

## **Workshop for the working group on Cultural Policy, Immigrants and Promotion of Cultural Diversity**

Place and time: Ministry of Education and Culture, Meritullinkatu 1, Tuesday 25 August 9.30-12.30/13.30-16.30

### **Summary of proposals from the group discussions**

#### **Goal of the workshop**

- To enlighten the status of artists and cultural professionals with foreign background in the Finnish art and culture scene
- Identify problems and challenges in connection to this
- Find solutions to problems and other means to enhance professional status and working possibilities for artists and cultural professionals with foreign background
- Due to corona restrictions the participants were divided to two identical consecutive workshops where the work was carried out in group tables. As an introduction, experiences from Avas/Opening-project was shared by diversity agent Ilaria Tucci.
- which concrete factors create opportunities and which factors prevent them from being realized?

#### **A thematical summary of the presented problems and solutions in the group discussions:**

##### **1) Overall structural problems**

- Make clear policies and directives for diversity and inclusion
- Establish mandatory accountability on accessibility and inclusion for art and culture institutions, establish explicit statements about how they promote diversity in every day practices
- Create internal and external (independent, peer-to-peer) structures to monitor and evaluate inclusion practices, development measures based on facts
- Strengthen participation and engagement in preparation and decision-making. Development work is to be done *with* people with foreign background and minorities but not *for* them
- Bring forward and acknowledge "invisible" obstacles. Seek, spread and make use of good practices
- Encourage to encounter and dialogue. Strengthen acceptance of a more diverse use of Finnish and Swedish

##### **2) Problems in allocating resources**

- Include diversity as a key, not peripheral, feature and criteria in funding calls
- Institutions making grant decisions should have a mandatory quota of foreigner background experts in their councils
- Create extra structural funds to support and implement bridges, collaboration and experimental/innovative artistic work between independent artists and established organizations
- Show earmarked funding to enhance diversity and reach equality
- Create start-up-financing possibilities for artists and cultural workers who have settled down in Finland
- Transfer short time project-based activities on a more permanent ground
- Widen the range of used languages in financial calls in order to enhance accessibility and equality

##### **3) Problems in recruitment of artists and cultural professionals**

- Acknowledge foreign exams, acknowledgement of competencies also through earlier experience and proved work performance in practice
- More flexibility and pragmatic approach to language competencies in Finnish and Swedish. Create prerequisites for language competence development within work. Offer flexible courses in Finnish and Swedish and other learning possibilities that meet individual needs.
- Take advantage of positive discrimination in recruitments
- Strengthen awareness and competencies of experienced work force through guidance and counselling (mentoring)
- Enhance possibilities for persons with foreign background to get employed within educational institutions for art and culture
- Organize more events where people with foreign background get possibility to build networks both with other artists and cultural workers with foreign background but also with different stakeholder in the Finnish art and culture field
- Pay the freelancer artists proper fees when engaged in work
- Improve possibilities for artists to get a work-based residence permit for instance by increasing awareness of working possibilities in the art and culture field in Finland and working conditions of artists

#### **4) Problems in communication**

- Clear and accessible language use in information providing, using simplified Finnish (selkosuomi) to lower the threshold to speak Finnish
- More multilingualism in art and culture institutions. Translation programmes could be used more in institutions (both oral and written)
- Increase information on Finnish art and culture field in the multilingual InfoFinland-website
- Recruit staff that can offer information and guidance to artists that have moved to Finland in art and culture institutions
- Find out about possibilities within framework of International House Helsinki to provide information and guidance about culture and art field in Finland and about inclusion services for artists
- Offer education about the structures of and ongoing work in art and culture life in Finland and the status of artists in Finland
- Encourage art and culture institutions to arrange open door days, events for different target groups, clinics to assist with grant applications etc.
- Promote collaboration with foreign cultural institutes in Finland (Goethe, Centre Cultural Francais, British Council among others)

#### **5) Diverse issues**

- Strengthen education in diversity and intercultural relations in educational institutions and organizations in the art and culture field. Promote understanding of benefits with observing diversity
- Take advantage of diversity agents to help organizations to see their practices critically and to develop
- Enhance competencies especially within culture and art other than European and Western (Eurocentric). Strengthen participation of experts in this field in decision-making
- Offer specific leadership training for artists and cultural professionals with a foreign background
- Create safe spaces for dialogue on an equal footing, more open discussion, encounter, listening and understanding of both sides
- More possibilities for participatory activities like community art, school visits, working pairs