

# **Komunikace s komunitou v galerii G18**

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Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně

Fakulta multimediálních komunikací

Ateliér Arts Management

Akademický rok: 2024/2025

## ZADÁNÍ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE

(projektu, uměleckého díla, uměleckého výkonu)

|                   |                                      |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Jméno a příjmení: | MgA. Veronika Barrera                |
| Osobní číslo:     | K22429                               |
| Studijní program: | N0288P310001 Arts Management         |
| Forma studia:     | Prezenční                            |
| Téma práce:       | Komunikace s komunitou v galerii G18 |

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Jazyk zpracování: **Angličtina**

**Seznam doporučené literatury:**

ASTAHOVSKA, Ieva; BRSAKOVSKA, Jana; ČECHOVÁ, Veronika; DITTEL, Kris; GRÜN, Daniel et al. *Islands of kinship: a collective manual for sustainable and inclusive art institutions*. Praha: Jindřich Chaloupecký Society, 2024. ISBN 978-88-6749-634-1.  
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GARTNEROVÁ, Eva; MAŇASOVÁ HRADSKÁ, Helena; ZELINSKÝ, Miroslav; JAKUBÍČEK, Vít; VALENTOVÁ, Petra et al. *Nenávratné stopy: tradice a udržitelnost jako roční téma galerie G18 = Irreversible traces: tradition and sustainability as the annual theme of the G18 Gallery*. Zlín: Univerzita Tomáše Bati, Fakulta multimediálních komunikací, 2019. ISBN 978-80-7454-870-3.  
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Datum zadání diplomové práce: **2. prosince 2024**  
Termín odevzdání diplomové práce: **23. května 2025**

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## **ABSTRAKT**

Diplomová práca sa zameriava na komunikačné možnosti s komunitou univerzitnej galérie G18. Cieľom diplomovej práce je pomocou kvantitatívneho výskumu analyzovať, ako vybrané kultúrne organizácie alebo projekty pristupujú ku komunikácií s ich príslušnou komunitou, so zameraním na „sense of belonging“ u čo najširšieho spektra publika a na princípy „placemaking“. Výsledkom práce je návrh formy komunikácie a odporúčaní vo forme infografiky, ktoré vychádzajú z výskumných dát a zároveň sledujú hodnoty a poslanie galérie G18.

**Kľúčové slová:** univerzitná galéria, galéria G18, komunita, belonging, placemaking, komunikácia

## **ABSTRACT**

The thesis focuses on the potential for communication with the community of the G18 university gallery. The primary objective of this thesis is to undertake quantitative research analysis of the manner in which selected cultural organizations or projects engage with their respective communities, with a particular emphasis on the cultivation of a "sense of belonging" among a diverse range of audience and the implementation of "placemaking" principles. The thesis's culmination is a proposal for a communication format and recommendations in the form of an infographic. These are based on research data, and are in alignment with the values and mission of the G18 Gallery.

**Keywords:** university gallery, G18 Gallery, community, belonging, placemaking, communication

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my thesis supervisor, Mgr. Eva Vázalová Gartnerová, Ph.D., for her guidance and inspiration.

Thanks also go to the professionals in the field of culture for their participation and sharing their experiences – Róbert Blažko, Martina Johnová, Peter Radkoff, Tímea Szőke, and Zai Xu.

I am equally grateful to my university classmates and lecturers, as well as to the Arts Management studio and the G18 Gallery, for the opportunities and inspiring creative collaborations.

Finally, I would like to thank my friends, colleagues and family for their unwavering support during this challenging period.

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## INTRODUCTION

The project was initiated with the objective of exploring the potential of design to improve both the environment and communication, particularly within the context of a university gallery. One reason is that society is facing a variety of global challenges related to mental health. It is therefore important not only to make cultural content accessible to the widest possible range of recipients but also to encourage cooperation, community relationships, meeting and dialog, and efforts for mutual understanding. By cooperating and linking everyday experiences with culture and art, it is possible to transform the environment around us.

The thesis focused on exploring the meaning of community building within a cultural-artistic organisation, with an emphasis on participation and the sense of belonging. The concept of community is closely linked to 'placemaking', which involves creating spaces that are vibrant, safe, and accessible. Placemaking relies not only on participation and the active involvement of individuals and organisations, but also on addressing the needs of the people who use these spaces.

In addition to supporting community life, culture and the arts, it is also important to address well-being. Global organizations highlight the potential of museums and galleries to contribute to social wellbeing, provide opportunities for diverse audiences, support education, and foster reconnection among individuals. Furthermore, the thesis explores the concept of 'belonging' – an essential aspect of 'well-being' – and its significance in motivating inclusion among as many people as possible, particularly within cultural institutions. Fostering a sense of belonging demands more than physical accessibility: it requires approaches and communication that prioritise relationship-building, reflect values, and acknowledge all the diverse identities.

One of the aims of this work is precisely to explore pathways for communication. One of the chapters examines inclusive and respectful communication, which can encourage a sense of belonging and strengthen community ties.

The practical section of the thesis explores how two selected cultural organisations communicate and engage with their audiences, using case studies for analysis. The research continues with semi-structured interviews conducted with experts from the cultural sector. The analysed responses and case studies serve as sources of inspiration, drawn from successfully operating cultural organizations of a different type than a university gallery.

The aim of the thesis is to develop a set of recommendations and suggestions for the G18 Gallery, aligned with its core values.

## 1 THE CULTURAL AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

The accessibility of culture represents a current topic and an ongoing process of removing barriers. It is important for the audience to get involved in the activities of cultural organisations. Adopting a more open and inclusive approach to the programming, communication, and integration of museums, galleries, and other institutions can help strengthen shared identity, experiences, and communities.<sup>1</sup> The author further posits that culture exerts a positive influence on social cohesion, the dissolution of social barriers, the motivation to enhance the surrounding environment, and the encouragement of creativity and diversity.<sup>2</sup>

The cultural and creative industries, that is to say, the production of creative goods and services, are chiefly distinguished by their high levels of added value, the utilisation of intellectual property, and their considerable impact on quality of life. This chapter commences with the definition of the term 'museum' by International Council of Museums (ICOM), a definition which encompasses the core activities of cultural institutions across the cultural sector.

