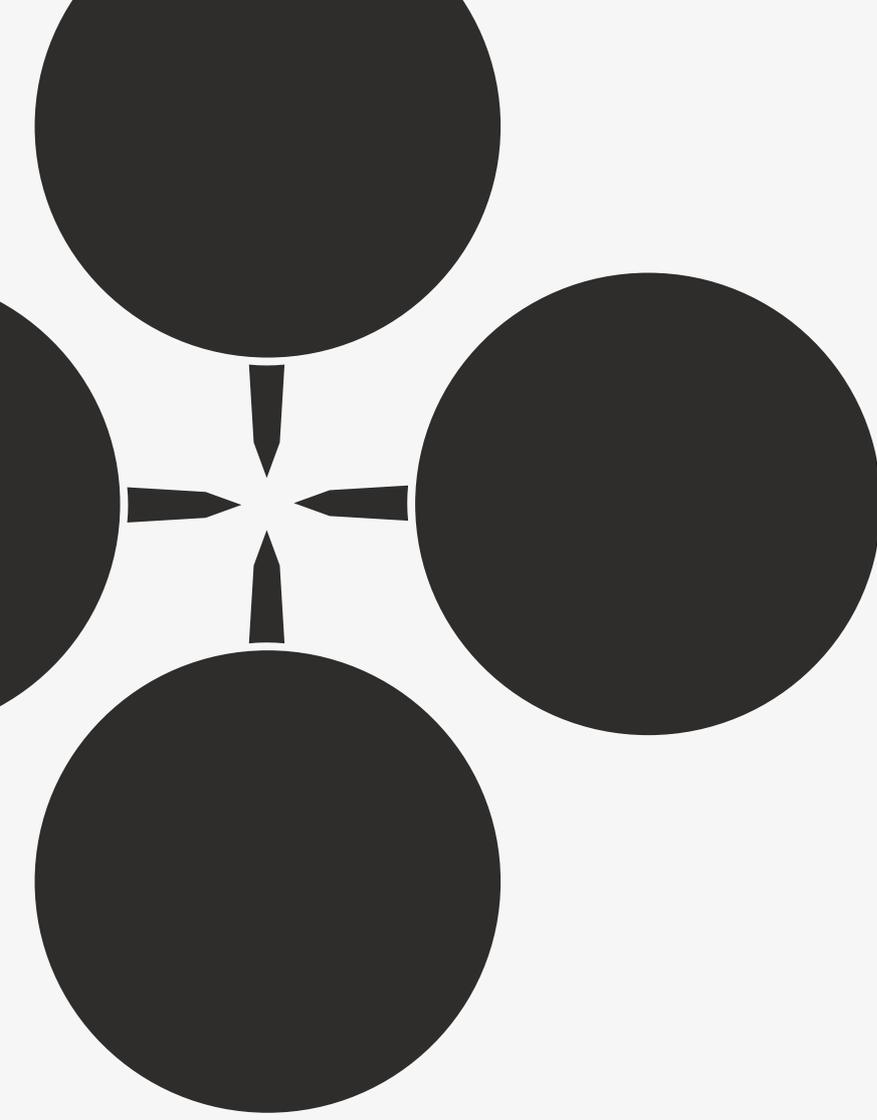


Green Paper for the
Prague Cultural Forum 2021
What's The Future?



English

Future: art

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Comments from Barcelona.

Despite the 1,722 km that separate Prague from Barcelona, there are many potentials and opportunities that connect the realities of the two cities. They also share some threats that have to do with global changes that affect the cultural policies of cities, but also with specific challenges that the two cities share. The recovery after the COVID-19 crisis should be managed as an opportunity to boost and improve culture in the city project, in a dual dimension: locally but globally.

Challenges and trends. Praha in the next 5-7 years.

Beware of the city's previous „success“. Tourist success can be the great social and economic trap to culturally desert the city, hand in hand with gentrification. Prague can continue with its model of „success“ of a tourist city, with an important heritage and cultural prestige, since this model has led to economic growth, improved competitiveness and attractiveness of the city, capacity to attract talent and the cultural diversity typical of an open and cosmopolitan city. But that model of success and growth prior to the COVID-19 crisis, but increasingly ageing, where heritage can end up being an empty setting, without a soul and vibrancy, where the real creativity of contemporary citizens has no link.

The Sustainable Development Goals 2030 are an essential reference that must be taken into consideration

when designing a new cultural policy. Although there is unfortunately no specific SDG for culture, culture is a determining factor for sustainable development. As Jon Hawkes would say, it is the fourth essential pillar of sustainability (economic, social, environmental and cultural sustainability). Next Generation funds and other EU programs can be used to boost culture for

Prague City Cultural Project.

To improve the funding of cultural vibrancy and development there are key points to be considered. Among others, we could mention in this first draft:

1. Public-private collaboration.
2. Tourism taxation.
3. Financing culture
4. The educating city. The city must be an educating project.
5. A sustainable urban project.
(Is there a strategy city plan?)

Prague can boost its character and potential as a cosmopolitan city, but at the same time the epicentre (hub) and connection of the creative capacity and the diversity and cultural power of the entire Czech Republic.

To do this, it must promote the current potential and the tourist positioning to generate, beyond the tourist „stage“, in a vibrant and creative city where tradition connects with innovation, and where creative activity allows giving strength to an urban project of sustainable future.

Key factors for public support

Share the idea of the city. The city is an idea, which must be shared. That idea integrates the potentials and opportunities. The main factors that make it necessary and justify greater public support are:

Culture is not an ordinary expense. It's an investment. Every euro funding culture can provide a bigger economic impact. Beyond the direct impact on GDP and employment, Culture generates urban attractiveness and added value, improves the positioning of the city, attracts talent and investment, and is part of the essential strategies for the development of quality of life, social cohesion and the development of new economic activities related to knowledge management, applied research and the creative economy.

