

EUNIC Climate Culture(s) Creative Lab



23 - 28 June 2023
Pfefferberg, Berlin, Germany

A message from Johannes Ebert, Secretary General Goethe-Institut, EUNIC President 2022/2023

Currently, there are not many topics that are touching everyone's lives more than the climate crisis does. So, it was no surprise when EUNIC members at the General Assembly last year named it as a topic of common interest, one that our network is committed to addressing collectively.

Each day, we are confronted with alarming news about the impending consequences of climate change. Predictions of an ice-free Arctic by 2030, global warming reaching 1.5 degrees Celsius between 2030 and 2050, melting glaciers, rising sea levels, prolonged droughts, and devastating floods paint a dire picture of our planet's future.

But what can we as cultural institutes do? What could be our role?

1. We connect.

The climate crisis is not an isolated issue, it is connected to global justice, migration, responsibility, and consumption. To solve these issues, we need to collaborate across disciplines. Only if we make the connection between these critical issues and bring those together who understand how they interplay, we can come closer to understanding the necessary changes and how to bring them about.

2. We raise awareness and bring creative perspectives.

The climate crisis can be abstract for many people who are not directly affected by it. We work with artists who possess the unique ability to communicate its personal impact creatively. Artists and cultural worker who are deeply rooted in their communities, know what moves them and how to relate to them. We can be the driver of such initiatives.

3. We think globally.

The Climate Crisis is not a local issue, it is a global challenge and can only be tackled through solidarity and cooperation across countries and regions. International cultural relations have a pivotal role in strengthening the inter-disciplinary cooperation globally, regionally and locally.

I am delighted that this group came together in Berlin to reflect on these issues, and to think about how to become a changemaker for the EUNIC network. It was a real opportunity to grow together and build lasting relationships which will benefit our EUNIC network now and in the future.

Opening remarks on the Climate Culture(s) Creative Lab

Last summer the EUNIC General Assembly identified climate action as the priority topic when the Goethe-Institut proposed a new shared project as a part of their Presidency of the EUNIC network.

Following an open call to all EUNIC members, 31 colleagues from 20 of our EUNIC members came together for the CCCL. Our goal was to seek out and bring together climate champions from amongst our membership, to connect and build capacity amongst our network, and to build a lasting network of change makers on the space of global cultural relations, climate and the environment, continuing to reimagine EUNIC together along the way. No small task!

The CCCL experience highlighted many core assets which the EUNIC network and cultural relations community can bring to the climate movement. As the group highlighted in their outcomes, cultural relations have the ability, reach and responsibility to act.

The encounters with experts showed that despite overwhelming unprecedented scientific evidence base, the science alone is not enough. The climate crisis is a cultural crisis, a values crisis and it requires the deeper emotional and experiential dimensions culture can bring. As Julie's Bicycle underlined, the climate crisis is an everything crisis; EUNIC has always actively sought to expand the understanding of what culture is, as well as culture's role in international relations and global governance. With COP28 potentially being the Culture COP, we need to strengthen our concerted action.

The cultural relations approach at the heart of EUNIC's founding strives for reciprocity and mutual benefit, the stark levels of injustice in the climate crisis require honesty, integrity and accountability in a global context. EUNIC's global network, attention to local context and cultural relations vision can play a vital role in building trust, empathy and understanding.

The tireless energy and commitment of our participants, team and partners for the CCCL was a moving and uplifting experience. It was a week I will not forget. Aiming to bring a collective shift in the network's commitment to climate action, the CCCL also embodied the ethos EUNIC strives to cultivate as a membership association: From the outset in Berlin, the group consciously grounded its collective work on principles including dialogue, solidarity, courage, ambition and love. In the face of unprecedented challenges optimism remains.

Andrew Manning
Director, EUNIC

Climate crisis as cultural crisis

The earth's temperature is hotter than it has been for over 1 million years. Most of that warming has occurred within the last fifty years. We have embarked on a very risky experiment with life on earth, and we are running it at breakneck speed, this in spite of knowing that it will not end well.

