

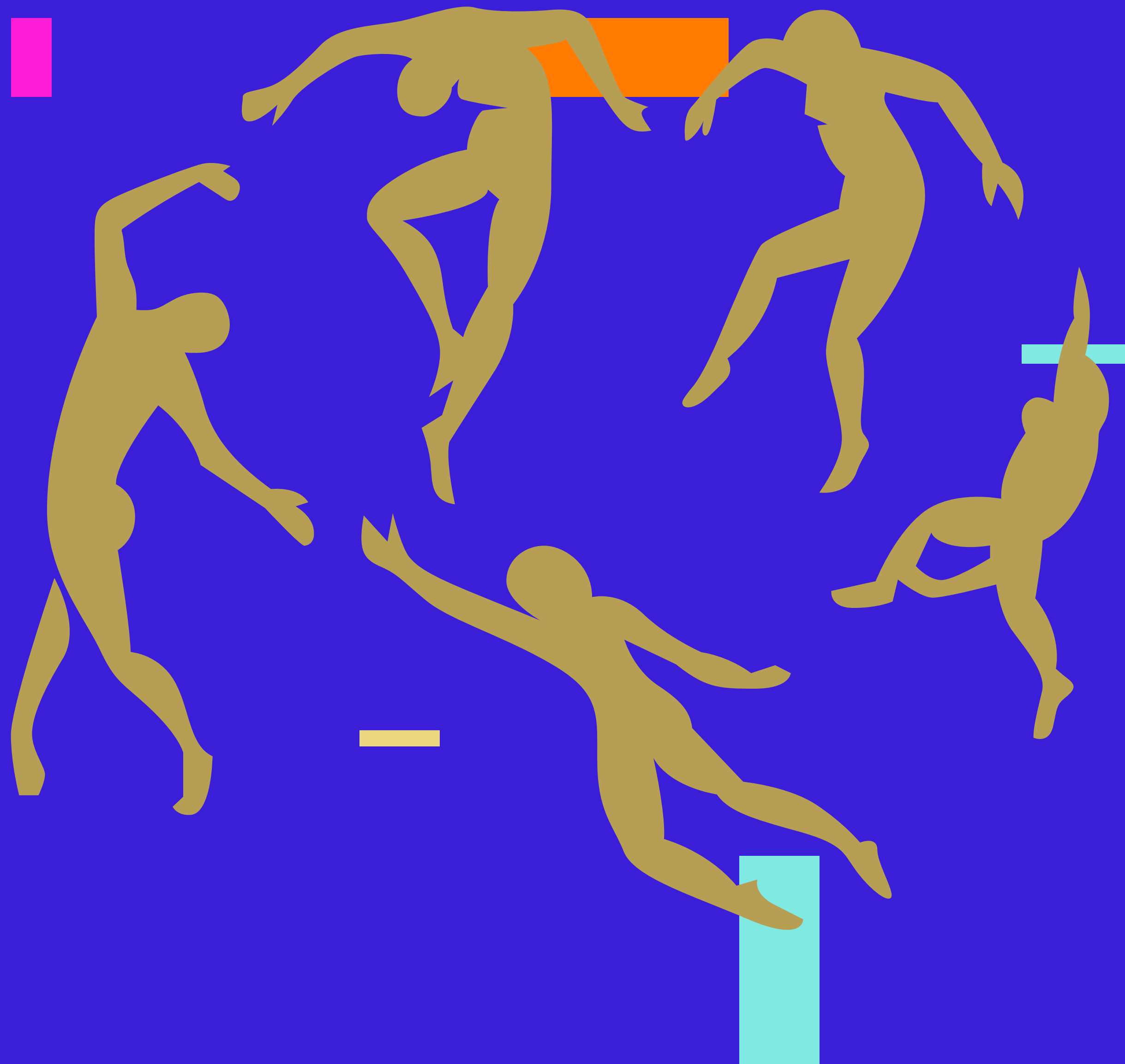


Co-funded by
the European Union

THE 16TH CULTURE NEXT CONFERENCE

Larnaka (Cyprus)

2026



LARNAKA (CYPRUS)

6-8/05/2026

CONFERENCE REPORT

16TH CULTURE NEXT CONFERENCE

Culture for CCS – Empowering the Cultural & Creative Sectors

The 16th Culture Next Conference took place in the city of Larnaka, Cyprus from the 6th to the 8th of May, under the theme “Culture for CCS – Empowering the Cultural & Creative Sectors”. The 16th Culture Next Conference brought 158 participants to Larnaka to discuss the future of artists and cultural ecosystems across Europe. The event focused on empowering artists, solidarity, care and culture as a safe space in times of uncertainty and conflict, while Larnaka’s overarching theme, Common Ground, became deeply reflected in the conversations and ideas explored throughout the event.

