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SUMMARY REPORT ON
INNOVATIVE APPROACHES
TO VOLUNTEERING AND
INTEGRATION IN THE
CREATIVE ARTS SECTOR
REPORT

VOLPOWER: VOLUNTEER AND EMPOWER:
ENHANCING COMMUNITY BUILDING AND
SOCIAL INTEGRATION THROUGH DIALOGUE
AND COLLABORATION AMONGST YOUNG
EUROPEANS AND THIRD COUNTRY NATIONALS



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Deliverable 4.5

Summary report on innovative approaches to creative arts volunteering in relation to integration

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VOLPOWER: VOLUNTEER AND EMPOWER: ENHANCING COMMUNITY BUILDING AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION THROUGH DIALOGUE AND COLLABORATION AMONGST YOUNG EUROPEANS AND THIRD COUNTRY NATIONALS

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Deliverable 4.5 - Summary report on innovative approaches to creative arts volunteering in relation to integration

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This report builds on and brings together findings from the work package 4 internal country reports and public deliverables (4.1-4.4).

You can find all publications, also from the other work packages of the VOLPOWER project on <http://www.volpower.eu/>

Work package 4 *Volunteering in Creative Arts and Culture*

Deliverable 4.5 Summary report on innovative approaches to creative arts volunteering in relation to integration

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1. Introduction

In this work package '*Volunteering in Creative Arts and Culture*' (wp 4) of the VOLPOWER project we have explored how creative arts volunteering can contribute to dialogue, collaboration, and resource building between EU national- (EUN) and third country national- (TCN) youth. We have explored existing practices in culture and arts volunteering and have co-designed new practices in Croatia, Malta, the Netherlands, Slovenia and South-Tirol. For this we closely collaborated with selected volunteers and organisations in the five countries.

VOLPOWER is an interactive research project in which the volunteers are not only subjects and participants in the research via different training events, but in our project the volunteers are also important partners in co-designing innovative approaches that strengthen the link between youth empowerment, diversity and inclusion through volunteering.

The application of co-designing in volunteering is rather unexplored terrain, while it has great potential of mutually reinforcing empowerment of the volunteers and increasing awareness around diversity and inclusion. In VOLPOWER we have used the co-designing approach as an instrument to research current practices in volunteering in the arts and culture, as well as in changing and developing practices together with the volunteering organisations. Furthermore, we applied the co-designing approach not only in the relationship between researchers and practitioners, but we also organized co-designing to allow for cross-country comparison and mutual learning.

In the following section we give a short description of the co-designing method and the empirical findings of the project. This will be followed by the academic contributions of the project before we conclude the report with an overview of the practical implications of the project.

2. Co-designing process

Co-designing stems from participatory customer design techniques. It departs from the idea that you create something *together* with a range of stakeholders, as smart solutions require a creative interdisciplinary team, combining first-hand experience from different settings. In the co-designing principle an equal collaboration with the users, as partners rather than subjects in the design, is central (Sanders and Stappers 2014; Rodgers 2018). While originating in the commercial design sector, “*co-design is quickly becoming widespread in the public sector, including voluntary sector organisations, the third sector, and small to medium sized enterprises, as a way of engaging citizens in design exploration*” (Rodgers 2018). In VOLPOWER we bring together volunteers from different organisations to exchange good practices on the nexus of volunteering on youth empowerment, diversity and inclusion. What can the organizations learn and exchange to strengthen their activities around youth empowerment, diversity and inclusion?

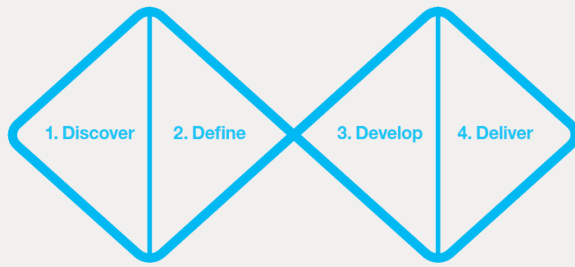
A co-design approach consists of different steps in which a solution is designed, tested and refined, together with the users or experts (Sanders and Stappers 2008; Steen et al 2011; Weiler et al 2016), or in this case the volunteers. *Central in this approach is that you involve the users in all the steps in the designing process, from the first explorations of the topic (discover and define) to the final development and delivery of the co-designing process (Design Council 2015).* These steps are defined as:



1. Preparing the theatre performance in Bolzano, South Tyrol

Discover, Define, Develop and Deliver (Design Council 2015). The so-called ‘double diamond’, combining divergent and convergent thinking: “*It maps how the design process passes from points where thinking and possibilities are as broad as possible to situations where they are deliberately narrowed down and focused on distinct objectives*” (Design Council, 2015, p.6). You start with opening up by exploring the associations and experiences of the users, in this case our volunteers (*discovering*). Secondly you then *converge* filtering the best, or most relevant approaches that were collected in the previous step (*define*). In the following step *new* solutions are *developed*. You again start with a broad, brainstorming approach. Finally, an intervention is selected for testing and implementation in the *delivery* phase.

Overview of the double diamond phases

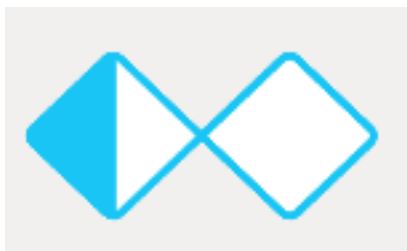


1. Source: Design Council 2015

In Deliverable 4.1 we started with a first description of the volunteering organisations and the current activities the volunteers undertake there. For the subsequent step focus groups were organised to delve deeper in the volunteers' personal experiences around youth empowerment, diversity and inclusion and the approaches/practices within their respective volunteering organisations that can

strengthen these (**Discover/Define**; see Deliverable 4.2 and **Develop**; see Deliverable 4.3). Subsequently the new approaches and practices that were developed by the volunteers to strengthen youth empowerment, diversity and inclusion were put in practice (**Deliver**; see Deliverable 4.4)¹. In this report we reflect on the co-designing process and what we have learned about how creative arts volunteering can contribute to dialogue, collaboration, and resource building between EU national- (EUN) and third country national- (TCN) youth.

¹ Deliverables 4.1, 4.3 and 4.4 are available on the VOLPOWER project website <http://www.volpower.eu/>






2.1 Discover (Existing practices)

For the co-designing process we closely collaborated with a number volunteering partner organisations. All organisations operate in the creative arts sector, in dance, forum theatre and cultural dialogue centres (for a full overview of the organisations' activities see VOLPOWER 4.1 report).