We feel it, all of us; the volatile and violent weather, the painful sense of things missing – insects, birds, wild places – and the near-constant anxiety for this world we have made. We owe it to ourselves to take action, and we owe it to the more-than-human world. Those of us with more power, especially on the back

of colonialism, have more to do. Because the climate crisis is, fundamentally, a crisis in cultural values. At the heart of this predicament is an extractive and materialist ideology that has created an enduringly inequitable global economic system. This has dispossessed millions of people of land and livelihoods and is devastating the natural world.

The **climate crisis is a cultural crisis**, and it follows that culture-led solutions are climate solutions. This is an incredible moment for culture – heritage, the arts and the creative industries – to commit to creativity of the highest order, and to serve the immediate needs of us all.

Because climate diplomacy is failing. Perhaps Cultural diplomacy and relentlessly good, ethical cultural relations, can do what politics, technology, science and finance seem unable to on their own: spotlight culture and why it matters; strengthen culture-led climate, nature and justice solutions; create different – better – realities with skilful dialogue, cultural exchange and artful experiences.

Spending time at the Culture Climate Lab with this group of exceptionally committed EUNIIC members was a privilege. Cultural relations is a critical frontier for climate and these young people are vital to this moment. I for one will do everything I can to support them on their journey.



Alison Tickell,
Founder & Director of Julie's Bicycle

ABOUT THE LAB

The Climate Culture(s) Creative Lab emerged in the framework of Goethe-Institut's presidency of EUNIC in 2022/23. Building on EUNIC's previous work and continued engagement in the field of culture and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, this programme was developed to support emerging leadership in the areas of environment, climate and culture and to encourage more collaboration and a stronger network among EUNIC members on these topics at new levels.



Through an open call to the entire network published in January 2023, each EUNIC member was invited to nominate up to 2 participants from their organisation to take part in the hybrid programme. In the end, 31 participants from 20 EUNIC members participated in 3 preparatory online meetings from March 2023. The programme culminated in 5 days of training, visits and panel discussions in Berlin in June 2023.

In an effort to **organise the entire programme itself as sustainable as possible**, the organisational team partnered up with vegetarian & local catering, the group moved using public transportation and the closing event took place on a renewable energy fueled boat.

5

days of meeting in
Berlin

31

participants from
across the network

7

local initiatives
visited

19

EUNIC Members

10

External speakers in
panel discussions

PARTNERSHIP

The programme was developed in close collaboration between EUNIC, the Goethe-Institut, and the participants as well as with the support of two external partners, **Julie's Bicycle** and **Social Impact**. While EUNIC and the Goethe-Institut provided the opportunity for engagement and exchange, the CCCLab participants brought in their commitment to building a community and putting the outcomes of the lab into practice.

Julie's Bicycle is a pioneering not-for-profit organisation mobilising the arts and culture to take action on the climate, nature, justice crisis. Based on their [Creative Climate Leadership programme](#), they helped participants understand the broader picture of scientific urgency, the existing climate movement, climate justice, and policy opportunities - within others.

Social Impact are experts in start-up consulting. They supported participants to translate and apply the learnings into concrete ideas within their specific contexts of arts & culture in international relations.



PARTICIPANTS

While most participants joined from headquarters of EUNIC members in Europe, other participants also joined from branches worldwide including from New York, New Delhi, Lebanon, Cairo, and Lagos.

Coming from both national cultural institutes, as well as Ministries of Foreign Affairs, the participants contributed to the lab with their diverse expertise related to culture, climate and environment, ranging from **cultural management and sustainable development to communication, public diplomacy, library-management, contemporary art, climate activism and more.**



Overview of participants from Europe



Global overview of participants

Sessions of the week

JULIE'S BICYCLE

SOCIAL IMPACT

PARTICIPANT-LED SESSIONS

LOCAL INITIATIVES

Creative Climate Justice

'World Café' for brainstorming project working groups & creating space for ideas

Aarushi Khanna - Goethe-Institut New Delhi
AI, Climate, and Culture: Harnessing Technology for a Sustainable Future

Exhibition: EXAMPLES TO FOLLOW! ETF! & Workshop with Folke Köbberling

Systems thinking for Creative Climate Practice

Systemic view: How to link project ideas to EUNIC's mission and resources

Albert Meijer & Tim Wildeboer - DutchCulture HQ
Climate policy and funding: How to include sustainability measures into funding mechanisms

Haus der Materialisierung - Materialization house/ Center for climate-friendly use of resources

Creative Climate Movement

Project ideas impact: Does it work in different contexts?

