

ON- AiR Research on Digital Mobility Opportunities

Give a person a fish and you feed them for a day. Teach someone to fish and you feed them for a lifetime.

Introduction

This research aims at providing **individual digital artists tools** to secure **mobility** opportunities within the framework of the **European Union**, inspired by the above saying. Therefore, this document is a combination of **specific information** gathered and a description of **best practice** on mobility opportunities for digital artists (residencies, funding schemes, networks, festivals, prizes and transnational production opportunities). The research document comprises of three main sections:

- **Opportunities in the EU**
- **Tools and Check List**
- **Appendix** - A list of useful organisations and events to support the sections of the main text.

The scope of the research had to be strictly limited in order to produce a user-friendly document. It is based on body>data>space's approach that technological **tools** can be **enablers** of human endeavour, empowering and enhancing our natural need for **responsivity, interactivity** and **connectivity**.

The following definitions are provided for this purpose:

Digital art: We do not see the digital art as an art form in itself, but as a medium that can be used by any art form. Yet, ultimately no good art is about the tools alone, but about the process they generate, the opportunities offered, experimentation enabled and changes made.

Opportunities within the framework of the European Union: Opportunities available to European citizens, taking place in European countries, including third countries.

Third Country: The European Union has a number of relationships with nations that are not formally part of the Union. According to a statement by Commissioner Günter Verheugen, the aim is to have a ring of countries, sharing EU's democratic ideals and joining them in further integration without necessarily becoming full member states. Please check the [European Union's website](#) to see the full and updated list.

I. Opportunities in the EU

To be able to take full advantage of European mobility opportunities, you must approach the work you produce or intend to produce from several angles. An artwork can fit several themes, so try to find the dimensions of your work that fit the brief. Be flexible and open, it pays off.

Residencies sometimes are not advertised as such, so do take a look on production and co-production opportunities between different countries, Festivals, Venues, Prizes, EU exchanges, Embassy and Cultural Centre open calls, University opportunities and Erasmus (if you are still a student). Here are some examples that can give you an idea of what you may stumble upon:

1. Physical Mobility

1.1. Information Distributors / Networks

There are organisations and websites that pool useful information on opportunities for artists. Therefore, it is worth visiting their sites on a regular basis or subscribing for their newsletter. Make sure to check the internet for knowledge pools in your own language as there are many small, local organisations and sites that are tailored for your needs.

Example:

Digitalarti (France / International)

[Digitalarti](#) welcomes digital art professionals, artists, festival organisers, journalists, collectors, galleries, institutions, digital art fans and all festival-goers around the world, and invites them to share experiences, information, artworks presentations, use the tools and data bases, and have fun. The site includes information and blogs about hundreds Digital Art festivals, artists and places worldwide including text, videos, pictures and much more. Videoblogs can be opened for free, and everyone benefits from free space and video storage.

CG society

[CG society](#) is a comprehensive portal for Computer Graphics Professionals, bringing together digital artists with the latest technologies and practices in computer graphics.

CG society is rather thematically specific, but it is a great example of a versatile website structure offering workshop, prizes, online galleries, etc.

D-Media

[D-Media](#) is a founder member of The European Digital Think Tank working with partners in Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Paris, Finland and Rome. The EU digital Think Tank comprises a “core group” of leading European Digital Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) clusters: Barcelona Media, Berlin “Project Future”, Cap Digital Paris, Digibusiness Finland, FILAS Rome, IIP Create of the Netherlands and D-Media Network UK. This network is a great example how digital art is linked to the creative industries and the commercial sector.

Digital Humanities - University of Hamburg

[Digital Humanities](#) is the annual international conference of the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations (ADHO). ADHO is an umbrella organisation whose goals are to promote and support digital research and teaching across arts and humanities disciplines, drawing together humanists engaged in digital and computer-assisted research, teaching, creation, dissemination, and beyond, in all areas reflected by its diverse membership. The Digital Humanities conference in 2012 will be hosted by the University of Hamburg between 16 - 22 July 2012.

Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities (DARIAH)

The grand vision for the Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities ([DARIAH](#)) is to facilitate long-term access to, and use of, all European Arts and Humanities (A+H) digital research data. The DARIAH infrastructure will be a connected network of people, information, tools, and methodologies for investigating, exploring and supporting work across the broad spectrum of the digital humanities.

1.2. Residency Providers

There are a few organisations that offer residencies on a regular basis. They have extensive experience in the field of mobility, therefore, they are the ideal platform to contact if you are preparing to hit the road for the first time.

