XR WORKSHOP METHODOLOGIES: EDUCATING, MEDIATING, AND DISSEMINATING XR

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ABOUT *REALITIES IN TRANSITION*

Realities in Transition (RiT) is an international community that aims at both exploring and supporting alternative Extended Reality (XR) productions, and experimenting with new narratives and creative processes.

RiT aims at building a strong, independent European XR creative and activist community, a think tank to tackle current and future challenges in the digital sector.

We want to establish XR as a sustainable and inclusive tool for the common good.
→ RiT wants to consolidate and share XR related knowledge, tools, and methodologies.
→ RiT takes a critical look at XR, bringing together creation, curation, and dissemination practices with educational methods, and considering privacy, ethics, and sustainability issues.

We support alternative XR creation to promote new narratives.
→ RIT supports emerging XR creatives, artists, and projects to foster inclusive and sustainable practices for experimental XR creations.

We aim at consolidating the existing XR creative Community.
→ RiT creates opportunities for networking and peer-to-peer learning between existing independent and activist XR initiatives, XR artists, researchers, coders, cultural and creative sector professionals, decisionmakers, and the general public interested in XR in coming together to use XR as a common, open, and sustainable tool in their work.

www.realities-in-transition.eu

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THE CONSORTIUM

Chroniques

Shaped by the contrast and diversity of its dual identity in Marseille and Aix-en-Provence, CHRONIQUES is a uniquely recognised international artistic event and a human-powered organisation whose purpose over the past 20 years has been to vibrate to the effervescence of new aesthetics and imaginary realms that shed light on the ambivalence of our approach to technology. CHRONIQUES embraces a wide range of activities, from programming to funding creation and supporting artists, mediation, educational activities and networking.
Its key international event is the Biennial of Digital Imaginaries that hosts a multidisciplinary program. CHRONIQUES operates on a simple principle: to be what we imagine.

Ars Electronica

Between Art, Technology and Society. We have been analyzing and commenting on the Digital Revolution since 1979. Since then, we have been developing projects, strategies and competencies for the Digital Transformation. Together with artists, scientists, technologists, designers, developers, entrepreneurs and activists from all over the world, we address the central questions of our future. The focus is on new technologies and how they change the way we live and work together. In addition to the annual Ars Electronica Festival and Prix Ars Electronica competition, we host the Ars Electronica Center, a museum of the future, the in-house research and development department Ars Electronica Futurelab as well as the business unit Ars Electronica Solutions.

iMAL

iMAL is an art center for digital cultures and technology, located in the center of Brussels. It combines the functions of a Contemporary Art Center and a Media Lab and is unique in its kind in Belgium. iMAL wants to formulate a solid response to a rapidly evolving digital society. The center will therefore not only provide space for (inter)national art practices that use, challenge and question innovative processes but will also be a place where technological developments and creativity are reflected and shared with a broader community. iMAL strives to create a program that contextualises these developments and inspires and encourages citizens to actively participate in the latest digital cultures, as well as empower them to be critical of the challenges associated with the digital revolution.

V2_ Lab for the Unstable Media

V2_, Lab for the Unstable Media is an interdisciplinary center for art and media technology in Rotterdam (the Netherlands). V2_ presents, produces, archives and publishes research at the interface of art, technology and society. Founded in 1981, V2_ offers a platform for artists, designers, scientists, researchers, theorists, and developers of software and hardware from various disciplines to discuss their work and share their findings. In V2_'s view, art and design play an essential role in the social embedding of technological developments. V2_ creates a context in which issues regarding the social impact of technology are explored through critical dialogue, artistic reflection and practice-oriented research.

KONTEJNER
bureau of contemporary art praxis

KONTEJNER is a non-profit NGO based in Zagreb, Croatia, founded in 2002. It is engaged in curatorial work, organisation of art festivals and public cultural events, artwork production, education, publishing, and social theory. Its primary focus is on progressive contemporary intermedia art, sound art, and experimental music, with a special emphasis on cross-sectorial projects that explore the role and meaning of science, technology, and the body in society, as well as addressing current and relevant phenomena, provocative and intriguing topics, and societal taboos. The KONTEJNER team has curated and organised over 120 group and solo exhibitions, performances, lectures, workshops, and presentations featuring international and Croatian artists, theorists, philosophers, scientists, hackers, and innovators.

L.E.V. Festival

LEV (Laboratorio de Electrónica Visual) is a platform of production, promotion and experimentation related to electronic sound creations, audiovisual creations and digital art.
An open area of research which uses the latest technological tools to explore contemporary creation with national and international avant-garde artists and new and trailblazing creators, performing several activities and shows in public spaces.
The platform's two big annual events are LEV Festival, in Gijón, and LEV Matadero, in Madrid. Two largely attended festivals which serve as a meeting point to provide an all-round, eclectic view of the current state of sound, audiovisual and digital creations, and its constant evolution and connections with different disciplines, through live shows and audiovisual performances, concerts, immersive events of virtual and augmented reality, digital explorations, installations and exhibitions, among other activities.

Dark Euphoria

Dark Euphoria is an artistic production and cultural innovation agency based in Marseille. We produce projects at the crossroads between art and digital technologies: interactive installations, immersive experiences, augmented shows....

We explore new artistic languages and technological devices, shared between artists, creative technologists and cultural institutions. As a pioneer in the production of XR and live performance, Dark Euphoria is particularly committed to reinvent theatrical, musical and choreographic forms and the place of the audience.

INTRODUCTION

This booklet provides guidelines, methodologies, and best practices for institutions and organisations in the cultural and educational sectors, and beyond, who wish to develop, host, and implement workshops on XR-related topics. It is a helpful resource for workshop developers and facilitators that want to dive into this field.

As an introduction, we first provide an overview of elements to consider for any XR-related workshop (General recommendations), relating to design and preparation, audience mobilisation, technical set-up and space, resources, materials and equipment needed, facilitation, and follow-up.

The more specific methodologies provided in the following parts of the booklet are divided into two main sections:

1. **Target groups:** the workshops presented are meant for artists (in residency) and art students, professionals, as well as the general public, from the youngest to the oldest ("Gen A-Z").
2. **Objectives:** the workshops highlighted range from learning skills to building communities, from reflecting and contextualising XR to using XR as a mere vehicle to explore other topics.

We outline suitable approaches to designing workshops for each of these target groups and objectives, and offer recommendations on both participants and facilitators as well as on practical aspects like group size, duration, equipment, and more.

In addition, we highlight a best practice case study: The Critical XR Manifesto (CXRM) workshop developed by V2_ Lab for the Unstable Media, which has been implemented multiple times and serves as a vehicle to enable critical reflection on XR as a technology.

These methodologies were developed on the basis of experiences made by implementing more than 40 workshops in the context of *Realities in Transition*. Each methodology is accompanied by example workshops from this context to offer further inspiration.

