DECISION

Subject:	Memorandum of Understanding for the implementation of the COST Action "Connecting Critical Pedagogies, Inclusive Art Forms and Alternative Barometers for Urban Sustainability" (CIRCUL'ARTs) CA23117

The COST Member Countries will find attached the Memorandum of Understanding for the COST Action Connecting Critical Pedagogies, Inclusive Art Forms and Alternative Barometers for Urban Sustainability approved by the Committee of Senior Officials through written procedure on 17 May 2024.

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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

For the implementation of a COST Action designated as

COST Action CA23117
CONNECTING CRITICAL PEDAGOGIES, INCLUSIVE ART FORMS AND ALTERNATIVE
BAROMETERS FOR URBAN SUSTAINABILITY (CIRCUL'ARTs)

The COST Members through the present Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) wish to undertake joint activities of mutual interest and declare their common intention to participate in the COST Action, referred to above and described in the Technical Annex of this MoU.

The Action will be carried out in accordance with the set of COST Implementation Rules approved by the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO), or any document amending or replacing them.

The main aim and objective of the Action is to CIRCUL'ARTs addresses the need for new typologies of solutions for circular economies that are interdisciplinary, inclusive and creative. We will exchange on theoretical frameworks and empirical material, using creative methodologies developed in informal and international contexts, to stimulate and advance urban sustainability and circularity, to provide recommendations for new methodologies.. This will be achieved through the specific objectives detailed in the Technical Annex.

The present MoU enters into force on the date of the approval of the COST Action by the CSO.

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OVERVIEW

Summary
CIRCUL'ARTs develops an innovative methodology to stimulate the emergence of solutions towards more circular and sustainable cities, based on a 'dynamic ecology of knowledge'. This implies new ways of co-creating knowledge, sharing it and transforming it into action, orientating our learning towards more practical action. Most of all, this new methodology consists in stepping out of a Euro-centric perspective and taking into consideration plural voices and needs, ancestral and indigenous knowledge, creative micro-strategies developed at a local level - a body of information that has remained hitherto unconsidered.
We envision bringing this knowledge into a global circulation, appealing to artistic practice - as a form of creating information exchange in a participative and creative way and of producing topic solutions. Art, and the de-colonisation of thought and knowledge will allow us to develop a methodology that is in itself sustainable and circular.
This innovative methodology will be applied to 3 working areas in urban circular economies, according to the analysis of particular case-studies (in the locations of our members and partners) . Our project is therefore organised around 6 thematic working groups (corresponding to our three working areas plus 3 creative methodologies), and a 7th one that brings together recommendations for the development of innovative creative methodologies in the field of circular economies and disseminates them:
1. Food systems
2. Construction process/housing
3. Public spaces
4. Visual arts - creative methodologies for Circular Food/Habitat/Public Space
5. Performative Arts - creative methodlogies for Circular Food/Habitat/Public Space
6. Urban Design - creative methodlogies for Circular Food/Habitat/Public Space
7. Recommendations and Dissemination through critical pedagogies.

Areas of Expertise Relevant for the Action	Keywords
● Arts: Preservation of cultural heritage ● Social and economic geography: Socio-economic aspects of environmental sciences ● Educational sciences: Education: training, pedagogy, didactics ● Social and economic geography: Socio-economic aspects of agriculture, agriculture and environment, urban agriculture, gardens, agricultural economy ● Arts: Visual arts	● Circular cities ● Sustainability ● Art forms ● Critical Pedagogies

Specific Objectives
To achieve the main objective described in this MoU, the following specific objectives shall be accomplished:

Research Coordination
● Development of a common framework to collect information concerning 'sustainability' and 'circularity'
● Systematisatisation and sharing results
● Elaboration of a set of recommendations
● Devising a strategic plan for the implementation of change

Capacity Building
● Facilitating information exchange
● Identifying descriptions of sustainability and circularity
● Creating a talent pool around the 3 urban circularity areas

- Enhancing academic and public awareness
- Demonstrating to large audiences how creative pedagogies through artistic practice can benefit daily lives
- Disseminating produced knowledge
- Devising strategies for further investment of the knowledge

TECHNICAL ANNEX

1. S&T EXCELLENCE

1.1. SOUNDNESS OF THE CHALLENGE

1.1.1.   DESCRIPTION OF THE STATE OF THE ART

Transforming our societies into more sustainable ones has been a major concern for more than half a century. This has led to many international agreements and much research although, sadly, to no convincing sign that we have made our world more sustainable and have learnt how to pursue our endeavours for decades to come. What we have learnt, however, is that a *diversity* of approaches, stakeholders' voices to hear, disciplines, contexts, perspectives, modes of representations can help in generating more practical and satisfactory results, at more local – and human - scales (Pascual et al., 2023; Baggio, 2022; Fonseca Batista and Andrade, 2021). From this, four new 'avenues' are emerging – that we are interested in taking in this programme.

1) The importance of **working more locally** has manifested itself, for instance, through the emergence of more project-focused research, or research at the urban scale. The city, as a major contributor to climate change and to un-sustainable patterns, has become a particularly topical focus and work on '*urban sustainability'* is thriving. One specific practical issue, that of waste (of products, food, time, space, know-how, etc.), is capturing our imaginations in that, through the concept of '*circularity*' (or zero waste), we are questioning what is useful and what is not, how value emerges in society, thanks to whom, and how territories as well as products 'in transitions' precisely reflect how cities and societies are themselves in a state of transitions and moving towards something new.

2) How such changes take place is facilitated through processes that also need changing: it is now on urban **participatory governance** that the emphasis is put, requiring novel ways of valuing *inclusivity* and of hearing the voice and perspective of *all* communities.

3) An enormous amount of work is still needed to provide the platforms through which such novel forms of **solidarity economics** based on cooperation and complementarity of action, could take place and lead to the co-creation of different types of places.

4) This itself is closely related to the need for a *new 'language of economics'* but also **new forms of communication** amongst stakeholders and **new narratives** describing our visions on sustainable, circular societies (be they focused on the 'circularity' related to the valuing/recycling of waste, the 'learning-action' type of cyclical creation of knowledge, or the circularity of exchanges between various disciplines, professions, stakeholders and cultures).

Although initiatives are carried out in the four domains described above, what is precisely needed is to **connect them** for 'circularity' to make even more sense (Camocho, 2022; Calisto-Friant et al. 2023; Schroeder and Barrie, 2022). If COST Action programmes already exist in the context of circular processes, they however remain focused on technical means of recycling waste.

