

Borderland School

Planning and Realisation of Projects 2013-14



The Summer School of Dialogue, Krasnogruda, Poland

The Summer School of Dialogue offered unique training opportunities for animators of dialogue in the region of the Caucasus and Central Asia, Belarus, Ukraine and Poland. It aimed to support long-term artistic and educational ventures in multicultural communities, assisting in the creation of centres for intercultural practices and cooperation through trans-regional networks of partnership in Belarus, Georgia, Ukraine and Poland.

It brought together a diverse group of individuals – artists, anthropologists, cultural entrepreneurs, managers of NGOs – for an intensive period of workshops and presentations to learn from each other, to be inspired by each other and to build supportive networks.

For an overview of the idea behind the Summer School at Krasnogruda, watch this short introduction from Krzysztof Czyżewski: - <https://vimeo.com/114476454>

The second edition of the summer school in 2013 also invited candidates to propose a project, which was then critiqued and developed over an intensive period with our experts. (*See the document Borderland School 2103 for details.*)

Follow up workshops were then held in Minsk, Tbilisi and Lviv, after which candidates were invited to submit their project proposal for funding. These successful projects were invited for further planning and mentoring a Krasnogruda before being then delivered in the summer of 2014. This document gives a summary of those activities.

Host:

The Borderland Foundation is among the most recognised and experienced Central-European non-governmental organizations dealing with art and education for intercultural dialogue. Since the early 1990s, it has been conducting cultural, educational and artistic activities with the local community. Its own workshop of integrative practices is based on many years' experience of daily work in the concrete place embracing one whole community, starting from the youngest to the oldest. The mission of the Borderland Foundation is to explore and popularise modern practices of the intercultural dialogue based on the symbiosis of art and education.

The International Centre for Dialogue in Krasnogruda is located on the border between Poland and Lithuania, in the near vicinity of Kaliningrad and Belarus. It is situated in a newly rebuilt manor house which before the war belonged to the family of Czeslaw Milosz. Using many years of experience that Borderland Foundation gathered working on different borderlands, the Centre aims to initiate and expand a movement of people committed to the promotion of a modern ethos of commonality and education of new cultural leaders in the field of intercultural practices bridge builders for whom intercultural competences and related crafts will be a life profession.

The Local Workshops programme for the Borderland Summer School were co-ordinated by Agnieszka Podpora and Weronika Czyżewska, supported by Chris Keulemans, Willemijn Lamp, Natalie Bolgert, Brendan Jackson and Krzysztof Czyżewski.



Local workshop participants, Tbilisi, Autumn 2013

Local Workshops



Agnieszka Podpora and Weronika Czyżewska. Minsk, Autumn, 2013

Autumn 2013 - Lviv and Tbilisi

The Lviv sessions took place at The Centre for Urban History of East Central Europe. The sessions in Tbilisi took place at the Arts Research Institute, Ilia State University.

There were introductory sessions with Krzysztof Czyżewski, who presented the ideas behind the work of Borderland Foundation over the years and good practice in terms of building community. The work of the Borderland School was then outlined by Agnieszka Podpora and Weronika Czyżewska, the project co-ordinators. These local workshops are dedicated to working with small teams of people to help develop and define both realistic and exciting cultural projects. Workshop leader Nathalie Bolgert stressed that the workshop was about the participants and uncovering what they could offer. ‘You have a lot of different resources – experience, relationships, emotions, human resources, desires, ideas... To learn how to get the best out of our resources, we need to be fully aware of what they are, what resources and what experience we actually have...’

The sessions were then organised as follows:

‘Getting to know each other’

The first exercise was to sit in pairs for 15 minutes. Choose someone you know less well – you will talk with the other person and ask questions. What are their plans, what is the project, what is s/he working on? What are their objectives in coming to this workshop? What is s/he looking for? What does this person feel s/he doesn’t have or what skill does s/he want to develop? What resources does the person have that he can offer to the group? Participants were asked to consider the following points:

Seriously think about who you are **HERE**, in this workshop. Try to formulate it shortly, in your own words. Think about your deadlines and objectives for this workshop. Think about your needs: what resources do you most need from the group? How to be supportive to your partner

The pairs then presented back to the whole group their findings about each other (this also acted as a introduction to each participant). The answers were also written up and shared on the wall. These were then discussed in some detail.

‘No start without diagnosis’

Nathalie stressed it is vital to make a proper diagnosis before starting any project, in order to thoroughly prepare a written application, to create a whole picture of the project, to accurately tell the story in order and to make it an appealing, realistic proposition to funders. Nathalie spoke of ‘Project Writing Disease’ – the danger of using words that don’t mean anything, language only made for the bureaucracy of the funder. If you suffer from this, you will stop thinking about your project effectively and you stop being understandable to anyone else. Try to use your own words, your own logic and in a way that is easily communicable to others. Not only for your funders, but for your partners, media, the participants.

Participants need to describe the problem they wanted to tackle and express it clearly and understandably to the group, and further afield. “Remember that when you do not have a problem, you do not have a solution.” Nathalie shared this checklist of questions above to perform a good diagnosis.

What is the problem that your project addresses?

Why is it a problem?

For whom is it a problem?

How did I learn about this problem? What are your sources of information?

What do I specifically know about the problem?

Who am I to speak about this problem and take care about it?

What is my position? Am I the right person to pursue this problem?

Do I need to learn more about the problem?

Some other aspects of diagnosis are:

Experience

What experience do you bring to the project? What experience are you missing? Is there other experience out there you can bring in to assist you?

