# EU4ART_*differences*

## Deliverable D5.2

| Deliverable 5.2.: Concept for Research and Innovation Transformation Network Web Platform | |
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| Description: | The Concept for Research and Innovation Transformation Network (RITN) will describe the conceptual outline of the Research and Innovation Transformation Network (RITN). It will define the main RITN factors, characteristics, its intended networking parameters, and information workflow. It will establish the way how the information about research, research outcomes, research infrastructures, and human resources will be shared on the RITN. The RITN is intended to be developed as part of project website that will directly interlink with Erasmus+ European University EU4ART website, therefore it is important to establish clear demarcation and synergy with the existing communication channels. |

## Versioning and Contribution History

| Version | Date | Modified by | Modification reason |
|---|---|---|---|
| v.01 | 17/12/2021 | | First version |
| v.02 | 29/12/2021 | | Updated, uploaded version |
| v.03 | 17/08/2023 | Claudia Reichert | Changed dissemination level from "confidential" to "public" based on amendment |

## Glossary

| Abbreviation | Meaning |
|---|---|
| ABAROMA | Academy of Fine Arts of Rome |
| ARC | Artistic Research Catalogue |
| CC | Creative Commons |
| EC | European Commission |
| EQ-Arts | Enhancing Quality in the Arts |
| EU | European Union |
| GA | Grant Agreement |
| HfBK | Dresden University of Fine Arts |
| EUROSTAT | European Statistics |
| LMA | Art Academy of Latvia |
| M2M | Many2Many |
| MKE | Hungarian University of Fine Arts |
| No. | Number |
| RC | Research Catalogue |
| RITN | Research and Innovation Transformation Network |
| SC | Steering Committee |
| WP | Work Package |
| FAIR principles | Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, and Reuse of digital assets |

# Table of Contents

# Executive summary

This document describes the *Research and Innovation Transformation Network* (RITN), its structure, functions and particular role in supporting aims of the EU4ART_*differences* project. The RITN is being developed to exchange and communicate information regarding research, research outcomes, research infrastructures, and project staff by project the partners. It was projected as a network for artistic researchers the EU4ART_*differences* project, in which members of the EU4ART Alliance can act as regional protagonists to implement artistic research practice as a valid approach to generate relevant knowledge, both, through art practice in dialogue with humanities, social sciences and society. This will be reached through tailored implementation strategies in Riga, Dresden, Budapest, and Rome. It is crucial to understand, that the RITN consists of two parts: a web platform and a repository. Both are interacting and referring to each other, see figure below.
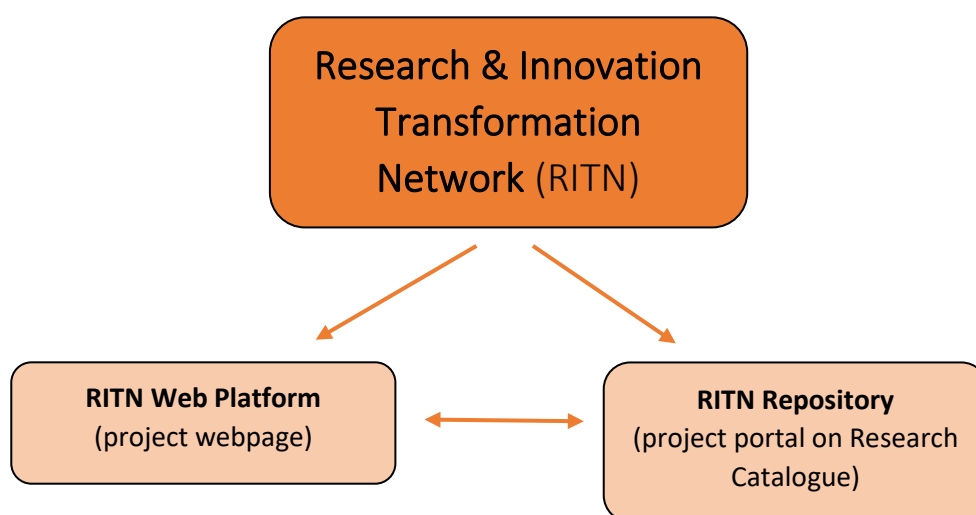


This deliverable is divided into four sections.

**Part I:** The introduction provides the necessary background for understanding the aims of this deliverable.

**Part II:** This section includes a glossary of key terminology. It also includes background information on the partner universities, as well as a description of the scope and extent to which the new *RITN Web Platform* will transmit information about research, its outputs, and infrastructures, as well as project personnel. The new RITN Web Platform's planned method of use is also explained.

**Part III:** This chapter provides an overview of the many ideas and concepts, as well as the decision-making process for choosing a repository that fits all the requirements. The publishing platform *Research Catalogue (RC)* provided by the Society of Artistic Research has been chosen as an integral component of the RITN by the consortium: in the context of this project, we refer to it as the *RITN Repository*.

**Part IV:** This part is meant to provide a brief overview of the information presented earlier in the report. It concludes with remarks on how this deliverable outlines the project's aim for building not only an online platform for dissemination and communication, but also a repository that adheres to open access and FAIR data principles.