Culture Next Network together with Larnaka 2030 European Capital of Culture hosted the 16th CN Conference under the theme “Culture for CCS – Empowering the Cultural & Creative Sectors”, brought together 158 participants from across Europe and beyond, alongside more than 80 local stakeholders, the strongest local participation ever recorded at a Culture Next conference.

Representatives of European cities, cultural institutions, policymakers, local artists, researchers and international organisations gathered in Larnaka to discuss not only cultural policies and systems, but also the people behind culture itself: the artists, cultural workers and creative communities facing increasing instability, precarity and geopolitical pressure. 31 CN member cities were present and two cities were present for the first time at a Culture Next Conference: Caceres (Spain) and Nijmegen (The Netherlands).

Across two intense days of panels, workshops, informal exchanges and public discussions, one idea emerged repeatedly: culture is not a luxury, but a form of resilience, solidarity and human connection.

A Policy Paper on Empowering the CCS is produced as a key outcome, positioning Larnaka at the centre of a broader European conversation on culture, resilience and social responsibility.

KEYNOTE SPEECH

European Capitals of Care

by **Mary Ann De Vlieg**,
PhD, Independent

Consultant:
**Artists' Rights and
Displacement**

Mary Ann DeVlieg's keynote centred on the relationship between culture, care, ethics, solidarity and democratic responsibility within European cultural cooperation and the ECoC process, posing the recurring question of whether ECoC cities can become genuine "European Capitals of Care." Drawing on decades of experience with international cultural networks and displaced practitioners, she framed care not as an abstract principle but as a practical methodology connected to governance, accountability, working conditions and long-term institutional responsibility towards artists, cultural workers and communities.

The keynote stressed that cultural organisations frequently underestimate the long-term impact of their decisions on people's lives, and repeatedly questioned how cultural programmes concretely address the principles enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union beyond symbolic rhetoric. Drawing on

philosopher Paul Ricoeur and Aruna D'Souza's *Imperfect Solidarities*, she argued that solidarity stems from a commitment to care, and identified attentiveness, responsibility, competence, responsiveness, trust and solidarity as necessary components of ethical cultural governance.

Reflecting on the history of international cultural networks, she described them as epistemic communities built on intellectual exchange and trust rather than funding logic, and cautioned against the gradual instrumentalisation of culture through institutional expectations. The keynote concluded with a direct call to reduce the excessive demands placed on cultural workers, connecting precarity and burnout with the ethical responsibilities institutions carry towards their collaborators. The session also opened a broader discussion on the possibility of developing a Code of Ethics within the Culture Next network.



PANELS

FIRST PANEL

Responses from the artists

LARNAKA, CYPRUS 6-8/05/2025

Moderator:
Kelly Diapouli,
Artistic Director,
Larnaka 2030 ECoC

Speakers:
Ahmed Tobasi,
Artistic Leader, Artists On the Frontline;

Eleana Alexandrou,
Artistic Director Lemesos 2030 ECoC Finalist &
Performance Artist;

Nurtane Karagil,
Visual Artist;

Yulia Khomchyn,
Director, Cultural Strategy Institute Lviv

This panel brought together artists and cultural practitioners from Palestine, Cyprus and Ukraine to reflect on how artistic practice responds to occupation, division, war, displacement and institutional precarity, drawing on personal testimony and lived experience rather than policy frameworks.

Ahmed Tobasi, Artistic Leader of Artists on the Frontline (Palestine), spoke about growing up in the Jenin refugee camp and the role of art as resistance, dignity and survival under occupation, calling for future resistance movements to take cultural form.

