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i. Reading Guide

This document is a first draft at a reimagining of what Arts Collaboratory (AC) could be. The key point of this document is to track down the principles by which we could work together and to begin a structure of how this might practically happen. This is an exploratory working document, not a manifesto, and by its nature will need to be continuously evolving. It helps to read this document more than one time to get a clearer sense of the content.

The structure of the document begins with principles and paradigms in section A, B and C (these focus on what we are trying to achieve) and then continues with the ways in which these paradigms and principles could be manifested practically in sections D, E, F and G (how we are going to achieve).

These are the sections:

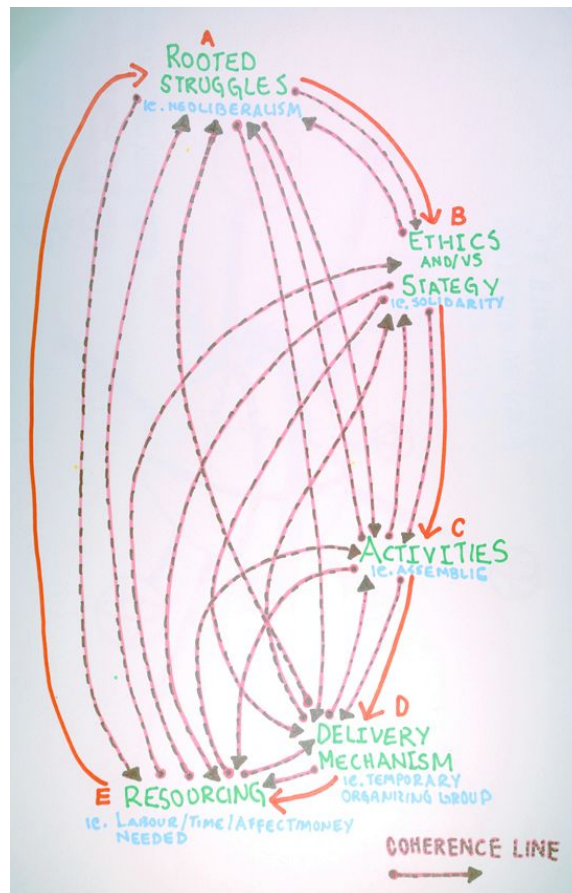
- A. **Introduction:** gives the background to how we have arrived at this point. In so doing it links how each institution, and the way that we work locally and in AC, has lead to the ideas captured in this document;
- B. **Vision:** tracks some key points of what AC foresees for a future. This frames why the future of AC is important and what it seeks to do in the bigger picture;
- C. **Ethical Principles:** discusses some main shared principles among us and the ethics we have in common. What it also does is seek some specific principles (potentially more akin to some AC organisations than others) that will be pivotal to the future of AC and new ways of thinking about what AC could be; this include the budget that deals with the question of funds, how these are to be coordinated and how we are to be accountable to ourselves and each other in spending them
- D. **Commonwealth's:** Discusses some specific tools that can achieve the principles and vision expressed in the previous sections. Specifically this section discusses our resources and how we can support and grow them;
- E. **Activities:** The Activities section takes some of our existing AC activities: tents, assemblies, institutional residencies, website and collaborative projects- and remoulds them into four key activity areas which we feel collectively better represent AC and most importantly, are better integrated into the existing work of each institution;
- F. **Self-Determination and Shared-Governance:** is a new way of thinking about governance and the possibilities of how AC could function in the framework of self-organisation;

There are some key things that must be taken into account while reading:

- **Language:** there was an agreement that conventional 'funding language' is not adequate for speaking about what AC is to become. Therefore this document includes the use of some proposed new words that we feel better capture what AC is doing. These words

attempt to move away from the dynamics of applications/proposals, reports and deadlines but also attempts to rethink ideas of value, of resources and of hierarchy;

- **Style:** the document is written in a theoretical/poetic/political style to attempt to define the wider spirit in which we will work. It is not an instructive document but a consideration and reflection. That said, it also has some more practical areas that refer to needs and urgencies;
- While B, C and D are relatively well developed they are of course still very much **open to change** and discussion. E, F and G are proposed structures for which the details need to be **developed collectively**. We have suggested that this may happen at the next Assembly;
- A **Common Language / Index of Terms** follows to give descriptions of the language and the intention behind the use of some of the words. This index will also need to be collectively developed and finalised;
- **Responses** by AC partners are to be made via email to your team coordinator who will collate all feedback from your team and send to Binna, who, with a smaller team of AC members will synthesise the ideas.
- **Cascade of coherence.** Works for checking correspondence and coherence between activities, struggles, ethics, budget/labor and delivery mechanisms.



- **Philosophical reading guide:**

*What happens if you know you don't know where this is going? And you know that it came into being because of a whole set of contingencies. Then, how do you evaluate this experience? And from that point of view, **the practices of bricolage are very important because they allow you to hang on to that temporality of transition**, that doesn't say, "I have an authority because I am the contemporary." And it doesn't say, "I have an authority because I am only a stepping stone towards this transformation, I am incomplete process of what is going to be transformed." It says, "In my fragility, in my incompleteness, I also represent the ground on which people's feet will have to uncertainly balance. And from which they will observe the world, and from which they will have to create, and from which they will have to write.*

[..]

*Bricolage is rather an "incubation". Whenever you think you are at a turning point at history, people always keep using the word "new" - just like now, everything to do with globalization is new: new economies, new telecommunication, new materials. **Whenever you hear this word "new" you have to understand that you stand in a very fragile relation of the past to the present, and that is incubation.** It is not as if you stand at the end of something or in the middle of a brave new world. It is a middleness of a different kind. It is, in a way, starting from thinking you are always in the middle of something - and that is the incubation-al and the spirit of time, that is part of the movement of bricolage."*

- Homi K. Bhabha (2006)

ii. Common Language / Index of Terms

- **Affinity**
Refers to the action, intuition and sensation of searching to build yourself and to build with the other. We're talking of desires, dreams, your present situation, economical, social or political issues and all that you think is worth fighting for. This action will lead an engagement with the other that at the other end will find an ally. But beware of the differences you might leave out, these might come in handy later on.
- **Banga Meetings**
These are proposed to be Nomadic (or Know-madic for knowledge) meetings that merge the previous tent and institutional residencies strategies but have their main purpose in care for each organisation and knowledge sharing *specific* to the support of each organisation and/or its programme(s). **See E2** for further discussion.
- **Commonwealths**
Commonwealths refer to the wealth we have collectively through sharing resources. This idea works against the neo-liberal ideal of the wealth of the individual and rather focuses on the range of resources – time, knowledge, care – that we have collectively. In terms of activity common wealth is translated into the common pot. **See section D** for further discussion.
- **Care**, see self-care
- **Decentralisation**
- **Resource**
Resources are assets and capacities that enable things to be done. Importantly in AC, resources are not just financial but are also human, knowledge, time and space resources. Within the AC framework, this wider understanding of resources and the sharing of these resources, contributes to our common wealth.
- **Resource Map**
The Resource Map is a document that tracks each organisation's resources and indicates where the lacks occurs. The Resource Map has a number of functions including; assisting us to know more about each organisation, serving as a way of sharing and supporting each other but also as a way of giving accountability and feedback to each other. **See D2** for further discussion.
- **Self-Care**
Care, and care of the self and each other is an important political objective for the members of AC. Self-care means taking care of AC and the 'health' of each organisation and its people. Self-care is different to being self-serving; it is a generative, collective and supportive action in a time when we are pushed to disregard our own 'health' for the purposes of production and outputs.
- **Self-Limitation**
In order for decentralisation, mutualism and trust to function in AC, organisations and individuals would have to limit themselves to only what's best for all

Decentralisation refers primarily to the proposed dispersing of power and responsibility to all organisations in AC. In so doing the work is shared and the decisions are non-hierarchical.

- **Degrowth**

Degrowth is the principle of acting against the influence of the world that says bigger is better. In our work, and in conventional society, we are encouraged to always have bigger number, more outputs, more programmes – degrowth acts against this. Degrowth is the principle that we focus on quality and not quantity.

- **Dissensus Management**

The idea behind dissensus management is the understanding that we will disagree, that there is productive potential in our disagreement, and that we can manage this to have good outcomes.

- **Ecosystem**

The ecosystem is the system of connections, relationships and linkages between all the organisations that make up Arts Collaboratory. The use of the word ecosystem suggests that like in nature, our relations are about life cycles, germination and maturation.

- **Ethics**

Ethics are the principles that govern our approach to our work. Why and how we do what we do. **See Section C** for further discussion

- **Failures**, validating (≠ celebrating failures)

Failures are an important part of learning. Because Arts Collaboratory is about unlearning/learning and study, failures must be taken into account.

involved. This means that each should take only what one needs and contribute as they can. This will not be controlled or enforced by the group but can only be managed by the self.

- **Self-Organisation**

Self-Organisation is the decentralised coordination of our activities as AC by and for the organisations that make up AC. Self-organisation as a term can also be replaced with shared-organisation or mutual organisation. Importantly, AC self-organisation is proposed to be non-hierarchical.

- **Self-Sustainability**

This serves as the cornerstone of AC. In AC, sustainability does not only refer to financial sustainability in the sense of always having enough funds but also refers to rethinking what it means to sustain the intentions of the work we do. Self-sustainability refers to relying on internal mechanisms and approaches for sustainability rather than external, conventional ideas of value, resources and success. This includes care and interdependence of our sustenance, not only in funds but in other resources as well. **See B2** for further discussion.

- **Shared Management / Governance**

Similar to self-organisation, but referring directly to the shared responsibility of governance and the structure by which we will share the different roles and responsibilities.

- **Solidarity**

To be a human is in question at all times. Being a human right now struggles with the fragmentation capitalism carries on. Solidarity is to be aware of this and to take a stand upon it. Solidarity is of the other, because the other is also yourself.

Importantly, because AC does not subscribe to conventional neoliberal society – we do not need to ‘hide’ our failures in order to ‘get more money’ but rather can collectively share and learn.

- **Hospitality**

The use of the term hospitality in AC refers to a traditional hospitality of ‘anyone can find a home at AC’. This is different to how hospitality is often referred, in relation to tourism, wealth and inequality.

- **Lifeline Plan**

Within AC, and due to the fact that AC should not subscribe to more conventional societal pressures, we should subscribe to lifelines rather than deadlines. This means that ‘milestones’, ‘outputs’, ‘activities’ and ‘reports’ within more conventional funding language change to become focused on the life, strengthening and care of an organisation and its work.

