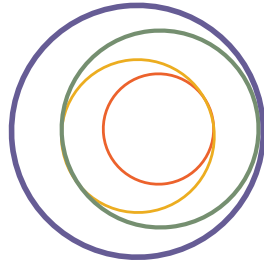# not a toolkit!

Fair Collaboration in Cultural Relations

A ReflAction

Elaborated by Cristina **Farinha**, Avril **Joffe**,
Matina **Magkou**, Anna **Steinkamp**, Katelijn **Verstraete**,
Sudebi **Thakurata** and **D.epicentre** (design partner)

Use of material in this publication

For the development of the Fair ReflAction Game we built on the work created by Dorota Ogrodszka, Aniko Racz, Doreen Toutikian and Konrad Gadzina for the Gamified Workshop Toolkit, part of the RESHAPE project and licensed under the **Creative Commons License Attribution- ShareAlike 4.0 International** (**CC BY- SA 4.0**)

THE FAIRNESS CHECKER FOR MANAGING COLLABORATION PROJECTS

GUIDING QUESTIONS THROUGHOUT THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT CYCLE FOR FAIR COLLABORATION IN CULTURAL RELATIONS

Projects' conception and implementation are the moments when fair collaboration in cultural relations can be put into life. As projects are the moment when practices manifest, values unfold, concepts are challenged and commonalities and differences become tangible, this "Fairness Checker" is dedicated to the project management cycle.

WHAT IS THE FAIRNESS CHECKER?

The "Fairness Checker" is designed to sustain individual and organisational reflAction processes and help detect possible and potential moments of shifting towards fairer collaborations.

It is composed of a set of guiding questions for conceiving, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating a project taking fairness into consideration. The questions, building upon context, content, concepts and values of fair collaboration in cultural relations, are structured around the project management cycle covering all dimensions of sustainability in its wider sense. The questions provide for and incite self-assessment, self-positioning, and, most importantly reflAction before, during and after the project.

Hence, the "Fairness Checker" is at the same time a tool for:

- Designing cultural relations programming
- Planning cultural relations projects
- Monitoring cultural relations projects
- Evaluating cultural relations projects
- Ensuring transparency among partners

HOW DOES THE FAIRNESS CHECKER INTERACT WITH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE NON-TOOLKIT?

The *"Fairness Checker"* is a practical application of other components of the present non-toolkit, such as the *"Ways of..."*, and the *"Fair ReflAction Game"* . It can also be used to deepen a learning or reflAction process of an organisation and, as such, is complementary to the *"Organisational Wheel"*.

WHO COULD USE THE FAIRNESS CHECKER?

This component is primarily designed for project managers and practitioners working in or with the EUNIC network. It can also prove useful to project managers and practitioners active in the field of cultural relations and cooperation in general. Further, it could also be helpful for those enabling projects or shaping framework conditions for the latter (e.g. funding organisations, decision-makers, policy makers providing funding guidelines).

The checker can be used by individuals themselves (e.g. as a learning journal or as a checklist) or in a gamified version by project teams of an organisation and/or including the partner's organisation' teams (see instructions below).

This way each person/organisation may create their own playground/ journey of how the ideas of fairness have progressed in managing collaboration projects.

WHEN TO USE THE FAIRNESS CHECKER AND WHY?

The set of questions can be used at any time of the project management cycle but ideally at the very beginning when planning and conceiving a project. Later on, it can also serve as a monitoring and evaluation tool regarding fair practices in project management. The questions are designed to encourage reflAction on all perspectives involved in filling the project with life, especially those of the partners.

WHAT MAY REQUIRE THE USE OF THE FAIRNESS CHECKER?

When using the "Fairness Checker" as a group (e.g. a team, a consortium of partners), it is recommended to appoint a facilitator who would be:

- Able to unpack and translate the guiding questions into actual questions for the specific context of the present group and to provide a space for conversation and reflAction

- Experienced in international cultural cooperation, and cultural programming

- Able to understand challenges and difficulties that might emerge during transnational cooperation projects

- Knowledgeable of the specific needs and working contexts of the group

- Capable of enabling the group to reflect about their positionality, e.g. by answering the following questions:

  - What countries are we working in and with?

  - What kind of power dynamics might be linked with it?

  - What economic and/or political inequalities — compared to the partners' country / organisation — are we aware of?

  - What kind of resources do we have and are we able to acquire?

  - How big / powerful is our own organisation?

WHAT TO DO WITH THE FINDINGS?

It might not be feasible to deal, change, or shift all the practices or habits identified as "unfair". We therefore recommend to define internally which are the non-negotiable conditions of fair practice by answering the following:

- *Which are the practices found unfair and that might be eliminated from the project management?*
- *Can specific steps and mechanisms to make these fairer be defined?*
- *What kind of correction mechanisms need to be introduced?*
- *Whom else needs to be included for that?*

We would suggest keeping it feasible and simple! It is advisable to think in small steps and introduce change gradually; and regularly to offer a space to re-discuss these changes with other colleagues and/or partners and to try to see whether these changes are becoming a part of practice in the long run. It could also be considered drafting own guidelines for managing projects fairly or using a more targeted project management tool (project canvas) that takes fairness into account.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR "PLAYING" THE FAIRNESS CHECKER

The duration depends on if one specific or all phases are picked, if all questions are reflActed on or only those from a specific lens or dimension. The Fairness Checker adapts to the needs of the user(s).

Independently, if the Fairness Checker is used individually or within a team (ideally facilitated by an expert in cooperation projects), the following procedure is proposed:

GET PREPARED

- Decide if you do a "quick check" and go through the whole cycle at once or if you pick one, step by step. Suggested duration time: from 1hr (e.g. for one phase) to a 1 day-workshop (whole cycle).

