

Open Call – Capacity Building Programme

11 - 17 March 2025 - San Sebastián, Spain

Deadline for applications: 19/05/2024

The Festival Academy, an initiative of the **European Festivals Association (EFA)**, in partnership with **dFERIA - Performing Arts Fair** and **Victoria Eugenia Theater** calls for applications for the **23rd edition** of the **Atelier for Young Festival Managers**, to take place from **11 to 17 March 2025 in San Sebastián, Basque Country (Spain)**.

The **Atelier for Young Festival Managers** will offer the opportunity to up to **35 young festival leaders and curators from all over the word** to spend **7 days** together guided by experienced **festival leaders, cultural activists, cross-sector experts and artists** in San Sebastián. The Atelier facilitates a **global conversation about today's challenges and the role that festivals, art and culture can play in these**. The Atelier is about innovating leadership, gaining new perspectives, exploring the essence and impact of festivals in a global context, share and exchange experiences and reflect on the topics that concern the participants.

The Atelier starts from the very essence of festivals –**the arts, the artist and the audience**– and all issues tackled during the training and in one way or another relate to this essence, why we do things, for whom and with whom.

"The Atelier was like coming home; feeling alone in your work and worldview until you realize that there are hundreds and thousands of people all around the world who are your siblings, working with the same beliefs toward the same goals."

Ben Grinberg - Participant Atelier New York 2024
Core Producer and Program Manager in Cannonball Festival, Philadelphia, USA

dFERIA & Victoria Eugenia Theater

The **Atelier will be hosted by dFERIA**, the Performing Arts Fair of Donostia/San Sebastián, which is a **Spanish national reference point for professionals in the performing arts**. Established in 1988 by the San Sebastián City Council and Donostia Kultura, dFERIA is a contemporary, innovative, committed and varied fair that focuses on **strengthening its Latin American and European markets**. At the same time, it is an extraordinary **meeting platform for different agents in the sector**, which promotes multiple opportunities for the **exchange of experiences and artistic collaborations**.

dFERIA 2025 will take place between **March 16th and 20th**, while the **Atelier will run from March 11th to 17th**, resulting in a **two-day overlap** of the events. During this period, we will **participate in the activities and cultural programs of the fair**. Participants who wish to do so are invited to stay for the fair after the conclusion of the Atelier. Conditions can be negotiated at a later stage after being accepted in the Atelier.

The iconic **Victoria Eugenia Theatre**, inaugurated in 1912, will serve as the **headquarters** for both the **festival** and the **Atelier**.

The Atelier will also provide an opportunity to get to know the **sociopolitical and cultural context of the Basque Country and Spain**, as well as to **connect** with **festivals, cultural professionals, and artists** from the region.





Who can participate?

This **seven-day long capacity building programme** targets **festival curators from all over the world**, regardless of age, gender and nationality, who are interested in **exchanging knowledge and experiences between professionals** active in the field of festivals and who wish to **improve their management skills, learn from renowned experts** and **exchange ideas** and **best practices** with other participants.

It is addressed at young leaders who are interested in the organization and in the **new ways of cooperation and sustainable production**. In addition, it is aimed at participants who are interested in becoming part of a network that focuses on **knowledge sharing and networking**. At the end of the programme, participants will leave with **expanded skills in festival organisation and curation** with a **wide new personal and professional network** and with inspiration for new ways of developing their festivals.

'**Young**' in the Atelier title refers first of all to **being young in the festival business**.

Participants represent a **broad diversity of cultural and professional backgrounds** – from students to young managers working for large **established organisations**, to **emerging curators** running their own innovative international festivals.

Topics

The Atelier for Young Festival Managers is a **tailor-made capacity building programme focused on the needs of the specific group taking part** in the programme, based on the **analysis of the expectations** of the selected participants. The topics and issues raised by the selected participants are further developed during the Atelier: in **panel discussions** guided by renowned festival leaders and cross-sector experts from across the globe, in small **working groups, thematic lunches, cross-discipline round tables and plenary sessions**. There is plenty of time and space for official and **informal one-to-one talks** during the programme and during meals and **cultural visits**, as the sharing of experiences and networking are key to the Atelier.

Topics to be explored could be amongst others:

- Innovative forms of leadership
- Different models of curating, focusing on building audiences/communities
- Digital innovation and new technologies
- The social, environmental and artistic impact of festivals: how festivals are/can be agents for social change and social cohesion
- Fundraising (beyond subventions)
- How and if festivals can contribute to strengthening global identities and values and tackle rising nationalism
- Decolonisation
- Equitey and Fair international collaboration (and trade) including the UNESCO 2005 Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions
- Festivals and the integration of underrepresented or fragile communities (people of colour, first nation people, migrant/refugees, LGTBQIA+, disabled people, children and youth, etc.)
- Sustainable festival-making on all levels
- Freedom of expression and the relevance of artistic boycott

All these food-for-thought and conversations will be developed in close relation with our partners and the context in which the Atelier takes place, serving as a source of inspiration and discussions by meeting local actors. You can find out more about the programme here.



