

# The Ultimate Cookbook

FOR CULTURAL MANAGERS

## Understanding Artistic Freedom

Artistic freedom encompasses a bundle of rights



## Artistic Freedom the Rights of Audiences

### �除 Censorship limits public access

Removing or altering artistic works deprives audiences of diverse viewpoints and narrows cultural life.

### 经济障碍 Economic barriers

Reduced public funding, forcing to increase ticket prices, limit access to culture for all.

### 虚假信息 Disinformation campaigns

False or manipulated online narratives can pressure institutions into cancelling works before audiences can engage with them.

## The Artistic Freedom Regulatory Framework in the EU

From equipping yourself with the tools to identify risks, to understanding the legal landscape, to taking action to defend and promote artistic freedom.

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INFOGRAPHIC VERSION

## International and European Legal Framework

Artistic freedom is firmly grounded in human rights law and is protected across multiple instruments at international and European levels.

### United Nations

Universal Declaration of Human Rights  
(Article 27) – cultural participation.



### Council of Europe

Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union  
(Articles 11, 13, 21, 22) explicitly protects artistic freedom, expression, non-discrimination, and cultural diversity.



### European Union

European Convention on Human Rights  
(Article 10) protects artistic expression, interpreted broadly by the ECtHR.  
(Article 27) – cultural participation.



### Audiences have a right to culture!

International law (UDHR Article 27, ICESCR Article 15) protects everyone's right to access and enjoy the arts.

### Safety concerns

Threats, harassment, and violence undermine the willingness of audiences to attend cultural events and weaken public trust in cultural spaces.

### Education matters

Equal access to arts and cultural education strengthens participation, critical thinking, and future audience engagement.

# Risks and Challenges

## Mobility barriers

### ! Signals to watch:

- Frequent last-minute visa denials or delays affecting artists from specific countries or groups.
- Border officials questioning artists about their work or beliefs
- Scrutiny of lawful expression.



## Political pressure on institutions

### ! Signals to watch:

- Sudden governance changes that give political appointees more control over programming or hiring.
- Funding calls with vague criteria, such as “respecting national values”.
- Repeated rejections of critical or experimental art without clear reasons.



## Censorship and self-censorship

### ! Signals to watch:

- De-programming of announced shows.
- “Postponements” without clear reasons.
- Unusually restrictive house rules.
- Legal threats (i.e. cease-and-desist letters over content, dubious copyright takedown notices, defamation allegations).



## 7 tips for daily practice



**Keep written records** of interference, risk assessments, legal threats, and decisions affecting programmes.



**Track signals to watch:** vague “values” criteria, repeat rejections without reasons, “pending visa” defaults, and shrinking international line-ups.



**Communicate with audiences as partners:** explain public interest, provide context materials, and invite dialogue rather than retreat.



**Request transparent grant procedures** and written justifications for funding decisions.



**Build a copyright playbook:** know quotation, parody, and pastiche exceptions; seek legal review before releasing content.



**Adopt an artistic freedom policy** and a crisis-response plan for backlash and disinformation (Q&A notes, contextualisation, spokespersons).



**Balance security with openness:** proportionate measures, trained staff, liaison with police, and clear public messaging.



For further information read:

**The Ultimate Cookbook for Cultural Managers:**

[The Artistic Freedom Regulatory Framework in the EU](#)

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