Our objective with this proposal is the testing out of a new methodology of work in this field, through the systematic involvement of artistic practices and the development of de-colonising strategies (Bentz et al., 2021; Fowkes, M. & R., 2022; Fowkes, M. & R., 2006). In that sense, creativity, diversity and inclusion are key to address and propose solutions for a circular, sustainable city (Verma et al., 2020; Pickett et al., 2014; D'Amato, 2021 and Stojanovic, 2017)) based on solidarity economics, participatory governance and local narratives (Howard et al., 2019; Sonnier and Grit, 2022; Illeris, 2017; Papastergiadis, 2018). By combining and integrating theories and methodological approaches from different disciplines (social sciences, architecture, urban design, sustainability studies, decolonial studies, humanities and the arts), but also by expanding our knowledge to geographical regions that have been less studied – through including participants from Inclusiveness Target Countries (ITCs), International Partner Countries and Invited Speakers - our research network will be able to develop a holistic approach to circular economies as well as innovative solutions (Weintraub, 2006; Couts and Terres de Eca, 2019; Kagan, 2014). It will therefore also address the need to reform our learning systems to better our societies to transition towards more sustainability and circularity and face the 21st c. challenges (Brundiers et al., 2010; Weintraub, 2012).

1.1.2. DESCRIPTION OF THE CHALLENGE (MAIN AIM)

Our Action will address the pressing need for a systematic interdisciplinary and international knowledge advancement through new typologies of solutions for circular economies: inclusive solutions involving creative methodologies, therefore bringing an advancement into the discipline. We will exchange on theoretical frameworks, but also on empirical material, focusing on creative methodologies developed so far in informal and international contexts, with the objective to stimulate and advance urban sustainability and circularity. **CIRCUL'ARTs** will also translate findings into recommendations for the development of new methodologies, that will be further theorised as such.

Knowledge on creative methodologies is currently rather sporadic and fragmented, and experimental solutions are not commonly transferred into the scientific field of sustainability studies. This is unfortunate as the contribution of interdisciplinary creative solutions for various disciplines is more and more acknowledged. **CIRCUL'ARTs** focuses on 3 creative branches: Visual Arts, Performative Arts and Urban Design, which will be analysed and applied to our Working fields (Circular Food Systems, Housing and Public Space), mapping results and innovations.

The core objective is the development with our members and partners of an innovative methodology based on a 'dynamic ecology of knowledge'. This implies new ways of co-creating knowledge, of sharing it, of transforming it into action and of orientating *our learning towards more practical action* through a creative approach. Above all, this new methodology consists in stepping out of a uni-dimensional perspective and taking into consideration plural voices and needs, ancestral and indigenous knowledge and micro-strategies developed at a local level - a body of information that has remained hitherto unconsidered and that we will explore through our diversified and inclusive network.

In 2010, the theoretician Irit Rogoff (Rogoff 2010) launched the notion of an 'educational turn' in the field of art. Marked by a holistic approach to art, it is dedicated to highlighting the interconnectedness between global social and environmental phenomena. Art is perceived as a tool for social militancy, raising awareness toward the urgency of collective intervention. We envision bringing this knowledge into a global circulation, by appealing to artistic practice as a form of creating information exchange in a participative and creative way. Art, as well as the de-colonisation of thought and knowledge will allow us to develop a methodology that is in itself sustainable and circular. Our premise for learning differently is to embrace decolonial learning processes but also ways of defining sustainability. This innovative methodology will be applied to our 3 working areas in urban circular economies, according to the analysis of particular case-studies (in the locations of our members and partners, IPC members and Invited Speakers. Our approach will be based on bringing together different stakeholders that have developed in their specific disciplinary fields, in their economic contexts and in their social communities creative micro- solutions and strategies that have balanced existing inequalities. An innovative aspect of this proposal is also not only working with academics and students, but including in our COST network citizens, activists, members of associations and civil organisations in a Global North/Global South balanced composition.

CIRCUL'ARTs affirms that in order to obtain a sustainable, circular city, the methodology, partner network and action line has to be in itself sustainable - therefore inclusive. By broadening the learning community and contextualising learning processes within the community's territory, we will work on a participatory and genuine sustainability, as problems that sustainability aims to address are expressed by people themselves. This represents a radical 're-positioning' as it fosters 'participatory environmental governance', the participation of traditionally disadvantaged groups and destabilises the perpetuation of hegemonic knowledge production and information exchange. Our approach aims also to facilitate communication between local actors and to motivate them to develop new narratives for a sustainable future, that is closer to people's aspirations, perspectives and needs.

CIRCUL'ARTs will be dedicated to collecting experiences that critically address a Western-centred view on sustainability as well as the domination of certain disciplinary, expert-centred, and theoretical approaches when exploring sustainability. We will be working on case-studies: previous practical solutions, theoretical approaches and epistemic contexts will be confronted during COST Formats (Training schools and the short scientific missions). The Action will enable its members to exchange ideas and research findings, systematise findings, write joint research papers, develop joint empirical – interdisciplinary and/or internationally comparative work, based on qualitative and quantitative databases. With the implications of artists and designers, we will elaborate and disseminate in WG7 new functional solutions, designed for specific contexts in our 3 working areas (food, housing, public space). The involvement of non-academic stakeholders, will have repercussions on policy making, inform a broad range of stakeholders on sustainable practices and ultimately benefit a global context, beyond the academic field.

In WG1-6 we will explore case-studies of innovative methodologies and develop their potential on a global scale. Each WG will conduct a thematic review of recent research, findings and advancement in the first year of the Action.

In WG7, we will formulate and disseminate tangible recommendations for daily practice based on solid scientific grounding (developed during our 6 WGs).

1.2. PROGRESS BEYOND THE STATE-OF-THE-ART

1.2.1 APPROACH TO THE CHALLENGE AND PROGRESS BEYOND THE STATE OF THE ART

Education for Sustainability, which has been, since its inception, very much focused on concepts and detached from the context in which it is being taught, is suggested to be reformed in view of emphasising the attachment of people to their territory and the meaningfulness of place-based co-creation and experiential and social learning. A whole network of people is working on education for sustainability and, progressively, also on 'territorial education'. In parallel, and quite detached from this, numerous highly technical initiatives focus on circular cities, circular food systems, circular economies from an 'industrial ecology' perspective, without necessarily involving the general public, nor neighbourhoods. Our proposal to generate new ways of apprehending societal changes and transitions towards more circularity and sustainability based on *creative forms of knowledge transfer and artistic practice,* implies the co-creation of non-hegemonic narratives that make more sense to more people. Using art practices in formal and non-formal contexts raising awareness of environmental education, is engaging collective learning processes for ecological justice, social justice and ecological well-being.

CIRCUL'ARTs aims to help make governance more participative by clarifying the end goal collectively pursued as well as by generating and strengthening new ways of communicating, negotiating and learning amongst stakeholders involved. Our proposal is that creative practices can be involved as an efficient and innovative approach to reforming Education for Sustainability and to open up formal learning institutions towards more practice-based informal learning, hence creating stronger bonds between communities and better integrating learning into urban daily-life. We want to investigate the effects of empowering an inclusive community of urban citizens from varied cultural and social backgrounds in articulating their vision for a sustainable, circular city.

