



MEASURING THE IMPACT OF A MOBILITY GRANT:

a work in progress
by the Roberto Cimetta Fund



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WHY A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF ARTISTIC MOBILITY?

THE QUESTIONNAIRE & ITS RECIPIENTS

A questionnaire was drafted by the RCF with the support and feedback from Ms Inga Farina Petzhold, University of Hildesheim, Germany and Ms Matina Magkou, PhD student working with Ms Cristina Ortega Nuere at the Institute of Leisure Studies at the University of Bilbao, Spain.

A total number of 21 responses were sent back in French, out of which 20 were valid ones and 90 responses in English, out of which 88 were valid. In total **108 answers** were received and constitute the body on which the following results are put together.

The answers received between the 26th October 2012 and the 10th November 2012 were presented at the MEDARAT Platform of Exchange that took place in Beirut (20-21 November 2012). An extended deadline was given until the 30th November 2012 in order to collect as many replies as possible.

THIS REPORT...

puts forward some of the most important findings of the questionnaire. It is a first step for understanding what the RCF mobility grant meant to the grantees, and what their general concerns and opinions about mobility are in the Euro-Arab region in particular. The report is solely based on the answers received and does not pretend to be an overall evaluation, nor to reflect the opinions of all grantees. However, it provides some food for reflection and allows to draw some conclusions which are open to revision. That's why this report is just the first step of "a work in progress" in which the RCF is engaging.

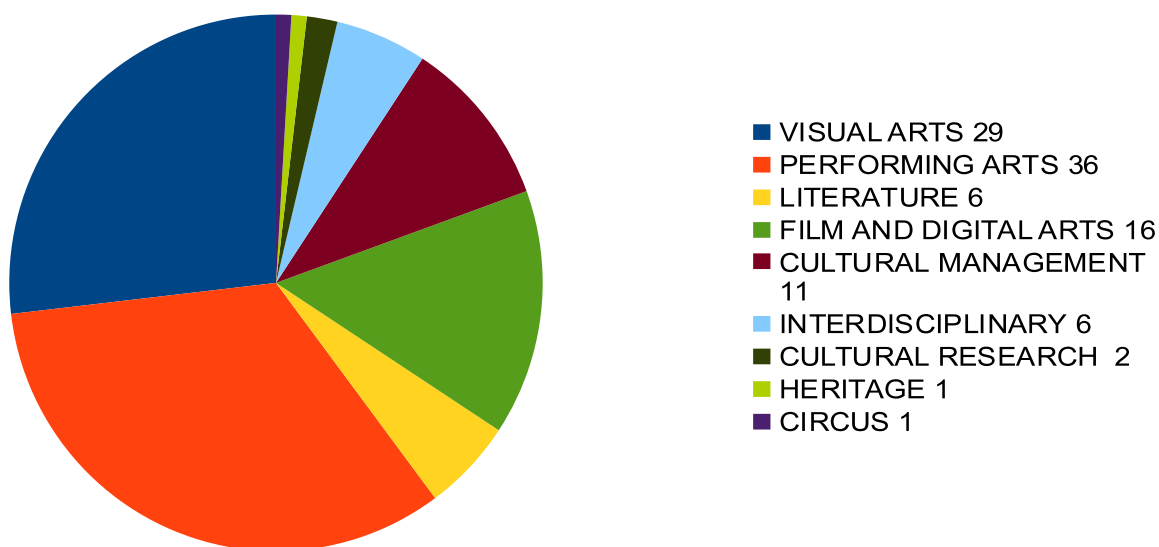
THE PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Gender: 70 women and 38 men replied to the questionnaire

Average Age: 38 years old

Education/ Training: 60 of the respondents (55,5%) have an Arts education (academy, school, college etc), 34 of them (31,4%) have another kind of education and 14 are self-taught (12,9%).

Artistic Discipline or Cultural field: The respondents come from a variety of artistic disciplines and cultural fields.



Current situation as artist or cultural operator: 53 of the respondents manage to live off their art work/ their profession in the field of culture, 35 of them have a full-time occupation as artists or cultural operators/ managers and they do side jobs to make a living, 16 of them have another full time job to make a living and they do their art and culture activities on the side and 4 have responded something else (ex. they are currently students).

THE RESPONDENT'S RCF GRANT

47 received their grant less than a year ago (from October 2011 to July 2012)
 21 received their grant between 1 and 2 years ago (from October 2010 to October 2011)
 40 received their grant more than 2 years ago

Frequency of mobility grant request: 52% of the respondents had applied only once for a RCF fund, 43% between 2 and 5 times and 5% more times.

Almost 100% of them would apply again for a travel grant, 79% of them in the same region, 4% elsewhere and 15% both in the region and elsewhere.