RUNNING XR WORKSHOPS: GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Workshop design & preparation

- Define clear and specific objectives for the workshop.
- Select a relevant theme for the target audience and establish a detailed program with the responsible members of the targeted community.
- Depending on the topic, participants may benefit from hands-on experience with DIY equipment, supervised by a mentor with expertise in the area.
- Be mindful of the facilitator-participant ratio.
- Vary formats and activities to maintain interest.
- Make informed and reflected technology choices when preparing the concept.
- Include space for reflection and discussion in the workshop concept.
- Make sure to consider logistics and technical needs.
- Take time for thorough preparation.
- Be mindful of information overload (do not squeeze too many aspects into one session).
- Make sure to include breaks and interactive elements.

Community mobilisation

- Engage the targeted local community from the outset.
- Communicate well in advance.
- Use various communication channels to spread information and encourage participation (mailing lists for mobilisation, shared online folder for workshop resources, Signal channels for ongoing workshop discussions, etc.).
- Be very clear about possible pre-requirements (e.g. specific technical skills) in your communication to avoid frustrating potential participants.
- Know and actively define the exact number of participants in advance (registration form or equivalent) to prepare adequate materials.
- Ensure all participants, regardless of their skill level, feel included and valued.
- Consider feedback and suggestions from participants.

Technical set-up & workshop space

- Provide sufficient equipment (check your number of participants!) to prevent workflow interruptions due to equipment shortages.
- Ensure that all technical equipment is set up, functional, and ready for use prior to the workshop to avoid participant frustration.
- Ensure accessibility for impaired participants and equip the venue with the necessary facilities to accommodate their needs.
- Access to fresh air and natural light during breaks is important to prevent participants from feeling overwhelmed, especially when using immersive technologies like VR headsets.

Equipment, resources & materials

- Ensure the availability and proper functioning of XR equipment.
- Make sure to have sufficient and up-to-date equipment.
- Provide appropriate educational materials and tutorials. The materials should not hinder the smooth running of the workshop.
- Work, wherever possible, with non-proprietary, open-source software.
- Offer technical support during the workshop (always have a qualified technical point of contact).

## Facilitation & running the workshop

- Announce the programme and expected results to all participants.
- Design a safe, inclusive, stimulating, and benevolent mindset and environment for participants.
- Make everyone comfortable, there are no wrong questions!
- Define the key terms used during the session so participants have a common understanding and speak a common language.
- Provide an adequate number of facilitators according to the number of participants.
- Implement interactive and collaborative activities.
- Encourage knowledge-sharing and mutual learning.
- Be mindful of time management: while discussion should be encouraged, too big topical "detours" need to be avoided to ensure reaching an outcome.
- Provide space for reflection: encourage participants to think about what they have learned and how they can implement and use it in their day-to-day practice.

Follow-up & evaluation

- Collect detailed feedback from participants (questionnaire).
- Analyse strengths and areas for improvement for future workshops.
- Measure the impact and satisfaction of participants.
- Document and provide materials (both documentation and learning resources) after the workshop.
- Consider constructive criticism.

XR WORKSHOP METHODOLOGIES FOR DIFFERENT TARGET GROUPS

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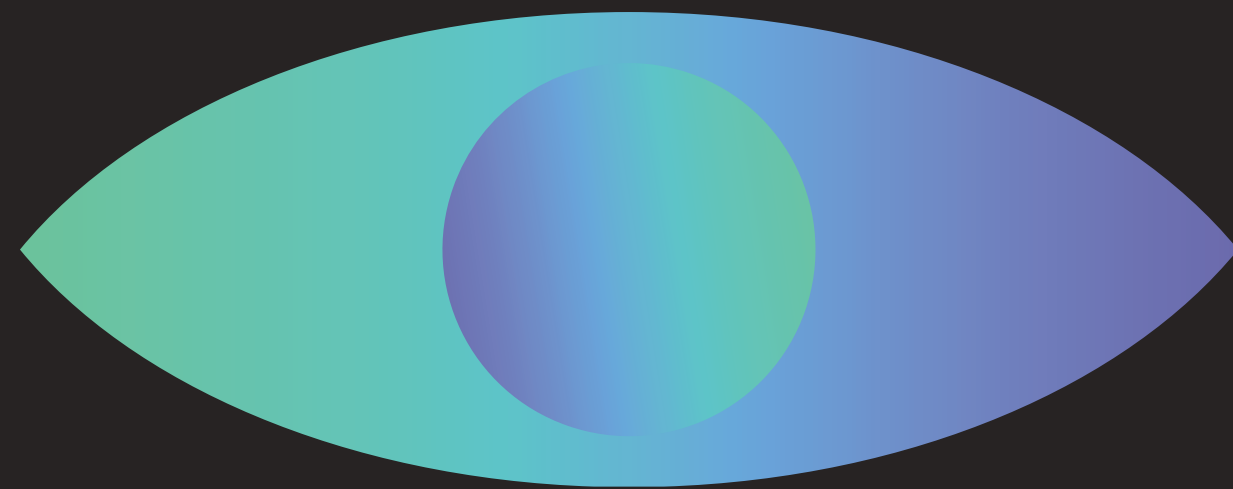
ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE WORKSHOPS

by Boris Debackere and Sieta van Horck, V2_ Lab for the Unstable Media

This methodology shows approaches to workshops that support artists to develop their XR practice, build their skillset, professionalise their practice, and experiment with technology and ideas.

Objectives
- building technical skill set
- developing artistic practice
- production of XR artworks
- experimentation, prototyping, and testing
- communal learning

Suitable approaches
In order for artists to develop their XR skill set and come into contact with new technologies, a hands-on-approach should be combined with a theoretical understanding of the theme. Communal learning works best by an (external) expert introducing the overall thematic, software, hardware or technology conceptually, after which the residents will engage with the content in a hands-on, experiential learning environment. After each session, the work can be presented and reflected on collectively to build common knowledge and share experiences. Due to the multitude of XR/VR tools available, it is recommended to choose one tool to focus on (in case of technology-driven workshops).

It is recommended that the workshop utilises a XR/VR tool that is used within the resident group, or that is coined by the group itself and will be used further on in their creation process. Some artists will be new to the tool and some will already know the tool (and will be able to stack tools). This way artists can also support each other in hands-on-learning.

See also:
→ Community building workshops: Creating a group
→ Hands-on workshops: Learning skills
→ Reflective workshops: Contextualizing XR

Target groups & how to source participants
Artists (in residence). Most commonly sourced through Open Calls on specific thematics or programs. They can be engaged through program announcements, social media outreach, general publicity, individually targeted or targeted through Art Academies and Universities. It is recommended that participation in this type of workshop is offered for free.

