

# AIM Network 2018–2020

## Mid-term report

August 2019



AIM Plovdiv 2019, Meetings, photo: Todor Nenev.

## **AIM Network 2018–2020**

<b>Overview</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Development of project aims</b>	<b>3</b>
Ad 1) Adding new members from a more varied geographic spectrum	3
Ad 2) More specific direction with a focus on active in-depth engagement of local/regional spaces	3
Ad 3) Efficiently use the outcomes of our long-term efforts	4
Ad 4) Support two newly established online maps of artists' initiatives: Artist-Run Alliance and Alternative Art Guide	4
Ad 5) Investigating the possibility of submitting a Creative Europe application	4
<b>Changes in the programme</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Changes in Conference 1 / Plovdiv 2019 – Local connections</b>	<b>5</b>
Budget	5
<b>Updated Meetings and Conferences plan</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Realised meetings</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>AIM Stockholm 2018</b>	<b>7</b>
Summary	7
Programme	8
Participants	8
<b>AIM Plovdiv 2018</b>	<b>11</b>
Summary	11
Participants	12
Programme	12
<b>AIM Plovdiv 2019 – Local Connections</b>	<b>16</b>
Summary	17
Participants	17
Overview	17
Marketing and PR	18
Meetings	18
Topics	18
Workshops	20
Exhibition	20
Panel Discussion	20
Programme	21

# Overview

The duration of AIM 2018–2020 has been scheduled for three years between 1 January 2018 and 30 December 2020.

The project has been following the proposed project plan and objectives set in the initial proposal, with several diversions from the original programme which are specified in the section Changes in programme.

The project aims as outlined are:

1. Adding new members from a more varied geographic spectrum.
2. More specific direction with a focus on active in-depth engagement of local/regional spaces. Demonstrated also in more specific exhibition concepts, thematic discussions and group-targeted meetings.
3. Efficiently use the outcomes of our long-term efforts, as it is only now that our work eventually starts to bear fruit. We know our limitations better. We have experience in organising international conferences, seminars and exhibitions. Some of our most successful outcomes – conference in Wrocław in 2016 and the issuing of AIM Network publication will be used as orientation models for future events, as transferred onto local models.
4. With our gained experience from developing an artist-run map we can support two newly established online maps of artists' initiatives: Artist-Run Alliance (Tel Aviv based) and Alternative Art Guide (The Hague based). AIM will provide its experience in the area (analysis of obstacles and projection made 2011–2016) and in exchange will receive enhanced visibility and promotion of its events and member spaces.
5. Investigating the possibility of submitting a Creative Europe application (Support for European cooperation projects) in a year or two, given our experience and growing ambitions and scale of the project.

And the overall long-term sustainable goals:

- To strengthen the artists' initiatives and create spin-off effects through mobility and exchange of experience and knowledge.
- To enhance the visibility of the self-organised art scene.
- To broaden the public interest in contemporary art.
- Thus broaden the representation of diversified backgrounds in the art world and among artists.

# Development of project aims

## **Ad 1) Adding new members from a more varied geographic spectrum**

From the initial amount of eleven members we have now expanded the members' base to fifteen. The proposals of which initiatives to invite were based on the network's positive experience with the initiatives, their strong public programme, cooperation in local and international projects and active engagement of the audiences. The proposals were discussed by all the AIM members and the network's coordinators. Consequently, in June 2019 we invited the following artist-run spaces, who all accepted the invitation:

Artist-Run Alliance, Tel-Aviv/Berlin, Israel/Germany  
Lateral Art Space from Cluj-Napoca, Romania  
Pasaj, Istanbul, Turkey  
Snehta, Athens, Greece

In the second half of the project we intend to invite an artist-run initiative from Poland and/or other central European country, which are currently missing in our membership base, and given the fact that Central Europe/Visegrad countries are generally underrepresented on the international artist-run scene.

## **Ad 2) More specific direction with a focus on active in-depth engagement of local/regional spaces**

This project aim has been specifically addressed in the large-scale meetings/conferences. The topic of Plovdiv 2019 was 'Local Connections' with strong focus on connecting the independent artist-run initiatives of the neighbouring countries with the Bulgarian initiatives. As part of the event we invited 9 local (Bulgarian) and 5 neighbouring artist-run initiatives of which 4 attended, as U10 from Belgrade, Serbia, cancelled last minute.

The topic of local connections was chosen for its relevance to the nature of the work of artist-run spaces and to the activities of AIM Network. It is a common occurrence that artist-run initiatives do not know or interact with initiatives of similar profiles within their region or country and thus lose on the valuable knowledge and experience exchange. It is thus necessary to connect such initiative and initiate a dialogue between them. Plovdiv 2019 hosted discussions and meetings on the subjects of how to work locally and regionally better, what can be done to improve the communication and exchange on local, national and international level, how to stimulate international cooperation and what are the differences between cooperating on the local and international basis.

Detailed minutes of the meetings were taken to be used for further development of our activities.