Meet our partners!

Croatia	Centre for Cultural Dialogue	<p>Centre for Cultural Dialogue is a non-profit and non-governmental organization that strengthens and promotes interreligious and intercultural dialogue in Croatia and beyond. The Centre for Cultural Dialogue is contributing to acceptance, tolerance and peace by promoting intercultural society.</p> <p>On one side, the Centre implements different programs such as educational, humanitarian, intellectual and other integration-related activities. On the other, it builds awareness, fosters resilience, reduces prejudice and overall increases a level of acceptance and the culture of welcome to refugees in Croatian society.</p>
		
Malta	History of Art Student Association (HoASA)	<p>The History of Art Student Association, (HoASA) was re-established in 2009 as a voice to all art lovers and to give enthusiasts a chance to meet other people who share the same interest. Furthermore, it creates contacts with other associations, which foster the same principles. It also gives all members a chance to visit places of interest and meet the artists.</p>
		
<p><i>In Malta the researchers furthermore worked with a new language training that was developed by one of the volunteers</i></p>		

The Netherlands	<p>Hip Hop Huis</p> 	<p>Hip Hop Huis was founded in 2002 as a home-base for Hip Hop enthusiasts in and around Rotterdam. The foundation offers Hip Hop dance classes, but also DJ'ing, Spoken Word and Producing courses. Besides these regular activities several annual festivals and events are organized, all linked to Hip Hop. Hip Hop Huis forms a community for youth culture in Rotterdam. Through their classes, events and volunteer engagement Hip Hop Huis aims to stimulate the cultural and personal development of youngsters: "changing the world through Hip Hop". Furthermore they aim to broaden the cultural sector in Rotterdam, by representing the youth culture through Hip Hop.</p>
	<p>Stichting Lemat</p> 	<p>Stichting Lemat was founded in 2015 as an intermediary organisation between Eritrean refugees and the Dutch society. The foundation supports both Eritrean refugees in their process of settlement in the Netherlands and Dutch organisations (such as municipalities, societal organisations and language schools) in developing a cultural sensitive approach in their work with Eritrean refugees. Besides languages classes, consultation hours and empowerment training, Stichting Lemat runs several projects, such as an integration and empowerment project in Rotterdam and a theatre project together with the Herman van Veen Arts Center.</p>
Slovenia	<p>Slovenska filantropija – Slovene Philanthropy</p> 	<p>Slovenska filantropija – Slovene Philanthropy Association for promotion of voluntary work, is a humanitarian organization operating in public interest since 1992. Their programs are aimed at increasing the quality of life in the community and advocacy for the socially underprivileged.</p> <p>Various activities are combined in program units Migrations, Volunteering, Intergenerational cooperation, Promotion of health, International and development cooperation. Areas of work of the Migration unit are psychosocial, integration, legal and learning assistance, leisure activities, awareness raising and advocacy for the rights of unaccompanied and separated children, asylum-seekers, persons with international protection and other migrants.</p>
	<p>RogLab</p>	<p>RogLab is a creative hub established in 2012 as part of the Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana (MGML). As a collaborative platform providing an encouraging environment for creators</p>



with its 3D workshop, RogLab responds to the challenges of today's society and the urban environment by producing creative projects, while broadening the scope of its programme through a network of partner institutions. Roglab is dedicated primarily to activities in the fields of architecture, design and contemporary art, but it also focuses on cross-sector collaboration with institutions in the fields of education, science, economy, environment and urbanism.

Skuhna



Skuhna is a social enterprise that runs a restaurant providing authentic food from Africa, Asia and South America since 2012. Skuhna further expands the goals of Zavod Global and uses word culinary and storytelling as a unique tool of global learning and social inclusion as the social enterprise at the same time provides migrants from the Global South the training for full-time chefs.

The migrants along with volunteers (international and local) now organise an ongoing programme of cultural events taking place in Skuhna along with lunches, dinners, workshops and catering services from their full-time restaurant on Trubarjeva ulica.

Cirkokrog




Cirkokrog is a youth organization that was established in 2005 by a group of circus pedagogues. They have been developing circus, as a medium for working with diverse groups, also asylumseekers and vulnerable groups. They have been developing and implementing various projects and programs for the youth, and developing programmes of social, children's and community circus. They use various forms of circus in the pedagogical, youth-empowering and social pedagogical contexts. Many migrants and refugees also work with Cirkokrog.

Studio XXV



Studio XXV Institute for Cultural Activities, Studio 25 was established in 2015 by Maša Kagao Knez (Slovene- African (Burkina Faso background), acclaimed and awarded dancer, choreographer and theatre practitioner, active in the fields of dance, music and theatre. The Institute focuses on promotion of Western African culture and its integration into modern dance, music and theatre.

The institute has its own dance and theater production and offers regular dance and music courses. It has been very prominent in promotion of African culture in Slovene cultural space – through art performances and educational programmes.

South Tyrol	Organization for a World of Solidarity (OEW)	<p>The Organization for a World of Solidarity (OEW) is a non-profit organization based in Bressanone (South Tyrol). It was founded in 1990 and has been dealing with the North-South divide ever since. OEW's three main fields of activity include conscious consumerism, diversity and coexistence and international cooperation.</p> <p>OEW aims to promote critical thinking about global conditions and, at the same time, foster a respectful coexistence in South Tyrol. The organization offers to all of its members and participants space for creativity, exchange, education and discussions. It provides training courses, it organizes exhibitions and workshops, and supports young people in gaining experience by promoting international cooperation.</p>
		<hr/> <p>Youth Centre COOLtour</p> 
	<p>ArteViva Onlus</p> 	<hr/> <p>Cooltour is a youth communication project implemented by the educators of the Association "La Strada-Der Weg Onlus".</p> <p>The project was born in the first June of 2017 in the Don Bosco district of Bolzano. Cooltour is based in the premises of an old shop that has been dismissed for long time. The shop has become a youth editorial office with video makers, journalists, photographers and cartoonists who collect and tell the stories of the neighbourhood, working with educational agencies in the area and with local newspapers and media.</p> <hr/> <p>ArteViva Onlus is an amateur social sports cooperative that deals with small Circus. The cooperative is active through projects and workshops for children and young people aged 5 to 14 years. ArteViva is based in Bolzano and is coordinated by experts of Italian and German mother tongue. The cooperative carries out circus projects in kindergardens, elementary and middle schools and has experience with extracurricular circus workshops and summer camps in which entire weeks are focused around the circus art.</p>

The second step consisted of the participants linking the conceptualisations as defined above to existing practices and experiences within their own volunteering organisations, narrowing down (converging) the relevant interventions and further more mapping which elements of the key concepts are (not) addressed within the organisations. Thirdly then, practices were exchanged between the different organisations both nationally and between the different national cases.