Recommended group size
3 to 20 participants
To have active engagement within groups, it is recommended that group shares are facilitated for communal learning to emerge. The smaller the group, the more the conversation can go into depth.

Suggested duration
3 hours to 3 days
Three-hour workshops can give an overview of a given topic and allow for some first experiments. However, for deep learning and moving beyond superficial understanding and more in-depth reflection, workshop experiences of multiple days are recommended. This could also result in building something (individually or collectively) that can be presented and shown at the end of the workshop.

Venue and equipment requirements
Depending on the thematics and technology presented, a versatile studio space where the group can collectively sit together, have laptops in place and access to WIFI and electricity. A beamer connected to a laptop is recommended for presentations. A calm space where residents can focus on the task at hand.

Who can lead / facilitate this type of workshop?
- experts within the field of technology
- developers working with specific hardware/software/technology
- academics/tutors presenting specific topics and themes
- facilitators who mediate group dynamics processes
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Example workshops
- The Annotated Garden
- Hugo & Pedro What a Mess - Walkshop
- The Cookery: Creating Analog Virtual Realities
- The Cookery: Patch your way to the metaverse
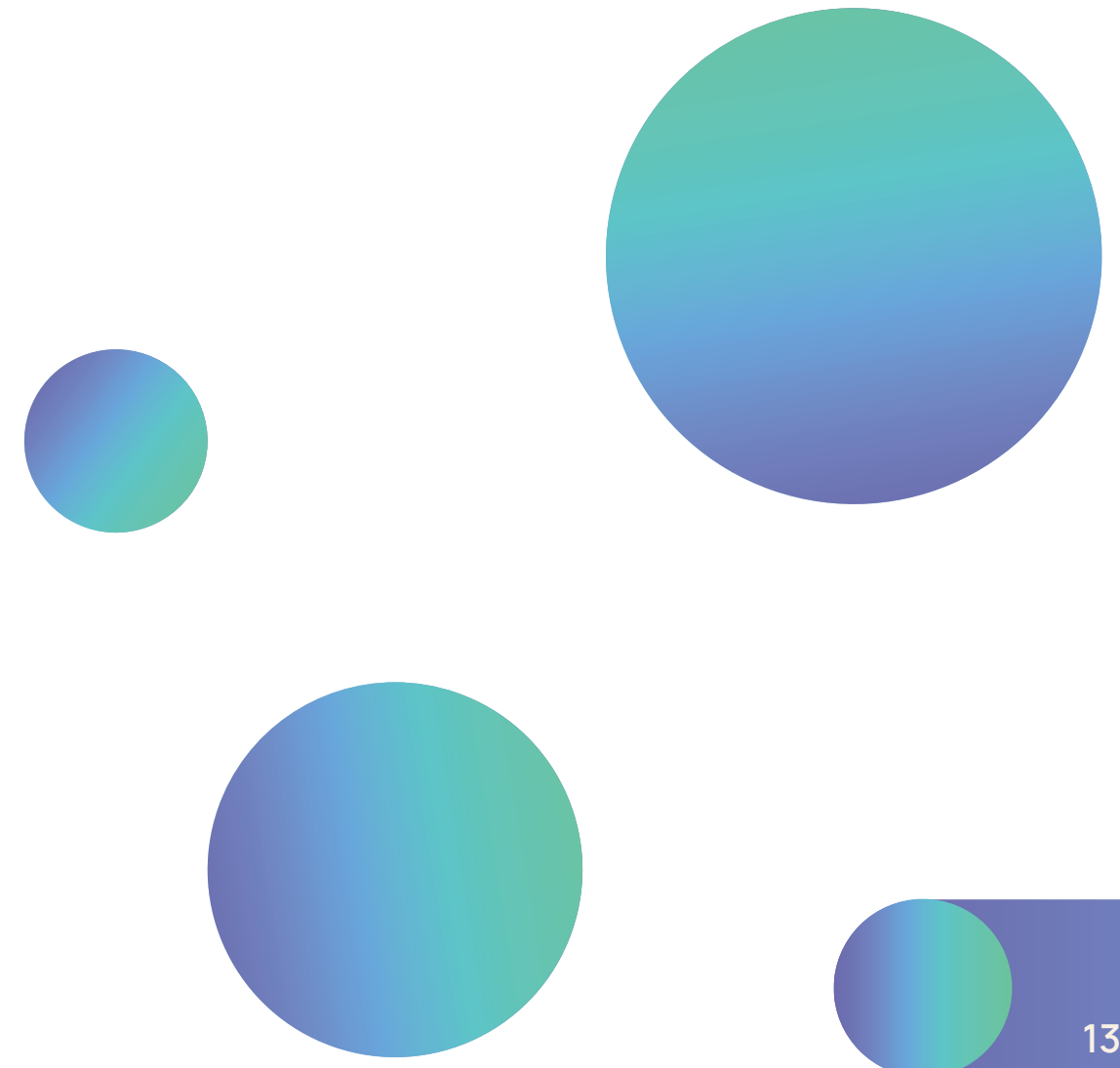
ART STUDENTS WORKSHOPS

by Ana Bedenko, KONTEJNER

Art students today are increasingly drawn to the possibilities offered by technologies such as XR, gaming, AI, and more. Their needs can best be met by designing engaging workshops tailored specifically for art students. These workshops aim to provide art students with a deep dive into the creative potential inherent in these technologies that are still not easily accessible. Through hands-on exploration and experimentation, participants can familiarize themselves with the basics of XR technologies, and learn how to integrate XR and similar tools into their artistic practice, or expand on their knowledge and advance their existing projects if they are already acquainted with these approaches and technologies.

Objectives
- exploration of creative possibilities
- technical skills development
- interdisciplinary learning
- critical thinking and analysis
- collaborative projects
- professional development: advancing/evolving students' art practice
- community building

Suitable approaches
Workshops should be tailored to meet the specific needs of students, considering their familiarity with technologies like XR or AR, as well as the tools involved. Depending on the students' field of art, workshops can focus on integrating these technologies into their current practices or exploring new avenues for development. It's crucial to align workshop topics and exercises with the professional requirements of the students.
Experimentation, exploration, and play should be encouraged, giving students the freedom to incorporate or adapt technology to their unique artistic expressions. For more complex subjects or tools, discursive elements such as discussions on ethical dimensions could be included.
If the students have a general artistic education background, the workshops shouldn't be overly specialized. Instead, we should ensure that the level of instruction is adjusted to meet the student's needs and skill level, ideally determined in advance during the workshop design process.
Both workshops that result in concrete projects that the students can incorporate into their portfolios, and the ones that simply encourage learning and exploration without tangible results, are welcome and should be encouraged.
See also:
→ Community building workshops: Creating a group
→ Hands-on workshops: Learning skills
→ Reflective workshops: Contextualizing XR

Target groups & how to source participants
Art students. Various art fields: visual arts, design, architecture, but also students of technical subjects that are exploring the artistic sphere of their work (creative coders, computer science, 3D developers etc.)
Possible sourcing approaches are either direct collaboration with schools (students are contacted and/or groups organised in collaboration with educators at specific schools/universities) or open calls.