### **Ad 3) Efficiently use the outcomes of our long-term efforts**

We have used and further developed the format of AIM Wrocław 2016 in the preparation and implementation of Plovdiv 2019, and in the preliminary planning of Galway 2020 and Eleusis 2021. The format of the meetings has been developed to address the issues of the artist-run sector and of AIM Network's aims of discussing international, regional and local connections and differences.

Synergies from events organised by AIM Network have been monitored by its members.

A draft for a second publication 'The Birth and Death of Artist-run Initiatives' has been made and given its scale and the range of needed research we currently seek additional funding for its development and publishing. AIM Network's network of contacts and knowledge of artist-run spaces will be used to find suitable contributors to the publication across Europe.

### **Ad 4) Support two newly established online maps of artists' initiatives: Artist-Run Alliance and Alternative Art Guide**

After thorough consideration we decided that the best option is to invite Artist-Run Alliance to become of AIM Network's members. Artist-Run Alliance will thus become closely intertwined with AIM Network, with more intensive exchange of information and active participation in AIM Network's events. Artist-Run Alliance will also be one of the partners for the Creative Europe's Smaller scale cooperation projects application which AIM Network currently develops, playing a key role in developing a knowledge centre for and by artist-run initiatives.

On an ongoing basis we have been supporting both Alternative Art Guide and Artist-Run Alliance by exchange of knowledge and providing advice on which artist-run initiatives to contact, and forwarding artist-run initiatives that we encounter to join the online maps.

### **Ad 5) Investigating the possibility of submitting a Creative Europe application**

After more than a year of discussions (Skype and email conversations, Meeting 2) we now began to develop an application for the Smaller scale cooperation application which we intend to submit for the Creative Europe's 2020 call in Autumn 2020. A majority of AIM Network's members will take on the role of a partner or associate partner in the application.

The applied project develops the existing activities of AIM Network and hopes to broaden the opportunities for the independent artist-run sector and make it accessible to a wider range of audiences. One of the project's main goals is to strengthen and develop the self-organised artist-run scene in Europe with focus on interregional cooperation through a combination of public and professional programme items: meetings for art professionals, student workshops, lectures, public seminars and co-curated exhibitions.

## **Changes in the programme**

Two types of events were outlined for the three-year project plan: internal meetings for the members of the network (Meeting of artistic leaders) in duration of 3 days, and larger sessions with public outcome (Conference).

The project has already realised Meeting 1 (Stockholm, 2018), Meeting 2 (Plovdiv, 2018) and Conference 1 – AIM Plovdiv 2019 as part of Plovdiv 2019 – European Capital of Culture. Meeting 3 was shifted from taking place in Copenhagen in June 2018 to September 2019 in Riga

Thanks to cooperation with Supermarket 2018 and Process Space Art Festival 2018 the programmes of Meeting 1 and 2 were extensive and many of the activities were in a sense co-funded by these hosting events. However we did not collaborate that close that we agreed to exchange documentary evidence. The second meeting, in Plovdiv 2018 was larger and longer than we initially planned, and not very different from one of the major conferences. One of its main goals was to brainstorm Creative Europe's application. It was arranged in cooperation with Process Space Art Festival.

## **Changes in Conference 1 / Plovdiv 2019 – Local connections**

### **Budget**

We agreed on a divided responsibility with the partners to cover different costs, and our local collaboration partner experienced difficulties to get access to the means coming from the ECOF foundation. This reflects in our revised budget; some costs are much lower and we need to request to redistribute them to other costs that were higher.

We extended the conference to ten days, and the programme of its activities was the most extensive of all our events.

So far we have not received as much co-funding as expected, and therefore we made a revised budget where the last major conference and two of the smaller meetings are

cancelled. They can still be implemented in case we receive co-funding through our partner organisations.

One reason to decrease the number of meetings is that the co-funding we received from Stockholm City is a support for making a Creative Europe application, and thus cannot be used for the planned conferences, costs for travel, accommodation etc.

A further reason to make fewer but bigger meetings and conferences is that we realised that our time plan was too demanding to follow. It is quite difficult to agree on such timeframe with all the planned partners, many of whom have other jobs, families and already agreed contracts and cannot travel that frequently.

We also minimise the number of flights if we organise fewer larger events.

## **Updated Meetings and Conferences plan**

Meeting 1 (13 April 2018, Stockholm) Candyland and Supermarket – Stockholm Independent Art Fair (during Stockholm Art Week)

Meeting 2 (May 2018, Plovdiv) Hosted by Process Space Art Festival and top eV

Conference 1, AIM Plovdiv 2019, (May 2019, Plovdiv) Hosted by IME and Plovdiv European Capital of Culture

Meeting 3 (September 2019, Riga, planning CE application) Hosted by Totaldobre and Free Riga. Location 'Tallinas ielas kvartāls'

Conference 2, AIM Galway (August/September 2020, Galway) Hosted by Galway 2020 European Capital of Culture

Meeting 4 (November 2020, Copenhagen), evaluation meeting Hosted by KRÆ syndikatet

# Realised meetings

## AIM Stockholm 2018

11–13 April 2018

Meeting 1

Supermarket – Stockholm Independent Art Fair, Stockholm, Sweden



Group discussion, AIM Stockholm 2018. Photo: Diana Agunbiade-kolawole

## Summary

AIM Stockholm 2018 was co-organised by Candyland and Supermarket – Stockholm Independent Art Fair as part of Supermarket 2018. The main focus of the meeting was on meetings, presentations by invited guests and going through the newly drafted next three year project plan. The participants took part in Supermarket's public and internal programme and also had the opportunity to get a guided tour around Stockholm's artist-run spaces.