"A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing."<sup>3</sup> In accordance with the ICOM definition and prevailing societal trends, cultural institutions are expected to fulfil a role that extends beyond their conventional functions, encompassing the creation of an environment and space conducive to community support. This thesis focuses on university gallery operations, aiming to enhance approaches and inclusive communication with communities.

It is generally acknowledged that galleries are considered to be specialised museums of fine arts, which provide members of the public with access to artworks of a guaranteed standard of quality. According to the ICOM definition, they belong to the museum network despite certain differences.<sup>4</sup> The network of cultural institutions also includes university galleries

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<sup>1</sup> KAŠPAR, *Co dokáže kultura*, 2024, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> KAŠPAR, *Co dokáže kultura*, 2024, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup> INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF MUSEUMS, *Museum Definition*, © 2022.

<sup>4</sup> JELÍNKOVÁ and BRABCOVÁ, *Specifika galerií – muzeí výtvarného umění*, 2019.

and museums, which are of equal importance. The 'UNIG' web platform facilitates collaboration between university galleries with a view to inspiring each other in the domains of audience engagement and community development.<sup>5</sup>

## 1.1 The Establishment of University Galleries

In 1683, the collection of artifacts belonging to the collector Elias Ashmole was donated to the University of Oxford. The establishment of the first university museum open to the public was predicated on this collection.<sup>6</sup>

The establishment of university galleries in Czech Republic and Slovakia has been associated with their development at art schools since 1990s. The oldest and most active university galleries, namely the AVU Gallery, which is the gallery of the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague and is used as an exhibition venue for students. The MEDIUM Gallery was founded in 1991 at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava. In addition to its function as a conventional exhibition space, the venue also operates as a communication hub within the academy, thereby extending its influence beyond the immediate environment. In Czech Republic, since the year 2000, a number of university galleries have been established in conjunction with newly founded schools. These galleries, however, do not possess collections. Recent examples of such institutions include the House of Art at Jan Evangelista Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem (2016) and the youngest G18 Gallery, which was established by the Faculty of Multimedia Communications at Tomas Bata University in Zlín (2018).<sup>7</sup>

Since 2000, there has been a marked increase in the general interest in university galleries and museums, a development that has been supported by the establishment of the International Committee for University Museums, galleries and Collections (UMAC). The emergence of novel initiatives and the concomitant surge in interest can be attributed to two overarching factors: technological advancement and the pursuit of sustainable audience engagement in gallery operations.<sup>8</sup> The engagement of the audience is part of the broader ongoing transformation of cultural institutions and creative industries, which are striving for accessibility, inclusion, and a sustainable system.

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<sup>5</sup> UNIG UNIVERSITY GALLERIES. *First Online Database of University Art & Design Galleries*, [2020].

<sup>6</sup> KROUPA, *Metody dějin umění Metodologie dějin umění* 2, 2010, p. 325.

<sup>7</sup> GARTNEROVÁ, *Univerzitní galerie a jejich potenciál pro mezinárodní spolupráci*, 2020, p. 13.

<sup>8</sup> GARTNEROVÁ et al., *Irreversible traces: tradition and sustainability as the annual theme...*, 2019, p. 226.

## 1.2 University Galleries and Their Role

In recent years, there has been a noticeable proliferation of university galleries and museums worldwide. These institutions have evolved beyond the scope of mere collection or exhibition activities, marking a significant advancement in the realm of higher education. Doctor E. Gartnerová specifies "the university galleries as collection-based or non-collection-based institutions, established and operated by higher education institutions or their subparts (faculties, studios, departments, etc.)." In addition, she describes these spaces as non-commercial, with a primary function of establishing a conduit between the academic sphere and the public domain. The purpose of this conduit is to showcase artistic creations and design prototypes.<sup>9</sup>

K. Zářecká describes a particular role of the university galleries in the structure of cultural and creative industries. Each individual gallery is unique in terms of its history, founding, location, space, curatorial approach, vision etc. The most important common function is the presentation of work by the youngest generation of future designers and artists. In addition to demonstration of skills, students may acquire experience in the management of a gallery or curation of exhibitions.<sup>10</sup>

As E. Gartnerová observes, the function of university galleries as cultural resources for students and the general public is twofold. Firstly, they can provide accessible art education, and secondly, they can facilitate interdisciplinary cooperation and intercultural approaches. As she suggested previously, this type of gallery can be regarded as a conduit between the academic and public spheres, the formal and informal domains, and the emerging and the established approaches. It emphasizes the necessity for engagement with the audience for the effective functioning of a sustainable and inclusive institution.<sup>11</sup> It is evident that university galleries have the potential to function as both a hub and creative centre. In this capacity, they can serve as a platform through which the public and the audience can engage in informal education in art and design. This engagement can be facilitated through the provision of accompanying programmes.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> GARTNEROVÁ, *Typology and Audience Engagement of University Galleries*, 2021, p. 124.

<sup>10</sup> ZÁŘECKÁ, *University galleries stand for tradition, exhibition practice and educational potential*, 2020.

<sup>11</sup> GARTNEROVÁ et al., *Irreversible traces: tradition and sustainability as the annual theme...*, 2019, p. 229.

<sup>12</sup> GARTNEROVÁ et. al., *Irreversible traces: tradition and sustainability as the annual theme...*, 2019, p. 232.

## 2 AUDIENCE AND COMMUNITY IN CULTURE

As previously indicated by experts in the subchapter on the roles of galleries, working with people – whether visitors, the general public, students, or academics – is key and gives meaning to the institution's existence. An important indicator of any cultural institution is the level of attendance, with the audience forming the focal point in terms of the establishment of long-term relationships. The establishment of relationships is predicated on the cultivation of understanding of the audience, thereby enhancing opportunities for communication. The aim of this work is to examine audience engagement and relationship dynamics from a critical perspective. It is therefore beneficial to comprehend the distinctions between these concepts and to clarify who can be considered a member of a community.