- **Micropolitics**

Refers to the smaller scale relationships among people and their relation with the world. They are constructed upon the affective and often inarticulate parts of everyday life such as sensations, intuitions, beliefs, feelings and emotions.

- **Mutualism**

Mutualism is the way two organisms of different species exist in a relationship in which each individual benefits from the activity of the other. Similar interactions within a species are known as co-operation. Mutualistic relationships build new ways of coexistence. Mutualism can be contrasted with interspecific competition, in which each species experiences reduced fitness, and exploitation, or parasitism, in which one

Solidarity is knowing that you are walking along with everyone else.

- **Study**

A kind of practice of spending time with each other, with material, and with our work in unlearning / learning and looking to better understand what we do and our worlds. Study is the intention to reflect on our work. As opposed to the convention of reporting in funding, study suggests that we would contemplate and give thought to our practice and the practice of others. Importantly, study does not need to produce a ‘result’, ‘thing’ or a ‘credit’; it is crucially the sharing with others in itself that constitutes study. **See B3** for further discussion. Study can be broken down into:

- **Active study:** Study, which is specifically geared at a specific thematic;
- **Collective study:** Study by definition is always collective, done with others and shared with others;
- **Self study:** Self-study is study of the self. Like self-care, self-study is about studying the AC network and the work we do as the ‘self’. It is not self-indulgent but rather a self-reflexive, self-critical process;
- **Study Buddy:**
The Study Buddy is a second person (built out of the original interview chain we did) who directly supports you with study within AC in order to ensure connection, feedback and support.

- **Sustainability**, see self-sustainability

- **Time Strike**

species benefits at the expense of the other. AC proposes to have mutualistic relations between all the partner organizations.

- **Neo-liberalism**

A form of political thought that favours free-market capitalism. Also the dominant state of political thought throughout the world. **See B1** for more detail.

- **Organisation**, see self-organisation

- **Paradigm Shift**

A paradigm shift is a change in the basic assumptions, or paradigms, within the ruling form of thought. To enact a paradigm shift means to completely change the basic premise of how something is thought about. **See B1** for further discussion.

- **Post-colonial**

In principle post-colonial means after colonial rule (or after independence). But it also refers to a continued state of control by the powerful and by capital (often referred to as neo-colonialism). Importantly, this continued state of control can be felt and understood throughout the world and not only in previously colonised spaces.

- **Pot**

The pot is a multi-use term that refers to a shared locus of resources. The idea behind the pot is that all contribute to the pot and all can take from the pot according to pre-determined guidelines. **See section D** for an example

- **Radical Imagination**

Radical Imagination, like the paradigm shift, is a complete rethinking of things that are otherwise unthought of. This is important for developing AC and our

Time Strike is not only a slogan but also a mechanism proposed for AC to support our power to change our relationship to time. In other words, it's a call for strike against the current use of time - one deadline after another, being busy, feeling anxious and overwhelmed which harms our well-being and interpersonal relations. We should therefore create different time, real time, time for activities that make us feel alive.

- **Tooling**

Tooling refers to various forms and ways of sharing our un/learning process with others within AC as well as outside of AC. Whilst study in a form of being together and conversation is the core, on-going activity of AC, it is important to share what we are studying outside of the group. This way, tooling replaces reporting and demonstrational practice (superficial publicity).

- **Translocal**

Translocal refers to localised embeddedness with deep connections to the wider world. AC is translocal because each organisation has a commitment and connection to its own place, but through AC is connected and working with a wider geography of people, ideas and practices.

- **Entangled vs. horizontal/linear**

Entanglement is the visual language of our connections, relationships and thought processes. Entanglement suggests we should not attempt to develop our ideas, or simplify our relationships into linear or horizontal ways of thinking but rather respect the complexity.

- **Unlearning / Learning**

own work, which seeks social change and therefore seeks to imagine a different world. **See B4** for further discussion.

Unlearning is the act of changing paradigms. It entails rethinking the things we have learned within conventional and restrictive learning environments. To unlearn is to question preconceived, and assumed 'truths'. In so doing we (re-)learn alternatives and better understand our own assumptions. This is important for developing AC and our own work, which seeks social change and therefore seeks to imagine a different world.

- **Wealth**, see commonwealths

iii. Background & Struggles

Our current world faces the anthropocene with an urgent need of change. Centuries of death, exploitation, addiction and violence have affected our local contexts directly. Arts Collaboratory share common dreams of change in the embedded notions of value that neoliberalism and postcolonial times impose, as well as shifting paradigms in the micropolitics of our relationships with others, with our communities, ourselves, and most importantly, our living, breathing environment.

'Goodbye, capital, time for you to go, we are going to create other ways of living, other ways of relating to one another, both among humans and between humans and other forms of life, ways of living that are not determined by money and the pursuit of profit, but by our own collective decisions.'

- John Holloway

'It ends with love, exchange, fellowship. It ends as it begins, in motion, in between various modes of being and belonging and on the way to new economies of giving, taking, being with and for...'

-Jack Halberstam

A. Introduction

Arts Collaboratory (AC) is a translocal ecosystem consisting of 25 diverse organisations around the world focused on art practices, processes of social change, and working with broader communities beyond the field of art.

As an ecosystem, AC is a process of collective study and active research on the field of self-sustainability, self-determination and interdependence through radical imagination. It functions as a meeting point where these organisations can share knowledge, collaborate on projects, and build emotional and financial support together. AC is a place for building self-care in a network to work in common across territories in order to form a community of solidarity based on the idea of mutualism. With a constant practice to keep the imagination, and critical thoughts, by being self organized and with the power (control) to write of our own history.

AC organisations in the ecosystem:

32° East | Ugandan Arts Trust (Kampala), Al-Ma'mal Foundation for Contemporary Art (Jerusalem), Art Group 705 (Bishkek), Ashkal Alwan (Beirut), Casa Tres Patios (Medellín), DOEN Foundation (Amsterdam), Centre Soleil d'Afrique (Bamako), Cooperativa Cráter Invertido (Mexico City), Darb 1718 Contemporary Art and Culture Center (Cairo), Casco – Office for Art, Design and Theory (Utrecht), Doual'art (Douala), Kër Thiossane (Dakar), Kiosko Galería (Santa Cruz de la Sierra), KUNCI Cultural Studies Center (Yogyakarta), lugar a dudas (Cali), Más Arte Más Acción (Choco), Nubuke Foundation (Accra), Hivos (The Hague), Platohedro (Medellín), Picha Art Center (Lubumbashi), Raw Material Company (Dakar), Riwaq (Ramallah), ruangrupa (Jakarta), TEOR/ética (San José), Theerta (Colombo), Visual Arts Network of South Africa (VANSA) (Johannesburg).

This document is a result of a collective working process amongst the previously mentioned organisation. The information herein was developed and gathered from Assemblies in Indonesia and Senegal, and further developed by a temporary working group who gathered in Utrecht. The timeline and process is summarized below:

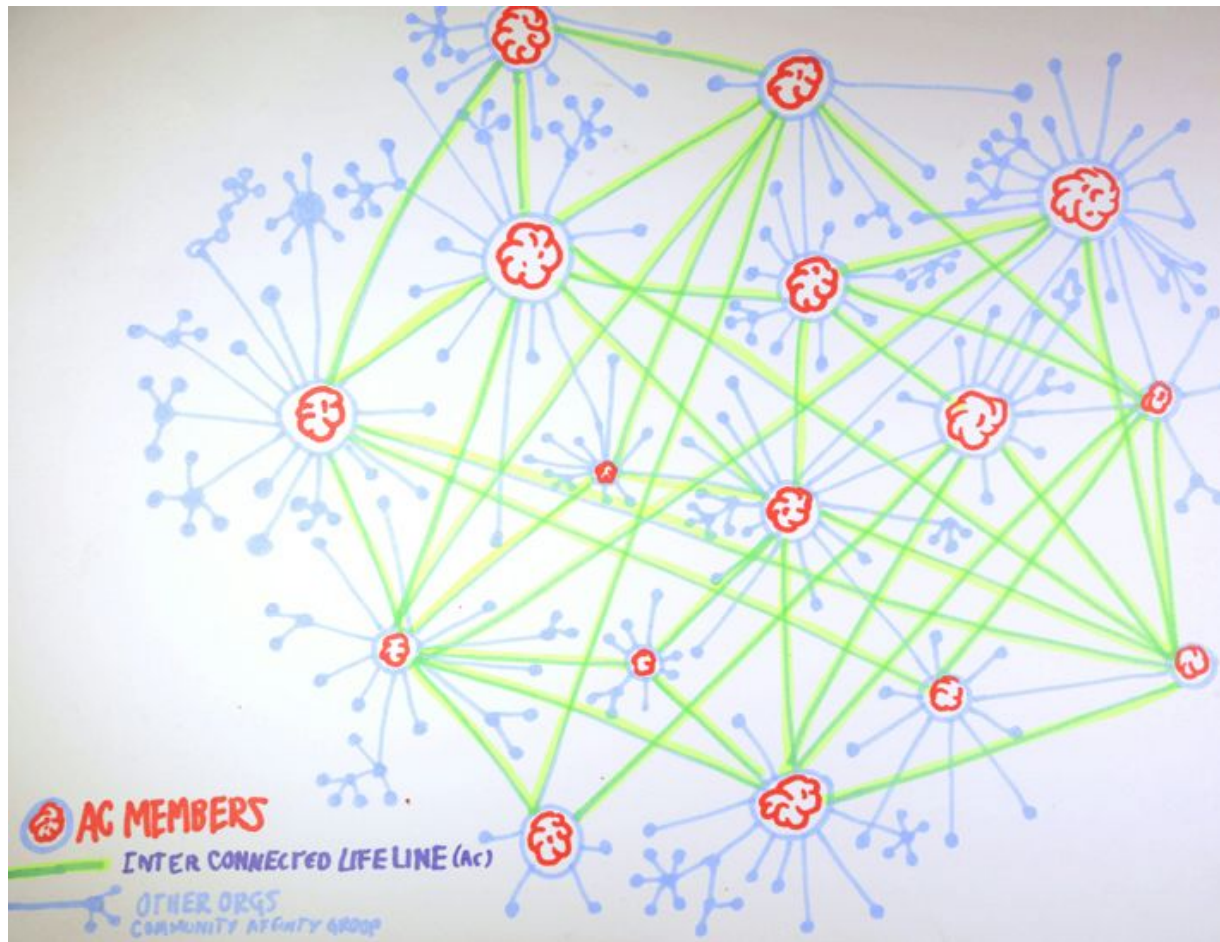
- **Colombia, 2011:** This meeting was the concluding meeting in the first phase of Arts Collaboratory (2007-2012) and the first meeting where a future was imagined where more emphasis on collaboration and collectivity was imagined. The first 7 years of AC had seen a lot of networking and exchange, but had not built a strong collective identity. The Colombia meeting showed however after these 7 years that there was friendship and a shared identity and a wish to move on collectively. The meeting was an important base for the second phase of AC (2013-2015) and the decision to work towards a collectively owned platform. Around 50% of the organisations present in Colombia moved on to the next phase;

- **Indonesia, May 2014:** The first general meeting: learning from and with practices in Indonesian art scene and affinity building, developing the idea of collaboration;
- **Senegal, April 2015:** the second general meeting: learning from and with practices in Senegal art scene and having a deeper knowledge on each member, elaborating on collaborative projects, building future plans (working models) in light of sharing passions over Arts Collaboratory and the current obstructions for the passions;
- **Utrecht, June 2015:** The workshop group: workshopping and further developing the future plan that centers around the 'ethical principles'.

