Common stories

OPEN CALL
Common LAB 2023 - One shared artistic journey

Bobigny, France | Stockholm, Sweden | Cairo, Egypt | Lisbon, Portugal
Deadline - April 3rd, 2023

We are looking for 8 theatre directors, playwrights, choreographers and performance makers to take part in Common LAB 2023, an itinerant 8-week laboratory to experiment with collective and individual devices for knowledge sharing, and the development of artistic research, broadening European narratives.

Common LAB - a programme of *Common stories*

Common LAB 2023 is part of *Common stories*, a project that brings together performing arts organisations, artists and audiences to address the dynamic notions of identity and diversity in a changing European society.

Identity constructions are based on and strengthened by stories and experiences. Stories tell who we are and who we strive to become, they question and challenge the way we see ourselves and the others. We believe that a diversity of stories and a multiplicity of perspectives will allow for a more accurate and fair understanding of the political, cultural and social challenges we have to face in order to create common grounds in European societies, characterised by volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity, but at the same time struggling for social justice.

European societies are historically built upon inequalities that, we believe, need to be addressed. Cultural sectors, both concretely and symbolically, are riddled with colonial and patriarchal tensions and rationales. In the performing arts sector, power, resources, decision-making and programming positions are still mostly in the hands of a white male middle-and-upper-classes majority, while artists and art professionals from different cultural, social, gender and ability backgrounds are largely underrepresented on and off stage, especially in decision-making and leadership positions.

In *Common stories,* through different actions, we will promote new artistic practices and contents, while contributing to develop a wider framework to welcome and listen to multiple voices and perspectives.

Common stories is developed by Maison de la Culture de Seine-Saint-Denis, MC93, Bobigny (FR), Théâtre National Wallonie-Bruxelles, Brussels (BEL), Alkantara, Culturgest, Lisbon (PT), africologneFESTIVAL, Cologne (GER), Riksteatern, Stockholm (SWE), in association with TR Warszawa, Warsaw (PL), Orient Productions – DCAF Festival, Cairo (EG), CulturArte, Maputo (MOZ), Les Récréâtrales, Ouagadougou (BF), cofunded by the Creative Europe Programme.

The Common LABs

We will propose 3 Common LABs, one each year. We will be selecting 8 artists for each lab.The next call, for Common LAB 2024, will be launched in September 2023.

Each Common LAB will include four two-week modules in four different places, including one non-European, for a total of eight weeks.

Throughout the programme of Common LAB, we will be paying particular attention to the following issues:

- Artistic practices and stories that are underrepresented or absent from our institutions. The relevance of diversity in language, aesthetics and representation.

- Public space and visibility. How cities' architecture and urban policies shape what is valued, made visible and invisible.

Here is where and when Common LAB 2023 will take place:

Where	When	Hosted by
Bobigny, France	September 4-17	MC93
Stockholm, Sweden	October 6-20	Riksteatern
Cairo, Egypt	October 21- November 4	Orient Productions, during the DCAF festival
Lisbon, Portugal	November 5-20	Alkantara, during the Alkantara Festival

Common LAB will provide opportunities for selected artists to:

1. **Exchange, share and learn,** through a programme of activities that includes:

   - **Lectures and talks** by guest speakers

   - **Workshops and masterclasses** - on techniques/practices, in relation to a specific context or to the work of the selected artists

   - **Practical sessions on author status and professional environment**
   - on copyright, project financing, contracts, access to international networks

   - **Encounters, city visits and meetings** - with the teams of the host organisation; with guest artistic mentors; with local communities, including artistic communities, activists, partners, mediators; with other artists in residency; with different working contexts

   - **Artistic events** taking place in host venue and/or host city

2. **Research their own projects,** through individual and collective working sessions with guest mentors. In addition to group activities, the Lab will allow time for artists to research with full autonomy.