One of the 'Study on Audience Development. How to place audiences at the centre of cultural organisations' by the Creative Europe program introduces three main categories of the audience. The first one – audience by habit, referring to a group that regularly attends or participates in cultural activities, and their barriers are relatively easy to overcome. An audience by choice, for whom participation is not a habit, people who rarely attend an exhibition or concert, due to lack of interest or life stage reasons. They also do not share any specific social or cultural disadvantage. The third category of people who are hard to reach are those who do not participate in any cultural activities; they are called the 'audience by surprise'. They may be indifferent, sometimes hostile, or linked to social exclusion.<sup>13</sup>

Authors Slezáková and Grůň describes the audience as all people who regularly or occasionally visit the exhibition space, based on information on social networks or posters etc. On the contrary, a community consists of people who are regularly visiting place and want to keep in touch, and might participate in various activities. The term 'community' also refers to people who are closely involved in the organisation and have a closer relationship with the institution, such as curators, cultural workers, management, students, artists, designers, teachers, partners, friends, collaborators from other institutions, suppliers etc.<sup>14</sup>

The authors of the study highlight a few areas / factors that need to be addressed. The first is the place, or the physical space in which activities and confrontations occur. This includes inviting people to a regular visits, repeating experience and using unconventional locations. The second factor is the key digital space for maintaining relationships,

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<sup>13</sup> BOLLO; MILANO DA; GARIBOLDI & TORCH. *Executive summary, Study...*, 2017, p. 7–8.

<sup>14</sup> ASTAHOVSKA; BRSAKOSKA; ČECHOVÁ; DITTEL; GRŮŇ; et al. *Islands of Kins...*, 2024, p. 183–184.

participation and sharing information, experiences, or potentially receiving feedback. The third factor, co-creation, has been identified as an area of action for cultural organizations, with the aim of deepening experiences and participation to establish longer-term relationships. A study demonstrates that support for audience development support can redefine the role of culture in a rapidly changing social situations, initiating changes within organisations and communities. However, it is evident that active collaboration with the audience and implementation of audience-centric programmes necessitate resources, particularly human capacity.<sup>15</sup>

## 2.1 The Concept of Community

This thesis focuses on communication with the community, a term that can be perceived as a very broad. Therefore, it is necessary to define it. The word 'community', which is frequently used and associated with certain values and inclusion, is now permeating various fields, including society, public spaces, living, lifestyle, social networks, art and design, and marketing. Understanding and perception of the term 'community' also influence the work with it.

The concept of community is often based on the collective perception of a place and related to the relationships formed between people and their culture in relation to a specific area. In sociology, the term 'community' can have different meanings. One definition refers to a place where a group of people interact with each other. Another meaning of the term refers to the social system itself, which is the group of organisations that help people meet their needs. Lastly, sociologists use the term to describe a shared sense of identity among a group of people.<sup>16</sup>

Interaction within the community is related to the formation mutual relationships. In the interview, Karina Kottová discusses the importance of building long-term relationships with the audience. She gives the example of working inclusively with a group, with whom they have collaborated for a long time to develop a complementary programme for the exhibition. This form of audience engagement benefits both sides, as it enables the organisation to receive direct feedback on-site from the selected group on site.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> BOLLO; MILANO DA; GARIBOLDI & TORCH. *EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, Study...*, 2017, p. 8–11.

<sup>16</sup> FLORA; FLORA & GASTEYER, *Rural communities: legacy and change...*, 2016, p. 14.

<sup>17</sup> BARTLOVÁ & TODOROVÁ, *Karina Kottová: Dlouhodobé vazby jsou pro mě strašně důležité*, 2025.

Nowadays, the word 'community' is used to describe various places and projects aimed at revitalising the cultural scene, encouraging civic engagement and supporting minorities. The author of the article even refers to it as a social trend, while the need to belong to a community remains fundamental to human nature. This current topic relates to the use of community projects to promote social change, which requires long-term impact and sustainable operation. According to her, the essence of community life is not only about bringing individuals together but also about distinguishing oneself from those with different views. While no community can be completely inclusive, they can aim to be open and continuously seek ways to include as many people and as much diversity as possible, regardless of background or social status. The sociologist explains that communities are not a new social phenomenon; people have always created them, only their character has changed over time.<sup>18</sup>

In this thesis, the term 'community' refers to people connected by activities in a place or institution / university. As mentioned above, this refers to individuals interested in participating, contributing utilising, as well as creating space. For the gallery team, understanding the concept of community may help to build ideal long-term relationships, understand their audience better, and use this knowledge to create more tailored programmes and accompanying events that align with their goals and vision.

## 2.2 Participation

Participation is when an audience is actively involved. The opportunity to participate or contribute is a crucial part of developing a sense of belonging.

As part of the city unit, art museums and other cultural organisations carry important civic and cultural values. This makes them socially responsible, and they aim to maintain a connection with local communities, providing opportunities for feedback and shared learning. Participation and inclusion in the cultural sphere is a complex issue involving audience and community engagement in accompanying programmes and content creation.<sup>19</sup>

E. Redaelli highlights museums and cultural institutions or organizations as central features of community life. In order for an organisation to function, it is necessary to determine how the organization is perceived by communities and what relationships it has with stakeholders. Therefore, Redaelli emphasises the importance of training and building relationships within

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<sup>18</sup> RAPOŠ BOŽIČ, *Komunitný život: nový trend, ktorý tu bol odjakživa*, 2023.