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# 1. Introduction

The EU4ART Alliance is convinced that artistic research, as a means of promoting the understanding and development of the arts, can play an important role in the life and work of Higher Arts Education. The project "EU4ART_*differences*" focuses on the notion, implementation, and didactic exploitation of artistic research (including "practice-based research" and "research through the arts" as well as other comparable sub-definitions) as a topic that has become increasingly significant for art academies and universities in recent years. The aim of EU4ART_*differences* is to explore these open fields for the alliance partners and, using a shared platform, make them accessible for artistic and academic discourse, as well as for society.
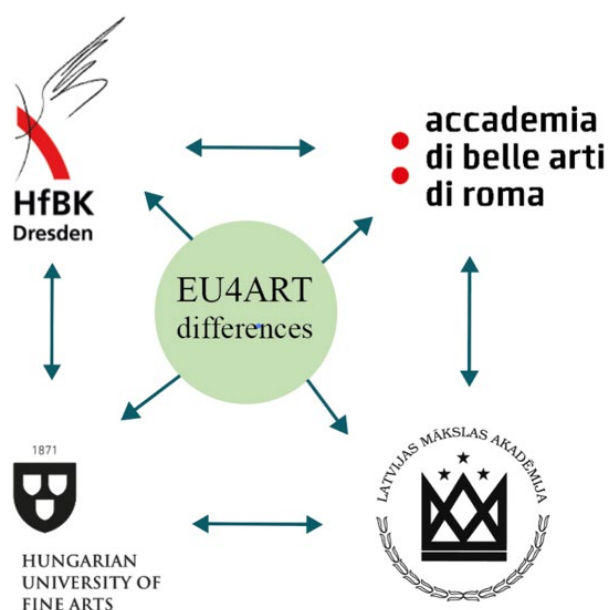


### Artistic Research in the Third Cycle

Artistic research is a broad term that describes several different models of relationship between artistic practice and research within art universities, research institutions and even outside the institutional framework. Artistic research consists of practice-oriented research in the arts and research-led artistic practices. Artistic research is closely linked to design research, creative research and curatorial research. Methods of artistic research are also accepted in other areas of the humanities and social sciences. Artistic research, through the combination of artistic experience and research, forms an important knowledge base of contemporary art education and is a fundamental element of art education in most of the countries participating in the Bologna Process.

Artistic Research as a new topic in Fine Arts education is mostly taught during Third Cycle studies, as it is a complex issue interweaving research, art practice and science-related approaches. Enhanced artistic experience and knowledge form the basis of artistic research, and higher education in artistic

research has spread from only few, mostly English-speaking countries in the 1990s to a number of countries even beyond the "Western World".

The *Bologna Declaration*[1] was a major step forward in European higher education, and it was followed in 2005 by the *Salzburg Principles*[2], which attempted to particularly address doctorate education as part of the *Bologna process*. Despite this, more than half of the countries that signed up to Bologna still do not recognize the Third Cycle in higher arts education, and many of those that do only do so if it is validated through a "traditional" university, which has its own set of disadvantages and limitations for the arts sector.[3] Furthermore, artistic research does not appear in EUROSTAT research statistics.

In June 2020, the *Vienna Declaration on Artistic Research*[4] was published by seven European umbrella organizations for higher art education. It was co-written by the *European Association of Conservatoires* (AEC), CILECT/GEECT (the *International Association of Film and Television Schools*), *Culture Action Europe* (CAE), Cumulus (the *International Association of Universities and Colleges of Art, Design and Media*), the *European Association for Architectural Education* (EAAE), the *European League for Institutes of the Arts* (ELIA), the *European Platform for Artistic Research in Music* (EPARM), *EQ-ARTS*, *MusiQuE* and the *Society for Artistic Research* (SAR). The *Vienna Declaration* is the first international policy document on artistic research, meant to provide concepts and definitions for integrating artistic research into European higher education. It explains that artistic research fulfils the five criteria for research as defined in the OECD (*Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development*) framework document for research, the *Frascati Manual*[5]. The *Vienna Declaration* approached the topic of Third Cycle studies in the arts anew, and thus created a broad debate about the interconnectedness of artistic activity and academic research knowledge production. With this document, the artistic research community has taken an important step towards a broader recognition of artistic research worldwide. Since then, new additional degree formats have been developed. An international database of Third Cycle awards in the European Higher Arts Education was created within the *Creator Doctus* project (2018-2021)[6].

The EU4ART Alliance supports these initiatives to propose that artistic research becomes a field of its own on the 1-digit level in the Frascati classification. Furthermore, drawing inspiration from the *Creator Doctus* project (co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union)[7], we are going to develop additional, artistic research-related, didactic approaches towards student centered learning, students' professional development, and models of institutional research culture. The Third Cycle in the arts, with all the postgraduate students, junior researchers, researcher-artists and academic staff involved, demands specific needs to present its outcomes to both, peers, and to the broader public.

