

You Are Here - Hungary

A cultural campaign to discover our own city with the help of new migrants

‘You Are Here’ is the name of a participatory multimedia art project and a multi-layered cultural campaign aiming at the social inclusion of migrants and a better understanding of their cultural and personal background through the development of collective art products, community building and information sharing.

Concept

The project aims at initiating a campaign by which the art world contributes to the social recognition and inclusion of migrants by effectively involving them into a collaborative exercise the purpose of which is to create artistic multimedia products reflecting on their experiences that would appeal to a larger audience. In this way, through the medium of the visual arts and the establishments of new contacts, the project would provide opportunities for the active social participation of migrants and intensify their acceptance by the broader public.

A central element of the project is the creation and inhabiting of an imagined city, in the form of a multimedia website, that will serve as a repository of the participants’ stories and ideas and also as a surface to communicate these personal experiences to outsiders. This virtual city will be designed by the migrants themselves in a process facilitated by professional media artists and filmmakers. The site will contain memories the migrants have brought with themselves, visual recordings of their present lives, and their ideas regarding the near future. At start, the focus will be on how participants envision their next 2 years – where they will live, what they will do, how and in what forums they will interact with society. In this way, the city map will also map out the integration related expectations of participants.

The map will be published on different media platforms, like a community multimedia website, along with individual spots about the participants and the art work generated in the course of the project. Thus the map will provide an entry point to the virtual city where one

can wander accompanying migrants to see how his/her world is seen by others. In the last phase of the project, the integration related expectations of migrants will be revisited and reflected upon by the participants themselves. The results of this kind of personal review of the success of individual integration trajectories, contrasting their previous expectations with actual realities, will also be posted on the map, allowing the audience to better understand the stakes and conditions of social integration from an expressly personal point of view.

The concept of the project has been developed by professionals in social scientific research and multimedia artistic enterprises. In connecting these two fields of expertise, the main goal of the project is to dissolve and counter act widely shared stereotyping and prejudistic perceptions of migrants that enclose them in culturalist and often racist clichés, offering, instead, very personal accounts of the way in which they try to establish themselves in a new social context.

Drawing on the extensive field work experiences of the initiators of the project, the best ways will be sought to address and involve participants/refugees to share their personal opinions and feelings by non-intrusive means, in a safe environment determined by partner relationships and common understandings that develop organically in the process of collective creative exercise.

Relying on their previous experiences, the developers of the concept envision target groups, media surfaces and creative contents being harmonized during the creative process. The use of multiple media will guarantee the reaching of a diverse audience, adjusting the key information clusters to their particular media consumption habits.

Steps

1. In the course of working together with migrants, information will be collected regarding their background and journey to Europe, their everyday lives and, especially, their expectations regarding their new place to live. This will be done in three ways:

1. In creative workshops where, under the guidance of experts in intercultural communication, participants will together create a map of an imagined European city;
2. By interviewing migrants individually regarding their past and future expectations.
3. By asking participants to record anything about their everyday lives and family events that they feel like showing to the outside world.
2. The collected materials will be then presented to artists who, with the active participation of the migrants, will develop various artworks - films, paintings, multimedia installations, performances, films, etc. – using these documents.
3. The results of the collaborative work of migrants and artists will be presented to a larger audience, in the form of screenings, media presentations, exhibitions, concerts and open discussions during a festival that will be the closing event of the project.

The project's mediasites and products (Platforms)

Platform 1: City map

The project's new media site will take the form of the interactive map of a **virtual** city designed by the participants based on participatory art practices such as collaborative art and participatory filmmaking and storytelling.

Output: multimedia website which develops during the whole project, containing general and specific information about and for migrant from migrants, also available for interested outsiders. The site will display information on the integration related expectations and experiences of refugees as well as supporting services and organizations responding to their particular needs.

The multimedia site with the virtual city map will serve 3 functions:

- source of information for project participants as well as outsiders;
- documentary archive and a tool for tracing the project and making it transparent

- interactive surface allowing for the development of an online community and its expansion indefinitely.

Platform 2: Film documentaries

Bringing together famous Hungarian film makers and video artists, film documentaries will be created and distributed on television and by online media. These films allow viewers personally experience the individual life stories of migrants. In conveying information targeting the audience using professional artistic means, a positive change of attitudes is sought with respect to refugees.

Platform 3: Documentary art exhibition

The exhibition will present work of art created with the involvement of contemporary Hungarian artists drawing on experiences obtained from migrants in the course of the project. Not only direct artistic reflections on the themes of the project will be exhibited but also works showing the unfolding of the project, providing a model of participatory art enterprises

Platform 4: Festival

The closing event of the project is a festival to be organized at A38 Ship Concert Hall and Cultural center will consist in presentations and professional discussion of the project, followed by a variety of cultural programs: opening of the exhibition, screenings, performances, concerts.

The closing event of the project will present the experiences of the migrants from their own points of view, through document based artwork facilitated and mediatized by artists. The main point of the festival is to attract the broadest possible audience by targeting its subgroups by means of different media. The aim is to reach newly arrived migrants living in immigration reception centers, just like young people growing upon community media channels, or members of the high society, that is, a widerange of people of different social statuses and cultural consumption habits.

A38 as a highprofile producer and presenter of artwork, with a vast experience and know-how in managing culturalprograms and a socially committed concept of business and marketing, guarantees that the project will make a significant impact.

We are seeking partners who:

- * are interested in theconnection of culture and societal engagement
- * have experience with largescale cultural projects
- * have experience in working with migrants and other marginalized groups of society
- * have strong connections with their cities, meaning interaction with and visibility among locals
- * have good public relations, media and telecommunication connections

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