<sup>19</sup> REDAELLI, *Visiting the Art Museum: A Journey Toward Participation*, 2023, p. 129–131.

the team and with staff and the executive board, in order to establish a collective sharing of values and enrich participation. This also affects the organisation's role in the community, as well as the development of authentic relationships, cohesion, audience participation, and support for democratic activities.<sup>20</sup>

Author N. Simon describes institutions as participatory projects, presenting them as platforms for connection, distribution, critique, reception, and collaboration. Specific audience activities related to the content shared with the institution and include creating individual ideas, sharing, and discussing individual ideas. A third activity is connecting, which refers to socialisation between the audience and the gallery team or connections among individual audience members. Collaboration between the institutions and the public can increase its attendance and also create the foundation for a strong community, which in turn supports the further development of the place. Simon argues that the required participation is a matter of good design, and institutions should trust the public and provide opportunities for participation. The meaning and most significant impact comes from providing opportunities for collaboration to the largest possible number of interested people. This means that everyone has the opportunity to share their opinion, contribute to the organisation or community, connect with others, and feel included and respected.<sup>21</sup>

The theoretician and curator Kottová describes how contemporary cultural institutions are perceived as places of social exchange that transcend disciplinary and social boundaries. Many cultural workers and theorists believe that contemporary art provides an open space for dialogue and acts as a self-renewing mechanism for societal renewal. She discusses the actual scope for audience participation and considers whether concepts such as dialogue, interaction, and participation remain merely theoretical. Grant policies and funding play a significant role, as attendance or the number of exhibitions is one of the key criteria for evaluating an institution. Although many institutions are undergoing transformations that aim to position the audience as an active co-creators of content rather than a passive recipients, there has been minimal change in their actual audience. Contemporary art and design are fields that are not easily accepted by the general public. Public discussion with broader audiences about content, for example, often remains just a wish or a means of fulfilling grant requirements. Smaller institutions may struggle with insufficient time and staff capacity for active audience engagement and collaboration. However, the author

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<sup>20</sup> REDAELLI, *Visiting the Art Museum: A Journey Toward Participation*, 2023, p. 144.

<sup>21</sup> SIMON, *The participatory museum*, 2010, p. 2–4.

believes that smaller institutions have an advantage in that they can connect with the community, becoming places for genuine gatherings and relationship-building, and where people with different needs and opinions can express themselves more personally and, in some cases, even more actively.<sup>22</sup>

The following example illustrates the participation of a design studio with the community. The project called Museum of Us was created through a collaboration between the design studio Fieldwork Facility and the independent architectural discussion forum New London. This campaign included an exhibition, a design space, and a programme aimed at bringing local people together. The completed installation and accompanying space facilitated the exchange of opinions, conversations, and engagement with long-term plans for the area. A significant part of the exhibition was intentionally left open, inviting visitors to engage with a series of rotating prompts about what they value in the area and what changes they would like to see.<sup>23</sup>



Figure 1 Museum of Us<sup>24</sup>

University galleries can strengthen their relationships with their audiences to encourage active participation, which is essential for them to become centres of community life. The main focus of university galleries is primarily on students from various departments, with new students arriving each year, as well as academics and members of the general public of all ages. Connections with these groups can be established through the gallery.

<sup>22</sup> KOTTOVÁ, *Institute a divák*, 2019, p. 67–69.

<sup>23</sup> CHEUNG; VICKIONARY, *Good by design: Ideas for a better world*, 2022, p. 108–113.

<sup>24</sup> DHANDA, *Museum of Us*, © 2025.

One of the goals of the G18 Gallery is to enhance community participation and active communication among its members. The exhibition platform has long aimed to be a space for connecting people, facilitating meetings, and supporting community life in Zlín and the surrounding area. Another part of this goal is collecting feedback more effectively and providing opportunities to express opinions.

### 2.3 Well-being

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health and well-being as "a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". According to this definition, mental health encompasses more than just the absence of mental disorders or disabilities. Furthermore, it enables individuals to fulfil their potential, cope with life's challenges, work productively, engage with others and contribute to their community.<sup>25</sup>

A 2019 study by the World Health Organization highlighted the potential impact of art on the prevention of mental and physical health diseases. The Culture for Health summary report indicates that participation in cultural and artistic activities plays a crucial role in promoting positive mental well-being and health, both at an individual level (subjective well-being) and at a collective level or community level (supporting social inclusion and engagement).<sup>26</sup>

The increased interest in well-being is driven by various global and societal factors, such as the climate crisis, war conflicts, the loneliness epidemic, the cost-of-living crisis, social polarisation, and tension – just some of the many issues affecting all generations. Since the pandemic began, society and communication have changed dramatically, with greater attention and emphasis being placed on well-being and mental health. Authors Hesketh and Cooper define well-being as both a mental state and a state a way of being that encompasses feelings of safety, comfort, health and self-acceptance.<sup>27</sup>

The term 'well-being' refers to the state of health, happiness, or prosperity, whether in relation to an individual or a community. It encompasses physical, psychological, and moral welfare.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> *Health and Well-Being*, World Health Organization. © 2025.

<sup>26</sup> ZBRANCA, *Culture For Health Report – Summary: Culture's contribution to health and...*, 2022, p. 4.

<sup>27</sup> HESKETH; COOPER, *Wellbeing at Work*, 2023, p. 13.

<sup>28</sup> *Well-being noun*, Oxford English Dictionary, © 2025.

According to author S. Wise, well-being is the quality that is most commonly associated with belonging. Safety, authenticity, familiarity, connectedness, access, and growth are also part of it.<sup>29</sup>

Cultural institutions, such as museums and galleries, play an important role in society. They serve as open public spaces where people can gather, learn in both formal and informal ways, engage in open dialogue, and also create and support an environment that promotes health and well-being. Mental well-being can be improved by reducing social isolation. However, cultural institutions cannot replace health or social services. Engaging with and communicating with audiences is closely linked to a better understanding of the positive impact of culture on health and well-being. This involves collaborating with community groups to address the needs of the local population.<sup>30</sup>

Visiting an art museum or gallery can benefit mental health and well-being and help prevent loneliness by facilitating social connection. It can facilitate the development of interpersonal connections and help prevent loneliness. Loneliness and social isolation are concerns not only for the elderly but also for the youngest generation today. Various projects are already focused on community building and connecting people in real life, in order to combat loneliness in cities.

Well-being and mental health care concern everyone – not only the audience, but also the team, artists, volunteers, and all those who contribute their efforts or are involved in running a community or cultural organization.

