

ON
THE
MOVE

CULTURAL MOBILITY YEARBOOK

2024



Co-funded by
the European Union

Executive Summary

This is now our third Yearbook analysing trends in cultural mobility. The first, covering activity from 2021, had a special focus on the digital mobility that was then springing up in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. A second edition, in 2022, looked at the topic of environment and sustainability and its growing ubiquity in response to overlapping ecological crises. This new edition looks back at these two themes while relating them to a third – **training and professional development**. As a topic, it provides a window onto the concerns of today by linking them to our ideas of what's coming next.

The first section of this yearbook is dedicated to analysing open calls that were published on the On the Move website in 2023 – in total, 551 calls for funded mobility opportunities, with 77 countries

and territories as destinations. We attempt to chart changes across regions, disciplines and types of mobility in order to get a broad view of what happened throughout the year.

In the second section two writers give a personal perspective on the subject of training and professional development. In a first article, Birgitta Persson reflects on the changing face of international collaboration, sketching five key challenges for the field to consider, ranging from the importance of local learning and cross-collaboration to the impact of AI and new technology as it reformulates the 'live'. In the second, Vânia Rodrigues questions internationalisation in light of the green transition, highlighting a need for 'unlearning ways of doing which are tied to colonialist and mercantilist legacies'.

Key insights

- **86% of all calls focused on in-person activities – around the same share as last year.**

- **Hybrid mobility has found its place in the 'new normal'**. Calls that involved a mix of online and in-person activity made up 10.5% of all calls in 2023, versus 9.1 % in 2022.

- **Online-only formats, however, continued to decline**. After falling from 18.5% of all calls in 2021 to 6.4% in 2022, online-only or remote opportunities made up just 3.4% of calls in our data for 2023. Of these, a third were focused on training and professional development – a key format for online work.

- **82 calls were labelled as relating thematically to environment and sustainability – 14.9% of all calls during 2023**. In spite of this topical interest, opportunities providing extra financial support for green forms of travel remain rare.

Around 1 in 10 calls in our 2023 data were principally focused on training and professional development. While these opportunities were present across art forms, Performing Arts (25% of the subset) and Music & Sound (16.1%) were more strongly represented.

Africa was the region where training made up the largest share of opportunities – 32.3%. Regionally, calls showed some different assumptions about the experience levels of participants, with opportunities outside Western/Northern Europe calls tending to focus more on practical/hands-on experiences and 'essential' skills. In countries with higher levels of subvention and more established art scenes, programmes seldom concentrated on 'hard' skills, and often described themselves by focusing on how they planned to change or evolve the sector as a whole (rather than the skills of participants).

Looking across the formats and content of all calls focused on training we can make some observations:

- **41% of training calls adopted either online-only or hybrid formats.** Hybrid formats (30% of training calls) favoured an initial online phase (usually a small commitment spread over a longer timeframe) followed by a short, intense period of in-person work. While it may be common for training to take place online, only 8.9% of training calls had a focus on digital skills themselves, either artistic or administrative.
- **37.5% of training calls were open to culture professionals** – more than twice the share of other opportunities in our data. Calls that targeted artists also sometimes centred on production, fundraising, or marketing: while 51% of calls focused on artistic training, 43.1% were focused on administrative matters, and 5.9% a mix of both.
- **The emphasis was mainly on contextual knowledge, reflection, and discussion – engaged with during group work.** 64.3% of calls involved some sort of collective work, and peer learning was common above 'hierarchical' learning formats. 37.5% of training calls described themselves as involving mentoring, speaking to the need for responsive, tailored forms of support.
- **Aside from art form, the most common factor of eligibility was age** – 26.8% of calls had a maximum age – with 35 years the most common cut-off. As is often the case, however, time and means are 'hidden' obstacles to participation: **only around a third of training calls (32.1%) paid any stipend for the time of training itself.** 5.7% made additional funding available to cover access costs.