Below we will discuss the thematic outcome of the focus group, summarizing the discussion on the different concepts. After that an overview of how the existing practices within the volunteering organisations score on the identified dimensions of diversity, inclusion and youth empowerment, is depicted before moving to the new practices that were born out of this comparison and the identified gaps in the existing practices.

Diversity

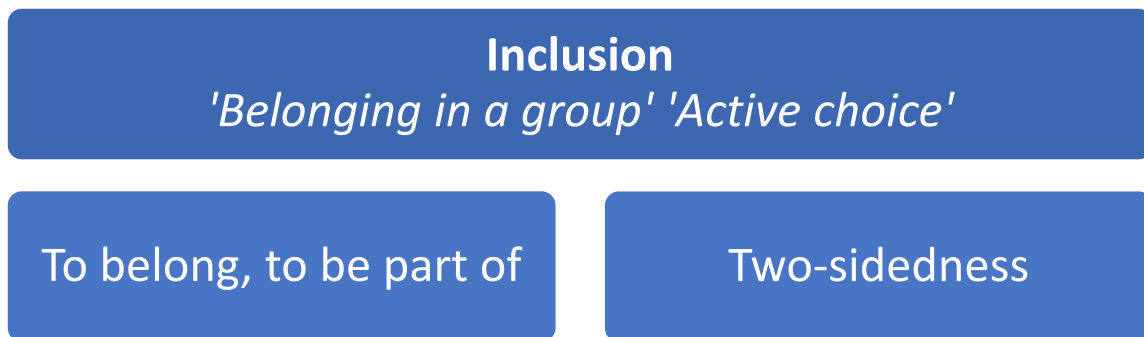


Diversity is defined as “being different” by the volunteers. They distinguish several dimensions in this: race, social class, gender, sexual orientation. The multi-dimensional character of diversity is emphasized, it is about “having people with all colours, ethnicities, languages, cultures, interests, traditions and mentalities”. Diversity for them is about bringing different people together. This raises the question how diversity is best facilitated. This is discussed in two different contexts. On the one hand, as summarized in the Rotterdam meeting: “Diversity is experienced when differences come about”. Inter alia the volunteers from South Tyrol discussed how their confrontation with diversity, in the form of new practices and habits after arriving in South Tyrol faced them with the need to adapt. In that sense diversity is linked to adaptation, learning and exchange. On the other hand the influence of (increasing) diversity on the mainstream is discussed. Diversity as the (new) norm. In the Rotterdam focus group it is also discussed how (increasing) diversity leads to reforms in society at large: diversity shaping [Dutch] society.

Diversity is about “being different” ... it is about “having people with all colours, ethnicities, languages, cultures, interests, traditions and mentalities”

The South Tyrolian volunteers also refer to the specific South Tyrolian context of cultural diversity. The volunteers noted how cultural diversity is a central and very sensitive topic in South Tyrol institutional setting. According to volunteers, “South Tyrol is a place of different cultures, who used to live side by side. But at the same time, each one tries to protect its own community”. This habit of coexistence and multilingualism is challenged by “new diversities” brought in the province by newcomers. “In a place like South Tyrol where minority languages are recognized and protected, what is to be done with new languages brought here by newcomers? How far do we go in protecting, recognizing new minority groups?” asked a volunteer with migratory background.

Inclusion



Across the different focus groups inclusion is referred to as “belonging within a group” and “everyone matters”. The volunteers distinguish between ‘subjective feelings and emotions about being part of a group’ on the individual side and different barriers and enablers to inclusion on the structural side. Providing opportunity to develop one’s own identity as enabling condition to be active in a community (closely linked to youth empowerment). In South Tyrol the discussion focused primarily on inclusion in the local society: “to feel like a Bolzanino”, through an ‘understanding of the culture and the life’. The

concept of inclusion is contrasted to integration, which is considered as focused more on one-way adaptation. Instead in the context of inclusion the importance of an equal relationship is stressed.

“Diversity is more something that just happens to be ... Inclusion is more of a choice, I will do this [to be inclusive], make this effort, or not. It is about having a choice”

Across the focus groups different enablers for inclusion are mentioned, the importance of certain shared characteristics, or alternatively shared activities are emphasized. This highlights the tension between diversity and similarity. The volunteers discussed how it is easier to connect if you share something, or when this is facilitated through an event, enabling the participants to discover or create these shared experiences (see above). Language is mentioned as an important tool for participation and inclusion.

However, it is also remarked that inclusion requires more than adaptation at the immigrant’s side. While ‘language’ and ‘knowledge of cultural scene’ can be helpful tools for inclusion, the two-sidedness of inclusion is emphasized, particularly in the Rotterdam focus group. Based on own experience, one of the volunteers tells how an open attitude on the ‘receiving end’ is an important prerequisite for inclusion too. The importance of intermediaries is stressed, someone who can bridge gaps for you. As phrased by one of the Dutch volunteers “You can have an open attitude but if the rest is not aware of what the struggles for you are than it is really difficult, and then you are still not part of it”. Here again, intermediaries are referred to. “It is about seeking connection. Someone who breaks the ice for you. Holds your hand.” This can be facilitated through mentoring projects targeted at reaching out to the ‘newcomers’. Or by efforts to explicitly facilitate dialogue between different groups, emphasizing the two-sided character of inclusion. “It is about talking to each other. Talking to people who are new, learning to understand each other, having an open attitude but by conversation.” In Rotterdam the distinction between inclusion and exclusion was also discussed. When does diversity lead to inclusion or exclusion? The volunteers distinguish between diversity and inclusion, in which inclusion is defined as a deliberative choice which requires an active effort of all actors involved. The volunteers stress the organisations’ responsibility in their share of inclusion.