Carolin Vonbank - Austrian Cultural Forum Cairo
'Take a step forward' exercise to raise awareness about inequalities and opportunities

Visit and Talk at Prinzessinengarten and Paloma Bar/ Clubtopia

Creative Climate Diplomacy

Defining goal/purpose, to address systemic issues

Anna Puklová - Czech Centres HQ
Sustainable film-making

Visit and Talk at Spreepark Art Space

Making Change & Next Steps

Next action points for outcomes of project ideas

Izabela Gola - Polish Cultural Institute New York
ECO Solidarity: Activist Curating and Cultural Programming in times of humanitarian and environmental crises

Visit and Talk at ZKIU Berlin

Johannes Schmidt - ifa Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen Poland
Heritage initiatives & climate policies

Visit and talk at the urban quarter 'Holzmarkt'

Yurii Veselkyi, Julie Arnfred Bojesen, Diana Shvets & Nataliia Druhak - Danish Cultural Institute, Ukrainian Danish Youth House, Ukrainian Institute HQ
The environmental impact of war

Dinner at Zero-Waste restaurant 'Happa'



EXTERNAL SPEAKERS AT PANELS

Climate movement: *Cultural Courage for change*

- Sebastian Brünger, Kulturstiftung des Bundes
- Farina Hoffmann: GenderCC-Women for Climate Justice e.V.
- Frauke Röser, New Climate Institute
- Caitlin Southwick: Ki Culture
- Lauren Uba: Climate Anxiety to Climate Action
- Anne Schwanz, Gallery Climate Coalition Germany

Moderation: Ralf Weiß, 2N2K

Deutschland e.V. / Culture4Climate



Climate policy: *Exploring developments in policy making at the intersections of culture and climate*

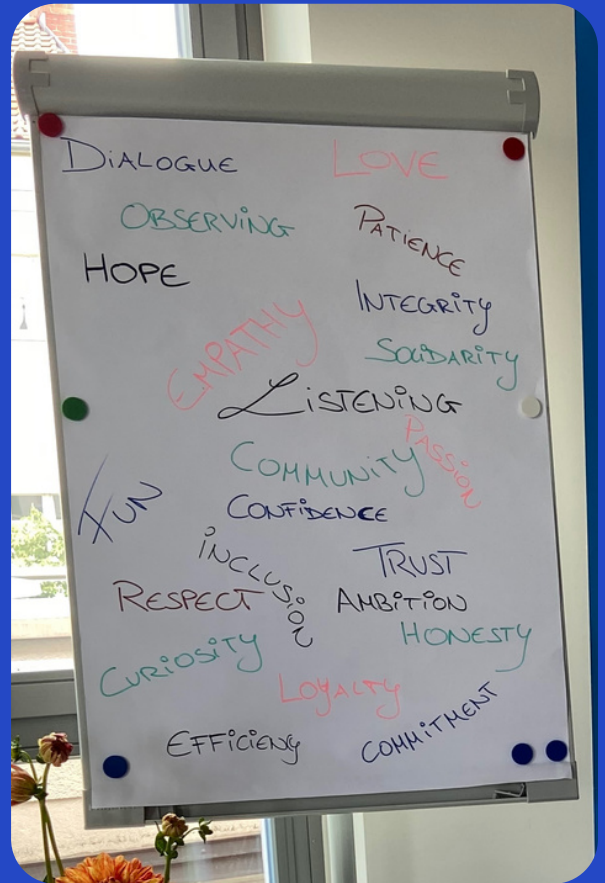
- Prof. Dr. Dirk Messner, Bundesumweltamt (The Federal Environment Agency)
- Nele Heinevetter, Department Culture & Society Federal Foreign Office of Germany

Moderation: Jacob Bilabel, Aktionsnetzwerk Nachhaltigkeit



CORE VALUES

In an exercise with Julie's Bicycle, the participants of the Lab defined together a set of core values to guide the work on culture, climate and environment throughout the week and beyond. These values are at the heart of cultural relations work on climate and environment and need to be upheld at every level. Building on principles of Fair Collaboration and hope-based communication, which are key to the work of EUNIC members, the values also defined the way of working and the group dynamics of the week.



