



ViSuAI

Value in Social Art

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The Action

- **Value in Social Art (VISuAI)** is an interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral collaborative knowledge-transfer and research initiative that enables researchers and practitioners from across academia and the cultural sector to identify and articulate forms of social benefit that frequently elude measuring within the current evaluation methods of Social Art Practice. By Social Art Practice (SAP) *we are referring to artist, designer and urbanist-led projects whose practice take place in the public domain and addresses social issues through collective action*. SAP plays an important role in democratic societies as it reveals and addresses issues that may not come under usual political or municipal attention and acts as an agent for democratic values enabling a community of citizens to come together to exchange opinions and ideas, which have the potential to generate longer-term social change. This is particularly vital in a European political climate where EU values are constantly contested by the rise of nationalist populism.



Roles in European society and beyond

- The publishing of critical narratives that regenerate democratic discussion
- Empowering communities through local interventions
- The realisation of social change



Use examples 'in text' to communicate your project



In 1994, **WochenKlausur**, addressed a social issue that was being hotly debated in the political arena at the time: the provision of relief organizations for drug abusers. They set themselves a concrete goal to generate support and funding to create a shelter where female sex workers with addiction problems could find refuge during the day. The method WochenKlausur employed to secure the financial, political and media support for the project was to bring together participants from all of Switzerland's political parties, the mayor of Zurich, the chief of police, representatives from various drug relief organizations and sex workers, and send them out in small groups on three-hour long boat trips around Lake Zurich.



Park Fiction (1994-2017) is a SAP that took the form of a bottom-up urban planning application to establish a public park in a site that had been rezoned for high-rise office buildings. The Park Fiction committee achieved their goal by acting as though the park had already been officially sanctioned and proceeding to host public events, such as open-air film screenings, concerts, raves, exhibitions and talks. The combined effect of these happenings and the media attention they generated, transformed what was a fictional (or illegal) park into a social reality, thereby making it difficult for the city council to refuse to officially endorse its existence. In 2005 Hamburg city council finally passed the committee's unorthodox planning application and Park Fiction became a reality.



Assembling your consortium

- Determine who the experts in the field are
- We found it beneficial to work with partners we had previously engaged with, though sometimes it is necessary to seek out partners in a different disciplinary field and to convince them of their suitability to the project
- Ask each academic partner to bring in a non-academic partner (in their city) if possible
- Organise face-to-face (Skype) meetings with all potential partners, meet in person if possible.
- While the suitability of partners is paramount to the integrity of the action, aim for an EU geographic spread



VISuAI Consortium: 21 Members

7 Academic in fields of:

Art, Design, Architecture, Visual Culture, Curatorial Studies,
Cultural Policy, Education, Architecture, Urban Studies,
Economics, Sociology, Anthropology

14 Non-Academic comprised of: 9 museums and galleries; 3
urban agencies, 1 creative media agency and 1 borough council

UK: 2 Academic / 5 Non-Academic

IE: 2 Academic / 2 Non-Academic

NL: 1 Academic / 2 Non-Academic

RO: 1 Academic / 1 Non-Academic

CY: 1 Academic / 2 Non-Academic

AU: 2 Non-Academic



VISuAI Consortium: 21 Members

Academic: THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART (UK); THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHAMPTON (UK); NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN (IE); UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN (IE); UNIVERSITEIT VAN AMSTERDAM (NL); UNIVERSITATEA BABES BOLYAI (RO); UNIVERSITY OF CYPRUS (CY)

Non- Academic: TATE (UK); The Showroom Gallery (UK); MKGallery (UK); MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL (UK); Threshold Studios (UK); IRISH MUSEUM OF MODERN ART (IE); Project Arts Centre (IE); STEDELIJK VAN ABBEMUSEUM (NL); Foundation Casco (NL); Kunst Haus Wien (AU); Transparadiso (AU); Association for Historical Dialogue and Research (CY); AA & U for Architecture, Art and Urbanism (CY); Federatia Fabrica de Pensule (RO);



Visibility of Non-Academic Partners throughout the application

- Make sure the function and synergy of non-academic partners is clear and understandable, in A&H this can be complex as it is not based on technical exchange but rather experience, knowledge and expertise. For **VISuAI** access to live projects and publics was very important
- Make clear how you have worked together in the past, or shared conference and symposium platforms
- The inclusion of important and significant partners make the action more convincing - i.e. TATE, UK IMMA, IE



Arts and Humanities (A&H) Actions

- **PROS:**
- Access to a great network of public cultural institutions
- Access to audiences and a wide range of publics
- Generally more open to cross-disciplinarity
- MSCA offers a more dynamic and pragmatic project structure for A&H in the public domain

- **CONS:**
- The research impacts of A&H actions tend to unfold over a longer-term, and are therefore not as explicit as the hard sciences
- A&H actions tend not to be centered around technical innovation and there aren't always commercialisable results, which makes it more difficult to understand the benefits from the evaluators point of view.