## Participants

1646 (The Hague, Netherlands), Johan Gustavsson  
AIM/Candyland (Stockholm, Sweden), Alice Maselnikova, Andreas Ribbung  
Artist-Run Alliance (Tel-Aviv, Israel), Gideon Smilansky  
Berlinskej model (Prague, Czech Republic), Richard Bakes  
Kræ Syndicate of Creatures (Copenhagen, Denmark), Signe Vad  
Műtő (Budapest, Hungary), Zsolia Kokai  
MUU (Helsinki, Finland), Timo Soppola  
Sant Marc (Sineu, Spain), Marcos Vidal  
Small Projects (Tromsø, Norway), Jet Pascua  
>top schillerpalais (Berlin, Germany), Matthias Roth, Penka Mincheva, Kim Dotty Hachmann  
Totaldobze (Riga, Latvia), Kaspars Lielgalvis  
Water Tower Art Fest (Sofia, Bulgaria), Nia Pushkarova  
Wykwit (Wrocław, Poland), Adam Martyniak, Karolina Włodek, Michal Mejnartowicz

## Programme

### 11 April

18.00–0.00 VIP opening Supermarket 2018

### 12 April

During the day (12.00–19.00) Supermarket 2018 Meetings sessions, individual times

12.30 Lunch meeting with Jet Pascua regarding publication application for Fritt Ord

14.00 Art Shots (presentations of Supermarket 2018 exhibitors/PNPs, Talks stage)

17.00 PNP Speed dating (PNP & Exhibitors Lounge)

18.00 Dinner

19.00 Market Art Fair preview

### 13 April

9.00 Coffee, informal introduction of the invited guest initiatives

9.30 Short presentation of each member space (15 minutes/space). Pecha kucha format.

12.30 Lunch

14.00 Discussion on organisation and logistics of the 3-year plan

16.00 Iaspis/Forum for Living History panel discussion with V4 countries' exhibitors:

HotDock, Műtő, Wykwit, Berlinskej model

20.00 Stockholm Artist-run galleries tour

### For those present on 14th April

20.00 Exhibitors' and staff party at Studio 44, Tjärhovsgatan 44.

## Minutes

The meeting took place in a conference room at the Supermarket 2018 venue in the meatpacking district. In the second part the meeting moves on the outside terrace.

9.00

The main day of the meeting begins. Coffee and welcoming of the guest initiatives: Artist Run Alliance from Tel Aviv/Berlin, Israel/Germany, Wykwit from Wrocław, Poland and Berlinskej model from Prague, Czech Republic.

9.30

Introduction and presentation of the Meeting 1 programme by Alice Maselnikova (AM). Start of individual presentations in pecha kucha format. Most of the spaces prepared powerpoint presentation or use their website to present the programme.

Presentation by Johan Gustafsson of the Alternative Art Guide, the Hague

*Presentation by invited guest:* Gideon Smilansky, Artist-Run Alliance, Tel Aviv/Berlin

Kaspars Lielgalvis, Totaldobze Art Centre, Riga

Presentation by Signe Vad, Kræ Syndikatet, Copenhagen

Presentation by Matthias Roth, Penka Mincheva, Kim Dotty Hachmann, Berlin

Presentation by Timo Soppela, Muu, Helsinki

Presentation by Marc Vidal, Sant Marc, Sineu, Mallorca

Presentation by Nia Pushkarova, Water Tower Art Fest, Sofia

*Presentation by invited guest:* Adam Martyniak, Wykwit, Wrocław

12.00

The morning session is concluded by general presentation of the project plan for 2018–2020 and the application process behind the NKK application (AM) and followed by presentation of the overall budget (Andreas Ribbung (AR)).

Questions from AIM members regarding distribution of the budget to different parts of the project (Meetings 1–10), nature of larger and smaller meetings, possibility of claiming per diems, travel reimbursement.

Individual parts of the budget are discussed.

The meeting is agreed to continue after lunch.

13.00

The group moves to lunch destination. Informal discussion of the project in small groups.

14.00

The second part of the meeting starts.

Budget and project plan overview is wrapped up. AM will send the project plan and application pdf to all members plus the budget for Stockholm and Plovdiv meetings.

Meeting 2 in Plovdiv in May 2018 as part of the Process Space Art Festival is brought up and questions regarding members' participation raised.

Who will be able to join in Plovdiv, what should be on the agenda and how will the meeting be organised (by Matthias Roth and Penka Mincheva).

PM brings up the idea of AIM Network presenting their activities at the Process Space Art Festival during one presentation/discussion session. This is accepted. PM will send date and time in the coming weeks.