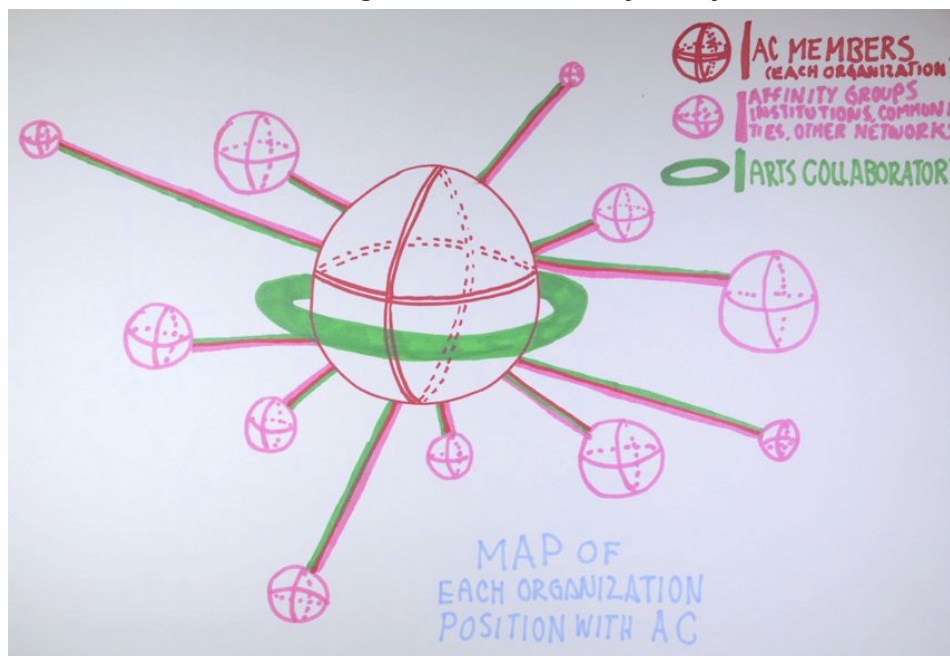
This document is designed to be an open document that proposes a model for translocal collaboration among socially engaged art organisations. In this way, the plan outlined here should not work as a definitive proposal, but as a structure in the making. It should work as a place where collective knowledge is formed and supports the commons, not as another regulation or constraint. This reflects the core of the plan: to imagine and practice sustainability, as well as processes and value in unlearning, studying, sharing and tooling together, as opposed to individual and competitive production and possession.

This process requires a constant subversion of the existing language we use and the creation of new languages and/or concepts. If anything, it is not for immediate understanding but, should be considered as an open invitation for collective study, collective invention, and rewriting.

This document provides an overview of Arts Collaboratory future plan as collectively developed by the above organisations.



Reference image: Arts Collaboratory Ecosystem



Reference image: position of each organisation with AC.

B.Vision

Arts Collaboratory is an organisation that we build and are a part of, that doesn't mean that AC limits or constricts our autonomy as organisations and our work with other networks or communities. The aim of the network is to create an ecosystem to support different organisations to coexist and sustain. The ecosystem is thus a compendium of various networks, resources, and organisations, like a living organism.

Arts Collaboratory envisions the ecosystem comprised of 25 art organisations to act as one translocal organisation. This does not mean a mere collectivisation in place of individual organisations. In contrast, the strength of Arts Collaboratory lies in each individual organisation embedded in their specific local context and working accordingly, while connected trans-nationally. Our difference and diversity are key elements for this ecosystem in this regard, as well as the fact that we are an 'unnatural network' in a sense that we did not gather by affinity or common interest by our own initiative. We are connected through common desires and struggles which need a translocal network. Four strong desires are recognized in forming our vision:

1. The paradigm shift in the post-colonial and neo-liberal contexts;
2. Our sustainability as the highest value for the network-ecosystem;
3. Collective study instead of demonstration and administration;
4. Radical imagination and pragmatism through thoughtful organisation.

B1. Paradigm Shift in the Post-Colonial and Neo-Liberal Context

Isn't this network and collaboration among the organisations just a burden, adding to the workload and perpetuating the precarity of the contemporary working and living condition that each organisations are coping with? If there's a strong common desire for this translocal encounter and mutual unlearning/learning, what obstructs this desire to be further fulfilled and what direction for our future does this desire express?

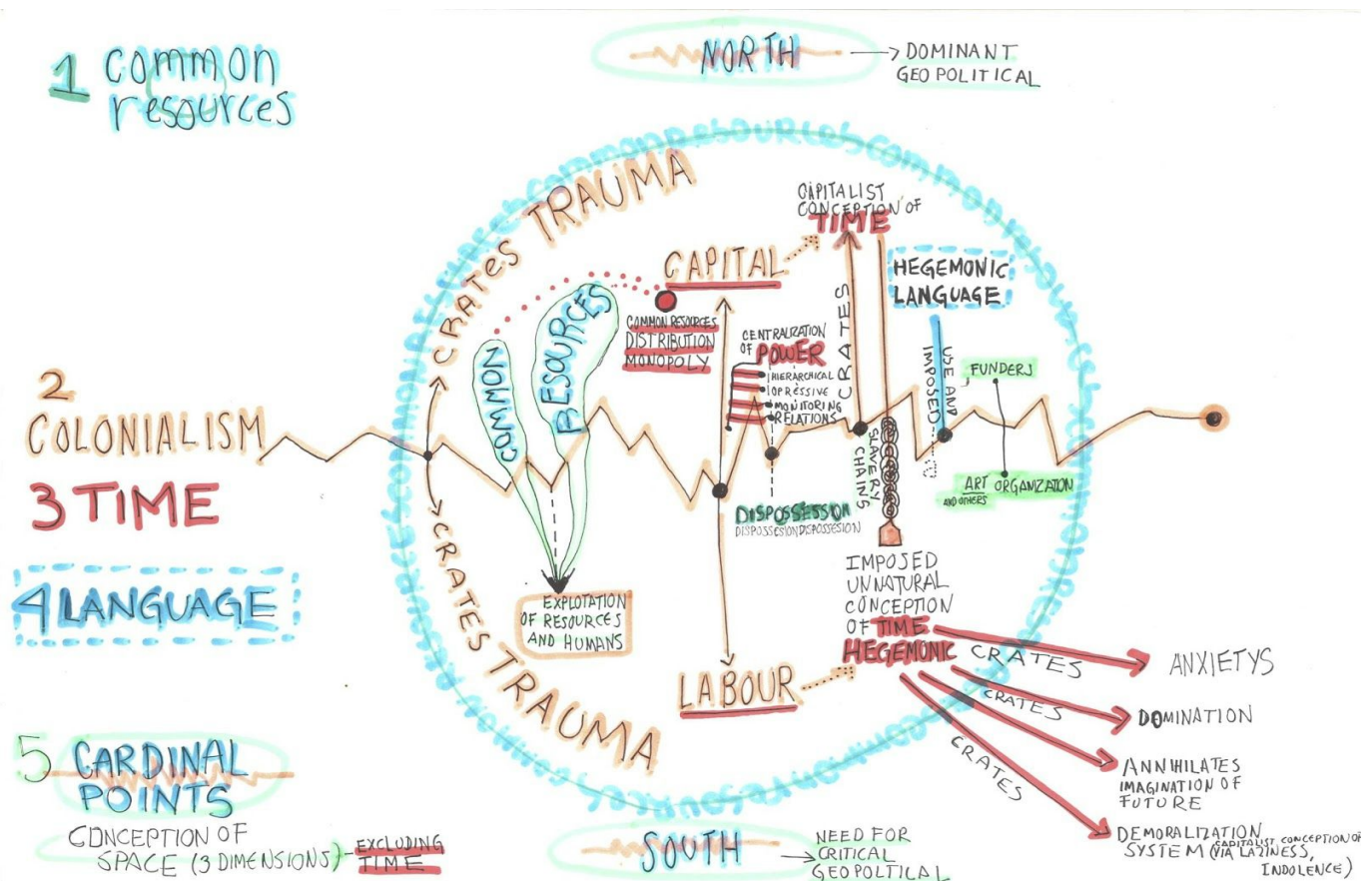
Most of the Arts Collaboratory member organisations are located in the geographic area denoted as the 'global south'. By purposely avoiding to use this notion for our identity, Arts Collaboratory pays attention to the problematics of the current division between the 'global south' and the 'global north'.

This partition reflects the division between labor and capital, namely the structural domination of the former by the latter through the mechanism of never-ending production; the myth of growth and the logic of accumulation. In turn all of these factors have created the culture of individualism and competition; and dependency and exploitation, as to come to ever-increasing inequality among the capitalists and not.

While the neo-liberal turn of capitalism since the late 1970s in global scale only has accelerated this capitalist mode of operation, we find the root in the colonial time, mainly in the construction of the hegemonic notions of time, value, space and language. All the organisations in Arts Collaboratory have been affected by the trauma of colonialism as it is a logical progression, the structures of capitalism perpetuate this trauma even after each respective country's 'independence' from, or removal of, colonial power.

