



ARTS COUNCIL MALTA

# STRATEGY

**2025** / CARE  
CREATE  
FLOURISH





*Fly Like a Butterfly – Vince Piscopo*



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# FOREWORD

FOR THE PAST SIX YEARS, ARTS COUNCIL MALTA (ACM) HAS PROMOTED INNOVATION WITHIN MALTA'S CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTORS WHILE ALSO SAFEGUARDING THE DYNAMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY'S CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS. WE HAVE BUILT A SUSTAINABLE CREATIVE ECONOMY FOR ARTISTS AND PRACTITIONERS, FACILITATING PARTICIPATION AND CONTINUING TO SERVE AS A STRATEGIC LEADER AND CATALYST WITHIN THE SECTORS. FURTHERMORE, ACM ALSO WORKS TO INCREASE THE ACCESSIBILITY OF CULTURAL AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES WITHIN MALTA'S CULTURAL ECOSYSTEM.

When Strategy2020 was launched in 2015, our local cultural and creative sectors were a different landscape to what we see now. Since then, we have witnessed an unprecedented increase in government investment in the sectors, a bolder presence of Malta within the international artistic community, and stronger local and international partnerships. The knowledge base concerning how these sectors function, as well as their overall social and cultural impact, has also been nurtured and expanded, and ever more people are benefitting from public funding – both directly and indirectly. Public Cultural Organisations and independent cultural entities in Malta have improved their capacity building exponentially, and arts education and schools are being increasingly prioritised via collaborations with artists to increase students' exposure to the arts.

Our strategic success has resulted from bold and fruitful collaborative efforts with a wide range of stakeholders, both in the public sector and with artists and cultural operators whose dynamism, creativity and innovation have enriched the sectors substantially over the past few years. Throughout it all, ACM has played a central and vital role in investment, advocacy and support, empowering and facilitating these improvements over the years.

Nevertheless, at ACM we are acutely aware that challenges remain, which we will need to address over the coming years. In particular, we aim to focus on creative and artistic engagement across all age groups, especially given the adversity faced since 2020. We intend to open up new opportunities by facilitating stronger collaborations between educational institutions and cultural organisations and practitioners as a key starting point.

Despite recent challenges relating to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the cultural and creative sectors, ACM's first strategy can be considered a success. The difficulties and misfortune we faced motivated a rethink of how best to support sectoral development, and we have used this opportunity to address the artistic and cultural needs and concerns of both the sectors and the Maltese public. To this end, we increased our participatory mechanisms so as to hold and facilitate our public consultation process leading towards Strategy 2025. We conducted extensive conversations with the public and artistic, cultural and creative representatives, and we also held internal retrospectives and evaluation procedures targeting the different challenges and opportunities faced over the years.

With the National Cultural Policy 2021 having been launched in September 2021, Strategy 2025 aims to contribute to its implementation alongside strategies from other relevant public entities. We aim to align our goals with the Policy's priorities and commitment to embracing culture for the well-being of all, highlighting the importance of cultural rights within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals and addressing the Status of the Artist head on – something which has become ever more pertinent given the recent challenging global context.

Strategy 2025 has been designed together with the people it will most impact. Our participatory approach to the strategy's creation is being practised with immediacy. Culture is where new narratives and mindsets are developed and new societal shifts occur. Importantly, it is an enabler of long-term sustainability. Care, Create, Flourish is our mantra, best capturing how ACM will enable and position the sustainable and inclusive growth of Malta's cultural and creative sectors as being integral to the well-being of all. Sustainability and inclusivity shall be endorsed holistically and comprehensively in policy directions, funding and investment.

Since drafting Strategy 2025, we have gathered invaluable feedback from ACM's stakeholder groups, including cultural and creative practitioners, organisations, sectoral representatives and public entities operating within and/or with an interest in arts and culture. The feedback has indicated that we are on the right track to addressing the sector's main challenges and ambitions, which is encouraging. ACM is also appreciative and grateful for the time, insights, suggestions and comments that have led to improvements made to Strategy 2025.

Now, ACM presents our final Strategy 2025, paving the way for our work in the coming four years. The staff at ACM looks forward to working with all stakeholders to continue supporting and promoting the development of Malta's cultural and creative sectors.

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# CARE CREATE FLOURISH - TOWARDS STRATEGY 2025

IN DECEMBER 2015, ARTS COUNCIL MALTA (ACM) PUBLICLY LAUNCHED ITS FIRST STRATEGY, NAMED STRATEGY2020. AT THE TIME, THE VALLETTA 2018 EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE WAS AT THE CENTRE OF MALTA'S CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND, THEREFORE, IT WAS THE HUB OF OUR PLANS TOO. THIS WAS A CRUCIAL PERIOD FOR MALTA AND ACM AS IT WOULD SET THE TONE FOR VALLETTA'S LEGACY BEYOND THE MOMENTOUS YEAR.

2018 was a transformative moment for ACM as it drove our vision to place the arts firmly at the heart of Malta's future. Simultaneously, we also established concrete actions to work towards building the foundations for Malta's post-2020 cultural development – steps to be accomplished through ongoing conversations with local communities that form the creative ecology we strive to support.

At ACM, we believe that our work over the past six years has enabled us to continue carving out our path as a strategic leader for Malta's cultural and creative sectors. We have built several meaningful partnerships to promote and foster widespread creative and cultural expression, practice and participation.

We did not expect to realise our long-term vision within a short five years. Yet, we have nevertheless been able to evaluate and measure our successes on our path to fulfilling our vision. Our unprecedented level of investment in the development of artistic and cultural work through funding, brokerage, research, advocacy and capacity-building initiatives has significantly contributed to bringing the value of arts and creativity to the forefront of public discourse. Evidence shows that cultural participation has increased across socio-demographic groups in Malta over the past six years. Moreover, the data we have gathered suggests that the creative work we supported has indeed positively impacted local communities, both socially and economically.

Be that as it may, audience development and sustaining audience engagement across age groups remain crucial challenges that need to be addressed, especially given the evidence gathered over the past two years. We have supported and strengthened the capacities of the Public Cultural Organisations (PCOs) within our remit, and the result we witness is cultural programming that pushes boundaries. While still in need of further advancement, our collaborations with public entities, as well as private and voluntary organisations from within and outside the creative and cultural sectors, have also been reinforced. The development of such relationships further reflects ACM's position as a cultural leader.

Despite our successes over the past few years, several structural challenges came our way, made ever more visible in 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic shook the creative and cultural sectors globally and nationally. As a result, more than ever before, we need to be flexible and self-reflexive in our approach to the development of Strategy 2025 as we continue to rethink and reflect on what lies ahead.

We stepped into September 2020 ready to embark on a public consultation process designed to evaluate the strengths and challenges of Strategy2020 while gaining insight into the diverse needs, concerns and aspirations of those with direct or indirect involvement and interest in Malta's cultural and creative sectors. We aimed to learn from our work over the past six years to build on our strengths and address the current and future challenges shaping our cultural ecosystem. From the outset, we agreed that our next strategy must be even more adaptable, pragmatic and ambitious to effectively reflect and handle our turbulent times.

By incorporating an open-ended, participatory and rapid qualitative research methodology, we conversed with over 200 people from across socio-demographic backgrounds, localities and roles within Malta's creative ecology. Our nine-month-long research process started with thematic discussions with internal stakeholders, including ACM staff and PCO representatives. These led to a further 10 thematic talks with the general public, which primarily included representatives of diverse practices from across Malta's cultural and creative sectors. Discussions were held online due to the pandemic; however, to maximise engagement, the public was encouraged to submit comments and suggestions before and after the sessions. In addition, five individual interviews with key experts who have worked with the ACM over the past six years were held during the final phase.

Our entire research process aimed at generating solution-oriented recommendations for topics highlighted by our initial desk research into reviews of national and European cultural policy documents, domestic and international academic research, annual reports and conversations with stakeholders. Our discussion points mainly revolved around issues such as the status of artists and creative practitioners, funding, career development in arts and culture, equality within the cultural and creative sectors, community cultural spaces, long-term sustainability, digitalisation, artistic research, internationalisation, education and cultural governance. The stakeholders and members of the public involved offered valuable ideas on how our strategy could be better developed and delivered to address such pertinent issues.

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The outcome was a set of key recommendations that underpin our strategy for the years to come:

- **We must not work in silos. ACM must facilitate links across sectors and stakeholders by supporting participatory approaches to decision-making within cultural planning.** Engagement needs to be recognised as an integral part of any process in which the public, private and voluntary sectors are in constant dialogue, for we must acknowledge the long-term value of cultural democracy as a driver for policymaking. This also puts into perspective the need to further involve independent representative organisations advocating for relevant sectors. Addressing the diverse and atypical modes of creative and cultural practices is crucial, and we must also enable structures that promote creativity, critical thinking and other 21st century skills.
- **We must support sustainability within the creative and cultural sectors through measures that reflect new models of creation, production and distribution.** The significance of resilience is paramount, and it remains a running theme in most of our discussions, especially given the pandemic's economic impact. Our analysis has revealed that, more than ever before, people are motivated to seek and develop alternative platforms and working models that could extend affordability, accessibility, income streams and audience engagement beyond traditional models. This requires critical reflection on the inner dynamics of relevant sectors, as resilience needs to be rethought for the long term to ensure sustainable and inclusive development. Simultaneously, we have observed that wider economic sectors also need to consider Malta's cultural and creative ecology and be incentivised to support and engage with it. For instance, we identified a need to foster a broader understanding of emerging applications of digital technologies in the context of new realities. Trends on how creative work is presented and how sectors can be better equipped to face immediate and future challenges must be considered. Yet, we have also noted that digital technologies do not replace human interaction but rather serve to enhance it.
- **We must harness the full potential of Malta's vibrant ecology of cultural expressions grounded in community-based activity which is localised and socially embedded.** We have an opportunity to continue building on our work to further support community-led activities in a long-term and structured manner, leading to the adoption of a community-based outlook in all of our work – one that steers away from simply ticking boxes. Thus, ACM will continue to increase its commitment to promoting more equitable cultural and creative sectors that represent Malta's diverse social, cultural, political and economic backgrounds. Diversity should be celebrated and tapped into as a resource for a multi-faceted creative ecology built on dialogue and collaboration. We need to be mindful of structural inequalities based on gender, ethnicity, class and disability – imbalances that limit the vast potential of cultural assets within our communities. Only then can we move towards transforming the opportunities that our cultural infrastructure offers into an equitable and accessible source of well-being for all.
- **We must distribute public investment more justly to provide for longer-term structural funding as well as infrastructural development, especially in the diverse pool of creative talent and expression in the cultural and creative sectors.** This approach considers sector-specific needs and the atypical working conditions of artists and other creative practitioners. It involves fostering and promoting cross-sectoral partnerships that lead to artistic activity, even when that is within contexts from outside the cultural and creative sectors. Our investment would need to be allocated towards measures that support forms of mentorship, training, professionalisation, research and innovation that strengthen the prospects of Malta's creative ecology. Our discussions have further illustrated a need for more equitable access to funding opportunities and investment measures. Propositions include reducing bureaucracy while increasing transparency of the allocation process, ensuring decent remuneration, and implementing inclusive investment decisions. To start, people's perspectives need to adapt to reflect the multiple realities present within our cultural and artistic ecology, especially when identifying priorities for public investment.
- **We must fulfil ACM's role as a compassionate and proactive cultural leader and ACM should be recognised as such across sectors and the general public.** As an institution, we provide a support system to artists, practitioners and other communities engaged in cultural activity to engender trust, cooperation, accountability and creative experimentation. By investing in and harnessing relationships built on mutual trust with our stakeholders, we increase the potential to further establish ACM's position as an advocate, facilitator, broker and guardian of the arts and the wider cultural and creative sectors in Malta – a role denoted in our discussions with stakeholders, including the public. In fact, given that we are primarily accountable to them, members of the public should be given a louder voice in the decisions that affect their cultural life. To do so, we must assertively work towards adopting participatory governance in our evaluation processes while leading the national conversation on arts and creativity. We recognise that the arts should be leading change and are confident in our ability to combine bottom-up and top-down approaches within our leadership methods. We ground our confidence in research and will continue to adopt an evidence-based outlook to our strategic work. As we build more robust mechanisms for access to knowledge and data, we hope to bolster confidence and trust in our work among our stakeholders.