Core values defined by the group



Participants discussing group work on core values

"How can we reimagine arts and culture policy mandates so they are oriented towards climate, nature, justice?"
- Chiara Badiali, Julie's Bicycle

The Climate Culture(s) Tree

During the Lab, participants discussed several creative cultural & climate projects, and looked at challenges and opportunities to this work at different levels. To aid in the thinking process and move towards action, Social Impact suggested the **tree as a useful analogy** for the types of initiatives and commitments the participants were developing.

Each part of the tree relies on the other and is deeply connected. This image helped participants to situate and prioritise initial project ideas, allow new ideas to flourish, and for the recommendations to take shape.



The **leaves** are the cultural relation **projects and initiatives** that blossom and stem from the whole.

The **branches** represent the **structures and processes** of cultural relations work with to achieve outputs.

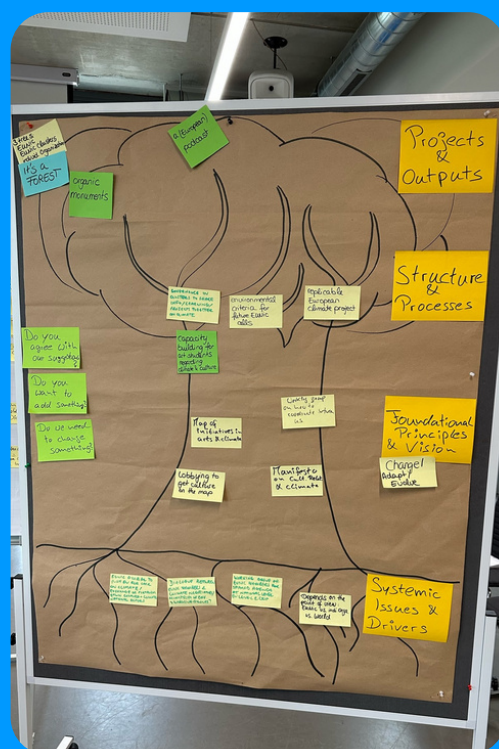
The **trunk** is the core of the tree and symbolises the **founding principles and vision** for the whole. It supports the branches above and reaches down to the roots.

The **roots** are the **systems and drivers of cultural relations** that can either nourish or damage the tree.

There are several "trees" in the collective EUNIC forest: The EUNIC office, the EUNIC clusters as well as the EUNIC members.

They interact with other "tree" systems: The EU institutions and EU Delegations, local and national partners, climate experts, and the cultural sector as a whole.

While they may each be seen as separate trees, they stand together in a collective forest that feeds from the same roots and appears as a single canopy from above. **Culture is an ecosystem.**



ROOTS - SYSTEMIC ISSUES AND DRIVERS

In their session on Systems Thinking, Julie's Bicycle started right at the roots of the Climate Movement and planted the seeds of a different perception of the world and being. Northern European societies often exhibit a binary view on the world, perceiving human life as being separate from nature and not **a part of it**. To find sustainable, creative and peaceful solution it needs a change of perception of the interdisciplinary and interdependent dimensions of this world and understand it as a whole. For a cultural change it is crucial to accept that actions have consequences beyond an individual level and to start to think about **human life in connection to the world around**. Just as the roots of the tree live in coexistence with fungi and microorganisms and thus can provide the rest of the tree with nutrients.

"I believe since we are living on the earth as citizens of this planet we need to make sure that we use it in a way that allows us and future generations to benefit from it."
- Georges Gambadatoun, Goethe-Institut



From parts to wholes.

