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PRESS RELEASE

EMPACT - Empathy and Sustainability: The Art of Thinking Like a Mountain

Official Launch of EMPACT Project

EMPACT – "Empathy and Sustainability: The Art of Thinking like a Mountain" is an exciting 24-month project, co-funded by the European Union's Creative Europe program, which is expected to be completed in 2024.

Ever since Aristotle, the arts have been associated with the arousal of empathic responses towards the suffering of others and, consequently, with the development of a compassionate stance. In what ways can engagement with works of art affect people in emotional ways so as to become more compassionate towards nature and non-human beings and thus affected in morally positive ways?

The EMPACT project adopts an innovative approach in advocating for climate crisis, based on the idea that the concept of empathy can shed new light on how we understand and embody sustainability in the arts. The project lies on two interconnected pillars: (i) the facilitation of artists to produce, through sustainable practices, art that fosters an empathic stance towards non-human beings and nature, and thus effectively incorporate the concept of sustainability in their artistic production; (ii) the necessity for artists and cultural workers to become themselves empathic and resilient individuals in order to deal with the post-pandemic social and economic crisis.

Key role players, including, artists, sustainability experts, philosophers and social scientists will engage in effective dialogue to explore the importance of empathy as a central means to encourage individual sustainability orientations and broader environmental sustainability, with the ultimate action of tackling climate change.

From this, EMPACT will deliver a holistic, well-designed, series of activities and tools that will provide artists and cultural players with the knowledge and tools to address complex scientific and social conflicts generated by climate change, namely:

A training program on Empathy & Sustainability pathways for arts that will be developed by relevant experts, and will be tested and delivered during the project with artists from all partner countries through landmark and experiential workshops.

An artistic program that involves co-operation and creation of innovative art-projects, comprising the creation / curation of 2 contemporary art exhibitions that address sustainability within an empathic and creative context.

A series of art/artist orientated projects, including, a residency program offering artists the opportunity to work with international collaborators and present their work to the public; socially-engaged art interventions, to collaborate with the organization and local people, communities and/or art students to initiate and implement a socially engaged art intervention, tackling specific problems related to sustainability and the promotion of circular economy practices; and, collaborative interdisciplinary artistic projects.

The development of the Sustainable Circular Economy (SuCiE) Platform to enable artists and companies to post and trade waste, spare or unneeded material with other artists cost effectively.

EMPACT is led by the Cyprus University of Technology and scientifically coordinated by Assistant Professors Efi Kyprianidou and Yannis Christidis (Department of Fine Arts).

The above measures will be implemented with the collaboration of nine European partners ([University of Technology](#) (Cyprus), [ID22: Institute for Creative Sustainability](#) (Germany), [Fondazione Lamberto Puggelli](#) (Italy), [Espacio Rojo](#) (Spain), [National Academy for Theatre and Film Arts \(NATFA\) “Kr. Sarafov”](#) (Bulgaria), [Nature, Art & Habitat \(NAHR\)](#) (Italy), [Umetnostna Galerija Maribor](#) (Slovenia), [Wisefour](#) (Cyprus), and [Vorres Museum](#) (Greece)) offering diverse experiences and know-how, which represent a broad, balanced, and targeted geographical area.

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NOTE TO EDITORS

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