This makes us keep producing at the cost of our own labor and time, without being able to create our own rules and rhythms. Yet the crucial recognition that Arts Collaboratory wants to make, in line with many other colleagues and thinkers around us, is that this problem does not just belong to the so-called 'south.' The general precarization, the exploitation of labor by capital, and the increasing gap between the rich and the poor are experienced palpably by the majority of the population in the 'north' as well.

In this light, Arts Collaboratory sees the importance of challenging this paradigm by subverting the above mentioned division and cultivating co-existence. We move forward to degrowth against the growth, enact inter-dependency against dependency or independence, sharing common wealths against primitive accumulation.



Reference image: Paradigm Shift diagram

B2. Self-Sustainability as Highest value for the Ecosystem (AC)

Sustainability is the primary concern within the AC ecosystem/network. It does not only denote a reason to live but also an avenue of making sense and valuing various forms of the existing discrepancies among the network members. The value of the ecosystem/network lies in how each member shows their willingness to take care and at once, to acknowledge their interdependency to each other.

Sustainability is a condition and a process which incorporates the determination of each organisation. It has always been referred to as the capacities for self-sustainability and self-determination. Inherent here is an attempt to shift the paradigm of what 'lack of resources' means. Questions, uncertainties, and doubts that revolved around the 'lack of resources' discourse have transformed into the development of power in value and in revaluing the existing resources that are not monetary or financial. The making of a Resource Map (**See D2**) is part of the strategy in achieving sustainability, and at the same time is the possible output of the sustainability process.

Sustainability is thus a condition which captures the struggle and the process of each member to define, redefine, and experiment with their definition of themselves. It is a practice which expresses the network's readiness for being in a perpetual invention and decolonizing power relation. What emerged from this process is a series of choices, radical imaginations, and speculation that can be used to write our own history and future.

B3. Collective Study instead of Bureaucracy and Demonstration

Study and tooling is like a breathing activity for Arts Collaboratory. Breathing evades the need to demonstrate or present, the needs for approval and evaluation from others. This need as imposed by a system produces the process of bureaucracy and multiplies time for administration. A regular, major activity of art organisations these days lie in representation, demonstration and writing reports, which mostly attempt to prove one's success and strength, hide the failure and vulnerability, or which, in contrast, fall into the trap of '*pornomiseria*' - a commodification of misery.

In place of this culture of accountability, - **we say NO to creditors!** (an echo the voice of Greek comrades!)

Arts Collaboratory turn every mode of activity into a self-mutual-(un)learning process where conversation is taken as the most basic and important mode. This way, time and labor for the existing form of accountability will be used for self and collectively enriching process of learning. Furthermore, based on the Ethical Principles (**see Section C**) that we share our learning beyond 'us in the room,' we transform part of our learning process into common tools, that we share with

others, and also as a mechanism for building affinity and studying diversity of strategies that in turn enrich our commonwealths.

B4. Exploring Radical Imagination

Radical Imagination & pragmatism through thoughtful organisation

We are convinced that the complex challenge of Arts Collaboratory is the process of unlearning that allows us to be aware that we are our own obstacles.

The deep problems we face are not only outside of us, but within our own mental structures, social relations, and historical and cultural contexts. The active exploration of the radical imagination is absolutely necessarily to build this ecosystem based on our ethics.

What is Radical Imagination?

On the surface level, radical imagination is the ability to imagine the world, life and social institutions not as they are but as they might otherwise be or become.

It is the courage and the intelligence to recognize that the world can and should be changed. But radical imagination is not just about dreaming of different futures. It's about bringing those possible futures 'back' to work in the present, to inspire action and new forms of solidarity across boundaries and borders, real or imagined.

Without a radical imagination, we are left only with the residual dreams of the powerful, and for the vast majority they are not experienced as dreams but as nightmares of insecurity, precarity, violence, and hopelessness. Without a radical imagination we are lost.

Radical imagination remains a driving force in the dynamics of our political moment. It is not a thing the individuals *possess*, but something that groups activate and do together. The imagination is our capacity to think about those things we do not or cannot directly experience, but it is also the filter or the frame through which we interpret our own experiences. For this reason, the imagination is an intimate part of how we empathize with others, the way we project ourselves into the future, and gain inspiration and direction from the past.

Radical imagination is a deep force at the very basis of the human subject, the realm of 'the imaginary' where ideas, meanings, associations, fixations, drives and affects circulate beneath the threshold of conscious thought. The notion of the 'radical' inherits its most powerful meaning from the Latin 'radix' or 'root', in the sense that radical ideas, ideologies or perspectives are informed by the understanding that social, political, economic and cultural problems are outcomes of deeply *rooted* tensions, contradictions, power imbalances, and forms of oppression and exploitation.

The radical imagination is that tectonic, protean substance out of which all social institutions and identities are made, and which, likewise, is constantly in motion under the surface of society,

undermining and challenging all that we take to be real, hard, fast and eternal. Likening the radical imagination to magma, that volcanic substance between liquid and solid. Seemingly permanent social forms (from the ideal of marriage to the form of the state, from the value of money to the concept of nation) are the temporary solidifications of the (shared) radical imagination.

The radical imagination is also that force within individuals and collectives that resist the present order, that screams 'no!' and refuses to be conscripted. Art is the very concrete means for exercising this radical imaginative power: hence is 'Art' + 'Collaboratory.'

C. Ethical Principles

The Ethical Principles, as outlined here, form the DNA of Arts Collaboratory and the point to which we return whenever we encounter new questions and challenges in our working process. Ethical Principles are for a self-regulatory system, which is to be distinguished from self-control and policing.

C1. Open Ethics, Not a Manifesto

It is important to state that the Arts Collaboratory Ethical Principles are not the moralistic rule which we need to obey, but we consolidate and adopt as we practice them. Ethics is a process. Open mechanism serves as the basis of the workings of the organisation.

C2. Arts Collaboratory Ethics

- Arts Collaboratory is a network that celebrates **openness**. Openness is our ethic to share knowledge publicly and to 'invite' others into the network. Openness also allows each of us to dissolve, disappear or reduce in the need for certain resources from the AC. This can be seen as a self-checking system, which then allows other organisations to join the network, to bring in new recourses and receive support when needed;
- AC is a **decentralised**, translocal organisation. Entanglement and non-hierarchical, feature as the main characters of the ecosystem/network. Decisions are made through **consensus and an active study of dissensus** and powers are dissolved in the sharing. Arts Collaboratory runs by **shared-management** and **shared-governance**. We can give mutual support to address hierarchies in our own organisations;
- The network values the **diversity** of all members, taking advantage of its quality as an '**unnatural network**'. In the same vein, it also embraces the diversity of commitments of all members and provides room for the diversity of the members' shared-determination;
- The network is dedicated to **critical** thinking and against a type of network that is surface level;
- We take learning and unlearning processes in common and as the core of our spirit. We call learning and unlearning '**study**' that we want to build as our habit. This means, we remain open to self-reflexive and contextual thinking. The emphasis on study invites the responsibility for sharing what one learns or unlearns: **Tooling (see section E)** what you study is also a key for our operation and forms a radical pedagogic method, which in turn lets us build our capacity and lets us share our radical imaginations with others;
- We are dedicated to critical **hospitality** (distinguished from the service providing hospitality in tourism) and a critical notion of **friendship** and **conviviality**. Our relations are not social capital, that should be measured and commoditised;

- We take **conversation** as the best means for learning and relating to each other, instead of administrative and bureaucratic systems of communication. In a sense, this allows us to study with a focus to **process** rather than to product. The conversation also makes it possible to stay vulnerable and honest;
- This also means that we value **discomfort** rather than comfort for our relations and collaborative works;
- **Trust** is the basis of our relations. We attempt a strong faith in capacities as well as in failures. Because what we aim for is a network to be a space for radical imagination;
- Inherent in the trust is **collective risk-taking** practices, which would pervade the network with flexibility and the willingness to constant mutation, change, and re-evaluation;
- We value **experiments** and serious playfulness. In this, the focus is on **life-giving**, sustaining lifelines, not dead lines and closures;
- Arts Collaboratory is a **care** network, which works against the system of punishment, exclusion and indifference. In doing so, reciprocity or mutualism serve as the basic principle. Also the idea of **self-limitation** accompanies it: your share is also based on the consideration of others and for sharing, you may need to limit your own (in)take;
- We take reciprocity, or our sense of reciprocity, as a practice, which would precipitate the development of **solidarity**. Solidarity thus can be defined as a mutual feeling as well as a space where certainty amidst uncertainty could be created.

D. Commonwealths

(And what we are going to do to be commonly wealthy)

Arts Collaboratory generates and sustains itself through the commonwealths. Commonwealths do not only include money and knowledge but also: affect, care, energy, time and other tangible and intangible resources. We go beyond money and knowledge in order to subvert the concept that the (so called) 'global south' has a 'lack of resources'. We believe the resource is not lacking: it's just that the definition of resource is lacking ethics and radical imagination.

Arts Collaboratory conceive that commonwealths are co-owned and co-generated by all. Arts Collaboratory is an eco-system and generates its wealths through *intra-action* and *inter-action* with other parties. Each member is regarded as an autonomous node and at once interdependent to the others. Various contexts of differences such as time, value, distance, language, empathy and silence, are acknowledged as valid and human factors to shape and inform the modes of contribution of each member to the network. Arts Collaboratory is not a static pocket but a rhizomatic living system to *intra-act* and *inter-act* with new external things.

There are a variety of ways to contribute to the commonwealths. We propose the following document is produced by each Arts Collaboratory member, in replace of a 'funding application' in order to work towards a sustainable future for our organisations and towards a future that is full of commonwealths.

D1. Lifeline Plan

We propose, a **Lifeline Plan** replaces what is known to us as a funding application. While the convention of a funding application obeys the logic of production, expansion, and productivity in the face of judgemental evaluation—approval or non-approval—this system draws from the ethical principle of inclusivity and care, and makes a plan that celebrates life and living processes.

There is a guarantee from Arts Collaboratory of long duration; 5 year, for building sustainability without a competitive or (self-) exploitative scheme.