By taking forward these recommendations, we hope to enact the required changes and further strengthen and build on the successes of Strategy2020, allowing us to align our work with the vision and mission of Malta's National Cultural Policy 2021: "embracing culture for the well-being of all" by integrating "culture in national development with a global outlook that contributes towards sustainable development".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ministry for the National Heritage, the Arts and Local Government, 2021. National Cultural Policy 2021, p.10: [https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public\\_Consultations/MHAL/PublishingImages/Pages/Consultations/NationalCulturalPolicy2021/National%20Cultural%20Policy%202021%20-%20Public%20Consultation.pdf](https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public_Consultations/MHAL/PublishingImages/Pages/Consultations/NationalCulturalPolicy2021/National%20Cultural%20Policy%202021%20-%20Public%20Consultation.pdf).

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Looking ahead, three overarching themes shape our strategy:



## CARE

**We thrive when we connect with others and with our environment. We thrive when we express ourselves and react freely to our context, and the happenings around us.**



## CREATE

**We have an innate urge to give form to our perceptions of the world, through creative interpretation, expression, and narrative.**



## FLOURISH

**Given the right opportunities, we gain the power to excel, but also to shape, and redefine our context through creative expression.**

These themes capture ACM's commitment to prioritising cultural rights when implementing our strategy for the years to come. By means of our participatory approach, we will continue to learn from our stakeholders as we develop and implement Strategy 2025.

The ways in which people access, create and experience culture are constantly changing, presenting new opportunities and challenges. Our work does not exist in a vacuum, and the pandemic's impact, global threats and trends have taught us that we are constantly evolving, affecting both the cultural and creative sectors and society at large. We are seeing, for instance, that the climate change crisis is set to be a major force determining our social and cultural lives in the near future. And the same applies to the pandemic, which has accelerated the expansion of digital technology use across industries, especially in the production of – and engagement with – creative work.

In addition, given culture's symbiosis with social justice, democracy and the economy, the creative and cultural sectors are inherently vulnerable to the political and financial challenges that a post-pandemic Europe will face – challenges which will translate into uncertainties around artists' working conditions, mobility and freedom of expression. On a national scale, we are also vulnerable to these adverse conditions as we operate with and within the global and European communities, and our international connections are vital to the development of Malta's cultural and creative sectors. ACM's research and conversations have indicated that practitioners have been responding to external challenges in various ways, including by rethinking their business models and experimenting with digital technology in the artistic process. Nonetheless, together with everyone involved across sectors, we recognise that difficulties remain. As everyone grapples with our everchanging context, some challenges may be harder to overcome than others. Therefore, ACM's strategy will help us address both the opportunities and challenges ahead of us by establishing a clear link between cultural and creative practice and the conditions that enable it.

We are recharging our mission with care through practice and support of everyone's opportunity to create and flourish. We want to drive change based on the principles of cultural rights, whereby all citizens have the right to partake in diverse forms of cultural expression in an equitable manner. We know this will happen gradually and is partially dependent on the resources available to us as a public entity, so we shall continue listening and learning from our stakeholders and collaborate to position the arts firmly at the heart of Malta's future. Our strategy sets the stage for this to happen.



Parliament Triangle – Martin Ajius



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## OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES: THE RIGHT TO CULTURE

ART COUNCIL MALTA'S (ACM) COMMITMENT TO CULTURAL RIGHTS IS BASED ON THE EVIDENCE WE HAVE GATHERED OVER THE YEARS AND REFLECTS AN ONGOING PARADIGM SHIFT TAKING PLACE IN EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY. THE CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM OUR PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS CONFIRM THE UNPRECEDENTED RELEVANCE OF CULTURAL RIGHTS IN THE CONTEXT OF CURRENT SOCIETAL CHALLENGES. FOR THIS REASON, ACM'S FOCUS WILL LOOK BEYOND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT TOWARDS A BROADER UNDERSTANDING OF THE LINKS BETWEEN CREATIVE AND CULTURAL ECOLOGY AND THE REST OF SOCIETY.

Thus, in line with Malta's National Cultural Policy 2021, our strategy aims to contribute to "addressing the immediate needs of arts and culture and reaffirming the intrinsic value they bring to society" while acknowledging "the role culture has in tackling global issues such as democracy and collective action, climate change, and other matters related to social and environmental sustainability".<sup>2</sup>

We are committed to supporting and promoting the diversity of artistic and cultural expression, following UNESCO's definition of cultural rights as:

*"the right of access to, participation in and enjoyment of culture. This includes the right of individuals and communities to know, understand, visit, make use of, maintain, exchange and develop cultural heritage and cultural expressions, as well as to benefit from the cultural heritage and cultural expressions of others."*<sup>3</sup>

Like human rights, cultural rights are universal, transcending nations and social contexts. Thus, over the past six years, we have started integrating and analysing the principles of cultural rights within our work and research as part of our strategy, leading to the design of our public consultation process informing Strategy 2025. Our evidence indicates that, much like culture, the meaning of cultural rights is relational, contextual and socially situated. Therefore, we recognise the need to be mindful of the communities we want to work with and how they choose to engage with arts and culture. In addition, we want to deliver work that resonates with the diverse forms of creativity that make up Malta's artistic landscape during a time when our creative and cultural ecology has been put through unprecedented challenges, both locally and globally.

We are now living at a pivotal moment that has revealed the importance of the arts and culture in maintaining our overall well-being. Arts and culture have an ever-growing connection with social and environmental issues and must therefore form part of our collective reach towards sustainable development. Our work in developing ACM's strategic goals and actions aligns with the principles of cultural rights as recognised globally and is set to contribute further towards the United Nation's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which echoes the central tenet of the 2005 UNESCO Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. The Convention outlines a moral and legal obligation for countries to protect and promote cultural diversity. At its core is an understanding of the right to culture as a human right where:

*"Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits."*<sup>4</sup>

We adhere to the EU's position as articulated in the EU Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022, which views culture as driving sustainable development – on the grounds of its relevance to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is evident from the widespread consensus about the transversality of culture across the SDGs, especially in relation to inclusive and equitable education (SDG 4); gender equality (SDG 5); inclusive and sustainable economic growth, decent work and employment (SDG 8); reduced inequalities (SDG 10); sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11); action towards combatting climate change and its impacts (SDG 13); and peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16).

<sup>2</sup> Ministry for the National Heritage, the Arts and Local Government, 2021. National Cultural Policy 2021, p.17.

<sup>3</sup> Universal Declaration of Human Rights quoted in UNESCO, n.d. 10 Info Sheet – The Right to Culture. [http://www.unesco.org/culture/culture-sector-knowledge-management-tools/10\\_Info%20Sheet\\_Right%20to%20Culture.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/culture/culture-sector-knowledge-management-tools/10_Info%20Sheet_Right%20to%20Culture.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> UN General Assembly, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 10 December 1948, 217 A (III): <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>.

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In the context of the transversality of culture, ACM will enhance its contribution to the 2030 Agenda by exploring further cross-sectoral cooperation in our work and the work we support, especially in areas directly or indirectly linked to the SDGs, both directly and indirectly. We envision a strategic approach that considers the role of arts and culture, as well as wider creative expression, to bring about transformation and innovation in sectors such as the environment, climate change, healthcare, urban development, disability, social justice, the economy, education, enterprise, international diplomacy, governance and all that lies in between. We will strive to continue contributing to key global conversations in cultural policy through our involvement in international networks and partnerships, while also influencing and implementing policy strategically at a national level with our local stakeholders.

Ultimately, we acknowledge that the right to culture as a driver for sustainable development has artists and cultural and creative practitioners at its heart. We recognise their central role in the creation and production of diverse artistic and cultural expressions while considering their often-atypical working conditions. In line with the National Cultural Policy 2021, our work will continue to be inspired by the UNESCO 1980 Recommendations concerning the Status of the Artist and its further developments, including the 2005 UNESCO Convention. Through Strategy 2025, we shall continue to support and advocate for working conditions in which artists and cultural and creative practitioners can create and flourish in pursuing their ideas and aspirations. Both on a national and European scale, research indicates that more needs to be done to improve the professional, economic, social, political and legal status and protection of artists, cultural and creative professionals, and wider practitioners alike. For this reason, we align ourselves with the 2019 UNESCO Report on Culture and Working Conditions for Artists, which states that:

*“New policy solutions need to be found to address [...] emerging challenges to the status of artists, to their rights to create without censorship or intimidation. To their right to have artistic work supported, distributed and remunerated. To their rights to freedom of movement and of association. To their rights to social protection and to citizens’ rights to participate in the cultural life of their choosing.”<sup>5</sup>*

The cultural and creative sectors are heterogeneous. Within them are disciplines, sectors and sub-sectors that function using a variety of logic and models. Hence, Strategy 2025 seeks to be flexible and adaptable enough to be implemented through a continuous process of sector-specific understanding while striving towards a more sustainable cultural and creative ecology. The needs, concerns and ambitions of those involved in Malta’s cultural and creative sectors form the very foundation of Strategy 2025, as is evident through ACM’s participatory consultation process. This is key to how we approach our work and the work we support, embracing the transversality of cultural rights while consolidating connections and building new relationships with our partners and stakeholder groups.

With cultural rights at the heart of our thinking, we continue to prioritise the following 10 guiding principles while demonstrating their immediate interlinkages with the SDGs. Building on our previous strategy, these principles will determine our investment, initiatives and stakeholder relationships in the coming years.

**1. Champion the advancement of the status of the artists, and cultural and creative practitioners.**

We will advocate, facilitate and invest in initiatives, measures and projects that put artists and cultural and creative practitioners at their heart. We consider the right to artistic freedom, right of association, right to access public investment, and fair working conditions as crucial to enabling sustainable sectoral growth. (SDG 8, SDG 9, SDG 10)

**2. Value and position the diversity of artistic and cultural expression, access and participation as integral to Malta’s wider cultural and creative ecology.**

We will invest in relevant, innovative, equitable and enjoyable creative experiences that reflect our cultural and creative ecology while embracing creative risk, cultural democracy and intercultural dialogue. We acknowledge that engagement in arts and culture is key to promoting “individual empowerment, democratic consciousness and social cohesion”.<sup>6</sup> (SDG 4, SDG 8, SDG 10, SDG 11)

**3. Nurture cross-sectoral synergies at local, national and international levels to recognise arts and culture as essential for the well-being of all.**

We will strengthen existing and initiate new collaborations, partnerships, networks and other forms of support frameworks with representatives and experts from other sectors, including (but not limited to) healthcare, education, disability, the environment, STEM disciplines, digital, urban development, social justice, international

<sup>5</sup> UNESCO, 2019. Culture & Working Conditions for Artists: Implementing the 1980 Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist. Paris: UNESCO, p.7: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000371790>.

<sup>6</sup> European Union, Council Conclusions on the Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022. [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52018XG1221\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52018XG1221(01)).

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relations, enterprise and economy. Our focus will be on the role of arts and culture at local and regional levels in relation to liveability, urban design and social innovation in placemaking because we know that they are key to improving our well-being and quality of life. (SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 8, SDG 10, SDG 13)

**4. Integrate active and participatory citizenship to ensure sectoral and public representation in our decision-making processes.**

We will enhance participatory cultural governance through citizen engagement that genuinely represents Malta's diverse cultural and creative ecology across public, private and voluntary sectors. Sectoral expertise and experience concerning arts and culture shall be given due importance in our investment, advocacy, research and communication decisions. We will view engagement with our stakeholders as integral to our process while pragmatically adopting a compassionate and proactive leadership approach. (SDG 8, SDG 10, SDG 16)

**5. Support education, capacity building, professional development and knowledge exchange to empower people to flourish in their cultural and creative practice.**

We will direct investment, advocacy and facilitation efforts towards developing knowledge, skills and competencies needed by cultural and creative practitioners to flourish in their sectors. This includes supporting advisory, mentorship, training and networking opportunities for people from the public, private and voluntary sectors who work in the creative and cultural fields. We will continue viewing cultural and artistic education at all levels as essential drivers of continuous sectoral advancement. We shall strive to ensure that artists and creatives are equipped with the skills they need when working with diverse communities and within other sectors while encouraging conversations that inspire rethinking. (SDG 4, SDG 8, SDG 11)

**6. Build and strengthen strategic partnerships, collaborations and networks nationally and internationally to enable further opportunities for artists and practitioners.**

We will work with strategic partners that share our values and enable us to facilitate opportunities for cultural and creative practitioners. We want to cultivate relationships based on trust and understanding with public, private and voluntary sector representatives, both nationally and internationally, as well as with Public Cultural Organisations (PCOs) that are key partners in implementing our strategy. Through our investment and expertise, we will continue supporting our cultural partners in fulfilling their goal of building a stronger cultural and creative ecology. (SDG 4, SDG 8, SDG 9, SDG 10, SDG 11)

**7. Support sectors through proactive public engagement that is accessible, efficient and informed, using minimal bureaucracy.**

