

NETWORK OF ARTS AND CULTURAL PRACTICES



AGENDA 2030 - SDGs



CULTURE 21 ACTIONS - COMMITMENTS

1. CULTURAL RIGHTS
3. CULTURE AND EDUCATION
6. CULTURE, EQUALITY, AND SOCIAL INCLUSION
7. CULTURE, URBAN PLANNING, AND PUBLIC SPACE
9. GOVERNANCE OF CULTURE

PARTICIPATION, PEACE, EDUCATION, YOUTH, INNOVATION, INCLUSION, SOCIAL, DEVELOPMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS, ARTS, TRAINING, ACCESS, CULTURAL, COMMON GOOD, COMMUNITY, EQUITY

1. Context

Medellín is the capital of the Antioquia Department, and it is one of the cities that has shown the most progress in Colombia. After many years of armed conflict, it remains a place of significant cultural and regional transformation thanks to public policies, public-private investment, and citizen participation.

The Network of Arts and Cultural Practices began in 1996. Today, it is organised in partnership with the city's artistic and cultural entities, aiming to guarantee the cultural rights of children and young people in all the communes and townships.

THE AIM IS TO LINK DIFFERENT ORGANISATIONS AND GROUPS IN THE CITY IN ORDER TO REVIEW, TOGETHER WITH THE ADMINISTRATION, POLICIES FOR ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL PRACTICES AMONG CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND TO GUARANTEE THEIR CULTURAL RIGHTS.

2. Medellín and culture

The Network of Arts and Cultural Practices has used the Culture 21 Actions framework to transform itself into a project that is synonymous with the recognition of cultural rights. The project includes an inter-agency and interdisciplinary aspect and brings together public and private initiatives.

1. **Ending Poverty:** increases access to culture by improving cultural infrastructure throughout neighbourhoods, cultural training opportunities, and promoting specific programmes and offers for disadvantaged groups. It offers free access and regional coverage.
3. **Health:** contributes to improving health and well-being through arts and culture, developing the social fabric, and help promote peaceful coexistence.
4. **Inclusive Education:** access quality arts training in various disciplines.
5. **Gender equality:** awareness of gender equality and helps eliminate gender-related disparities in education to ensure equal access to training for disadvantaged groups.
8. **Economic Growth:** social services offered by cultural organisations are promoted through job creation and resources.
10. **Promote respect** for differences and recognising the cultural rights of vulnerable groups, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, older adults, and victims of conflict situations.
- 11 and 16. **Training on sustainable lifestyles** and development, and human rights. Promotion of non-violence, global citizenship, appreciation of population and cultural diversity.
17. **Partnerships to Reach Goals.**

3. Project goals and implementation

3.1. Main and specific objectives

The overall objective of the Network is to bring together different organisations and groups to work alongside the municipal administration and jointly assess policies on arts and culture practices for children, adolescents, and youth. It guarantees the cultural rights by providing them with the adequate opportunities for expression, exchange, learning, and experimentation with different artistic, aesthetic, and cultural forms.



3.2. Project development

The project is structured into 5 networks: The Dance Network, the Network of Music Schools, the Performing Arts Creation Network, the Fine and Visual Arts Network, and the Audiovisual Creation Network. Each of these is designed and built with different organizations and artistic and cultural groups from throughout Medellín. The list can change from year to year depending on the demands and needs of a particular project.

With an annual investment of 9,630 million COP, this project supports more than 7,000 people. In 2020, 24 organisations were part of the Network of Arts and Cultural Practices:

- **Dance Network:** Dances of Afro-descendant origin, Traditional and Folk, Popular and Ballroom, Urban Dances, dance and creative laboratories. 37 laboratories.
- **Performing Arts Creation Network:** social and experimental circus, contemporary theatre, mixed stage techniques, mime, Pierrot and carnival pantomime, working methodologies for ethnic populations, social and political performance, contemporary dramaturgy, street theatre, experimental theatre, postdramatic theatre, and social dramaturgy. 51 laboratories.
- **Fine and Visual Arts Network:** laboratory in artistic and digital artistic interactive actions and language for experimental exploration. 24 laboratories.
- **Network of Music Schools:** the University of Antioquia oversees this project. In partnership with the municipal government, this network is responsible for the technical, pedagogical, and regional proposals for the 11 groups and the 27 music schools.
- **Network of Audiovisual Creation:** experimental audiovisual and fiction creation.

THE NETWORK, DESIGNED AND BUILT IN ASSOCIATION WITH DIFFERENT ORGANISATIONS AND ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL GROUPS IN THE CITY, IS MADE UP OF 5 NETWORKS: DANCE, MUSIC SCHOOLS, PERFORMING ARTS, PLASTIC AND VISUAL ARTS AND AUDIOVISUAL CREATION.



