

Creator Doctus (CrD): a position paper

The major aims of the Creator Doctus (CrD)¹ project are to raise awareness, provide a framework for third cycle doctoral level² study in the arts³ and to increase the recognition of artistic research⁴ in and through the arts.

Background: The key progressive step in European Higher Education was made by the Ministers of Education through the *Bologna Declaration*⁵ 1999, followed in 2005 by *The Salzburg Principles* which aimed to specifically address doctoral education as part of the *Bologna* process. Yet 22 years later more than 50% of the countries signed up to *Bologna* still do not recognise the third cycle in higher arts education and many of those remaining countries that do, only recognise it if it is validated through a 'traditional' university, which has its disadvantages and limitations for the arts sector⁶.

The problem: For the Arts a critical problem in developing the third cycle occurs where countries divide the higher education sector into 'traditional' and 'technical' universities, often referred to as the '*binary divide*'. In this situation the arts are generally located within the technical universities and as such are prohibited from independently delivering third cycle programmes and awarding doctorates. This is compounded in countries, where the arts are to be found in autonomous academies or within university structures, here we still find research funding for the arts severely restricted and where artistic research - *producing new knowledge and understanding by conducting original investigation in and through the creative process*, is largely not recognised.

The resolution: We therefore urge, ministries, policy makers, funders, and institutional leaders to develop policies and build appropriate support structures that help:

- establish a research culture within the arts institutions;
- embed research through practice in the curriculum in all cycles of study, to enhance the quality of learning and teaching and make our graduates more competitive internationally;
- make research explicit in the teaching staff's⁷ contract and allocate dedicated time⁸ to carry this out. Thus, enabling the teaching staff's professional development and remove their severely restricted access to research funding, which in turn impacts on the quality of the teaching and resources available to students, and negatively impacts on culture and the creative industries.

It is widely recognised that the arts and artistic research has a major role in, and makes considerable impact⁹ on, public discourse, creativity, cultural and societal inclusion, the environment, the economy and business including the creative industries, public policy, professional practices, industry, public health and, significantly, wellbeing. **It is therefore imperative that at European and National levels political decision makers, ministries, quality assurance agencies, funding bodies, higher education and research institutions fully support the development of the third cycle in the arts, acknowledge it as being at the same level as the sciences and the humanities and enable the arts to fully access research funding.**

- 1 Creator Doctus (CrD) is a 3-year ERASMUS+ funded international project, involving Athens School of Arts, Greece; l'École nationale supérieure d'arts de Paris-Cergy, France; Vilnius Academy of Arts, Lithuania; Glasgow School of Art, United Kingdom; Merz Akademie, Germany; The Royal Danish Art Academy of Fine Arts, Schools of Visual Arts, Denmark; Gerrit Rietveld Academie, The Netherlands, and EQ-Arts International Quality Assurance Agency for the Arts, The Netherlands as the partners, developing 3rd cycle programmes.
- 2 The 3rd Cycle (e.g., PhD or other doctoral award) of the *Framework of Qualifications for the European Higher Education Area* refers to, and is the equivalent of, level 8 of the *European Qualifications Framework* (EQF).
- 3 The creative and performing arts and design including architecture, dance, design, film, fine art, media, music, photography, theatre.
- 4 See the *Vienna Declaration* 2019 a common policy paper describing key features of Artistic Research (AR) <https://societyforartisticresearch.org>
- 5 See the *Bologna Declaration* 1999 - <http://www.ehea.info/page-ministerial-conference-bologna-1999>
- 6 Including non-arts supervisors lacking arts subject expertise and inappropriate research methods and methodologies.
- 7 A large majority of staff teaching in arts institutions are professional practicing artist/designers/musicians etc.
- 8 A percentage of the remunerated contract time (e.g., a day a week) or sabbaticals etc.
- 9 Cultural and creative sectors - European Commission - <https://ec.europa.eu/culture/cultural-and-creative-sec>