We shall continue investing in our brokerage services, knowledge-sharing platforms and comprehensive communication strategies to ensure continuous, timely and high-quality engagement with the public and private sectors and the general public. We will strive to enhance accessibility to our services and be open to rethinking our approach, keeping in mind the diversity of the communities we engage with. Consultation and information services will be underpinned by sectoral expertise to ensure excellence. In addition, transparency, accountability and trust are at the core of our approach to public engagement. (SDG 8, SDG 9, SDG 10, SDG 11)

**8. Foster an evidence-based approach to have research, evaluation and debate inform our decisions and actions.**

We will implement our strategy and design our actions using an evidence-based approach to ensure ongoing relevance. Knowledge gaps in the creative and cultural sectors need to be identified and addressed through appropriate research designed in consultation with sectoral stakeholders and through collaborations with academic and professional entities. We will ensure that our evidence base is continuously updated to reflect ongoing developments in cultural policy, both nationally and internationally. Continuous monitoring and evaluation of our strategy in partnership with our stakeholders will be further developed and form part of our decision-making and advocacy efforts. (SDG 4, SDG 8, SDG 9, SDG 11)

**9. Embrace culture as a pillar of sustainable development in terms of its sustainability and interlinkages with the social, economic and environmental dimensions of well-being.**

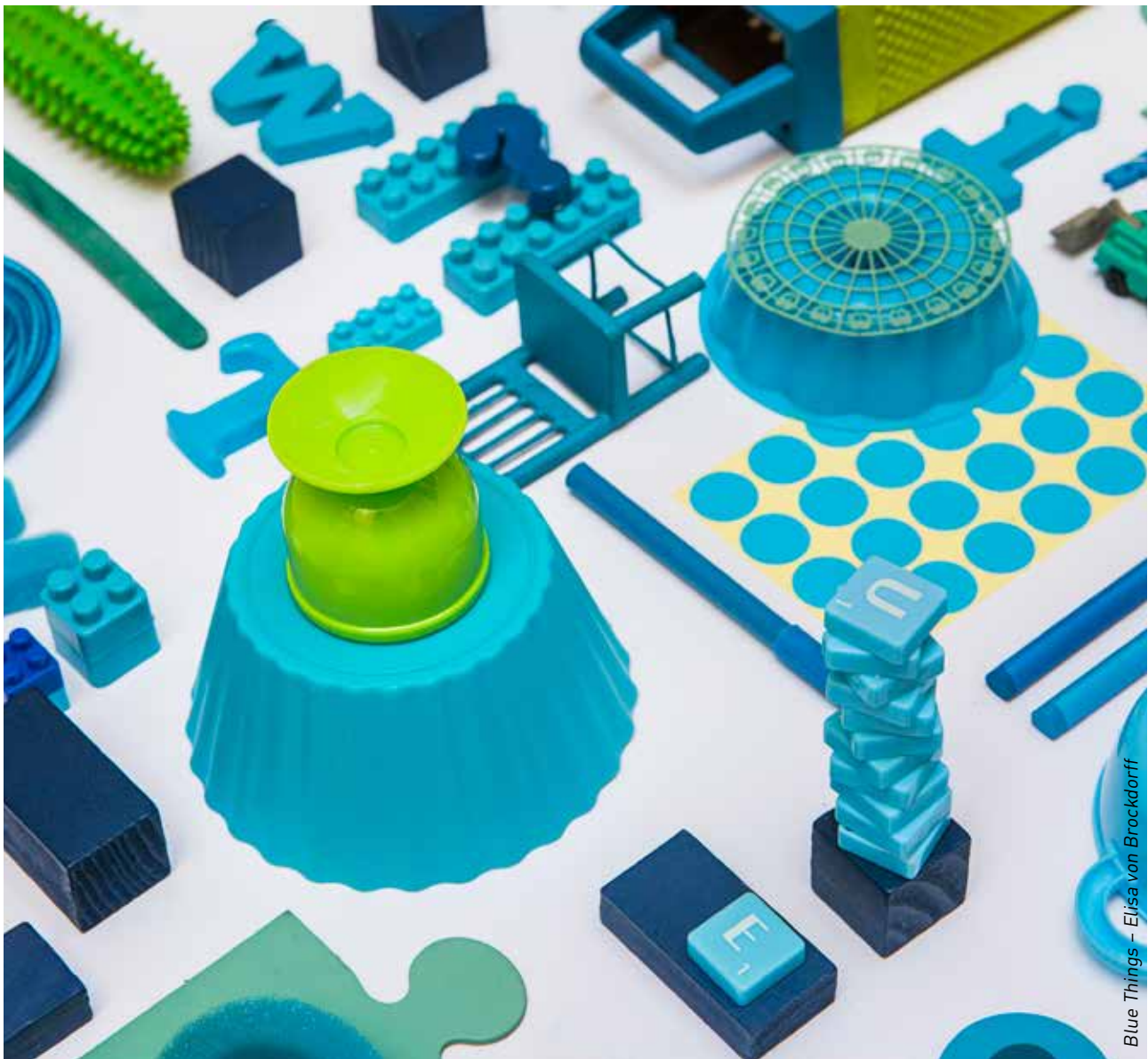
We will support and advocate for practices that enable sustainable development through culture and nourish the sustainability of culture itself. Based on the significant contribution of the cultural and creative sectors to Malta's economy, we will boost our efforts towards supporting their economic resilience. We believe that

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social equity, diversity and inclusiveness are fundamental to a richer and more just cultural and creative ecology, and this will be incorporated into our work and promoted in the work we support. In addition, we recognise the essential role of arts and culture in addressing environmental challenges and the fight against climate change. We will prioritise green practices and the reduction of negative environmental impacts to promote cultural sustainability because we view sustainable practices as reaffirming the intrinsic value of culture while contributing towards overall well-being. (SDG 8, SDG 9, SDG 10, SDG 11, SDG 13)

**10. Recognise cultural infrastructure and international cultural relations as integral to the long-term advancement of Malta’s cultural and creative sectors.**

We acknowledge the need for a structured outlook towards enabling conditions conducive to a dynamic cultural and creative ecology thriving in excellence and equity. For artistic and cultural activity to occur, the right networks, systems and physical resources must be available. We consider infrastructure as a prerequisite for improving the educational provision and further professionalisation of arts and culture. This is combined with our active role in embracing an open dialogue through our international connections and support of global cultural exchanges to raise Malta’s cultural profile internationally. (SDG 8, SDG 11, SDG 17)



Blue Things – Elisa von Brockdorff

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# OUR VISION, MISSION AND GOALS

## OUR VISION

We want the arts to be at the heart of Malta's future.

## OUR MISSION

Driven by our commitment to cultural rights, we invest in the arts to strengthen Malta's creative and cultural ecology.

## OUR GOALS

### 1. To invest in and foster diverse artistic and cultural expression.

We recognise freedom of artistic and cultural expression as a right that is essential to the development and inclusive growth of Malta's cultural and creative sectors and a driver working towards a more open and creative society. We embrace the interlinkages between cultural diversity and excellence as values that inform each other. We aim to invest in experiences that reflect the diversity of Malta's cultural and creative ecology while adopting a structural approach to improve the quality of artistic processes and outcomes. To achieve this goal, we must build mutual trust and exchange based on the shared values and ambitions of cultural leaders, audiences, individual artists and creatives. In the end, we want to facilitate and empower all sectors to participate in delivering our mission while embracing the diverse social backgrounds, heritage, art forms, modes of practice and identities that make Malta's cultural landscape so unique.

### 2. To support and promote the conditions in which Malta's cultural and creative sectors can flourish.

We believe that systemic and structural improvements are fundamental to enabling Malta's cultural and creative sectors to flourish in the long term. This means investing, advocating and building knowledge on the conditions that enable the sectors to operate in a culturally, socially, environmentally and economically sustainable manner. We aim to enhance our stakeholder engagement processes through our work with PCOs, independent sectoral partners and cultural leaders, as well as cross-sectoral collaborators. By working together, we can reach towards securing more decent and equitable working conditions for artists and cultural and creative practitioners. We want to facilitate conversations between public, private and voluntary representatives of the cultural and creative sectors and work towards enabling an infrastructure that accounts for place-based cultural assets and sector-specific needs across art forms.

### 3. To advocate and provide for community-led opportunities to engage in arts and culture.

Over the past six years, we have witnessed an increase in community-led cultural and creative activities and participation, as well as a deeper understanding of the positive impact arts and culture have on communities. We acknowledge that this has been partially driven by the unprecedented increase in focused public investment, namely via our funding programmes, research projects and initiatives from PCOs. Through our participatory approach, we aim to strengthen our capacity to empower diverse communities (whether rooted in traditional activities or emerging creative practices) to engage in arts and culture, embracing local cultural identities within an evolving multicultural environment.

We will also advocate for regional cultural development that facilitates artistic and cultural initiatives and programmes led by communities for communities through formal and informal activities. We will continue to support arts education as a critical pathway to engagement while bringing artists and schools closer together and emphasising the importance of working with and for young audiences and the elderly. We will direct our investment towards funding, research, capacity building and partnerships to democratise cultural participation while increasing audience engagement and providing resources for cultural collaborations between community leaders and institutions.

### 4. To strengthen Malta's international cultural relations to continue developing international artistic exchanges and collaborations.

Malta has been pursuing an active role in developing an EU strategic approach to international cultural relations and fostering intercultural dialogue in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Therefore, we aim to continue playing a leading role in bringing the policy domains of culture and foreign affairs together through our strategic actions. We want to embrace an

### OUR VISION

We want the arts to be at the heart of Malta's future.

### OUR MISSION

Driven by our commitment to cultural rights, we invest in the arts to strengthen Malta's creative and cultural ecology.



### OUR GOALS

- 1 /** To invest in and foster diverse artistic and cultural expression.
- 2 /** To support and promote the conditions in which Malta's cultural and creative sectors can flourish.
- 3 /** To advocate and provide for community-led opportunities to engage in arts and culture.
- 4 /** To strengthen Malta's international cultural relations to continue developing international artistic exchanges and collaborations.
- 5 /** To nurture cross-sectoral collaborations that contribute to Malta's sustainable development.
- 6 /** To enable cultural partners, including Public Cultural Organisations, to build and strengthen organisational capacity.

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open dialogue in cultural relations with stakeholders targeting bottom-up approaches, local empowerment, participation and co-creation. We also acknowledge our potential contribution to national bilateral and multilateral programmes that address the role of culture in external relations. We will strengthen Malta's global connectivity as a creative nation through international artistic exchanges and collaborations, leading to increased opportunities to showcase Maltese and Malta-based artists and their artistic works. This drive also connects with our ongoing efforts to support the professionalisation of Malta's cultural and creative sectors by pursuing greater international market opportunities, partnerships and access to national and European funding programmes. We will promote and adopt an international outlook in our work and the work we support, maximising international visibility and exchanges of experience and expertise.

**5. To nurture cross-sectoral collaborations that contribute to Malta's sustainable development.**

As advocates for Malta's cultural and creative sectors, our role entails developing and facilitating cross-sectoral collaborations centred on arts and culture to catalyse wider sustainable development and 21st-century skills. National and international research has demonstrated that arts and culture imbue exploratory, inquisitive and critical thinking to how we view our surroundings and their complex systems, enhancing our ability to adopt multidisciplinary and cross-cutting approaches that address the contemporary human challenges we face. Our work shall be guided by the main economic, social and environmental pillars of the SDGs to address and understand the needs and ambitions of Malta's cultural and creative sectors. We aim to work closely with our stakeholders, including the Ministry responsible for culture, to develop inter-ministerial cooperation and bring together policy officials and experts who specialise in other sectors that impact arts and culture. In so doing, we aim to reduce policy fragmentation in the sectors empowered to propose, develop and implement measures that strategically align with our vision and mission. Furthermore, we want to support and promote bottom-up initiatives that build connections between artistic practice and other specialisations across a range of communities.

**6. To enable cultural partners, including Public Cultural Organisations, to build and strengthen organisational capacity.**

Our legal remit entrusts us with the responsibility to strengthen the entities listed as Public Cultural Organisations (PCOs). We shall advise and support PCOs in their decision-making towards their common objective to commit to and foster inclusive and sustainable growth for Malta's cultural and creative ecology through investment. We aim to support PCOs in strengthening their human and technical capacities to address the demands of our dynamic sectors. We will be leading a network of PCOs to increase collaboration among them while sharing resources and expertise in delivering their programmes in line with Strategy 2025. We shall also address the needs and objectives of the independent cultural partners we support through our public investment. We want to provide enhanced opportunities for our cultural partners to become economically, socially and environmentally sustainable while advancing artistic ambition by strengthening capacity building and facilitating networking platforms.

