

Rijeka 2020, what legacy for Volunteering in Culture?



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Rijeka will be the European Capital of Culture in 2020 and it is seen as an opportunity to secure a lasting legacy of volunteers in many fields of culture and cultural heritage.

SMART

Submitted by F Pere Tarrés on Wed, 06/13/2018 - 12:00

Description:

The Civil Society Development Association SMART promotes the effectiveness of the non-profit sector, cross-sectoral cooperation and the development of volunteerism. In its work, SMART connects non-formal education with advocacy, informing and influencing public policies. SMART cooperates with civil society organizations, public institutions, local and regional authorities and civic initiatives on the principles of accountability, active inclusion and respect for diversity.

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Rijeka will be the European Capital of Culture in 2020 and we are well aware that we will need the support of thousands of volunteers to ensure that we get the best result of the year and especially that visitors to our city - the Port of Diversity - will get the assistance that they need.

We are not considering however that volunteers will only be engaged for 2020, we are looking to secure a lasting legacy and that Rijeka and the surrounding area will be able to count on the contributions of volunteers in many fields of culture and cultural heritage that desperately need their energy, commitment, skills and time.

Collaborating with the two networks that we are members of, the [European Volunteer Centre](#) (CEV) and the [Croatian Volunteer Development Centre](#) (CVCN), we were able to implement the recent [European Volunteering in Culture Capacity Building conference](#) (VIC). This marked an important moment and gave a significant contribution to our preparations alongside the Rijeka 2020 agency and the City of Rijeka, to ensure a successful year as the European Capital of Culture in 2020.

Before, during and after 2020 we want to build on the best practice of Rijeka City Library and develop the potential and space for the improved engagement of volunteers in other municipality institutions such as museums and other cultural centres. We are determined to ensure however that volunteers are seen as an additional resource rather than a cost cutting exercise. Codes of practice should be developed for this purpose especially in order to protect jobs and ensure the added value of volunteers is truly respected.

RiRock, is another example that we have of an NGO harnessing the passion and interest of citizens in different arts through volunteering in a way that will benefit the wider community. We want to encourage the growth and development of other NGOs active in the culture field and ensure that they retain their voluntary, citizen led nature and provide additional value to the community, beyond purely entertainment, such as actions towards social inclusion or education. We also expect to see a continued growth in the rise of volunteers contributing to the success of various cultural events such as festivals and conferences in accordance with global trends.

At the VIC conference, we heard from the Motovun Film Festival whose organisers have a long experience in engaging volunteers alongside paid staff and in this way ensuring the smooth and cost effective running of the event. Even when receiving state subsidies, in order to keep the ticket prices low enough for those people who will benefit most from the festival the possibility to attend, volunteers must be engaged in a wide variety of roles and tasks. The Motovun organisers have clear guidelines about how to protect the rights of volunteers and ensure that they receive at least as much added value from participating as they are giving.

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