Example:

European Media Art Network – EMAN / European Media Artists in Residence Exchange – EMARE (International)

The basic purpose of the [EMAN/EMARE program](#) is to enable European artists to collaborate on projects and consequently to create closer bonds between European media organisations. The unification and extension of Europe, triggered by the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, has created new problems to be faced as well as new opportunities for cooperation and exchange. EMAN/EMARE offers an opportunity to work within these bounds, as defined by the individual artists, which enables the latter to develop their own

projects within a new context, and thereby give something back, in turn, to their host organisation.

1.3. Open Calls

Through open calls artists may get access to **commissions, exhibition opportunities and residencies** as well. Open calls can be released by any organisation at any time, and these calls may not be repeated on a regular basis. Many structures / festivals / venues have **key themes or focuses in different years** relating to the type of content they are searching for their new projects. Therefore, the best method is to regularly check **Information Distributors / Networks**, become part of as many networks relevant for your section of digital art as possible and subscribe to the **newsletter / mailing lists** of your favourite digital art structures.

Example:

RAN - Reseau arts numeriques (France / International)

The Digital Arts Network, or [RAN](#) in French, offers a unique platform where art, science and industry converge, removing the barriers between these sectors and opening up a pioneering space for creation and innovation where experts from various professional fields can come together. The RAN seeks to develop a collaborative approach aimed at fostering exchange, reflection and co-production between artistic, scientific and industrial structures. It promotes the synergy of cross-disciplinary expertise and helps bolster national and international cooperation. Please note that individuals cannot join RAN, however, they website lists many digital arts structures that do.

Im[m]agine (Italy)

International project of mail art and digital art

The Councillorship for Culture of the Municipality of Quiliano (Italy) in collaboration with SACS (Space of Contemporary Experimental Art) organize a mail art project, which title is [Im\[m\]agine](#), about the “objet d’art” (art object). Deadline: 30 April 2012

FONLAD Digital Art Festival (Portugal)

[FESTIVAL FONLAD](#) appeared in 2005 with the aim of promoting the dissemination of digital arts. Right from the start there was a concern to extend its scope by developing contacts with various institutions to promote events in physical spaces, both nationally and internationally. FONLAD Festival, in its 8th edition aims to celebrate Nam June Paik, Vito Acconci and Bruce Numan, proposing as global theme “Performing Acts”. It seeks to present a body of work that has at its core the record of performances (artistic or not), the body in its many cultural meanings and poses, the registration of events / actions, works that have as a theme or center, the body, he’s move(s), desire(s), anxietie(s), either in the form of

video art, video performances, photography or web art. Deadline: 31 March 2012

Prix Ars Electronica Collide@CERN

[Prix Ars Electronica Collide@CERN](#) is a prize in digital art (deadline November).

CERN is the European organisation for nuclear research. CERN's latest experiment colliding the minds of scientists with the imagination of artists opens with the Prix Ars Electronica Collide@CERN prize in digital arts. This is the first prize to be announced as part of the new Collide@CERN Artists Residency 3 year programme initiated by the laboratory.

1.4. Festivals

Many festivals create their own content through artist commissions and take on the touring and marketing of the work. The resulting large-scale visibility is a serious asset when looking for new opportunities.

Example:

Festival Bains Numériques (France)

The [Festival Bains Numériques](#) (Digital Baths) is a great event for interactive video and sound creations, offering freely accessible shows, concerts, exhibitions and installations designed to suit all audiences. In 2012, from 12 to 19 June, it is again taking over the whole of the town of Enghien-les-Bains / Paris.

The fifth edition builds on the development of its internationality and accessibility, in particular the promoting of new talent through competitions open to artists of all nationalities, active participation and exchanges with other countries, and raising awareness of the public who are invited to enjoy this fun event. Professional development roundtable conferences take place each year linked to specific themes. eg.: 2012 – The general theme is LUDICITY / LUDI-CITES - the creative or playful city.

Piemonte Share Festival (Italy)

[Piemonte Share Festival](#) is an annual event held in Torino-Italy, dedicated to contemporary art and culture in all its global dimensions and interconnections with the Internet and new media. Share Festival was founded in 2005 by Simona Lodi, artistic director of the event, and by Chiara Garibaldi, who supervises its general organisation. The festival is organised by the cultural association The Sharing. Since 2007 the Festival has awarded the Share Prize, dedicated to major artistic installations. Every year an overarching theme, encapsulated in the title of the event, brings the festival alive with exhibitions, video screenings, in-depth conferences, symposiums, workshops and performances.