Recommended group size
3 to 20 participants
Group size can vary depending on the workshop topic and format, as well as on the number and availability of mentors and available technical equipment.
Small groups should be large enough for collaboration and learning, while larger groups can facilitate a fruitful collaborative atmosphere. Smaller groups are especially suitable for in-depth learning and more advanced approaches to the subject. Larger groups can also be divided into smaller fractions for certain activities.

Suggested duration
3 hours to multiple days
Multiple day workshops could potentially work well in this case, especially if the participants are already somewhat familiarised with the topic or the tools and can potentially work on more advanced projects. It can also be a one-day workshop with a focused approach.

Venue and equipment requirements
The workshop venue should be adaptable to accommodate specific topics, ideally offering flexibility in accessing various equipment tailored to the students' specific artistic areas of focus. It should provide ample space for varying group sizes, allowing students to move around comfortably, explore freely, and engage in spontaneous collaborations or individual work. Additionally, private working areas, such as separate rooms or partitioned spaces, should be available for students who need privacy.
If the students are not really used to certain technologies (like programming or 3D modelling), it is important to reflect on the ratio of teacher and students. We recommend no more than 10 students working in pairs by teacher.
Depending on the topic, students may benefit from hands-on experience with DIY equipment, supervised by a mentor with expertise in the area.

Who can lead / facilitate this type of workshop?
- artists with some teaching experience
- creative technologists with some educational expertise
- art school professors

Example workshops
- Build your own virtual avatar
- XR Manifesto workshop
- New Narratives About the Metaverse
- Become a football player: 3D live scanning
- Introducing the 2.5D
- Minting yourself!
- The Annotated Garden workshop
- What a Mess - Walkshop
- Une rentrée numérique-Video mapping – Miguel Chevalier

GEN A-Z WORKSHOPS

by Vanessa Hannesschläger, Ars Electronica

XR is still an unknown medium for many people, especially younger children and seniors. This methodology shows approaches to mediate XR to general audiences, especially the youngest and oldest members of society.

Objectives:
- introducing XR as a medium to general audiences
- showcasing playful ways of engagement
- encouraging curiosity for the medium and reflection on its implications

Suitable approaches
In order to introduce XR as a concept, a limitation to focus on either only VR or only AR can be helpful when engaging with general audiences. Workshops that work with XR / Virtuality as their main topic should focus on specific aspects and bring in a hands-on activity to reduce the level of abstraction. Alternatively, workshops can focus on a content-driven topic, using XR as a mere vehicle of engagement. In the latter case, some space and time of the workshop needs to be dedicated to the introduction of the medium, which should also make a link between the given topic and the medium as such.

See also:
→ Topic-centred workshops: XR as a vehicle
→ Community building workshops: creating a group
→ Hands-on workshops: learning skills

Target groups & how to source participants
General audiences. Groups can be defined more narrowly (e.g. targeting only children, only families), but can also be a mix of people. This type of workshop can also be offered to groups that come in together (youth / senior / sports clubs, school classes, etc.).
Participants for this type of workshop can be general museum / festival / exposition / event audiences. They can be engaged through program announcements, social media outreach and general publicity.
It is recommended that participation in this type of workshop is offered for free.

Recommended group size
10 to 20 participants
Group size can potentially be extended for groups that come in together. For randomly assembled groups, smaller group sizes are recommended to enable active engagement of all participants.

Suggested duration
1 to 2 hours
For this type of workshop, duration should be limited and the activities should be carried out in one sitting without a break to interrupt the experience of the participants. Sensible concepts for multi-day workshops with limited durations of sessions per day are also possible for this target group.

Venue and equipment requirements
The venue needs to be large enough to comfortably host all participants and should be a reasonably calm acoustic environment. Offering seating options is recommended.
Specific equipment needs depend on the topic and content of the workshop. When working with immersive environments that audiences enter, scaling group sizes to available space is vital. When working with headsets or other types of gadgets, providing one gadget per two participants is recommended.
Making sure that all technical equipment is set up, functional, and ready to be used before the workshop begins is vital to avoid frustration among participants from this specific target group. Facilitation of handling technical equipment throughout the workshop duration has to be ensured so that less technologically versed participants also feel included.

Who can lead / facilitate this type of workshop?
- artists who would like to engage general audiences in their project
- museum/festival mediation staff

Example workshops
- Space messengers
- Build your virtual avatar
- Phygitale
- [FAMILY]TECH - Augmented Reality / Worldbuilding
- Become a football player: 3D live scanning
- The New Kind of Beauty: Collaborative Music Making in the Age of Algorithms
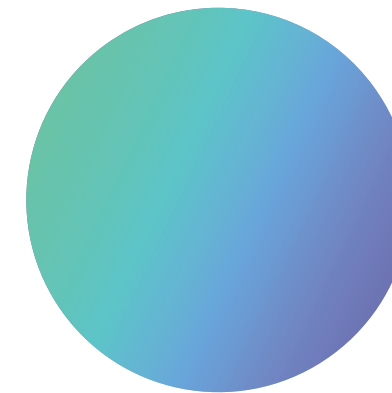
PROFESSIONALS WORKSHOPS

by Jesus Jara, L.E.V. Festival

This methodology is designed with professionals as beneficiaries in mind. By XR professionals we mean from 3D artists to spatial computing developers, but also cultural mediators, educators, curators, producer companies or distributors of XR projects.

Objectives
- knowledge sharing and non-competitive discussion
- network building among participants
- providing insights in innovative and cutting-edge tools, ideas or content
- skill building

Suitable approaches
There are many reasons why XR professionals would profit from a workshop, especially if the attendants are also peers in the field. Introductory workshops deal with a general approach to XR while professional workshops are much more specific. It is important to detect what are the hot topics or the common challenges faced by all professionals transversely, like distribution channels, lack of technological standardisation, sustainable methodologies of production, how to reach new audiences, artist's creative work and tools, authorship protection, to name but a few examples.

Also, extended realities, being as they are, a relatively modern field, allow for a more discursive approach, that allow the attendants to reflect on their own work, redefining their goals and the direction that the field is taking in general.

Depending on the topic is desirable to gather similar kind of professionals, like to present a brand new tool to a group of experienced 3D artists, or sometimes it is better to have a variety of professions, like to discuss sustainability measures among the production of XR projects, because some challenges need to be analysed from different angles and perspectives.

