



LEIPZIG  
SEPTEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup>-27<sup>ST</sup>, 2015

**kultur**  
**standort**  
**bestimmung**

International cultural congress  
and cultural festival

**RECOMMENDATIONS  
FOR ACTION**

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

The congress **culture | place.positioning** represented the most crucial cultural contribution of Leipzig's independent scene for the city's anniversary year 2015. 1000 years after the city's first mention seemed to be a grand occasion for celebrating that which makes the city what it is and what it stands for. The initiative Leipzig + Culture e.V. was supported by the municipality to conceive and carry out an international and interdisciplinary congress that invited 40 experts from France, Great Britain, Poland, Greece, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Latvia, as well as from all over Germany. They were tasked with (re)defining practical German examples of cultural policy, gathering recommendations for action, collecting examples that have been undertaken and fashioning suggestions for action.

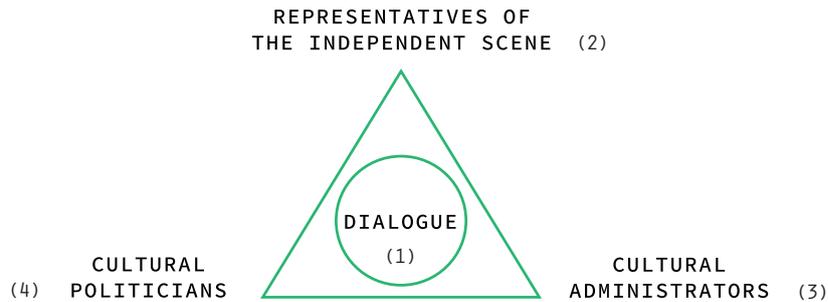
The most special part of the congress was the series of practice-oriented workshops that built upon the forums and panel discussions (s. PDF Contents) of the third day and worked out recommendations for action. Together with experienced moderators, the information was then synthesised from the results of the forums as well as the theories and example projects from the podiums. These syntheses were then brought into relationship with each other and further analysed for the future. The workshops developed recommendations for actors from different sectors. Scenarios for political and government action have been designed in terms of culture, which should be as pioneering for Leipzig as they would be for other cities.

The aim of the congress was the creation of a cultural policy dialogue between the independent scene and municipal decision-makers. This involved the participation and interplay between three specific stakeholders: The representatives of the independent scene, cultural administrators and cultural politicians. How can they work together? How can a lasting and sustainable dialogue be designed? A prerequisite for this dialogue has clearly evolved out of the discussions at the panels and the collaborative workshops: There is a need for a change of attitude of all of the respective stakeholders. There needs to be an attitude that is characterised by open dialogue, participatory processes and co-determination. On the part of the independent scene this will require more self-confidence, whereas the communal decision-makers must become more ready to enter into and maintain dialogue. Only through this shift in attitude will it be possible to move from a "man-in-the-middle" situation toward an arena situation in which the independent scene exists on equal footing with local decision makers in the cultural sector.

Above and beyond a change of attitude, it will also require the further development of skills among the participating actors such that the desired dialogue can be constructive. On the part of the communal decision makers this specifically includes the acquisition of detailed knowledge regarding the functioning of independent cultural scenes. On the part of the cultural agents this means acquiring knowledge of the conditions, the procedures and the space of manoeuvring imposed upon the decision makers.

Last but not least, it is necessary to communicate the goals regarding adequate dialogue formats and decision making processes, to continuously and reliably implement them and integrate their results into municipal cultural policy.

The recommendations for action relate to the interactions between the actors (1) and are addressed to each recipient of the independent scene (2), the cultural administration (3) as well as to the cultural policy makers (4).



## 1. Instruments for Dialogue

### 1.1 Roundtable

A framework for the exchange should be created to introduce the desired culture of dialogue. There should be regular meetings at a table shared by all the parties to the dialogue. Here are important questions that require clarification:

- **Instrumentation:** Representatives of the independent scene, cultural administrators and cultural politicians should all participate in the discussion. This is about transparency. The goal is to manifest binary relationships (cultural policy and cultural administration; cultural administration and independent scene; cultural policy – the independent scene). This necessarily raises the question of the integration of further actors in the cultural sector such as representatives from public cultural institutions.

Various modes of meeting were identified depending on the desired integration of the respective sectors: Should there be multiple round tables differentiated by the individual sectors? Or should there be one round table where all sectors are included? The issue of participation reveals the question of the number of participants: How big should the round table be in order to allow for an effective working environment?

- **Regularity:** The round table should take place regularly in order to facilitate a continuous working process.

- **Meeting place:** The round table should not always take place at the premises of the cultural administration. It should also be organised to take place at a cultural site, so that all participants can be treated as equal partners. A rotation of the location should also be considered.