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[1] URL: https://www.ehea.info/page-ministerial-conference-bologna-1999 [date: 27/12/2021]

[2] URL: https://c3qa.iqaa.kz/en/project-documents/salzburg-principles [date: 27/12/2021]

[3] URL: https://mcusercontent.com/eaad1985b65737a6c7e4b11b0/files/8ca945dc-d132-d9e9-93f3-80c347a91909/CrD_position_paper_ENGLISH.pdf [date: 27/12/2021]

[4] URL: https://www.artandeducation.net/announcements/338016/the-vienna-declaration-on-artistic-research [date: 23/12/2021]

[5] Today, Arts are classified under the 2-digit topic 6.4. Arts in the Frascati Manual.
This topic includes art history, musicology, theatre science, studies on film etc., i.e. various fields of research on art. This classification does not in any satisfactory way reflect the development
of artistic research. URL: https://www.oecd.org/sti/inno/frascati-manual.htm [date: 27/12/2021]

[6] URL: http://3rdcycleinthearts.eu [25/12/2021]

[7] URL: http://creatordoctus.eu [date: 27/12/2021]

## 2. The EU4ART_*differences* Research and Innovation Transformation Network (RITN) Web Platform

In cyberspace, digitalization has allowed for the emergence of a multitude of platforms. These digital platforms are M2M (many-to-many interactions) systems that operate as an intermediary between participants, allowing them to communicate and exchange value.

The EU4ART_*differences* Research and Innovation Transformation Network (RITN) makes the project's progress and processes visible. Furthermore, it can provide the consortium with expertise from emerging artistic researchers that create artworks or use exploratory artistic research approaches by sharing collected results and knowledge. These researchers are usually, but not always, incorporated in a self-contained creative activity in the field of art, such as Third Cycle or doctoral/PhD research programs. The RITN will support postgraduate students and staff in their need to develop and maintain contacts with the wider research community in the EU4ART Alliance. On a European level, the RITN Web Platform represents their concerns and interests. New collaborations can be formed here with the objective of promoting innovation and breaking new ground in artistic research. The RITN will contribute to new understandings and elevate the discourse level on what constitutes artistic research by allowing researchers and artists to share their experiences, thoughts, and expertise. It will be a dynamic content-based digital platform with distinct identity (as measured by these two strategic dimensions: alliance and platform identity).

Most material uploaded to the RITN Web Platform will be contributed by artistic and academic researchers, while other members of the EU4ART Alliance will consume content from the repository (detailed in 3.) to build a shared understanding of how artists undertake artistic research at the partner institutions. It is expected that the outputs of artistic research will come in a wide variety of forms and media. However, any artistic researcher has an obligation to the research community to explain both, the process, and the outcome of his or her research in ways that conform to the normal standards of comprehensibility among peers that are found in more traditional research. The RITN will be the dissemination platform that delivers insight into emerging artistic researchers and their work in their own words. It will offer two primary categories of content*:

- Input from the artistic research process: information for research strategy, methodology and performance
- Output from artistic research projects and processes: study findings, documentations, and reports.

*Peer-reviewed and/or externally validated content is to be prioritised on the platform (e.g. through conference publications, exhibition programmes in museums or curatorial selection processes).*

## 2.1. Explanation of relevant terms

In this chapter, we define terms in order to clarify their meanings in the context of our project.

### FAIR principles

- FAIR principles (Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, and Reuse of digital assets) allow limited use of copyrighted material without permission from the copyright holder for purposes such as learning, criticism, parody, news reporting, research and scholarship, and teaching. The Copyright Directive protects freedom of expression, a core value of the European Union. Most important, since June 2021 the *Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market* (EU) 2019/*790*, Article 17 introduced new obligations for online content-sharing platforms. They are directly liable if their users post unauthorised copyright material on their platforms. In order to avoid liability, those platforms will need to demonstrate that they have made "best efforts" to obtain permission from rightsholders and acted diligently to remove any infringing content once notified by rightsholders, as well as keep it disabled.[8]
- Wherever possible and under the provision of proper copyright regulations, open access is the guiding principle for dissemination of artistic research work and the documentation of artistic work (e.g., digital portfolios in institutional repositories).
- The necessity to create FAIR data is a specificity of the project's dissemination contexts and should be clarified at the beginning of the doctoral studies (e.g. in the doctoral agreement).

### General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

- All personal data that the EU4ART_*differences* partner universities are going to collect about individuals will be held in accordance with the *General Data Protection Regulation* (GDPR).
- The new data protection regime essentially requires consent for any personal information used on the web platform and demands transparency about the private data held on the website.
- Researchers must ensure that all research published or otherwise disseminated does not contain information that allows individual statistical units (persons, households, enterprises, etc.) to be identified.

### Network

- A network, in our perspective, is a large, interconnected group of people who have common interests and concerns about a single topic.
- They collaborate with each other on a regular, formal, and informal basis in order to address the project's goal and mission.
- Networks are created specifically with the goal of gaining knowledge related to their members' field, or evolve naturally because of the members' common interest in a particular domain or area (Lave and Wenger, 1991)[9], and have to be goal-directed.

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[8] URL: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_21_1807 [date: 27/12/2021]
[9] Lave and Wenger (1991). Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

### Network member

- Any member of the respective network can be a network (project) member.
- In the EU4ART_*differences* project, belonging to the network is defined as being an active participant who contributes to the project's mission and purpose through participating in activities (e.g., group discussions, knowledge and idea sharing, etc.).
- It is also possible to be a passive member of a network if you are a member but do not participate in any activity.