The title of the meeting 2 is enquired about by Nia Pushkarova. There is a possibility of it clashing with the planned meeting in Plovdiv in 2019 as part of the European Capitals of Culture, since it received the funding under the AIM Network name. PM joins in what shall the presentation of AIM be called in the Process Space programme. The issue is discussed and a simple title is agreed on (Artist-run Network International).

The discussion moves to what should be part of the content of Meeting 2.

AM mentions the upcoming deadline for the Fritt Ord application (1st August) and explains its nature. The idea of the second publication is to have a broader focus and be more accessible for the wider public. The group brainstorms for a while. AM suggest the content of the publication to be one of the topics of Meeting 2 and that the members think of this prior to the meeting.

AM also brings up the question of narrowing the focus of AIM's meetings. This is supported by Signe Vad, but the started discussion dies out.

The session continues by AM raising the question of partnering up with the Artist-Run Alliance. The idea is vaguely supported that some a kind of collaboration would be beneficial. More thought will be put into the topic.

The idea of AIM exhibitions is discussed. There are to be three exhibitions during the larger Meetings/Conferences. Who is to curate the shows: shall we invite local curators to take part? Local art spaces? Who should be shown? Is there a point to show local artists to local audiences or better to show 'new' and 'foreign' exhibitors? The earlier format of the AIM meetings was that the local member from where the meeting took place curated the exhibition. The new idea presented is to introduce a local curator who would curate the exhibition or invite local artist-run spaces to be shown in the exhibition. This seems like it will be discussed further.

AR and AM remind everyone to provide their local travel receipts before departing from Stockholm.

Kaspars Lielgalvis introduces the idea of having a longer workshop as part of the meetings. He states that the shorter format of the meetings is not enough for delivering sustainable results. A three-week format of a workshop is desirable. This causes a discussion with disparate opinions from the members. There is not budget scheduled for a longer workshop, point out AM and AR, so if there is such an event introduced additional funding would need to be sourced.

16.00

Some of the members join for the Panel Discussion with countries of V4. The discussion includes Richard Bakeš (Berlinskej model, CZ), Zsafia Kokai (MUTO, HU), Roman Bicek

(HotDock Project Space, SK), Michal Mejnarowicz (Wykwit, PL) and is moderated by Alice Maselnikova.

20.00

A majority of the members join for the guided tour around Stockholm artist-run art spaces (Candyland, ID:I, Studio 44) who agreed to specially open for the occasion.

## AIM Plovdiv 2018

24–27 May 2018

Meeting 2

Process Space Art Festival, Plovdiv, Bulgaria



Painting workshop by Gideon Smilansky, AIM Plovdiv 2018. Photo: Neo Hachmann

## Summary

AIM Plovdiv 2018 was coordinated by AIM Network and hosted by [Process Space Art Festival](#) during its annual art festival. It was the Meeting 2 of the planned meetings. The program of Plovdiv 2018 was focused on internal planning meeting of AIM 2019 Local Connections, on getting to know to locality of Plovdiv and establishing new contacts for the conference in the following year. Photographer Mariko Hori was hired for the event.

## **Participants**

1646, Floris Kruidenberg, The Hague, Netherlands  
Artist-run Alliance, Gideon Smilansky (invited guest), Tel-Aviv, Israel  
Candyland, Alice Máselníková, Andreas Ribbung, Stockholm, Sweden  
Kræ Syndicate of Creatures, Signe Vad, Copenhagen, Denmark  
Process Art Space, Penka Mincheva (hosting organisation), Plovdiv, Bulgaria  
Totaldobze, Kaspars Lielgalvis, Riga, Latvia  
>top schillerpalais, Matthias Roth, Kim Dotty Hachmann, Berlin, Germany  
Water Tower Art Fest, Nia Pushkarova, Sofia, Bulgaria

## **Programme**

### **23 May**

Arrival to Plovdiv

Evening: informal meeting at the Old Plovdiv Hostel, which served as a base of the artists of Process Space Art Festival, in the centre of Plovdiv's old town with the organisers of Process Space Art Festival and the artists involved in the festival.

Attendance of the Process Space Art Festival Presentations (Iliana Manukova, Bulgaria (18:00–18:20); Kim Dotty Hachmann & Neo, Germany (18:25–18:45); Rumen Zhekov, Bulgaria (18:50–19:10))

Informal talk with Gideon Smilansky (ARA), Alice Maselnikova, Andreas Ribbung regarding the collaborative EU application jointly with AIM. The discussion will be continued with the rest of AIM network's members after their arrival.

### **24 May**

Breakfast at Old Plovdiv Hostel, planning of the day's programme.

Morning: Tour around Plovdiv and its artist run spaces; studio visits with the artists participating in the festival: Gideon Smilansky (IS) and his painting workshop, Uwe Jonas (DE) and Mariko Hori (JP/RS).

Afternoon and evening:

AIM members attend presentations by artists from Process Space Art Festival: Milen Dzhanelov, Bulgaria; Víctor Nicolás Babadillo, Mexico; Mariko Hori, Japan/Serbia.

Meeting with Gideon Smilansky and AIM members regarding the EU application. Present: Gideon Smilansky, Alice Maselnikova, Andreas Ribbung, Kaspars Lielgalvis, Kim Dotty Hachmann, Floris Kruidenberg.