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## OUR LEGAL FRAMEWORK

ARTS COUNCIL MALTA (ACM) IS MALTA'S NATIONAL AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT IN THE CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTORS. ITS PRINCIPAL TASK IS TO FUND, SUPPORT AND PROMOTE MALTA'S CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTORS.

On 12 May 2015, the Maltese Parliament approved a new legal structure for ACM by means of Act 15 of 2015, which denotes ACM's duty to develop and promote Malta's cultural and creative sectors nationally and internationally via all forms of creative expression, as well as to increase public access to arts and culture.

Arts Council Malta's objectives are to:

1. Advocate and be a strategic leader and catalyst for Malta's cultural and creative sectors by implementing strategies that focus on:
  - a. Knowledge-based cultural and creative development,
  - b. Education and training,
  - c. Intelligence and data building,
  - d. Business development, funding and investment,
  - e. Diversity and communities, and
  - f. Internationalisation.
2. Promote innovation in the cultural and creative sectors and stimulate a creative ecosystem for the generation of contemporary creative content.
3. Initiate, develop and promote strategies, programmes and initiatives to enhance sectoral performance.
4. Act as a broker for the cultural and creative sectors and a bridge with other sectors.
5. Promote intellectual property in the cultural and creative sectors.
6. Ensure the development of a sustainable creative economy.
7. Enable and promote the sustainable development of creative individuals and organisations.
8. Facilitate participation in and access to cultural and creative activity.
9. Foster active and participatory citizenship in culture and promote cultural inclusion, equality, diversity and the freedom of creative expression.
10. Increase the understanding, appreciation, enjoyment and expression of culture.
11. Safeguard the dynamic development of those cultural characteristics, including intellectual, linguistic, traditional and folkloric, that identify the Maltese people.



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## OUR FUNCTIONS

The functions of Arts Council Malta are also outlined in its legal framework within Act 15 of 2015. They can be summarised as being to:

1. **Advocate** for the cultural and creative sectors and advise Government on matters that directly or indirectly impact these sectors.
2. **Support** the cultural and creative sectors through information and advisory services, national and international collaborations, promotion of intellectual property rights, data collection and management, and facilitation of cultural infrastructure.
3. **Develop and facilitate** the implementation of strategies to professionalise the cultural and creative sectors, enable their access to national and international markets, support relevant industry networks and platforms, promote cultural participation, develop sub-sectors, encourage excellence and innovation, enhance the sectors' role in education, and foster citizenship and creativity.
4. **Be the national research point** for the cultural and creative sectors by conducting and disseminating research and collaborating on national and international research projects and data gathering exercises.
5. **Invest** in the cultural and creative sectors by developing and managing funding programmes, grants, schemes, awards, loans and other incentives and facilities, as well as strengthening the capacity of Public Cultural Organisations.



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## OUR STAKEHOLDERS

WHEN WE THINK OF CULTURAL AND CREATIVE ECOLOGY, WE ENVISION NETWORKS OF ARTISTS, CREATIVES, PRODUCERS, PARTICIPANTS, AUDIENCES, VOLUNTEERS, ACTIVISTS, POLICYMAKERS, INSTITUTIONS, ENTREPRENEURS, FUNDERS AND SPONSORS INTERACTING WITHIN COMMUNITIES OF CULTURAL PRACTICE. JUST LIKE IN THE NATURAL SCIENCES, THE TERM 'ECOLOGY' EVOKES A HIGHLY HETEROGENEOUS ENVIRONMENT WITH A CONTINUOUS NEED TO BE INTEGRATED, INTERCONNECTED AND INTERDEPENDENT. ARTISTIC EXPRESSION FLOURISHES WITHIN A THRIVING CULTURAL AND CREATIVE ECOLOGY THAT ENABLES COOPERATION, COLLABORATION, CO-CREATION AND CROSS-FERTILISATION VIA OPEN DIALOGUE AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING.

Arts Council Malta is part of this vast and diverse ecology, and our mission is to strengthen it, especially by asserting the importance of our stakeholder relationships, which we want to build, maintain and enable as we:

1. Collaborate and encourage collaboration,
2. Hold ourselves accountable and promote accountability,
3. Advocate and support advocacy, and
4. Invest and encourage investment.

To this end, our strategy is founded on mutual trust, respect and openness among our stakeholders, and we have based our strategic ideas on the work and consultations we have conducted over the past six years.

We value trust in the artists and creative and cultural practitioners whose voice continuously shapes our work and whose work we support and invest in through our programmes and initiatives. We also value trust in the public, who engage in conversations that challenge and stimulate cultural institutions and practitioners while entrusting us with the public funds invested. And we also value trust in Malta's public entities, which continue their unstinting public investment in the cultural and creative sectors through strong value-based commitments and forward-looking cultural policies.

We believe that participatory cultural governance is key to managing our stakeholder relationships. For this reason, we maintain an approach based on the principles of sustainable development, which affirm that governance responsibilities are to be shared among stakeholders, be they Regional Councils, Local Councils, Public Cultural Organisations (PCOs), other public entities, non-governmental organisations, local communities or artists. Ultimately, our approach translates into the inclusion of policymakers, representative sectoral organisations, the wider cultural and creative sectors, and the public in our decision-making processes.

We will continue to facilitate this approach by developing sectoral committees, think tanks and working groups, whose expertise will complement that of our management to ensure sustainable decisions are taken that engage those most likely to be impacted. As we implement our strategic goals, we will also integrate participatory cultural governance within the legal and operational framework that constitutes our various levels of decision-making. In addition, PCOs will also be supported in implementing these practices within their structures, and inter-ministerial committees will be formed to enable cross-sectoral cooperation at a governmental level.

In implementing Strategy 2025, we will focus on building stronger partnerships with and between the following eight stakeholder groups to incorporate their insights and concerns when shaping our strategic actions.

- Cultural and creative practitioners and organisations
- Communities
- Public Cultural Organisations
- Academic, non-governmental and private sector consultancies
- Public entities with an interest in culture
- Ministry responsible for culture
- Ministries with an interest in culture
- European and international partners and networks

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## CULTURAL AND CREATIVE PRACTITIONERS AND ORGANISATIONS

This group includes every artistic and creative individual and organisation active in the cultural and creative spheres across the public, private and voluntary sectors in Malta, including sectoral representative organisations advocating for the professional and socio-economic interests and rights of cultural and creative practitioners and organisations. According to the ACM Act, their activities are identified “as a set of culturally significant, knowledge-based activities, born of creativity and cultural capital, that encompass the cycles of creation, production, distribution and preservation of cultural and creative goods and services, and which have the potential to generate cultural and social development, economic growth and employment”. Our work centres on this stakeholder group, which has a major impact on the forms of support, investment, advocacy and research we engage in when implementing our strategy. We want this group to be part of our decision-making while also being directly supported through our funding programmes, brokerage services, research, development initiatives and knowledge-exchange opportunities.

## COMMUNITIES

The communities that make up Malta and Gozo’s contemporary social and cultural fabric engage in forms of artistic and cultural expression spanning myriad identities, disciplines and traditions. Our approach to public engagement is thus shaped by our commitment to the cultural rights of everyone. These rights are universal, inalienable, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. By our actions, we aim to enable and support open and participatory dialogue with all communities. And in the spirit of cultural democracy, we recognise the right of every person to participate in the cultural life of their choice, have access to a wide range of cultural experiences, and be empowered to nurture their creative talents and be active citizens. Malta’s diversity of artistic and cultural expression must be safeguarded, supported and celebrated as it fosters critical thinking, equity and innovation – which, in turn, contribute to wider social well-being and cohesion. Therefore, we aim to promote sustainable community development through meaningful community engagement, which is also interwoven with our commitment to continuing cross-sectoral collaboration.

## PUBLIC CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS

As listed in the Second Schedule of the Arts Council Malta Act, Public Cultural Organisations (PCOs) share common objectives to invest public funding in arts and culture and foster creativity, social wellbeing and economic activity. ACM is entrusted by law to monitor and review PCOs’ strategies, financial estimates and reports. In this role, we will continue leading Malta’s network of PCOs to increase inter-PCO collaboration and share resources and expertise. In addition, PCOs will be guaranteed independence in artistic programming, reflecting our principles of diversity and freedom of cultural expression. The following organisations have been listed as PCOs in the National Cultural Policy 2021:

- Festivals Malta
- Fondazzjoni Kreattività
- Kor Malta
- Malta Philharmonic Orchestra
- Mediterranean Conference Centre
- MICAS (Malta International Contemporary Arts Space)
- Pjazza Teatru Rjal
- Teatru Malta
- Teatru Manoel
- Valletta Cultural Agency
- ŻfinMalta

**INTERNAL**



**Public Cultural Organisations**

**Ministry responsible for culture**

**Academic, Non-Governmental & Private Sector Consultancies**

**European & International Partners & Networks**

**Cultural & Creative practitioners & organisations**

**Communities**

**Public Entities with an interest in Culture**

**Ministries with an interest in Culture**



**EXTERNAL**

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## ACADEMIC, NON-GOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE SECTOR CONSULTANCIES

Through partnerships and public tenders, ACM works with consultants and consultancies specialising in the services and exchanges needed to reach its strategic goals. Our collaborations include (but are not limited to) focused research and evaluation to gain specialist insight and independent analysis, specific solutions for strategic development and implementation, business development, training and capacity-building programmes, design and rethinking of funding programmes, and improving our operational capacity. By maintaining our intersectoral and interdisciplinary perspective, we continue to prioritise the diverse potential and extensive knowledge of academics and academic institutions, voluntary organisations and associations, business advisors, and sectoral consultants.

## PUBLIC ENTITIES WITH AN INTEREST IN CULTURE

ACM nurtures its holistic approach by collaborating and cooperating with public entities that have a cultural remit under the Ministry responsible for culture, as well as other ministries. Accordingly, we have worked and intend to continue working with entities such as, among others, the Creativity Trust, Malta Enterprise, Malta Film Commission, Public Broadcasting Services (PBS), the Local Government Division, the Economic Policy Department, Aġenzija Żgħażaġh, the National Statistics Office (NSO), the Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST), Il-Kunsill Nazzjonali tal-Ilsien Malti, the National Book Council, the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST), Mikiel Anton Vassalli College, and the Malta Visual and Performing Arts School.

## MINISTRY RESPONSIBLE FOR CULTURE

The Ministry responsible for culture oversees the implementation of the National Cultural Policy and other local and international programmes and conventions. As ACM is one of the entities responsible for implementing the National Cultural Policy, working closely with the Ministry is crucial, but we also still maintain an arm's length principle. We also work with other governmental entities because whereas the Ministry responsible for culture has traditionally been in charge of policies focusing on the arts and national heritage, other related policy areas related to film, broadcasting, crafts, publishing, libraries, archives and arts education have often been developed by other ministries. In addition, we continue to integrate new and evolving aspects of the creative economy and cultural policy linked to STEM disciplines (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) within a framework that embraces cross-sectoral cooperation.

## MINISTRIES WITH AN INTEREST IN CULTURE

To increase policy cooperation for the cultural and creative sectors across different ministries, ACM brokers collaborations with ministries at a cross-sectoral level. Together with the Culture Directorate within the Ministry responsible for culture, ACM will continue to bring together policy units from different ministries that directly and indirectly impact Malta's cultural and creative sectors. Using this approach, we will nurture and implement strategic alliances based on the notion of culture as a pillar for sustainable development and therefore enable active contribution from all representative parties. Our shared National Cultural Policy objective aims to reduce policy fragmentation in the sectors empowered to propose, develop and implement measures that strive for sustainable development. Sectors such as education, the environment, urban planning, tourism, human rights, social justice, disability, healthcare, STEM disciplines, economic policy and employment shall be represented through inter-ministerial cooperation.

## EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS AND NETWORKS

This stakeholder group includes associations, agencies and multi-stakeholder networks operating on a wider European and/or international scale and with a remit in the cultural and creative sectors. ACM is a member of key international networks and organisations, such as, among others, IFACCA (International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies), EUNIC (European Union National Institutes for Culture), IETM (International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts), the Association for the Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends, and the Salzburg Global Seminar. Looking ahead, we intend to further increase our representation in the coming years to promote our strategic goals. We are also developing international and European partnerships with reputable and sustainable cultural leaders to enhance our operational capacity in developing methods and initiatives that support Malta's cultural and creative sectors.

