

Africa- Europe Creatives Connect

May 10, 2019



In a nutshell

Africa-Europe Creatives Connect strives to present innovative ideas and models that challenge the way we see creativity from an African and a European perspective, inspire shifts in perceptions and give pointers on the future of the creative industry.

Through presentations in a TED-style format, over the course of 1 day, creatives from Africa and Europe can expose their vision of their creative process under various facets (the way it fosters social inclusion, the way it can be marketed, the way it honors heritage while innovating, etc). Attendees walk away with new ideas that can make a real impact on their work and having widened their networks. Talks are filmed to enable dissemination with a wider audience.

Background

Culture has always been considered by the European Union (EU) as a key component of social and human development which contributes to foster economic growth and social cohesion, in Europe and in partner countries alike. This priority has been expressed in different documents and strategies¹, including under the Africa-EU Partnership². Creative industries are the practical expression of this cultural component, showing above-average growth and creating jobs particularly for young people while strengthening the European and African common principles and values.

The European Union Delegation to the African Union (AU) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, is celebrating Europe Day 2019 under the theme of Cultural Exchange through different initiatives. One of the activities that will be carried out, besides the Africa-Europe Creatives Connect, is a two-week music residency that will bring together musicians from Africa and Europe for collaboration and co-creation. The residency will culminate with a jointly recorded EP and a concert at the Ethiopian National Theatre on the 9th of May.

1. https://ec.europa.eu/culture/policies/strategic-framework/strategy-international-cultural-relations_en
https://ec.europa.eu/culture/news/new-european-agenda-culture_en
https://ec.europa.eu/culture/news/2018/new-work-plan-culture-start-2019_en

2. <https://africa-eu-partnership.org/en>

Africa-Europe Creatives Connect: What, Where and Who?

Creatives Connect aims to bring together top creatives and culture shapers from Europe and Africa to Addis Ababa, for a one-day workshop. Scheduled to take place on May 10 at Shega Warehouse, it will facilitate knowledge sharing and networking among those in the sector.

The creatives involved in this process include graphic designers, photographers, film makers, musicians, architects, fashion designers, sculptors and writers among others. Interaction among artists from different creative industries will enrich this event with diverse opinions and points of view, allowing to respond to their different interests and to enhance the contribution of each one.

Existing European and African networks of creatives - ADCE (Art Directors Club of Europe - <https://www.adceurope.org>) and LAfrique Cest Chic (<https://lafriquecestchic.world>) serve as pillars for the initiative by contributing to the substance of the event and possibly ensuring its continuity. This way, the one-day workshop would also pave the way for a Euro-African collaboration between networks.

Overall Objectives:

Key results expected from the organization of the one-day workshop are the following:

- Bring about cultural and experience exchange among creatives
- Develop the capacity and widen the horizon of young creatives in Ethiopia and beyond
- Create a platform for networking and collaborating
- Bring Africa and Europe closer through art
- Spur and inspire young creatives to use their medium towards realizations of national and continental aspirations

Workshop Format

The day will comprise of different sessions that are participatory and engaging. The sessions will feature talks delivered by creatives on specific topics, Q&A and networking times. Talks will be filmed and posted on YouTube for wider dissemination.

Topics

Creatives from Africa and Europe will give talks (lectures) using the below questions as possible topics. Each talk will be followed by a Q&A from the audience.

1. How do I use my art to impact social change?
2. How can I keep my creative work as authentic as possible?
3. How do I make my art sustainable as an entrepreneur?
4. What national and continental issues can be tackled through design?
5. How do I price my creative work?
6. Where do I get inspiration for my work?

The speakers can inter alia:

1. Showcase exemplary projects that have contributed in shaping culture
2. Highlight the impact of their work in:
 1. Achieving cultural inclusion and integration
 2. Embracing authentic identity
 3. Preservation of heritage
 4. Linking creative sectors and creative economy
3. Share the philosophy and thought process behind their work
4. Share their specific cultural context to ensure a cultural exchange
5. Highlight the role of art and design in bringing societies together

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