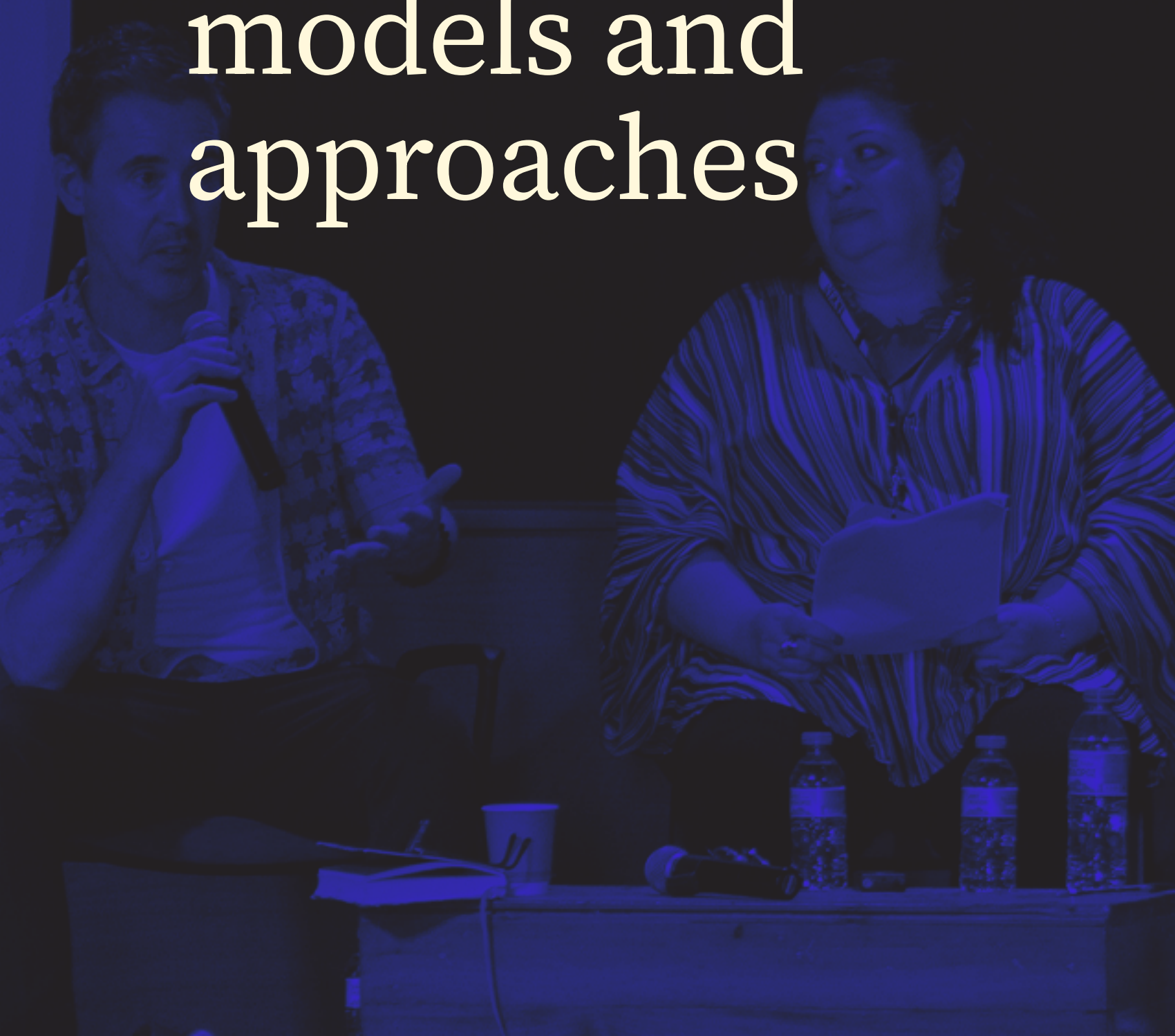
Nurtane Karagil, Turkish-Cypriot Visual Artist, explored the paradoxes of artistic practice on a divided island, questioning simplified narratives of pre-war coexistence and raising concerns about artwashing, while stressing the value of a “heart-rooted” language that transcends official narratives. Eleana Alexandrou, Greek-Cypriot Performance

Artist and Artistic Director of Lemesos 2030 ECoC Candidate City, reflected on the concept of “understories”, whose narratives are made visible and whose remain hidden, questioning whether ECoC processes genuinely support radicality and highlighting precarious labour conditions and political interference in cultural representation in Cyprus.

Yulia Khomchyn, Director of the Cultural Strategy Institute Lviv, addressed culture’s role during wartime, describing how Lviv transformed its ECoC candidacy into a municipal programme centered on Responsibility to Be, sustaining connections between the approximately 8 million Ukrainians displaced by the war.

Recurring themes across all contributions included inherited trauma, censorship, precarious artistic labour, and the relationship between culture, dignity and coexistence.

Toward an Equitable, Fair Creative Economy: Reflections on models and approaches



LARNAKA, CYPRUS

6-8/05/2025

Moderator:
Tom Fleming,
Director of TFCC & Culture
Next Policy Expert;

Speakers:
Alma Salem,
Director, Al Mawred;

Carla Rogers,
Steering Committee Member,
National Campaign for the Arts of
Ireland;

Marilyn Gaughan Reddan,
Chair, EIT Culture & Creativity

The second panel examined structural inequalities affecting artists and cultural organisations across European and international contexts, connecting concrete policy examples with broader reflections on culture's role in democracy, coexistence and social resilience.

Tom Fleming, Director of TFCC and Culture Next Policy Expert, moderated the session, questioning the instrumentalisation of art within ECoC processes and calling for more horizontal, cross-sector approaches to cultural funding, while stressing Cyprus's strategic position between Europe and the Mediterranean.

