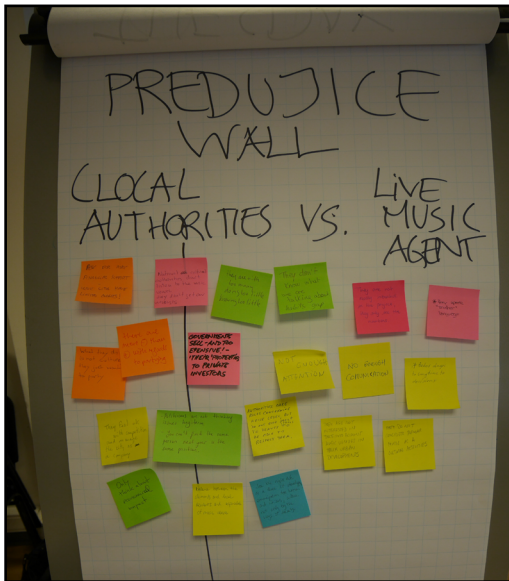


## THE VALUE OF LIVE MUSIC VENUES TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

19. - 21. FEBRUARY 2018  
Brussels, Belgium



The Live Style Europe working group met for the **second time** to explore the topic **"the value of venues to local authorities"**. The three days in Brussels were the continuation of the work commenced in Berlin in November 2017.

The first session of the working group was the perfect platform for exchanging best practices, identifying common topics, and brainstorming potential options for creating concrete tools. **The second session build on this fundamental work** in order to **concretize the ideas** that came up in Berlin and that have grown during the online exchanges between the two sessions.

We were very happy to continue the work with our external consultant Dorte Hartmann who was in charge of the moderation.

### DAY 1

On the first day, participants split up into **three groups** according to the three **topics identified in Berlin**:

#### Change the story, change the language (communication) - European platform

>> Development of a **collaborative** "best practice" **online tool** to share inspiration and **immediately applicable solutions**.

#### Change the story, change the language (advocacy) - Crossing networks on different geographical scales

>> Improving advocacy by writing the history of the **recognition and structuration of music venues** in each country as an **advocacy tool** that can be applicable in all venues when they are in contact with local authorities.

#### Living together - Relationships between venues and their local authorities

>> Ambition to find a solution on how to **co-construct a partnership between venues and local authorities** by communicating **the venue's global project** that is **in line with the priorities of local authorities**. Four major categories seem to make sense: programming music, creation, education and social value.

In order to keep the goal in mind, each participant worked first individually on their **ideal vision for the tool they aspire to create**. Starting imagining the ideal outcomes of their tools, everybody then considered the **resources** they already possess in order to build such a tool, and **potential obstacles** that need to be dealt with. After comparing and discussion each participant's ideal outcomes, the three groups worked out a **first action plan** that they then presented to the plenary: What is the challenge they want to address? What do we want to do? Why do we want to do it? How? What are the next steps? What resources do we need?

After collecting the feedback from the working group, the three topic-groups included the comments in their action plan.



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## DAY 2

On the second day, we had the chance to welcome **three external experts** that gave valuable input and feedback on the three projects the participants decided to work on:

- **Margaux Rouchet** - **LIKE-Les rencontres**, a European network of cultural cities representatives
- **Julie Hervé** - **Eurocities**, a European network of cities, in the cultural department specifically
- **Katharina Weinert** - **European Music Council**, the biggest European network dedicated to the music sector

After the presentations of the topics and tool-ideas, the experts dedicated their attention for the rest of the morning to each group individually in order to help them to **think outside of the box** and to learn more about **the perspective of politicians and authorities working in the cultural departments**.

**Interesting comments** from both sides, the working group participants and the external experts, included:

- Important to focus on **creating better partnerships**.
- Necessary to **improve the communication on both sides**: Julie Hervé advises to talk to local authorities not only about numbers, figures, and money, but to tell them more about the people who work in the venues and about the audience. Who are they, why do they come, what do they do? Authorities are interested in seeing venues as third places that have a project that goes beyond culture (social dimension of a venue).
- **Common interest** in developing **innovative working methods**.
- Authorities work on the **same topics** as we do (example: social inclusion).
- **Reclaim the recognition**: Be confident of what you do and don't make yourself smaller than you are, it is important what you are doing, demand the recognition that you deserve (not only from local authorities).