From structures to processes.

From linear to non-linear.

From hierarchies to networks.

From analysis to synthesis.

From objects to relationships.

'If I am I because you are you,
and you are you because I am
I, then I am not I and you are
not you.'

Menachem Mendel of Kotzk

TRUNK - PRINCIPLES AND VISION

The trunk is the beating heart and lungs of a tree. It is the part that is most visible, connecting the leafy crown with its roots. Like EUNIC and its members, the layers of the trunk run deep, and its multiple rings reveal its long history and core fabric. Understanding the trunk of a tree is key to understanding the tree as a whole. It defines the core of being and the vision for the future of EUNIC as a network.

For the participants it was vital to ensure a solid commitment from EUNIC and its members to climate action and sustainability, which is embedded at the core principles and vision. At the General Assembly, they put forward the **Pfefferberg Convention**, that calls for a collective response to the urgent need for climate action and enables support for it to take place.

"Why must culture be at the heart of climate action? Culture covers interactions between people and all environments. We need to get conscious about how we are engaging in climate action".

- **Kasia Zalaszewska, Polish Institute Bucharest**

We can have many voices from different parts of the world involved in the project and we can all gather and work on a common cause and all have in mind that our objective is to push our ideas forward in a way that involves everyone."

- **Neicia Marsh, Finnish Institute in the UK and Ireland**

The Pfefferberg Convention

Responsibility - EUNIC plays a key role as a national representative, local and global actor.

Ability - EUNIC has resources and experience that can galvanise action and influence change.

Reach - EUNIC has the networks and audiences to take climate action and engage people on climate and sustainability.

We call for climate action to be an overarching priority for EUNIC and its members, for us to show responsiveness and a commitment to true integration in our policies and practice.



BRANCHES - STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

With an intricate mix of branches, boughs, stems and twigs, the communications and connectivity within and between the varied EUNIC network can be symbolised. By being well-aware of developments and opportunities elsewhere, EUNIC's members can grow into similar directions, join up information flows, and grow upwards to turn into meaningful concrete projects in the canopy. What is needed to keep this motion dynamic and constant?

"My wishes are to co-create some policies or guidelines which can be used by all of the EUNIC members to make our work more sustainable in terms of climate and environment."

Yurii Veseskyi, Ukrainian Youth House, Kiev



Connectivity

"We need to break the ice and transcend superficiality to open up on such an important and emotional topic. Let's continue sharing knowledge across this network."

– Aarushi Khanna, Goethe-Institut
India

Two of the participants' projects aim to boost knowledge-sharing and practices across the network - **taking stock of best and worst practices and creating more learning opportunities to implement change.** This offers opportunities for implementation further up the tree.

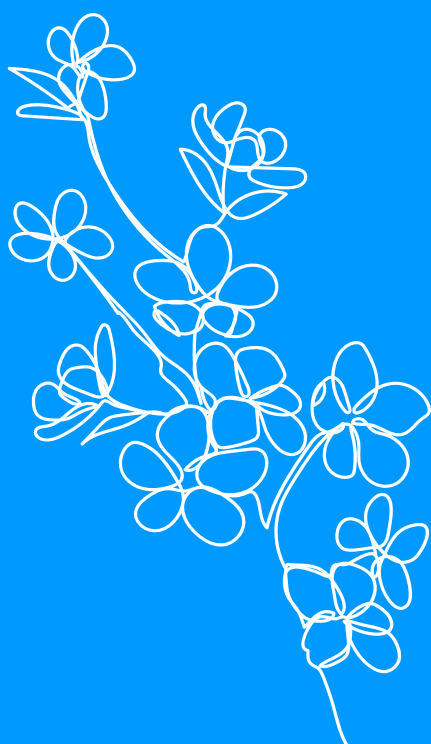
BLOSSOM & LEAVES - PROJECTS

All the way up the tree, EUNIC's individual members and clusters launch projects and programmes. Informed by the newly established principles, projects can address creative climate action in a variety of ways. Of special relevance in this instance is building links with the so-called **creative climate movement** of cultural practitioners and organisations. Julie's Bicycle identified seven trends taking place in the cultural sector aimed at taking climate action. As connectors and amplifiers, EUNIC's members are ideally positioned to support, work with, and learn from those reinventing cultural practices to the benefit of our planet.