Alma Salem, Director of Al Mawred, offered a personal reflection on the Mediterranean as a shared cultural landscape shaped by displacement, memory and loss, framing culture not as a luxury but as an essential space for imagination and solidarity, and highlighting Cyprus as a symbolic bridge between Europe and the Arab world.

Carla Rogers, Steering Committee Member of the National Campaign for the Arts of Ireland, presented Ireland's Basic Income for Artists pilot, involving 2,000 participants from a pool of 10,000 eligible artists, as a concrete example of how sustained public investment transforms artistic and social conditions, noting that despite strong cultural infrastructure, 53% of Irish artists still experience poverty.

Marilyn Gaughan Reddan, Chair of EIT Culture & Creativity, stressed that ECoC legacy planning must prioritise people over infrastructure, while highlighting the growing importance of AI, research ecosystems and intellectual property ownership for the sustainable development of the cultural and creative sectors.

Recurring themes included precarity, artistic labour rights, the limits of utilitarian approaches to culture, and the need for long-term public investment in cultural ecosystems.

THIRD PANEL

Mediterranean Cultural Cities Network (MCCN). Bridging Shores, Building Futures



LARNAKA, CYPRUS

6-8/05/2025

Moderator:
Rita Orlando,
General Coordinator Matera 2026, Mediterranean
Capital of Culture and Dialogue

Speakers:
Stefano Dotto,
Senior Expert – Team Leader
Good Governance, European
Commission (online)

Genci Kojdheli,
General Director of Integration,
Strategic Planning, Environment and
Economic Development, Municipality
of Tirana

Agnès Ruiz,
Policy Officer & Focal Point for
Culture, United Cities and Local
Governments (UCLG)

The panel “Mediterranean Cultural Cities Network: Bridging Shores, Building Futures” explored efforts to strengthen cultural cooperation across the Mediterranean, framing the region as a shared civic and cultural ecosystem connecting Europe, North Africa and the Middle East.

Rita Orlando, General Coordinator of Matera 2026 and Mediterranean Capital of Culture and Dialogue, moderated the session, stressing the need to move beyond heritage-focused narratives towards future-oriented cooperation and long-term mechanisms capable of surviving beyond symbolic declarations and short funding cycles.

Stefano Dotto, Senior Expert and Team Leader for Good Governance at the European Commission, presented the emerging Mediterranean Pact, structured around three pillars, people as drivers for change, stronger economies, and security and migration, and designed to produce tangible outcomes through concrete initiatives including a prospective Euro-Mediterranean University, a Med Skills Tracker, a Youth Parliamentary Assembly and

the Blue Med Partnership.
Genci Kojdheli, General Director at the Municipality of Tirana, presented Tirana’s trajectory through multiple international titles, including the Mediterranean Capital of Culture and Dialogue 2025 developed jointly with Alexandria, as an example of how cultural titles can reposition a city and build institutional capacity. He also offered reflections on the administrative realities of cultural diplomacy and framed Tirana 2025 as a shift from event delivery towards systemic legacy across institutional, social, spatial and economic dimensions.
Agnès Ruiz, Policy Officer at UCLG, addressed the growing role of local governments within global cultural governance, stressing cities’ increasingly strategic role as active diplomatic actors and producers of institutional innovation. Recurring themes included the shift from symbolic cooperation towards operational governance, evidence-based cultural policy, and connecting local ecosystems with broader European and global agendas.

SDG LAB

Larnaka: From Concept to Dashboard?

The third formal meeting of the Culture Next SDG Lab took place on 6th May 2026 in Larnaka. The session brought together eight lab cities and two academic partners. The agenda covered the three tools the lab has developed: the Cultural Conversations Chat Agent, the qualitative framework and city profiles, and the Encore evidence dashboard and digest - alongside a spotlight session on Larnaka’s monitoring and evaluation approach and open city introductions.



8

cities in
the room

5

Chat Agents
sites live

252

citizen
conversations

1

evidence platform
launched

Key findings

The tools are generating real data - quality control is the urgent priority

The Chat Agent is live on five websites and has captured 252 citizen conversations since March. The most common themes are access and participation, career pathways into culture, and neighbourhood versus city-centre provision - mapping directly to SDGs 10, 11 and 8. Cities found the data genuinely surprising.

The concern raised by multiple cities: journalists visiting city websites may treat Chat Agent output as official city statements. A media disclaimer is required on all five live sites before the next news cycle.

Encore launched publicly - and the bid book problem will be fixed before it goes wider

Encore - the evidence submission dashboard and weekly email digest - had its first public outing with the cities in the room. Cities submitted evidence live; the system responded in real time and began building a member profile for each city. The core value proposition landed: a public, searchable evidence base for culture and the SDGs, with a personalised weekly digest for each city.

Garcia: 'A bid book is not what happened in the city. It is what a city wanted or planned to happen. The platform must never present bid book content as a verified cultural outcome. This distinction must be explicit in every output the system generates.'