### Open access

- Open access is the practice of providing online access to scientific information that is free of charge to the user and is reusable[10]. Open access follows certain principles and grades and primarily refers to accessibility of data, not on their re-usability.

### Web platform

- A fully functional end-to-end platform is intended here, with access to collected data and the ability for emerging artistic researchers, staff and network members to become visible to a wider audience.

## 2.2. RITN Aims and Objectives

The EU4ART_*differences* network is thematically focusing on artistic research, considering its challenges and possibilities in establishing dialogues between art and society, as well as between art, science and the humanities, therefore supporting societal change. The project's objective is to assist young artistic researchers interested in obtaining a doctorate or a comparable degree in the arts, primarily in the Fine Arts, but also in inter- and transdisciplinary fields, and to develop distinct models of Third Cycle studies in Artistic Research at the participating universities.

The RITN will be used by cross-disciplinary practitioners, writers of artistic research, editors, publishers, and educators, as well as artistic researchers from the Hungarian University of Fine Arts, the Latvian Art Academy, the Rome Academy of Fine Arts, and the Dresden University of Fine Arts. The RITN purpose is to streamline the work of the alliance's artistic research teams across borders and to make research widely available and easy to consume throughout the EU4ART Alliance.

It will provide information on the artistic research infrastructures that are now being developed or have matured as a result of the long tradition of fine art doctoral programs and their methods (e.g., the MKE Doctoral School and the LMA Third Cycle studies, that are concluding with state examinations and consist of presentation of a theoretical study and creative artistic work).

The strategic objective of the project is to bring into exchange different study programs of the Third Cycle, mostly leading to a doctoral degree in art studies at four European academies to meet cultural,

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[10] URL: Open access - H2020 Online Manual (europa.eu) [27/12/2021]

public and societal needs, based in artistic creativity and science, as well as to contribute to the field of contemporary art and/or design.

A clear RITN structure is critical to the project's success. From a hierarchical perspective, structures in a network strongly define the roles individual members can play, as well as the tasks they can engage with in artistic Third Cycle contexts. The network depicts all artistic research related activities of the alliance, including events, workshops, training programs and PhD candidates' self-organized activities.

## 2.3. Research entities and beneficiaries within EU4ART_*differences* framework

The EU4ART_*differences*_project is a research program of the *European Universities* alliance EU4ART. The funding members of the EU4ART Alliance are public higher education institutions and they have trained famous painters, sculptors, graphic artist and printmaker in Italy, Germany, Hungary and Latvia for hundreds of years. Each of these academic institutions is significant for their historic legacies and for proving their ability to adapt the higher art education to modern contexts and remain relevant in a globalized world in spite of political turmoil and intense competition. Partnership in the EU4ART Alliance provides access to the highly diverse resources of the four alliance academies from across the Europe, and that allows affiliates to access additional opportunities of institutional growth, to modernise the curriculum of fine art subjects, as well as to initiate continuous self-improvement activities. In addition, because each affiliate in the EU4ART Alliance is legally independent, it provides greater latitude to tailor each study program to its distinctive needs and offer numerous specializations at all study levels.

Although this complex context forms the framework for EU4ART_*differences*, the RITN is specifically developed for the research outcomes of this specific research project and does not serve as a tool to communicate the alliance activities in general. However, it concentrates on the research topic, artistic research.

The following section provides a status quo summary of Third Cycle study opportunities at partner institutions:

### Hungarian Fine Arts University Doctoral School, Budapest
The subject of the doctorate training program includes painting, sculpture, graphics, graphic design, intermedia, as well as stage and costume design, and restoration. The objective of the doctorate program is to obtain a *Doctor of Liberal Arts* degree. The *Hungarian Fine Arts University Doctoral School* offers an eight- semester curriculum.
The basic structure of the program includes theoretical lectures, presentation exercises, students' lecture on their artistic and research project in each semester, furthermore visiting exhibitions as well as discussions with artists and the curators. At least in each second academic year the Doctoral School organizes an exhibition for the students, occasionally in collaboration with international partners. Currently there are 14 supervisors and ca 62 students in the MKE Doctoral School. Usually, 10-11 students are accepted each year.

### Dresden University of Fine Arts *Meisterschüler* program (Master Classes)

While the HfBK does not currently offer doctoral degrees, it does allow post-doctoral students a two-year study phase with a focus on practical, artistic work that includes intensified individual consultations between the Meisterschüler students and their supervisors/professors. Meisterschüler students are expected to do a certain amount of teaching in tutors' positions within the academy during the second year. Additional support for professionalization is given by the academy's *Career Service*. Meisterschüler should meet their supervisor regularly each semester and discuss their artistic development with them. At the end of the two-years term, there is an exam, usually linked to an exhibition of the artwork created during the Meisterschüler time, and an official degree is conferred. Every winter semester, beginning from October, every Fine Arts professor can accept max. two postgraduates as Meisterschüler students. The *differences* project team's objective is to develop the Meisterschüler format in general, to conduct workshops and lectures for postgraduates in order to provide extra theoretical input and qualification, and prepare them for their respective jobs. Additional support is envisaged through fellowships.