This proposal invites all the current Arts Collaboratory member/organisations to create a Lifeline Plan of **maximum 5 pages**, we propose it includes the following details:

1. Articulate the resources we already generate by each organisation creating a **Resource Map** (see section D2 for full details of the Resource Map);
2. Discuss '**life-lines**' (instead of deadlines) and ways to survive long-term by creating a Lifeline Proposal that includes long term thinking on the sustainable survival of our organisations (create a timeline to articulate how we are thinking long term);

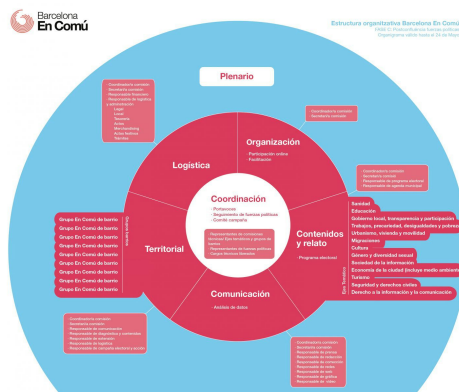
- Budget (**see section D3 for details**): We propose that the budget is equally set at 75,000 Euro per year for each AC member. We propose that each AC member's budget also includes budgeting for the following AC activities: the **AC Assembly** (see E1) and **Banga Meetings** (see E2) and communication (including the website).

D2. Resource Map

We can imagine that the Lifeline Proposals that we create, become **25 'lifelines'** which automatically generate all the items that form the Arts Collaboratory resource and serve as a kind of foundation for the network. The proposals will serve as a readily available main reference on which the activities of the network are based.

Key to the Lifeline Proposal is a **Resource Map**. We propose that the Resource Map becomes a way for AC members to share and inform with each other their resources and therefore also areas where they might need particular support from the network in order to achieve a more sustainable and resourceful life.

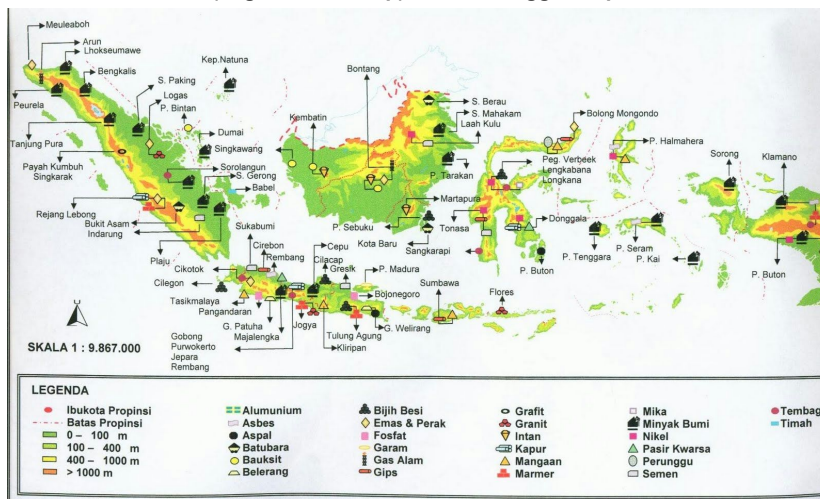
Some examples:



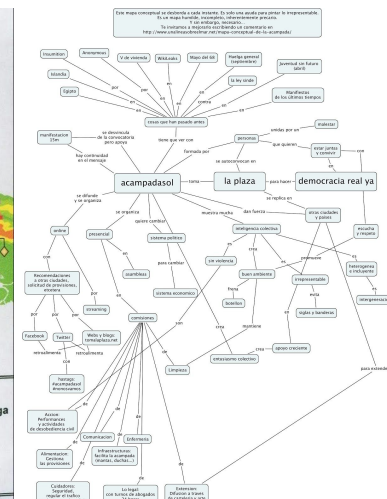
Barcelona En Comú (Organization map)



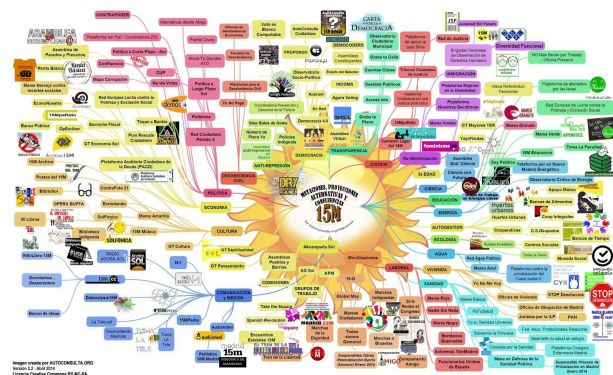
Struggle map



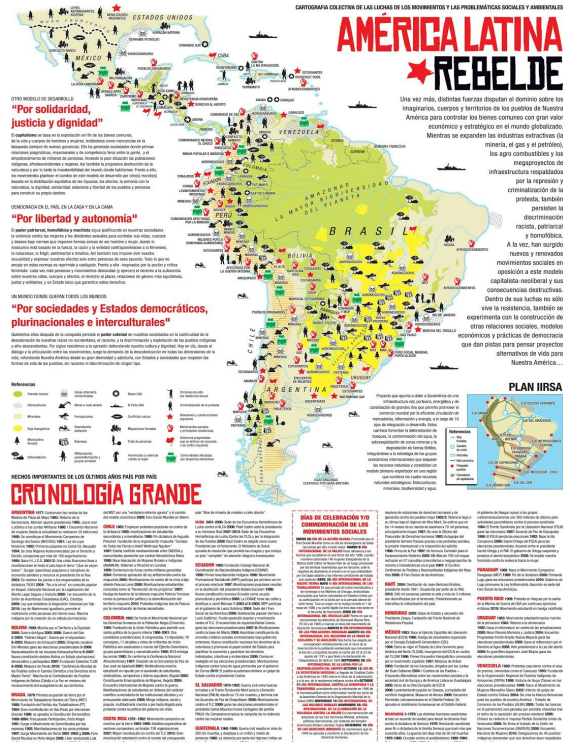
Sumber daya map (Indonesia)



Affinity Groups map



Post 15m organizations and collectives maps.



Map of struggles

The map should be able to capture the recognised capacities of the AC members and other forms of capacities that might be left unknown unless accompanied by an attempt to illustrate them through this Resource Map. While aiming to describe the resources of each organisation, the Map can also manifest the quality of the relation among the network members. The Map thus is an active Map; it would be renewed many times as long as the network exists.

The materials of the map can consist of, but are not limited to: knowledge, experience, capacities, desire, commitments, facilities, influence, affection, access, people, affinities, vision, ambition, dreams. This includes all the relations with other affinity organisations, groups, and communities in our locality that we share struggles and processes with.

The importance of building and developing this Map is to share the knowledge and complexity of the projects, activities, struggles, programs and movements that are having a condition and an effect on us as we are affected by them.

The Resource Map becomes a tool for building awareness based on affinity of our needs, our ethics and our imaginary. The Map becomes an open source tool for other organisations, communities, groups and individuals to visualise what opportunities we might offer and in which areas we might need support. This allows the AC ecosystem to generate decentralised and natural links without the need for any of the participating organisations of Arts Collaboratory to act as mediator—we all are mediators. In this sense, the Resource Map becomes key to the active

exercise of decentralisation and devolution of power, while allowing collective empowerment that is rhizomatic and expands itself. It is important to note that DOEN, Hivos and Casco will also be creating Resource Maps in order to illustrate and share their activities and needs outwith funds, for example.

To list the imagined materials to be put on the map, or to make use of the map, each member can consult the Arts Collaboratory Ethics (see section C2) . Instead of promoting or showcasing, the map should aim for sharing and caring with others.

We are thinking of different, creative ways of mapping and telling the gathered wealths. The aesthetics and design of the map is up to each AC partner. The Internet would be the main medium to store and share the map.

D3. Budget: Principle of Management & Allocation

D3.1. Principle of Management

In the current way capitalism is practiced, we are accustomed to think and act in a way that leads to maximizing profit, or make our outputs at the lowest expense as possible. This goes often at the cost of our body, our social and learning time, and our spirit. Next to that many of the organisations in Arts Collaboratory fulfill multiple roles in their own contexts. Roles that in other realities are taken on by governments, educational institutes, etc.

Therefore the pressure on each organisation is out of balance with its size, and many organisations are under threat of burnout. To provide a healthier picture of the 'cost' of each activity, we are building the habit of measuring all the amount of time spent on these activities, next to the financial costs. We propose to think of activity in relation to (invisible) labour and time, and what it does to our life.

Arts Collaboratory is seen as part of and extension to every organisation's core activity. The relevance of each organisation in its local environment, as well as the value the translocal collaboration brings to that reality is reflected in the way the budget is seen and managed.

The budget is therefore built on each organisation's core budget and from that budget contributions to the network activities are to be allocated to the 'collective' AC budget.

During the transitional period in 2016, in which a solid (legal) model for governance has not been settled yet, exceptions are still made for the assembly, website, communication/fundraising and administration costs.

In 2016 the 'old' structure will remain in place in which the funder directly contracts the separate organisations. However the budget of collective activities, until 2015 handled by DOEN and Hivos,

will be transferred to differing organisations that take up extra responsibility for these activities (**Assembly, Banga meetings**, website, communication/fundraising).

These organisations will receive a remuneration for handling these budgets and activities, to acknowledge the extra labour they put in this.

From 2017 on, when an Arts Collaboratory legal entity is established, all the finances will be handled by the legal entity that will distribute the money over each individual organisation. The transition period in 2016 shall demonstrate whether the finances of collective activities can be further decentralized or the structure should be maintained wherein specific organisations receive additional funding for specific network tasks.

D3.2. Budget Allocation



- The maximum amount that each of the 25 organisations can propose in their Lifeline Proposal is limited to 75,000 euros per year (this number is still in internal discussion within the DOEN's board hence still provisional). This total amount should reflect two components: 50,000 euros is to be allocated for funding each individual organisation's

sustainability plan (see self limitation), while 25,000 euros goes to the network collective activities, such as for **Banga Meetings**, attending **Assembly**, institutional residencies etc;

- During the transitional period of 2016, an extra fund is still provided for the cost of organising the assembly, website, communication/fundraising and administration costs;
- Ethical principles of **self-limitation** and **collective care** should be highly relevant for each organisation's budgeting;
- When an organisation asks for less than the maximum contribution, it can grow the **Collective Saving Pot** (see D5), or can propose and develop new ideas for self-sustainability or experimental communication for the network/ecosystem (for example, building a shop of Arts Collaboratory products or developing a new internal communication system);
- From this budget, each organisation should allocate their contribution to the costs of the **Arts Collaboratory Assembly** (see E1) and **Banga Meetings** (see E2) (before called as Tents and Institutional residences and showcase events) and communication (including the website).