The human capital question is the most important unresolved methodological problem in the field

Larnaka 2030's monitoring and evaluation session, presented by Christina Achilleos and the external evaluation team, introduced a longitudinal human legacy project tracking 50 people from bid stage through to 2030. This provoked the most substantive discussion of the day. Beatriz Garcia confirmed that the question of how to give scientific value to human transformation stories, the people whose confidence, careers, and civic identity are changed by ECoC, is one the field has not solved in 30 years. The lab's approach of combining longitudinal qualitative tracking with AI-assisted pattern recognition across cities is a credible attempt at solving it. If successful, this reframes the lab's entire position: not apologising for thin quantitative data, but building the methodology the field has needed.

The network effect is visible

Across all three tool sessions, cities repeatedly noted that the value of each tool increases with the number of cities using it. The Chat Agent data becomes more interesting with ten cities than five. The Encore evidence base becomes more credible with fifty submissions than twelve. The city profiles become more useful when cities can see themselves alongside comparable peers. This was not framed - cities articulated it themselves. The platform model is understood. The challenge is now onboarding.

In a nutshell

The lab has built; five live tools, 252 citizen conversations, and a public evidence platform with its first submissions. The room understood the network effect and articulated it without prompting. The quality risks are identified and a plan exists to address them. October is the moment to present this to the wider network as a platform, not a project with the network wide cohort already forming. The work between now and then is about fixing what's broken, onboarding the cities that are ready, and building the evidence base to the point where it can make a credible case.

Culture Next Network Internal Sessions

Day 2 is always dedicated to updates on the network's future activities, thematic working groups, mobilities, conferences, membership, missions, decision making etc. All the presentations are in the following [link](#).

Moreover, there were organized separately the following sessions dedicated to the mobilities programme and therapy sessions:

MOBILITIES PROGRAMME

This working session, facilitated by Bruno Inacio, Membership Coordinator of Culture Next, was organised exclusively for full network members and focused on the development of future mobility exchanges between member cities. Bruno Inacio presented the operational framework of the Culture Next mobility programme, which foresees approximately 90 mobilities until 2029, with around 30 already implemented during the current year. The programme enables member cities to send participants to and host delegations from other member cities, building reciprocal exchanges between local cultural ecosystems.

The session was structured as a speed-networking format, with multiple rounds of short bilateral exchanges during which participating cities presented thematic areas in which they could offer hosting opportunities and thematic areas in which they sought learning and exchange. Topics ranged across community participation, sustainability, legacy planning, youth engagement, digital culture, post-industrial spaces and evaluation methodologies, reflecting the breadth of expertise and needs present within the network.

The session demonstrated both the diversity of knowledge already existing across Culture Next member cities and the practical value of structured peer-to-peer exchange as a mechanism for capacity-building and longer-term collaboration within the network.

THERAPY SESSIONS

This session included four groups for networking, sharing and support. The groups were divided as follows:

Bidding cities,
moderated by Karolina Raabová

**Cities in their implementation
and legacy phase,**
moderated by Immie Jonkman
and Rita Orlando

Cities that were not awarded the title,
moderated by Jolle Desloover

Culture Next ECoC Archive

The session presented the Culture Next ECoC Archive, covering 71 title-holder cities since 1985 and 209 candidate cities, as an evolving knowledge infrastructure capable of supporting research, benchmarking and policy development, rather than a mere storage system. The research conducted by TF Creative Consultancy showcased that while valuable materials such as bidbooks, evaluation reports and case studies already exist, the archive remains fragmented, with missing documents, inconsistent formats and limited coverage of governance and legacy dimensions. Recommendations focused on transforming it into an operational strategic tool through thematic tagging, searchable databases and stronger integration of monitoring and evaluation data, summarised in the sequence “Archive → Knowledge → Strategy.” The presentation also included an open invitation for cities and participants to contribute missing documents and help expand the archive collectively. Participants raised concerns about long-term digital preservation, quality control and the need for human editorial oversight alongside AI tools, as well as the potential contribution of independent academic researchers to future evaluation processes. The next goal is to continue developing the ECoC archive more thoroughly, moving from a fragmented collection to a strategic knowledge tool.