See also:
→ Community building workshops: creating a group
→ Hands-on workshops: learning skills

Target groups & how to source participants
Professionals of any field are usually organised in some sort, and the XR field is not an exception. Most countries have groups of discussion, where everyone can show their work, or where job offers are posted regularly. Depending on the nature of the group, they can provide a more specific or professional help, like cooperatives or associations, or they just simply gather people together with the same goals. Also, those groups are related to physical institutions like cultural centres, innovation labs, or industrial hubs. Identifying those business-oriented places help to gather an insight of the activity of a specific region in a specific field. These kinds of workshops can have a reasonable price.

Recommended group size
20 to 25 participants
While a more practical or hands-on workshop requires a smaller group of attendance, a more presentation-like approach works also well with more people. For the specific examples of *Realities in Transition*, where the workshops organised were very practicalw, a group of 20 or 25 max is recommended.

Suggested duration
2 to 3 hours
It is recommended to give time to this kind of activity. It is very common that these kinds of workshops raise questions and discussions among the participants and it's a pity to cut those valuable conversations once they take place. For that reason, 2 to 3 hours is recommended depending on the kind of topic.

Venue and equipment requirements
The workshop venue should be flexible to host both larger groups in presentation/auditorium format and small group workshops. It should provide visual support through projectors or screens and have a PA system. Apart from that, there are no specific requirements but some characteristics are more desired, like good acoustic conditioning, noise protection or access to natural light.

Who can lead / facilitate this type of workshop?
- professionals / developers of the specific tool that is in focus
- mediators in case of a more network oriented workshop

Examples of RiT workshops relating to this methodology:
- XR Manifesto workshops
- PatchXR Workshop
- The sound of Metaverse
- XR and performing arts
- Building Musical Worlds in VR (PatchXR)
- Minting yourself!

BEST PRACTICE: THE CRITICAL XR MANIFESTO WORKSHOP

by Boris Debackere and Sieta van Horck, V2_ Lab for the Unstable Media

The Critical XR Manifesto (C.XR.M) is an application created by *Realities in Transition* consortium that archives and creates a Manifesto. It's a movement exploring alternative, inclusive and sustainable XR production. C.XR.M is a tool that is used within a workshop context in order to archive statements on XR, order them in your own favourite way and create an 'common manifesto', making a list of the 10 most liked statements.
Through working with this tool, we experiment and support new narratives and creative processes while aggregating the community of European professionals to address cultural and social challenges raised by XR.

The Critical XR Manifesto: *https://cxrm.eu*

The Critical XR Manifesto workshop sets out to reimagine and expand on the current notions of XR while following a critical, reflective line of thought and envisioning a common, open, sustainable XR as promoted by the *Realities in Transition* project.
The interactive workshop addresses XR artists and professionals from Europe and beyond, inviting them to contribute their expert perspectives in a collaborative setting. It aims to create a critical framework, emphasising the significance of collective debate within the community rather than individual efforts.

Method
The session showcases the custom-built CXRM (Critical XR Manifesto) app enabling participants to contribute perspectives and statements to the *Realities in Transition* Manifesto. During the workshop, XR topics are explored in focus groups. Thematics can be chosen according to preference and relevance to cater to the event. A list of possible topics could entail:

Overarching topics
- XR ethics
- Sustainable XR
- XR and surveillance / privacy
- XR out of the box / experimental approaches

Audiences (accessible experiences)
- New ways to experience XR IRL / new displays
- XR in public spaces
- Collective XR experience
- Accessibility to impaired and non-human audiences
- Inclusive XR for underprivileged / low tech communities

Makers (technology / methodology)
- Mapping Creative and Activist XR practices and communities
- Educating and developing European XR talent
- New narratives / storytelling
- Creative tools & processes in XR production
- Open source
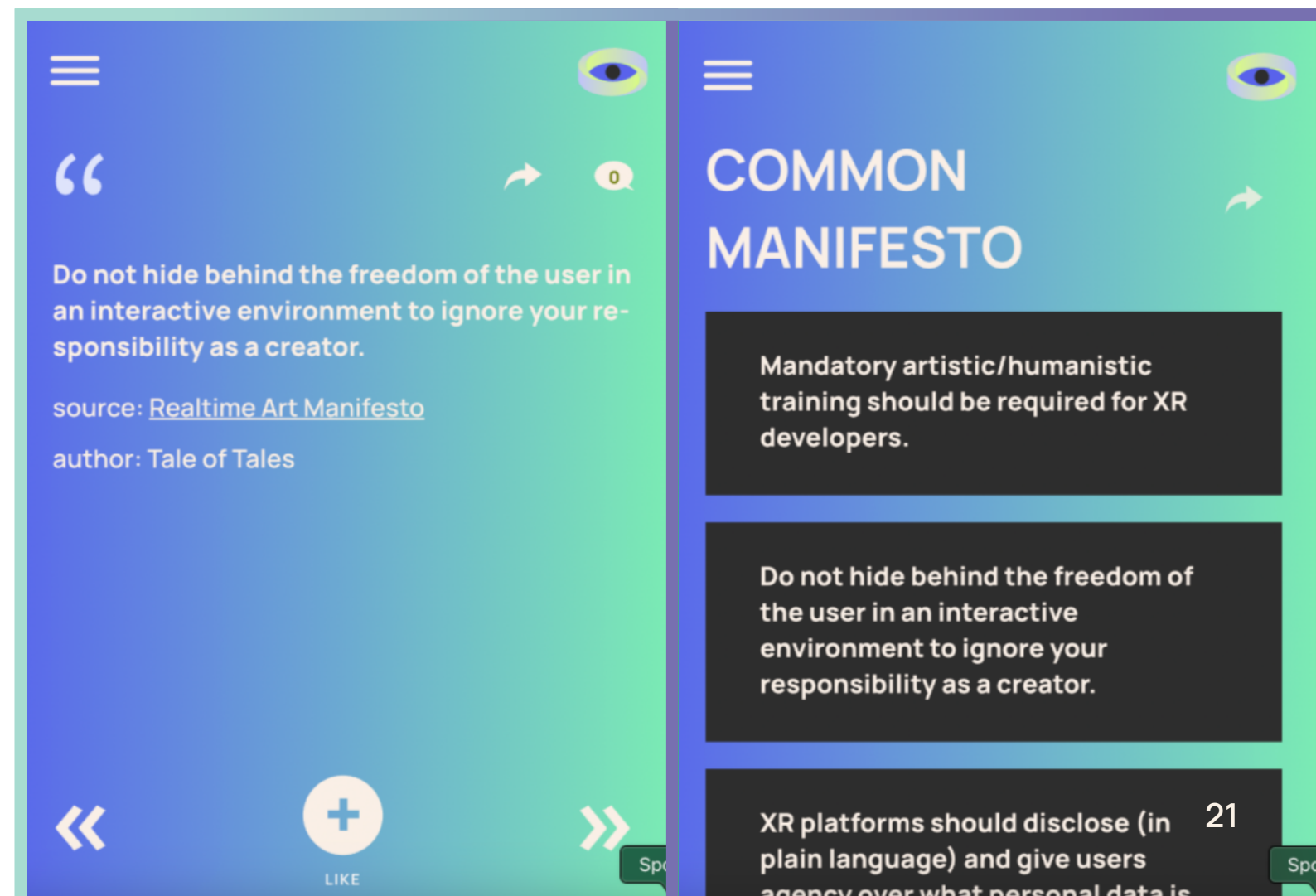
1. The workshop should kick-off with a short introduction and a walk through of the CXRM application so participants know how to use it.
2. The thematics to be explored are presented and groups are formed according to interests and number of participants.
3. The groups split off for an ideation session, having one group facilitator who sparks discussion and writes down ideas on post-it/paper. The group facilitator makes sure that everyone can speak and is heard. It is best to keep a minimum of 1 hour for the group discussion.
4. A minimum of 5 statements are formulated from the group discussion and directly added to the app by the group participants.
5. All groups choose a spokesperson who presents their statements and thought processes, opening the space for group share and discussion.
6. Concluding, all participants are invited to create their own Manifesto in the app, selecting their preferred statements that will feed into the common Manifesto.