The wider public: 'Do the ducks know about it?'

A very important issue: do the people/ community with whom you want to work/you want to do your project for know about it? Nathalie explained that with her daughter she once attended an award of prize to the best NGO activist. A medal was being awarded to an ecologist, whose activities were aimed at rescuing nearly extinct ducks. Nathalie started explaining to her daughter how he rescued the ducks and how now they can live happily ever after. Her daughter asked this question: "But do the ducks know about it?"

Research

Is there available academic research that can help you? Is there ad hoc research you can undertake to support your project? (For example, using questionnaires to help identify some of the project issues.)

'No project without an objective'

Nathalie spoke about the importance of formulating a goal that is closely connected with the diagnosed problem and setting out a couple of objectives. To assist with this the group spent some time with a role play – each group at each table picked one project to work on objectives. One person was picked to be the 'workshop bearer' who had the task of briefly presenting the project and its objectives. Then the rest of the group – who were given specific roles to play (for example, a participant that has to pay for participation, a hostile NGO activist, a representative of the local authorities) asked the presenter difficult questions regarding the objectives. The presenter had to defend the project against these questions and criticisms.

Participants were asked to consider the following:

Aims – the vision.

Objectives – smaller and measurable, a step in the right direction. Keep your objectives consistent.

Remember the goal is to solve the problem. The objective is to:

- make a step in the right direction
- reach an identified place
- make sure I get where I wanted to get
- get ready to go further to the next identified place

The objective should be attractive to the person or institution (the stakeholder) that you wish to involve in the project. A good objective is also a powerful team building tool. Make your objectives realistic and measurable.



Local workshop participants, Lviv, Autumn 2013

'Street University' - leader: Nathalia Yeryomenko, journalist and social activist, Chernivtsi. The project consisted of the idea of creating a common space for local community to share ideas, learn about interesting initiatives and meet inspirational personalities. In her presentation she stressed that the content of the project will be developed together with local community to respond directly to their needs and interest. It will also result in deeper involvement of the community during all the stages of the project.

'Multiculture through ages' - leader: Anna Zharkivska, Union Forum, Brody. The project, realised in partnership with the city council and local museum, consists in organisation of an international summer voluntary workcamp dedicated to arranging of the old historical cemetery. The activities will include making photo catalogue of monuments, presenting the result of work as the exhibition in central park of the town and organising a series of youth workshops and discussions on different aspects of past and present diversity of the town. The project is aimed at rising awareness among local community about the multiculture past of our town, bringing up the subject of intercultural dialogue into small (closed) community, as well as promoting open-minded attitude to multicultural past and create background for international cooperation and cross-cultural promotion of town's cultural heritage.

'Developing Strategies for Revitalization of Post-industrial buildings in Ukraine' - leader: Bozhena Zakaliuzhna, Cultural Industries Association, Lviv. Bozhena depicted the problems with post-industrial buildings in Ukraine which are located in the close centres and are not in use anymore for many years. These buildings are dead spot in urban space and play destructive role in the community and city in general. Her project is aimed at creating new strategies for revitalising industrial buildings, that will enable changes in urban space in different cities, involvement of local communities into different activities.

Faced with questions, authors had to give answers to persuade public to their projects. Then ballot had been commenced to see what notes the public gave to each of the projects, according to set criteria.

'No activity without formulating and describing'

This session was dedicated to clear formulation of activities that are bound to the previously defined objectives. Each group worked on three to five activities in a chosen project. Nathalie proposed some ways of presenting the activities in the project: the cooking recipe, a letter to a grandmother, to-do list, project chart, performative presentation. Most people chose the method of to-do list. The second most preferred method turned out to be 'a letter to a grandmother' – an account of activities formulated in such a way that a person outside of the cultural activity milieu would understand.

'Planning an effective project budget'

This session concentrated on how to construct a budget for a project from scratch, using excel spreadsheets, looking at all the elements.



Autumn 2013 - Minsk

‘From Vision to Practice’ was a three day workshop delivered by Chris Keulemans and Willemijn Lamp.

Workshop Outline:

- each session started with 5/10 minutes looking at inspirational project from abroad
- after the opening of each session, the teams worked separately on their projects
- Willemijn and Chris then joined one separate team for 30 minutes, alternating between the teams (every general question mentioned below will be specified for each project, before each session).

1. Introduction

- Chris and Willemijn, both 15 minutes, interviewing each other
- Then we interview each participant 10 minutes:

what do you do in your professional life, why are you participating in this workshop, what do you want to achieve/change

2. Project

- A day in the life...

An outline of the Ideal situation of your project, in 2014, if you will have received the Support for Democracy Programme funding

3. Participation: building a community

- how to develop your communication with a/ authorities b/ strangers c/ peers
- on the local, national and international level

4. Presentation

- Written
 - Handout: do's and don'ts
 - For funders/participants/teachers/press/invitations
 - Good and bad examples
- Live
 - Real life demonstrations of presentations, plus exercises and training

5. Final presentations

- referring to questions and answers from first session

Big thanks to Pavel Kasciukekich, Katsiaryna Ramanchyk, and Kaciarynka Pikirenia for being our cultural guides to the 'topographical crisis' of the city.

The workshop was hosted by Director of the Photocentre, Aleksei Shinkarenko. The centre was located in what looks from the outside like an office block from the 1960s, though it was constructed in 1973. From the other side it reveals a more industrious purpose. It was a former factory which, in the Cold War times, made the guidance systems for rockets. Today it is rented out to a variety of small businesses – on the top floor is a centre for photography – our host – with different spaces for printing, a library, meeting rooms and an exhibition space.