Cities’ presentations

In this session, participants had the opportunity to present and discuss case studies on how Capacity Building Programmes can be organised and implemented, with a focus on the methodologies behind them. The member cities that had presented their case studies are the following:

- České Budějovice presented by Karolína Raabová referred to upcoming open calls for projects and study programmes involving artists and scientists;
- Bad Ischl Salzkammergut presented by Laura Carcioppoli referred to the “Shine On” rural model involving 23 municipalities;
- Victoria Gozo presented by Ariane Bieou referred to the preparation of the second bidbook within the context of “an island of an island” highlighting the realities of small-scale territories with populations of approximately 13,000 inhabitants;
- Novi Sad presented by Sara Vuletic reframed the ECoC title year as a hinge between short-term cultural intensity and long-term systemic transformation, proposing a four-step capacity-building methodology focused on diagnosis, design, delivery and transition;
- Larnaka presented by Panos Gkiokas highlighted the strategic value of Erasmus+ KA1 accreditation for ECoC cities, arguing that accredited organisations can access more sustainable long-term mobility funding for staff, artists and institutional exchanges, and that collective accreditation across the network could substantially increase its overall mobility capacity.

These interventions reinforced broader discussions concerning regional participation, long-term capacity-building and the need to strengthen cooperation frameworks extending beyond title-year programming.

Local Focus

CITY TOUR WALK

On the first day, the participants had the opportunity to get to walk and know the city of Larnaka. The guided tour was led by Dr. Iosif Hadjikyriakos, Director of the Phivos Stavridis Archives.

LIVE DRAWING

For the official reception on the first day, we invited the artist Alex Dzaghigian Vadet to welcome and surprise participants with a live drawing performance. By taking photos of the participants, the artist created live sketches on the spot, offering guests a unique experience. This created a warm and friendly atmosphere, encouraging participants to engage with one another while taking home a personalised souvenir.

JOGGING TEAM

An early morning beach jogging group started the day along the Larnaka coastline, connecting informally with fellow members outside the conference setting.

Local cultural actors from Larnaka presented inspiring projects and initiatives, highlighting the vitality, creativity and commitment of the city's cultural scene as it prepares for its journey toward European Capital of Culture 2030. The local cultural actors that showcased their project are:

CARE FESTIVAL

An interdisciplinary cultural platform that places children, mothers, and families at the centre of artistic creation and education. Through artistic residencies, school initiatives, and community care labs, it explores care as a cultural and civic value across Europe and the Mediterranean. Culminating each April in a family-focused festival, CARE reflects Larnaka 2030's vision of inclusion, co-creation, and sustainable community life.

COMMON GROUND KAFENIO

Enjoy traditional Cypriot coffee and the cult of coffee reading! reimagines the traditional café as a travelling space for dialogue, participation, and imagination. Communities from Cyprus, Europe, and the wider region gather to discuss shared values, experiences, and hopes for the future through interactive fortune-telling games.

DESIGN CENTRE

A cornerstone of the Common Ground Cultural Centre (CGCC), the Design Centre connects traditional crafts and local resources with contemporary design. Beyond 2030, it will continue supporting sustainable, community-driven creativity and innovation in Larnaka and the wider region.

HOME OF MEMORY

Museum of the people of Larnaka - a museum of history told through memories preserved in everyday objects. These documents and artifacts reveal the cultural and social evolution of the city, connecting the stories of ordinary people with today's visitors while creating a bridge to future generations. Rather than representing a city or nation, H.O.M. seeks to reinterpret the world through personal stories, perspectives, and lived realities.

INSULAR EUROPE

Brings together artists and island communities across the Mediterranean to explore shared environmental challenges through art, science, and ecology. Connecting islands such as Mallorca, Sicily, Malta, Greece, and Croatia, the project reimagines the sea as a shared space for sustainability, creativity, and collaboration.

MUSIC ECOSYSTEM

Meet the city's diverse music artists who run the following music related projects in Larnaka 2030 programme: **Follow the Music, The Earth's Wounds, Fengaros City Festival.**

NEW CARTOGRAPHIES

New Cartographies is an artistic initiative that remaps Cyprus through memory, landscape, and community. Focusing on Larnaka and Famagusta, it explores emotional geographies shaped by stories of coexistence, belonging, and displacement since 1974. Through art and community gatherings, villages and neighbourhoods become living archives of memory, dialogue, and peace.

PYLA PROJECT

Transforms Cyprus's only bicommunal village into a living space for dialogue, coexistence, and artistic exchange. Through shared stories, especially those of women, the project explores how everyday life and resilience can inspire new forms of peace-making art.

REHEARSING HERITAGE

Artistic research project exploring heritage as something living, evolving, and collectively reimagined. Combining film, music, and crafted scenes.

SEMELE PROJECT

Reinterprets The Bacchae by giving voice to Semele, the silenced woman at the centre of the myth. Blending testimonies from women affected by conflict and displacement, the performance becomes a feminist ritual of remembrance, reconciliation, and unity beyond division.

ksi urban collective: ξι- / un- is a participatory project that reimagines the city through collective interventions, performances, walks, and rituals. Beginning in 2026, residents, artists, and communities co-create annual actions that reveal hidden cultural layers, strengthen social connections, and celebrate Larnaka's multicultural identity.