The attending members of AIM network approved to make a joint application between AIM Network and Artist-Run Alliance as suggested by Alice Maselnikova and Gideon Smilansky. The issue will be also additionally passed by the rest of the members.

### **25 May**

All day: Internal meeting, main session

18.00 Process Space Art Festival, Artist talks:  
Albena Kazakova, Bulgaria; Emil Mirazchiev, Art Today, meeting point Ancient Bath;  
Traffic Jam: Kim Dotty Hachmann and Matthias Roth, Germany.

## **26 May**

12.00 Meeting of the group with Vanya Grozdanova at the Old Tobacco House, the suggested conference and exhibition space for AIM network at Plovdiv 2019, and tour around the venue.

18.00 Process Space Art Festival, Artist talks

Presentation of AIM network by Andreas R. and Alice M. to the artists from PSAF and local audience. Each of AIM members gives a short presentation of their own initiatives.

Presentation by Gideon Smilansky of Artist-Run Alliance.

## **27 May**

Joint breakfast and informal evaluation of the meetings

Departure of participants

## **Visits to Plovdiv's artist-run spaces:**

Art Today, [website](#)

Arsenal of Art, [FB](#)

CU 29 gallery, [website](#)

U-Park gallery, [FB](#)

Visit to the [Mexican house](#) / exhibition venue

Visit to [Pironkov house](#) / exhibition venue

## **Internal Meetings**

### **The key aims of Meeting 2:**

- a) Plan the Conference in Plovdiv 2019 as part of the Plovdiv 2019 European Capital of Culture, meet local artists and art-initiatives in Plovdiv, meet the coordinator of Plovdiv 2019 ECOC and agree on exact dates and content of the conference.
- b) Discuss the Creative Europe Network/Project Collaboration application with possible main partner to make the application with AIM, the Artist-Run Alliance.
- c) To visit Process Space Art Festival, meet the invited artists and present AIM Network to the participants of the festival.

### **Thursday 24th May: Creative Europe application**

Present: Gideon Smilansky, Alice Maselnikova, Andreas Ribbung, Kaspars Lielgalvis, Kim Dotty Hachmann, Floris Kruidenberg.

Formalities and key points of the application:

- Goal: Submit application to Creative Europe's open call on Network Collaboration/Project Collaboration. The application will align the initiatives' agendas in one joint project. The open calls are published ca 3 months prior to each deadline.
- 2 main partners of the application – Candyland, Sweden with AIM + its member initiatives and ARA through Alfred Institute, Israel/Germany.
- The application will be written by Alice Maselnikova with help of the Israeli partners. Candyland/AIM will apply for Stockholm city's EU funding that supports Swedish initiatives that make EU applications.
- Andreas Ribbung will write the application with help of Alice Maselnikova. *(Updated note: The application to the Culture Administration of Stockholm city was sent on 1 June 2018, and was granted in September 2018).*
- ARA can allocate budget ca 2500 euro to support the writing of the application.
- AIM can only allocate funds if the Stockholm stad EU funding support is granted.
- *Update 8th June AM: It is no longer possible to apply for the European Network funding in 2018, instead the Project Cooperation funding is considered.*

Content of the application was discussed:

Ambassador programme.

Mobility opportunities for artist-run initiatives and artists in general.

Artistic content.

### **Friday 25th May: Main meeting session of the Meeting 2**

Present: Andreas Ribbung, Alice Maselnikova, Kaspars Lielgalvis, Nia Pushkarova, Kim Dotty Hachmann, Signe Vad, Matthias Roth, Floris Kruidenberg, photographer Mariko Hori

### **Organisation of the Plovdiv 2019 conference**

- Possible partners were discussed. Guest art initiatives from the neighbouring countries (bordering Bulgaria) should be invited to the conference with one representative from each of the countries: Romania, Serbia, Macedonia, Greece, Turkey
- Suggested initiatives were listed. By the end of the summer we ought to have the communication established. Alice M., Andreas R. and Nia P. will divide and contact the initiatives.
- The discussion moves on to the participation of Turkey, an issue raised by Alice M. prior to the meeting as a) AIM network's scale was specified for European countries and b) Inviting more initiatives and outside of the specified framework will only broaden the already broad focus of the network.
- The members believe it is good to invite neighbouring countries for the event, including Turkey, since Bulgaria has strong Romanian and Turkish community in Plovdiv and it is an

important part of the local heritage. Many of the artists' initiatives in Istanbul are located in the European part of Istanbul.

- The members do not think the focus will be broadened by inviting another country, so it is voted that a Turkish initiative should be invited to take part in Plovdiv 2019 Conference.
- One of the outcomes of the Conference is a public exhibition
- The format of the exhibition was discussed: invite local Bulgarian curator, a Plovdiv artist-run initiative.
- The members of AIM network can act as artists, curators or workshop leaders of different parts of the programme.
- Date: - 1<sup>st</sup> week of June 2019; 1-9 June 2019
- The need to coordinate the AIM conference with other events of the Plovdiv European Capital of Culture was mentioned.
- An application to support Japanese artists to take part in Plovdiv 2019 ECOC. Link: <http://plovdiv2019.eu/en/opencall/360-open-call-japanese-culture>, opens on 1<sup>st</sup> September, deadline 30th September was brought up.