The way in which we want to pursue these objectives is **SMART**: **S**pecific; **M**easurable; **A**chievable; **R**elevant and **Ti**mely. Our objective is to involve different types of COST Members, but also of guests and partners who **specifically** work, in an international context, with alternative, creativity- based forms of learning in sustainable circuits. Local organisations that were involved in the development of creative micro- or macro- solutions towards sustainability, experimental architects, artists and designers engaged in social action, urban activists, performative activists are our target partners. We would like to collaborate with institutions and citizens based both in the Global South and the Global North. By connecting these groups, we are intending to collectively make the new narratives/ representations **measurable** by deriving from this communication process some forms of creative pedagogies. The objective is to promote the emergence of co-learning spaces, where artistic practices foster methodological innovation. This will be made **achievable** by developing within **CIRCUL'ARTs** different COST formats: Training schools (which consist of workshops and artistic residencies), Working Groups (thematic) and scientific missions (grant-based). In these formats (detailed in paragraph 1.2.2.2.), members and partners will exchange on already tested solutions and will develop new strategies and methodologies for current cases and contexts, involving creative forms of knowledge production: artistic activism, performative arts, story-telling, affective and subjective cartography, collaborations with community-based associations and museums, participative artistic and architectural urban installations. Finding such new ways of approaching a sustainable future and circular cities is particularly **relevant** in a context of governance crisis and of mistrust of governing institutions. The discourse on such issues needs to be re-appropriated to the larger community of citizens, especially those who are requested to 'participate' in changes. Addressing such a challenge is also **timely** because, in addition to a 'governance crisis', real scepticism is rising concerning the (often rhetorical) discourse employed to talk about sustainability and circularity in terms that seem to fit a particular (and not-shared) agenda. Decolonialising this discourse is therefore an imperative: it can be done through the critical analysis of Eurocentric views of sustainability, of the domination of certain disciplines and perspectives over others, and through the defence of inclusivity and feminist theories, through participation and through giving a voice to citizens. Similarly, showing that practical transitions can happen is also urgent. We suggest exploring the capacity of art forms and ecologic knowledge

transfer processes to act as catalysts for transitions towards practical sustainability by investigating the territory as learning ground and exploring the links between acting and learning.

Following WGs structure CIRCUL'ARTs:

WG 1. Circular Food. will describe and analyse the latest developments and advances in circular food systems, involving not only the transformation of organic waste into compost, but also the connection of infrastructures - i.e. how unused urban space can be transformed into urban agricultural fields or how greenhouses can be introduced into the cities. We will also study the human capital aspect by reviewing solutions regarding the training of unemployed people in agro-ecology and permaculture. Thematic review of the literature and new insights will be generated through the exploration of qualitative datasets, delivered from our partners (mainly through interviews with participants involved in experimental solutions in urban design, communitarian projects, creative initiatives that fostered the implementation of solutions through citizens' involvement and the creation of necessary urban installations). The WG therefore aims to create indicators that will map and explain past and current strategies and draw a set of methodological solutions that can be further applied, both at a macro-level (recommendations for urban policy makers and institutions), and at micro-level in intervention projects addressing problems identified by our COST members during our COST Action.

WG 2. Circular Habitat focuses on developing methodologies of the co-creation of knowledge regarding how construction materials can be reused, insulation improved, temporary housing provided. We will be addressing disadvantaged social groups and analysing case-studies in which hegemonic approaches to housing have created scarcity and disempowered communities. Data is based mainly on qualitative interviews and questionnaires and on co-creation of content, where citizens themselves (acting as Invited Speakers) will narrate their own perspective on urban policy and governance and analyse case-studies in which specific institutional, national, and international policies were causing social inequalities. Solutions will be searched for on a creative level, by inviting Invited Speakers from the creative sector to design micro- solutions on a topical level that provide solutions for construction industry to become more energy-efficient and to emit less CO2. Empowering citizen through the sharing and building of new knowledge, is leading, in the long-run, to a reform in the field of Education for Sustainability, through practice-based informal learning, hence creating stronger bonds between communities and better integrating sustainability learning into urban daily-life. Our interdisciplinary approach (bringing together citizen from civic associations, urban activists involved in housing inequalities, partners from the creative sector specialised in community work), is expected to foster a 'dynamic ecology of knowledge', where new solutions are mapped based on solidarity economics, participatory governance and local narratives. The knowledge generated in this WG is relevant for urban institutions and policy makers who develop strategies for making housing more inclusive and for diversifying urban integration.

WG 3. Circular Public Space focuses on human involvement in circular public space. Generating a new type of solidarity economy results mostly from motivating people to cooperate towards a common objective. Re-using waste implies a much stronger collaboration between citizens and their specific activities that normally do not cross in the social and public space. WG3 will analyse how creativity becomes a tool for balancing social inequalities and supporting and empowering citizens to co-create their public space. WG3 will show how that can be further applied towards integration and performance in the labour market and skill development.

WG 4. Visual Arts for Circular Food/Habitat/Public Space will analyse the effectiveness of topical solutions developed by artists, designers, architects for ameliorating situations of crises. Temporary sculptures in public space, installations, activist art and painting are responding to a particular emergency contexts and approach these conflict situations through artistic research and specific case-studies that aim to evaluate the situation. The solutions should emerge from the community itself, whereas the design and artistic intervention stimulate the implication of the involved communities and the innovative development of new strategies. WG 4 will connect artistic education for sustainability to what has been called the 'environmental turn', from which other preoccupations such as 'engaged art,' postcolonial ecological critiques and the central notion of eco-justice further emerged. Our WG aims to make literature review on how historically art started to be seen as action, performance and social critique - practised collectively. Our WG will apply these theories to our actuality: how can we apply ecological awareness into social actions in the context of circular food, housing and public space? In this WG we will be sharing and exchanging knowledge of previous realised actions in the context of expanding cities, where performative collective actions with citizens are concerned with the transmission of knowledge, ecological education, learning alternative social models, and sharing sustainable skill development. We will elaborate further methodologies with an activist component,

militating toward collective ecological consciousness and transmitting micro-strategies for counter-acting the fast expansion of the capitalist consumerism and the exploitation of resources.

WG 5. Performative Arts for Circular Food/Habitat/Public Space explores how can art education work without instrumentalising the social conditions found in the field and finally feeding back the cultural market system. We will analyse and develop performative art forms (theatre, spoken word, documentary film, artistic performance) that express more sustainable conceptions of human subjectivity. Artists, often in cooperation with subcultural movements, have established parallel institutions – universities, summer schools, workshops, farms, and entire mini-communities – that challenge classical teaching through performative formats. These creative ways of stimulating knowledge transfer and heritage transmission stimulate a 'slow' efficiency and counteract performance optimization, in a time in which tangible and intangible heritage preservation is extremely acute and funds for rehabilitation are scarce worldwide.