Day One

For the first session, participants were interviewed by Chris and Willemijn, after a short demonstration where they interviewed each other about their respective projects in Amsterdam – the Read My World literary festival and The Tolhuistuin, covering their motivation and inspiration, their contexts for their work, target groups and audiences and, as importantly, communication skills. They stressed that it is not an easy task to tell the story of your project in short sentences, in a short space of time, to say what it is and why it is important, and this is a skill to develop – and these workshops will provide a continuing opportunity to do that.

Starting the afternoon session Chris and Willemijn shared a couple of projects – one which was still in the making as a new literary initiative and one which a music festival that had started small in scale and now extremely popular and profitable.

The first example was from Utrecht – Cultural Sundays – which they described as a programme intended to be easily accessible to a wide range of people – 'entertainment but with some thought'.

As part of a Sunday in November an event called Visiting the Book (Op bezoek bij het boek) would be taking place. This would be a series of readings by authors in people's houses, or in libraries, restaurants, different kinds of spaces. It was a format that is replicable, a great way to introduce new audiences to literature – which was a particular concern for some of the participants.

The second example was Into The Great Wide Open, a music festival for all ages on Vlieland, an small island in Northern Netherlands, which had started out as a very small event – almost you might say for family and friends – the initiative of a guy who had a record label, who went on holiday there regularly with his kids. Another example shared by Brendan Jackson was The Goat Milk Festival in Bela Rechka, a small village with less than 500 (mostly elderly) people in the mountains of northern Bulgaria, which began over 10 years ago with a small group of cultural professionals visited the village where their grandparents came from and decided it would be a great idea to reconstitute the traditional village savor (festival) in May, an event which had not been organised since communist times.

Chris then told the group about the time a few years ago, when he was writing the final proposals to gain support for his arts centre, and at the last moment felt that there was a vital ingredient missing. So he decided to write 'A Day in the Life' of the centre, imagining what it would be like in a year's time, once it had opened.

Extract from: A day in the life of Tolhuistuin

8:14 Uncle Abdel is cleaning up the garden, together with the students of the high school next door, who have joined our maintenance team. Scattered all over the garden, they find the coloured balloons of Malika', who had her 8th birthday party here yesterday.

9:08 Piet and Jaap, two retired harbour workers, have a cup of coffee at their fixed spot at the window of our cafe, overlooking the water.

10:00 The alarm bell goes off in the artist residency in the former building of the Shell medical service. Erzen Shkololli, video artist from Kosovo, has been editing until 4 o'clock in the morning on his short film about an Albanian marriage in our neighbourhood – and turns over, because he decides he deserves a little more sleep.

10:05 Slight confusement in the meeting room in our main pavilion. Both the intercultural committee of the Foundation for Literature and the management team of Mentrum (arts&culture for people with a mental handicap) have rented the space for their meeting. Touria, our manager, solves the situation. From the kitchen ladies arrive with platters of coffee and baklava.

12:10 Ellen welcomes a gallery owner from Perpignan in her ceramic atelier in the former security building. The French lady finds her way through the tiny new Picasso's from the primary school around the corner, who are fingerpainting on the floor, coached by Saskia of Noordjes Kid's Art. Sarien decides to close her office door, to be able to have a concentrated meeting with her partners from three other cities in Holland about the national young poets competition, that she will organize in our main hall next month.

13:08 The weekly team meeting of Tolhuistuin starts with the announcement that the wildwater cycling race across the river has been cancelled because the municipality didn't approve of the idea after all.

13:16 Crowds at the self service counter for lunch in the cafe. The piles of sandwich with local Waterland cheese are disappearing at an alarming speed. Co-owner Eddy Muller runs around shouting and cursing because his food suppliers are still not catching up with the surprising number of visitors.

Participants were then asked to prepare a similar piece, in their teams, to present back to the whole group. 'A way to make it visual, to bring it alive – try to picture what is going to happen in the future' – not only by including the things that are great and they would like to see, but including the things that might be obstacles, so they could think of solutions in advance.

Participants had one hour to work on these descriptions to present back for discussion and critique.

Yuliya Tsimafeyeva presented the project to promote 'PrajdziSvet', an internet-journal of translated literature, to both fill a niche (literature translated into Belarusian) and as an independent platform where translators, critics, writers can discuss actual problems of modern literature and culture. (See a sample at: <https://vimeo.com/77924839>).

Sviatlana Haidalioneck presented the project 'Academy on the Grass', a five day event in a village in a national park, based on the idea of alternative education with discussions and practical activities involving art and ecology, social animation, DIY, performances, concerts, film screenings.

Alina Dzeravianka and Marina Zavvazhnaya presented the project 'Brest Fortress', which aimed to restore the old abandoned citadel on the outskirts of the city as a cultural and historical attraction for both local people and tourists, to reclaim its story through contemporary art installations, performances and cultural events.

Oksana Karpovets presented the project 'Cross Line', which intends to bring together artists, curators and art managers from Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia and Poland, in three different spaces with diverse historical contexts which are united by one concept – the space of migration. The first event would be in Turov (Gomel region, Belarus).

Ianina Kazchuk presented the project 'Kara', which aims to create a cultural centre (both incubator and platform) with non-formal educational activities and an active community around it.

Aleksei Shinkarenko presented the programme of the PhotoCentre and how it aimed to engage with partners and institutions to promote a wider interest in photographic practice.