Points for Further Discussion

- We are currently researching the most radically imagined possibility for how to distribute money—away from a top down approach from DOEN to 'us' and towards a **self-organised** process that would enable the network to receive funds from multiple sources, therefore growing the network and all 25 participating members. For the time being and in order for partners to receive funds by January 2016, DOEN will transfer funds to each individual organisation and each organisation is to submit an audited financial report at the end of the year. However individual reports will not be needed as these will now become peer to peer reviews of the **Lifeline Plan** and an ongoing interest in the **Resource Map**.
- DOEN proposes that they could consider offering optional funding mode where everyone can still receive the maximum same amount after the 5 years period end. The benefit in this scenario is that members can adjust which one suits better to their need and conditions. The two options for funding are:
 1. Individual member can receive an equal amount of funds every year (especially for those who expect that they would require a longer period of time to move towards **self-sustainability**) for 5 years;
 2. Members can also opt for a gradually diminishing amount of fund. This means that they would receive a proportionally bigger amount of fund in the first 2 years, but in the 3rd and following years the funding will be reduced.

At the end of the 5 years period, organisations that had chosen option 1 will end up receiving a same amount of funding with those who opted option 2.

These two options could very well respond to the ethical principle of attending the **diversity** of situations and challenges faced by each organisations towards self-sustainability.

Reference: budget sheet for all the activities

(to be ready by early August: Marie Nour)

The budget sheet will encompass both the finances per activity and the time investment per activity.

D4. Process for starting and living the Lifeline Plan:

1. We propose the first step to creating the Lifeline Plan is to create the **Resource Map** and by doing this, to then write the 5 page Lifeline Plan based on the commonwealths we might or might not have;
2. This **Lifeline Plan** and **Resource Map** will then be followed by a mutual review system through a concept called '**Study Buddy**' (similar to the 'chain-interviews' we undertook in Indonesia where one organisation interviews another- only this time it will be to specifically go through our Lifeline Plans, until all of us have received feedback from someone). This process itself will strengthen our relations with each other and earn time for conversation, while also feed into our common resource. The idea for these interviews is to care for the organisations we are interviewing—to find potential challenges or areas of unstuckness (where perhaps a **Banga Meeting** might be needed, see E2) and to give support in general of how to implement the Lifeline Plan.
3. Based on this chain-interview, each organisation will revise their Lifeline Plan. These Plans, including the Resource Maps (and including Activities as outlined in E) will form the larger proposal to Arts Collaboratory—there is no need to write another separate or joint proposal, our Lifeline Plans are our Arts Collaboratory plans.
4. In replacement of an Annual Review, AC will undertake a **yearly peer-review** through the **Study Buddy** method of organisation to organisation conversations and mentorship.
5. The **Arts Collaboratory Assembly** will be the 'Annual General Meeting', and the occasion for studying together core issues and questions that emerge in each of our plans during the year.
6. For the first year of running, but potentially to change for future years, each organisation is obliged to submit an audited financial report to DOEN, a coordinator (one AC member who will be offered remuneration for this fee) will make one financial report for all partners on a yearly basis also.

The following points (D5 and D6) are financial Activities **to be discussed and decided upon at the next Arts Collaboratory assembly.**

D5. Common Pot #1: Collective Saving

The **Collective Saving Pot**, is an important means to build trust, solidarity and sustainability within and outside of the AC network.

Within our budgets, each AC member is to dedicate some funds to a shared 'pot' (an account) for times of emergency, crisis or particular needs for care. The Collective Saving Pot might not just contain money, but time and other resources as identified in the Resource Map.

In line with the trajectory of network members' lives, more often than not, wealths are characterised by a dynamic progress of the network-ecosystem. The ways of managing the resources revolve around the possible anxiety and fear of whether they could lead us to sustainability. Because it is developed to assure **sustainability**, it might be seen as a practice which emphasizes wealth. The collective saving pot is a systematic strategy for anticipating our mixed feelings of uncertainty, resulted from the dynamic resources of network-ecosystem.

Rather than bringing the notion of the Collective Saving Pot back to the concepts of individualism, we take it as an idea and means by which we practice generosity. Within the generosity holds the thinking that we value imagination and speculation in relation to the future. Through this practice, each member contributes energies to the other members. Collective Saving Pot thus can also be seen as a **dream pot** and as **collective saving**. It is a space where we transform the ethics: mutualism, interdependency, coexistence, valuing personal rhythm- into an actual practice.

D6. Common Pot #2: Time Strike

The Time Strike Pot is a mechanism to support our power to change the way we use time and transform our way of working around 'project economy' into sustainable and radically imagined activities. Time as inseparable from the current monetary value system in the Time Strike will be earned by a freely, accidentally given sum of money—as collected by the members organisation—to a few organisations every year.

The Time Strike Pot will be used for facilitating the **Lifeline Plan**, furthering a different mode of working and living in common, and assist our different rhythms, here by using what we call the 'Time Lottery' system. It is a spirit keeper, building the collective imaginary.

Chosen at random, three organisations per year (5 year period after collecting) will receive the amount of 32,000 euros for a **Time Strike Period**. An organisation that wins the Time Lottery cannot receive another in consecutive terms.

What to do with your Time Strike Period?

- Mechanism for ideas to be matured. A mixture of investment and active study: to go deeper into your sustainable plan;
- Study and provide space for your 'own-rhythm practices': for active, radical imagination and spare time for study;
- Using it as a time to pause activities and do things that we never imagined before; time to do more experiments, time for freedom, and doing a project that has not been funded;
- To give space and possibilities for the organisation to break away from the routine/daily boringness of life.

How does the Time Strike pot gets fund?

There are 2 different ways of filling this pot:

1. With the financial wealths that were not requested by each organisation from the core funds, in other words: the difference between the maximum and the actual requested budget per each organisation (**see Budget in section G**);
2. In the 1st transition year each art organisation will invest 10,000 (X 24org=240,000) euros from their financial resource into this saving pot, also each funding organisation will put 240,000 euros from their financial resource into this saving pot.
3. In total we could have a Time Strike Pot with 480,000.+ the sum of all the financial wealths that each organisation did not request in his sustainability plan.

How is the Time Strike Pot refilled?

- All organisations need to agree that after 5 years the collective saving pot needs to be bigger in all kinds of resources and should be used for starting a new Time Strike Pot for other emerging member-organisations. This will be achieved via fundraising (resources of all kinds) so when new members join, there needs to be further investment in this pot. Each organisation can do constant re-investments to grow the amount of resources and have more powerful time strikes.

E. Activities

E1. Self-organised Assembly

Spirit of free school, big annual family gathering, retreat, visits.

The annual Assembly is a key moment as well as key device for the Arts Collaboratory network to operate as a translocal organisation according to our ethical principles.

The Assembly is where every organisation of Arts Collaboratory gathers to address issues and challenges in a mode of collective study, while taking care of each other (instead of others taking care of ourselves). The Assembly will be self-organised by the members and therefore the moment when we exercise self-governance and develop forms of accountability.

The Assembly provides a temporary space for living together and for collective care, and for developing a sense of empathy and galvanising an 'energy pot' made of our lived and inherited experiential knowledge of various historical contexts. Through this extensive time of physically being together, we also develop common languages and enrich our commonwealths.

Practical framework

- The Assembly takes place for **10 full days**;
- The group who is in charge of organising the Assembly is led by the **hosting team** consisting of 1 (2, in case there are two organisations in a city), local organisation(s) in the hosting country and 2 organisations from the network;
 - The hosting team can invite other groups or organisations outside of AC to provide help.
 - The hosting team take charge of the strategic planning and hold the task division over flight booking, visa arrangement, preparing working document, facilitation, programme, and so on.
- The preparation should begin at least 8 months before the Assembly takes place;
- It's important that we challenge the boundaries between host and guests. The hosting team creates a structure and facilitates the rest of the AC members to take part in co-organising during the Assembly, especially the reproductive labour such as cooking, cleaning, taking care of each other.
- Assembly Budget: approx 80,000 euros.

Main Objectives

- The assembly is the occasion for studying the **Sustainability Lifeline Plans** as well as visiting our **Ethical Principles**;

- As one of the main objectives, it is the occasion for studying each member's activity, engaging in collaborative projects and exchanges among the AC organisations, and developing the tooling methods for sharing what we learn with others;
- We evaluate **Banga Meetings** that had took place and the tools generated by them, and address the possible future meetings;
- As part of the collective study, we **visit** other communities and organisations in the local environment, especially outside of the field of art. Here we mirror our activities and desire to mutually transform and extend our affinity lines;
- The assembly includes the non-discursive and **non-verbal** moment where our **emotions and bodies** are directly involved, experimenting communication methods. This could be in a form of party, dancing, picnic, or 'emotional assembly';
- It ensures the time for sharing the above mentioned **reproductive labor**;
- We visit and evaluate the **common resources** that are tangible, intangible, imaginary and material;
- We dedicate part of our time for updating and **fundraising new resources**;
- We study a **collective entity (governance)**;
- Give **Study Tools** (see E3) presentations on **Banga Meetings** and look at how **Time Strike** and the **Collective Saving Pot** might work;
- Lastly, we plan the next Assembly.

The documentation of the Assembly is also based on the methods of **tooling** that we develop (see E3).

Research References:

- <http://unitierra.blogspot.mx/>
- <http://radicalimagination.org/free-school-2015/>
- <http://thepublicschool.org>

E2. Banga (Knowmadic meetings)

Banga means time and space in Luganda, a Ugandan language, and means 'tide' in Lithuanian.

Issa Samb's studio. Dakar, 2015

Whilst the Assembly takes place annually and with participation by all the AC member organisations, Banga (Knowmatic Meetings) are small scale, sporadically held meetings based on a 'call for gathering' for friendship, self-care, reciprocal support, and collective study on a particular subject/issue. Banga can take different forms including 1) 'advice meeting' for getting advice from the AC members on a particular issue that a member is dealing with, 2) 'collective study meeting' for delving into a topic, 3) 'event meeting' to be held next to an event that a hosting organisation organizes or attend and 4) skills sharing meeting.