Tools & materials
→ the CXRM App!
  https://cxrm.eu
→ big writing paper
→ post-its
→ pens / markers
→ chairs
→ tables
→ big space

Target groups
→ XR artists
→ XR professionals
→ XR experts in the field
→ (Art&Technology) students

Suggested duration
The suggested duration for this workshop is around 3 hours.

Recommended group size
15 to 30 people
The total number of participants can vary according to the number of facilitators.
We recommend having between 4 and 6 participants per group discussion, led by 1 facilitator each. Running this workshop with a total number of participants below 8 is not recommended.

Who can lead / facilitate this type of workshop?
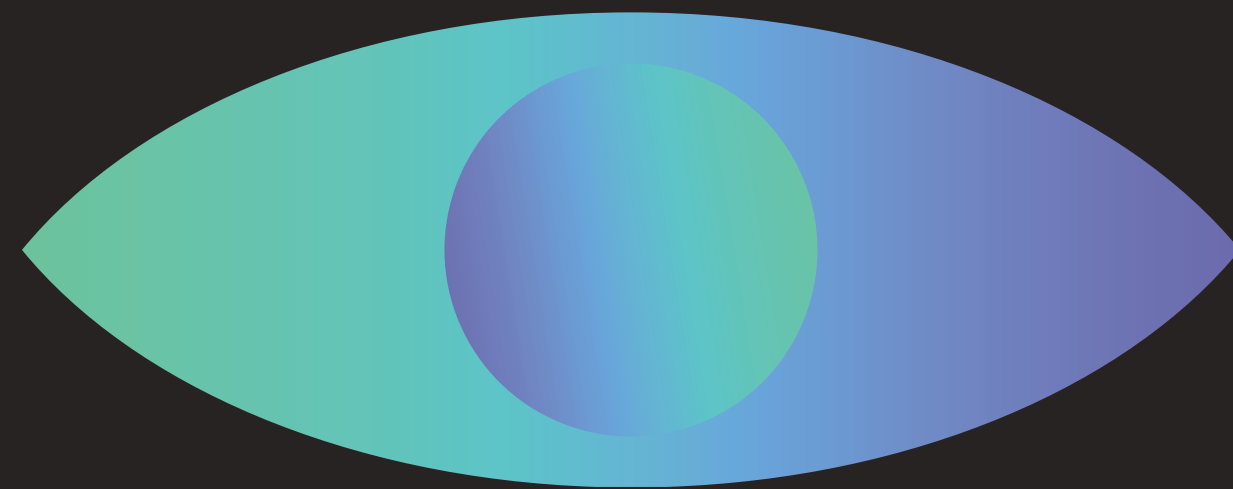XR experts
group facilitators, project managers

Examples of Critical XR Manifesto workshop implementations

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XR WORKSHOP METHODOLOGIES FOR DIFFERENT WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

#ALPHALOOP by Adelin Schweitzer © vog.photo

HANDS-ON WORKSHOPS: LEARNING SKILLS

by Louise Wadier and Lucía García, iMAL

As XR is created by applying a set of diverse technologies, creators are always interested in and required to learn the application of new tools and develop new technological skills to enhance their practice and stay up to date with current methods. Skill-focused workshops are therefore highly sought-after in the field of XR.

Objectives
- learning specific technical skills to create XR works
- artistic experimentation to create metaverse performances
- developing artistic potential
- production of solo or partnered XR works

Method
This type of workshops can begin with a topic and references presentation, instruction and skills mini-workshop, followed by the exploration of techniques and devices. Then the participants are invited to work intensively in self-driven creative explorations always with access to the leader of the workshops. Providing a set of tools this new, deep, and open-ended, is a rare chance for artists and platform creators to exchange ideas and get their hands directly on a new and evolving medium. The methodology adopted is considering the workshops as a moment of participative and collaborative creative time to explore new ideas and concepts, including working in small groups.

Target groups:
→ XR artists and creators
→ other professionals interested in an artistic or creative technology practice involving XR or immersive/interactive technologies
→ art and technology students

Recommended group size:
3 to max. 16 participants
Group size can potentially be extended if participants are split up into sub-groups. Small groups enable meaningful conversation and space for developing arguments, which is crucial for this type of workshop.

Suggested duration
1 to 3 days
For this type of workshop, it is advisable to work for a minimum of 1 day, and up to 3 days with group sessions of around 7 hours per day. This will allow the participants with the necessary time to experiment, and the leaders to answer the questions that arise in the way.

Venue and equipment requirements
This type of workshop requires a space where artistic experiments can be displayed (ideally exhibition spaces from 40 sqm on). Facilitation approaches can involve digital tools and environments, for which participants should bring their own devices and projection possibilities should be provided, or analogue materials (pen - paper - post-its).
In this type of workshop, participants should be invited to bring their own laptops while the rest of the equipment and materials should be provided by the host organization.

Who can lead / facilitate this type of workshop?
- XR artists
- XR creators and developers
- XR production professionals

Example workshops
- The Cookery: Patch your way to the metaverse
- XR and performing arts
- The Cookery: Creating Analog Virtual Realities
- Build your own virtual avatar
- Building Musical Worlds in VR (PatchXR)
- The New Kind of Beauty: Collaborative Music Making in the Age of Algorithms
- Introducing the 2.5D
- Public Space & Augmented Reality: Color Expansion
- What a Mess - Walkshop
- The Annotated Garden
- URN-Video mapping – Miguel Chevalier

REFLECTIVE WORKSHOPS: CONTEXTUALISING XR

by Vanessa Hannesschläger, Ars Electronica

XR, born as a new experimental medium, is developing into an economically relevant industry sector in the fields of art and entertainment, but also far beyond (extending to medicine, education, professional skill development - to name but a few examples). Creating spaces to reflect on contexts and ethical dimensions is therefore crucial.