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## STRATEGIC AREAS

WE WILL REACH OUR STRATEGY 2025 GOALS BY WORKING IN SIX STRATEGIC AREAS. EACH AREA HAS AN OVERALL OBJECTIVE AND SET OF PRIORITIES AND PROPOSED ACTIONS THAT AIM TO FULFIL OUR VISION AND MISSION IN THE YEARS TO COME.

Some of the actions are also directly based on the National Cultural Policy 2021's proposed outcomes, which also align with our priorities. The strategic areas that have been designed and will be implemented by ACM's Funding and Strategy Team are:

- Public Investment
- Diversity and Communities
- Education and Development
- Internationalisation
- Creative Entrepreneurship
- Research and Evaluation

### PUBLIC INVESTMENT

As Arts Council Malta, we believe in the public value of arts and culture, as well as their power to enrich the lives of everyone who experiences them. Our research into the impact of our investment over the past six years has indeed become evidence of our conviction because we have witnessed and listened to encouraging stories of artists and communities influenced by the work we have supported. Thus, in recognising our accountability towards the public, we want to broaden our approach to investment by looking beyond our funding portfolio because, above all else, we consider cultural and creative engagement a right. Therefore, we shall widen the scope of how we advocate for – and then allocate – public investment. We aim to reach this goal by further diversifying our funding processes and the other forms of investment mechanisms we lead, develop and support.

Over the coming years, we will invest strategically in work that supports our goals and guiding principles in alignment with cultural rights and overall sustainable development. At the centre of our investment decisions, we shall consider the professional, social and economic status and conditions of artists, creatives and cultural practitioners. From project funding for an experimental artwork to seed capital for a creative start-up, we want to structure investment that matches the sector-specific needs of artistic expression and production. We also know that investment in arts and culture can bring about broader social benefits and contribute to economic growth and the development of sustainable communities. Therefore, we plan to invest further in mentorship, capacity building, professional development, training and knowledge sharing among organisations and individuals to improve the quality and potential of their artistic work and operations. We strive to champion arts and culture across the voluntary, private and public sectors – not only via direct investment but also through our development efforts by building connections among everyday cultural participation in communities, the organisations we support, and other key sectors in Malta.

Our investments will also be directed towards building new partnerships and collaborations and expanding our knowledge, skills and networks so as to support and promote the conditions in which Malta and Gozo's cultural and creative sectors can flourish. We will work closely with those we support through constructive monitoring and reporting requirements by providing the necessary assistance and encouraging best practices. We will continue identifying the structural challenges and opportunities facing the cultural and creative sectors and address them by leading conversations that bring people together from across sectors.

We will also advocate for the value of arts and culture with other public entities and stakeholders so as to support the sustainability, innovation and growth of Malta's cultural and creative ecology and take the lead in placing the arts at the centre of the country's future. Indeed, we aim to collaborate with PCOs to provide a support structure that incentivises excellent working conditions in their work with the private and voluntary sectors, placing the Status of the Artist at the centre of operations and decision-making. We shall engage in structured dialogue with PCOs to ensure that their investment considers the multiple economic and social realities of Malta's cultural and creative sectors to ensure the sustainability of PCOs through support of independent sectors. This requires continuous learning, discussion and rethinking of our funding programmes and investment decisions through research and knowledge building to continue strengthening the case for public investment in arts and culture.

## OBJECTIVES AND INTERLINKAGES BETWEEN THE STRATEGIC AREAS

### PUBLIC INVESTMENT

To direct structured public investment towards sustainable cultural and artistic practices that contribute to the development of Malta's cultural and creative sectors as well as overall well-being. We also aim to advocate for increases in public expenditure in arts and culture through evidence-based and participatory approaches.

### DIVERSITY AND COMMUNITIES

To enable the arts and culture to reach people more deeply in every aspect of their life, instilling a more diverse and innovative cultural and creative ecology, valued by – and aligned with – the communities it serves.

### EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

To direct public investment towards education programmes that ensure accessible, equitable and high-standard arts education and participation from early childhood to lifelong learning, while facilitating collaboration between cultural operators and educational institutions. In addition, continuous career development in the cultural and creative sectors within various settings shall also be prioritised and facilitated.

### INTERNATIONALISATION

To strengthen Malta's international cultural relations by building trust and understanding through diverse artistic and cultural expressions that foster international networking, collaboration and exchanges.

### CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

To promote creative entrepreneurship as a mindset so as to foster an empowered, resilient and collaborative artistic community.

### RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

To develop a comprehensive knowledge base that will guide the future growth of Malta's cultural and creative sectors, advocate for and support evidence-based policy development, and evaluate ACM's funding programmes, strategy and general operations to ensure we adhere to our core principles of cultural rights.

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The principles of open competition, accountability and transparency will continue guiding our funding and overall investment decisions. We are committed to providing information about the different funding programmes via our digital channels and brokerage services. Our guidelines and application forms will be regularly reviewed and published online to ensure maximum accessibility. In addition, through our newly revamped and continuously evolving Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, application procedures will include clear steps that outline our expectations for every part of the application. In addition, every funding opportunity's deadline will be published in advance as part of a yearly calendar.

At ACM, we ensure that our decision-making process is conducted effectively and meticulously, which is why we engage – and will continue to engage – independent evaluators to assess funding applications. Concurrently, we will also explore approaches that lessen bureaucracy by investing in digitalisation and simplification procedures to be rolled out across our funding programmes.

We invest in artists, creative professionals and practitioners to develop and deliver artistic excellence and contribute to our strategic goals that support growth, diversity and training in the cultural and creative sectors. The benefits of public investment are effectively utilised to steer growth and development. The method adopted may incorporate traditional funding models via multi-annual grants, strategic funding and development funding. However, through our partnerships and stakeholder engagement, we also aim to initiate conversations on alternative funding sources, such as match funding, crowdfunding, preferential loans, trusts and other models that favour participatory approaches.

Multi-annual grants consist of agreements with creative professionals over several years and address the long-term vision and priorities outlined in Strategy 2025. In fact, strategic funding programmes are ACM's primary tool to implement our strategic goals, whereas development funding programmes provide the necessary environment in which we can invest in the development of quality-driven creative work that pushes the artists' and sectors' boundaries and encourage more engaging creative experiences. These programmes focus on what matters most to artists: funds that support them in taking creative risks to develop new work through research, experimentation and collaboration.

Looking ahead, we will continue to ensure our public investment decisions remain equitable to reflect the principles of cultural rights and embrace the diversity of artistic and cultural expression.

## OVERALL OBJECTIVE

**To direct structured public investment towards sustainable cultural and artistic practices that contribute to the development of Malta's cultural and creative sectors as well as overall well-being. We also aim to advocate for increases in public expenditure in arts and culture through evidence-based and participatory approaches.**

## PRIORITIES

### FUNDING PROGRAMMES

By investing in a diverse portfolio, we will support the development of Malta's cultural and creative sectors. Furthermore, we will assess the performance of our investment targets annually by identifying the needs and ambitions of those involved in the sectors, thereby informing our public investment decisions through quantitative and qualitative methods and consultations. Our approach will enable evidence-based explorations of funding models that cater to our society's evolving needs and aspirations. We will continue providing access to financial grants and incentives through competitive funding programmes. However, in this context, we must also maintain a fair system, whereby every application and proposal must undergo a selection process that is both accountable and transparent. We also recognise the need to integrate socially and environmentally sustainable practices within our evaluation criteria to incentivise and support environmentally, socially and culturally sustainable work through our funding programmes.

### LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT

Our Strategy 2025 consultation process highlighted the need to refine our investment mechanisms based on time and diverse project needs. As a result, we aim to identify tools beyond our funding programmes that sustain creative projects' long-term development and outcomes over time.

### ACCESSIBLE OPPORTUNITIES

We believe that both emerging and established artists have a right to access public investment, and we want to support them in achieving excellent outcomes. For this reason, we will invest in a support structure that encourages new and repeat applicants to access our funding programmes. We will also explore methods that foster collaboration and co-





ZfinMalta's performance of 'Carmen' in 2018 - George Abdilla

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creation among emerging and established artists. However, we are aware that our application phase can be a learning curve and might also include unnecessary bureaucracy. Therefore, we will explore ways of maintaining mutual trust, transparency and accountability by reducing bureaucracy and increasing openness.

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Every emerging and established artist and practitioner has their own specific needs, and each individual and organisation brings value to the cultural and creative sectors through dynamic and innovative methods. Therefore, we aim to introduce opportunities that enable cultural and creative practitioners – both individually and as organisations – to unleash their potential through specific skill sets at different stages of their professional development, including job shadowing opportunities.

### **SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES**

The COVID-19 pandemic has directly impacted Malta's cultural and creative sectors. In this context, we aim to safeguard and uphold the livelihood of artists and practitioners through our policies and regular conversations with PCOs and wider stakeholders. This mechanism aligns with our objective to steer the sectors towards more resilient, sustainable and inclusive models, echoing the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development's vision from the environmental, social and economic perspectives. Furthermore, we will develop specific and measurable indicators in line with the SDGs.

### **DIGITAL PRESENCE**

We will continue investing in our CRM system to provide a simplified application process and expand access to a wider audience through our digital platform. The drive behind investing in the online system is to provide centralised information to facilitate communication between internal users and beneficiaries. Our previous consultation process indicated the need to improve our digital presence and give exposure to projects supported by ACM. To this end, our online CRM system will enable us to monitor active projects, as well as provide the opportunity to disseminate information about ongoing programmes and open calls for application. Nevertheless, we will also explore additional ways of showcasing the activities supported by ACM.

### **EU PROJECTS**

The EU is an invaluable source of project funding for Malta's cultural and creative sectors. Therefore, we will continue to strategically utilise EU funding programmes to develop our portfolio of EU-funded projects further. This approach reflects and addresses the goals set out in Strategy 2025, which align with Malta's National Cultural Policy 2021 and are guided by the European Commission's priorities 2019-2024,<sup>7</sup> the EU's Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022<sup>8</sup> and the EU Strategy for International Cultural Relations.<sup>9</sup>

By using EU-funded projects effectively, we strive to invest in Malta's cultural and creative sectors further through the following horizontal, overarching objectives:

- Enabling strategic connections, networks and creative partnerships with other European/international creatives and cultural organisations.
- Strengthening the role, performance and institutional capacity of our workforce and that of PCOs to provide enhanced service delivery.
- Building bridges and synergies with other policy areas and cross-cutting themes, such as sustainability, the environment, digitalisation, cultural rights and diversity.
- Contributing to the creative and cultural sectors' sustainable economic development, employment and innovation dimensions.

Creative Europe is the primary funding instrument that supports cultural and creative projects in Europe. However, due to the transversal nature of the cultural and creative sectors, at ACM we shall explore other direct and indirect EU funding programmes, such as the European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF), Horizon Europe, the European Neighbourhood Instrument Cross-Border Cooperation in the Mediterranean (ENI CBC Med), EuropeAid, Europe for Citizens, and the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).

<sup>7</sup> European Commission, 2022. The European Commission's priorities for 2019-24. [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024_en).

<sup>8</sup> Council of the European Union, 2018. Draft Council conclusions on the Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022. <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-13948-2018-INIT/en/pdf>. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52016JC0029&from=EN>

<sup>9</sup> European Commission, 2016. Joint communication to the European Parliament and the Council: Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52016JC0029&from=EN>.

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We shall also collaborate with Creative Europe Desk Malta to promote awareness and understanding of the Creative Europe programme, ensuring that advice and support are continuously provided to local artists and cultural organisations to increase their active participation in international collaboration projects.

The priorities for EU projects shall be aligned with other priorities for public investment to strengthen international cultural relations, social cohesion and well-being through culture, as well as for the professionalisation of the creative and cultural sectors and their workforce, including tackling the challenges and opportunities encountered by the digital shift.