Structure of Plovdiv 2019:

- 3-days preparation session, 3-day intensive meeting with the partners, 3-day festival. The exhibition can stay longer; NKK application support for the conference said 4 days in total, so we would need additional funding to be able to realise a longer event.
- Accommodation - discount from the Capital of Culture (*Update: not possible. We preliminarily booked accommodation in an apartment hotel in the centre of the city that can host about 60 people.*) More people can share the same flat.
- Totaldobze suggested a three week Black Hole workshop in October 2018 in Plovdiv that also would enable us to plan some items of the 2019 programme and get to meet the local artists and art spaces better. However an additional workshop needs external funding.
- Cultural coordinator of the Plovdiv 2019 ECOC, Vanya Grozdanova, arrived to the meeting and everyone introduced themselves and their artists initiatives. Possible venues in Plovdiv were discussed with Vanya. Assistance with accommodation was not possible, once more the Black Hole workshop in October was presented and discussed.
- The group agreed to meet Vanya at 12am on the next day at Sklad, the Old Tobacco House, a possible venue for the Conference in 2019.

## **The Creative Europe Application**

Summary of the Thursday meeting as not all members were present in the discussion on the day before.

Artistic content was discussed: curatorial exchange initiative between partners of the network, pop up activities in the locality.

Connecting with the local community. Mediator role: ambassador training programme and it's financing; workshops involving the local initiatives with exhibition as outcome.

Outreach and printed matters were discussed.

Brainstorming application titles.



## Publication

- The next publication was brought up and the application for Fritt Ord support that would fund its production costs.
- The theme (and work title) of the publication was presented by editor Alice Máselníková: Birth and death of artist-run spaces. The publication should be made more accessible to the reader by having narrative stories by different authors, curators, writers presenting their art spaces' individual and collective histories. It will also include interviews, essay. Everyone was in favour of the publication idea.
- Fritt Ord supports and enhances freedom of speech and the objective's connection to the theme of the publication was discussed; the life-death cycle, gentrification process, non-administrative methods, do-it-yourself, grass-root perspective.
- Other ideas for the publication were discussed: the need to find a publisher, editing responsibilities etc

## AIM Plovdiv 2019 – Local Connections

1–10 June 2019  
Conference 1  
Plovdiv, Bulgaria



Panel discussion 'Artist-run initiatives: international projects and local development'. Photo: Todor Nenev

## Summary

AIM Plovdiv 2019 – Local Connections brought together a range of European artist-run initiatives to connect independent Bulgarian art scene with the surrounding regions and internationally. The project builds on AIM Network's long-term goals to facilitate connections, build new collaborations, strengthen the artist-run scene and make it accessible to the public. It develops the concept of working on a large-scale local basis across different but interconnected neighbouring regions. Despite the state borders, artists and curators often share similar social and cultural questions, common traditions and discourse in contemporary art, yet often they do not have the opportunity to meet in person and share their experience. The project offered a range of events including public workshops, panel discussion, guided tour and exhibition. AIM Plovdiv 2019 was organised by AIM Network and Water Tower Art Fest with the support of Plovdiv 2019 European Capital of Culture.

## Participants

Æther (Sofia, BG), Candyland (Stockholm, SE), Doma Art Foundation (Sofia, BG), the fridge (Sofia, BG), International Performance Art Festival and Meeting (Tokyo, JP), KRÆ – The Syndicate of Creatures (Copenhagen, DK), Lateral Art Space (Cluj-Napoca, RO), LTMKS (Vilnius, LT), MUU Artists' Association (Helsinki, FI), Ormston House (Limerick, IE), Pasaj (Istanbul, TR), Press to Exit (Skopje, MK), Sant Marc (Sineu, Mallorca, ES), Small Projects (Tromsø, NO), Snehta Residency (Athens, GR), >top (Berlin, DE), Water Tower Art Fest (Sofia, BG).

Art today (Plovdiv, BG), CU29 (Plovdiv, BG), Kapana Plovediv (Plovdiv, BG), Art Studios 'Maritsa' (Plovdiv, BG), Studio 2/Toest (Plovdiv, BG), Gallery Geshev Arsenal of arts (Plovdiv, BG).

## Overview

AIM Plovdiv 2019 took place in duration of 10 days in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. SKLAD was the main venue of the event, provided by the administration of Plovdiv 2019 ECOC. It was also hosted the final exhibition. Two AIM Network coordinators Alice Máselníková and Andreas Ribbung coordinated the event, together with Nia Pushkarova from Water Tower Art Fest. The key topic of the event was 'local connections', reflecting on the nature of local, national and international collaboration.

The programme included two half-days of internal meetings in small groups, each discussing one of three topics: Artist-run and sustainable, International cooperation and Audience development. Two half-days of presentations of invited artist-run spaces were part of the programme and open to the public.

Six workshops were delivered by Secil Yaylali, Augustus Veinoglou, Marcos Vidal, Alice Máselníková, Signe Vad and Michelle Appelros, Andreas Ribbung.