Youth empowerment



Youth empowerment is described by the volunteers as “feeling confident” in order to ‘fully participate’, and thereby very close to inclusion. The South Tyrolian OEW describes youth empowerment as “providing opportunity to develop one’s own identity as enabling condition to be active in a community”. Here too distinction between the individual and organisational level is made, although the discussions mostly focused on the former. Enablers for youth empowerment partly overlap with those for inclusion (e.g. to have knowledge and opportunities) but also focus more on the emotional/individual level (feeling confident, having the power to say no, having a network, having a purpose).

Youth empowerment is described by the volunteers as “feeling confident” in order to ‘fully participate’

Comparing practices

After the volunteers defined diversity, inclusion and youth empowerment the identified dimensions were compared to the existing activities and practices in the volunteering organisations, to identify which elements of diversity, inclusion and youth empowerment are addressed and which remain underrepresented in the organisations.

A clear finding from the focus groups is that diversity and inclusion are perceived as more than adaptation (of the newcomer), and to instead also explicitly focus on exchange, diversity as the norm and adaptation from the mainstream. These dimensions are however least addressed in the organisations so far. For the next step we will thus focus on how the existing practices on this dimension can be exchanged

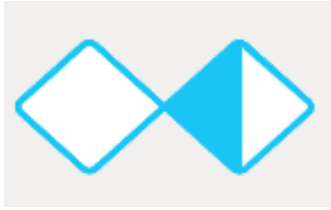
and further developed. For youth-empowerment the role of volunteering organisations as providing opportunities and networks stands out, although this happens mostly indirect.

See table 1 on the next page for a full overview of the practices.

Table 1: Overview organisations and existing practices' score on diversity, inclusion and youth empowerment

		Diversity			Inclusion		Youth empowerment		
		<i>Adaptation, learning, exchange</i>	<i>Bringing people together</i>	<i>Diversity as the norm</i>	<i>To belong, to be part of</i>	<i>Two-sidedness</i>	<i>Knowledge</i>	<i>Opportunities</i>	<i>Networks</i>
Kantina (SI)	Intercultural dinners; Eritrean coffee ceremonies	●	●			●			
Slov. Filantro pijas (SI)	Volunteering ; 'Spoznavmo se' program	●	●		●		●		
	Language and cultural integration programs	●			●		●		
Skuhna (SI)	Volunteering	●	●		●				
	Language and cultural integration programs	●		●	●				
	Skuhna talks		●			●			
Roglab	Volunteering ; production lab					●	●		
Lemat (NI)	Volunteering consultation hours	●			●			●	●
	Language and cultural integration programs	●			●		●		

Hiphop huis (NI)	Mentoring project	●		●			●
	Programs for vulnerable groups				●		
	Volunteering; hosting		●	●		●	●
	Take a Seat		●		●		
	Iftar meals	●	●				
OEW (ST)	Volunteering		●			●	●
	ZEBRA Magazine	●	●				
COOLto ur (ST)	Empowerment training					●	●
	Media volunteering	●					
Arteviv a (ST)	Volunteering circus activities		●	●			
HoASA	Volunteering arts	●				●	●
CCD (Cr)	Volunteerign Forum Theatre	●	●	●	●	●	●



2.3 Develop & Deliver (co-designed practices)

The co-designing of new practices happened decentrally in each of the countries. The process led to a range of activities in which diversity, inclusion and empowerment were addressed through theatre, dance, language classes and job clubs, creating different shared spaces between the volunteers (and participants). Building a growing awareness and ownership of diversity, inclusion and youth empowerment by the volunteers. Below we will describe the co-designed approaches per country.

By the focus on the three key concepts, diversity, inclusion and youth empowerment, the co-designing process served to strengthen the awareness and explicit discussion on these topics, while the volunteers actively shaped the concepts based on their own perceptions, experiences and meaning attached to it.

The co-designing process itself was perceived as empowering by the volunteers too. While many of the organisations engage with diversity, inclusion and youth empowerment directly or indirectly, the opportunity to actively reflect on these themes in a team, exchanging between volunteers from the different organisations, complementing and reinforcing each other's ideas was perceived as stimulating. The volunteers furthermore commented on being an active member of the process, feeling as a sort of "co-designer" of the whole activity.



3. Job club Slovenia

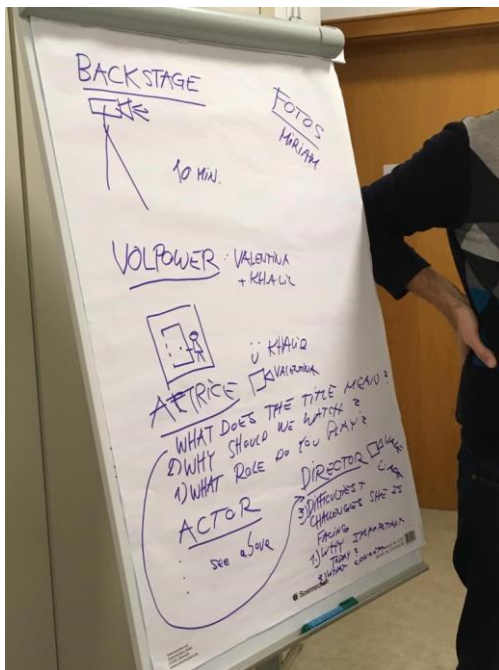


South Tyrol

In South-Tyrol the volunteers collaborated in a theatre play conducted by the South Tyrolian VOLPOWER partner organisation OEW. The VOLPOWER volunteers collected interviews with mixed couples living in South Tyrol to update the contemporary message of the play. Audio recordings of the interviews were used in the play. While learning about the interviewees' life and experiences, the volunteers could practice their skills by independently carrying out interviews in an organized and professional way. Given the multi-language setting of South-Tyrol the volunteers had to work together to conduct the interviews, in either Italian or German engaging with the bi-cultural and bilingual setting of South-Tyrol.

The volunteers also took an active part in the conceptualization and implementation of the promotion of the theatre play.

The unique setting of the performance allowed for a collaboration and skills exchange across organisations and made volunteers feel part of a bigger group, contributing to the performance both in content and form.



4 Preparing the theatre play

Theatre play, South Tyrol

The theatre play "Fear Eats the Soul" (original title, *Angst essen Seele auf*) is based on Rayner Werner Fassbinder movie from 1974 and tells the story of Emmi and Ali, whose love affair is put to a hard test by racism and envy from their social environment. The

VOLPOWER volunteers participated in several preparatory meetings for the play and helped to strengthen and update the contemporary message of the piece. Furthermore, the volunteers helped with the promotional campaign for the performance.