## ACTIONS

1. Allocate annual investment towards our funding programmes, which will include financial schemes aimed at supporting artistic and cultural projects, programming, internationalisation, community exchanges, research and development, professionalisation, arts education, cultural content in the media, platforms, cultural and sectoral representative organisations, traditional cultural activities and similar initiatives to meet ongoing sectoral needs and concerns. Investment allocation is subject to Government's annual budget, but our persistent aim is to maintain a relevant, structured and flexible funding framework.
2. Develop and continuously review our funding programmes and investment mechanisms through ongoing public consultation, engagement and evaluation to address sector-specific needs and concerns with the Status of the Artist at the core of our thinking.
3. Enhance standard operating procedures for fund management and assess existing processes to minimise bureaucracy and enhance communication with the public about our monitoring and reporting requirements.
4. Embark on an evaluation and consultation process to identify investment measures that allow for increased transparency and healthier competition. This includes reviewing and analysing our evaluation processes and systems to pinpoint areas that need improvement to provide more equitable investment, better feedback and flexibility in response to the changing needs of the cultural and creative sectors.
5. Invest in resources that facilitate ongoing discussions with our stakeholders and establish procedures that lead to a charter on the Status of the Artist to align with the National Cultural Policy 2021's direction. The result will be a framework that protects, improves and recognises an artist's right to express, practise, organise and advocate for their status.
6. Enhance our online CRM system for all public investment initiatives administered by ACM. It will be utilised for the duration of the funding process, including the application, evaluation, award, implementation, mentoring, monitoring and reporting stages, to ensure a greener, smoother and more efficient process.
7. Explore and establish alternative funding mechanisms that complement our existing ones. Such tools must be based on participatory approaches that enhance recognition of the public value of arts and culture, including crowdfunding, match funding, micro-grants and preferential bank loans. To achieve this goal, we will follow an exploratory process with our existing and future stakeholders using a cross-sectoral approach.
8. Establish co-funding mechanisms for our portfolio through inter-ministerial collaborations addressing specific target groups within the cultural and creative sectors.
9. Engage sectoral support coordinators with specialist knowledge and experience to monitor and guide the implementation of the funded projects and work we support through other forms of public investment.
10. Pursue the continuous support of Gozo and its position as a distinctive cultural region through a localised approach, as well as collaborative investment in the island's cultural development.
11. Allocate resources to participatory frameworks with PCOs to strengthen their cultural leadership through relationships with collaborators from the public and independent sectors, their operational standards and various levels of decision-making. This will be implemented through regular and collaborative strategic reviews and evaluations using specialised think tanks and consultations. In this regard, ACM will serve as a role model, offering continuous guidance and advocating the use of best practices.

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12. Establish sectoral steering committees with practitioners from public institutions, independent cultural entities and representative organisations that form part of Malta's cultural and creative ecology and can offer advice and guidance during our investment decision-making processes.
  13. Invest in building on the established Il-Premju għall-Arti as an award that recognises excellent and outstanding artistic work, in line with the sectoral trends, for its contribution on a national level, while encouraging more professionalism and innovation in the cultural and creative sectors.
  14. Develop a portfolio of EU-funded projects to evolve and expand ACM's international cultural profile to benefit those involved in the cultural and creative sectors.
  15. Develop effective and suitable international multi-stakeholder partnerships and consortia to bid for multi-country project-based work by identifying the right partners and building relationships to prepare robust EU project proposals.
  16. Make EU funding more accessible to Malta's cultural and creative sectors by financially supporting Maltese cultural organisations that have secured EU funding, using an established co-financing mechanism that covers the self-financing component of the EU-funded project.



Lighting the Sky for San Lawrenz – George Abdilla

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## DIVERSITY AND COMMUNITIES

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION ARE AS CRUCIAL TO ARTS AND CULTURE AS THEY ARE TO INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE WELL-BEING, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES. DIVERSITY ACKNOWLEDGES AND VALUES DIFFERENCES, AND IT ENCOURAGES AND ENABLES CONTINUED CONTRIBUTION WITHIN AN INCLUSIVE CONTEXT WHERE EVERYONE CAN FEEL THEY BELONG. WHILE INCLUSIVENESS ENSURES THAT EVERYONE CAN PARTICIPATE, DIVERSITY ALLOWS PEOPLE TO TAKE PART ON THEIR OWN TERMS, REMOVING BARRIERS SO AS TO NURTURE WIDER CULTURAL PARTICIPATION AND SAFEGUARD EVERYONE'S RIGHT TO EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES TO ENJOY THEIR INDIVIDUAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND ACHIEVE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL.

We believe that culture can be a catalyst that nurtures diverse and inclusive communities – where all people are treated with dignity and respect, as well as valued and equitably supported in realising their cultural rights. We aim to promote and strive for the protection and realisation of the rights and freedoms of each person (both individually and in community with others) to develop their full potential and express their humanity, their worldview and the meanings they give to their existence and development through, inter alia, values, beliefs, convictions, languages, knowledge, the arts, institutions and ways of life. In order to do so, there needs to be protection and promotion of access to cultural heritage and resources that allow such identification and development processes to take place. In these communities, we enable and support openness, authenticity and critical thinking, promote awareness of diverse narratives and acknowledge challenges and opportunities. We shall collaborate across sectors to ensure that everyone, irrespective of sex, gender, racial or ethnic origin, age, disability, sexual orientation or religious belief, has access to arts and culture, as well as the benefits and well-being they generate and that this power is duly shared.

We will work with all local, national and international organisations and individuals across sectors whose key responsibilities could support culture's central role in building a fairer, more prosperous and more resilient society, actively engaging in local, regional and global debate and shaping sustainable development in communities and the cultural sphere. We will also work with players within local communities to leverage cultural and social innovation for the benefit of their communities and society. We believe that we can enhance this approach further by advocating and investing in measures that encourage active cultural participation, strengthen audience engagement and support overall artistic development through community-led initiatives.

As fundamentally embedded components of Strategy 2025, we will enable, support and advocate for the realisation of cultural rights, greater diversity, equity and inclusiveness, as well as for environmental, social and economic sustainability.

## OVERALL OBJECTIVE

**To enable the arts and culture to reach people more deeply in every aspect of their life, instilling a more diverse and innovative cultural and creative ecology, valued by – and aligned with – the communities it serves.**

## PRIORITIES

### INCLUSIVENESS

We commit to enabling and advocating for radical inclusiveness in the cultural and creative sectors, practising the ethics of care and responsibility through sustainable practices. This would entail power-sharing, the rethinking of long-established dominant narratives, a reduction in poverty, enhanced holistic well-being and the flourishing of every person. To this end, we shall work with PCOs as cultural leaders with a responsibility to widen access, increase diversity, and ensure inclusive programming practices that reflect societal change.

### WELL-BEING AND COHESION

In close and equitable collaboration with other players and stakeholders, we shall strengthen cohesion and well-being, by promoting a profound transformation of lifestyles, circularity and regeneration, rethinking current models of operation and addressing sustainability holistically. We shall prioritise collaboration, knowledge building, advocacy and research that address policy crossovers to mainstream culture in social inclusion, integration and diversity policy and strategy.

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## COMMUNITY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

As ACM, we shall facilitate community cultural development, enabling the utilisation of existing and potential cultural spaces around the Maltese Islands and the reinvention of spaces of exchange, creation and socio-ecologies that are relevant to the community. To achieve this, we require a rethinking of the modus operandi to address environmental and social sustainability. We aim to support non-governmental operators by identifying and using underutilised resources and emphasising local and regional cultural development. By prioritising regional cultural development, we will valorise the distinctiveness of its various forms and expressions while enabling and supporting relevance and development, reflecting our rapidly changing communities.

## ACTIONS

1. Implement a Right to Culture sensitisation campaign, which includes wide dissemination of the Right to Culture resource kit, training and orientation/study visits; support of cultural mediation; recognition and dissemination of good practice; and advocacy for the constitutional entrenchment of cultural rights.
2. Invest in and advocate for the mainstreaming of cultural participation and access to address the social structures that impede equitable participation and access. This shall include accessibility training for staff, investing in resources and infrastructure, supporting services such as relaxed and signed performances, touring, multi-sensory and tactile exhibits, due facilities (including Braille and speech text), touring and accessible digital services to improve cultural experiences for all.
3. Adopt a rights-based approach to initiate and nurture sectoral consultation, networking, collaboration, shadowing, continuous knowledge building and access to support structures for the development of opportunities to recognise and celebrate Malta's diverse cultural assets and identities.
4. Promote and support applied research on social equity, diversity and inclusiveness in Malta's cultural and creative sectors, focusing on access, representation, participation, working conditions, precariousness, career paths and the impact of values, attitudes, interests, intersectionality and gender issues, as well as that of diverse groups, utilising methodologies and dissemination tools that are accessible for all.
5. Promote and support Arts on Prescription, focusing on mental health, equitable well-being and politics of care by collaborating with arts and non-arts organisations.
6. Implement regional cultural strategies through continuous collaboration with public, private and voluntary sector stakeholders at local and regional levels. This encompasses the creation of capacity-building and research initiatives, enhancement of cultural infrastructure, improvement of local and regional cultural programming and governance, and development of ongoing evaluation and monitoring structures.
7. Reinforce and support collaborations with the Government through the Regional Cultural Coordinator and Regional Cultural Officers. This will facilitate the fair distribution of investment and support, as well as the development of well-connected intra-regional communities.
8. Invest in safeguarding and promoting the diversity of artistic and cultural expression in tangible and intangible cultural heritage, as well as heritage-led regeneration, creativity and innovation (including the teaching of language, history, culture and cultural mediation).
9. Promote and support digital accessibility as part of post-pandemic recovery plans, focusing on its innovative incorporation into cultural heritage, creative expression and audience engagement.
10. Align our investment and funding with cultural diversity and sustainable community development values, making them fair and flexible by (1) promoting and enabling access support (including assistance to access funds, linguistic services, social assistance, specific allowances and fiscal measures), (2) facilitating and supporting capacity-building programmes to enable access to tools and resources while developing new initiatives to respond to the demand of the cultural and creative sectors' ever-changing narratives, and (3) reviewing and evaluating our structures and guidelines as needed and using ongoing public consultation.



*ŽfinMalta's Requiem for Juliet (May 2022) - Joe Smith*

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## EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

IN ADDITION TO SUPPORTING FORMAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, WE WILL EXPLORE INITIATIVES AIMED AT SUPPORTING INFORMAL AND LIFELONG EDUCATION FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD TO ADULTHOOD. OUR AIM IS TO NURTURE BOTH QUALITY EDUCATION OF THE ARTS, AS WELL AS A WIDER APPRECIATION OF THE ARTS AND THEIR CROSS-SECTION WITH DIFFERENT FIELDS OF KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE.

One of ACM's essential roles is to lay the foundation for cultural and creative operators to function and thrive. Education lies at the heart of this process, nurturing and supporting the arts' important contribution to students' holistic development and the wider school community. Exposing students to creativity in teaching (even in core subjects) promotes 21st-century transversal skills, including critical thinking, collaboration, communication and real-world problem-solving.

In addition to supporting formal educational institutions, we will explore initiatives that bolster informal and lifelong education from early childhood to adulthood. Our aim is to nurture quality arts education, as well as encourage wider appreciation and awareness of the arts and how it intersects with different fields of knowledge and practice. Our vision for the sector's growth also entails other forms of development outside the immediate sphere of education. We intend to support the continuous development of all artists and practitioners, from those operating in traditional or grassroots settings to those working in academia and the public, private and voluntary sectors. We will adopt a cross-sectoral and holistic approach while remaining mindful of current and future trends identified by the Council of Europe's conclusions on the Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022 – namely, the digital shift, globalisation, growing societal diversity and changing working environments.

ACM will continue advocating for key stakeholders in education to recognise creativity, culture and the arts as viable career pathways within the contemporary knowledge economy. And by supporting partnerships between PCOs and educational institutions, we will facilitate the provision of vocational support in career development and address the creative aspirations of students and educators. As stated in the National Cultural Policy 2021:

*"[G]iven the trends and changes in career boundaries, the creative pedagogies, essentially, teaching for creativity and creative learning that sustain education for the Arts are fast becoming a necessary skills set for every student as more and more future jobs will involve creative application, digital communication skills and creative entrepreneurship."*<sup>10</sup>

This reflects the transversal 21st-century skills students will need to acquire as active learners.

## OVERALL OBJECTIVE

**To direct public investment towards education programmes that ensure accessible, equitable and high-standard arts education and participation from early childhood to lifelong learning, while facilitating collaboration between cultural operators and educational institutions. In addition, continuous career development in the cultural and creative sectors within various settings shall also be prioritised and facilitated.**

## PRIORITIES

### PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES

Through ongoing collaborations with key players in education, we will nurture a deeper appreciation for, as well as skill sets that include, pedagogical practices in arts education within formal and informal settings. Our aim is for those active in the liminal spaces between arts, creativity, education and community to gain more profound knowledge of the best pedagogical practices available while fostering an environment of true, meaningful collaboration that safeguards participants, educators and creative practitioners alike.

### WIDER ARTS APPRECIATION

We will focus on lifelong education from early childhood to adult education and on formal, informal and non-formal education as platforms that contribute to the holistic development of different members of society. Furthermore, we believe that the best way to increase and diversify our audience is through the effective engagement of new practitioners.

<sup>10</sup> Ministry for the National Heritage, the Arts and Local Government, 2021. National Cultural Policy 2021, p.87.