### The Art Academy of Latvia Doctoral School, Riga

The Art Academy of Latvia offers the study program *Doctor in Arts*, a doctor's degree program in art. The regular duration of studies is 3 years; the main research fields are History and Theory of Art and Visual Culture, History of Design, History of Architecture and Art of Latvia and the Baltic region.

Since 2021 in collaboration with a number of institutions for higher education in the arts, the Art Academy of Latvia offers extended PhD level studies beside Theory of Art and Design also in the field of Art and Design Practice and likewise Creative Industries. This professional arts-based PhD study program is a new opportunity to have the third level studies for a PhD degree for artists in Latvia. In collaboration with Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music and the Latvian Academy of Culture, the Art Academy of Latvia has developed a new joint doctoral program in the fields of Music and Stage Performance, Visual Art and Design, Audio-visual Art, Theatre and Contemporary Dance. The new doctoral program consists of two elements: individual artistic research and participation in the doctoral study programme. Research in and through art is an inseparable part of the artistic or design practice of the researcher. Consequently, research-in-art (as opposed to research-about-art, such as art history) does not have a set goal or expected result, nor are there predetermined general procedures.

The new doctoral study programme consists of lectures, seminars, trainings, and workshops, and it is an essential part of the research environment in which the student undertakes his or her research. The new doctoral program is tailored to suit the ever-developing needs of professional arts industry and is accepting highly qualified applicants with a master's degree in their field. The duration of study is 3 years. It is required that the doctoral candidate submits his/her work (artwork), along with a thesis that puts this work in the context of other art works and explains how the candidate's work builds on art history or aesthetic approaches, etc. Graduates are required to satisfy the creative component of the program as well as write a doctoral thesis. Number of students: 17; number of supervisors of the professional PhD study program: 34.

### Accademia di Belle Arti di Roma

Third Cycle studies are not yet active for *AFAM* institutions (Fine Arts Academies, Conservatoires, National Dance and Drama Academies) in Italy. Nonetheless, Accademia di Belle Arti di Roma is carrying

out multiple initiatives to shape its Third Cycle of studies, thanks also to its participation in EU4ART_*differences*.

As for today, these initiatives include:

- selecting Junior Scientists (JS) for the project: WP2 and WP4 already have their JS, WP 3 and 5 will join in 2022
- implementation of two research grants for artistic research, in the fields of Visual Arts and Multimedia for Heritage; these grants have been approved by the Administration Board, and calls will be published soon
- appointment of a responsible for Doctoral Studies, who is currently comparing existing Third Cycle university regulations, and shaping the future Doctoral Faculty
- fostering a regular discussion with the quality-management national regulatory body (*ANVUR*)
- establishing a relationship with the European organization *EQ-Arts*.

## 2.4. The EU4ART_*differences* RITN Web Platform functionality

To build a more vibrant and diverse art ecosystem, the new RITN Web Platform will be developed as a sharepoint for a collection of artistic research related material that should support the following functions:

- To provide partner universities with a joint platform for publishing results of artistic research, artistic research-based master and doctoral works, and results of research of artistic research;
- To present artists, researchers, educators, students, and curators in relevant stage for publishing and dissemination, discussions, and critical studies on artistic research, art and research;
- To provide society with the relevant information regarding artistic research, its role in the research ecosystem of art universities and impact on society, culture and economy;
- To increase awareness about artistic research and participation in artistic research work among students, academic staff, and the academia at large;
- And to support artistic research, so that academic researchers may be more productive in planning and pursuing their artistic research projects.

The following key activities and processes can promote enhanced member interaction, collaboration, and productivity within a network of the EU4ART_*differences* project (e.g., information about social events, exhibitions and different activities for PhD candidates, workshops and classes in form of mentoring in the artistic Third Cycle contexts, artistic research methods, application strategies for PhD programmes, presentation skills, international exchange and summer residency programs).

The new RITN will be built as an ongoing collaborative experiment in digital publishing and information sharing. It will function both as a repository and a communication tool. All members of the EU4ART Alliance community will have the ability to add new and edit most existing content.

## 2.5. Procedure

Starting in the first quarter of 2022, we will develop specifications and objectives (technical and functional requirements to support such a web platform system), as well as exclusion criteria, selection and award criteria for the procurement process and to find a suitable service provider for the web platform, and describe the obligations and responsibilities that the service provider must fulfil in order to set up and operate this type of web platform. We shall, of course, follow EU public procurement rules and national regulations when contracting with third parties to provide specific IT services.

The Research Catalogue portal will be completely operational by April 2022. Starting in May 2022, the EU4ART_*differences* project webpage will be connected to researchers' profiles and expositions.

## 2.6. The new RITN Web Platform structure and content

This chapter defines the order in which our website's material will be presented and divided into independent sections, as well as the site's structure and navigation options. It is essential that the new website has an attractive design, intuitive navigation, is mobile friendly, and swiftly responds to the demands of our project's target audience. A mobile version should be prioritized in order to optimize the user experience regardless of how the user interacts with the webpage content. The new RITN Web Platform will present the structure, protagonists, and activities of the project and link to the single project outcomes, research documents and expositions. The following sections will detail how the new website's diverse subpages will be organized and related.