3. **Pitch their projects**
   During the last module of the Common LAB, the selected artists will be encouraged to share their projects with the partners' artistic directors and professional guests. The pitch session will be prepared with the support and feedback of the Common LAB guest mentors throughout the programme.

Contents will be shaped according to profiles and interests of selected artists.

What we offer:

- A programme of activities
- Stipend (80€/day)
- Travel and accommodation

Most activities will be in English. Translation from/to English may be offered for some activities, according to the needs of the participants.

Who can apply?

Artists:
- addressing the dynamic notions of identity and diversity in a changing European society, both at a professional and personal level
- who have a professional practice in the performing arts - Dance, Theatre, Performance or other
- interested in researching and pitching a project (regardless of the number of people needed to execute the project - could be solo works, group pieces or other formats)
- living and working in Europe
- who have a good command of English
- available to fully participate in the four scheduled modules

Only the artist/author leading the project may apply. Group applications cannot be accommodated as Common LAB will only support the costs of one person per project.

We strongly encourage applications from artists of all ethnicities, cultures, religions, nationalities, abilities and disabilities, sexes, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations, ages, and socioeconomic statuses.

How will projects be selected?

Applications will be evaluated by Ahmed El-Attar (Orient Productions), David Cabecinha (Alkantara), Dritëro Kasapi (Riksteatern), Hortense Archambault and Virginie Dupray (MC93). Evaluators will consider the applicants' previous projects and the project the applicant would like to research on.

As part of the process, applications will be discussed with *Common stories* advisors Ansar Bakir, Raquel Lima and Safia Kessas. They will examine applications and deliver recommendations in order to ensure the diversity of the group as well as of selected artistic projects.

Shortlisted artists will be invited to participate in an interview between May 6th and 10th. Final results will be announced by email by May 15th, 2023.

All artists will be informed about the result of their application, whether they are selected or not. We will not be able to provide individual feedback. All applications will be carefully reviewed, but please keep in mind that our decisions are final.

How to apply?

Complete the application form available [here](#) by April 3rd.
We encourage you to submit your application in English, but we will also consider applications in Portuguese, French, German, Polish and Swedish.

The following information is requested in the application form:

1. Name

2. Country of residency

3. Age

4. Gender (Male / Female / other, please specify)

5. What are the pronouns we should use to refer to you? (He / She / They / Other, please specify)

6. Field(s) of work (Theatre / Dance / Performance / Other, please specify)

7. Briefly present the project you would like to research and pitch in Common LAB. (Max 3000 characters)

8. Briefly describe your artistic journey and previous works. (Max 6000 characters)

9. Please share some information about your background in relation to the values of *Common stories.* (Max 3000 characters)

10. What are your motivations to apply and what do you expect from the programme? (Max 2500 characters)

11. Do you confirm you are available to participate in Common LAB in the proposed schedule?

12. Please upload pdf documents for:

    • CV

    • Artistic presentation of the work you would like to research, in the context of Common LAB

    • Documentation about previous works, including links to videos, website and social media

13. Please use this section if you want to add something about your personal or professional situation that we would need to take into account in order for you to participate.

SELF-IDENTIFICATION SECTION (OPTIONAL)

In this section you may choose to self-identify as a member of any systematically marginalised group in the cultural field in Europe (including, but not limited to, groups on the basis of gender — including identity / expression —, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and ability), and you can also choose to describe that identity.

This section is intended to help us accurately estimate the diversity of our applicant pool as part of our commitment to increase the diversity of artists and projects present in our cultural institutions.

14. Do you self-identify as a member of any systematically marginalised group? (optional) (Yes / No)

15. Self-identification statement — If yes, and if you would like to elaborate, please describe that identity. (Max 1000 characters)

If at any point you have any questions about this call feel free to reach out to:
- Ionara Silva (ionara@alkantara.pt) for inquiries in English/Portuguese
- Virginie Dupray (vddupray@gmail.com) for inquiries in French

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