



# Inspirational Guideline: Dance Communication Lab

## Beyond Front@ – Bridging Periphery

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Creative Europe Project (2023–2026)

This guide provides an in-depth overview of the Dance Communication Labs (DCL) organized within the Beyond Front@: Bridging Periphery project. It aims to inspire cultural stakeholders by presenting the project's objectives, methodology, examples of good practices, and recommendations for future initiatives aligned with EU priorities such as mobility, inclusivity, cultural diversity, sustainability, and digital innovation. The annual theme for this cycle is “Virtual,” offering an optional but inspiring framework for program development.

### **Introduction**

Beyond Front@: Bridging Periphery is a Creative Europe project designed to strengthen contemporary dance networks across Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia, Poland, Romania, and Sweden. The project promotes international collaboration, cultural exchange, and professional mobility among dance artists. By fostering dialogue and creativity, Beyond Front@ contributes to EU cultural policy objectives, including audience development, equal access to culture, and innovation through digital tools. The annual theme “Virtual” encourages organizers to explore hybrid formats, virtual presence, and digital artistic practices.

### **The Concept of Dance Communication Lab (DCL)**

DCL is a short-term exchange format where six professional dancers from partner countries collaborate through improvisation—the most distinctive creative process in contemporary dance. The methodology emphasizes democratic collaboration, equal participation, and creative dialogue across genres and disciplines. Each DCL concludes with a public performance, often site-specific, showcasing embodied imagination and collective creativity. The theme “Virtual” can inspire integration of digital elements, such as streaming performances or incorporating virtual audiences.



## EU Priorities in Action

The DCLs reflect key EU cultural priorities:

- Mobility: Artists travel across borders to engage in collaborative creation.
- Inclusivity: Equal opportunities for participants from diverse backgrounds.
- Cultural Diversity: Exchange of practices and traditions from six countries.
- Sustainability: Encouraging eco-friendly travel and resource-conscious events.
- Digital Innovation: Exploring virtual and hybrid formats to broaden access.

## Inspirational Examples from DCLs

- Kraków, Poland (Krakow Dance Theatre)

The first Dance Communication Lab in Poland took place on September 1–3, 2023, organized by Krakow Dance Theatre as part of the Beyond Front@: Bridging Periphery project. The workshop was led by Paweł Grala and featured Toni Flego (Croatia), Ryuzo Fukuhara (Slovenia), László Szekrényes (Romania), Ana Kuszarecka (Poland), Dorina Kiss (Hungary), and Yrsa Heijkskjöld (Sweden). The lab aimed to democratize the creative process and foster collaboration on equal terms. The public presentation on September 3 was part of the “Rollercoaster. Collectors of Sensations” program in collaboration with Cricoteka. Photo documentation by Grzesiek Mart highlighted the integration of intermedia elements, resonating with the annual theme “Virtual.”

- Budapest, Hungary (CEDT)

Held from November 15–17, 2023, during the Sissi Autumn Dance Week at Bethlen Square Theater, this DCL focused on the embodiment of imagination. Mentored by Csilla Nagy, a Hungarian dancer-choreographer, the lab explored intention and action in performance space. Participants included Anni Erika Koivusalo (Sweden), Ema Križič (Slovenia), Mariana Gavriciuc (Romania), Mia Zalukar (Croatia), Dorottya Podmaniczky (Hungary), and Sławomir Juszcak (Poland). The final improvised performance on November 17 bridged cultural perspectives and encouraged reflection on hybrid artistic practices inspired by the “Virtual” theme.



- Sfântu Gheorghe, Romania (M Studio)

Organized as part of the FLOW5 Festival (June 17–23, 2024), this DCL concluded with a public workshop presentation on June 19 at Háromszék Dance Studio. Coordinated by Simona Deaconescu, the lab emphasized democratic collaboration and networking among dance artists from partner countries. The event provided free entry to the public, fostering inclusivity and audience engagement. Opportunities for digital documentation and virtual sharing were explored, aligning with the annual theme “Virtual.”

## **Recommendations for Future DCLs**

- Ensure inclusivity by broadening outreach to underrepresented communities.
- Promote sustainability through green travel options and eco-conscious venues.
- Integrate digital tools for hybrid collaboration and documentation, leveraging the annual theme “Virtual.”
- Strengthen audience engagement through interactive formats and discussions.
- Develop mentorship programs to support emerging artists and foster long-term networks.

These recommendations aim to enhance the impact and accessibility of future DCLs while aligning with EU cultural strategies.

## **Annual Theme: Virtual**

The theme “Virtual” serves as a conceptual anchor for organizers, encouraging exploration of digital dimensions, virtual presence, and hybrid artistic practices. While not mandatory, it offers a creative lens through which activities can be contextualized. Examples include live-streaming performances, integrating virtual audiences, and using digital platforms for collaborative creation.



## Conclusion and Resources

Dance Communication Labs have proven to be a powerful tool for fostering international collaboration, creativity, and cultural exchange. By embracing EU priorities and implementing the recommendations outlined above, future DCLs can continue to inspire and connect artists across Europe. For more information, visit the Beyond Front@ project website or contact the local partners in your country.

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