Kaciarynka Pikirenia presented the project 'Ja knihu maju' ('I have a book'), which aims to change the very perception of native literature among Belarusians by introducing the reader to forgotten, historically banned or simply currently unavailable authors.

In the evening **Pavel Kasciukekich** gave us a tour of [“Ź” Gallery of Contemporary Art](#) and the adjacent bookstore and literature centre, Kniharnia Loguinaŭ, which holds events and publishes work. There is also a small arts & craft shop here which sells material made by local artists – lots of goodies to be found here on Nezalezhnasty av. 37a.



Day Two

Chris and Willemijn went through details of **planning, community building as well as presentation**. As we would be working today very specifically on the projects, we needed to focus on how to build building a community for the project, whether online, offline, or with peer artist, educators, trainers, or a community, with your neighbours or the society around you.

Two short examples were presented. The first example – Das Magazine, a literary magazine on paper in the traditional sense, produced four times as year, with writers who don't have a publisher yet. They then created a web site and an online community. Every 2 months they held an event which was very theatrical and festive – for example, there was a guy reading in bathtub. They also invited prominent Dutch writers to discuss old classics – Dostoyevsky's 'Crime and Punishment' in one instance, with an interview with humorous questions, along with a funny quiz, so it became quite a performative event. They also held a Reading Club for young people – with writers presenting in a club or bookstore, 40 venues in one night – which ended in one venue at a huge party. The audience could subscribe for a fee (approximately 20 euros) to receive the book of the writer and then meet the writer in person and ask questions – this in small groups of 10-15 people). They also used Facebook extensively. Key elements to realise this project were: style, taste, sense of humour, and being not afraid to take risks.

The second example: Terraforming, a project by two artists – working in Novi Sad, Sarajevo, Stockholm, Saravejo. 'A project that was cross borders, based on idealism, depending on some European funding and a lot of hard work'. They were interested in using the arts to build a community and present a community in a new light – in this case the Roma community, a minority group associated with stereotypes, some of which were true, many of which were false.

For one project, Fortune Tellers Future, they asked older adults in this community, 'If you were young now, what profession would you like to be when you grow up?' They received answers such as: I would like to be the director of a classic orchestra, a medical surgeon, Alfred Hitchcock – they then made photographic portraits of them in this role, blown up to real life size, images of their dreams of a different life. They were then photographed carrying their portraits in the local landscape as a performance and later exhibited in a theatre, alongside a concert by local Roma musicians. The project took place over four months. Chris and Willemijn stressed that this kind of project completely relies on the artists ability and willingness to build up a relationship of trust and respect with community members.

They also spoke about a project undertaken by two artists in residence at Townhouse Gallery, Cairo, who created a maquette of an area in Cairo called Antikhana, the neighbour hood in which the

gallery was housed and which was subject to potential regeneration and gentrification. Over three months they created a scale model of the neighbourhood in exact detail, measuring the stones of the houses, the number plates, reproducing exactly the same colour. This started a conversation with local residents, which began a process of assembling stories connected with the neighbourhood. When the maquette was put on show, the local people came to the show and it started a discussion about change in the neighbourhood, about whose rubbish this was, whether this wall should be a different colour and so on. It developed into a richly layered project, with both intercultural dialogue and educational aspects.

Chris and Willemijn then asked participants were asked think about the community they planned to work with; their own team; the volunteers and peers around them. Are you planning to work with a strong and tight community, or a light community, something which is temporary? Will it involve the people living in the villages around, will it involve people you do not normally interact with. How do you work together with the authorities – how do they hinder or assist your project? What must be done to build these relationships?

Participants were reminded that while their plan may involve a longer term project but for this exercise they needed to define one moment of the project – between August and November next year – and go through the details of the planning. What minimum budget do you need to make the project happen – what can be achieved with an ideal budget, a minimal budget, or no budget?

Over lunch break Chris and Willemijn looked at the proposals. In the afternoon, the workshop looked at written presentation and live presentation, illustrated with examples from the planning and the project proposals.



The afternoon session looked in depth at how to present yourself to a potential funder or partner through the written word or through a short meeting in person.

Written presentation

Chris explained key elements to take into consideration when you present yourself in a written form. He drew on examples from the project proposals we had been presented by participants.

Be succinct and to the point

Chris: 'As a Director of an arts centre, I often receive emails from people I don't know. In the first few lines, I quickly need to know who you are, what your organisation is and what you want from me. I don't want to read five pages before I understand why I reading this.'

He shared some examples of good and bad email communication – one request which was too short and not specific enough. ‘What do they really want me to do and who with?’ The second was much clearer explaining the group they wanted him to work with, the time-frame, the deadline, the content of the workshop.

Mention your partners

Noting who your institutional partners are will strengthen your case and give the impression ‘these people have got their act together’. It’s even better if you can be specific about what their role is in the delivery of the project.

Include what you know to be accurate

Explain who your team, what your project will do and be specific (where/when/what) – ‘everything that is a big question in your mind, do not include’. Make a short note of what planning has been undertaken so far.

Communication

Pay attention to your marketing and PR – ask yourself: who is this for, what audience do I want to attract?

Live presentation

Willemijn introduced an exercise on live presentation, based on a drama exercise which is intended to make you aware of your body language when presenting, and awareness of the impression your body leaves. In this exercise you are asked to present your project in just one minute to a specific person, so you have to consider the most appropriate way to present yourself. Another member of the groups would be then asked to duplicate the presentation, showing how they perceived it, and to exaggerate the style and body language, gestures.