A series of workshops organised by the Stanica-Záriečie cultural centre in Žilina is an example that demonstrates the potential of cultural institutions and organisations to support inclusion and well-being. As well as focusing on the mental well-being of participants, the aim was also to identify any barriers that might prevent people from engaging in cultural or community activities. Rather than focusing solely on a specific group, the organisers aimed to work with various disabilities. Experts from the fields of sociology and psychology were invited, as well as individuals who work with people with disabilities, alongside representatives from theatres, galleries and other cultural organisations, and cultural activists. In the conclusion of the report, they reflected that inclusive cultural activities

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<sup>29</sup> WISE, *Design for Belonging: How to Build Inclusion and Collaboration...*, 2022, p. 21.

<sup>30</sup> CANTERBURY MUSEUMS & GALLERIES, *The Beany Health and Wellbeing in...*, 2021 p. 8.

contribute to everyone's well-being, not just that of disadvantaged individuals, thanks to positive artistic experiences and human interaction in a safe environment.<sup>31</sup>

### 2.3.1 Belonging

The sense of belonging and community connectedness are closely linked to well-being. A sense of belonging is one of our basic human needs.

The pair of authors, Steiner and Zeller, refer to Susan Goltsman, who argues that designing a variety of ways to participate so that everyone has a sense of belonging, is the key to inclusion. There is no single inclusive design of one thing or approach for everyone.<sup>32</sup>

Although it is not possible to include everyone fully, supporting a sense of belonging is one way to partially address the need for museums to be more inclusive. In an interview with Shelman, Steiner and Zeller discuss the full inclusion of the institution. While some people may still face barriers or exclusion in certain places, but the goal is to welcome and include everyone, helping them to value their own culture. The aim is to ensure that people feel safe, both emotionally and physically, and that they can experience a sense of belonging and be themselves in the museum. This is not easy to achieve, as it mostly involves building relationships and communicating effectively. In some cases, misunderstandings can lead to mistakes such as using the wrong name or pronoun, or making assumptions based on stereotypes.<sup>33</sup>

In her publication, Wise explains that belonging means being accepted by others, being part of a group, and having the opportunity to express yourself. Belonging also means being invited to take part in something. People may perceive belonging differently, depending on the context, for example, their identities, and whether they feel a sense of place, comfort, validation or invitation.<sup>34</sup>

As the participation is an integral part of belonging, the same applies to invitations and opportunities to contribute. The invitation to, and welcome in, a space provides the first opportunity to create a sense of belonging, and it is also often the first point of contact between the audience and the organisation. It is important to recognise that an invitation reflects the values upon which an organisation is built. Dr Susie Wise recommends

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<sup>31</sup> DÂMASO; DOWEN; SMITH, *Culture for Health and Well-being Compendium*, 2023, p. 28–30.

<sup>32</sup> STEINER; ZELLER, *Design For All? Inclusive Design Today*, 2024, p. 13.

<sup>33</sup> STEINER; ZELLER, *Design For All? Inclusive Design Today*, 2024, p. 134–135.

<sup>34</sup> WISE, *Design for Belonging: How to Build Inclusion and Collaboration...*, 2022, p. 3.

considering key attributes to make an invitation as effective as possible, such as access restrictions, the need for specific technologies to view it, the knowledge required to understand it, and particular community needs.<sup>35</sup>

The report from the 'Belonging, Museums & Galleries Queensland 2024' conference captures the importance and current relevance of feeling safe, comfortable, welcome and accepted. The document asks how galleries and cultural platforms can play a vital role in the community by fostering empathy and understanding, opening conversations, and actively engaging the public through accompanying programmes. Several educational workshops focused on working with communities and perceiving the museum as part of the neighbourhood, and as a community space.<sup>36</sup>

Belonging can be viewed on multiple levels, such as the accessible physical space we are in, the type of modular furniture, the comfort, the creative environment and the library. It is also related to the audience activity and participation of the audience, such as leaving evidence of work, opinions, signatures, symbolic objects, or pictures.<sup>37</sup> However, examples such as leaving evidence in the space are already approaching the level of communication. The way in which institutions communicate impacts how they are perceived and the sense of belonging they foster.

As mentioned above, comfort and physical space have an impact on human experience. The 'Social Seating' project, which was promoted at the Pinakothek der Moderne, showcased significant pieces of furniture design and provided visitors with the opportunity to use these objects. The year-long project was presented as 'sitting as a form of communication,' encouraging both children and adults to sit together and interact, against a backdrop of growing social isolation.<sup>38</sup>

Wise, the author, describes communication that is tailored to help a wide range of people feel invited in, fully engaged, and able to navigate every moment with a sense of belonging. She believes that, if we want to communicate purposefully and foster a sense of belonging within the community, we need to understand who the institution is speaking to and why. This is particularly important when engaging with a new audience. This involves understanding how the organisation's intended audience self-identifies and respecting the

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<sup>35</sup> WISE, *Design for Belonging: How to Build Inclusion and Collaboration...*, 2022, p. 35.

<sup>36</sup> MUSEUM & GALLERIES QUEENSLAND, *Belonging, 2024 Conference. Outcome Report*. 2024, p. 3.

<sup>37</sup> WISE, *Design for Belonging: How to Build Inclusion and Collaboration...*, 2022, p. 92.

<sup>38</sup> PINAKOTHEK DER MODERNE, *Social Seating*, © 2025.

language that is important to individuals or groups. Secondly, communication should foster engagement and support people's identities, abilities, and values. It can enhance the sense of inclusion by inviting people to join and participate.<sup>39</sup>

## 2.4 Placemaking

The subchapter on the community mentions the connection with the place and collective perception. Communities can also emerge in an online space, but this work focuses more on communities connected to a specific places as a cultural institutions. Placemaking is best known for its links with architecture and urbanism, and for improving quality of life and human interaction. The question is whether the principles of creating meaningful places for people can also be applied to a gallery practice.

