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Creative Lenses Forum London | Innovative Business Models in the Arts

Contributed by Jerneja Rebernak clf-newsletter The first **Creative Lenses Forum** will bring together 100 thinkers and managers from arts and cultural organisations, academia and business **in London** on 13 October 2016, **to explore business models in independent arts venues and performing arts organisations**. **Creative Lenses** is a 4-year European funded project that sets to research and enable business model innovation of cultural and arts organisations. It aims to **develop their innovation capacities without compromising their artistic integrity**. The initiators of this project are, 2 academic institutions, University of the Arts London and University of Basilicata, as well as Trans Europe Halles (the) and the International Performing Arts Network(IETM) representing the wider independent arts sector complementing arts institutions and creative incubators based in 11 European countries. The

Creative Lenses Forum will be an opportunity to hear from experts whom will provide inspiration for **independent art spaces nurturing understanding of business innovation.** Keynotes and workshops will focus on **digital cultural entrepreneurship**, **social innovation**, **IP/copyright** and engage with tools like the **business model canvas** challenging art managers to experiment beyond their usual working practices. The recently published IETM toolkit introduces **business model innovation** to the cultural and the arts sector and elaborates on definitions, strategies and tools of business models. The author of the report Jose Luis Rodriguez, TEH Communications Director, has also developed a business model canvas specifically fit for arts and cultural organisations.

> *...every organisation that delivers value has a business model, whether it is explicit or not. What a business model essentially does is to turn ideas into money or other types of value for the organisation so it can continue its activity.*

Much of these needed discussions informing the sector about innovative engagement with business models will take place at the Creative Lenses Forum. The report on recent business model innovation in the UK performing arts organisations by the University of the Arts London has identified that organisations are still pursuing greater income diversification and cost reduction through a **combination of traditional revenue sources.** These are innovative practices based on collaboration, new commissioning models or the development of new products and services, fundraising and audience expansion. Digital tools present a huge potential, although the sector is still testing these digital tools and the use of digital data. More experimentation and more investment will be needed to identify and spread effective strategies and develop capabilities for their implementation. **Public funding** enables such experimentation to be tested, but the resources are rapidly decreasing. In this light, it becomes important to understand how dependencies on traditional funders can be diminished by clever and bespoke models of financial autonomy that would enable resilience, **community engagement and sustainability** within arts and cultural organisations.

 As in most

European cities, also in London, art venues and independent spaces are often disappearing, because of capital investment within redevelopment projects in the city, following the usual gentrification pattern. As rents are increasing, often the only survival strategies remain centered on commercial revenues, that can sometimes jeopardize the very existence of artistic communities in the city. Findings based on a TEH research in 2015 from a survey of 47 independent centres in 27 European countries shows that organisations still struggle to understand the basics of business models in the arts sector and that these are often inadequate. The Creative Lenses Forum will inform the sector opening up discussions on innovative propositions from experts and up-to date experiences from the arts and cultural field. To secure your place at the Creative Lenses Forum please register here. For more information:

- www.creativelenses.eu
- TEH – Creative Business Models: Insights into Business Models of cultural centres in Trans Europe Halles
- IETM - An introduction to business models (innovation) for arts and cultural organisations.

Jerneja Rebernak is EU Research and Enterprise Coordinator at the University of the Arts London and Creative Lenses UAL Project Manager. She holds an MA in Media Studies from the University of Amsterdam and a BA from Communication Science, University of Ljubljana. She has worked professionally in international organizations like the Asia-Europe Foundation, the Cultural Centre of European Space Technologies, and the European Capital of Culture Maribor.

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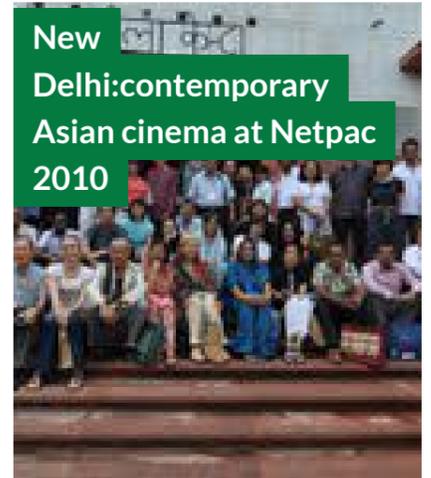
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