### Home page

- The key information relates to the audience's needs and the project's objectives. It visually reflects the EU4ART_*differences* project's artistic research focus.
- It provides an overview of ongoing artistic research projects at partner institutions of the EU4ART Alliance.
- A navigation menu, header, and footer with general information and links will assist with navigation (the footer also has information regarding funding - the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No 101016460).

### About
- A staff directory will be available here, as well as online profiles of individual researchers (researcher names, professional summary, education, positions and work experience, research support, publications, presentations).
- A "Contact" section will list all team members' names, email addresses, and areas of expertise.
- The EU4ART_*differences* web page will be designed to the state of art in terms of navigation and will provide filter function in order to provide easy keyword research.

Projects/ News overview

- Various projects / works in different media formats will be presented (text, photos, sound, video etc.)
- Links to the contributions in detail will be made available on subpages of each artistic research project (research title, author name, author job title, author organization, a short description of the research, summary abstract, the accompanying video, etc.)
- Information on current events and forms of participation (e.g., zoom sessions or workshops)
- Dos & Don'ts, tools and templates for conducting and analysing artistic research, such as templates for research planning, research roadmaps, interview scripts for feedback, user tasks, consent forms, notetaking and tips for using experimental/interpretive research, analysis tools, raw notes and artifacts from research sessions and video library could also be housed here.
- Visitors will be invited to follow the project on Facebook, Instagram and other social networks (sharing tools and recommendations to other pages for follow-up readings)
- Links to RC EU4ART_*differences* publications in the RITN Repository

The main purpose of the categories is the classification of different posts under one umbrella topic. Since all these parts of the web platform will be separate entities, they can be edited independently, and used in different contexts. Tags and categories will help users to navigate the website. Structured content can also simplify the translation process into different languages. At the same time, we will ensure that localized content follows the same format as the original content, thus the presentation will be consistent and any original assets such as images will be easily reused.  The web platform will be entirely in English, as English is both our project's common language and a scientific language.

Updating of text and other content is also very important to keep the site fresh and content current. When content is changed in one area of the website, it might need to be changed in other areas for consistency and accuracy. It's important that new website is pleasing to the eyes and content isn't too overwhelming. Navigation and buttons should be clear and obvious so users can explore the website intuitively.

# 3. The EU4ART_*differences* Research and Innovation Transformation Network (RITN) Repository

Efforts in work package 5 are mostly focused on developing a strategy for storing, facilitating access and presenting the project's output, which may include artistic research processes, exhibition documentation, publications, even our researchers' artistic research theses. Typically, the results of doctoral work in the arts are disseminated through appropriate channels. For artistic work, exhibitions, performances, media installations and content, websites, and comparable formats like social media provide appropriate dissemination frames. Likewise, artistic research projects are generally presented at conferences through a paper, a poster presentation or an oral presentation with some documentation. Projects are generally presented at their beginning and completion. Sharing and discussing the various projects is a way to disseminate artistic research among colleagues and peers.

The EU4ART_*differences* project is supporting this diversity of artistic expressions, and artistic researchers are free to choose their methods and formats according to the needs of their projects. One of the project aims is to create settings which are practice-oriented and allow for an in-depth discussion of the EU4ART Alliance research projects and the activities involved. Furthermore, the EU4ART Alliance expects that the new RITN Web Platform will allow these works from the alliance's artistic research teams to be valued for many years to come. The EU regulations for FAIR data and open access prompted extensive consultations with international database professionals in academia, participation in expert group organizations, and extensive self-research.

This chapter describes how we approached this subject and how we came to the conclusion to build two distinct and tightly connected tools for open access publication and dissemination of our project. Furthermore, the selected data repository's mode of operation will be described.

## 3.1. Assessment of opportunities and barriers of existing platforms

The search for appropriate data repositories, as well as the simultaneous handling of FAIR data and Open Access standards, is a challenge for institutions in the visual arts, as well as for all other kinds of creative practice in academic contexts, including the sciences and humanities. As a result, many Higher Education Institutions in the field of art are working on the development of databases that can handle multiformat data in addition to the traditional text forms (doc, pdf, etc.) that have been used in academia for decades. It is crucial to look for relevant external opportunities and analyse current options in order to be able to save relevant data of all types and make them accessible for peer review and reuse, but also for general public. This is important when it comes to artistic research.

Because artistic research approaches do not have data type limits, connected databases/repositories must be adaptable. Furthermore, a large amount of data should be estimated to be storable, as well as the process data of artistic research, which should be maintained available for future research. Due to the highly specialized nature of artistic research and the difficulty of anticipating how data may be utilized by subsequent researchers, we see a need to save even "side data" that may become significant only after a period of time.