WG 6. Urban Design for Circular Food/Habitat/Public Space is devoted to urban installations, dispositives, ephemeral constructions, that can range from parks for children, temporary and emergency housing, structures that can promote exchange between citizens, selling points to encourage informal commerce etc. Often art institutions and academies promote/finance the temporary construction of these installations in public space for student's research and intervention projects. Other times these initiatives are initiated by the citizens themselves, who organise themselves to find topical solutions for a better communication in public space and for creating equal opportunities for all community members. These projects are multidisciplinary, transforming architecture and design into a collaborative site where different agendas are developed and different stakeholders get involved. If for example public space installations are missing from an urban neighbourhood, art and design labs work with recycled material, not only for resolving a situation of scarcity, but also to socially revitalise natural or urban environments that are in decay. WG6 will analyse how discrimination, lack of resources and protective measures for fragilized social groups can stimulate the creative potential of the citizens themselves and the need of providing support for cultural and social renovation.

WG 7. Dissemination & Recommendations develops tangible recommendations for a range of stakeholders, based on the various types of knowledge transfer that will have taken place during the previous WGs: from academics to citizens, from artists to communities, from citizens and artists to the public institutions and academic partners. Underlying this is the observation that researchers often do not thoroughly elaborate on the potential implications of their findings for stakeholders' daily lives. Moreover, when such recommendations are formulated, they are often not feasible for those who professionally engage with social and urban questions. At the same time, often in recommendations of this type, the voice of the concerned citizens does not come through: their approach, needs, experiences and specific narratives are rarely flowing into the content production. The academic research agenda is often not in tune with practitioners' needs, because the methodology is not sufficiently diversified and innovative to accommodate and respond to an empirical type of context. For this reason, we will develop the following structure: each WG. will appoint a stakeholder advisor, who will give regular input processed and systematised in WG 7. The role of design, visual arts and performative arts as pedagogic approaches and as means for integration has been acknowledged. However, what is missing is a systematic approach allowing the sustained incorporation of creative methodologies into the fields of sustainability with long-term scientific and societal impact.

1.2.2. OBJECTIVES

1.2.2.1. Research Coordination Objectives

1. Development of a common framework to collect information concerning 'sustainability' and 'circularity'

In an international, interdisciplinary format in different sectors (academia, urban policy or administration, NGOs) the Action will bring together early career and senior investigators working on a wide range of topics, in applied and theoretical ways as well as in scientific and creative ways. This combination of voices will reflect the complexity of content production, for which a major framework like a COST Action is particularly well adapted. The objective of **development of a common framework to collect information concerning 'sustainability' and 'circularity'** will be met by following actions:

- Reviewing and advancing existing global scholarship on each of our three topics - i.e. thematic reviews that will be produced in each thematic WG and the participation of ITCs and IPCs. **CIRCUL'ARTs** will develop an interdisciplinary research that will draw upon the combined expertise and (quantitative and qualitative) datasets that are shared by the academic and non-academic members and partners.
- Coordinating methodological workshops/Artistic Residencies between the COST Full members (and IPC as well as Invited Speakers) in experimental learning formats opening up dialogue between different forms of knowledge, in a critical pedagogies framework.

- Identifying relevant locations: Choosing the appropriate locations for the development of these meetings, which equally reflect the involvement of a varied typology of partners: public space, schools, urban labs, other organisations, associations, depending on the partners.
- Organising the learning communities as experimental and creative learning and exchange Training Schools, with rotative locations that cover some of the countries of the involved Full Members and Inclusiveness Target Members.
- Diversifying the research mobility of PhD students, invited speakers, partners and stakeholders.

2. Systematisatisation and sharing results
Novel and richer ways of defining sustainability and circularity will emerge, informed by the various results presented in different platforms which will lead to new or improved content production.
- Systematisation of the developed circular and sustainable working methodology, and theorising it into an innovative, sustainable type of discourse on circular food, housing and public space issues.
- Considerations on the possibilities of translation and interpretation (linguistic and cultural) in this cross-cultural format.
- Projecting topical solutions in concrete contexts.

3. Elaboration of a set of recommendations
Recommendations and toolkits will have effective applicability for specific contexts with the perspective of improvement of circularity. Our planned dissemination of results will address a layered sector encompassing the academic and the social space.
- Coordination of information through the creation of a website.
- Elaboration of sustainable dissemination strategies in close cooperation with the stakeholders who are involved in the Action to ensure their feasibility.
- Dissemination of results to the general public and stakeholders.

4. Devising a strategic plan for the implementation of change
We intend to apply the accumulated knowledge into further funding applications, taking advantage of the already established partnerships. We will be further applying mainly to large scale European Projects that would facilitate the concrete materialization of new functional sustainability models.

1.2.2.2. Capacity-building Objectives

C1. Facilitating systematic exchange of information
Focusing in each group of partners on certain types of circular creative process in view of bridging separate fields of science (industrial ecology describing circular processes on the one hand and creative arts on the other) as well as different types of stakeholders to achieve methodological breakthrough on social learning.

C2. Identifying various descriptions of sustainability and circularity. Involving specific target groups (e.g. newly established research groups, Young Researchers and Innovators, the under- represented gender, teams from countries/regions with less capacity in the field of the Action, creative arts associations, etc.) in the activities described above.

C3. Creation of a strong talent pool around our 3 urban circularity areas of focus.

C4. Enhancing academic and public awareness of the importance of research, co-creation and dissemination based on artistic methodologies, across disciplines. The inclusion of IPC members from the Global South is especially relevant in this regard, as case-studies, informal

solutions, but also research and approaches from these countries do not always reach a broader public.

C6. Demonstrating to a large audience how creative pedagogies through artistic practice can benefit daily lives.

C7. Disseminating the knowledge produced.

C8. Devising a strategy for the further investment of the knowledge produced with the diversified partner structures involved.

2. NETWORKING EXCELLENCE- COMPOSITION OF THE PARTNERS

2.1 ADDED VALUE OF NETWORKING IN S&T EXCELLENCE

2.1.1 ADDED VALUE IN RELATION TO EXISTING EFFORTS AT EUROPEAN AND/OR INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

Although many new regulations encourage cities to become more circular, and despite the fact that general guidance and toolkits occasionally exist on certain types of applications, the *contextualisation* of practices within a specific territory and certain communities is crucial. Understanding how certain practices can be adapted to a territory, as well as embraced and explained by communities can be done by showing practical examples and sharing insights. A previous research in the COST repertoire, showed that following projects have been funded: CA16229 ENEC European Network for Environmental Citizenship, CA21103 (presented as one of the success stories of COST Actions), CA17133 (on Circular economy and nature-based solutions). While some of these projects are more general, others are very specific and technical (on circular economies and building materials such as plastic). On environmental education we found 173 entries to the search. In relation to these projects, our approach brings forward two aspects: creativity, as a tool for inclusivity on one hand and the development and theorisation of a new methodology - sustainable itself. The added value of our network is a cluster of interdisciplinary partners that can promote the development of a sustainable methodology that involves creative practices, contemporary art, architecture and design forms, with the objective of moving away from a Eurocentric perspective and introducing alternative forms of knowledge that have been previously marginalised. Our network is reflecting this cross-cultural and cross disciplinary perspective. At the consolidation of the network we expect to count with around 300 persons, with a core of around 100 partners and collaborators permanently active. Several academic and non-academic partners from COST NNC and IPC will be included in the Action, after the funding of the project. As our objectives is to work on the relevance of indigenous knowledge developed in Global South communitarian universities, on the relevance of pilot projects and micro-solutions implemented within artistic projects in communities that brought a change to persisting problems, on ancestral knowledge regarding governing, on participative urban processes developed and tested out by citizen - our contribution will be also involving all these stakeholders in a project that should **not** be dominated by academic knowledge production. Our network will reflect this '*dynamic ecology of knowledge-creation*' on all levels.