She demonstrated this exercise with Chris. She asked Chris to explain his project to the Belarusian ambassador, who he meets briefly at an official function in Amsterdam. He has one minute to do this. Following this she re-enacted his presentation, exaggerating his gestures and body language. Each participant was then asked to act out specific scenarios, and audience members asked to replicate and emphasise them. Here’s a couple of examples...

<https://vimeo.com/77982145>

<https://vimeo.com/77982411>

These live presentations were discussed. How did the person come across? Were they professional or unconfident? Did nervousness show? Were they stiff and a little bit boring? Did they use eye contact or look at the floor? Did their voice get higher. Did they act too nice?

Day Three

The final sessions in Minsk took place at the Belarusian PEN Centre. **Hanna Yankuta** gave a brief introduction to the work of the centre, a place where several cultural initiatives come together – acting as the office for an independent newspaper, the Belarusian Collegiate hold classes here, a school of young writers meets here, as well as members of the PEN Centre for literary discussions, seminars and workshops. The centre organise a number of literary awards and have a new award to encourage literacy criticism – ‘inviting people to write about a book you are reading now’.

Chris then shared his thoughts on the previous two days and what had been achieved, and how people's thinking and ideas had developed into concrete proposals – not in all cases, for some there was still work to be done. The morning was spent working in teams on a final presentation back to the whole group. 'You need to convince each other of the quality and reality and do-able strength of your project.' Chris then shared his thoughts on the previous two days and what had been achieved, and how people's thinking and ideas had developed into concrete proposals – not in all cases, for some there was still work to be done. The morning was spent working in teams on a final presentation back to the whole group. 'You need to convince each other of the quality and reality and do-able strength of your project.'

The elements of this would include:

- Project outline
- Short-term goal
- Long-term goal
- Budget (but not in detail)
- Partners that you have, or who you will invite
- Target group
- The audience
- Planning
- Follow up

Each team worked on these and made a final 10 minute presentation back to the group for further critique and advice from Chris and Willemijn. The presentations were strong and professional and the development of the proposals was evident. However, based on all the presentations, these are some points for us all to remember:

- When there are two people presenting, make sure you are fully aware of the other person, listen to what they are saying with interest and try not to overlap or interrupt each other.
- Clearly say who you are, what organisation you represent, what your project is.
- Be more specific in describing content – if you are talking about a series of activities at a historical site be clear about what the connection between your contemporary art programme and this site is; if you are talking about a series of educational meetings, give an example of what you mean by this; if you are talking about an artist activity, give an example of the type of artist you want to work with.
- Put dates into your planning, so we understand the time-line of the activity.
- In terms of physical presentation, if you are using a flipchart or a powerpoint, talk to us, the audience, don't talk to the flip chart.
- Put your personal passion into the story.
- Speak about your experience and skills more. If you mention artists, tell us their expertise.
- Go beyond the concept and be specific and concrete as much as possible. When you explain the context, say how you will use the arts to change this situation.
- A light touch can be welcome in a presentation. A little humour can help us better digest lots of facts and statistics.

[View comments on the local workshops in Minsk.](#)





Follow up

In February 2014, participants of the summer school and local workshops were invited to apply for the **Competition for Best Bridge-building Initiatives**. The main aim of this competition was to support social and cultural initiatives that were developed by the participants - offering them an opportunity to implement the skills, knowledge and tools of educational and social work in the communities they work in on an everyday basis – putting their learning into practice in a concrete way.

The successful project applicants met at Krasnogruda in May 2014. Agnieszka Podpora and Weronika Czyżewska explained how the partnership with the selected projects would work – the way Borderland would be the main institution with responsibility to report to the sponsors, presenting the projects to the funder to make an argument for how cultural work will contribute to the process of democratisation in these countries. They then outlined the partnership agreement that would be written with each of the projects – the activity description and preparation of budgets, the process of reporting and the evaluation. They asked groups to think about the sustainability of their project.

Chris Keulemans and Willemijn Lamp led a number of sessions to fine tune the projects. Brendan Jackson led a workshop to look at different types of documentation. ‘Why do documentation?’ Suggestions included: to make an archive; for publicity purposes; for the funders; for the local community; to remember; to analyse results and to improve; for a portfolio; to evidence your track record.

The Projects

‘Visual Storytelling: Tbilisi Migrant Stories’ aimed to present selected migrants groups’ cultures in Tbilisi and to engage local communities into educative intercultural dialogue, using photography, cooking, presentations. The project was organised by Geo-Air. They planned to work in a community where there are many different ethnic groups living together. During the project they would work with people who moved to Tbilisi within past two decades to live there and implement public interventions with them. They discussed the methodology of how to reach out to a variety of groups and in particular they want to work with 12-16 year olds, and how to effectively engage with school teachers.

The results of the project would be shown at Tbilisoba, a festival held annually in Tbilisi in October. It started towards the end of 1970s; every year its program mainly includes concerts and food related activities in various locations of Tbilisi, predominantly in the historical city centre where people from various districts of Tbilisi come to celebrate the city. Even though Tbilisi has always been characterised

as multi-cultural, the programme is usually homogeneous – for instance, food that is usually made can be considered as mainly ‘Georgian.’ Since this project was talking about about Tbilisi Migrants, they decided that being part of the festival this year would make it richer and give voices to people who are not originally from Georgia, but have come in recent times to live in Tbilisi. The group worked with young people from school #43 in Tbilisi, with whom they discussed the basics of doing ethnographic work – what kind of questions can be asked, what can be observed, how the diaries should be kept, followed by some meaning of documentary photography, main tools to be used and examples of power of the visual storytelling by Tamara Bokuchava (Social Photography Caucasus Foundation).