Like the Assembly, the spirit of Banga is for working, conversing, and being together, not showcasing or promoting. Nonetheless, tooling this collective study/learning process for wider sharing is crucial, as well as being embedded in a local context.

Practical Framework

- Each member who wants to call for Banga should look at the AC Resource Maps to see where resources to support them could be found;
- Partners should also make a 'self-diagnosis' first through Study Buddying (interview chains and skyping AC partners) in order to check if a Banga would be resourceful;
- A **Banga team/committee** will be formed (to be selected in the next Assembly), consisting of 3 AC organisations in order to decide on which Banga calls to support. Decisions will be made in line with our Ethical Principles—including the value of **self-limitation, non-hierarchical self-organisation**—this team will look at whether the meeting should take place with the AC members and whether there is a translocal benefit. The meeting could be with other local organisations or practitioners. AC will also investigate how Banga could benefit the AC in general in light of its resource map;
- The actual organisation of a Banga is to be done by the host organisation, including the travel arrangements;

- Each Banga budget is maximum 8,000 Euro the rest comes from the host or Collective Savings Pot.

E3. Mutual Learning (Study) / Tooling / Resourcing

We will replace reporting with Tools. Instead of hiding mistakes and showcasing ourselves in order to get more money, we will create Tools for future learning for ourselves and for others.

Tooling expresses what a trans-local organisation could do well, without being subjected to agendas of productivism and self- exploitation.

How to do Mutual Learning

Although the predominant forms for mutual learning in Arts Collaboratory are the **Assembly** and **Banga**, we are not limited to them and encourage Radical Imagination of on-going Tooling.

Tooling can for example, take place through on-going, online requests for **Study Buddy** with AC partners (but self limitation here is important too).

How to do Tooling?

Tooling means one's transformative and creative capacity to transmit a concept that belongs to one or a few, for others and many. It is a place where the Radical Imagination is welcomed. Tooling is to honestly show the process that our programme or activities took in order to offer lessons to ourselves and others.

Tooling is not synonymous with use-value. We challenge the concept of usefulness, instead of thinking of what moves us, what affects us. Can we imagine **affective tools**?

Examples of tools (that can replace reporting) are: Essays, edited transcripts of a conversation or interview, videos, photo-montages, comic strips, poems, recipe books, performance presentations. The key is that the Tool is linked, connected and complementary to our activities and to our experiences when running our programmes and activities. Also that Tooling makes us time by giving us tools for learning.

Co-management of Open Resource

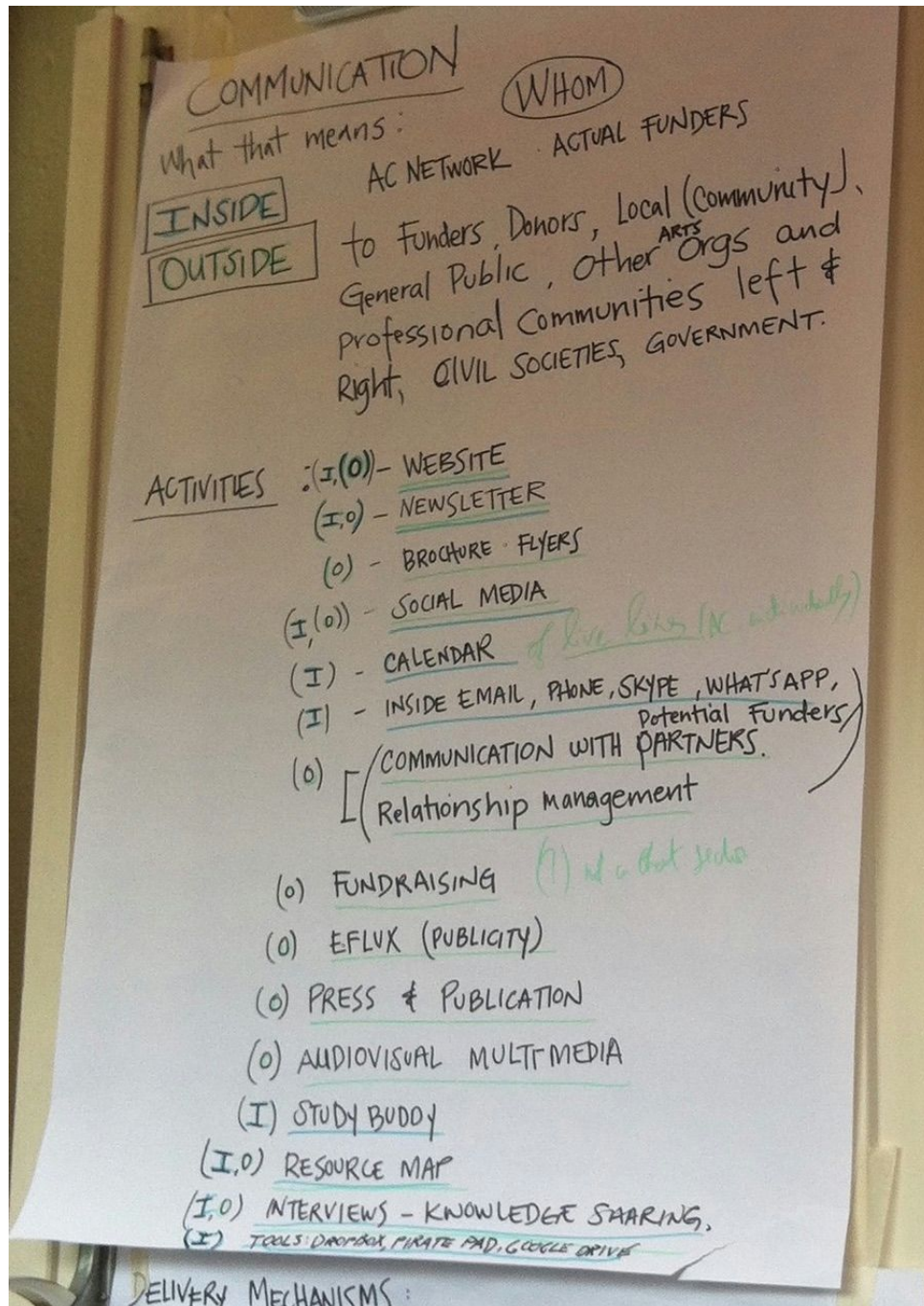
All the tools generated can be posted on an online Resource Map. There will not be a selected editor, but the website is trusted as a co-editorial process, which runs by the principle of passion and capacity.

All the tools of Arts Collaboratory will be open source. (copyleft, anti-copy right).

The use of Arts Collaboratory common identity, not the logos of individual organisations, needs to be considered when sharing these tools.

E4. Communication

This area is to be developed. Any comment is welcome!



F. Self-determination and Shared Governance

F1. Collective Entity

Building up a mechanism of governance and accountability that can sustain the life of a network of 25 organisations across the globe while at the same time fostering the sustainability of each of the participating members, requires **radical imagination** as well as collective effort from those who are involved.

The realisation of such a mechanism entails subscription to ethics of trust, care, openness and decentralisation, as well as a process of mutual learning based on collective conversation.

Assembly then becomes the main space for the organisations to gather, share experiences and collectively engage in decision-making processes. It also plays a crucial role as a laboratory for **studying** together on how individual organisations navigate local dynamics while collectively envisioning ways to deal with unfolding challenges in and beyond the networking of AC.

This latter point departs from the proposal that came through the discussion in Senegal Assembly, on how to resolve issues of accountability (1) as a form of care towards each other, (2) as a working structure and (3) to those outside of the network (including local networks, public, and funders). The discussions at the Senegal Assembly showed a common desire in framing accountability not in terms of showcasing and/or measuring success, but in terms of collective learning and of remaining relevant, open and sharing towards local artists, publics, activists etc.

However it is worth well considering here the limitations of **Assembly** in terms of time and resources. Additionally, geographical distance remains a concrete obstacle for the network to address issues that require immediate attention. One way to deal with this is to optimize the use of the online platform of AC (again not without its own limitation due to the discrepancy of internet access in the different regions) and to work with **study-buddy** and regional study groups.

Study reference for digital platform:

<http://www.resilience.org/stories/2015-03-06/barcelona-en-comu-the-city-as-horizon-for-radical-democracy>

While there is no single solution to these practical but complex challenges, especially if we are to balance the aspirations of dissolving centralized power while at the same time attending trust and care with each other, the following schemes were developed during the working group session in Utrecht. They are proposed as tactical scenarios during this transitional period (2016), at least until a more solid mechanism for putting our **radical imagination** into motion is achieved.

F2. Cooperative Entities

In order to give proper response to emerging obstacles in the self-running of AC as a global network, all members are encouraged to work in smaller groups of affinity/ clusters / team based on specific desires and (self-limited) capacities.

This being said, the formations of the smaller working groups should not be regulated by the logic of delegation or representation. It is more about opening ways for individual members to actively 'take matters into their own hands'. The framework of **self-limitation** in the current approach, implies that silence by any of the core members in the network also signifies an important component in the learning process that occurs in Arts Collaboratory: silence does not always necessarily mean absence, listening to silence may also articulate a negotiation of the disparate and the common in different ways.

The tactical character of this small working group entails sensitivities to time and power accumulation, whereas its aim should be oriented to common practice without losing sight of other forms of struggle within the network and elsewhere. Therefore these groups are temporary in nature and exist as long as an urgent necessity and affinity is in place.

During the course of time, Arts Collaboratory has been accommodating seminal models of working groups that are orientated towards organisational practice and to thematic issues. They can be further developed along with the more recent ideas of teamwork that have been proposed throughout the current document.

To reiterate existing and future tactical cooperatives that have been addressed thus far, they are:

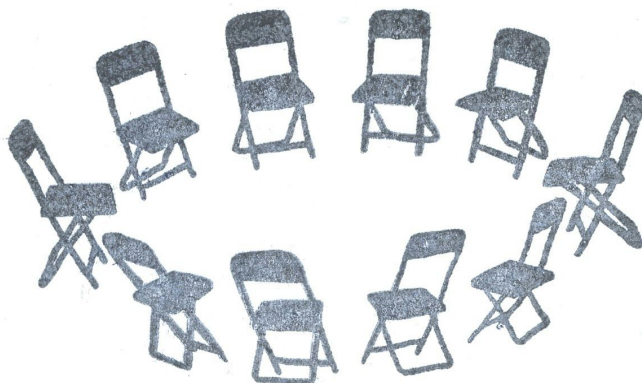
- **Assembly** hosting team: a committee comprising of 1 host organisation and two buddy organisations who overlook the preparation of Assembly;
- **Banga** meetings: a small scale, spontaneously held meeting based on 'call for help' or 'call for gathering' for friendship, self-care, reciprocal support, and collective study on a particular subject/issue;
- **Study Buddy**: a team comprising two or more organisations that exercise mutual reviews on the Lifeline Plan;
- **Thematic group**, comprising smaller groups that are divided into three collaborative projects based on commonality of interests such as *Lobby*, *Arts Schoolaboratory* and *Minga*.
- **June team**, a team of 10 organisations that are 'assigned' to discuss the future scenario of AC.