CYNETART (Germany)

[CYNETART](#) is an international festival for computer-aided art in Dresden. The festival has been the focal point of the research at Trans-Media-Akademie (TMA) Hellerau for over fifteen years now. This work has made the festival become a countrywide and internationally recognised platform of digital culture – providing an in-depth overview of current developments of technology-based art

Transmediale (Germany)

[Transmediale](#) engages in reflective, aesthetic and speculative positions in between art, technology and culture. An annual festival and numerous cooperation projects articulate a critical understanding of technology as being more than the digital world and of the cultural as being more than what emerges from within institutionalised fields of production. Accordingly, transmediale is a transdisciplinary platform, always searching for new avenues of artistic, academic, activist and everyday expressions. It is a project always on the look out for projects and persons who may help to navigate, reflect on and ultimately re-model the production of contemporary culture.

Pixel Ache Network (International)

[Pixel Ache](#) is a Network and annual international Festival of electronic art and subcultures, involving experimental projects by artists, engineers, designers, researchers and architects taking place in Helsinki - Stockholm - Bergen - Reykjavik - Paris – Medellin.

1.5. Venues

There are **venues that organise festivals and also offer connected opportunities**, so it is worth keeping track of local and international digital art spaces.

Example:

Ars Electronica (Austria)

Art, technology, society. Since 1979, [Ars Electronica](#) has sought out interlinkages and congruities, causes and effects. The ideas circulating here are innovative, radical, eccentric in the best sense of that term. They influence our everyday life—our lifestyle, our way of life, every single day. The Festival as proving ground, the Prix as competition honouring excellence, the Center as a year-‘round setting for presentation & interaction, and the Futurelab as in-house R&D facility extend their feelers throughout the realms of science and research, art and technology. Ars Electronica’s four divisions inspire one another and put futuristic visions to the test in a unique, creative feedback loop. It’s an integrated organism continuously reinventing itself.

1.6. Prizes

Prizes are generally linked to established festivals and venues, so keep your eyes open for them.

Example:

The Digital Artist Awards (United Kingdom)

The [Digital Artist Awards](#) is a worldwide competition for anyone with a passion for digital art. It aims to inspire, recognise and reward the highest standards of digital art across a range of genres and categories from concept art, illustration, architectural visualisation and animation to character design and videogame art.

The competition is organised by leading art and design magazines: [Computer Arts](#), Computer Arts Projects, ImagineFX and 3D World.

Young Digital Artist Award presented by EDC & HP (International)

The [Young Digital Artist Award](#) has been conceptualized and initiated by EDC -- the pioneers of digital Creative Technology Solutions -- in association with HP. This first-of-its-kind award has been initiated as part of EDC's "Ideas Ahead" program that is aimed at promoting digital art & creativity among the youth. The mission is to provide kids a creative opportunity to think beyond the paper-n-pencil and evolve art ideas on the digital platform, thereby imbuing in them a sense of creative freedom and building career and life skills that is the need of the day. With this approach, innovative and critical thinking is fostered in students so as to make them knowledge seekers who attain their maximum potential through an enjoyable and fun-filled competition.

Cube Prize 2012 (France)

The [Cube Prize 2012](#) will be awarded for the first time during the Le Cube Festival to the best creation in digital art by a young artist under age 35. The aim of this Prize is to bring to light, showcase and support the work of an up-and-coming artist from the international digital arts scene.

European e-Skills Week (International)

[European e-Skills Week](#) is an awareness raising campaign that is about putting the spotlight on the growing need get e-Skills and get a job. The e-Skills Week Campaign is about **inspiring a generation of young people to get digital** and find their first job, e-Skilled and develop your business potential, or choose a career creative and inspiring career path. Each category winner in the Project Passion competition will receive a cash prize of €2.150, and runners' up will win €1.000. First place prize winners will also receive an Xbox or Kinect, a Lumia smart phone from Nokia and paid internships/ shadowing opportunities in very cool companies to kick-start your career.

[Prix Ars Electronica](#) (see above)

[CYNETART Award](#) (see above)

1.7. Calls for Paper

Call for papers can enable you to **present your work in academic settings and conferences**. These opportunities do not cover travel expenses most of the times. It is worth establishing a link with institutions concerned with the technology you use to create your artwork.