RECOGNIZE_RECONCILE_RECONNECT

Meet the city's diverse music artists who run the following music related projects in Larnaka 2030 programme: **Follow the Music, The Earth's Wounds, Fengaros City Festival.**



SYNOIKISMOS

A flagship project on displacement, memory, and community resilience. It reimagines refugee housing estates as spaces of care, creativity, and inclusive urban futures. Focusing on Larnaka and connected communities across the Southeastern Mediterranean, the project transforms histories of displacement into shared cultural heritage and artistic expression. Rooted in the idea of "living together," Synikismos highlights these neighbourhoods not only as symbols of loss, but also as places of resilience, coexistence, and community rebuilding.

MAHALLART: MANTOMAHALLART | URBAN GORILLAS | PATHKIA PATHKIA

Community-led neighbourhood festivals activating public spaces and celebrating diversity. Launched in 2024 in Agios Ioannis, one of Larnaka's most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, Mantomahallart has become a lively annual community festival created by and for local residents. Urban Gorillas explores city neighbourhoods with a lively annual community festival created by and for local residents. Pathkia Pathkia explores the history and identity of the Larnaka district through interdisciplinary walks in rural communities.



PANELS

16TH CULTURE NEXT CONFERENCE

LARNAKA, CYPRUS

6-8/05/2025

Participants

The 16th Culture Next Conference, hosted in Larnaka, Cyprus, brought together 158 participants in total from across 31 Culture Next Network's member cities, as well as 80 local participants from the city of Larnaka and the region, for two dynamic days of dialogue, exchange, and cultural strategy.

158

total number of participants

105

female participants

53

male participants

0

non binary participants

0

participant prefer not to disclose

PARTICIPATING MEMBER - CITIES:

- Bad Ischl
Salzkammergut, Austria
- Bielsko-Biała, Poland
- Bradford, United Kingdom
- Brno, Czechia
- Broumov, Czechia
- Caceres, Spain
- České Budějovice, Czechia
- Chemnitz, Germany
- Cluj-Napoca, Romania
- Debrecen, Hungary
- Galway, Ireland
- Kortrijk, Belgium
- Kourion, Cyprus
- Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain
- Larnaka, Cyprus
- Leeds, United Kingdom
- Leeuwarden, The Netherlands
- Lemesos, Cyprus
- Leuven, Belgium
- Lviv, Ukraine
- Matera, Italy
- Nikšić, Montenegro
- Nijmegen2033, The Netherlands
- Novi Sad, Serbia
- Oulu, Finland
- Plovdiv, Bulgaria
- Timișoara, Romania
- Trenčín, Slovakia
- Valmiera, Latvia
- Victoria (Gozo), Malta
- Zalău, Romania

Venues

DAY 0

- SDG - Phivos Stavrides Foundation - Larnaka Archives
- Culture Next Network Management Meeting - Youth Makerspace
- Cultural CityTour for all - Europe Square
- Official Reception in the Evening - Salina Municipal Park - Multipurpose Centre for the Creative Engagement of Youth and Vulnerable Groups Larnaka

DAY 1

- Conference - Allilodidaskaleio
- Afternoon - Youth Maker Space Larnaka & Multipurpose Centre for the Creative Engagement of Youth and Vulnerable Groups

DAY 2

- Conference - Allilodidaskaleio
- Famagusta Trip - Famagusta City

Inside Larnaka:

The Larnaka team ensured that the conference venue and events were held within walking distance from accommodation and city center. Participants have the chance to walk around and feel the city’s vibe. For the Famagusta Trip, a dedicated bus served the event for traveling from Larnaka city to Famagusta city.

Food

DAY -1

Dinner - Island Restaurant

DAY 0

Morning - Larnaka Club Mattei Residence
Lunch - Lazaris Bakery Bar
Official Reception in Evening - the Ballroom catering at Salina Municipal Park

DAY 1

Morning - OX and Mules catering at Allilodidaskaleio
Lunch - the Ballroom catering at Larnaka Municipal Market
Dinner - Nusa Beach Bar

DAY 2

Morning - OX and Mules catering at Allilodidaskaleio
Lunch - Lazaris Bakery Bar

Logistics:

The Larnaka team booked accommodation for a total of 206 nights, while some participants independently booked accommodation for a total of 42 nights. Mercure Larnaca Finikoudes Beach (Vasileos Evagorou) served as the main conference hotel. The team prioritized hotels that could accommodate a large number of participants within walking distance of the conference venue. Additionally, hotels were selected based on availability and proximity to the venue, including Mikes Kanarium Hotel (69 Faneromenis Street), located just steps away from the conference venue and the city center, as well as Frangiorgio Hotel (51 Stasinou Street) and Josephine Boutique Hotel (corner of Zenonos Kitieos and Mitsi Street).