While the list is far from exhaustive, there are issues that cannot be dealt with in tactical manners if we are to develop a sustainable future for AC, particularly those pertaining to communication

(website management), administration (financing and auditing management) and fundraising demands.

The discussion so far during the Utrecht meeting has been revolving around scenarios of temporarily appointing a certain organisation or a committee (of several organisations) that are in charge of overseeing the day to day operation of these activities. The ethical and financial implications of these options remain as topics that require further discussion with all AC members. For the transitional year in 2016, this will however be the proposed working mode.

F3. Self-Accountability



Self-accountability is organised as an alternative to the 'upward accountability' approach which is emphasised on the desire of performing 'success stories' in reporting to funders and donor. This entails changing the idea of 'measuring success' into a tool for **collective studying** through the **Resource map**. This Resource Map is the essential base not only for accountability towards each other within the ecosystem, but also towards the outside.

The narrative in the Resource Map shall be able to visually reflect the ebbs and flows of the organisational life of each organisation. This includes its falling short of expectations and the creative way individual organisations are coping with vulnerable circumstances. The recognition of **'failure'** next to success is key here as it provides essential knowledge that is neither overly optimistic nor pessimistic, but practice-oriented. **Failure** may in fact provide more creative, more collaborative, more surprising ways of insights into the organisational being, and thus lead to tools for productivity beyond the dominant narrative of progress.

As the Resource Map does not only contain sustainability plans but also the budget and financial reports of each organisation, the financial aspect should also undergo a similar process of collective discussion as a form of care of the network to its individual members.

AC members consider it part of a healthy practice to develop yearly a financial year document that is audited by an external accountant and then attached into the Resource Map, both as part of creating a sustainable financial practice internally and in terms of accountability towards the outside. This auditing will happen according to local auditing standards and most importantly in working with auditing companies that understand the nature of the creative and **self-organisational practice** of the network or in case they don't exist locally, to help develop capacity in those terms.

From 2017 on, after a collective legal identity is established for Arts Collaboratory (**see section F4.**), a document that contains an audited year report of the whole network will be compiled and made available to public by the organ appointed to take care of the financial administration.

In cases where one of the AC members has to deal with financial problems, it goes without saying that principles of **study and care** also apply. Practically speaking this may mean that the network provides support in terms of assistance from regional-based group, Study Buddy or during Assembly, depending on the emerging needs and circumstances.

F4. Co-Ownership

As stated, 2016 will be a transitional year in which Arts Collaboratory will function as an independent entity, but as yet has no legal form. During the second half of 2015 and first half of 2016 (when an assembly will take place), further research, trial and discussion about organisational principles and the consequent legal form that fits best, will take place. This should lead to a legal establishment of Arts Collaboratory in the second half of 2016 which will follow the principles of self-organisation and co-ownership of the platform.

A team consisting of VANSA, Crater Invertido, Casco and DOEN have committed to kick off this research and come with proposals to the next Assembly which will take place in the first half of 2016.

Reference: survey on the legal construction of self-organisation collective (to be ready by next assembly: Vansa, Crater, Casco, DOEN).

F5. Membership, growth and openness of AC

Membership

On a conceptual level, membership to Arts Collaboratory network is open and voluntary. It is built on common affinities and sensibilities of working together. But considering the social and

historical transition of AC from a funding-based network to a self-organizing one, financial issues continue to influence the life course of the network in general and its members in particular.

The new phase of Arts Collaboratory will kick off with the current ecosystem of 25 members. These members have built together a certain bases of **trust**, **care** and **hospitality** that are the foundation of Arts Collaboratory.

As the network re-orientes itself towards challenges of sustainability, the proposal to founding partner DOEN is to commit to a period of 5 years funding to AC and its 23 core members. The background of this is that organisations need a substantial period to work on their Lifeline plans and also for the translocal network to work towards its sustainability. The starting point for Arts Collaboratory is precisely being a network that comprises of sustainable and independent organisations, despite the shifting politics of funding.

Therefore after a period of 5 years, none of the core members of the network will receive further funding from DOEN, assuming that they have individually achieved a **sustainable** condition (among others, shown by their independence from shifting donor policies). But this does not mean that the network stops their endeavor to get external donor funding through fundraising in order to ensure the growth of the network.

As far as the sustainability of the network is concerned, there is a deep interrelation between its sustenance and is linked to the core being of each organisation and therefore its sustainability is linked to the sustainability of each separate organisation. However, for specific activities like assembly, fundraising will be developed. There is a list of contacts that are interested in Arts Collaboratory and that have expressed the will to further research collaboration. This list will be expanded over the coming years. Also founding partner Hivos is researching the possibility of continued support to the network especially in developing new collective ways of obtaining financing.

It is well worth stressing here that if organisations reach self-sustainability before the 5 year period, they subscribe to **self-limitation**, and provide the existing financing for network activity. Also it needs to be stressed that discontinuation of financial support to one organisation within the network is *by no means* equal to exclusion from the network.

Openness and growth

An important ethical principle of Arts Collaboratory is being open and relevant to both its local networks, publics and societies and towards the translocal community. This openness is enacted in two ways:

- The first principle is that openness and growth are considered **horizontally**. This means that the principle is not that the network itself will grow bigger and bigger, but that its reach and participation grow bigger by actively opening up to the broader local and international networks, publics, in short the constituents of each individual organisation. The growth of

the network in terms of quality and scope is parallel to a snowball effect. Affinity is continuously formed by the members as they continue to bring in the diversity of practices, knowledge and desires from their community settings. The way each organisation does this is part of the sustainability plan. But also, for example, an important element of **Banga meetings** is that other organisations and individuals are invited to join and many will be organized to establish study and debate with wider local constituencies.

- The second one is gradual growth of membership. The openness of Arts Collaboratory will be maintained by accepting maximum 2 new members every year. These members will be brought in via the project fund that DOEN runs for financially supporting socially engaged art organisation's mid-size projects (8 projects per year, between 15,000 euros and 60,000 euros). This fund is currently part of Arts Collaboratory. The proposal is that DOEN maintains this program and runs it independently but part of Arts Collaboratory so that this field of work is continuously supported. DOEN has better capacity to run this programme than AC. However there will be an intimate link between the programme and AC: Arts Collaboratory members will support DOEN in the administration and work load of its selection procedure and AC will select its new members out of the pool of selected projects in this fund. New members will be decided in the **Assembly**.

Roles and Positions of DOEN, HIVOS and Casco

Following the shifting paradigm of AC, the previous roles of DOEN, Hivos and Casco as the facilitating partners will also shift into those of **non-hierarchical** members. Basically this implies that each of the three organisations shall aim at orienting their conduct of operations towards the network's ethical values.

We understood very well that each of the three organisations has specific historicity, organisational challenges and values that require a sensitised approach in order to ensure their full inclusion into the network. We all need to mutually agree that our present and future affinity shall not be characterised by a sense of formality which is based on indebtedness to past contributions, regardless of its affective values.

In the last day of the June meeting in Utrecht, Gertrude and Yu-Lan from DOEN, Tanja from Hivos as well as Binna and Jason from Casco together with the rest of the June team had shared their opinions and desires regarding to further involvement in the network. They are as follows:

- DOEN: The rest of June team expressed that DOEN will actively partake in the network within its capacity as a funder during the transitional phase towards AC as a self-organized network. While this means that Gertrude and Yu-Lan have to find strategic ways in communicating the radical changes that occurred within systems of governance and sustainability in AC to DOEN's executive bodies, the June team has expressed its commitment so that the workload should be shared among us, depending on individual capacities. On the other hand, DOEN is also expected to readjust its working mode into a more open and transparent mechanism, allowing for more vulnerability and to perform less

bureaucratic structures, and actively join the collective unlearning/learning process in its present and future endeavours.

- Hivos: June team expressed that it expects Hivos to take roles similar to DOEN if it aspires to resume its position as a non-hierarchical member of AC. Tanja had repeated the fact that Hivos will discontinue its role as a classical donor from 2016 on, and expressed hope that Hivos may renegotiate its involvement with the AC upon learning that the shifting paradigm of AC carries some important overlap with Hivos' ambitions to switch from a classical donor to an equal partner and co-creator of social innovation. Tanja mentioned several ideas about the nature of that involvement, like: playing a leading role in the alternative fundraising (from the developing of the 'shares' of AC and market for it to the organisation of the Call for Donors) or involving the AC members in its tenders to EU Calls. However, at this moment it remains unclear how these overlaps can be further developed. There were some emerging concerns expressed by the June team that Hivos' plan to fund some projects initiated by AC members through the Call or Tender could be detrimental to the network's climate of trust by re-creating competitiveness among members. Hence the challenge is more than just how to convince the decision-makers in Hivos, but also how to transform the logic of donors from funding as 'investment' to collective risk-taking. The task to further formulate a strategic proposal based on these points shall be equally shared by Tanja and other AC members. The proposal will later be presented to Hivos as well as to AC network for further discussion.
- Casco: The organisation's main function as a facilitator/mediator for communications among members as well as between members and grantors is to be discontinued as soon as the bilateral contract between DOEN and Casco ends by the end of 2015. The June team requested that Casco is to assume its position as one of the active network members based on its trajectory as a common-ing institution. As the June team expressed, the organisation's geographical background as the only non-funding institution located in the so-called 'global north' shall not be singled out as a factor which obstructs the mutual (un-)learning processes of AC. On the contrary, it should enrich the diversity of practices that this network already is. In view of the economic gap that perpetually divides between the north and south of the globe, Casco expressed its commitment to exercise self-limitation in terms of sharing the collective monetary pot, vis-a-vis its other funding opportunities over the duration. The involvement of Casco in AC may also take precedence over future possibilities of the network opening up to groups/organisations located in the so-called 'global north'.