Example:

Digital Humanities Congress - biennial event (United Kingdom)

CALL FOR PAPERS

The University of Sheffield's Humanities Research Institute with the support of the Network of Expert Centres and Centernet is delighted to announce its Call for Papers for a three-day conference to be held in Sheffield during 6th - 8th September 2012.

The Digital Humanities Congress is a new conference which will be held in Sheffield every two years. Its purpose is to promote the sharing of knowledge, ideas and techniques within the digital humanities.

Digital humanities is understood by Sheffield to mean the use of technology within arts, heritage and humanities research as both a method of inquiry and a means of dissemination. As such, proposals related to all disciplines within the arts, humanities and heritage domains are welcome.

1.8. Calls by Embassies and Cultural Centres

Make sure your national art agencies representing your country abroad receive your portfolio as your work may find its way into their programme. You can increase your chances if you arrange to visit these agencies when visiting a foreign country.

2. Virtual Mobility

Digital art is inherently mobile, so it is worth taking advantage of the myriads of opportunities your artistic tools offer. Your content carried by any digital medium is very suitable for multi-distributional usage and cross-sector distribution. **Remember, the more ways you present your work, the more people can access it.**

Digital mobility is a burgeoning area in arts, so make sure you make the most of it. You can use it as a tool or join in the technological development and gain funding for your work from the scientific and commercial field.

According to Judith Staines ([excited atoms](#) by Staines, 2010), types of work which can be described as incorporating virtual mobility include:

- *one-way distributed/streamed media: e.g. worldwide screening of live performances from the Metropolitan Opera, New York and the National Theatre, London (NT Live)*
- *two-way interactive performance projects where performers (and audiences) are in different physical locations: e.g. The World Opera, The Lost Sounds Orchestra, Another Language Performing Arts Company*
- *'three-way' interactive telematic performance involving physical and virtual environments – so called 'mixed reality' (with virtual avatars interacting with real performers) – which leads to a concept of a third internet virtual world space: e.g. Company in Space, Paul Sermon, body>data>space*
- *interactive performances in virtual environments, especially Second Life™: e.g. Ballet Pixelle, Avatar Body Collision performances that use mobile devices (e.g. phones, GPS) and games to create new structures that put the audience participants in the role of performer/co-creator/content generator, often using augmented reality: e.g. Blast Theory, Rimini Protokoll*
- *using online tools and social networks to invite participation of artists, amateurs, fans as cocreators: e.g. Matthias Fritsch's 'Music From the Masses'(YouTube), A Bicycle built for Two Thousand (using Mechanical Turk), Emma Cotter's Rettocamme choreography project and others which invite scripted or linked dance contributions.*
- *using standard and specialist online tools (website, blog, joint authoring software, Skype, email) to co-create and develop joint projects: e.g. Long Distance Hotel, FLOSS Manuals BookSprints*

- *and many more variations existing and yet to be invented of mixed, online, offline, augmented, interactive, pervasive, virtual, realtime, realities and unrealities....*

For practitioners, managers and observers, there is a big difference between the one-way and two way types of virtual mobility. One-way streaming is connected with distribution mechanisms, marketing and audience-building whereas two-way interactivity (whether involving performers, audience or both, remote or proximal) centres on the creative process and participatory strategies. Both can be driven by the desire for mobility and intercultural dialogue – or not.

To present your work online, take a look at Web Galleries and Virtual World opportunities.

Examples:

[Online European festival](#)

[WJ project](#)

3. Funding

Funding individual artists can apply for directly are few, the best way to receive some financial support for your work is therefore to get on the mailing list of digital organisations, festivals and prizes to be informed of new funds. Naturally, it is also worth checking your national art funds. Good advice would be to become attached to a local or national art structure who can include you in their applications to larger funds.

EU Culture Programme 2007-2013 at present is not available for individual applicants, only to organisations. However, it is likely that the partner organisations in many projects will work with individual artists who will contribute to the development of a successful project. It is always worth checking which organisations programme of work has received EU funding as they may offer residencies or commissions linked to their upcoming projects. Most countries have small mobility grants available for independent artists - do check your ministry.

Example:

STEP Beyond Travel grants from the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) (Netherlands / International)

[STEP Beyond Travel grants](#) fund up-and-coming artists and cultural workers - with a priority to individuals up to 35 years and/or in the first 10 years of their career - to travel between EU and countries bordering the EU.

Artists' international development programme (United Kingdom)

The [Artists' international development programme](#) is a £750,000 fund, jointly funded by the British Council and Arts Council England. Artists are able to apply for small grants (minimum of £1,000 up to £5,000). You can only apply to the Artists' international development programme once in any financial year.