Culture - the cultural power of a city with heritage, arts and living cultural expressions-can be decisive to position and improve the international positioning of Prague.

Public-private collaboration within the framework of shared governance can be a solution to give continuity over time to a project that promotes financing for relevant initiatives and projects of all the cultural fabric, maintaining a balance between all institutions.

Arguments to increase cultural funding.

The GDP generated by tourism, the ability to attract talent, new companies, with a significant capacity for concentration of citizens from other areas of the Czech Republic, and from other countries, have a fundamental element without which the improvement of the international positioning of the city, with an increase in attractiveness and competitiveness, which has resulted in an increase in the location of new companies and businesses. That strategic element is culture: without Prague's heritage, strength and cultural appeal, such growth would not have been possible. Barcelona is a similar case: Without culture, would it have been possible for a city with 1.6 m inhabitants to be one of the most attractive and competitive cities in terms of innovation, science and activities related to knowledge, university offerings and education? Business schools of the world? What has been the main ingredient that has distinguished the international positioning of Barcelona, which is not the capital of Spain, nor is it a great metropolis, to become one of the 5 main cities in the world in terms of fairs and congresses? Would it have been possible for the Mobile World Congress to be implanted in Barcelona, without the attraction of the cultural offer (heritage, music, festivals, theatre, formal and informal culture, popular cultural events, gastronomy, etc ...) connected to economic activities such as the that make up the concept of the creative economy?

How can the City of Prague find the balance between supply and demand in culture?

This is a medium and long-term process in which many factors intervene: the educational city (the connection of creation, cultural manifestations, the arts, heritage and citizenship).

A good public policy balancing the support and promotion of the different cultural sectors.

Developing a process of participation and governance in which the visions of cultural creators, managers, and mediators are integrated, with promoters, cultural entrepreneurs and cultural institutions. This is a medium and long-term process in which many factors intervene: the educational city (the connection of creation, cultural manifestations, the arts, heritage and citizenship).

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How to make change in support of culture by the City of Prague?

You need a sincere, honest and real strategic planning, avoiding rhetorical processes. Sharing challenges and

problems first, and later sharing solutions (and not the other way around)

Analysing and integrating a good analysis, diagnosis and action plan that shares the challenges and weaknesses, and knows how to take advantage of the potentials and opportunities in a balanced and shared way between the cultural sectors, with the other economic sectors and social opportunities.

Considering the experiences and good practices of other cities (benchmarking), to learn from their mistakes and successes. Maintaining a permanent relationship with other expert views from different urban realities.

Organizing a public reflection, with a public debate, in which this narrative of hope and improvement project is shared, and promoting an agreement for culture as a fundamental pillar for the development of an urban project in Prague, marked by quality of life, social cohesion, economic competitiveness, and cultural development, as a fundamental basis for the advancement of the new economy and the Knowledge Society.

How to make a successful and live cultural policy which will be accepted by stakeholders in culture and will be implemented successfully and sustainably?

Building trust. That always starts with sharing common problems,

not starting sharing the solutions) from a medium and long-term perspective. It is useless to start by sharing only ideas or solutions. A previous diagnosis is need it. Trust requires governance based on dialogue, the definition of a truly shared mission and vision, and a realistic plan of action. Objectives can always be adjusted to available resources. That is smart management: moving forward with what is available, creating new opportunities.

What are tools of creation live and various cultural offerings (programmes) which react to actual needs, topics and challenges (for the City of Prague)?

Having a good SWOT diagnosis of the access situation and cultural practices, their potentials and opportunities, must allow detecting development potentials. This requires a local team that shares sectoral views of the different areas of culture to imagine concrete responses to the needs and challenges of the population as a whole and of cultural creators, artists, companies and organizations.

How can the City of Prague find the balance between support of funded organizations and independent projects, venues and companies?

With a pact between the cultural sectors that has institutional recognition. For this, the creation of a working group in which all sectors

are represented is essential. Having a shared vision and a collaboration agreement is essential. Not having it will imply a process of cultural decline, loss of opportunities for the economic and social development of the Prague urban project, and surrender to the processes of gentrification and cultural desertification. Turning Prague into a theme park is only profitable in the short term, and creating social fractures and wasting the great potentials and opportunities.

What are tools of evaluation of funded organizations and projects, venues and companies supported by subsidies?

The indicators of an annual action plan, within the framework of a strategic cultural plan of the city are fundamental requirements. Adequate governance, in which public and private representation are integrated, and the representation of projects and cultural initiatives, as well as possible sponsors and economic entities interested in the project. The creation of a Foundation or independent legal figure that integrates public and private representation can facilitate the continuity of agreements, programs and projects, facilitating continuity beyond the mandates of the municipal government.

How how to make progress in support of theatres? How to find balance between support of funded theatres (the City of Prague has 10 funded theatres from 19 funded organisations – gallery, zoo, museum, ...) **and strong and successful independent theatre's sector** (circus, contemporary dance and other new theatres way) **which don't have certainty of subsidy and operate from year to year.**

This is the central objective of a management and financing plan that the city needs.

This management and financing plan must be the instrument resulting from the pact for culture, which should be the initial objective.

The three steps should be these:

1. diagnosis and determination of improvement objectives for cultural policy in Prague,
2. pact for the cultural plan of the city,
3. management and financing plan for the city's cultural plan.

Jordi Pardo

Barcelona, March 21st 2021