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Therefore, our strategy includes actions aimed at engaging the very young and their families up to the older generations so as to expand audiences and appreciation for the arts and increase students' likelihood of engaging in artistic training and careers.

### COLLABORATIVE AND INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO ARTS EDUCATION

We will strive to lead by example by establishing initiatives that bring together players from different entities and disciplines, including those from the private, public, academic and voluntary sectors. By doing so, we aim to promote a wider application of arts and creativity and promote transversal skills and knowledge. Our commitment to engaging educators and creative practitioners in dialogue and collaboration is steadfast, for we advocate for the broader inclusion of creativity and the arts in education to strengthen 21st-century education and skills.

### CAREER PATHWAYS IN THE ARTS

While working to achieve broader engagement in the arts, we will also strive to raise the standard of arts education to support the development of local talent and funnel people towards viable and fruitful careers. We will facilitate career development for young people and students of the arts and creative disciplines by collaborating with Malta's key stakeholders in the areas of youth, employment and entrepreneurship from both the public and private sectors. In doing so, we aim to support young people when embarking on careers in the arts by investing in their portfolios and supporting the building of networks and partnerships. We will also enhance resources and access to knowledge for professionals within cultural and creative fields to explore, experiment, discuss and invest in their growth, as well as to benefit Malta's wider economic, social and cultural development. Fostering these career pathways will contribute to retaining creative talent and furthering possibilities for innovation and international cultural relations.

## ACTIONS

1. Advocate for greater synergy between the Ministries responsible for culture, education and employment to facilitate a collaborative cross-sectoral approach, partnerships, and investment in resources to strengthen current initiatives and establish new ones.
2. Invest in the capacity building of organisations active in arts education via pedagogical training for educators and creative professionals working in education and local communities to promote professionalisation, creativity and critical thinking.
3. Invest in funding schemes that support collaborations between education institutions and artists, creative practitioners and cultural organisations, encouraging students and educators to further engage with the creative and cultural sectors.
4. Strengthen opportunities for and support of existing partnerships so cultural organisations and practitioners who operate in the public, private and voluntary sectors can collaborate to (1) provide high-quality education and outreach programmes focusing on long-term development and (2) demonstrate the value of transdisciplinary cooperation and knowledge sharing. This includes engaging young people and the elderly in new productions, as well as creative learning programmes targeting early childhood and the older generation as audiences.
5. Ensure that every child and young person has access to high-quality artistic and cultural productions, thereby promoting greater engagement and participation. This will be achieved through age-specific initiatives, including a curated programme for educational institutions and a non-curated programme for older students and young people in the community.
6. Promote access within communities through, for example, collaborative programmes within the justice system, social care, Local Councils and healthcare organisations to promote active participation in the community.
7. Collaborate with the Malta Further & Higher Education Authority to conduct research on available methodologies to introduce accreditation and licensing of arts education institutions and therefore promote high standards for institutions and curricula, as well as transparency through publicly available data from approved institutions.
8. Invest in talented young artists to develop their skills and artistic practice through funding and mentorship programmes and scholarships offered with other relevant entities, as well as through access to work and paid apprenticeship schemes for new arts graduates.

9. Bolster the communication of the personal, social and economic impacts of arts education to raise public awareness of its value. To this end, relevant media campaigns and brokerage work will encourage support for arts education in the public and private sectors.
10. Facilitate networking sessions, workshops and collaborative initiatives between artists and stakeholders within other fields, such as STEM disciplines, media, education, voluntary organisations and commercial enterprises, to promote interdisciplinary work and enterprises.
11. Encourage continuous lifelong professional training in partnership with relevant public entities responsible for education. Topics should align with the developing contexts and environments in which artists and creatives operate and could include, for example, fostering an entrepreneurial mindset, learning digital technology and other specialised training that provides opportunities for practitioners and educators to continue developing their skills and expertise.
12. Invest in the training of cultural leaders and employees in the cultural sector, including (but not limited to) relevant public employees, to continue promoting the sector's value and that of its employees.
13. Introduce schemes that support research in the cultural and creative sectors, as per the National Cultural Policy 2021. Such initiatives could include supporting artists who wish to take a sabbatical period of up to one year by allocating a basic income and following agreed-upon outcomes and objectives.
14. Contribute to the local publishing industry with a focus on design and illustration to expand the industry's reach and promote readership and literacy among the public



Malta Philharmonic Orchestra horn player Marco Cola prepares for the orchestra's first concert at Zaryadye Hall during their Moscow tour in 2019 – Joe Smith

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## INTERNATIONALISATION

AN INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK IS A PREREQUISITE FOR PROFESSIONALISATION AND FURTHER GROWTH IN TODAY'S GLOBALISED WORLD. GIVEN OUR GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT, ACM RECOGNISES THAT FORMING AND MAINTAINING INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS IS FUNDAMENTAL FOR MALTA'S CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTORS TO FLOURISH.

We envision stronger global cultural relations that enable long-term sectoral development via new opportunities for international collaboration and exchange – partnerships based on mutual understanding, trust and intercultural dialogue, whereby arts and creativity transcend borders.

We foresee Malta's cultural and creative practitioners becoming increasingly engaged in international exchanges and co-productions in the coming years. Given the constant evolution of the cultural and creative sectors, we also understand that there is a need to develop the skills of creative professionals to engage internationally. This includes reaching out to new and diverse audiences around the globe and sustaining the growth of cultural and creative entrepreneurs. In addition, there are also spill-over effects in other sectors, including nation branding, development, tourism and trade.

As being partly responsible for implementing the National Cultural Policy 2021, ACM shall advocate for a more open approach to cultural relations – one encompassing open dialogue with multiple stakeholders to engage and mobilise citizens, artists, civil society and cultural institutions. Our strategy will be directed towards building trust and nurturing relationships across national borders, as well as supporting and facilitating cross-border creative experimentation and new international cultural projects. Our existing and future roles as a national entity within international networks will also contribute to global conversations shaping the trajectory of international cultural relations.

For these reasons, we embrace the guiding principles of the EU's agenda in international cultural relations, as established in the Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: Towards an EU Strategy for International Cultural Relations. The document reaffirms the EU's commitment to the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and encourages cultural cooperation between EU member states and partner countries by "promoting a global order based on peace, the rule of law, freedom of expression, mutual understanding and respect for fundamental rights."<sup>11 12</sup>

## OVERALL OBJECTIVE

**To strengthen Malta's international cultural relations by building trust and understanding through diverse artistic and cultural expressions that foster international networking, collaboration and exchanges.**

## PRIORITIES

### INTERNATIONAL VISIBILITY

Internationalisation brings about greater visibility of Malta's creative talent abroad, as well as new audiences. It is also a form of nation branding, which contributes to sustainable tourism and diplomatic relations. Therefore, ACM will prioritise internationally showcasing and promoting Malta's excellent contemporary artistic work.

### INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

As more international artists create works with Maltese and Malta-based artists, we will witness greater experimentation and innovation with other practitioners and organisations too, thus sharing work at a global level. In addition, we aim to support the increase of Maltese involvement in European and other international cultural projects by setting up co-production and partnership targets.

### ACCESS TO INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS

More of Malta's artists, creative practitioners and organisations will gain experiences in an international professional environment by sharing knowledge, resources and expertise while expanding their networks and reach.

### INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGES

Exchanges of cultural experiences between international, Malta-based and Maltese artists, as well as other creative practitioners and organisations, shall drive an increase in touring projects, artistic residencies and presence at international fairs, festivals, conferences and biennales.

<sup>11</sup> European Commission, 2016. Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations.  
<sup>12</sup> International Cultural Relations are also one of the five priorities of the EU Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022.



Ada Rovatti during the Malta Jazz Festival 2014 - Joe Smith

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## ACTIONS

1. Allocate resources to evaluation, research and knowledge building on international projects, initiatives and programmes we support and coordinate. This shall strategically inform our funding programmes and initiatives, as well as our monitoring approach, ensuring that our decision-making reflects the challenges faced when internationalising artistic work.
2. Organise, facilitate and invest in regular knowledge-sharing sessions, training and mentorship, internship and job-shadowing opportunities that advocate, promote and support sustainable international touring and cultural exchanges, benefitting representatives from the public and independent sectors.
3. Continue supporting Maltese and Malta-based artists and organisations in their international touring, outgoing and incoming mobility, artistic residencies, showcases, networking events, co-productions, collaborations, international marketing and PR ventures through our funding programmes.
4. Advocate for strong inter-ministerial collaborations that specialise in international cultural relations. By leading conversations between the Ministry responsible for culture, the Cultural Diplomacy Unit within the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Malta Tourism Authority, we will explore the possibility of facilitating the establishment of cultural attachés based in different Maltese embassies worldwide. Such collaborations will support projects that aim to promote and strengthen Malta's cultural relations and diplomacy through international partnerships, exchanges and similar initiatives.
5. Explore how to further develop the Cultural Diplomacy Fund in collaboration with the Cultural Diplomacy Unit within the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The Fund aims to promote and strengthen Malta's cultural relations and diplomacy through international partnerships, exchanges and other similar initiatives.
6. Increase our global representation in international networks through representative entities abroad, such as Maltese embassies becoming members of international clusters of the network for European Union National Institutes of Culture (EUNIC). It is envisioned that this will build upon the assistance being provided by Maltese embassies and missions to artistic opportunities that further cultural diplomacy. The aim would be to further engage in international cultural relations and diplomacy and to support international co-productions and exchanges, as well as Maltese and Malta-based artists, other practitioners and organisations in showcasing their work internationally.
7. Actively participate in the newly established EUNIC Malta Cluster along with several other EU cultural institutes and embassies to strengthen cooperation between Malta and other EUNIC members.
8. Advance and boost Malta's reputation through international marketing, public relations and communications about Malta's most talented contemporary artists to promote their projects and activities.
9. Establish an online presence for Malta's most outstanding artists and organisations and their work through a platform dedicated to showcasing Malta-based talent to international cultural programmers, festival-makers, operators and audiences at large.
10. Strengthen active participation as members of existing international networks, such as the International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies (IFACCA), the European Union National Institutes of Culture (EUNIC), the International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts (IETM) and the Salzburg Global Forum amongst others, while engaging with new international networks that focus on cultural development.
11. Organise delegations to international arts and cross-sectoral events, including markets, expos and festivals, in collaboration with other national and international entities and networks.
12. Support the Malta Pavilion's participation in the Venice Art Biennale, London Design Biennale and other relevant events.
13. Support international digital collaborations to engage international audiences through horizontal platforms that strengthen cultural democracy while transcending borders and reflecting diverse voices.

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## CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

ACM CHAMPIONS CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP TO MOTIVATE SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH WITHIN MALTA'S CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTORS. OUR EXPERIENCE AND EVIDENCE, ESPECIALLY GIVEN THE PANDEMIC'S IMPACT, DEMONSTRATE HOW THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES ARISING FROM CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP ARE LARGELY SHAPED BY ATTITUDES TOWARDS RISK, INNOVATION AND THE DIVERSITY OF BUSINESS MODELS THAT CAN RESPOND TO TECHNOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL CHANGES, STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS AND OVERALL WORKING CONDITIONS.

The cultural and creative sectors present a highly aleatory variety of players with different backgrounds and ambitions relevant to their diverse economic, social and cultural contexts. We recognise that artistic, cultural and creative practitioners have ambitions that range from full-time professional engagement in the cultural and creative sectors to sustaining their practice without it being their primary source of income. Therefore, through investment, advocacy, communication and capacity building, our work will focus on nurturing creative entrepreneurship as a mindset to lead to a more sustainable and inclusive approach. We will be mindful of people's different realities and supportive of their diversity of engagements with the sectors, as well as their subjective definitions of success. We will consider the distinctiveness of different sub-sectors within our cultural and creative ecology, as well as the range of roles, inputs and set-ups within the creative value chain. To address this strategic goal, we will link to other strategy areas and ensure they support and enable creative entrepreneurship.

We remain committed to elevating the status of artists and professionals by advocating in favour of the arts and creativity within communities and promoting freedom of expression and inclusion, improved working conditions and equitable access to opportunities.

We also seek to see creative entrepreneurship become an endeavour with a social remit to promote the position of the cultural and creative sectors within local communities and society at large. This drive will enable and support the collective aspirations of the arts to stimulate social development and well-being.

For this strategy to be successful and comprehensive, we will ensure open and constant dialogue with other entities that are directly responsible for Malta's cultural and creative sectors and represent the different sectors and conditions that shape the work of cultural and creative practitioners and organisations, such as the Malta Film Commission and the National Book Council, amongst others. We will liaise with these entities to streamline efforts for the benefit of the sectors.