Arts and Humanities (A&H) Actions

- **CONS cont.:**
- A&H academics are more used to devising an approach than a solution, creating a counter-argument and contesting accepted norms, so the bid writing and the research can get intertwined
- A&H traditionally based on lone scholarship, so finding partners who want to work collaboratively can be more difficult
- A&H partners in the cultural sector are funded by public purse and tend to be small to medium-scale organisations and may only have 2 full-time employees



Writing the Abstract

- Be clearly and concisely written avoiding jargon
- Articulate a problem AND offer the solution
- Why is this action necessary both in terms of research and training?
- How do you know this? Evidence!
- Make links to EU Policies on economy, market, employability of fellows
- Emphasize the skills gap



Work Packages

- Clearly define your WPs
- To make the action more cohesive there should be direct correspondence between objectives and WPs; one for each
- Equal balance of work load per WP, equal split of researchers
- Demonstrate clear interaction between the researchers
- Important which beneficiaries are leading the work packages



Work Packages

Work Package No	Work Package Title	Activity Type (e.g. Research, Training, Management, Communication, Dissemination...)	Number of person-months involved	Beneficiary leading	Start Month	End month
1	Management	Project Management	24	RCA	1	48
2	Public Realm	Research	56	UCY	2	40
3	Public Gallery	Research	48	UvA	2	40
4	Cultural Policy Frameworks	Research	18	UoN	3	40
5	Dissemination, Communication and Outreach	Dissemination and Communication	30	NCAD	1	48



VISuAI Network-wide Training

- **#1 – Generating a Critical Framework for the Discussion of Social Art Practice.** When: M6 Duration: 3 days Location: London Host: RCA
- **#2 – The Sociology of Social Art Practice.** When: M12 Duration: 3 days Location: Cluj Napoca Host: UBB
- **#3 – Social Art Practice and Economic Value** When: M18 Duration: 3 days Location: Dublin Host: UCD School of Economics
- **#4 – Social Art Practice and Cultural Policy.** When: M18 Duration: 5 days Location: Amsterdam Host: UvA