The students began their fieldwork, to work with already selected migrant groups, photographing their everyday lives, as well as recording interviews – material which is being discussed and transforms into stories screened for wider public and postcards distributed during the event. The presentation at Tbilisoba on October 25th was called ‘Cooking Imaginations’. Located in the Rike Park, from the afternoon they started publicly cooking food together with Indian students. The festival was attended by a lot of people, curiosity to try Indian food. The location itself meant that they were constantly crowded by visitors.

Special postcards were designed for each story – visitors could choose the image they wanted, answer the questions on the back side, tear off the small part to return to us and take back the postcard with the image as the memory from the project and the stories. Schoolchildren were particularly involved in distributing postcards and getting responses from the audience, which made the screening more alive and engaged more people from different parts of the festivals.



The questions behind the postcards asked two things. One concerned peoples’ attitudes towards ‘Tbilisi migrants’ and the other one asked for their ideas on what needs to be done so that we better familiarise ourselves with foreigners living in Tbilisi. Over 130 responses were returned, with majority of them having positive attitudes, however, some rejection was also present in the answers. A lot of time visitors of the event mentioned that language was the big barrier and there should be more cultural activities that will bring together people from different backgrounds living in Tbilisi. Some of the quotes below connect to the character of positive responses that were returned: ‘They should create their own TV and let us know more about them’ or ‘With joint project, with learning together, or with the will to acquaint ourselves with each other’; however, there were some responses typical to – ‘I do not know how we should familiarise ourselves with each other, I live my life, they live theirs, why should we find out about each other?’ But the majority of responses were positive and we hope learning about our participants’ interesting lives in Tbilisi, through the visual stories, contributed to it

at some degree. One of the responses was ‘We should just smile to each other and have more trust.’ The project allowed participants to get to know each other begin to understand that diversity is the wealth. The project carried this idea throughout and the creation of visual stories was possible by starting with this understanding.

Example of the visual stories can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8VCe3RqJ1u1-MmPaqu0oxw>



‘*Dzestra Talks*’ aimed to present a series of lectures, conducted in the parks and city squares of Chernivtsi, a Ukrainian city in the south. The initial concept was of making a ‘street university’ with lectures held mostly in different public spaces, which are often disregarded, ignored by the citizens, or have fallen into disuse. These places are inert and dormant, which the project wished to transform into spaces with the potential for leisure or crossroads for public interaction and dialogue. The project wanted to use presenters of the lectures who were in some way innovators, role models who have a certain cultural expertise or positive reputation (ie. a well known film-maker), who have contributed to Ukrainian culture (in a broad sense of the word) without any support from state institutions, examples of how culture can be sustained and created by activist individuals. These street lectures were aimed at both young people who may be looking for interesting and intellectual leisure, as well as active youth who want to share ideas and develop them. ‘The project is all about showing people how to see possibilities and explore them, instead of simply focusing on problems.’

A series of meetings with local groups were first held (to find out what kinds of activity they would like to learn more about) and these helped determine the programme of talks. The ‘Dzestra Talks’ presentations then took place in different locations. Each of the events attracted audiences of between 40-60 people. They included the following speakers:

- A lawyer and blogger based in Kyiv, Tetiana Montian, who is specifically interested in civil and commercial law, who spoke about ‘Challenges of Local Municipalities in Ukraine.’
- Nadiya Parfan and Illia Gladshstein from Kyiv (although Nadiya is originally from Ivano-Frankivsk). Nadiya is a researcher of culture, urbanist and feminist. Together with Illia she has been involved with organising a festival of cinema and urbanism in April this year. She has also been working on some of the biggest movie festivals in Kyiv over the past few years.

- A social innovator, Oleksandr Suprunets, editor of the Big Idea media platform. He shared his experience as the coordinator of the Spil'nokosht project, which is Ukrainian platform for crowdfunding

- Kateryna Botanova, a well-known curator, the head of the Foundation 'Centre of the Modern Art' (CSM) and editor of the 'Korydor' platform. The subject of her lecture was 'Culture activists: who they are and what can they do for the city.' Kateryna shared her experience of fulfilling cultural projects in Kyiv, which were dealing with public space, art, activism and engagement.



- Yuriy Fyluk, a young entrepreneur from Ivano-Frankivsk, who advocates locally for a socially responsible business. As we learned during his talk held in Literatur Cafe on the main city square, what started as an ice cream stand is now a chain of club-cafes, each with different profile, that are also a centre of local activism and cultural events. His lecture, under the title 'When business is not enough', concentrated on how business may play an proactive role in local development and support the sense of responsibility for the common space, that is not only a touristic site but also a living place for the inhabitants.

- Michael Schur is an artistic alter-ego of Kyiv-based journalist Roman Vintoniv. Schur is claimed to be a member of Ukrainian diaspora in Canada. He is a correspondent of a TV-channel 'UT-Toronto' who moved to Ukraine in 2012. Recently he's been working on the Hromadske.tb, mocking on politicians in his talk-show. Michael's lecture was about ways and means of co-operation with neighbours.

- Otar Dovzhenko was born in Dnipropetrovsk but now lives and works in Lviv. He is a well-known journalist and media expert, who now works at Ukrainian Catholic University, Master's Program in Journalism.

