Arts Collaboratory

COMMON LANGUAGE

Accountability, see Self-Accountability

Affinity

Refers to the action, intuition and sensation of searching to build yourself and to build with the other. We're talking of desires, dreams, your present situation, economical, social or political issues and all that you think is worth fighting for. This action will lead an engagement with the other that at the other end will find an ally. But beware of the differences you might leave out, these might come in handy later on.

Banga Meetings

These are proposed to be Nomadic (or Know-madic for knowledge) meetings that merge the previous tent and institutional residencies strategies but have their main purpose in care for each organisation and knowledge sharing specific to the support of each organisation and/ or its programme(s).

Care, see self-care

Collective Pot

The common pot is a multi-use term that refers to a shared locus of resources. The idea behind the pot is that all contribute to the pot, and all can take from the pot according to predetermined guidelines.

Commonwealths

Commonwealths refer to the wealth we have collectively through sharing resources. This idea works against the neoliberal ideal of the wealth of the individual and rather focuses on the range of resources – time, knowledge, care – that we have collectively. In terms of activity common wealth is translated into the common pot.

Decentralisation

Decentralisation refers primarily to the proposed dispersing of power and responsibility to all organizations in Arts Collaboratory. In so doing, the work is shared and the decisions are non-hierarchical.

Degrowth

Degrowth is the principle of acting against the influence of the world that says bigger is better. In our work, and in conventional society, we are encouraged to always have bigger number, more outputs, more programmes – degrowth acts against this. Degrowth is the principle that we focus on quality and not quantity.

Degrowth is seen as a direct form of sustainability. The implementation of the concept of Degrowth requires the implementation of un-learning or re-learning in order to reach a "proper postcolonial realm."

Dissensus Facilitation

The idea behind dissensus facilitation is the understanding that we will disagree, that there is productive potential in our disagreement, and that we can manage this to have good outcomes.

Bridging theory and praxis:

1. To reveal a dissensus / how do we know we have a dissensus?
Would people recognize dissensus, for example when people are silent?
2. Disagreement is not dissensus: different situations and various degrees
a) during assembly
b) in smaller meetings
c) online and not face-to-face
3. Silence, discussion or crisis: we have to find out the deep reasons for the crisis -> it can be cultural reasons or emotions.
4. Prevention: dialogue, listening, self-organization, clarification
5. Mediation to work towards a productive potential of a consensus (but keeping in mind that we need constructive dissensus)
6. What happens if a dissensus/ crisis / confrontation is very strong ? sanctions? exclusion?

Ecosystem

The use of the word ecosystem suggests that like in nature, our relations are about life cycles, germination and maturation. The ecosystem is the system of connections, relationships and linkages between all the organisations that make up the commonwealth of the Arts Collaboratory.

In the context of the AC the word ecosystem is also understood as it relates to each organization's own context or local ecosystem and the resources that are related specifically to those ecosystems which, by means of the resource map, can also be used to nurture the commonwealth. (See Resource Map)

Entanglement

Entanglement is the visual language of our connections, relationships, and thought processes. Entanglement suggests we should respect the complexity of our relationships and knowledges rather than conceive of them linearly or horizontally.

Ethics

Ethics are the principles that govern our approach to our work. Why and how we so what we do. See Section C for further discussion.

Failures, validating (≠ celebrating failures)

Failures are an important part of learning. Because Arts Collaboratory is about unlearning/ learning and study, failures must be taken into account as fountains of critical thinking and questions. Importantly, because AC does not subscribe to conventional neoliberal society – we do not need to 'hide' our failures in order to 'get more money/ status" but rather can collectively share and learn between the organisations that make up AC.

Failures refers to not being able to meet expectations, not achieving a specific goal. For AC FAILURE = OPPORTUNITY. Failure is not based on simply listing flaws but rather reflecting on them for further growth. From failure we can collectively share and learn.

Steps in failing:

1) Identify the failure
2) Accept it. Remember that what resists, persists. We must learn to embrace failure.
3) Reflect on: what happened, why it happened and how it happened.
4) Share with others
5) Review possible options

Ways to deal with failures:

1) Open up a space to talk freely about failures (NO JUDGING ZONE).
2) Self Evaluate : Internal and External
3) Share with others (Study Buddy, Banga, Triangles)
4) Reflect on feedback
5) Enjoy and go onto the next one.

Hospitality

The use of the term hospitality in AC refers to a traditional hospitality for 'affinity groups who can find a home at AC'. This is different from the way that hospitality is often understood, in relation to tourism, wealth and inequality. Priority will be given to organic and natural processes of building trust and confidence.

Lifeline Plan

Within AC, and due to the fact that AC should not subscribe to more conventional societal pressures, we should subscribe to lifelines rather than deadlines. This means that 'milestones', 'outputs', 'activities' and 'reports' within more conventional funding language change to become focused on the life, strengthening and care of the participating organisations and their work.