Croatia

In Croatia too, a theatre performance was conducted. The performance of the Forum Theatre Group (Forum Kazalište) is based on two brief scenes of hate speech against Muslims. The VOLPOWER focus group helped the volunteers extend the diversity addressed in the performance beyond their own personal identity (Muslim identity) and inclusiveness beyond their own circle of people, to other identities and groups of people and engage with these broader debates. The theatre form (Theatre of the Oppressed) itself is empowering, both for the audience and the actors (who based the scenes on personal experiences). Through dialogue with the audience, the volunteers concluded that education and empathy are the driving factors for an open multicultural environment.

Theatre play, Croatia

In Croatia too, a theatre performance was conducted. The performance of the Forum Theatre Group (Forum Kazalište) is based on two brief scenes of hate speech against Muslims. Based at the Islamic Centre in Zagreb the play was prepared and performed by a group of volunteers the performance is conducted in a specific theatre method: Theatre of the Oppressed. After each scene the public is invited to engage with what they just saw, facilitated by a joker. The joker asks the audience what the scene is about, what the problem of the scene was and how they think this problem might be solved. The actors subsequently play out the suggested solutions, often illustrating the complicated nature of the scene, stimulating further debate with the audience.



5. Forum Theatre Group (Forum Kazalište)

Malta

In Malta one of the volunteers developed English language activities for irregular migrants. While the language training forms the core activity, it ties into different activities and themes connected to diversity, inclusion and youth empowerment such as activities around interaction, trust building and leadership. The English language classes provide a common language for communication, enabling meetings between the local inhabitants and the migrant community.

The various language activities thus not only focus on the skills requirement of the immigrants but explicitly focus on dialogue and exchange between the migrant and local community, particularly relevant given the isolated nature of both communities on the island. With English as the second language in Malta, a shared basis is created to facilitate dialogue between the different communities.

Language classes, Malta

In Malta one of the volunteers developed English language activities for irregular migrants on Gozo, one of the islands of Maltese archipelago. The immigrants are furthermore encouraged to develop their own activities.

Together with the students presentations at high school will be organised to facilitate a dialogue between the migrants and the local students, addressing the experiences of the migrants fleeing to Malta and addressing the discrimination that the migrants face on a daily basis.

Furthermore, there will be a workshop on leadership skills as well the assertiveness needed from the students to be able to present their story to high school students (aged 16-18) which will be a very large step in their development to be able to express themselves.

Job clubs, Slovenia

Both job club sessions were prepared together with the volunteers. The volunteers actively took part in both the development and implementation of the job clubs.

Each job club session was started with a 'knowledge exchange' This was developed with the idea to give the volunteers the opportunity to share their knowledge with their fellow team members and, thus, allow them to learn from each other. Additionally, it is meant to support the volunteers in the process of designing and presenting their own projects and ideas. The activity took the form of a dialogue, facilitating a deeper exchange between the volunteers.

Slovenia

In Slovenia the APIS Institute hosted two job club events. Building in the focus group outcome the activities focused mostly on youth empowerment and served as a stepping stone for the volunteers to build a professional life (in the arts and culture sector). The activity builds inter alia on opportunities, knowledge and support systems that were addressed in the focus groups.

During the first job club session, the emphasis was placed on shifting the perspective from adapting yourself in order to be selected (by an employer) to finding out what you are good at to select the most suitable job position. This way the activity contributed to empowerment and inclusion as a two-way process. The job club was followed up by a second session in which the connection to broader networks and opportunities as elements of empowerment were central, as (aspiring) professionals in the creative arts field were invited to share their experiences and connect to the volunteers.



6. Slovenian Job club

Netherlands

In Rotterdam a dance workshop will be organized by the volunteers, collaborating between the two VOLPOWER partner organisations Hip Hop Huis and Stichting Lemat². An important outcome of the co-designing focus group in Rotterdam was the importance of shared experiences to overcome differences, to enable people to connect by creating new shared spaces or experiences. The volunteers proposed dance as such a medium, to connect the different audiences of the Hip Hop Huis as a generic dance institute and Stichting Lemat as an organisation targeted at the integration of Eritrean refugees. Building on their experience at the Zagreb workshop with sports as a bonding activity one of the volunteers came up with the idea to organise a joint dance workshop.

Through the dance workshop the volunteers aim to overcome language barriers and cultural differences by creating a shared experience of dance. It fosters a two-way exchange, introducing the Eritrean refugees to new dance forms and Hip Hop Huis volunteers to a new audience. While Hip Hop Huis forms a diverse and international community there is little engagement with refugees. The workshop will enable the volunteers from both organisations to convey and exchange the sense of community they experience, and thereby to connect the participants to broader networks.

Dance workshop, the Netherlands

The workshop will take place at Hip Hop Huis and will be hosted by volunteers from both organisations. Participants will be primarily Eritrean refugees from the Stichting Lemat integration program.

The workshop will start with some group exercises to get to know each other, followed by a workshop introducing some basics of hip hop conveyed by the Hip Hop Huis volunteers. The workshop will be wrapped up with a reflection about the experience and comparison to Eritrean dancing. The workshop is primarily intended to create a common space and bring together people from both organisations. Furthermore, the process empowers the volunteers by making them owners of the process and organisation as well as the intercultural communication and interactions in the workshop.

² Due to the Covid-19 health and safety restrictions the dance workshop has not yet taken place.

Table 2: Overview co-designed practices and ‘score’ on diversity, inclusion and youth empowerment

	Diversity			Inclusion		Youth empowerment		
	<i>Adaptation, learning, exchange</i>	<i>Bringing people together</i>	<i>Diversity as the norm</i>	<i>To belong, to be part of</i>	<i>Two- sidedness</i>	<i>Knowledge</i>	<i>Opportunities</i>	<i>Networks</i>
<i>South Tyrol Theatre Play</i>		●	●			●	●	●
<i>Croatia – Theatre Play</i>	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
<i>Malta – Language trainging</i>	●	●				●		
<i>Slovenia – Job club</i>					●	●	●	
<i>Netherlands – Dance exchange</i>	●	●	●		●			

3. Academic contribution

The co-designing process is an inductive process, strongly based in the experiences of the users, in this case the volunteers and their perceptions on diversity, inclusion and youth empowerment. Building on this rich empirical material, we will connect these findings to ongoing debates in the literature on co-designing in volunteering, empowerment and diversity and inclusion.