- **Moderation:** Such encounters require external moderation in order to maintain an equal footing between all participants. The moderation should be undertaken by an expert in interpersonal communication, such as a cultural manager. This person should be capable of understanding the various perspectives and “translating” between the parties. The question of financing is decisive here: Who should pay the fees for such a moderation? Does the provision of funding create a dependent relationship?

- **Responsibility:** What functions should the round table should serve? Consultation or resolution? Should the round table also be used for the distribution of funding? Or is it mainly an instrument for developing new cultural and political lines?

## 1.2 Contact Point

The idea of a contact point was also proposed. This position should ensure fluid communication and continuous information exchange between the three types of actors. Following the example of the speaker for public-sector cultural establishment, there should also be a similar contact point for the independent scene in city cultural offices. The tasks of the contact point should include the following priorities: The gathering of issues and concerns of the independent scene and the preparation of these for the representatives of cultural policy and management; the organisation and execution of the round table; the communication of strategies for cultural development and financing in the independent scene; the collection of research about culturally relevant political themes within and outside the nation; the coordination of scientific accompaniment of all of the processes.

## 1.3 Informative internet platform

An informative internet platform should be created that enables greater transparency. This should include public reports of the round table, working documents and even scientific studies. It should serve to provide a neutral overview of the cultural and political processes behind the scenes.

## 1.4 Scientific evaluation of the participatory process

The participation procedures should be scientifically monitored and regularly evaluated.

# 2. Recommendations of the independent scene

## 2.1 Internal structuring of the independent scene

The independent scene should be structured inward in order to promote the exchange of experiences and resources, to solidify a stronger political representation of their interests and to develop the skills of their cultural and political work. This internal structuring may follow several directions:

- **Physical Location:** A meeting point that is open to all sectors where the actors of the independent scene can regularly meet in the sense of an independent scene centre.
- **Coordination Office:** for the stabilisation of the alliance of the independent scene a coordination centre should be created. The coordination centre should not replace the political representation of the independent scene, which remains a voluntary appointment. Instead, it should act as a point of contact, organiser and facilitator of information. It should work as a kind of interface both as a point of contact for members of the independent scene as well as for interested external parties.
- **Networking platform:** the internal structure of the independent scene can only be successful through a tightly woven networking of its members. A sense of belonging can only be developed by getting to know each other. An internet platform for the independent scene would be of great benefit. It could include a calendar of events and a map of the independent scene. It could also provide information on the activities carried out by political negotiations. It could also link to international groups and partnerships.
- **Resource centre for fine artists:**  
A resource centre would be a training and consultancy centre of the independent scene for the independent scene. It would offer training workshops; provide financial, legal and personal advice for artists; and help with funding applications.

Furthermore, a trading system could be created, in which technical services, specialist services and even materials could be exchanged. It would thereby assist in a more effective usage of the resources that are already present in the independent scene. A symbolic currency could even be introduced for these purposes.

## **2.2 Internationalisation of the independent scene**

The independent scene should expand its network internationally. It should establish international contacts with members of the free scenes in other cities or regions. A goal or context for this could be EU-projects. The actors of the independent scene have contacts, mobility and ideas. These assets should be used strategically.

## **2.3 Legitimacy of the political representation of the independent scene**

The independent scene should direct a reflexive process about the issue of coordination within the independent scene. Who is eligible for representation? How can the political legitimacy of speakers be guaranteed? How can the choice be made?

## **2.4 Common policy objectives**

The independent scene should develop a common position on cultural policy issues. The issue of fees for visual artists and performers constitutes a relevant example (keyword “art but fair”). The actors the independent scene should agree on objectives, so that they can be enforced. Similarly, the basic requirement for developing concepts for the sectors of the independent scene should be a prerequisite for the development of tailor-made funding instruments and content assessment of grant applications.

## **2.5. Scientific accompaniment**

The independent scene should seek to ensure that the processes of their self-organisation and their participation in municipal decisions on cultural policy are scientifically examined, which thereby would serve to enhance and professionalise self-reflection as well as the foster exchange with external actors. An important tool for the periodic review and communication of the results could be projects similar to **culture | place. positioning.**

# **3. Recommendations to the cultural administrators**

## **3.1 Acquisition of professional competence**

The staff of the cultural administration - both managers and case handlers - should be able to demonstrate their expertise in the field of culture. They need cultural education and a sense for innovation in order to be able to accompany and support artistic productions.

“Get out of the Cultural Office!”

They should undertake regular visits to the entire spectrum of fields within the cultural sector; not merely those of the state cultural institutions, but also and especially the myriad of cultural sites of the independent scene. These visits should be carried out to a quantifiable degree within their personal staff schedule, because only this can guarantee the maintenance of the basic knowledge required by their continued cooperation with the independent scene.