By air

Airport	Transfer Options	Notes
Larnaka (LCA)	Bus options and Taxi	Widest choice of flights
Paphos (PFO)	Bus options (appr. 1 h 30 min.) and Taxi (appr. 1h 30 min – 2h)	Suitable for some cities with direct flight connections, as no flight changes are required

Practical Information:

Language Greek; English Time zone Eastern European Time (EET)	Currency – Euro (EUR). Digital Wallet and Digital Card payments are accepted everywhere.
--	---

1 Social Media Performance

The communication campaign surrounding the 16th Culture Next Conference in Larnaka generated strong engagement across the network's digital channels and contributed to the continued growth of Culture Next's online visibility.

COMBINED RESULTS

Across Facebook and Instagram, the conference communication generated:

33.9K

total number of participants

4.7K

reach/viewers

1,255

content interactions

1,348

page and profile visits

113

new followers

2 Conference Communication Outputs

DAILY CONFERENCE COVERAGE

A comprehensive communication package was produced throughout the conference, ensuring continuous visibility before, during and after the event. This included:

- daily social media coverage
- story updates
- speaker highlights
- photo galleries
- participant testimonials
- event recaps
- strategic announcements

The communication strategy aimed to showcase not only the conference programme but also the collaborative spirit and diversity of the Culture Next community.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO CONTENT

Professional visual documentation was produced during the conference, creating a rich archive of photographs and video materials for future communication campaigns, reporting activities and promotional purposes.



TESTIMONIAL SERIES & PODCAST

A dedicated series of interviews, podcasts and testimonials was recorded on site in Larnaka, featuring representatives of member cities, cultural organisations, European Capitals of Culture, cultural professionals and network stakeholders.

These materials provide valuable long-term communication assets that will continue to support the promotion of Culture Next and its activities throughout 2026 and beyond.

3 Strategic Communication Highlights

The conference communication focused on several themes that generated strong interest among participants and audiences alike.

EMPOWERING THE CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTOR

As the central theme of the conference, discussions explored how cultural organisations, artists and cities can strengthen their resilience and sustainability in an increasingly complex social and political environment.

CULTURE AS A SAFE SPACE

Several sessions highlighted the role of culture in promoting dialogue, democratic values, freedom of expression and social cohesion.

ARTISTS IN TIMES OF WAR

One of the most impactful discussions focused on the role of artists and cultural organisations in contexts affected by conflict, displacement and social instability. The prominence of these topics further reinforced Culture Next's position as a platform contributing actively to contemporary European cultural policy debates.

4 Media Coverage & Strategic Partnerships

The conference generated strong visibility in both local and international media, contributing significantly to the profile of the network.

LOCAL MEDIA COVERAGE

One of the most important media appearances was a featured interview with Culture Next Secretary General, **Ştefan Teişanu**, published in Politis, one of Cyprus' leading newspapers.

The extensive article explored the role of culture in urban development, the long-term impact of European Capitals of Culture and the opportunities that cultural strategies can create for cities and communities.

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA EXPOSURE

Culture Next also gained visibility through Rai Italia's well-known programme Paparazzo, dedicated to Italian communities living abroad. The programme featured **Immie Jonkman**, Board Member of Culture Next and CEO of Arcadia (Leeuwarden–Friesland 2018), while the event was covered on site by special correspondents **Serafino Paternoster** and **Maria Teresa Cascino**. This represented an important opportunity to present the network and its activities to an international audience beyond the traditional cultural sector.

STRATEGIC MEDIA PARTNERSHIP WITH ECOCNEWS

During the conference, Culture Next officially launched its partnership with EcocNews, the leading European media outlet dedicated to the European Capitals of Culture ecosystem. Through this collaboration, EcocNews will become an official media partner of Culture Next, supporting the dissemination of news, stories and developments from across the network while strengthening the visibility of member cities and cultural initiatives throughout Europe.

CONCLUSION

Through a comprehensive communication campaign, strong social media performance, high-quality multimedia production, significant media exposure and the launch of a new strategic partnership with EcocNews, the conference further strengthened the visibility, credibility and influence of Culture Next across Europe. The successful implementation of the communication activities was greatly supported by the Larnaka2030 communication team. From logistical assistance and media coordination to the delivery of concrete communication actions on site, their professionalism, openness and commitment contributed significantly to the overall visibility and success of the conference.



Overall satisfaction
with the 16th Culture
Next Conference

97.1%

Contact information

hello@culturenext.eu

www.culturenext.eu

[https://www.facebook.com/
CultureNextNetwork](https://www.facebook.com/CultureNextNetwork)

Network secretariat:

Cluj Cultural Centre

Fluieraşului street no 3,
Cluj-Napoca, Romania, 400073

 CULTURE
NEXT

 Co-funded by
the European Union