## OVERALL OBJECTIVE

**To promote creative entrepreneurship as a mindset so as to foster an empowered, resilient and collaborative artistic community.**

## PRIORITIES

### TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Training and development enable creative entrepreneurship by informing practitioners about how to monetise their ideas and/or grow their businesses further via an exchange of knowledge on how to operate in particular contexts, including the public, private and voluntary sectors. We aim to mobilise our partnerships with relevant entities – such as Malta Enterprise – to ensure we disseminate information about all available training and development opportunities that facilitate the growth and scaling of creative business ventures.

### PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

For years, Malta and Gozo's physical cultural infrastructure has been a source of concern for our cultural and creative sectors. Using stakeholder feedback and our research into the sectors' most urgent needs, we will seek solutions to imminent hurdles that currently characterise our cultural infrastructure.

The pandemic has fast-tracked and intensified interest in the digital sphere, as well as the infrastructure supporting it, triggering important conversations about digital opportunities for monetisation, the generation of revenue through digital practices and the value of digital art. Therefore, we want to promote the digital sphere as another channel for artistic and creative expression to encourage new methods of experimentation, improving accessibility, increasing income generation and reaching audiences

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## CLUSTERING: NETWORKING AND SUPPORT

We aim to foster a culture of collaborative networking and support, which promotes meaningful connections on intersectoral and intrasectoral levels, to stimulate and sustain entrepreneurship while allowing for co-creation, skills transfer and collaborations to take place. For this reason, we seek to tap into new opportunities by creating connections across sectors, including health, the environment, planning and technology. We also strive to instil a solid model for cooperation and support, particularly between stakeholders that include public entities, private/independent organisations and/or individuals operating in Malta's cultural and creative sectors.

## SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

In recognising the importance of shifting mindsets towards sustained activity rather than one-off projects, we aim to engage in a process of advocacy to bring about this change in perspective over the next five years by providing information and tools to enable it to happen gradually and organically. We will also support practitioners in seeking and exploring relevant channels for their artistic work to be created, promoted and sustained. And, we will also encourage and support diverse revenue generation channels and provide advice on maximising income potential, including revenue generation through intellectual property. Finally, while supporting sustainability, we remain committed to promoting physical and mental well-being, balance and healthy lifestyles among practitioners working in the creative and cultural sectors.

## ACTIONS

1. Develop and sustain a diverse training and development programme that focuses on the entrepreneurial mindset and mobilisation of social, cultural and economic assets, including opportunities for knowledge exchange, skills development, awareness of well-being and access to resources such as toolkits.
2. Address physical infrastructural challenges on a legislative, administrative and policy level by collaborating with relevant entities and engaging in a process leading to improved and renewed access to existing infrastructure. This would include offering ACM's support – in collaboration with Public Cultural Organisations – to repurpose and upgrade existing spaces for organisations/companies/individuals in the creative sectors via collaborative frameworks with already-existing community spaces. The process would also involve supporting access by offering substantially subsidised rates to creatives renting these spaces.
3. Empower and facilitate networking and clustering by engaging in relevant partnerships with other entities, groups and associations to stimulate innovation and growth in the cultural and creative sectors
4. Develop a framework for PCOs, following a discussion with all stakeholders, including the private and voluntary sectors. The framework may include guidelines, resources and standards concerning intellectual property, ethical considerations, remuneration and pricing mechanisms, recruitment and co-production practices, and arrangements to empower collective bargaining. In so doing, we aim to encourage a more coherent and sound creative ecology that benefits and empowers public and private initiatives.
5. Initiate a programme of artistic residencies within the wider public sector to offer an opportunity for practitioners and organisations to apply their practice to other fields and tap into new potential networks and income streams.
6. Advocate for and support the creation of a legal framework enabling social enterprises to be established. In terms of the cultural and creative sectors, this would address an existing gap and provide the space for creative organisations to address social and cultural needs within an organisational set-up conducive to innovation.
7. Act as a point of contact for freelancers and self-employed practitioners by offering support on matters pertaining to their status as self-employed professionals and liaising with relevant entities, such as Business First. We will also assist creative practitioners in addressing pertinent issues relating to their employment status, ensuring they have access to the necessary tax and loan schemes, as well as other incentives that support the development of their creative ventures. This service would also involve publishing guidelines and toolkits that advocate for fair contracts that adequately acknowledge and reward all parts of the creative value chain.
8. Facilitate investment and provide support in research and development for creative entrepreneurs via direct funding and a regular pitch event for investors to assist practitioners in innovating, expanding and growing their creative business initiatives in tandem with artistic practice.

9. Facilitate access to business incubator programmes to support the creation of effective business strategies and revenue-generation models for practitioners.
10. Engage with other public entities to provide practitioners with the necessary knowledge and awareness about intellectual property rights through a regular promotional and training programme and dedicated portal.
11. Engage in partnerships with technology-focused entities, such as Tech.mt, MITA and private sector representatives, to create a development programme that supports and incentivises practitioners and organisations to maximise their use of digital technologies in their strategies, business models, operations and programming.



Roaring Lion at Summer Gozo Carnival – George Abdilla



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## RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION HAVE BEEN AT THE HEART OF ACM'S OPERATIONS OVER THE PAST SIX YEARS AND SHALL CONTINUE TO SHAPE THE DIRECTION OF OUR WORK IN THE YEARS TO COME. RESEARCH IS A PARTICULARLY CRUCIAL AREA AS IT IS, BY NATURE, NOT A SELF-CONTAINED SPHERE OF ACTIVITY BUT RATHER ONE THAT IMPACTS AND SUPPORTS MANY AREAS OF PRIORITY, WHICH IS PARTICULARLY PERTINENT IN THE CONTEXT OF ACM'S STRATEGIC PLANNING.

The goal of research as a strategic area is to build upon existing knowledge to nurture an internal culture of openness, critique and analysis, enabling ACM to make informed decisions about our operations, partnerships and future development across all areas of our work. The body of knowledge developed through ACM's research programme aims to instil a more thorough understanding of the crucial role arts and culture play in Malta's future socio-economic development. Our work seeks to identify and highlight existing trends and patterns of behaviour and activity within the cultural and creative sectors, as well as gain multi-layered insight into the status of artists and creative practitioners. Be it through addressing questions related to audience participation, creative practice, education, internationalisation or economic output, research enables us to gain a richer, more textured understanding of how arts and culture are developing, as well as the challenges that artists and creative practitioners face in their practice. This is especially valuable within the broader context of time and society, wherein a more extensive and longitudinal body of data reveals meaningful shifts and developments.

ACM can position itself at the forefront of Malta's creative and cultural sectors through compelling research, as a proactive, visionary and compassionate entity driving positive change and guiding the sectors through uncharted waters. Developing a more robust, representative and deep body of knowledge enables us to support the sectors in the present in addition to laying the groundwork for future developments. Our evidence-based body of knowledge will be informed by several sources, including relevant policy documents, local and international academic research, ACM's original research and primary data, pertinent statistical reports and our ongoing conversations with stakeholders and representative bodies. Our gathered insights will enable ACM and Malta's cultural and creative sectors to understand the human, social and economic investment required in emerging fields of practice.

Research is also crucial in establishing new partnerships and exploring new avenues of inquiry. As creative practice and artistic engagement become increasingly interdisciplinary – both in terms of their modes of practice as well as their subject matter – it is vital for us to establish and maintain strong relationships with individuals, entities and organisations operating in a range of different fields outside the arts. Research can bolster this kind of networking by inspiring new fields of exploration, identifying areas of collaboration and mutual interest, and bridging previously unrelated areas through knowledge transfer.

## OVERALL OBJECTIVE

**To develop a comprehensive knowledge base that will guide the future growth of Malta's cultural and creative sectors, advocate for and support evidence-based policy development, and evaluate ACM's funding programmes, strategy and general operations to ensure we adhere to our core principles of cultural rights.**

## PRIORITIES

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

ACM will continue developing a holistic understanding of Malta's cultural and creative sectors by tracing the socio-economic conditions of artists, as well as cultural and creative practitioners and organisations working across the sectors in Malta. We will also continue gathering data related to audiences of cultural activity. Aside from eliciting economic indicators, our research will also tackle topics such as diversity and representation across the arts, map the resources available to artists, understand changes in funding sources for the arts, and predict potential future trends in the local arts sector.

### ASSESS CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The infrastructural and regulatory framework through which Malta's cultural and creative sectors operate must be assessed, including mapping the sectors' administrative and regulatory setup to understand the obstacles practitioners

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face in developing sustainable operational structures. To this end, ACM will investigate Malta's physical cultural infrastructure and identify the sectors' most pressing needs to encourage further growth.

### CROSS-SECTORAL RESEARCH

We will develop greater knowledge about the cross-sectoral connections of the arts by investigating the relationship between artistic practice and various other aspects of social life, including well-being, urban development, sustainability and civic engagement, amongst others

### PROFESSIONALISATION

We will contribute to knowledge building about the ongoing professionalisation of Malta's creative and cultural sectors, particularly by identifying and addressing issues about which little local data is currently available, including digital literacy in the arts, arts education and internationalisation, amongst others.

### EVALUATING FUNDING PROGRAMMES

In reviewing and strengthening the impact of ACM's general operations and funding programmes through evaluation studies, we seek to understand our real-world impact and how public funding can evolve to better address the needs of Malta's cultural and creative sectors.

### ARTISTIC LEGACY

Malta's artistic legacy needs to be explored and documented more comprehensively, and we can do so by supporting and promoting research into the development of the arts in Malta over the past decades, as well as by establishing more formal documentation and record-keeping regarding ACM's work since its inception. Delving into our legacy is not simply an exercise in nostalgia; doing so helps us understand where we have come from, how our creativity has manifested itself throughout the decades, and how contemporary artistic practitioners stand on the shoulders of giants. This exercise also supports the articulation of our vision for the future, shedding light on past initiatives that have succeeded, as well as those that have failed, to empower us to build upon the works of those who came before us.

### COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION

Developing more open, transparent and engaging forms of communicating research outcomes is paramount so as to maximise their reach and impact. For this reason, we must ensure that research methods and findings are accessible to all and provide members of society with an equal opportunity to participate in research and use research findings. This is why we will ensure that research data gathered and owned by ACM is disseminated in line with Malta's National Open Access Policy.<sup>13</sup>

## ACTIONS

1. Update the Cultural Participation Survey to gain more insight into the latest trends on cultural participation nationally and enable comparative analysis. This will be complemented by further research on audience development and engagement to benefit creative practitioners and organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors.
2. Create a consultative working group comprising key stakeholders from the public, private and non-governmental sectors, including sectoral representative organisations, to discuss ongoing and future research in the cultural and creative sectors. This will enable the continuous development of our research programme and ensure its contextual relevance.
3. Explore and promote capacity building and collaborations that enable cultural operators to optimise their digital audience data management structures through suitable tools, partners and digital infrastructure.
4. Map the 'hard' and 'soft' infrastructure across Malta's cultural and creative sectors to develop a more holistic understanding of the environment within which cultural and creative practitioners operate. This exercise will assess the physical, institutional, social, legislative, regulatory and technological infrastructure that create the conditions within which our cultural and creative ecology exists.

<sup>13</sup> Malta Council for Science and Technology, 2021. The National Open Access Policy. <https://mcst.gov.mt/mcst-news/national-open-access-policy-public-consultation>.

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5. Develop an interactive digital interface for quantitative data to present and share research findings in an open and engaging manner.
  6. Conduct evaluation studies into our funding programmes to assess their impact and success, as well as make recommendations for their improvement to better address sectoral needs.
  7. Collaborate on updating the Creative Economy Report with the Ministry for Finance. The report was last published in January 2018 and outlines the economic contribution of Malta's creative and cultural sectors based on macroeconomic data.
  8. Create more comprehensive and transparent data collection structures for ACM's funding programmes to better understand their impact, reach and range.
  9. Coordinate and commission qualitative and quantitative studies into the relationship between artistic practice and other aspects of social life, including well-being and civic engagement, to gain more insight into the cross-sectoral connections between the arts and other socio-economic areas.
  10. Develop a database of cultural and creative practitioners for improved quantitative data collection. This will enable us to advocate more effectively for the Status of the Artist framework by means of reliable aggregate data which can inform relevant public policy and legislation.
  11. Develop strategic collaborations with entities and organisations working across Malta's creative and cultural sectors, as well as partnerships as part of consortiums that support national and European research.
  12. Support the documenting of Malta's artistic legacy by developing strategic collaborations with other public and independent organisations through joint research initiatives and projects.