

Beyond Borders

Regional and Cross Borders Collaborations

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Why are we here?

- Festivals as spaces of connection
- Cross-border collaboration beyond projects
- Sharing experiences, challenges & practices
- Building sustainable cultural relationships
- Regional & European perspectives

Festivals are temporary events, but the relationships they create can last much longer

Why does collaboration matter today?

- Artist mobility
- Audience development
- Knowledge exchange
- Shared resources & capacities
- Visibility for smaller cultural scenes
- Co-productions & partnerships
- Cultural diplomacy & trust-building

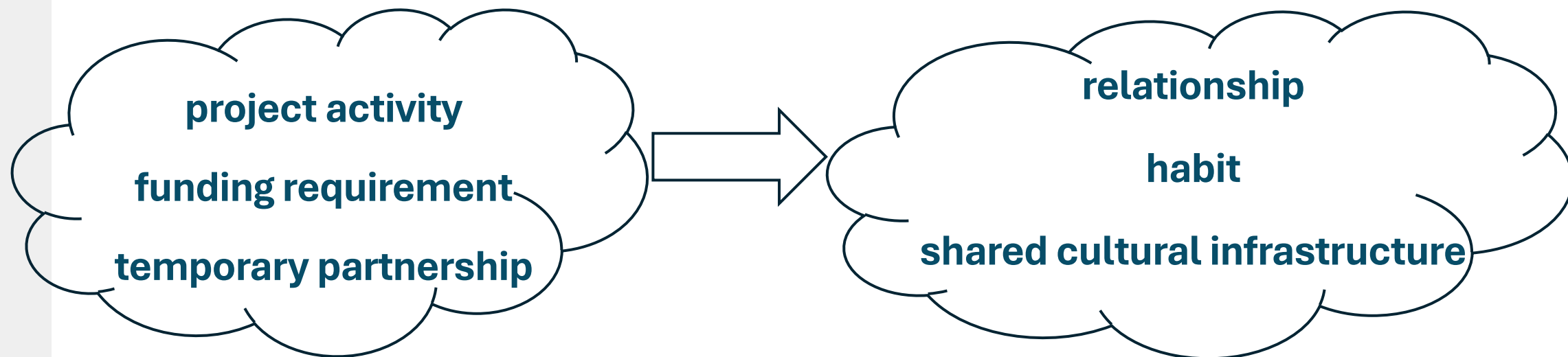
In smaller cultural ecosystems, collaboration is often not a luxury, but a necessity

Regional / Balkan perspective

- Shared histories & cultural memory
- Similar audiences & cultural references
- Fragmented systems & institutions
- Different funding realities
- Administrative & structural barriers

We are often geographically close, but institutionally far apart

From project logic → relationship logic



A project has a timeline
A relationship has memory

Main questions for today

- 1. Why do festivals collaborate across borders today?*
- 2. What makes partnerships sustainable?*
- 3. How does collaboration influence:*
 - artistic programming,*
 - audiences,*
 - knowledge exchange?*
- 4. Are international partnerships sometimes easier than regional ones?*

1. Why collaborate?

Artistic curiosity?

Audience development?

Funding opportunities?

Shared values?

Visibility?

Regional solidarity?

Personal relationships?

What usually comes first: idea, artist, partner or funding?

What need does collaboration respond to?

2. What makes collaboration sustainable?

Trust?

Continuity?

Shared vision?

Communication?

Institutional support?

Personal relationships?

Time & capacity?

*Sometimes collaboration starts from funding opportunities,
but the most valuable partnerships are the ones that continue
after the project ends*

3. How does collaboration shape festivals?

Artistic programming?

Audience development?

International visibility?

New formats & ideas?

Team development?

Learning & exchange?

*If audiences do not understand why collaboration matters,
then collaboration remains mostly professional*

4. Regional vs international partnerships

Are international collaborations easier?

Why do we sometimes know Western European festivals better than neighbouring ones?

What prevents stronger regional cooperation?

What kind of support is missing?

Can regional cooperation become the basis for stronger European partnerships?

Smaller festivals & cultural ecosystems

Smaller festivals often:

- Work with limited resources,
- Stay closer to communities,
- Adapt faster,
- Build trust directly,
- Experiment more freely.

Smaller festivals may have fewer resources, but often have stronger direct community connections

Key takeaways & Final reflection

BEYOND BORDERS

***Collaboration starts with projects
Community starts with trust***

***Thank you for being part of the conversation
Milica Popović***