The participants visited local art venues and artist-run spaces: Studio 2/Toest, Maritsa studios, Studio Goldhorn, Contemporary Art Space Ancient Bath, CU 29. In terms of public outreach the event resulted in one public exhibition 'Works on paper', one public panel discussion 'Artist-run initiatives: international projects and local development' and three public performances by Penka Mincheva, Daisuke Takeya and Voin Voinov/Genevieve Ward.

## Marketing and PR

The event was promoted and advertised prior, during and after the event by AIM Network, AIM Network's members, Plovdiv 2019 ECOC, Water Tower Art Fest. The participants of the event shared posts on social media in duration of their stay. The Facebook posts concerning AIM Plovdiv 2019 reached 12,645 people.

Updates were posted on AIM Network's website.

The coordinators were interviewed by Bulgarian national TV.

<https://www.bnt.bg/bg/a/blizki-sreshchi-na-artistichni-initsiatiivi>

Alice Máselníková and Andreas Ribbung were interviewed by textur, a Berlin-based cultural magazine about the event in Plovdiv. <https://texturmag.com/blick-interview-aim-network/>

Official designer was hired to design the visual side of the project.

Printed a3 posters promoting the event were placed locally.

T-shirts with the design of the event were printed and distributed among the participants.

Official photographer was hired for the duration of the project.

Printed brochure informing on the activities of AIM Network was distributed locally and internationally amongst the participants.

## Meetings

AIM Meetings took place during two half-days of the event (6–7 June). A joint discussion and summary of the topics took place on the second day.

The meetings have a premeditated format. The participants are distributed in small groups of 4–6 people with a geographical variety in each group. There is one moderator per group from the members of AIM Network. Each group discusses a previously decided topic and the conversation is directed by the moderator, including prepared questions, tasks and issues regarding the topic. The moderator takes minutes of the meeting.

## Topics

### Artist-run and the sustainable?

This topic discussed various issues of managing and artist-run space. How do you run an artist-run initiative for a longer period? How does the work change after one year, several years after starting an artist-run initiative? Is it possible to balance between the project and own artistic practice?

- Distribution of work, organisational models
- Transfer of knowledge
- Transition from solo/small group project to a formal association model
- Constant and continuous commitment
- Need for guest curators to attract young audience
- Educational programme, active work at art colleges
- Collaborations, long-term development

### **Analyse your audience**

A discussion about audience and audience development of small independent art organisations, where the participants shared their experiences and ideas about audience work.

- Does an art organisation need audience?
- What kind of audiences are there? Art people or broad audience
- Limited audiences of artist-run spaces. Why and what to do about it?
- Educational programme for different audiences, for schools
- Identify what kind of audience you want to have
- Identify a group: very young people – students – passive way of art consumption. Processes and methods.
- Accessibility
- Needs of an audience, engaged audience: workshops, talks, screenings
- Volunteers, member activities, open calls

### **International cooperation**

A discussion about international cooperation and how it can be maintained with consideration to local contexts and concerns. The participants looked at the different means of initiating and maintaining cooperations (sustainability) and communicating.

- Collaboration with similar initiatives within your country – does it exist / does it work? Provide some examples
- Collaboration on the local level: with the local authorities and the local community
- Local issues vs. national and global – how to transfer the local expertise/experiences on to international cooperation: which tools work and are there universal tools to work with both a local and international audience?
- Artistic collaborations from the Balkan region – how much do we know about each other?
- Implementation of environmental concerns.
- Closer travels: Knowledge about neighbouring countries?
- Importance of continuous and well-documented communication and online communication tools (Skype, Google Drive)
- Define collaboration and cooperation
- Responsibilities and contributions of each party

## Workshops

Secil Yaylali (Pasaj): Collective logogram of "being an artist initiative". A group workshop on creating a logo that would show a quality intrinsic to an artist-run initiative. All the logos were exhibited during the final exhibition.

Augustus Veinoglou (Snehta): Creating a residency. Collective brainstorming on how to develop a functioning artist residency, that would benefit the artist, the audience and the residency programme.

Andreas Ribbung (Candyland): Yesterday. Short engaging workshop activity on the rhythm of an artist's day and remembering the previous day's activities.

Alice Máselníková (Candyland): Connecting points. Pinpointing key values of being a part of an artist-run initiative.

Marcos Vidal Font (Espai Sant Marc): Printing and flaneurism. Two-day workshop based on the ideas of French flaneurs, psychogeography and Situationists. Collecting items and transforming them on paper through traditional Japanese printmaking techniques.

Signe Vad and Michelle Appelros (KRAE Syndicate of Creatures): How do we deal with the end of the world. A lecture workshop on the current state of our environment and what can artists contribute.

## Exhibition

The group exhibition dealt with a simple concept 'Works on paper', which also gave the name to the show. It showed 15 artists: Michelle Appelros (DK), Cristina Curcan (RO), Darena Giorgieva (BG), Lucian Indrei (RO), Alice Máselníková (CZ/SE), Penka Mincheva (BG/DE), Jet Pascua (NO), Nia Pushkarova (BG), Andreas Ribbung (SE), Matthias Roth (DE), Daisuke Takeya (JP/CA), Signe Vad (DK), Augustus Veinoglou (GR), Marcos Vidal (ES), Secil Yaylali (TR/IT).