'Placemaking' refers to collaborative processes designed to create community-driven public spaces that enhance shared values and strengthen a sense of belonging within communities. The term is primarily associated with urbanism and the planning of public spaces in contemporary cities. As a planning process, placemaking focuses on people rather than infrastructure, harnessing community potential, resources, and ideas to create environments that respond to people's needs and wishes.<sup>40</sup>

In the Design Kantýna podcast, architects M. Joja and B. Ponešová briefly describe placemaking as the transformation of public spaces and the creation of places. They explain that placemaking demonstrates that the creation of such spaces extends beyond material dimensions to encompass social use, activities, accessibility, and comfort. It is also the moment at which the process of change is initiated. This process requires initiators and involves direct collaboration with communities, sociologists, leaders and architects who are invited to participate in the planning process. According to Joja and Ponešová, city residents and community members are best placed to describe what is needed. The initial impulse and motivation of an individual or a small group is interesting, as this can later launch a larger project supported by higher authorities such as the city or an institution. The architects also mentioned 'place attachment', a term used in sociology to help express the essence of place perception, as there is no precise definition of placemaking. Whether placemaking is viewed

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<sup>39</sup> WISE, *Design for Belonging: How to Build Inclusion and Collaboration...*, 2022, p. 113–118.

<sup>40</sup> ALEGRE; SALAZAR and MELO, *A place to be – The play/act, Placemaking Handbook*, 2024, p. 8.

as an intention, activities, social ties, or a process, the key aspect is the involvement of future users.<sup>41</sup>

Still evolving, yet enacted on a global scale, creative placemaking integrates arts and culture into community-strengthening initiatives such as environmental revitalisation. Such initiatives started emerging abroad for various reasons, including gentrification, residential displacement, technological changes and support for local networking. Creative placemaking involves shaping the physical and social character of neighbourhoods and cities through artistic and cultural activities with the aim of promoting economic and social development, social capital public safety and social cohesion.<sup>42</sup>

For C. Courage, placemaking, as previously mentioned, is a distinct form of social practice is distinct from creative placemaking. This is because it reflects the value of artists' work in relation to the place and its people.<sup>43</sup>

On page 102, authors Courage and McKeown refer to Keeley (2007), describing social capital or a network of relationships strengthened by creative placemaking as an economic and cultural approach aimed at building civic connections, shared values, and mutual understanding in society. This, in turn, enables individuals and groups to trust and collaborate with each other.<sup>44</sup>

In the Placemaking Handbook, the authors describe the difference between space and place. They explain how the abstract concept of space as something abstract can be transformed into a place connected to social interaction. As part of their project, they evaluated thousands of public places around the world, they refined the characteristics that define a 'great place'. These are accessibility and connections, comfort (linked to safety and a sense of well-being), uses and activities, and finally, sociability, meaning being welcoming and fostering a sense of belonging to the local area. The authors also emphasise the identity of a place, which, unlike the image of a place, is defined by relationships and shared memories. The mentioned image of a place usually refers to how it is perceived by outsiders.

One Bite Design Studio describe themselves as place makers, creating alternative paths. The studio has curated a series of placemaking installations and creative collaborations focused on enhancing public spaces. One such initiative was the Community Hub project, which

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<sup>41</sup> DESIGN KANTÝNA, *Placemaking: Když se architektura umí ptát*, Ponešová Bára and Marie Joja. 2024.

<sup>42</sup> MARKUSEN; GADWA, *Creative Placemaking*, 2010, p. 3.

<sup>43</sup> COURAGE; McKEOWN, *Creative Placemaking: research, theory and practice*, 2019 p. 141.

<sup>44</sup> COURAGE; McKEOWN, *Creative Placemaking: research, theory and practice*, 2019, p. 142.

featured an art exhibition, local craft workshops, a storytelling session, and a pop-up event – all part of its ongoing efforts to foster community engagement. According to the studio, collaboration with stakeholders is essential. They acknowledge that responsiveness and change do not occur overnight, which is why they place a strong emphasis on continuity. For the team, listening, observing, and understanding the community are fundamental elements of their approach.<sup>45</sup>

Community-powered places bring many advantages to society, such as improved well-being, comfort, safety, accessibility, and a stronger sense of community. They are also relevant in addressing broader societal issues that affect us all, such as polarisation, discriminatory movements, social media addiction and the environmental crisis. Placemaking is a long-term process that requires vision and a plan, as well as collaboration with the community, stakeholders, and anyone else involved. Depending on resources, opportunities, and the character of the place, it can also take various forms. Common examples include street furniture, markets, cinemas and art installations. Any activity must be created with the community or target group to have an impact and strengthen the relationship with the place. The placemaking process requires an initial analysis of the space and environment, as well as stakeholders, including people, organisations, local community groups, artists, teachers and students. A key part of this analysis is identifying desires of the people involved, and in the case of a cultural organisation, the audience and community. The goal is to create a shared vision. The authors of placemaking recommend short, small-scale ideas and experiments that can be evaluated quickly and used as a foundation for further processes.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> CHEUNG; VICKTORIA, *Good by design: Ideas for a better world*, 2022, p. 262–265.

<sup>46</sup> ALEGRE; SALAZAR and MELO, *A place to be – The play/act, Placemaking Handbook*, 2024, p. 10–15.

### 3 CULTURE AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

This chapter clarifies the broader context of the chosen topic and explains why it is important to communicate with a close-knit community.

In addition to many areas such as the environment, health, innovation and geopolitical issues, megatrends and major societal challenges also address changes in social values. Society faces challenges and changes in an ever-changing world. The social situation is influenced by war conflicts, population polarisation, growing individualism, the generation gap, loneliness, discrimination, inequality, a lack of respect, stress, and more besides.<sup>47</sup> Loneliness, for example, the mentioned loneliness is considered a global problem that affects the quality of life and mental health of people of all ages.<sup>48</sup>

The Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO) represents over 30,000 museums across Europe. The organisation's vision is that museums contribute to social well-being by serving as places for meeting and open dialogue, and facilitating communication, possibly with all generations. Furthermore, also that they provide a learning environment, education, and also opportunities for all. By following this vision, museums can respond to the global challenges that society faces.<sup>49</sup>

The importance of the G18 university gallery, as well as other cultural organisations, lies in their ability to influence cultural and societal developments through well-established community connections. They may play a unique role in supporting and contributing to social changes for a sustainable future. Galleries and other organisations in the cultural sector are also increasingly serving as a kind of social spaces, that openly communicate values such as respect, equality and diversity.