II. Toolbox

1. Necessary Preparation

When considering taking advantage of any of the above opportunities, please note that you must have at least a minimal web presence. Looking for opportunities is one thing and being visible in order to be found is another. Doing your own promotion is not easy and not something all enjoy doing, but Virtual Mobility and Networking have great benefits.

2. Devices

It is worth considering what portable devices can offer in the field of virtual mobility. Telematic mobile equipment enables real-time interaction between artist and audience, a connection once considered extraordinary by now has become a basic expectation.

3. Networking

Becoming part of the digital art network is essential. This network is growing very fast across the EU, therefore, it is still possible to become visible if you are willing to invest some of your time. You can meet like-minded people, show your work, find opportunities and build your career. Conferences, debates, real and online galleries are also made more accessible by becoming a node in the online and offline network of digital artists.

Tele-presence and Virtual / Physical Networking offer evolving community sharing, knowledge transfer and group creation processes through the use of local to local connectivity by contributing to:

- extending understanding and trust
- evolving expression of self and others
- re-examining identity and presence

- expanding communities of belonging
- sharing creative environments
- content pooling and group processing
- intercultural / intergenerational solidarity
- bridging distance /reducing carbon footprint
- examining the future world of work and play
- mobility, employability and impact

3.1. Online/Social Media

As a person who has chosen digital technology as the means of artistic expression, you must also make use of this tool for self-promotion. Social Medias are a great tool to up your own visibility, to network and benefit from mobility without travel.

Using Tumblr, Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest and the social networks that have not yet come into existence is a must.

3.2. Off-line

Attending openings, seminars and conferences are a great way to meet like-minded people, so do keep track of the programme of tech-related university departments, museums and art organisations.

Check List

Marketing and Promotion

- Maintain a strong presence online: You are the first promoter of your work! Set up a blog or a website to be able to share your process, work and press
- Understand marketing trends, use social media and online promotion tools as Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest or Tumblr to promote your work
- Document and archive (video, text etc) your work (process, workshops and performance) to promote it onwards
- Communicate the essence of your work accurately and imaginatively
- Set up Google alerts to check if your work has been picked up on the web, by the press and share it online and to your network
- Keep any articles, press around your work to promote your work onwards

- Pay great attention to the crediting of your work onwards, ensure you credit co-authors finders and partners properly

Networking

- Be curious! Attend conferences and debates, check other artists' works and projects
- Sign up to as many arts, technologies, funding newsletters and mailing lists as you can, to gather topical information and look out for calls for proposals
- When invited to present for a conference, ask if you can present examples of your art work too. Also, ask to do talks and presentations linked to your artworks when exhibiting
- Become part of as many arts, technology, education networks as possible
- Be a linker, a networker, maintain strong and long term links with all the venues and partners you've been working with, on a national and international level
- Build a trustful and truly collaborative working network involving other artists, producers, experts, scientists, PR people, technicians etc.
- Share and exchange it will return to you from other who network ethically

Development and Partnerships

- Think outside the arts box! Think about your practice as part of the creative economy model and engaging with social and economic issues
- Consider cross-sectoral collaborations and partnerships with Education, Science, Health and Well-Being but also Social sectors
- Explore funding linked to social issues, education health and other public services and sectors on a local and EU level
- Consider and impulse innovative partnerships with Universities and Creative Industries businesses (technologies research and fab labs and incubators)
- Explore funding linked to Creative Economy, innovation, applications development, R&D
- Borrow equipment or/and develop partnerships with equipment suppliers companies. Offer to demo or test equipment for free
- Keep a close eye on the Technology and Innovation Press too

Working Methodology

- Keep your own faith in the work and maintain your professional integrity at all costs
- Think collaboratively and acknowledge co-authorship and partners at all times
- Integrate collaborative technologies (online, file sharing and telepresence) to your working practices
- Involve your project manager / producer creatively in the process to achieve best project results

Audience development

- Audience matters! Think about the audience from the beginning of the creative process. They are the purpose of performing at all
- Develop innovative audience development strategies, using telepresence and real time connectivity technologies to reach and interact with physical and virtual audiences
- Use social media (Twitter) and online tools to gather audience feedback and enlarge your visibility
- Think about working, collaborating with local audience, schools, community centres
- Be able to adapt your discourse and proposals for different audiences and groups

And always remember, our fellow digital artists: ask not what your audience can do for you - ask what you can do for your audience.

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