There are no straightforward answers to these questions, according to multiple discussions with protagonists who work on academy-internal databases for Fine Arts (Friederike Kramer, UdK Berlin; Jasna Zwimpfer, ZHdK Zürich; Tabea Lurk, FHdNS; and others). We used a MIRO board to assist us figure out the best options. Creating new databases from scratch and making them available to the public is not only expensive, but it also takes a lot of time and effort. Additionally, they must be updated on a regular basis and supported; this is a lengthy process that may require specialized employees. As a result, it makes sense to adapt to existing publishing options and to integrate with existing databases. Additionally, it may be appropriate to include local relevant databases in order to make the project's national outcomes available to a local audience.

### Option 1: Building a database from the scratch

The concept was to create a dedicated repository separate from our own university's website (as demanded by the EC in the *Guidance on Actions* document). Intensive conversations concerning this possibility resulted in the need for additional funding, but also for a long-term perspective for development supported by future project funding. Several external debate partners pointed out that this alternative would demand a significant amount of time and money, as well as the expertise of specialists. Our alliance's only potential conclusion would have been a database idea and prototype in the time allotted and within the budget. This newly created database would certainly need to be officially certified.

### Option 2: Using existing repositories without subscription fees

There is a number of existing data repositories, none of which are ideal for our needs, but by combining them, we could have created a common, though complicated, basis. Some repositories are designed only for text and images, while others are designed for video alone and/or sound files. Experts continue to debate the best way to store multimodal data. Members of our project team attended multiple sessions with *NFDI4Culture* colleagues and even presented our concepts to get feedback from them. The idea was to aggregate several certified repositories (the majority of which were free to use) and disseminate the information on a separate project webpage. Here we have discussed options with national repository providers, e.g., with *arthistoricum.net*. These repositories were designed to have API connections with our partner universities' existing local databases and library web OPACs. This choice appeared to be too complex, and we doubted that our researchers and students would have used it.

### Option 3: Distinction in a Research Catalogue project portal and separate web platform

A paid subscription to the certified and well-known *Research Catalogue* (RC) has been explored with the EC as one option. This option is applicable now that the RC has made a specific offer to the project starting April 2022. Not as an independent institution, but as an alliance of four art academies, we use a portion of the funding for a pilot subscription that lasts until the duration of our project funding is completed plus six months. The RC is providing a project portal to a project like ours for the first time, and the objective is to review the collaboration after two years to see if the RC – aside from meeting EU-compliant fundamental requirements – is the best option for sharing and disseminating our project results. A new decision will have to be taken at some point in the future funding period.  In any case, the project data published on the RC will stay available in a long-term perspective via the researcher's individual profiles with DOI. The portal will be kept available, but not operable after the end of the project period plus six months. For five additional years after the end of the project there will be further reading access.

## 3.2. Result of the preliminary research and decision-making

One of the preconditions for academic debate is the reliable archiving and availability of data. The EU4ART_*differences* project team has chosen to collaborate with the *Research Catalogue* – Option 3 – to  preserve and publish research data, theses, and project outputs following a solid research and evaluation process. The *Research Catalogue* is a non-profit organisation and publishing platform for

artistic research provided by the *Society for Artistic Research*. Between 2010 and 2012, the *Karlsruhe University of Arts and Design* (HfG) produced the *Research Catalogue* software under open-source licenses as part of the *Artistic Research Catalogue* (ARC) project.

Several joint conversations with colleagues from the *Research Catalogue* preceded this decision. After a detailed discussion of our alliance's unique needs and available budget, the RC proposed a customized solution. Unlike other Art Academies, who build their portals on the RC platform and connect their researchers to the portal by an annual individual subscription, our alliance is given special consideration in the development of a strictly project-oriented portal in a pilot phase. The *Research Catalogue* project portal – now our RITN Repository – will be interoperable for the project until June 2024, so for the time of the project phase plus six months. After that, it will be openly accessible (but no new expositions linkable anymore) for five additional years. While we only need a small fraction of our funds to join the RC for the length of our project, we can utilize the rest to build a webpage that connects our local library databases to the RC and vice versa. Additionally, some of the funds could be utilized to help partner institutions learn how to use the RC platform by providing RC training.

## 3.3. Structure and possibilities

The RC is free to use for artists and researchers who must formally register as full users to have the possibility to create their own researcher profile and have access to data storage space which they can use as their own repository. While the majority of the RC content published on one of the portals is peer reviewed, the remaining expositions and other information are quality checked by the individual author(s). As a result, the RC is highly inclusive. The RC's open-source status is essential to its character, as it serves as a connecting and transitional layer between academic discourse and artistic practice, thereby establishing a discursive field for artistic research. This web platform integrates sound, graphics, video, and text into a seamless presenting format. The author has complete control over the visual presentation (called "exposition" in the RC) and emphasis on various media types; this even allows to handle the presentation itself as an artistic expression and therefore a visual form adequate for artistic research as a general approach. A detailed online guidebook gives easy access to the tools that allow to create an exposition. This method of presenting artistic research is unique in comparison to all other repositories we examined utilizing the certified repositories webtool [www.re3data.org](www.re3data.org).