3.1 The co-designing potential in volunteering

In this study we find that the co-designing approach resonates very well with the volunteering context and can help to further strengthen the engagement and empowerment of the volunteers within their organisations and beyond. While empowerment is integrated in the co-designing process, and thus addressed through the co-designing itself, the co-designed activities on the other hand served to bring out diversity and inclusion more explicitly.

Many beneficial aspects have been ascribed to volunteering. Volunteering is perceived to inter alia aid building social capital (Putnam 2000), informal learning (Guo 2014) and skills and language development (Handy and Greenspan 2009). In an overview study, Lam et al (2012) analysed how co-design is used in the third sector and write about the co-designing potential to increase stakeholder engagement (p.3). In this study we indeed find that the co-designing process increases the volunteers engagement. The co-designing process forms an extension of the volunteering activities in two ways, by bringing a specific focus and thereby awareness in the activities, focusing on diversity, inclusion and youth empowerment, and secondly by bringing together actors from different organisations. Introducing the volunteers to new people, activities and skills. Stimulating the volunteers to explore and develop themselves out of their familiar environment.

As described in the literature, volunteering can play a big role in identification and engagement of the volunteers (see e.g. Wilson 2000; Grönlund 2011; Von Essen 2016; 2020; Dallimore et al 2018), particularly for young volunteers in whose life stage these questions of identification are particularly relevant (cf. Rosenthal und Bogner 2009). While on the one hand volunteering can aid “the processes of self-definition and identity in expressing the different core values of individuals” (Grönlund 2011, p. 571), so strengthening and emphasizing their own beliefs, on the other hand volunteering can also lead to a different positioning of volunteers, through encounters “with people that were quite different from those in their ordinary everyday life, and implied encounters with new lifestyles and different social conditions”

(p.258), sometimes changing their perspective or political standpoints. As one of the South Tyrolian volunteers commented; volunteering is always unexpected and you find a value even when there are problems and if there are difficult experiences. The co-designing process forms an extension of exactly that.

In the following sections we will discuss the effect of the co-designing process on the empowerment and diversity and inclusion. We will reflect on how the conceptualisations as defined by the volunteers relate to the literature on these topics and secondly discuss how empowerment, inclusion and diversity were enhanced in the co-designing process. Based on this we will subsequently reflect on the specificities of co-designing and volunteering in the cultural and arts sector and a targeted and mainstreamed approach in this.

3.2 Volunteering and co-designing in the creative arts sector

In interviews with the volunteers we discussed what is specific to them about volunteering and co-designing in the creative arts sector. The volunteers commented on the scene's open character: by creating everyone can be part of it. First of all, *"the fact that all of us were linked to the cultural and artistic ambit in some way, creating a common ground of understanding and interacting. Since arts and culture are our passion, it is something the bound us together from beforehand"* (South Tyrolian volunteer). However, the culture and arts scene is more than simply a common ground. The volunteers reflect on the playfulness and open character of the arts scene that enables connection and inclusion. *"The special thing about volunteering in the arts and culture field is the connection. You get to meet new people, talk to them, make innovative things like poems. I see the others do and discover new things"* (South Tyrolian volunteer).

The volunteers reflect both on the form and content of activities through arts *".. in arts you can really make stories, what you want to say to people.. It's like two things. it is happiness and also getting the knowledge"* (Slovenian volunteer). Vice versa one of the South Tyrolian volunteers remarks: *"Through a story one has the opportunity to know cultures, habits, how to react. Certainly you get cultural insights"* pointing at the cultural and arts sectors potential for exchange and intercultural learning. Building on this one of the Slovenian volunteers comments that *"the artistic method of expressing is definitely more inclusive than another method because it's more informal, and it includes... it contains all kinds of ways"*. The volunteer continues to comment on how in contrast to other forms of communication art enables a dialogue without putting people in boxes, thus allowing for more free forms of self-expression and thereby potentially creating a more inclusive and equal field. Different volunteers comment on how they feel better able to express themselves, linking this to the dialogues that can be facilitated through arts. The

experiences of the volunteers speak to the potential of the field of arts and culture in integration, *“build[ing] bridges to facilitate encounters”* (Vertovec 2009 in Martienello 2015), serve as forms of political expression (Martiniello en Lafleur 2008) and aid in the forming of collective identities (cf. see e.g. DiMaggio et al 2010, van Klaveren 2012, Kasinitz 2014, Martienello 2015).

Although arts activities themselves are considered open and inclusive the volunteers have very different perceptions on the inclusivity of the broader arts and culture scene in their cities and international art scenes. The volunteers all strongly identify with the activities and organisations they participate in. The Dutch volunteers who are active in the dance scene also comment on feeling connected to the international hip hop and dance scene through their engagement at their local organisation. On the other hand volunteers in the Netherlands and South Tyrol also comment that the broader arts and culture scene at first instance does not necessarily feel as inviting. In their words it is about the *“communication”* and *“the visitors, how they look at you, you do not feel part of it”*. Nevertheless through their volunteering activities both volunteers remarked to have got more interested and active in the broader arts scene. Either by hearing about exhibitions and other activities through their fellow volunteers (at a personal level) or opportunities for collaboration with different institutes (at organisational level). Pointing at the potential of inclusion and social incorporation of the arts and culture scene and role of institutes in bridging these (c.f. Delhay 2008; Dimaggio and Fernanced-Kelly 2015). As we concluded above, here too co-designing in the arts scene (Zamenopoulos and Alexiou 2018) and collaborations between different organisations can play an important role in overcoming the (perceived) barriers between organisations, both at the side of the individual participant or volunteer, but explicitly also on the side of the art and cultural institutes (more on this 3.4). As one of the South Tyrolian volunteers summarizes: *“this is to say that [I] surely believe creativity and culture help in inclusion. .. the only way to do it well is to discover more and more new initiatives or other ways in which other people do it and find their own and what it seems, feels more right”*.

3.3 Empowerment

In their own conceptualisation of youth empowerment the volunteers emphasized the participation dimension of the concept. With knowledge, opportunities and networks as enablers to ‘feel confident’ and ‘fully participate’. As part of this volunteers explained how these help to find out what you want, find purpose and goals in life and empower themselves also to say no to the things they do not want to do. Hinting at a critical stance and ownership over their lives or processes and activities at the volunteering

organisation. A distinction between the individual and organisational level is made, although the discussions mostly focused on the former. Enablers for youth empowerment partly overlap with those for inclusion (e.g. to have knowledge and opportunities) but also focus more on the emotional/individual level (feeling confident, having the power to say no, having a network, having a purpose).