BEFORE THE TRAVEL

Prior contact with host: The respondents gave various replies to the question on how did they establish their contact with their host and had the possibility to give more than one answer. Most of them mentioned that they met their host in a networking meeting or an event in the past, an answer that confirms that people-to-people exchanges and opportunities to meet are important for the birth of new collaborations.



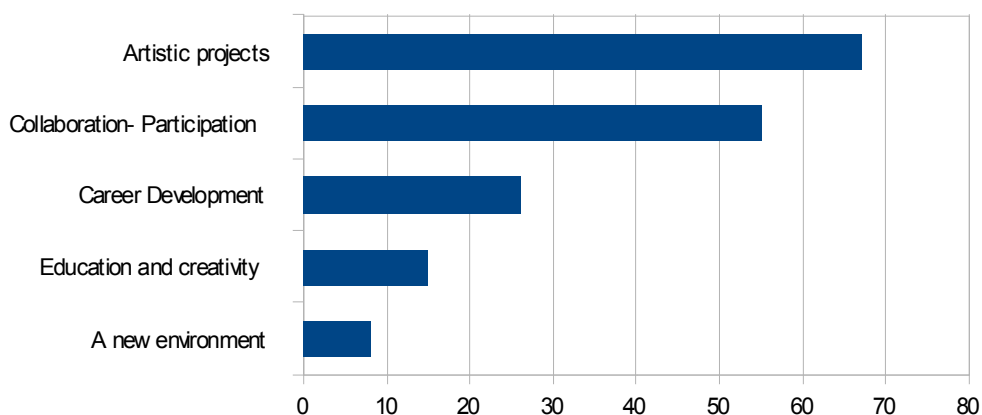
Reasons for travelling: The main reasons for travelling were identified in the following five categories and the respondents had the possibility to give more than one answers to this question.

Artistic projects: to collaborate with other artists on a new art project, to realise site-specific projects, to look for future production in the region, to use specific technical tools, facilities and resources.
Collaboration / participation : exchange with local artists, exchange with international residency artists, to give lectures and workshops, to work with the public.
Further your career : to expand your network of peers, to get in contact with professionals that can enhance your career and outlets, to get to know the professional circuits of a different country, to use the grant as recognition.

Education and creativity : to learn specific skills and tools to get critical feedback from other peers or professionals to learn about another country and culture to be in a different environment with new impulses and inspiration

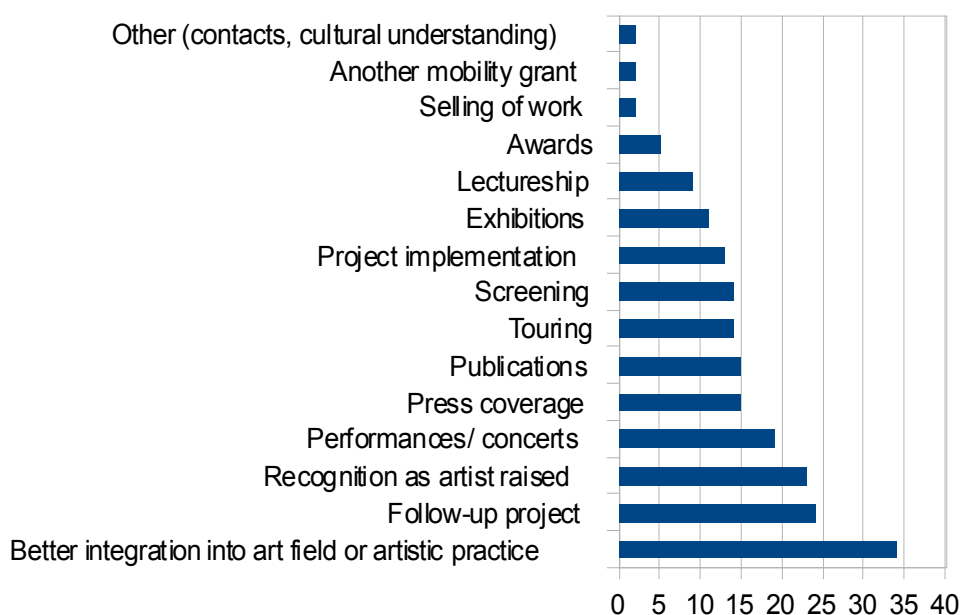
A new environment: to provide me with inspiration, to get away from daily worries in my home region, to work in a more promising environment for economic reasons.

The order of importance that came as a result of the answers is reflected in the following chart and shows that the primary motivation lies in the artistic projects themselves, followed by a desire to collaborate with peers from the region and participate in different activities related with one's work.