Micropolitics

As organizations in AC we focus both on macropolitics and micropolitics. Macropolitics appears in the general goals we have as a group, how we carry out our programs, and all the agendas to be accomplished. However, in order to build commons, the dimension of micropolitics is also essential, and refers to the smaller scale relationships among people and their relation with the world.

Micropolitics is about caring, hospitality and openness.

For AC Micropolitics are constructed upon the affective and often inarticulate parts of everyday life such as sensations, intuitions, beliefs, feelings and emotions and implemented through material and concrete, often seemingly mundane, ways of doing things.

We are together in a group, but each of us has our own history, culture, language, learnings, fears, wishes and dreams. We need to be aware of our behavior and how can this affect the others. Our way of talking, the words and the tone we use. Our corporal attitudes, the time for caring we give ourselves.

It is also important to think of how we can build transversality in order not to reduce the different singularities. As Guattari says, not to look for stupefying and childish consent, but to cultivate the dissent and the production of singular existence.

There are different ways that we can develop for implementing micropolitics in AC and into each organization. Some of them are: externalise power relationships, develop new ways to empower people, build consent, make visible. This also includes ways of doing things, like:

- Opening doors
- Respecting the other: washing dishes/ men and women on the same level
- Doing things together: creating commitment and sharing commitment
- Giving away control
- Rotating tasks
- Assuming responsibility and learning how to do things for yourself in self-organization
- Giving opportunities to recognise and externalise disagreement and to share those disagreements or get them aired out
- Translating AC documents
- Creating clear definitions
- Being open
- Being flexible

The values of each organization should be coherent with AC micropolitics. E.g. the organisation thinks about self-care.

Micropolitics can be a way to turn our terms from the future plan into action leading to a consciousness and to a change.

Mutualism

Mutualism is the way two organisms of different species exist in a relationship in which each individual benefits from the activity of the other. Similar interactions within a species are known as co-operation. Mutualistic relationships build new ways of coexistence. Mutualism can be contrasted with interspecific competition, in which each species experiences reduced fitness, and exploitation, or parasitism, in which one species benefits at the expense of the other. AC proposes to have mutualistic relations between all the partner organizations.

Neo-liberalism

A form of political economic thought that favours free-market capitalism. It is the dominant state of political economic thought throughout the world. It announces that it has the solution - through 'free' markets and entrepreneurship, and by opposing states and bureaucracies - to the problem not only of racial hierarchies and racism but to patriarchy and heteronormativity. We know, however, that these solutions are false. The context in which AC struggles continue to be local and global divisions of power according to race, patriarchy and heteronormativity, and not just (as) capital and labour.

Openness

Is our ethic principle to exercise our willingness for being permeated both between the organizations that comprise the AC ecosystem and by other organizations, persons, and processes around and beyond AC ecosystem. It implies vulnerability and honesty in openly exercising our responsibility to evaluate our situations in order to communicate our willingness and availability to share (and be shared) our resources within the constraints of self-care, self-limitation, care for others and Degrowth.

Open Source Knowledge

Means that the knowledge created by the AC members will never be privatized (including this document). Instead it is an open knowledge to be shared and discuss in our contexts and others. Is a key aspect of our shifting of paradigm because it embraces the dissolution of authorship which allows the construction of collective empowerment and builds new ways of giving and taking.

Organisation, see self-organisation

Paradigm Shift

A paradigm shift is a change in the basic assumptions, or paradigms, within the ruling form of thought. To enact a paradigm shift means to completely change the basic premise of how something is thought about.

Post-colonial

In principle postcolonial means after colonial rule (or after independence). "However, it also refers to the continuation of a racist approach to governance and state control that was established by the dominant capitalist european or north-american cultures (often referred to as neo-colonialism). Importantly, this continued state of control is still felt and understood throughout the world and not only in previously colonised societies. Postcolonialism inhabits our bodies. It is not only outside of us but deeply rooted within us."

Radical Imagination

Radical Imagination, like the paradigm shift, is a complete rethinking of things that are otherwise unthought of. This is important for developing AC and our own work, which seeks social change and therefore seeks to imagine a different world.

Resource and abilities

Resources are assets and capacities that enable things to be done. Importantly in AC, resources are not just financial but are also human, knowledge, time and space resources. Within the AC framework, this wider understanding of resources and the sharing of these resources, contributes to our common wealth.

Resource Map

The Resource Map is a document that tracks each organisation's resources and indicates where the lacks occurs. The Resource Map has a number of functions including; assisting us to know more about each organisation, serving as a way of sharing and supporting each other but also as a way of giving accountability and feedback to each other.

Self-Accountability

The basis for our understanding of this concept is rooted in love, trust, openness, self-care, self-limitation, self-management, self-organization and interdependence. As such, it transcends but does not supplant the concept of responsibility to oneself and to the ecosystem. In practice it is manifested in open communication regarding commitments to the AC ecosystem and its processes and the use of AC funds. It is intimately linked to the diversity of circumstances found in each of AC partner organizations, and in the interest of both self-care and interdependency it requires timely honest assessments and communication of each partner's ability to achieve their commitments.