Objectives
- opening a space for reflection on ethical dimensions and philosophical concepts of XR
- developing critical perspectives on XR as a medium
- developing critical audience opinions on technical implementation paths of XR projects

Method
When reflecting on the wider context within which XR is developing, defining a narrowed-down topic of discussion can be helpful. The focus might be on audiences and their experience (e.g. inclusive XR, collective XR experiences, XR in public spaces), on makers and methodologies (e.g. activist XR practices, new narratives development, open source tools, education needs), or on general issues (e.g. ethical dimensions of XR, privacy issues, XR and sustainability). This provides direction to participants. Participant groups can be homogeneous (e.g. a group of art students) to develop a common understanding, or very heterogeneous (e.g. artists, industry representatives, technology professionals, cultural institution representatives together in one space) to allow to understand all dimensions relating to the topics at hand. Facilitation is needed to guide the discussion and ensure the equal representation of different perspectives.

Target groups
→ Artists-in-residence
→ Art students
→ Professionals

Recommended group size
3 to max. 10 participants
Group size can potentially be extended if participants are split up into sub-groups. Small groups enable meaningful conversation and space for developing arguments, which is crucial for this type of workshop.

Suggested duration
minimum 90 minutes, can extend to a full day
Sufficient time has to be allocated to enable participants to develop their thoughts and come into meaningful conversation with each other. When extended to full day duration, appropriate structure has to be provided to direct and guide the conversation.

Venue and equipment requirements
This type of workshop should ideally be situated in a calm environment without too much distraction (a closed room) in order to allow participants to focus.
Facilitation approaches can involve digital tools and environments, for which participants should bring their own devices and projection possibilities should be provided, or analogue materials (pen - paper - post-its).

Who can lead / facilitate this type of workshop?
- culture professionals with experience in XR
- XR artists / scholars
- XR production professionals

Example workshops
- Critical XR Manifesto workshop
- What a Mess - Walkshop
- New Narratives about the Metaverse
- Minting yourself!
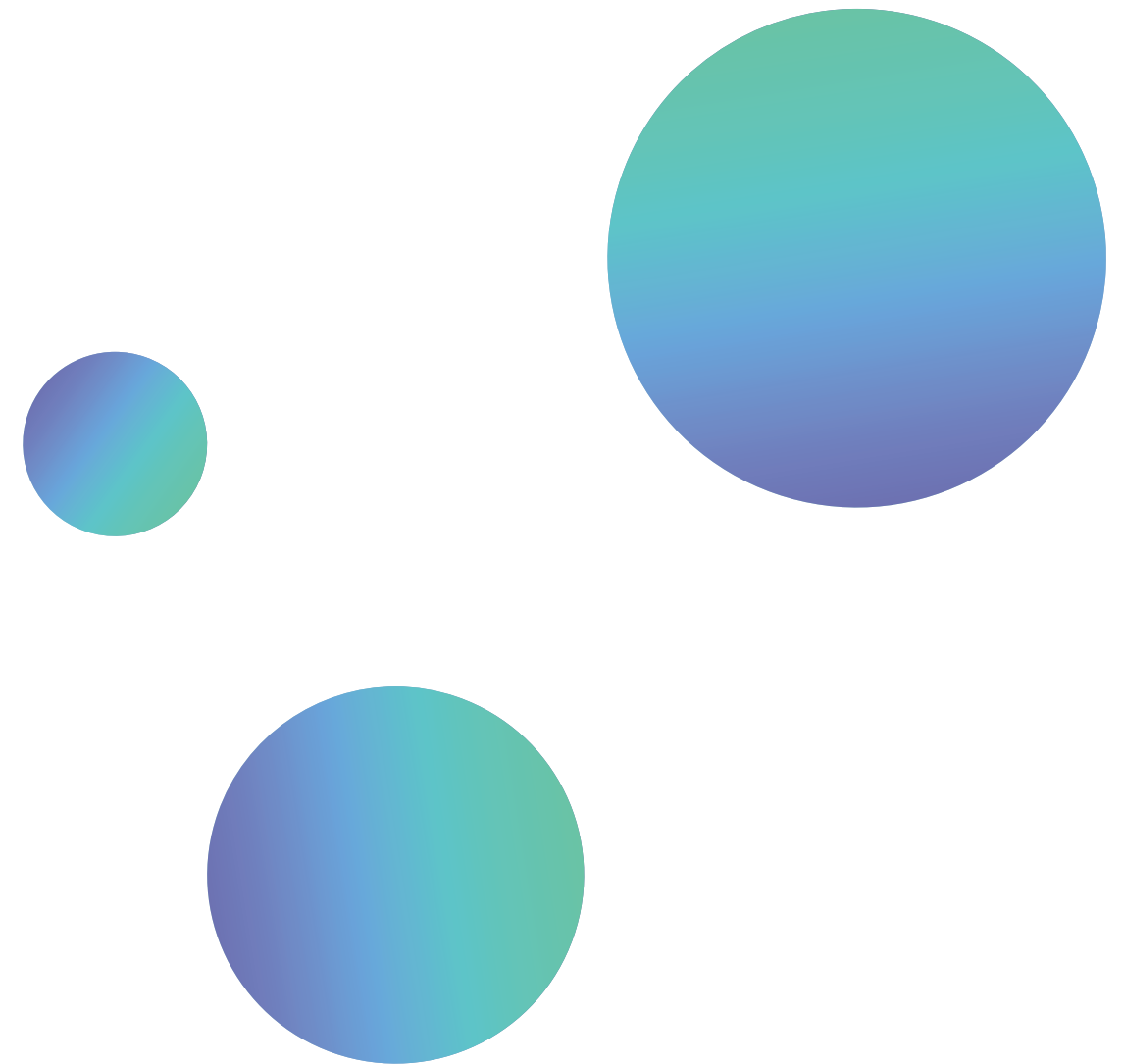
TOPIC-CENTRED WORKSHOPS: XR AS A VEHICLE

by Coline Perraudeau and Aurélie Delater, Chroniques

Some XR artworks claim to use immersive technologies and interactivity to generate empathy. In topic-centred workshops, the XR work serves as a starting point for discussion around a theme. While many other workshop methodologies presented in this booklet discuss the technology itself, this methodology focuses on aspects to consider when XR is merely used as a vehicle to discuss other topics.