On Tuesday afternoon, the working group split up into two groups in order to discuss with the experts two topics that came up a lot during the working group. We decided to dedicate the time and the expertise of our three guests to those topics, as they were **relevant** and provided **stimulation for the tools** the participants were working on: the **Agent of Change** and **Voices of Culture**.

### **Approval of the agent of change – law in the UK after a three years campaign lead by, amongst others, Live DMA member Music Venue Trust**

Participants exchanged with the experts about their needs for a regulation that protects the venues and clubs in a city. It has been concluded that **an online seminar with the leaders of the Agent of Change Campaign** will be organized so that the participant can better evaluate the process and results for their situation.

### **Live DMA's participation at Voices of Culture - structured dialogue between the European Commission and representatives from the cultural sector on the topic of social inclusion**

The group discussion focused on **collecting best practices** around the topic of social inclusion. The venues representatives around the table all agreed that the social and educational projects started on their initiative. The dialogue with local authorities is important and the **support**, be it financial or structural, **is essential for leading such projects**. However, we should not forget that music is our key activity and that social activities make sense for the venues if music is the core of the activity. In addition to leading specific projects, it is also important to **create a prosperous environment for social inclusion** in the venue: who is the first person visitors meet when coming to a venue? A security person can be an intimidating first impression. Can visitors easily identify the persons who to talk to when having a problem?



On Tuesday afternoon, we also welcomed **Fiona Deuss Frandi**, who works for the **European Commission – Creative Europe programme**, into our working group. Fiona supervises the Live Style Europe project and the other music projects funded by the Creative Europe programme.

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## DAY 3



The **last day** of the working group consisted in elaborating concrete and detailed action plans in order to realize the following tools:

### **Inspiration Blog – the venue as hub for inspiration & innovation (European Platform)**

#### **>> Objective:**

By highlighting the power of pop music to create social change, the inspiration blog aims to empower live music actors and to improve the recognition of their work.

#### **>> Concrete & tangible goals:**

Blog should have at least around 20 entries until June 2018 for its launch at Primavera. The content is presented in an engaging way, is translated, and will cover the topics that are the most relevant for the venues in our sector ("local relationship management", "social inclusion", "audience diversity", "education", "sustainability") and information that is usually difficult to find (e.g. arguments to use for applications). The blog will be updated at least once a month. Its dissemination will follow a concrete communication strategy. Specific promotion tools will be explored (creating a "most innovative action"- award, setting up an Instagram account).

### **A methodology to share advocacy guidelines / a tool for building collective organisations (Crossing networks on different geographical scales)**

#### **>> Objective:**

- Setting up fair relations between venues and local institutions
- Cooperating and sharing the best practices by exporting the successful events to other countries
- Change the perception of the grassroots venues by changing the language and vocabulary (e.g. instead of being lobbyists, proclaim ourselves as advocates; instead of seeing the representatives of the local government as authorities, dialogue with them as partners).

#### **>> Challenges:**

- Creating common solutions and terms for different local problems
- Providing practical tools to each member's needs

#### **>> Concrete & tangible goals:**

- Write and share a guideline to change the vocabulary
- Collect best practices (Music Venue Trust (UK): Agent of Change, Berlin ClubCommission, Stadtnach Acht - Night life conference (De) / Platform nationale de la vie nocturne (Fr))
- Encouraging the creation of networks by collecting best practices from existing networks and telling the story of establishing the associations (video)

## Local Partnership and Social Engagement – Creating a booklet on how to approach your local authorities (Relationships between venues and their local authorities)

### >> Objective:

Help venues to improve the contact to and relationship with local authorities and increase the number of projects supported by local authorities.

### >> Concrete & tangible goals:

- Finish the guideline of best practices (examples of good existing relationships between venues and local authorities)
- Create a pilot booklet of the seven venues that participated at this topic-group
- Collect 17 best practices (one for each Live DMA member) and translate existing communication tools that have been established on a national level (e.g. Pop 2.0 booklet in the Netherlands)
- Collect statements from our local authorities and find out which venues are involved in the decision-making process and how they are involved.
- Communication about the project at events with international impact (such as Primavera, Rep-perbahn)



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The **challenge** will now be to **integrate the action plans into the working plans of the Live DMA coordination team and for the participants** to make the time to work on elaborating and realizing the tools they have conceived during the working group for their peers, the 17 Live DMA member organizations representing 2100 venues.

**First results** of the tools can be expected in **June 2018** (eventually for the International Congress of Music Venues at PrimaveraPro or after the General Assembly of Live DMA).

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