The volunteers considered confidence fundamental to feel empowered. This entails both self-confidence as well as feeling confident in the place you are, so resonating with belonging. As one of the Slovenian volunteers remarks when you are confident *“you can really be part of the system and society (...) Confidence is the main thing for social awareness to come. If you don’t have any confidence, you just sit down lonely and you will not be a part of society”*. The volunteers also emphasized the importance of networks in this, as having the right people around you to inspire and support you and to gain access to the relevant information. The organisations in which the volunteers work play an important role in the spatial belonging and networks of the volunteers (for more on the role of volunteering see the VOLPOWER WP2 report). The co-designing practices could build on these safe places while also linking the volunteers to actors, skills and networks and itself functioning as a community of belonging.

This resonates with the work of Jennings et al. (2006) who distinguish inter alia a welcoming and safe environment and meaningful participation and engagement as essential dimensions of youth empowerment. Like the volunteers the authors also emphasize the integrated individual and community-level empowerment. Co-designing as a method itself is closely linked to empowerment too. With its participatory focus that puts the users, or this case the volunteers, central it has great empowering potential as it involves the users directly in shaping the entire process (participation and engagement). Zamenopoulos et al. (2019) describe co-designing “as a process that helps people to take control of their lives, develop critical awareness and knowledge about their situation, as well as develop long lasting skills and capacities to participate and shape their own environment beyond the confines of a particular project” (p.1). In this they distinguish different types of empowerment: to be able to bring forward your own issues in the design process; to be able to make sense of one’s own matters of concern, frame design problems and develop design solutions; the capacity to connect and act in concert with others and to unlock and transform one’s own knowledge and resources to carry out design tasks.

While there seems to be an obvious contradiction in encouraging empowerment ‘from above’, this is exactly why co-designing is such a suitable method, as it enables the volunteers to define the concepts and shape the activities themselves. A process that itself is experienced as empowering. One of the Slovenian volunteers remarked that while she attended trainings on inclusion before, she had never had the chance to actively brainstorm and define her own meaning of ‘inclusion’, ‘diversity’ and

'empowerment'. Also, she realized how the very brainstorming process was empowering, as it was *"like having a support system around you or feeling confident"*, aspects that were previously identified as factors of empowerment.

Of the volunteers' definition of empowerment confidence and participation came back in the co-designing process very clearly. Networks, opportunities and knowledge all played a role in this. This resonates with the definitions of Jennings et al. (2006) and Zamenopoulos et al. (2019) in particular their dimensions of respectively: welcoming and safe environment, meaningful participation and engagement, growing awareness of the participants and the ability to act in concert with others came out most evident in the VOLPOWER co-design process. The volunteers experienced increased ownership over the activities, in both the development and the implementation of the activity. We observed that the co-designing method and the collaboration between different organisations can serve as an extension of the engagement and empowerment within the different volunteering organisations. Combining both the safety of the familiar volunteering community with the exposure to new actors, skills and topics, connecting the bonding and bridging potential of volunteering (Putnam 2000).

When reflecting on the co-designing process the volunteers commented on the skills they gained, particularly as these new activities and collaborations offered the opportunity to come into contact with new people and new skills. The volunteers commented that they experienced these new skills as enriching coming out of their comfort zone of their own organisations and discovering new skills, varying from interviewing to organising and the co-designing process itself. While they sometimes experienced these new activities as a little scary, being put on the spot in a new situation enabled them to overcome these barriers.

Like volunteering, the shared activities and co-designing process also created a sense of belonging, again referring to the welcoming and safe environment (Jennings et al 2006) and the confidence the volunteers themselves refer too. While operating with their own volunteering organisations but in most cases also collaborating with new partners, they worked in a familiar and new setting at the same time. Working together on for example a theatre performance or job club the volunteers connected over the shared experiences and ownership they experienced over the process. Helping each other out and giving the confidence to try new skills and activities.

3.4 Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity is defined by the volunteers as “being different”, emphasizing the multi-dimensional character of it: “having people with all colours, ethnicities, languages, cultures, interests, traditions and mentalities”. This refers to diversity as can be experienced at the individual level. In this the volunteers emphasize that diversity and being different will mean something different in each context, referring to the multidimensional character of the concept. The characteristics that you share with a group in one case might exclude this same person in another context.

Precisely this multi-dimensionality echoes what is discussed in the literature as the diversity of diversities (Hollinger 1995) or as ‘superdiversity’ (Vertovec 2007). There is not only a focus on the wide range of ‘differences’ that the organisations are working with (such as colour, ethnicity, economic differences, etc), but also the fact that in practice it is often hard to differentiate between different types of diversity. For instance, economic differences may interact with colour differences, ethnic differences, etc. This also clearly reflected in the various volunteering organisation practices that emphasize the importance of bringing people together and getting accustomed to diversity as a norm. To cope with this multidimensionality, the organisations’ practices are often strongly situated in specific contexts, enabling the organisations to the specifics of the situation. This reflects the broader finding in the literature that coping with superdiversity does not involve a one-size fit all approach, or a standard model. Rather, it requires situational adaptation.

At a macro level, diversity comes out in different contexts, in relation to a (new host) society, or the multi-lingual and cultural context of South Tyrol for example. While the volunteers discussed the need for (flexible) adaptation to these contexts in the Rotterdam focus group it is also discussed how (increasing) diversity leads to reforms in society at large: diversity shaping [Dutch] society. The volunteers thus define three main dimensions of diversity, on the one hand how a confrontation with diversity leads to adaptation to the mainstream, on the other hand the volunteers describe how diversity is about bringing different people together to showcase diversity, and lastly diversity as the (new) norm is mentioned too.

This shows how the organisations’ practices contribute to commonplace diversity (Wessendorf 2014) or to diversity being accepted as ‘the new normality’ (Meissner and Vertovec 2014). There is very little focus by the organisations on specific backgrounds, but rather on how to bring together and promote interaction between people from different backgrounds, and how to prepare activities in the creative arts

and culture sector for diversity. With references to broader theoretical models, this means that rather than multiculturalism or an approach oriented at recognition of different backgrounds, we see (the potential for) an interculturalist approach (Zapata-Barrero 2015) oriented at interactions in diverse settings.