Innovative are also the locations that we will choose for our training schools, which will influence and shape new forms of exchanges between academic members and partners: citizen associations, collective farming gatherings, projects of public art, projects of experimental and temporary architecture, educational programs in museums that problematise our 3 focus fields.

2.2. ADDED VALUE OF NETWORKING IN IMPACT

2.2.1 SECURING THE CRITICAL MASS, EXPERTISE AND GEOGRAPHICAL BALANCE WITHIN THE COST MEMBERS AND BEYOND

In order to achieve the critical mass and expertise needed in this COST Action, we first reviewed the type of creative forms that seem most successful at facilitating communications on issues related to sustainability and circularity. Similarly, we identified partners working on circular processes that

expressed an interest in reaching out to the general public in view of spreading 'transformative action on the ground'.

Whilst some countries tend to strongly favour participatory governance and communities' participation through creativity (more typically in Northern Europe), some others tend to favour technological approaches and consultation rather than real participation and citizens' involvement. The challenge is to find a way for these two groups of people and approaches to learn from each other.

Many programmes are based on scarce or distorted empirical evidence. Consequently, the new insights that will be generated in this Action and its explicit bottom-up perspective will be very relevant for stakeholders, for example, in addressing social inequalities, improving citizens' knowledge on sustainability, supporting social integration processes and promoting community bonding that can enhance circular practices. In this sense, we will gather experts and practitioners from the fields of art and architecture, urban activists, representatives of citizen associations, educators in alternative schools and universities, public school teachers and students, connecting: people from different disciplinary backgrounds, people from academic and non academic backgrounds (associations, industries) with people from different generations, genders, and cultural backgrounds.

2.2.2. INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS

CIRCUL'ARTs will gather a group of partners and practices with history in innovative processes. Workshops will be organised to test transferability but also the feasibility of extending learning beyond formal and informal educational settings and into the realm of decision-making. The network involves a wide range of stakeholders as network proposers. 8% per cent of the proposers are representatives of NGOs, 5% from government or inter-governmental organisations, 3% from standards organisations and 3% from business enterprises.

But we also have non- academic partners from some of these countries, like circular economy networks and associations, as well as artistic organisations like Berlin Art Link - which works in the economy of our project as a databank of artists and projects specialised in circularity, who will be also responsible for conducting interviews.

3. IMPACT

3.1 IMPACT TO SCIENCE, SOCIETY AND COMPETITIVENESS, AND POTENTIAL FOR INNOVATION/BREAK-THROUGHS

3.1.1 SCIENTIFIC, TECHNOLOGICAL, AND/OR SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACTS (INCLUDING POTENTIAL INNOVATIONS AND/OR BREAKTHROUGHS)

Today, dominant discourses from policy makers and international officials often tell a successful story, shadowing potential imbalances in access to, experiences, and not equal benefits of circularity and sustainability. CIRCUL'ARTs will turn the policy and educational discourse and the general public's representations of circularity more realistic and in line with what is feasible, wished for and also most urgent for a practical transition to take place.

We will generate impacts at two levels:

1. Implementing practices that foster ecology of knowledges and applied knowledge transfer.

Participatory governance starts with enhancing dialogue amongst stakeholders who rarely communicate and/or stakeholders whose voices are not heard. This requires specific attention to the language used for such exchange. Whilst technical language (related to business models, industrial ecology or environmental policy jargon) tends to be used in the context of public consultation, we suggest to investigate on alternative and creative forms of 'telling the story' of circularity.

2. Creating a new methodology in circular economies studies.
CIRCUL'ARTs will, in the medium to long run, contribute to the reform of educational resources for sustainability and will help to explain how creative approaches can be integrated in 'participatory urban governance'.

3.2. MEASURES TO MAXIMISE IMPACT

3.2.1. KNOWLEDGE CREATION, TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The proposed COST Action aims to advance comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and comparative knowledge by coordinating and stimulating the discussion of creative bottom-up research that works with empirical data. Our main strategies to maximise impact are as follows:

Knowledge creation on ways to measure and represent sustainability. CIRCUL'ARTs will facilitate the expression of socio-ecological views, resilience, and circular processes, through a focus on a critical exploration of: Eurocentric views of sustainability; disciplinary imperialism; theory over practice; experts vs citizens' knowledge and perspectives. In defence of Inclusivity, Feminist theories, participation, giving people a voice.

Knowledge Transfer on innovation. Circular economy principles are fundamentally different from the very much relied on 'linear economy' principles that lead to a focus on GDP (Gross Domestic Product) as the sole measure of 'wealth and success' and that generate an enormous amount of waste. CIRCUL'ARTs will communicate through its deliverables (exposed more down) diverse ways of envisaging 'economic performance', more in line with human development and ecological health. The objective is to facilitate the exchange of knowledge about *practical transitions***,** formulating for the broad audience strategies towards practical sustainability.

Career development. In order to foster career development, each WG will appoint an ECI for either the role of WG leader or vice-leader, considering gender equality. The various Cost Formats will boost career development in WGs, workshops, and Training Schools, STSMs and mobility. The close involvement of stakeholders in the network will ensure access to relevant non-academic organisations, which will enhance further employment opportunities, through skill development inside and outside of academia. The participation in international consortia to apply for competitive research funds will increase chances of receiving competitive funding and hence stimulate upward career mobility of the scholars in the network. The use of theatre, story-telling, design promote co-learning strategies and foster skill development, which can enhance career development chances.