The organisation called 'The European Network of Cultural Centres' co-founded by the Creative Europe networks, supports projects related to inclusion, equality, ecology, digital ethics, non-urban (small towns), working conditions in the arts and culture sector in non-urban areas. The 2024 report highlights the importance and potential of cultural organisations, emphasising their ability to influence cultural and societal developments through well-established community connections. Inclusive platforms that support cultural, artistic, and social synergies within their communities serve as hubs for fostering public and

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<sup>47</sup> ČESKÉ PRIORITY, *Megatrendy a velké společenské výzvy*, 2021.

<sup>48</sup> MAVRAGANI, *Understanding Loneliness in Younger People: Review of the Opportunities...*, 2023.

<sup>49</sup> SIUNG; THE CHESTER BEATTY, *Diversity and inclusion in European Museum Organisa...*, 2024.

civic partnerships, as well as strengthening cultural and social understanding. This is essential for addressing the multifaceted challenges of today's global environment.<sup>50</sup>

The theorist and curator Kottová highlights the long-term transformation of art museums, galleries, and other institutions and discusses their current direction in terms of both programme and practice. She describes this as an alternative approach to considering their mission and operational capabilities within a changing society. Collectively, the institutions emphasise the international context and globalised rules and standards.<sup>51</sup>

A study conducted and published by the Institute for Museum Research in Germany shows how the public views cultural institutions in transition. One of the key findings is that museums are trusted more than scientists and the media, ranking just after family and friends. The results highlight the importance of hidden social capital in strengthening a sense of belonging, and maintaining trust in cultural institutions and organisations. Even among people who have never visited a museum, the institution is trusted implicitly, as it is generally considered to be reliable.<sup>52</sup>

Inclusive platforms that foster cultural, artistic, and social synergies within their communities act as hubs that support public initiatives and partnerships and strengthen cultural and social understanding. This is crucial in addressing the complex challenges of today's global environment.<sup>53</sup>

Nikola Ludlová explores how institutions can be transformed by applying the Ethics of Care. She believes that public institutions have a moral responsibility to create programmes and spaces that are as inclusive as possible. Exchanging insights, proposals and feedbacks between cultural workers and engaged communities represents major force for change.<sup>54</sup>

Trans Europe Halles is a non-profit organisation and network that connects people and organisations focused on creativity, urbanism, change, activism, independence, education, solidarity and community-driven activities. Its main role is to foster connections and support the regeneration of neighbourhoods, communities, and cities. Several cultural and arts organisations from the Czech Republic and Slovakia are among its active members.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> RANCZAKOWSKA; FRAIOLI; GARMA, *Just Sustainability from the Heart of Communitie...*, 2024, p. 4.

<sup>51</sup> KOTTOVÁ, *Institute a divák*, 2019, p. 58.

<sup>52</sup> INSTITUT FÜR MUSEUMSFORSCHUNG, *Trust in Museums: Institut für Museumsforschung...*, 2024.

<sup>53</sup> RANCZAKOWSKA; FRAIOLI; GARMA, *Just Sustainability from the Heart of Communitie...*, 2024, p. 4.

<sup>54</sup> ASTAHOVSKA; BRSAKOSKA; ČECHOVÁ; DITTEL; GRŮŇ; et al. *Islands of Kinshi...*, 2024, p. 17–18.

<sup>55</sup> TRANS EUROPE HALLES, *About us*, © 2025.

## 4 COMMUNICATION

The theoretical part also includes a basic introduction to communication in general as the exchange of information. Verbal communication involves the use of spoken words during direct interpersonal contact or in an online space. Non-verbal communication involves body movements, facial expressions and eye contact. The other types are written communication, then listening, and visual communication, the latter of which is especially important in a gallery environment.<sup>56</sup>

Communication is a set of activities manifesting in all aspects of a cultural organisation's operations, enabling comprehensive interaction with both visitors and potential visitors. The author describes how institutions such as museums communicate through exhibitions, expositions and programmes, as well as through feedback. These communication product channels also include publications, the building / space, staff and team members. Another group of communication channels are promotional channels including visual identity, public relations, print materials, advertising, merchandise, the web, social media and direct marketing. A cultural organisation's entire marketing strategy should help it to achieve its goals while also building trust-based relationships with its audience. However, building trust and even a community base requires much more than just marketing tools or visual style alone. It is important to continuously cater to the audience's needs and interests, and to transform values and professional standards into high-quality content and accompanying activities. As mentioned, the audience's perception of a cultural organisation's image, as well as visitor attendance, depends on the manner and content of communication.<sup>57</sup>

The environment and physical accessibility are also forms of communication for museums and other cultural organisations, which ideally strive to identify and remove barriers at all levels. This applies to various aspects, such as opening hours, signage, navigation systems, maps and diagrams, barrier-free physical spaces, safety measures, the entrance area, information and creative facilities, and social and relaxation zones. The second group of all forms of promotion stems from the organisation's vision and content, its goals, its target audience, and the data it gathers continuously. This includes a consistent visual style and graphic design for promotional materials, an accessible website, social media, strategic

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<sup>56</sup> WILLKOMM, *Five types of communication*, 2018.

<sup>57</sup> KESNER, *Marketing a management muzeí a památek*, 2005, p. 216–218.

advertising, proactive public relations, annual reports and direct marketing such as newsletters, membership offers and entrance fees.<sup>58</sup>

Communication is essential for shaping relationships, understanding and education, and is linked to cooperation and coexistence. This thesis focuses on communication tools and methods that can be employed in the galleries to strengthen community ties and foster a sense of belonging.

#### 4.1 Inclusive communication

The ability to communicate as inclusively as possible, meaning including as many recipients as possible, is connected to a sense of belonging because it demonstrates acceptance and the opportunity to be oneself. This applies to speech, space and, in particular, written and visual expression, free from discrimination. An environment in which individuals feel welcomed and comfortable, where their uniqueness is respected, and they are encouraged to participate can be called inclusive. Today, it is essential to provide accessible spaces and information in appropriate formats for as many people as possible, whether online or in print, and in visual, textual, spoken, or audio forms. Understanding people's needs and the environment, and removing barriers, contributes to the inclusion of diverse individuals, whether in terms of disabilities, neurodiversity, age, social status, ethnicity, gender, and so on. This is a continuous process of seeking ways of communication.