## **3.2 Dialogue between administrative areas: Urban Development // Culture // Youth-Family-Education // Social**

The employees of the cultural office should necessarily maintain close contact with the relevant positions in the other departments. They should be aware of developments in these areas in order to help their office position itself.

Just as the specific cooperation between the administration of culture and urban development should be systematically enhanced, improvement of the cooperation between the administration of social issues and cultural work could use the same treatment. There are no important decisions that can realistically be made without consulting the other administrative authorities. There could be regular internal information exchanges. There could be internal reports written to enhance the transparency of the entire administration.

For all areas of urban life there are corresponding administrative structures and development concepts. These concepts should be linked more strongly with each other in order to create relations. As an essential social link, the cultural sector forms the central element. All major decisions in each subject should first be checked for impact on the cultural landscape and calibrated accordingly. Therefore, it is advised to implement a cultural impact assessment.

### **3.3 Expansion of the administrative structure for inclusion of the independent scene**

Following the example of the speaker / consultant for the city's cultural establishments, a contact position in the Office of Culture for the independent scene should also be created. (see para. 1.2)

## **4. Recommendations for cultural politicians**

### **4.1 Acquisition of professional competence**

The members of the cultural committees should be able to demonstrate professional capacities in the field of culture. They need cultural education and a sense for innovation in order to be able to accompany and support artistic productions.

“Get out of the Cultural Committee”!

They should undertake regular visits to the entire spectrum of fields within the cultural sector; not merely those of the state cultural institutions, but also and especially the myriad of cultural sites of the independent scene.

### **4.2 Knowledge Transfer**

Mandates for cultural committees are of limited time: The members change every five years. This presents a problem for the transfer of knowledge. The transfer of knowledge between the old and the new committees should be improved. Until now, this task of mediation has been the responsibility of the staff of the political groups, the necessity of which is perceived differently from office to office. It is necessary to create a non-partisan archive where records of the meetings can be found.

### **4.3 Specialist advisory councils**

Specialist advisory councils should enable the creation of development concepts, cultural and political priorities and the distribution of funding. It should be composed of independent council members jointly nominated through a participatory process by members of the independent scene, in the cultural administration and from politics. The council should be responsible only for a specific mandate in a specific area. Outgoing members should regularly be replaced by incoming members.

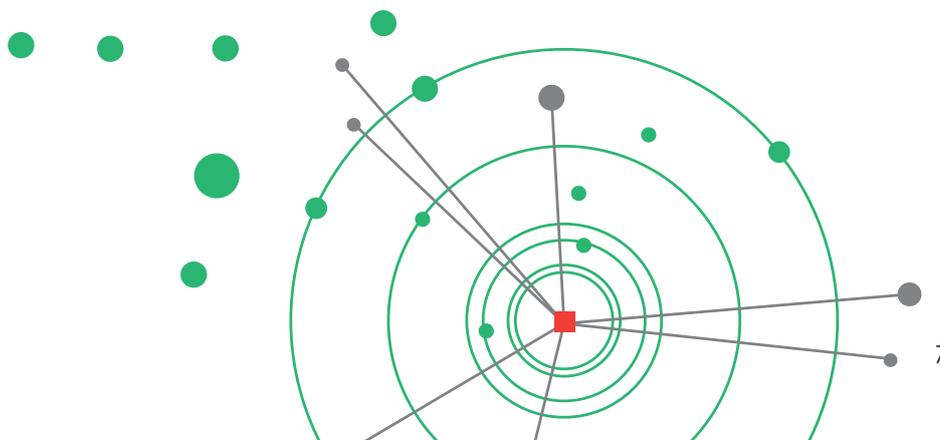
### **4.4 Evaluation instruments of cultural policy**

Culturally political decisions should be continuously evaluated. Effective instruments should be developed that provide for the regular verification of the allocation of funding, the priorities of cultural policy and the effectiveness of financing instruments. This should serve to balance between cultural policy's dual tasks of maintenance and innovating. Instruments should be found and used that are able to maintain stability within a constantly changing field.

#### 4.5 Dialogue between administrative areas: Urban Development // Culture // Youth-Family-Education // Social

All cultural politicians should work to ensure that the cultural sector plays an increasingly important role in the decisions of the respective city council factions. Analogous to the cultural impact assessment, which should be embedded in the governance of a city, even the political parties must be aware of the central importance of culture for the quality of life and social cohesion in a city. This relates to the crucial role of culture for the present and future challenges in the development of a cosmopolitan, multicultural, participatory and democratic society.

For this reason, it is necessary that members of the cultural committees establish close contact with the other committees, regardless of construed relevance. They should be informed about the developments in other areas in order to be able to position themselves. The specific cooperation between politicians - those responsible for culture and urban development as well as those responsible for cultural and social work - should be systematised. No important decisions should be made without consulting the persons responsible in other fields. There could be regular internal information exchanges. There could be internal reports drafted in order to create transparency.



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