

# Spanish Residency Report:

## Reaching Excluded groups

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## Espai Germanetes Residency (Barcelona, Spain).

### A. How did we consult?

#### Participatory consultation programme structure.

The first step to identify the location and excluded groups that could benefit from the implementation of a civic engagement – oriented art residency, started by an initial mapping. This map helped us to detect relevant stakeholders, namely, art and cultural institutions, foundations, networks and other stakeholders in the region of Catalonia, and in particular in the city of Barcelona that were working already with civic-engagement and or art residencies.

The map actors came up from literature reviewing, websites and other sources like early conversations with some stakeholders. We could identify experiences and processes sensible to host the residency

Considering the information gathered at that point, we prioritized the network “Artibbarri” to work with throughout the process (<https://artibbarriblog.wordpress.com/>). Here are the reasons:

- Artibbarri is a network comprising more than 20 entities with a longstanding in delivering Community and participatory art projects targeting excluded groups.
- Some of the proposals from the field of VET (Vocational Educational and Training) were put forward by Artibbarri network members.
- Considering the dissemination plan, Artibbarri was selected to guarantee better local and regional impacts.
- We also picked out Artibbarri for strategic and sustainable reasons. We decided to allocate a part of the Residency project resources in order to firm up Artibbarri work in the area of participatory and community arts.

We developed some actions to connect the Artibbarri’s network with the Residency project

1. Initial contacts with Artibbarri network gatekeepers.
2. Presentation of the project in the network steering group.
3. Stablish a network representative to follow up the collaboration.

One of the objectives was establish a collaboration base with the network Artibbarri, the Residency project was proposed on the ordinary assembly from this network, this one served for presenting the project and identify the first opportunities of collaborative work – open a call to let groups – projects, show them interest in host participatory-art Residency. This assemble was on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014

This call was extensive to members from the network, friends and another interested connected with members of the network, it was an important dissemination. At the same time, using the mapping of the stakeholders, another emails were sent to another projects

From this first call, we had 3 expressions of interest

1. Espai Germanetes, (<https://recreantcruilles.wordpress.com/espai-germanetes/>).
2. Belbiche Community Process, La Fundició (<https://lafundicio-net/>)
3. Poble Nou Community Process. (<https://apropemnos.wordpress.com/>)

Finally **Espai Germanetes was chosen**. The decision was made after the 2014 summer and criteria underpinning the selection process for the location were:

- The lack (and need) of activities to promote civic engagement targeting particular community groups. In other words, the existence of unreached groups who were excluded at this point from open participatory processes.
- The existence of an active core of participants willing to undertake the residency project in the host organization.
- The presence of organizational assets (i.e. community assemblies, steering groups ...) to guarantee the right implementation of the Residency.
- Practical considerations like physical distance, space features and transport connections that could facilitate the action - research team incorporation within the location.
- Evaluation of potential transferences (empowerment) to the host organization, considering the roles of the trainee, community practitioner and action - research team.

Once *Espai Germanetes* was selected a first round of discussions between the host organization members and the University of Barcelona action – research members took place. One of the themes addressed was to identify the target groups to include during the implementation of the residency. Three target groups were identified: small traders, elderly people and children. These groups were excluded from the ongoing participatory and engagement processes linked with *Espai Germanetes* project.

Different engagement strategies were design to reach the three different groups:

1. The engagement strategy to reach the small traders consisted in an information campaign and a distribution of plants among more than 30 small traders at the area (32 small traders were reached). A leaflet and a plant were distributed by the artists, the community practitioner, the trainee and some representatives of Recreant Cruïlles association. This action provided a great opportunity to outreach *Espai Germanetes Project* and to invite the small traders to join other activities like mobile garden building workshops. The small traders were asked to expose the given plants, to take care of them during 2 weeks. After these weeks they were invited to plant them in the mobile garden. Another action targeting small traders was to take a picture of each one holding the plant; the artists gave the printed picture back to the small traders in order to generate some sense of belonging to the project. As a learning outcome, although the response from the small traders was excellent, the leaflets and plants distribution was taken over mainly by the trainee, the artists and the community practitioner, we think we missed an opportunity to build mutual recognition between representatives from

Recreant Cruïlles and the small traders; the trainee, the community practitioner and the artists went to know and talk with them but as they are not members of the host association this relationships can “disappear” when the residency finish and they left the context.

2. The engagement strategy to reach elderly people consisted in mapping the elderly homes allocated in the nearest area of *Espai Germanetes* and visiting them to explain the residency project. 2 elderly homes welcomed the proposal and showed interest in doing some actions with their residents. 2 workshops were design and held at the elderly homes. The workshops were focused in making flowerpots with the participants. 25 people attended the workshops and a final event was organised to present the flowerpots at *Espai Germanetes*, the residents families were invited to join this outdoor activity. It is important to bear in mind that mobility of this group is a challenge and bringing them to the residency place was a tough issue.
3. The engagement strategy to reach children was going through public schools and scouts organizations in the area. After mapping and emailing the public schools in the area we received the answer of two of them that welcomed the residency project. Also, a scout organization welcomed the initiative and joined the residency project. The main action designed was a participatory workshop were children with their families or scout monitors planted seeds in flowerpots and put them in the different modules of the mobile garden. More than 60 children attended the sequence of 4 workshops that were held. Another two actions were developed in the empty lot: The Garden “Guerrilla” and a symbolic occupation of the lot with the mobile garden. The first action consisted in a community walk with the mobile garden around the neighbourhood, during the walk the participants planted plants in the tree planters with messages about the residency and the *Espai Germanetes* project. The second action consisted in entering to the empty lot to make pictures of the mobile garden at the place, a vindication to the local authorities.
4. Finally a big event call *ARTivism* was organized to share the main outputs of the residency with the people interested and to discuss about the role that arts can play in social movements.

As it was mentioned above, a first round of discussions took place for selecting and targeting the excluded groups. It was not a formal interview, but as a result of the participatory consultation programme outlined.