The Network is also important for local actors who strengthen, transform and support it and for the continuation of such processes both at the community and regional level.

The project functions through different components:

- **Interinstitutional:** responsible for the relationship between partnered organisations, for initiatives related to knowledge sharing, and for the ways that each entity carries out processes, methodologies, impacts and promotion of the Network.
- **Administrative:** management of resources and human talent to ensure that the project is sustainable from a logistical and organisational perspective. This includes making sure that budgets are met and spending is monitored.
- **Interdisciplinary training:** identifies the training spaces for collective creation. This process begins when participants formulate ideas, which then move on to the conceptual and practical phases. This eventually leads to creative composition exercises.
- **Research:** transform knowledge and collective learning into concrete training and management methodologies, and makes it easier to uncover opportunities to strengthen the project and its social impact.
- **Promotion:** creation as a skilled, professional process of staging, production viewed as a process which encompasses set design, circulation understood as actions and events that involve sharing creative products, and creating greater visibility.
- **Communications:** cross-cutting part of the Network, fundamental element of the promotion, visibility, and decentralisation of the project.

One of the key aspects is its central objective to train artists in more than solely in the technical or professional senses. While there is training in various artistic areas, the broader goal is for the project to have an impact on citizens, their coexistence, and social values.

Funding is the main obstacle to the project's implementation to expand into more neighbourhoods and areas throughout the communes and townships, impact more people, involve more organisations, improve infrastructure, and develop skills and to create platforms for decentralisation, communication, and research. Thanks to the involved organisations as well as the means and influence they bring to the project; this challenge may have a less of an impact on communities.



4. Impact

4.1. Direct impact

The Network is an organic structure that weaves together learning communities through interinstitutional and interdisciplinary approaches.

The Training Networks have generated spaces that have been created for participants to actively listen and engage in dialogue through artistic, aesthetic, and sensory experiences that tackle the challenges of their daily lives. The Network is a commitment to the transformative capacity of artistic practices, making them a powerful tool in the lives of the children and youth involved in the project.

4.2. Evaluation

The Research component standardises the experience that occurs in training spaces, improving the management of knowledge and memory by drawing on training and action experiences used in each of the networks.

Through research, amendments are compiled to improve processes at all levels which are subsequently used in the design of training proposals.

The monitoring tools of the Municipal Development Plan, such as the Action Plan or Indicative Plan, are available every quarter. Additionally, reports and monitoring of the processes are carried out.

THE TRAINING NETWORKS OF THE PROJECT HAVE GENERATED SPACES, BASED ON ARTISTIC, AESTHETIC AND SENSORY EXPERIENCES, WHERE THE PARTICIPANTS COULD DIALOGUE AND ACTIVELY LISTEN TO THEMSELVES TO FACE EVERYDAY CHALLENGES.

4.3. Key factors

- The Network of Arts and Cultural Practices exists in the 16 communes and 5 townships. It serves more than 7,000 people every year.
- It works together with other municipal plans and programmes, such as the Good Beginning programme, Non-Violence Secretariat, or the Secretariat of Civic Culture alongside other entities and corporations within the arts sector of the city.
- This strengthens the city's cultural sector and reinforces the experience and knowledge of different organisations thanks to an interinstitutional model.
- Guarantee the cultural rights of children and youth in regions where cultural life is limited.
- Strengthening the arts sector and qualification, with active training for arts educators who are part of the Network.
- Knowledge management and creation through research boards and standardisation of experience.

4.4. Continuity

By 2020-2023 the initiative is projected to:

- Public cultural policy to ensure that the processes in the Network are ongoing, and remain within the budgetary, technical, and procedural limits.
- The 2020- 2023 Future of Medellín Development Plan - Revitalising the Social Sphere – as a significant investment in cultural transformation.
- The network as one of the 3 strategic projects under the Secretariat of Civic Culture.
- In 2020 the Network of Arts and Cultural Practices will expand with the Audiovisual Creation Network.
- It will have a physical headquarters where the Tango School operates.
- Strengthening events that combine knowledge from all the networks in the project.
- Continuity in the participation of the Good Beginning programme in its different areas: Scientific Committee, arts platform, and interactive spaces
- Articulation, dissemination, vibilisation, interaction and socialisation of the processes.

5. Further information

Medellín was a candidate for the fourth "UCLG Mexico City – Culture 21 International Award" (November 2019 – May 2020). The jury for the award drew up its final report in July of 2020, and requested that the Committee on Culture promote this project as one of the good practices to be implemented through Agenda 21 for culture.

This article was written by Álvaro Narváez Díaz, Secretary on Culture ad Citizenship, City Council of Medellín, Colombia.

Contact: ruben.morales@medellin.gov.co – avilla@acimedellin.org