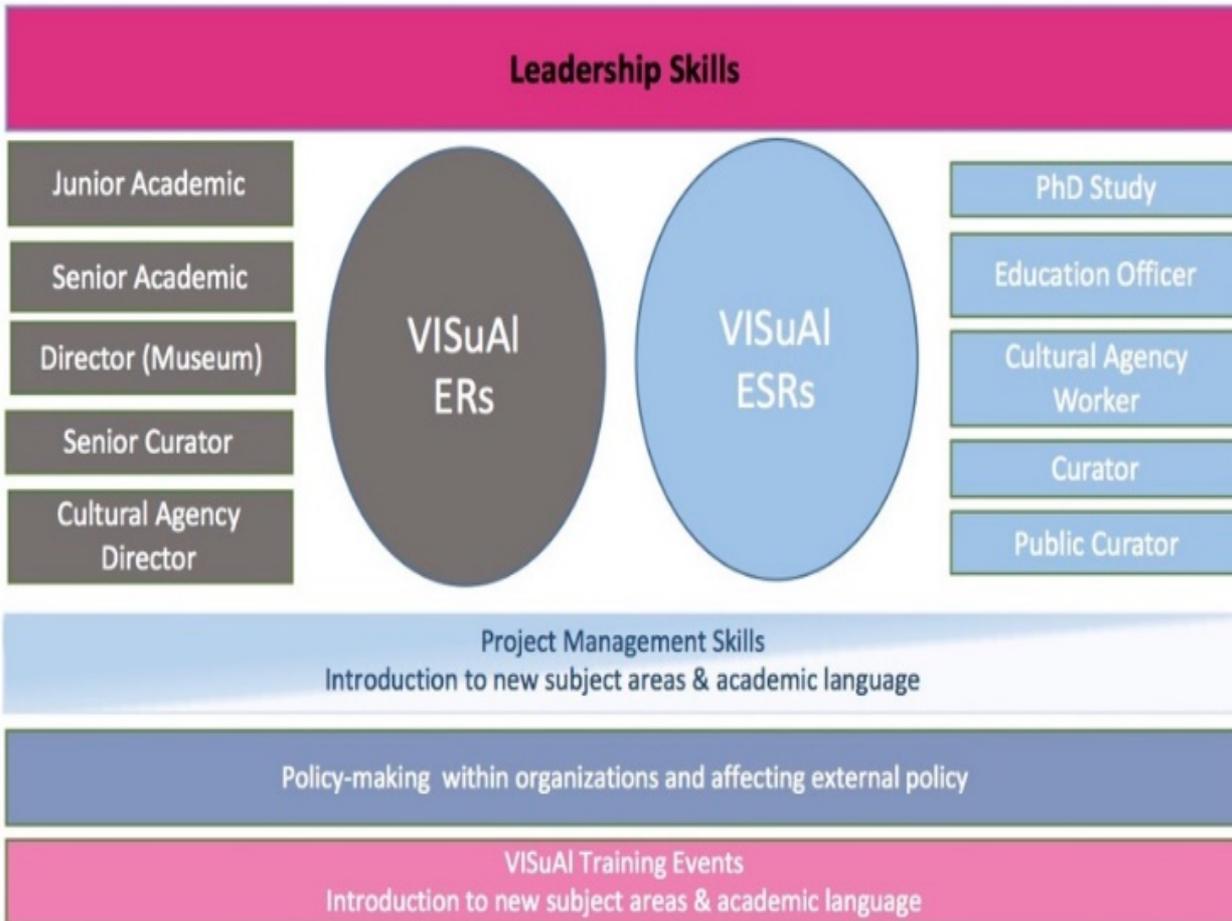


Impact

- Should set out the wider view of why the research and training should be funded; why and to whom it might be important beyond the research community: the public, society as a whole, the environment, the economic impact, etc.
- Respond to relevant EU policies
- Enhance the career perspectives and employability of ESRs
- How the action can be sustainable in the longer-term (after the action)

VISuAI Potential Future & Career Potential

- Career development attributes achieved
- Project management
 - Leadership skills
 - Advanced research skills & application
 - Applying new knowledge and making it count
 - Delivering cross-discipline training
 - Setting of policy
 - Collective working at leadership level demonstrated
 - Cognizant with challenges of sector & addressing these in scientific manner



- Career development attributes achieved
- Project management
 - Leadership skills
 - Research skills developed through case-study, literature reviews & ethnography
 - Discovering new knowledge
 - Training – cross discipline
 - Understanding and realization of policy
 - First-hand experience of applying a new evaluative methodology

ER's Potential Career prospects developed by VISuAI
 Promoted up the organization Senior Lecturer / Professor
 Potential to establish new cultural institutions
 Leading the field with major innovative shifts

ESR's Potential Career prospects developed by VISuAI
 Promoted up the organization – potential to undertake management role
 Potential to undertake leadership roles
 Interest & offers from other organizations (VISuAI networks)
 Potential to achieve academic positions increased

Dissemination v Communication





VISuAI Dissemination Strategy

- **(1) Training Events** move between closed sessions and those open to researchers, artists and professionals outside the consortium.
- **(2) The International Conference (DE1)** will serve to disseminate and ratify research papers from the action
- **(3) An Edited Academic Anthology.** Emanating from the International Conference
- **(4) Best Practice Reports:** will emanate from the 3 Research WPs. Each of the Best Practice Reports will be targeted towards its relevant stakeholder groups, using appropriate language,
- **(5) Academic Distribution Channels:** the consortium will employ distribution channels particular to their sectors, including delivering papers at related international conferences and/or staging knowledge-exchange events to coincide with them



VISuAI Communication Strategy

- **(1) Ongoing communication between ERs and ESRs / academic partners/ non-academic partners**
- **(2) Open Training-Events:** An afternoon in each of the network-wide training events will be set aside for communication activities open to other researchers, community leaders, voluntary organisations and key local government departments and members of the public.
- **(5) SPACES Communication Event:** will take the form of 3 Town Hall events in urban spaces in the cities of Nicosia (CY), Vienna (AUS), Utrecht (NL). exchanged and debated.
- **(6) Fact Sheet & Recommendations:** Emanating out of the 3 Best Practice Reports (WPS2-4), the Fact Sheet & Recommendations will also function as standalone easily accessible, best-practice recommendations



Gender aspects

- The PC (Jordan) is a female academic. Two women researchers, Jordan (RCA) and Mahony (NCAD), have led the project. Half of the scientists-in-charge in the academic beneficiaries are women. Of the non-academic partners 10 of the scientists-in-charge are women and 4 are men.



Writing the bid

- Who writes the bid
- How long it takes
- Reality of collaborating with the consortium
- EU not the same urgency as the UK in terms of funding demands



Dos

- Have a overview of the budget from the outset
- Factor in the big costs, such as the training events and whether ERs and ESRs will to supported to attend them all or just some
- If you are splitting up the person months into 1 or 2 week blocks, be aware of the additional travel and accommodation costs
- Make use of university accommodation in Summer semester and see if cultural institutions have accommodation; consider swapping private accommodation
- Give the partners sufficient time to get PICS if they don't have them
- Give yourself a full day to upload, have all the details of the consortium to hand, i.e. PICS, job titles, emails



Don'ts

- Assume the evaluators will understand disciplinary-specific jargon
- Don't be overly ambitious when it comes to calculating the person-months, consult with partners as to how long they can feasibly undertake secondments for