Objectives
- create a friendly, fun and shared moment
- discover and embrace an XR work of art
- exchange ideas around a theme
- encourage personal expression and value participants' words
- knowledge production & education

Method
Empathy is the ability to understand and share another person's feelings. It implies the ability to put oneself in someone else's shoes, to perceive what they are feeling and to respond appropriately to their emotions. Empathy fosters compassion and mutual understanding.

Extended Reality (XR), and Virtual Reality (VR) in particular, have an empathetic dimension, as it enables users to enjoy immersive experiences that have the power to raise awareness of various subjects by arousing strong emotions, that will bring different situations and perspectives to life, and finally, that will engage people to put themselves in other people's shoes and understand their experiences in a deeper way.

In this workshop methodology, we focus on the empathetic dimension of XR to unfold and question a theme (environment, civic engagement, food, harassment, etc.). As the artwork is the starting point for the workshop, it defines the general theme to be addressed. That's why it's essential to carefully select a suitable artwork, so that it matches the objective of the workshop and the target audience.

This type of workshop may place great emphasis on the discovery of the work. This discovery must take place in the best possible conditions (see below for location and equipment requirements), so that participants focus on their impressions and sensations of the work and the topic discussed - and not on the technical devices.

A qualitative pause at the end of the experience is led by the mediator to gather impressions and create a discussion or debate. To keep the experience participatory, everyone should feel free to express their own opinions. Discussion time is shared between the mediator and the participants. It is the group that collectively builds knowledge about the work, based on observation, impressions and emotions.

This time can be extended by an artistic and digital practice workshop, where the tools will be used to work on and deepen the theme.

Target groups
→ Art students
→ General audiences

Recommended group size
8 to max. 10 participants
Group size can potentially be extended if participants are split up into sub-groups (each facilitated by a monitor). Small groups enable meaningful conversation and space for developing arguments, which is crucial for this type of workshop.

Suggested duration
max. 2 hours
The workshop should be of 2 hours, to create a climate favourable to exchange and discussion, but also to be able to deploy the mediation tools (particularly if there is an artistic and digital practice workshop after the mediation).

Venue and equipment requirements
Provide a venue for the workshop that is flexible (chairs and tables may be moved) and quiet, with electricity and Internet connection. It is extremely important

Who can lead / facilitate this type of workshop?
- cultural mediators
- artists
- activists

Example workshops
- Space Messengers
- Building Musical Worlds in VR (PatchXR)
- Introducing the 2.5D
- Public Space & Augmented Reality: Color Expansion
- What a Mess - Walkshop
- XR & Performing Arts
- Le Club XR - Creating an exhibition
- Une rentrée Numérique - Landscapes of emotion (AR)
- Familytech - Nature invades MÉDIALAB

COMMUNITY BUILDING WORKSHOPS: CREATING A GROUP

by Sieta van Horck, V2_ Lab for the Unstable Media

This methodology shows approaches to workshops that support community building around a collaborative programme, thematic or practice. Most commonly used to build relationships between artists and / or cultural & artistic professionals who do not know each other yet, but will start working together in a programme or residency.

Objectives
- community building
- communal learning
- soft skills: communication, social skills, empathy
- building social and psychological safety
- collaboration
- sense of belonging
- networking

Method
Bringing a group of separate individuals together requires community building practices that evolve around a shared purpose, considering that they come from diverse cultural backgrounds (in European projects for example). Our approach is to facilitate dedicated moments together, working on a shared purpose. Examples can be: building an art piece together, cooking together, group games, curiosity games and learning a specific skill together.
Building an Art Piece Together:
Invite participants to collaborate to create a unique art piece that reflects their individual perspectives and heritage. Each participant contributes a part of the artwork, incorporating elements from their own culture or traditions. The final piece symbolises unity in diversity and serves as a visual representation of the collective creativity within the group.
Cooking Together:
Propose a culinary journey where participants share traditional recipes and cooking techniques from their respective countries / cultures. Each session focuses on preparing a dish from a different culture, allowing participants to learn about the ingredients, flavours, and cooking methods unique to each cuisine. Through cooking together, participants not only bond over shared meals but also gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of each other's culinary heritage. A possible alternative to multiple sessions is to organise a dinner party where participants bring a local specialty, present it to the group and all share a good relaxed meal.
Group Games:
Engage in a variety of interactive games and team-building activities that promote cooperation, communication, and friendly competition. By playing together, participants foster a sense of camaraderie and mutual respect, transcending language barriers and cultural differences.
Here is an example that you can use, that can work with a large spectrum of groups:
The Storytelling Circle: participants gather in a circle to share (personal) stories, anecdotes, or imaginative tales inspired by a common theme or prompt. Each person takes turns contributing to the unfolding narrative, weaving together a tapestry of diverse perspectives and creative voices. Through this collaborative storytelling experience, participants engage their imaginations, build connections through shared narratives, and cultivate a sense of community and empathy.
Curiosity Games:
Facilitate an interactive and playful way for participants to share interesting facts, stories, and customs from their disciplines / cultures / home countries, or specific practices. Through a series of engaging challenges and quizzes, participants can test their knowledge, uncovering surprising similarities and differences along the way. Curiosity games encourage open-mindedness, and a spirit of exploration, sparking meaningful conversations and connections among participants.
Learning a Specific Skill Together:
Organise a hands-on workshop where participants collaborate to learn a new skill or craft that is meaningful to their shared interests. By mastering a new skill together, participants not only expand their knowledge and abilities but also strengthen their bonds through the shared experience of growth and achievement.
Through this array of activities, the group should learn to collaborate through which they build relationships of care and make kin.

Target groups
→ Artists starting a collaborative programme or residency
→ Experts starting a collaborative programme or practice

Recommended group size
5 to 10 participants
We recommend 1 facilitator for a maximum of 10 people.

Suggested duration
Multiple days, varying from 1 to 5 days
The longer the program, the better the bonds that will form, as more time spent together will allow for a deeper connection. Even if only one day is dedicated to community-building, we suggest at least two formats of activities, to achieve a great balance between skill learning and trust building.

Venue and equipment requirements
It is recommended to take the group to a place they are not familiar with, to step out of their normal environment and step into a shared space. This can be an external location, a park, nature, another external event location. This will help everyone to get on the same page and supports having a shared experience with allocated time to get to know each other in a relaxed way.

Who can lead / facilitate this type of workshop?
- The group needs to be facilitated by someone who leads them into specific tasks, a workshop, a group game, walk, cooking and eating together.
- Group facilitator
- Community builder
- Expert/tutor on certain topic

Example workshops
- The Annotated Garden
- XR Manifesto workshops
- XR Matinee
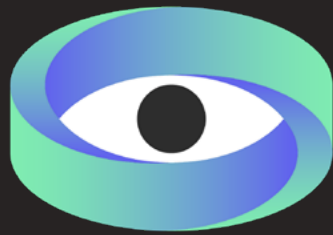
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