AFTER THE TRAVEL

Impact of the travel grant: 57,5% of the respondents replied that they realised the impact their grant had on them either during or right after their travel, 30,5% of them said that they realised it one to six months after their travel (medium term) and 12% of them more than six months after the grant (long term). **Concretely, the impact following the grant and the travel is reflected in the following chart. Respondents had the opportunity to give multiple answers to explain the consequences of the grant in terms of results and concrete productions.**



CONTACTS- NETWORKING

96% of the respondents are still in touch with their host from their RCF grant, 33% of them for networking reasons, 31% of them for project implementation or evaluation and 16% of them for friendship reasons.

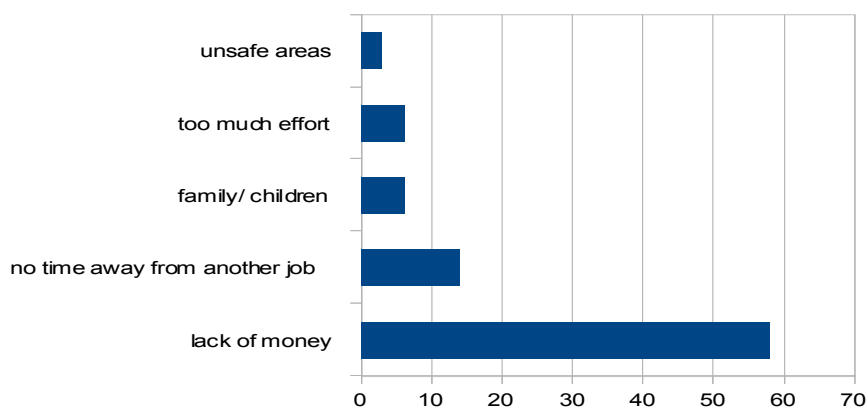
The most common means of communication is the email and social networks (such as facebook), but also a meeting opportunity in another country, a new travelling opportunity in the same country, a friendship visit, skype, telephone and lastly normal mail.

67% of the respondents have returned or have concrete plans to return to the hosting country for professional reasons. The three main reasons for return have been the implementation of the project they had initiated, the follow up of the project and networking reasons. A small number of them returned for a new project and some of them only for friendship reasons.

MOBILITY PRACTICES

45% of the respondents engage in mobility practices in the Euro-Arab region for professional reasons more than once a year, 26% more than twice while 29% travel more often. Almost all of them (97%) consider mobility very important for their work and claim that the RCF grant increased their interest in mobility opportunities in the Euro-Arab area and about mobility in general.

The reasons that prevent the grantees into engaging in mobility practices in the region are the following:



Moreover, the following issues were identified as obstacles to mobility in the Euro-Arab region:

- lack of funding
- high costs for traveling and accommodation
- visa issues
- lack of information about possibilities
- language difficulties
- lack of knowledge or acquaintance with the art scene
- unsafe conditions/ political conflicts between countries
- lack of intercultural awareness and skills
- different working cultures
- lack of opportunities (structures) to maintain the connections established
- difficulties in establishing contacts with cultural operators
- stereotypes

OPINIONS ABOUT MOBILITY IN THE REGION

To the question “what are the most valuable aspects of travelling in the EuroArab/ Mediterranean regions?” the respondents said the following:

“the region is so culturally appealing and we do not know enough about one another”

“to go beyond that European naval-gazing”

“presenting non superficial, complex and artistic representations of the orient to the west”

“breaking down prejudiced ideas and being able to go back and tell about the experience”

“learn/adapt to a different culture, explore and share new stories and point out social, environmental or political aspects that can help or make a difference”

“for the work to be seen by different people and interact in person living some time out of your own town and crowd gives you another inner view about what to do and opens doors for more projects to come. The lack of money makes things go slower”

“create better opportunities for intercultural dialogue highlighting the role of diversity and human dynamics for the peoples of the region”

“occasion to familiarize oneself with the art scenes of different countries, especially the independent spaces that might not be part of the international institutional network, opportunities to visit artists' studios and learn more about their practices in a direct encounter, open up possibilities for unbureaucratic, direct collaboration with small art spaces and artists outside the institutionalized infrastructure”

“reinforcing common cultural roots in the region”

“understanding of the complexities of the region”

“reaching different publics with different interests”

“allows us to function in the global market”

“occasion to familiarize oneself with the art scenes of different countries, especially the independent spaces that might not be part of the international institutional network”

“the development of new ideas through confrontation with local practices”

“expand the borders of my country beyond its limited space and beyond the political conflicts”

“experience the situation of a country for oneself and collaborate with the inhabitants without the filter of the media”

“mobility is urgent in order to instaurate a situation of political, social and cultural transition”

“the political situation in the region creates a momentum”