Expected Results/Outcome

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- **Capacity, leadership, skills and knowledge building within a global context:** In raising awareness and increasing the cultural and economic competitiveness and potential of the culture and creative sectors' main protagonists – cultural leaders -, organisations, participants and stakeholders are allowed a life-changing opportunity of walking away with skills, abilities and tools to essentially become more sustainable and socially and economically viable.
- **Digital toolkits** collecting the knowledge shared to distribute to a larger arts/festival community in a global level.
- A **platform for exchange in between arts and cultural colleagues** taking up different roles and coming from different regions
- Generating a **better understanding and knowledge** of the possibilities that may occur to festivals and cultural organisations.
- Offering time and space for imagining **new collaborations with people coming from very different backgrounds**, based on solidarity and incorporating fundamental universal values.
- Becoming part of a **global network of upskilled cultural and production** managers including Alumni and experts of The Festival Academy, today with 1400+ people from 100+ countries on all continents.

"The Atelier has become a place of safety where we can feel we are among professionals. We all felt open and supported. Some questions have become a challenge for us. It broadens your horizons when you hear the opinions and rationale of others."

Participant Atelier Elefsina 2023

Mentors and guest speakers

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Renowned festival leaders and directors, cross-sector experts, cultural activists, and artists are guiding the participants throughout the 7 days. Mentors and facilitators are present for the whole period of the programme. Members of the Alumni community of The Festival Academy are also invited as speakers to join the Atelier and take initiative leading sessions and involving professionals from their own networks (find out more about our Alumni-led sessions here and about our previous experts here).



Practicalities

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The Festival Academy will select up to **35 participants** for the **7-day programme** of Atelier Donostia / San Sebastián 2025. There is no age limit, and the average age of Atelier participants is of 32 years. **Excellent knowledge of English is required (the working language of the Atelier).**

We encourage people from all parts of the world to apply, and we commit to working towards making the Atelier accessible for all selected applicants by assisting as much as possible with visa procedures and other permissions/requirements in preparation for the Atelier.

Full course fee: €2.400

Reduced course fee for EFA member festivals: €1.900

Reduced course fee for festivals from the Basque Country and Navarra: €300

Course fee includes:

- Accommodation for seven nights
- Registration
- Working documents
- Access to all sessions
- Meals and drinks
- Receptions
- Local transport to activities within the programme
- Cultural and artistic programme
- Follow–up activities.

Travel expenses and insurance are not included in the Atelier fee and are the responsibility of the participant or the supporting organization.

Funding opportunities for this training programme are numerous at local/national level, and we have established long-term partnerships with some organisations all over the world to support prospective participants. Find out more about the application procedures and funding opportunities here.

Apply here!

Deadline for applications: 19/05/2024

Application & Selection Procedure

The 35 participants will be selected out of an open call for applications. Applicants are asked to provide information on their work experience, their expectations related to the programme and – most importantly on their motivation to participate in it. You can read more about the application process here.

Find out more & Apply!

Take the opportunity and **apply before 19/05/2024** if you want to:

- **Broaden your festival-making skills**
- **Challenge your ideas and develop new perspectives**
- **Be inspired by colleagues from all over the world**
- **Be part a unique global network of festival leaders**

Please do not hesitate to contact The Festival Academy on **info@thefestivalacademy.eu** or call us on **+32 2 588 20 46** for further information on the application & selection procedure.



Organizers & Partners

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The Festival Academy believes festivals are bridging platforms with a direct link to people and civil society structures. We believe a critical reflection between artists, arts and cultural managers worldwide and cross-sectoral stakeholders can bring about positive change, informed awareness, ideas and proposals for actions through personal human relations and based on knowing, respecting and tolerating different value and belief systems. We are a global community of more than 1400 festival managers from 100+ countries today.

The Festival Academy receives a grant of **Open Society Foundations** for 2023-2025.

If you wish to strengthen our global inclusive conversation and **support** young festival managers and our international activities, click **here**.

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dFERIA is Performing Arts Fair of Donostia / San Sebastián, which is a Spanish national reference point for professionals in the performing arts. Established in 1988 by the **San Sebastian City Council** and **Donostia Kultura**, dFERIA is a contemporary, innovative, committed and varied fair that focuses on strengthening its Latin American and European markets. At the same time, it is an extraordinary meeting platform for different agents in the sector, which promotes multiple opportunities for the exchange of experiences and artistic collaborations.

