



Lifelong
Learning
Programme

EUROPEAN CULTURAL LEARNING NETWORK

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ECLN

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RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS AND ACTION PLAN

(Linking the research to developing a
Curriculum Framework for the Network)



1. Linking Key Relevant Research Findings to Curriculum Aims:

- 1.1 The Artist Freelancers (AFs) and Cultural Organisations (COs) support cultural learning using different art-forms, in different delivery contexts for different purposes using a range of informal, non-formal and formal knowledge transfer and assessment strategies. The proposed core curriculum needs to be flexible enough to support each of these different art-forms, delivery contexts, purposes and strategies.
- 1.2 The main art-forms are Music, Visual Arts, Theatre, Dance, Photography, Audio-Visual Media , Writing; There are 9 delivery contexts: Professional- individual, group and community; Specialist-individual, group and community; Generalist-individual, group and community; There are 5 generic knowledge-transfer strategies in use: mentoring, coaching, teamwork, project work, training and there are 9 assessment strategies: Reflective Practice, Goal-centred, Distance Travelled, Community (Satisfaction and Mutual support), Conversations and Dialogue, Participant Performance, Added Value, Formal review and External Recognition.
- 1.3 The Curriculum needs to be developed from the competencies evident in the research as the top 5 skills used by AFs and COs and then tested in practice with partners. The Curriculum also needs to be approached as a Menu rather than a prescribed set of core competencies because of the diversity of the practice in the sector and to cater for specific emphases and purposes. The COs will be driven by their organisational culture, mission, values, objectives and current and future market opportunities and the AFs by their flexible working practices and opportunities to apply their skillset to market opportunities in line with their personal and professional values.
- 1.4 There need to be appropriate knowledge transfer strategies for each of the 9 cultural learning contexts, which were identified through the research pilot in Estonia and supported by the research findings. Each curriculum element will, therefore, need to have references to these 9 cultural learning contexts.
- 1.5 The biggest issue for developing the Curriculum is Assessment. Assessment strategies will need to fit the organisational range of COs and the working styles of AFs, who predominantly use informal and non-formal methods of learning and knowledge transfer. The key point here is to recognise that the Cultural Learning sector forms a Community of Practice that recognises each other as members in a constituency as AFs and as COs. There is a consensus or shared notion about what constitutes a proficient, competent and novice standard of practice and

they are able to articulate the shared contexts of that practice as well as recognising the key art-forms used in that practice.

1.6 The Curriculum and the assessment strategies used to determine the level of competence in any of the Curriculum elements needs to be able to be up-held, valued, integrated and embodied within this Community of practice and for this to occur it needs to be owned by the Sector rather than imposed by an external locus of authority. However, a bridge must be built from this internal Curriculum Framework to one or more external reference points such as the European Qualifications Framework and National Qualification Frameworks. Evaluation strategies used in the Sector for 'Self-Evaluation', 'Evaluation by those Supported' and 'Evaluation by Others' are evident in a portfolio of evaluation strategies identified through the research and these embody the range of informal, non-formal and formal assessment strategies that fit with the sector. The Curriculum clearly also needs to have a Menu of Assessment strategies that AFs and COs can select from and use so that these are 'fit for purpose'. To attempt to impose a formal assessment system in a predominantly informal and non-formal learning environment is to fail to see the vital opportunity to embrace, recognise and validate informal and non-formal learning and to fail to meet the challenge to measure the invisible and to make all learning count. This is a matter of social justice and there is a European Directive to enforce this recognition and validation in all EU member States.

2. Useful Case Studies to consider in relation to the ECLN Curriculum:

2.1 There are two useful case studies that will help us to think through the issues for developing the ECLN Curriculum Framework. Firstly, the American Society of Training and Development (ASTD), which has its own Certification process for the Certified Performance and Learning Professional (CPLP) with a Re-Certification process for members of the CPLP community. Reed International were able to get this American qualification recognised by the UK National Qualifications Framework at Level 7 (EQF Level 7). Secondly, the Euro-Aspire framework and Toolkit for the Recognition and Validation of Cultural Learning Practitioners in 5 European countries and currently being transferred across a further 4 European countries.

2.2 ASTD has been a professional association operating in the United States for over 70 years and is now providing professional advice, guidance, learning resources, thought leadership, training and certification across the world. ASTD's certification process is quite formal and involves 2 elements: the on-line multiple choice examination on the core competences of Performance and Learning at

Level 7 and the 'work package', which is a portfolio of evidence linked to one area of expertise in the core competencies. This 'work package' is assessed by 3 members of the CPLP Community of Practice who have a simple marking framework. Below the standard, meets the standard or is above the standard. There is a proviso that applicants have to have been in the industry for at least 3 years and that the work package must be based on recent work over a period of time. However, what is of most interest to ECLN is the Re-Certification process which enables individuals who have been through the Certification process to 'keep their proficient status' and their membership of the CPLP community of Practice 'live'. This Re-Certification process is a portfolio of evidence that indicates an active role in this Community of practice as a 'Proficient' member. This CPLP Re-Certification portfolio is based on a menu with allocated points and a maximum number of points drawn from each category to ensure a spread. can include specific evidence of the following

- a) Public output in the form of published work, speaking at conferences, summits etc.
- b) Advocacy and Advising Government or Public Policy;
- c) External recognition
- d) Higher Education or Further High Level Certified Learning;
- e) Leadership
- f) Innovation in a professional context

This Re-certification process draws on a range of informal, non-formal and formal learning accomplished by individual members of the CPLP community of practice and this benefits the Community of Practice by engaging its 'Senior' members in a recognised framework for Continuing Professional Development so that the Community remains dynamic in its outlook and models life-long learning attitudes.

2.3 The Euro-Aspire (EA) Framework and Toolkit took up the challenge to embrace, recognise and validate informal and non-formal learning in the field of cultural learning. It is not aimed as a learning curriculum but rather it is an achievement curriculum based on the tacit knowledge, skills and attitudes of cultural learning practitioners in 5 countries within Europe. EA is currently being transferred across a further 4 European countries. EA provides ECLN with a framework for understanding some key elements that have already gained a consensus or shared notion about what constitutes a proficient, competent and novice standard of practice. Furthermore, EA has devised a methodology of assessment that fits with the COs and AFs of the Cultural Learning Community of Practice, which uses a technique of Reflective Practice against the EA competences for a specific profile (Trainee, Competent, Proficient) supported by video-footage

followed by a Professional dialogue with a Proficient Peer Mentor, which is also recorded on video for the purposes of moderation. There are some useful tools that ECLN can borrow or adapt from EA and this needs to be explored further.

3. Next steps to create the ECLN Curriculum Framework and Content:

3.1 To construct the Framework ECLN Partners will need to do the following:

- a) Identify the profiles and learning contexts of the ECLN partners using the Research Charts that were used in the ECLN Research project.
- b) Define the rationale and methodology of the Curriculum based on Partner Profiles AND the research findings;
- c) Create the Menus within the Curriculum: Art-forms, Cultural Learning Contexts, Knowledge Transfer Strategies, Assessment Strategies, Community of Practice Protocols.
- d) Discuss these with ECLN Partners in sub-groups of 3-4 partners and develop the Curriculum Content alongside these sub-group in relation to certain shared and individual Curriculum elements e.g. 3 Curriculum items shared between each subgroup and one Curriculum item for each individual partner. There will be 3 sub-groups.
- e) Then, once the Curriculum Framework and Content are developed ECLN partners will move onto the testing phase in the sub-groups.

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