3.2.2. PLAN FOR DISSEMINATION AND/OR EXPLOITATION AND DIALOGUE WITH THE GENERAL PUBLIC OR POLICY

DISSEMINATION STRATEGIES:
- Joint publications (e.g. research articles, special issues, and edited volumes) in high-ranked international journals and publishing series to conclude the work of the training sessions - *Arts; Alternatives journal; Surveys And Perspectives Integrating Environment & Society SAPIENS; Environmental Humanities; Art & Ecology; Terrain: a journal of the built and natural environment; Landscapes (ecocriticism, art, poetry, fiction); etc.*
- Joint contributions to magazines and association platforms destined for the large public and particular groups of citizens who are connected to our stakeholders (*Artsper; Conversation piece - British Art Studies series*)
- Research reports and methodological documentations to be developed within and across WGs, which will be published on the Action's website.
- The organisation of WG meetings, workshops, webinars, and conferences across the lifetime
- of the Action
- Guest lectures, conference organisation with all stakeholders, keynotes, and seminars at academic institutes and stakeholder organisations
- Public exhibition with documentation of the artistic residencies, which includes images, video and reports on the results obtained during our Cost Action.
- Organising debates and actions in public space with Cost members and partners
- Projections of videos and other documentary material previously produced by Cost members and partners, that permits the communication of alternative forms of governance (for this purpose collaboration with civic associations that would host public screenings and debates).
- Database inventory (lists of available qualitative and quantitative data) to be updated permanently during the project.
- Briefs and practical recommendations informing practitioners and policy-makers.
- Articles and commentaries in the press and on social media and regular update of the website with documentation of the meetings. The website is used also as a visual repository of projects and actions shared by our creative partners (artistic interventions etc. functioning like a visual database).

- An electronic newsletter between all Cost members (1 newsletter every 3 months announcing further events and diffusing the calls for the short scientific missions and other collaborations) and mailinglist.
- Publication of an edited academic book, including communications, visual and theoretical material of all involved network members. (*Peter Lang Publishing: (Re)Thinking Environmental Education Series*)
- Support of doctoral students and dissertation research projects to ensure the transmission of knowledge and innovation in sustainable pedagogies.
- further funding applications to support our stakeholders, activists and partners in their local projects
- Visits in schools
- Inviting protagonists of alternative pedagogies for public debates in museums, galleries etc. that share preoccupations for ecology and sustainability.
- Produce regular policy briefs and recommendations for practice, written by network members. This will provide helpful practical knowledge to stakeholders working in public programs, town halls, international organisations, and for ex in the European Commission.
- Development of a Toolkit for creative circular economies - a digital publication that gathers examples of innovative solutions - and that can be distributed for free to target communities. This accessible publication (based on images and synthetic texts) can inspire and transmit solutions which often remain un-communicated due to economic constraints.
- Using social media and regular art and culture media channels (magazines, radio, urban advertisement, gallery and museum networks, internet) with which participants have connections and publicly disseminate the main outputs of the Action, as well as calls for participation in further actions.

DIALOGUE WITH THE GENERAL PUBLIC
Corresponding to the large spectrum of action-related research questions, the expected target audience will be equally diversified. The target groups for our dissemination strategies are initially identified as follows:
- Scientific community - working on sustainability, circular economy, urban development, public spaces, artistic communication, inclusive art forms, creative pedagogies.
- Artists - especially in the fields of visual arts, performative arts and urban design
- City councils, public bodies, regional government
- Urban planners, designers and producers/managers
- European-, national- and regional-level decision-makers
- Industry and services (e.g. artistic industry, food industry, training for sustainability),
- Students (design, arts, urban planning, architecture, environmental studies, solidar economy etc.)
- Other COST Actions and COST research groups
- Thematic national and international organisations (activist environmental associations, etc.)
- General public and media.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 COHERENCE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE WORK PLAN

4.1.1 DESCRIPTION OF WORKING GROUPS, TASKS AND ACTIVITIES

Management Structure, Tasks, and WGs

This Action will be implemented over 4 years and based on the networking of a set of partners united by joint objectives and interest but also by a strong will to carry out trans- and interdisciplinary work. Partners have a strong record of collaboration in research, design, lecturing, networks activities, organisation of international workshops and publications.

- Structure:
The Action, carried out by a network of researchers, artists and innovators from various COST countries, will be coordinated by the **Management Committee** (MC), whose chair and vice-chair will be elected at the kick-off meeting. The MC is responsible for the development, organisation, and

monitoring of the whole project. It will hold bi-annual meetings for tracking progress and monitor the delivery of results and watching that events, dissemination, reports, and publications are all corresponding and expressing the aim of the project and bringing a regular advancement in the objectives of the Action. The MC will elect also the Science Communication Manager, the Grant Awarding Coordinator, and the Science Communication Coordinator. The Action MC will be responsible for the overall management of the Action's work. The tasks of the MC focus on the:

- overall scientific coordination and evaluation of work progress;
- validation the work-plan;
- establishing the Working Groups and electing their leaders;
- supervising the accomplishment of COST and the Action rules and targets, e.g. gender balance, involvement of young researchers;
- responsible for the annual budget, and defining the activities (e.g. number of STSMs, workshops, training schools, and conferences).

The MC will establish the Core Group (CG) to be composed by the MC chair, vice-chair, the working group leaders and possibly further leadership positions. The Core Group will be responsible for the scientific management work:

- monitor the quality of work, set milestones and supervise their achievement;
- provide support for the organisation of MC meetings;
- facilitate and assure the transversal exchange among the working groups.

Corresponding to the main focus of our Action, the MC Chair and MC Vice Chair will focus on including in the Action IPC members and Invited Speakers from non- European countries, including researchers and stakeholders. During the development of the project we will strive for an equal gender balance and the inclusion of participants from ITCs and NNC.

The **Core Group** will have dedicated meetings every 6 months. The maintenance of regular contacts by means of conference calls and mails will ensure effective and continuous steering for the Action. The Action's Core Group will report to the MC.

The WG leaders will be responsible for the coordination of activities within WG and report to the Action's Core Group and MC.

- Tasks:

Short Term Scientific Missions, coordinated by the Core Group and committed to interdisciplinarity, gender balance and involvement of young scientists will be organised in order to enable further research in the case areas, to visit other interesting projects in-situ and to support a continuous transfer of knowledge and intensify cooperation with other networks on related topics. Management Committee Meeting (MCM) will be held on a twice yearly basis – spring, autumn; Core Group will meet (virtually or face-to face every 6 months or when needed); Thematic Workshops - organised by a single or more WGs will be held on a half-yearly basis (or if needed and budget allows, more often) and will be held the best in conjunction with the MCM. Training Schools will be held at least once per year, hosted in different cities (and be structured along case studies) – fall.
Short term scientific mission (STSM) - on demand prior the approval by the MC.