Donostia Kultura is a Public Business Entity that aims to position culture as one of the main assets of development and projection of San Sebastian. It manages various municipal facilities and services, such as theaters (Victoria Eugenia, Teatro Principal), scenic spaces (Gazteszena, Imanol Larzabal...), the San Telmo Museum, 10 houses of culture in the neighborhoods and a wide network of Municipal Libraries.

It also programs events of all disciplines, organizes festivals and, above all, promotes new cultural platforms in the city, combining public and private initiatives. In addition, it organizes and collaborates in all kinds of festive activities in the city.

The Festival Academy is an initiative of the **European Festivals Association (EFA)** which unites distinguished music, dance, theatre and multidisciplinary arts festivals from Europe and beyond since 1952. It connects about 100 festivals and festival associations in 40 countries. EFA's activities are implemented with the support of the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union.

Thanks to the support of the **Open Society Foundations**, The Festival Academy is able to further extend its activities geographically as well as its global community of festival makers. More people worldwide will have the chance to participate in its programmes and will become part of its growing community.



Open Call – Capacity Building Programme

21 - 27 September 2025 - Amman, Jordan

Deadline for applications: 19/05/2024

The Festival Academy, an initiative of the **European Festivals Association (EFA)**, in partnership with **Studio 8** and **IDEA Festival** calls for applications for the **24th edition** of the **Atelier for Young Festival Managers**, to take place from **21 to 27 September 2025 in Amman, Jordan**.

The **Atelier for Young Festival Managers** will offer the opportunity to up to **20 young festival leaders and curators from Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen and 15 from all over the word** to spend **7 days** together guided by experienced **festival leaders, cultural activists, cross-sector experts and artists** in Amman. The Atelier facilitates a **global conversation about today's challenges and the role that festivals, art and culture can play in these**. The Atelier is about innovating leadership, gaining new perspectives, exploring the essence and impact of festivals in a global context, share and exchange experiences and reflect on the topics that concern the participants.

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Ben Grinberg - participant Atelier New York 2024
Core Producer and Program Manager in Cannonball Festival, Philadelphia, USA

Studio 8 & IDEA Festival

Studio 8 is a Jordanian non-for-profit company active in the field of dance and performing arts. It was founded in 2014 by a group of young artists aiming to shape and humanize dance art through innovation, experimentation, development, exchange, education, and research. It is at the heart of the Studio's mission to increase access to dance and to increase opportunities for cultural expression and awareness. For the past 9 years, Studio 8 has collaborated with more than 600 people of 43 nationalities in creating 10 original dance productions, giving more than 60 performances, and organizing more than 160 classes and workshops. Studio 8 has also made dance videos and facilitated art incubations, artistic residencies, dance-inspired exhibitions, dance discussions, community art walks, and street art fairs.

IDEA – International Dance Encounter Amman, is a bi-annual international multi-disciplinary dance festival based in Amman, Jordan, organized and curated by Studio 8. IDEA aims to put Jordan in the global dance scene. It creates bonds between dance professionals from Jordan and abroad. Through supporting, producing, and presenting works for local emerging artists, together with a network of international and regional partners, IDEA serves as a platform for innovation, experimentation, and continuous development of dance culture in Jordan and beyond.

To hold a global Atelier in Jordan supports the mission to **bring international cultural workers in the Jordan scene** and to reflect in depth on which **role festivals and art can play in conflict situations** and as platforms for **freedom of expression and human rights**.





Who can participate?

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Practicalities

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Reduced course fee for festival makers from Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen: €300

Course fee includes:

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Travel expenses and insurance are not included* in the Atelier fee and are the responsibility of the participant or the supporting organization. ***Selected participants from Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestina, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen will have the travel costs covered.**

Funding opportunities for this training programme are numerous at local/national level, and we have established long-term partnerships with some organisations all over the world to support prospective participants. Find out more about the application procedures and funding opportunities here.

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Studio 8 is an independent dance space based in Amman, Jordan. Through nurturing experimentation, creating and producing original artworks, fostering the development of emerging artists, sparking dialogue, and working closely with local communities, Studio 8 contributes to Jordan's performing art ecosystem and emerges as a central organization in the development of contemporary dance in Jordan.

IDEA festival is a Jordan-based festival that devotes its program to dialogue and exchange between Jordan and the global art and culture scene. The festival aims to bring together international and local artists and cultural practitioners, to embark on a journey of exploration with movement, body, and voice, the harmony of art, science and anthropology, ecological awareness, and more-than-human-relationships, in search for new approaches to art and cultural practices in an increasingly plural society.

Drosos Foundation is committed to enabling disadvantaged children, young people and young adults to take control of their lives and make a positive contribution within their community. The Foundation promotes skills and creates living conditions which enable these people to fulfil their responsibilities. Drosos Foundation is convinced that life and technical skills are key elements in personal development. These skills help children, young people and young adults to be independent in the way they manage and take responsibility for their own lives.

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