The volunteers defined inclusion as explicitly distinct from diversity. As defined by one of the volunteers in Rotterdam: *“Diversity is more something that just happens to be ... Inclusion is more of a choice, I will do this [to be inclusive], make this effort, or not. It is about having a choice”*. Across the different focus groups inclusion is referred to as *“belonging within a group”* and *“everyone matters”*. The volunteers distinguish between ‘subjective feelings and emotions about being part of a group’ on the individual side and different barriers and enablers to inclusion on the structural side. The concept of inclusion is contrasted to integration, which is considered as focused more on one-way adaptation. Instead in the context of inclusion the importance of an equal relationship is stressed.

The volunteers emphasize that inclusion requires more than adaptation from the immigrant’s side. While ‘language’ and ‘knowledge of cultural scene’ can be helpful tools for inclusion, the two-sidedness of inclusion is emphasized, particularly in the Rotterdam focus group. Based on own experience, one of the volunteers tells how an open attitude on the ‘receiving end’ is an important prerequisite for inclusion too. The importance of intermediaries is stressed, someone who can bridge gaps for you.

This resonates with the literature that critiques the one-dimensional, assimilative focus of the classic integration literature (see e.g. Phillimore, 2012, Mahendran 2013, Schinkel 2018). Instead what the volunteers ask for a two-way approach to integration, or inclusion rather, involving both immigrant and the host society, and considering (migration-related) diversity as part of mainstream society. In addition to the common-place diversity approach described in the previous paragraph this thus requires an explicit focus or dialogue on diversity, from the organisations side. Such as in the intercultural approach to integration, which focuses explicitly on interaction and fostering of a collective identity, targeted at the entire society (Zapata-Barrero 2015). In this the volunteers explicitly address the role of the volunteer organisations and the wider society ‘to include’, emphasizing the explicit awareness, choice and effort this requires.

While the shape and content of the co-designed practices was open to the groups in Croatia, Malta, the Netherlands, Slovenia and South Tyrol they all departed from a focus group on the three central concepts: diversity, inclusion and youth empowerment. The focus groups and entire co-designing process enabled

the volunteers to explicitly think and discuss inclusion and diversity and to strengthen these in the co-designed practices. Such as in the Croatian theatre play on hate speech. The discussions on diversity and inclusion in the focus group enabled to bring these out more clearly in their performance and connect the personal experiences on which the play is based to broader debates on diversity and inclusion. A volunteer from Rotterdam comments on how the attention to and discussions on inter alia diversity and inclusion in the co-designing process, and the overall VOLPOWER project, makes her reflect on these values more explicitly, also in other aspects of her life. The focus of the project enables her to reflect on these concepts explicitly, while normally only engaging with them indirectly and self-evidently. Explicitly discussing these concepts in different group settings aids the “develop critical awareness and knowledge about their situation” Zamenopoulos et al. (2019) describe as an essential element of empowerment, in this case on diversity and inclusion. This in turn contributes to the awareness and open attitude of every citizen and organisation, that the volunteers define as necessary for inclusion.

3.5 Mainstreaming versus targeting

It is clear that the volunteering organisations (can) play a key role in adapting create arts and culture activities to the new normality of diversity and to making these activities inclusive. They help adapting to diversity as the new norm and to promoting inclusion as a two-sided process. The co-designing process formed an extension of the volunteering activities in two ways, by bringing a specific focus and thereby awareness in the activities, focusing on diversity, inclusion and youth empowerment, and secondly by bringing together actors from different organisations. Introducing the volunteers to new people, activities and skills. Stimulating the volunteers to explore and develop themselves out of their familiar environment. But when looking beyond the co-designed activities, looking at the organisations in which the activities are embedded, do they promote diversity and inclusion in a way that is targeted at specific groups or categories, or do they bring a more mainstreamed approach in which diversity and specific groups are included but are not the explicit targets (cf. Martinelli 2014, Joppke and Eule 2016, Scholten and van Breugel 2017).

Our analysis shows that diversity is mostly implicitly present in the organisations’ practices. Rather than explicitly organizing activities around specific ethnic or cultural characteristics of migrants, activities often seem to transcend ethnic and cultural participants in an effort to be inclusive. This clearly suggests a more mainstreamed approach, which is very much aware of differences and the need to make the mainstream more inclusive, to help the mainstream to adapt to diversity as the norm. In fact, our co-

designing approach revealed that although the organisations were very much aware of the importance of diversity and inclusion, even though they did not (all) frame their activities explicitly in those terms. This matches our earlier observations on the multidimensionality of diversity, as something that cannot be clearly defined along the lines of specific ethnic or cultural groups.

However, some differences did emerge in our analysis as for how this mainstreamed approach was developed by different organisations. Some activities were indeed generic in the sense that they were targeted at people regardless of background, such as the various activities in the area of dances that we studied. For instance, HOASA's activities are regardless of cultural background, but do try to promote cultural sensitivity. There were also several activities, such as Lemat and Skhuna that did orient at a specific background. However, here too, we found that the efforts were not so much to cater to specific groups only, but rather to help groups get access to mainstream activities, and to prepare other organisations for working with people from these groups.

4. Lessons for practice

Our analysis leads to a series of recommendations on how to develop co-designing and activities in the create arts and culture sector further when it comes to diversity, inclusion and empowerment:

- There is no one size fits all for how volunteers in the creative arts and culture sector can help promote diversity, inclusion and empowerment. It is important that practices are well situated within the specific diversity context in which the volunteering organisations operate;
- Diversity can mean different things for different participants and hence also for different volunteers. The organisations benefit from an open approach to different diversities, as to acknowledge the multidimensionality of the concept;
- Inclusion is a two-sided process, which means that the activities of volunteers should as best engage with people with different backgrounds. This should not only include people with a migration background, but also how people and organisations in general can engage with diversity as a new norm;
- Even when volunteering organisations do not address diversity and inclusion explicitly, they should be aware and ‘sensitized’ to the importance of diversity and inclusion for their activities and for the involvement of volunteers in these activities.
- Promoting volunteerism in the creative arts and culture sector can be an important tool for promoting confidence and participation of volunteers on a broader scale. Volunteering means becoming active, meeting other people and acquiring knowledge and skills that can benefit various forms of participation.
- Co-designing can function as an extension of the volunteering activities in two ways, by bringing a specific focus and thereby awareness in the activities, and secondly by bringing together actors from different organisations. Introducing the volunteers to new people, activities and skills. Combining both the safety of the familiar volunteering community with the exposure to new actors, skills and topics, connecting the bonding and bridging potential of volunteering.

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All pictures are taken by the VOLPOWER researchers, see page 2.