Self-Care

Care, and care of the self and each other is an important political objective for the members of AC. Self-care means taking care of AC and the 'health' of each organisation and its people. Self-care is different from being self-serving; it is a generative, collective and supportive action in a time when we are pushed to disregard our own 'health' for the purposes of production and outputs.

Self-Limitation

In order for decentralisation, mutualism and trust to function in AC, organisations and individuals would have to limit themselves to only what's best for all involved. This means that each should take only what one needs and contribute as they can. This will not be controlled or enforced by the group but can only be managed by the self.

Self-Organisation

Self-Organisation is the decentralised coordination of our activities as the AC by delegating responsibility to all of the organisations in AC. In so doing the work is shared and the decisions are nonhierarchical.

Shared Management / Governance

Similar to self-organisation, but refers directly to the shared responsibility of governance and the structure by which we share the different roles and responsibilities this concerns the AC network, within the self-limitations of each partner. The non-hierarchical system of rotational responsibility is part of the mechanism for shared management.

Self-Sustainability

This serves as the cornerstone of AC. In AC, sustainability does not only refer to financial sustainability in the sense of always having enough funds but also refers to rethinking what it means to sustain the intentions of the work we do. Self-sustainability refers to relying on internal valuations of sustenance, rather than external, conventional ideas of value, resources and success. Further it focuses on the importance of collective input and reliance on one another for sustainability. This includes care and interdependence of our sustenance, not only in funds but in other resources as well.

Solidarity

'Oneh' in Arabic means solidarity/ reciprocity, helping each other to carry out tasks that individually impossible. To be human is in question at all times. Being human right now implies a continuous struggle with the fragmentation that capitalism perpetuates. Solidarity is to be aware of this and to take a stand upon it. Solidarity is of the other, because the other is also oneself. Solidarity is knowing that you are walking along with everyone else.

Study

Study is a kind of practice of reflection and possibly spending time with each other, with material, information, and with our work in a process unlearning / learning and striving to better understand what we do and our worlds. Study is a way to reflect on our work and is implemented as a substitute for the convention of reporting in funding, study suggests that we contemplate and give thought to our practice, the practice of others. Importantly, study does not need to produce a 'result', 'thing' or a 'credit'; in the spirit of open source knowledge and solidarity sharing with others is a crucial aspect of study. in the spirit of open source knowledge and solidarity sharing with others is a crucial aspect of study.

Study can be broken down into:

1) Active study: it is at the same time a theoretical reflection and a concrete practice.
2) Collective study: Collective study is done with others and shared with others;
3) Self study: Self-study is study of the self. Like self-care, self-study is about studying the AC network and the work we do as the 'self'. It is not self-indulgent, but rather a self-reflexive, self-critical process.

Sustainability

Sustainability is considered in global terms. The principles of the AC reflect a holistic approach that includes degrowth as a practice that is necessary for the sustainability of human beings on the planet. See de-growth and self-sustainability.

Time Strike

Time Strike is not only a slogan but also a mechanism proposed for AC to support our power to change our relationship to time. In other words, it's a call for a strike against the current use of time - living from one deadline to another, being busy, feeling anxious and overwhelmed which harms our well-being and interpersonal relations. We should therefore create different time, real time, time for activities that make us feel alive. It's the beginning of building our own rhythm in our practices.

Tooling

Tooling refers to various ways of sharing our un/learning processes with others within AC as well as outside of AC. While study as a form of being together and conversation is the core, on-going activity of AC, it is important to share what we are studying outside of the group. This way, tooling replaces reporting and demonstrational practices.

Translocal

Translocal refers to localised embeddedness with deep connections to the wider world. AC is translocal because each organisation has a commitment and connection to its own place, but through AC it is connected and works with a wider geography of people, ideas and practices.

Trust

Trust is one of the key aspects of the relations between those in AC. Trust is the primary point to which the network may turn at points of difficulty.

Love, respect, confidence and motivation are essential elements in a continuing process of developing trust. AC requires permanent high levels of trust, and good communication is key to allowing trust to continue to grow in order to enrich institutional and personal relationships and to avoid doubts and fears. Virtual and physical encounters are important tools. Affinity plays also an important role, creating trust in an organic and unforced way, communication gives us the opportunity to discover affinity with others and to find answers to our doubts avoiding the diminishing of trust. Trust implies responsibilities related to the effort of being connected to the network. It is important to feed our own communication as the AC organization in order to keep each other updated and to generate trust between us for the development of encounter and sharing.

Unlearning / Learning

Unlearning is the act of changing paradigms. It entails rethinking the things we have learned within conventional and restrictive learning environments. To unlearn is to question preconceived, and assumed 'truths'. In so doing we (re-)learn alternatives and better understand our own assumptions. This is important for developing AC and our own work, which seeks social change and therefore seeks to imagine a different world.

Wealth, see commonwealths