- Accordingly, pick the stage of the project management cycle you are in/you want to start with.

- If you do it as a team, it is advisable to create a safe space and decide whether findings will be kept confidential or whether you will use it as part of a documented planning, monitoring and learning process. If so, please reflect previously on who and how you will document the outcomes to be able to use them afterwards.

- Define a timeframe for each phase (see above) and each question (e.g. 2 minutes reflAction in silence, 10 minutes to share and discuss in the team)

- The Cards

- For a digital use: collaboration tool (e.g. Miro, Mural)

- For on site use: sticky notes, markers/pens, sticker's/pins

PLAY THE GAME

- he orange set of cards will help you define, reflect, discuss and apply your *individual stake* in a team towards the project.

- The blue set of cards will help you define, reflect, discuss and apply your *stakes as organisation* towards the project.

- The green set of cards will help you define, reflect, discuss and apply *systemic goals* as an individual, team and/or organisation towards the project.

The first step involves blindly picking out ONE card from the ORANGE (individual) pile.

Once all the players have chosen their cards, each player takes 2 minutes to reflect on their respective cards through doodles, mind-maps or jotting down their thoughts on a sticky note. If you do it on your own, you take the time you need.

The next 10 minutes can be spent discussing and voting on the ideas that players resonate with to be applied in the project management. As an individual, you can take notes at this step.

The second step involves each player blindly picking out ONE card from the BLUE (Organisational) pile and laying them out for the rest of the team to engage with.

Once all the players have laid out their cards, the players take 10 minutes to generate insights on any of the cards that have been laid out through doodles, mind-maps or jotting down their thoughts on a sticky note.

The next 10 minutes can be spent discussing the ideas that players resonate with to be applied in the project management.

The team can then proceed to do the same with the organisational and the systemic deck (GREEN pile).
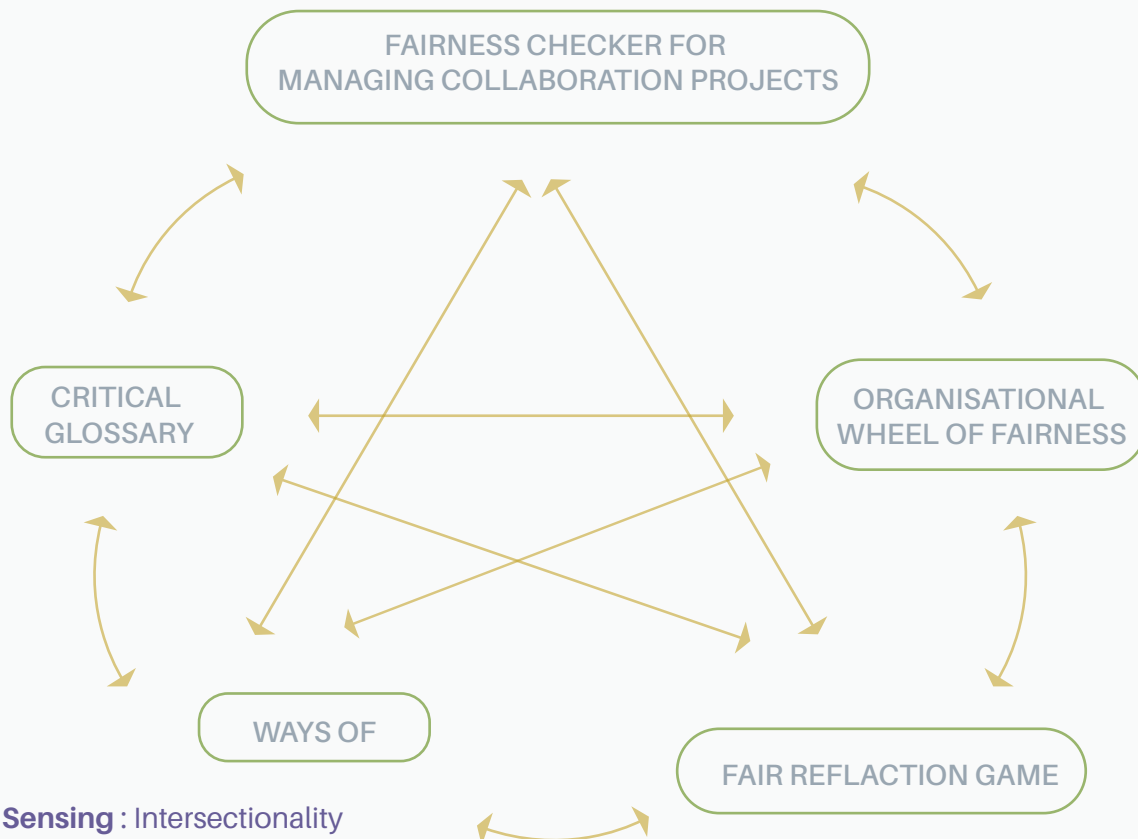
⊙ RESOURCES

"An exploration of possibilities and challenges of fair international cultural cooperation" (May 2021):

https://dutchculture.nl/sites/default/files/2021-05/DutchCulture-Publicatie%20Fair-2021-DEF.pdf

Click here to get the downloadable cards and diagram.

Each component of the *Not a Toolkit! Fair Collaboration in Cultural Relations- A ReflAction* is connected to all other components. After finishing your reflAction journey in this section continue journaling in the next part.

FAIRNESS CHECKER FOR
MANAGING COLLABORATION PROJECTS

CRITICAL
GLOSSARY

ORGANISATIONAL
WHEEL OF FAIRNESS

WAYS OF

FAIR REFLACTION GAME

Sensing : Intersectionality
Thinking : Decolonisation & Racism
Doing : Fair Evaluation
Connecting : ReflAction
Sensing : Injustice
Thinking : Climate Emergency