Recommendations to EUNIC members & clusters in their projects and outputs:

- Hold space for and bear witness to the **Creative Climate Movement**;
- Take stock of and integrate **climate-oriented practices and solutions**;
- Create and stimulate **new partnerships**; cross-pollination with science and activism.

"It starts with people but it affects governance."
- **Marc Mouarkech, British Council Lebanon**



The canopy

Thinking about EUNIC as an active part in this ecosystem places it closer to pioneering partners & practitioners in the worldwide creative climate movement. Ultimately, fruits and seeds from the tree are taken by the wind or eager paws so that elsewhere, a new tree may grow.

NEXT STEPS

Following the lab in Berlin, six participants, coming from Goethe-Institut India, DutchCulture, the Danish Cultural Institute/Ukrainian-Danish Youth House, Institut français, the Polish Institute in Bucharest and the Finnish Institute in the UK and Ireland, travelled to the EUNIC General Assembly in Copenhagen to present outcomes and recommendations to the network on adopting cultural solutions to the climate crisis.




This was also an opportunity for them to share their professional and personal experiences of the week, emphasising the crucial role of culture in solutions to the climate crisis and bringing inclusivity, intersectionality, democracy, responsibility, and empathy into the conversation.



After an open discussion with network representatives about what can be done at an organisational level in terms of climate action, the group shared what is needed to take next steps collectively. These needs for next steps include increasing knowledge sharing and understanding of each other's organisations in order to avoid overlap, a stronger understanding of the link between climate and culture, more education opportunities for the network and its partners, stronger regional connections as well as building on the strong existing climate movement and giving it more visibility.

Recommendations from the group how to address these needs concretely included: **mapping existing initiatives** across the EUNIC network, highlighting both what worked but also what failed, **improving existing resources** that the network already has, such as the newsletter, and create new ones when needed, and finally to **encourage clusters to work more closely together**.

The following ideas were prepared during the meeting in Berlin, based on the analogy of the Climate Culture(s) tree, outlining specific aims to achieve.

 PROPOSED IDEA	 DESCRIPTION	 AIMS
Pfefferberg Convention (Trunk)	Explicit commitment by all members' heads for internal organisational strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating political will • towards net zero policies; • creation of working group(s)
Sustainability Criteria (Branches)	List of criteria and KPIs for internal organisation and funding calls (application and evaluation processes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • confidence to achieve climate action; • structural approach to climate action.
EUNIC Climate Cultures Mapping (Branches)	Platform for best creative climate practices from across the network and ways to enable the creative climate movement in the cultural and creative sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased exchange of knowledge, inspiration and resources
Public Engagement Events (Leaves)	e.g. creation of organic monuments as a new interpretation of heritage, sparked by clusters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change of values and appreciation of heritage in climate crisis
Creative Climate Education and Advocacy (Leaves)	Knowledge sharing and capacity-building tools for members' colleagues on creative climate action and identification of global key advocacy moments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • driving change; • towards net zero policies.

TESTIMONIES



"There are many starlings in our network that can change our course"
- Albert Meijer, DutchCulture

"People being associated together and having the same though process but also have a different cultural lense – that's very interesting to find out: How people can coloborate, come together and join hands for solving this issue."
- Aarushi Khanna, Goethe-Institute India

„I believe in people and I believe in changes.“ - Vilyana Milanova, Bulgarian State Institute for Culture to the Minister of Foreign Affairs

“Working in a cultural institution, I believe that it's important that whatever we do in our day to day work we make sure that culture can contribute directly or indirectly to making this planet a better place.”
- Georges Gambadatoun, Goethe-Institut Nigeria

„Cultural Relations are extremely important to promote a better understanding of this whole world and the mess we live in and the climate crises is a part of that mess.“
- Marc Mouarkech, British Council Lebanon

Participants overview



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