- Activities

After each WG meeting, the WG leaders report to the Action MC on the progress of the WGs objectives, activities, and possible challenges encountered. Each WG will have a leader and a co-leader, who will be elected at the 1st Management Committee meeting of the Action.
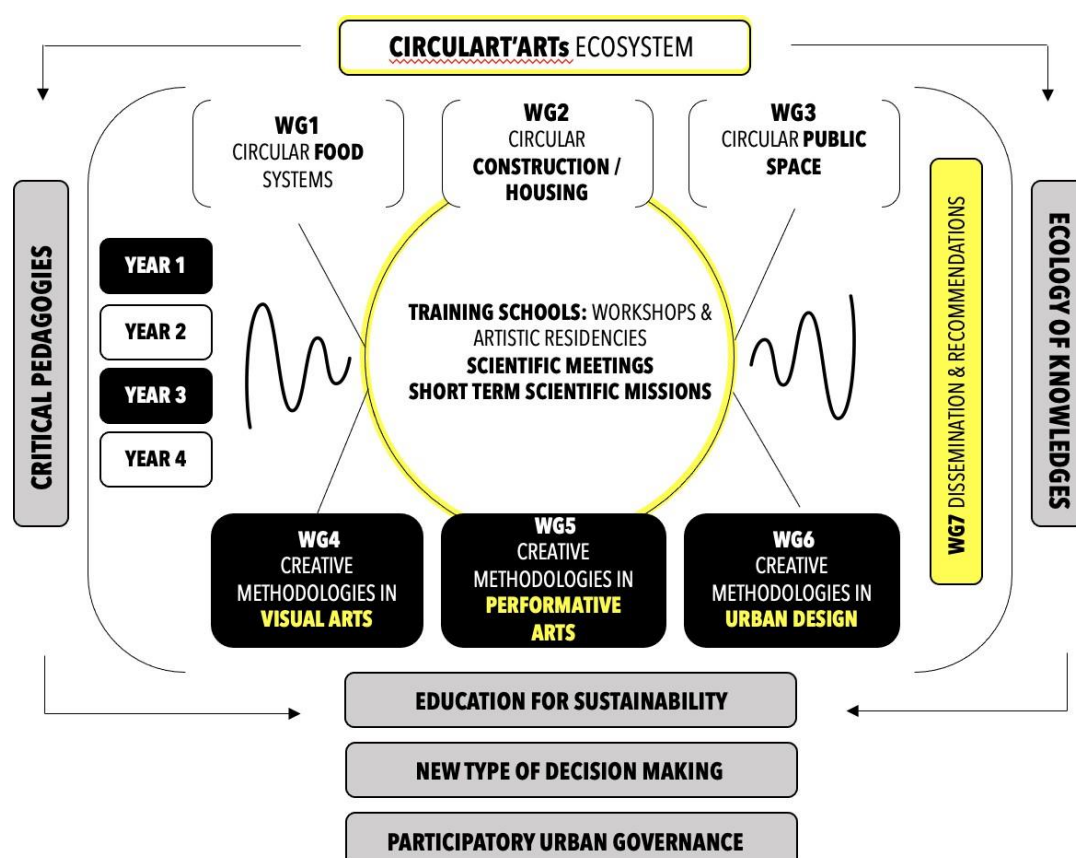The WG leader and the co-leader will be in charge of the implementation of the workplan, monitoring and reporting on WG activities, assisting the MC Chair in preparing scientific reports. Each WG will also choose a stakeholder advisor (himself a stakeholder).
- to bridge to the citizen organisations and formulate the final recommendations, further systematised after the two short-term scientific sessions. Each WG is responsible for the dissemination of their findings beyond the network, namely into the public space and the citizen networks that are concerned. The composition of the WGs will guarantee an interdisciplinary and international approach, and a combination of stakeholders and senior and Early Career Investigators. There will be mutual interactions between the WGs, theoretically, methodologically, and empirically, in particular through the Training schools, which consists of workshops and artistic residencies, but also through regular online meetings in webinars. We also propose an interdependence of the WGs, which will have at least one representative at another WG to ensure synergy between the WGs. All the produced material (documentation images of artworks, interviews with citizen and artists, articles and reports, news and events) should be posted in real time on to the Action's website. In this sense a media responsible will be appointed for each WG, which will coordinate media communication.
WGs meetings will coincide with major European conferences, events, meetings, but also art events such as biennials, art and design fairs, relevant to our themes to increase dissemination and impact of

the Action. Each WG meeting will result in short reports prepared by the WG leaders and co-leaders, with input from meeting participants and which will be circulated to the entire network. WGs will also organise a webinar at least once a year on sub-topics within their WG, which will be open to anyone. **Short-Term Scientific Missions**, at least 4 during long COST Action, will stimulate joint research and publications between the visiting scholars and receiving institutions, between ECIs, PhDs from the partner institutions as well as senior investigators and stakeholders. The STSM coordinator is responsible for the organisation and announcements of these STSMs and will collect and interpret the STSM reports from the grantees.

The **Training Schools** are organised by experts from different disciplines and involve non-academic members. They will bring together the formats artistic residency (where artists are invited to get involved in artistic research on a case-study in the location of the residency) and workshops (where academic and non-academic members discuss the artistic residency results and analyse case-studies of creative and inclusive methodologies in circular food, housing and public space).The Action will strive for the organisation of at least 2 Training Schools in ITCs. Throughout the lifetime of the Action, three **conferences** will be organised in a blended format. At least one of these conferences will be organised in an ITC, with the objective to include as many as possible non-academic stakeholders, along with members from WGs, artists which benefitted of the residencies, members and other involved partners. The conferences are aimed to bring to the forefront of public interest the Action, mediatize its aims (year 1) and achievements (in year 3 and 4). We will also invite specialists, speakers from across the world as keynotes, and participants from academic and stakeholder organisations. This will ensure a substantive dissemination of the results of this Action, within the networks of all participating members. The conference proceedings will be converted by our editorial board into publications of different typologies : academic, addressing the art audience, addressing civil organisations, institutions and policy makers.

4.1.2. DESCRIPTION OF DELIVERABLES AND TIMEFRAME

| Milestone/Deliverable	Description	Month/4 Years
M1	Meetings: Inaugural Meeting Bi-annual MC and CG Meetings (assess the progress of the Action, the WGs, the STSMs, Training Schools (Workshops/Artistic Residencies) and the dissemination activities) Bi-annual WG Meetings (report back to the MC on the progress, key accomplishments, and challenges met within the WG)	M1; M2; M7;M13;M19; M25; M31;M37; M43
M2	Training Schools (taking place in rotative locations, corresponding to the case-studies): Workshops Artistic Residencies	M6:M14;M21;M26;M33;M38;M45
M3	Short Term Scientific Missions (4)	M9-M11 M21-M23 M33-M35 M44-N46
M4	Knowledge transfer: academic publications update of website content (events, news, member profiles, and documentation of artistic events)	M1-M48
D1	Refereed articles corresponding to the the results of the WG7, in journals corresponding to the thematic focus points of the WGs	M11-M13 M23-M25 M35-M37 M45-M47
D2	Edited volume focused on 'un-learning' (the old ways of 'economics') and 'creatively and collectively re-learning' (new collaborative, sustainable and circular ways) in view of linking better knowledge and action.	M26; M47
D3	Series of online and 'live' exhibitions of the outcomes of the training schools.	M12;M24;M36;M48
D4	Realisation of a short documentary film describing the learning journey in the 4 Cost Action years, during the training schools via artistic residencies and workshops.	M5-M48
D5	Website creation as a collaborative platform that will develop into a useful database (relevant post-COST Action).	M1-M48
D6	Publishing Set of policy recommendations and recommendations for reforming Education for Sustainability (to be proposed to Peter Lang publishing).	M6-M47
D7	Practitioner handbook/toolkit. The working group for this strand will work with a group of practitioners to create a handbook for practitioners drawing out critical and creative pedagogies key themes from the research and presenting key ideas for effective practice. It will translate current cutting edge thinking about education for sustainability and social justice into a series of approaches that can be utilised by practitioners in a variety of contexts. A draft version of this handbook will be sent out to a wide range of practitioners for feedback and input.	M6-M47
D8	Young researcher and innovator journal special issue. An editorial board of young researchers, artists and innovators will be identified and connected to experienced mentors of the Editorial Board of the W.P.7. This group will develop a proposal for a special issue of a high-quality journal which can be developed and published through the course of the action. The aims of	M39-M46

this special issue will be both scientific (to advance the research aims of CIRCUL'ARTs) and also to build the capacity of the young researchers, artists and innovators involved.	