- Maxym Demskyi is an actor, a screenwriter and a director. In May this year he became the director of the Gogolfest - an international art festival held in Kyiv every autumn. Before that he has worked on TV, performed in a cultural centre 'Dakh' (The Roof) as an actor and has been a movie scene manager on Gogolfest. He shared his unconventional vision of Ukrainian culture in global context, which in his speech 'Ideology of a place, a city, a country.'

- Mykhailo Fedor is a radio-journalist from Uzhhorod. He is an author and presenter of a cult radio program 'Inshyi zvuk (Other sound), beloved by melons (music lovers) from all over the Ukraine. One peculiar thing about 'Inshyi zvuk' is that it was broadcast through national radio station 'Tysa FM' for 5 years, being almost the only programme about alternative music on the national radio. Mykhailo shared his experience as a radio presenter and a host for some very unique guests, whom he interviewed while working on "Tysa FM". Apart from his journalistic experience he could also share some insights as a music manager, as he has been organising a lot of music events in Uzhhorod as well.



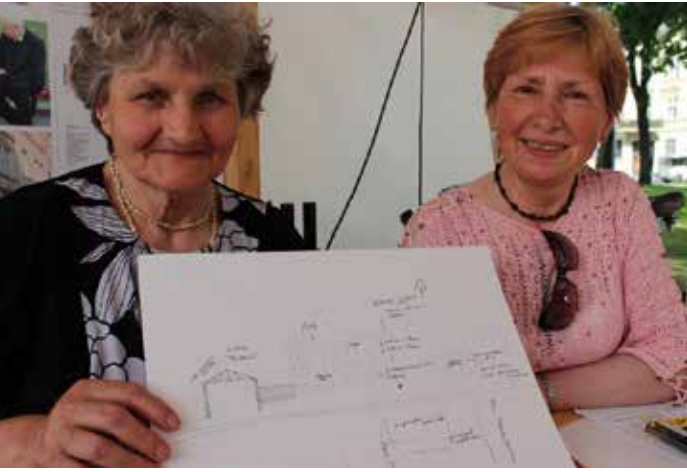
Pidzamche Neighbourhood Festival planned a community festival in one of the districts of Lviv. As they explained: 'In this particular district, there is not much going on, to say at least. And our approach is to launch festival preparations and provoke locals come and spend time together, making decorations, planning concerts and cooking food, and so on. The festival will act as a trigger.'

To explore the neighbourhood they organised four themed walking tours – Alternative, Industrial, Batiar (urban subculture in Lviv at the beginning of 20th century) and Sacral Pidzamche. They then organised an event with locals was called 'The Addresses of Our Memories' - a two hour mapping game where people were drawing maps of their district by hands. 'We asked them to mark places special for them and to also add things which they would like to have. When talking about the past many participants were quite excited. Proudly telling how they worked at factories with over 3000 employees, how powerful these factories were, and how sad they are abandoned now. It was a story of many, since Pidzamche used to be home for a number of industrial giants.'

Three concerts were organised to promote local talents, along with a week long art camp for children, which created decorations for the festival. Weekly meetings were held which focused on Pidzamche cuisine. At the end of August, professional and amateur artists came together for a two-day workshop with Pidzamche residents to design the location of the Festival – the courtyard of the School № 20, one of the oldest schools in Lviv.

The final two day festival in September included workshops on screen-printing, family zines, guided tours, sport, live music, urban space planning and the Pidzamche Cooking Contest.

View some of the online promotion: <https://vimeo.com/103796605>



Pidzamche Neighbourhood Festival

Final Workshop for the Animators of the Best Bridge-building Initiatives

At the end of November 2014, participants convened at Krasnogruda for the closing sessions of the current programme. Members of the ‘bridge-building’ projects from Belarus, Ukraine and Georgia came together to share the results of their projects with each other, with members of the Borderland team, with our project mentors and guides, and with funders and partners.

For the first sessions, the four local initiatives presented their the results of their work over the past six months, realised in the framework of the Borderland School 2013-2014 programme. The organisers expressed their appreciation of the scope of the work that had been undertaken – a range of very different projects which they were proud to have supported.

During the course of the day we heard the story of theatre, art and ecology workshops held in a small village near Brest; we heard of the presentation of public lectures in courtyards, community spaces and street corners in Chernivtsi; we heard of the animation of a old neighbourhood of Lviv, creating a summer festival; we heard of the project in Tbilisi using stories of food to explore issues of migration with the involvement of schoolchildren as authors of the visual stories.

View a short extract of the presentation from Anna Khvyl and Zoriana Rybczynska about their Community Neighbourhood Festival - <https://vimeo.com/113289344>

Following on from this there was a panel discussion – Education in [Eastern] Partnership – Cooperative Development of Know-How, Network and Good Practices – led by Krzysztof Czyżewski, along with Miłosz Zieliński (participant of Summer School, and currently involved with Eastern Partnership project, Lublin), Madgalena Uzdowska-Lis (Department of Foreign Co-operation, Ministry of Polish Culture), Levan Khetaguri (Ilia State University, Georgia), Chris Keulemans (artistic founder member of The Tolhuistuin).

The discussion began with sharing thoughts on cultural education, the value of encouraging creativity in people of all ages and to challenge the idea of ‘received culture’ (i.e. teaching people to appreciate art (to be an audience for art), rather than encouraging people to develop their own creative skills) and consider how we might learn from each other – a genuine cultural exchange.