For a RC portal partner there is a range of opportunities offered:
- documentation and publication platform (in our case, for the alliance project EU4ART_*difference*)
- Archive of expositions/publications done
- List/archive of users/researchers that are involved in the project/portal, direct links to their profiles
- Research documentation and collaborative workspace for staff and postgraduate students, artistic researchers including structures for working groups and a notification system
- Research managing tool, online rich media platform for peer reviewed journals that can be joined by researchers of the EU4ART_*differences* alliance as well

- Forming of research groups which allow to cooperate on specific issues and projects
- Even visitors with a basis account have the possibility to comment on expositions and to get in touch with the researchers/authors

Portal partners also receive an internal portal for study and student related activities on bachelor, master and/or doctoral level. This can be used for student's presentation of work outcomes, for teaching and learning (including supervision) purposes and for online assessment of student examination work. Our project consortium then can decide which of such material shall be shown on our public portal. For the benefit of the general public, the RC provides a comprehensive information resource on contemporary artistic research projects and discourses.

The portal's structure is comprehensible and can be used to a large extent without additional programming efforts. It allows a quick implementation of the project needs into a repository format.

Each portal can create templates, set their own criteria and procedures for peer review and publication, which sharing licenses to use etc. The responsibility for quality control of content published in the main RC portal, however, rests solely with authors themselves. The open-source status of the RC is essential to its nature and serves its function as a connective and transitional layer between academic discourse and artistic practice, thereby constituting a discursive field for artistic research.

The EU4ART_*differences* project portal on the *Research Catalogue* creates a link between:
1) elaborated notation/ documentation of the practice and work outcomes;
2) expositions and comments that engage with the contribution of the work as research; and
3) creation of individual profiles that present the students'/researchers' work and activities and allow the storage of research process-related data material.

Given that the public part of the RC is a site for artistic research, to add a work is to make a claim that the work can be seen as research. Through expositions, comments and articles the initial claim is transformed into a discursive argument. We believe that the reflective space provided by the RC can offer an essential part of the research process by providing a suitable structure in which to develop the relationship between research activities, documentation and dissemination. Additionally, it promotes discussion regarding individual approaches to the complex field of artistic research.

The KTH *Royal Institute of Technology* in Stockholm (Sweden) hosts the *Research Catalogue*. For the EU4ART alliance partners, RC provides a dedicated project portal that can be utilized publicly as well as internally for tasks related to artistic research, ensuring that the project's diverse requirements are already met. Additionally, the RC provides a high level of visibility for the project. With the RC's network of the *Society for Artistic Research* and various journals dedicated to artistic research, it can be tremendously beneficial for the EU4ART_*differences* Alliance to join as well.

### 3.4. Research Catalogue project portal (RITN Repository): modus operandi

The RC provides all sorts of licenses, starting from "all rights reserved only with your permission" to "no restrictions". There are several CC licenses (CC-BY, CC-BY-ND, CC-BY-NC-ND, CC-BY-NC-SA) that can be used, default is CC-BY-NC-ND. The expositions/publications done by the project EU4ART_*differences* will certainly relate to the standards given through the EU for FAIR data and open access.  In a user's (private) profile section  work can be edited, in a research section the user can create expositions which will be opened in the RC exposition workspace editor using graphical/block, text-based or HTML-based material. There is a multitude of possibilities to change layouts and to manage versions. Working groups can also be formed, which are supported by a notification system to facilitate information flow. A detailed guideline will be used and can be found online at http://guide.researchcatalogue.net.

## 4. Conclusion

The RITN Web Platform and data repository will allow the EU4ART_*differences* project to provide information on every relevant aspect of the project, both to internal stakeholders as to the broader public. It will create high visibility for the project and its outcome aiming to attract interested and interesting researchers, cooperation partners and societal stakeholders. Therefore, developing the RITN in a tailor-made way is an extremely relevant process within the project development phase. The RITN Web Platform will promote a productive dialogue about different strategies how to involve  artistic research methodologies in the Third Cycle for European Higher Arts Education.

After intense discussions and research, both nationwide an internationally, the WP5 team in charge of the RITN found a perfect solution for both structure and content of the RITN. This solution will allow us to create a highly specific, project-related website with many relevant features, but, at the same time, to become a member of a globally recognized repository for artistic research through a specified project portal. This active participation in the *Research Catalogue* will enable the project staff and members to easily connect with many leading stakeholders in artistic research and thus intensify the visibility of the project even more. The data repository of the RC, both in terms of structure as of content, offers an ideal solution to making our research outcome visible, to store research and artistic data and keep them available for future research. The EU4ART_*differences* RITN will make information publicly available about a wide range of artistic research outputs, from ongoing student projects, journal articles to exhibitions and artifacts. The RITN data repository will provide a digital archive of artistic research outcomes produced by the EU4ART Alliance partner institutions' staff and postgraduate students. Both parts of the RITN, the web platform and the repository, will be presented at month 18 of the EU4ART_*differences* project.

Beyond all this, for the first project phase, but even for a larger alliance in the future phases, the RITN will provide complex structures for visibility on all levels, but also for didactic aspects, like knowledge sharing, teaching and quality assessment, for discussions but also for controversies which are extremely productive for the long-term development of an exciting, complex, and quite new field of research for the four alliance partners. A unified online resource is envisaged to strengthen EU4ART Alliance collaboration and artistic research dissemination.