The exhibition was co-curated by members of AIM Network. The exhibition venue was located in SKLAD in Plovdiv.

## Panel Discussion

The panel took place on in duration of 120 minutes including open questions.

The topic of the panel discussion was 'Artist-run initiatives: international projects and local development'.

Panelists: Emil Mirazchiev, Center for Contemporary Art, The Ancient Bath, Plovdiv (BG) Augustus Veinoglou, Snehta Residency, Athens (GR), Secil Yaylali, PASAJ, Istanbul (TR)

Moderator: Alice Máselníková, AIM Network/Candyland, Stockholm (SE)

### **Questions discussed:**

- Artist-run initiatives bring another layer to the arts sector, functioning alongside art institutions and commercial galleries. Can you comment on how or whether the artist-run sector functions in your country?
- What does funding structure for non-profit initiatives look like in your country / place of work?
- In what ways can international collaborations contribute to developing art and culture in the regions, can you give any specific examples from your professional experience?
- International projects simply thrown into a site without considering the place, its history, people, culture, current situation etc are often inconsiderate and can cause more harm than use (e.g. the criticism of Documenta 14 in Athens). Do you agree?
- How do you see the impact of working with art projects in a city that is the European Capital of Culture, what are the positives and what are the downsides? Has the city and its culture scene changed in any way? (for Emil only)
- Connecting the regions – regional connections within a country and with surrounding countries is a subject important to AIM Network's activities. Does it work in real life? Is it something you consider in your work?
- What do you see as the biggest differences when (if) working locally and when working internationally?

## **Programme**

### **1st June, Saturday**

19.00 Welcoming Dinner 1 at Citizens Club in the Old Town of Plovdiv

### **2nd June, Sunday**

10.00 Morning gathering of AIM members

11.00 Informal meetings at SKLAD

14.00 Art walk with Rad to Adata Island, meeting point at SKLAD

17.00 Art walk, galleries visiting

### **3rd June, Monday**

10.00–11.00 Informal meetings at Ice Cream House Afreddo

11.30–13.00 workshop Marc Vidal, I part, walk

13.00–14.00 quick lunch

14.00 Art Walk Visit to Studio 2, artists Lina and Alexandra, near SKLAD

15.00–16.30 Informal meetings at Sklad

16.30 Art Walk visit to art studios near Maritsa, meeting with the artists

18.00 Creative Europe application meeting, hotel Dali room 8

### **4th June, Tuesday**

10.00–13.00 Meetings at SKLAD + Exhibition planning

13.00 lunch break

14.00 Workshop with Marc Vidal, II part, printing  
17.30 Art Walk to Studio Goldhorn at Vasil Aprilov

### **5th June, Wednesday**

11.00 Visit to Contemporary Art Space Ancient Bath, (Ancient Turkish Bath) and art walk to Garrison Oven with artist and curator Emil Mirazchiev, Art Today, meeting point Ancient Bath  
16:00 Workshop with Marc Vidal, Printing and mapping

### **6th June, Thursday**

9.00 AIM Meetings in small groups, SKLAD  
12:00 Workshop Secil Yaylali, Collective logogram of 'being an artist initiative'  
13.00 Lunch break  
Parallel / Ongoing parallel workshop – Nia Pushkarova, Drawing/Sketching Portraits 2nd – 6th June, SKLAD  
14.00 Connecting points with Alice Máselníková, workshop, 150 min. Participants find shared interests and connecting points of their working practices. They will be able to connect based on these, and discuss their specific interests in detail in an informal context.  
16.30–17.00 Meetings (sum up)  
17.30 Visit to Contemporary Art Gallery CU29 (meeting with the artist Velizar Dimchev) and visiting Kapana, meeting point to be announced  
19.30 Welcoming Dinner 2 Rahat Tepe Beer house

### **7th June, Friday**

9.00 AIM Meetings in small groups, SKLAD  
12.00 Lunch break (containing a not so demanding workshop 13.00–14.00 with Andreas Ribbung, 'Yesterday'.)  
14.00 AIM Meetings sum up, SKLAD  
16.00 Coffee Break  
17.00 Workshop with Signe Vad, How do we deal with the end of the world  
18.30 Work on joint installation of exhibition 'Works on paper', SKLAD

### **8th June, Saturday**

9.30 Panel Discussion & Guests Presentations, at SKLAD  
12.00 Lunch break  
14.00 Panel Discussion & Guests Presentations, at SKLAD  
17.00 End of panel discussion  
18.30 Exhibition Opening & Performances, at SKLAD  
22.30 Closing party, at FARGO

### **9th June, Sunday**

12.00–13.00 Workshop with Snehta  
13.00–14.00 Evaluation meeting  
18.30 Site-specific Performances, Art Studios Maritsa and The Core  
20.30 Closing party at Art Studios Maritsa, performance by Voin Voinov (BG) and Genevieve Ward (US)

### **10th June, Monday**

Recap meeting and feedback