4.1.3. RISK ANALYSIS AND CONTINGENCY PLANS

Risk	Gravity	Mitigation
RISK 1. A wide range of non-academic collaborators (in the Global North and in the Global South, especially from IPC, NNC and Invited Speakers) will be invited to join in: training schools (with workshops and artistic residencies) and working groups. There is the risk of not gathering all these collaborators at the scheduled dates and in the planned locations (that correspond to the researcher's and partner institution's locations). Artists, designers and community workers have usually a very mobile agenda and can be involved in the realisation of their projects. Also visa questions can arise for extra- European collaborators, that can difficult mobility.	High	To avoid this risk, we attentively address these questions, clarifying in advance with the collaborators agenda and mobility. We will be pay attention to visa requests for each particular group/individual and schedule our meetings according to their constrains. Our mail aim is also to have a balanced composition of the working groups between institutional partners and creative collaborators. As an alternative we can also opt for exceptional online meetings.
RISK 2. Not sufficiently developing network connections and not reaching out in a sufficiently profound way to all involved partners and collaborators	Medium	Creating subgroups with the same interests within the WG; creating an appealing and non-formal communication methods to share information.
RISK 3. Main stream, euro-centric research methodologies do not express the full potential in innovation of the material delivered by the non-academic partners and especially of partners with non-Western interpretative frameworks. This will impede good collaboration and exchange and the maximum benefits	Medium	Participants will be encouraged to communicate their methodological procedures as transparently as possible and debate in open formats their perspectives and approaches. As our Action is devoted to innovative methodologies, the 'procedere' of the Action itself needs to be open for innovation.
RISK 4. Efficient systematisation of produced material. As the project scope is vast and the involved collaborators are interdisciplinary, the risk is to lose overview of the produced solutions/knowledge/ working tools and to not corroborate efficiently information from all fields.	High	Working with a web platform as repository of information, in which all the participating partners have their own working space and systematise the produced material in real time. The proceeding of the working groups will also be periodically deposited on the platform, in this way helping to corroborate information. In general, a good organisation and clarification (from the outset of the project) of the role of each participating institution must guarantee the necessary equity for the project as a whole.
RISK 5.When working with artistic material copyright issues are very complex, both in what concerns visual and cognitive content	Medium	Copyright questions should be very carefully considered in the disseminating of results, always considering authorship attribution. All required decisions will be

		taken collectively, in accordance with EU laws and best practices.
RISK 6. Insufficient attendance of workshops and meetings	Low	Organising the WGs in thematic sub-groups, making the organisation more flexible; Defining clearly tasks and commitments of each partner in the work plan.
RISK 7. Not reaching potential collaborators for the STSMs, outside of the European context	Low	Announce vacancies for STSMs widely, through the networks of Action members, providing an overview of all the institutions and their key expertise available for STSMs.

4.1.4 GANTT DIAGRAM

- Publications and Outputs
- Events
- Short Term Scientific Missions
- → Ongoing process
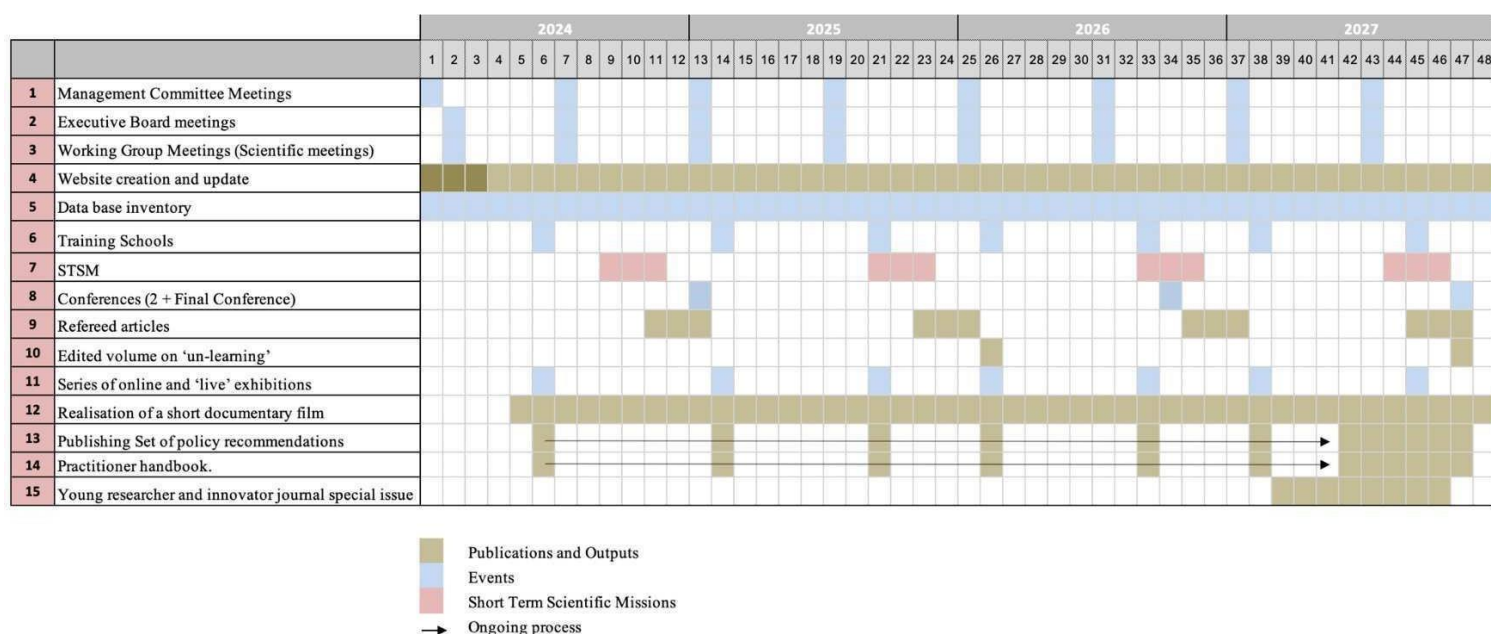
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