As part of this Miłosz Zieliński presented a history of the development of the concept of the ‘Eastern Partnership’, looking at a range of initiatives over the past decade. He felt that some early mistakes had been this idea of ‘treating the West like a good Uncle with a lot of money and ideas. So we ignored the East, lost the old contacts with the former USSR.’ To establish contacts required relearning how things were further east, how organisations and institutions operated – often on quite different paths. Using visual arts became a good field of co-operation – both Poland and the east had a strong contemporary arts scene, visual art was a kind of common language and culture could cross the barriers and borders where politics could not. He outlined various initiatives making links between Lublin and Lviv over the past few years and looking ahead to future plans.

A session was undertaken on ‘Cultural Impacts of Social Economy’ by Roland Zarzycki from Wroclaw. Roland was a participant in the first edition of the Summer School in 2012. Originally trained in social sciences, he had become involved in the development of the Wroclaw City of Culture bid. More recently he has been involved with setting up a new cultural space in the city, utilising a long abandoned building.

He presented the idea of social economy, first by an analysis of our current comic system which encourages hyper production, hyper consumption, hyper waste. He spoke of our experience of two polarised situations – the former Soviet bloc, where the state dominated and controlled the economy, and the capitalist system of the free market economy – neither of which people were, or are, happy and satisfied with (except for a small elite). He asked whether it is possible to consider a different way, to create a civic or social economy?

He defined the ideals of this as:

- social goals vs profit (thinking about the needs of society, and thinking about sustainability)
- democratic management (equality in terms of decision making – ‘of course, it is possible to have a boss but they have to be chosen in a democratic way’)
- shared responsibility and shared ownership (‘we share profit but part of the profit is put back into the business, but we also share the losses’)

He gave some examples with regard to ‘Participatory budgets’: involving people in the decision making process of setting a city budget, giving competencies to citizens so that they can make informed decisions. This was pioneered at the municipal level in Porto Alegre, Brazil in the late 1980s, and since then reached more than 240 municipalities in Brazil.

Civic audits – ‘We often don’t know what the local government is spending our money on’; there are mechanisms for better transparency and accountability in setting budgets for services.

Crowdfunding: whereby you seek finding for a project or venture by raising monetary contributions from a large number of people, typically via the internet.

The sharing economy: such as car pools, flat swopping, slow life movement, skill-sharing/swops

In the final part of the workshop he invited participants to work in small groups to propose a product or service which could be offered to strengthen their project. Roland suggested that groups do things gradually, trying to do too many things at one time – better to do things in increments.

Over the next two days the groups had a number of sessions with Chris Keulemans and Willemijn Lamp. As Chris explained in his introduction: ‘This is our closing weekend. Everyone knows each other, trusts each other. We’ve done the project, we’ve had successes. Now let’s look at the darker side – let’s look at what problems you encountered, what mistakes we can learn from together...’

Participants were asked to present two or three problems to each other, to discuss them and to share reflections on how they had resolved the problems, and to share ideas on each others perspectives on the problem.

Some examples:

- starting points and local research, how to approach people and their reactions – ‘When you approach them they think you’re from the church or from a marketing company...’; ‘Immediately they suspect you... why are you talking to me? Too nice, too sweet, too nice to be true...’; ‘How do you break the wall of suspicion?’

- developing and sustaining local contacts, managing local volunteers
- the value of having a physical public presence in an area (such as an office)
- effective delegation of tasks, establishing clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, managing expectations (of both the community and your co-workers); how to achieve consensus on tasks and shared responsibilities
- how you would build a team differently, learning from this project experience?
- the issue of conflicting aims, when one partner wants a high quality product and the other is more concerned with involving people and less concerned with overall quality; team tensions can give conflicting messages to volunteers; the issue of creative tension, when it can be an effective dynamic and when it can lead to more conflict.



Final Evaluation Session

Weronika and Agnieszka wished to convey the positive impressions of the whole Borderland team. They hoped that some potential possibilities for co-operate would open up in the future. They shared their reflections on the project and said that it was an important for them to experience to work they undertook in situ, both on the level of cultural animators and as a very strong positive experience. They asked the group to address these questions:

1. *What was most valuable in your Borderland experience?*
2. *The dream Borderland School. Imagine we have unlimited possibilities. What would it look like?*

A Selection of Responses:

- *The gradual approach – from participation in school to idea to application to realisation*
- *The opportunity to learn about other contexts*
- *Sharing project management experience*

- *To meet people behind the projects*
- *Inspiring but realisable project examples*
- *Selection process based on proposed projects, rather than just individual contacts*
- *The addition of local workshops to further develop the process*
- *Experts were grounded, more practical, less theoretical*
- *The mix of people, both experts and participants*
- *The ongoing documentation through the blog and Facebook*
- *The consistency of co-ordination, ensuring the criteria were met and welcome personal engagement and support of the co-ordinators*
- *The location for planning and developemtn – Krasnogruda as a place and the various projects arising from this place*
- *The ease of involving children rather than adults, as adults have little leisure time (how can this be developed – ideas of junior curators or young curators? and young people are often more open, carrying less prejudices); however, in some cases (certainly in term time), young people may also have limited time, and communication with children can be problematic*
- *The working from a negative motivation; ‘We had problems organising in the city where we lived, so we did it somewhere else, but we do not have roots in this place, it is not our house...’*
- *Misunderstandings of the project aims with the participants; the need to clearly and simply explain, for framing the project effectively.*
- *What works well as a starting point for engagement – the attraction of using a camera for children, or for printing your own t-shirt.*

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