Cultural institutions rely on visual communication tools every day. It is therefore essential that they apply the same principles of clarity and readability to exhibition spaces, navigation systems, websites, social media and printed materials.

Contributing to inclusivity also involves communicating bilingually, which depends on the location, environment, and target audience.

Language plays a key role in communication, and using it properly matters. Respectful and inclusive language is shaped by society and influences how people in how they feel and how they are perceived. Moreover, they can contribute to fostering a secure environment and serve as a means of expressing dignity. A linguist expresses the societal need for everyone to live together, communicate, and avoid harming each other despite differing opinions. Respectful language provides an opportunity to replace the traditional generic masculine

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<sup>58</sup> KESNER, *Marketing a management muzeí a památek*, 2005, p. 218–228.

with terms and addresses in both the feminine and non-binary. This gender-neutral approach provides an opportunity to include as many people of all gender identities.<sup>59</sup>

Many cultural organisations and institutions in Slovakia and the Czech Republic use sensitive gender-neutral forms of address in their written online communication, especially in invitations, programme and activity offers and calls for participation. Even small changes in speech or other impersonal communication can have a positive impact on individuals.

Language matters, and using plain language makes information clearer and more accessible to everyone. Using plain and clear language in exhibition texts, for example, does not diminish the institution's value – quite on the contrary, it makes the content more accessible. The most important thing is that the visitors understand the message and leave with a positive experience.<sup>60</sup>

The tone of communication within an organisation or institution influences how people feel about it. An empathetic, open, and as inclusive communication style fosters a sense of belonging and engagement, reflecting respect for diversity. If an organisation bases its communication style on its values, it also establishes norms of behaviour. Values such as trust, openness, acceptance, and equality contribute to fostering a sense of belonging.

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<sup>59</sup> BARCZIOVÁ, *Hovorme o sebe s rešpektom: sprievodca jazykom prijatia*, 2023, p. 60–73.

<sup>60</sup> CARTER, *Plain language in museums*, 2020.

## **5 METHODOLOGY**

The following chapter outlines the objectives of this thesis and research questions, and defines the qualitative research methods.

### **5.1 Research objectives**

This thesis focuses on the communication possibilities within the G18 Gallery community. It aims to explore how cultural organisations approach communication with their communities and the tools they use. The outcome of this study is the preparation of a set of recommendations and ideas for the gallery, which respond to its values and needs. The set of recommendations is based on theoretical knowledge, analysis of selected examined organisations, and findings from the evaluated semi-structured interviews.

### **5.2 Research questions**

RQ1: Which forms of communication would best support the expansion of community around the cultural organisations and institutions?

RQ2: In what ways can communication be used to foster a sense of belonging?

### **5.3 Research methods**

The first phase of the research involves reviewing available information and data on communication, program and related to community engagement programmes at particular cultural organisations and institutions, both at home and abroad before conducting the actual research for the thesis. Information will be gathered during this phase about activities, communication methods, feedback collection, calls for audience engagement, target groups, and the community in general.

In the second phase, two institutions will be selected based on the research and the established criteria. These institutions will be of a different type to a university gallery. To implement qualitative research in this practical part of the study, two case studies will focus primarily on communication and community engagement. The case studies are based on secondary and publicly available data, such as websites, social media, annual reports and relevant printed materials.

The case study criteria will form the basis for conducting individual semi-structured interviews. Phase three involves conducting five semi-structured interviews.

### 5.3.1 Case studies

The decision to prepare case studies is based on the need to examine the communication of the selected institution in depth.

Case studies are one of the fundamental approaches to qualitative research. It consists of a detailed description and analysis of one or more selected cases. A large amount of data is required to create one, and it is assumed that by thoroughly examining one case, similar cases can be better understood.<sup>61</sup>

Five analytical phases are used in case studies: research design, data collection and organisation, data analysis and literature comparison. Each of these phases includes additional steps that can be followed in order to successfully complete it.<sup>62</sup>

### 5.3.2 Semi structured interviews

For this thesis, semi-structured interviews were chosen as the research method to enable the questions to be answered as specifically as possible, given the fact that the participants work in different institutions and environments.

Primary, unique data on the selected issue will be collected through interviews. Questioning is a method primarily used to understand the fundamental reasons and motivations behind respondents' attitudes, preferences, or behaviour. Semi-structured interviews allow participants to provide more detailed responses, resulting in complete data that is immediately available. Provided that only one interviewer conducts the semi-structured interviews, the approach will remain consistent throughout the entire research process. The interviewer adheres to a set of questions while also giving the respondent the opportunity to elaborate.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> HENDL, *Kvalitativní výzkum: základní teorie, metody a aplikace*, 2023, p. 104.

<sup>62</sup> COLLINS, *Kreativní výzkum: teorie a praxe výzkumu v oblasti tvůrčích odvětví*. *Kultura...*, 2017, p. 146.

<sup>63</sup> COLLINS, *Kreativní výzkum: teorie a praxe výzkumu v oblasti tvůrčích odvětví*. *Kultura...*, 2017, p. 134.

## 6 RESERACH ON CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

Further research was conducted into organisations or institutions that focus on community approaches and activities, but are not university galleries.

### 6.1 Selection of relevant cultural organizations abroad

**Tabačka Kulturfabrik, Košice** – Founded in 2009, Tabačka Kulturfabrik is a cultural centre and an open space for art, creativity, and collaboration in Košice. It collaborates with the city and regional self-government and is a member of Trans Europe Halles. One of the Tabačka's main goals is to create a public space for everyone – a place to meet people, share knowledge, encourage critical thinking, and work together.<sup>64</sup>

**Stanica Žilina-Záriečie** – Founded in 2003, it is the result of a merger between an independent cultural space, an artistic laboratory, and a collective of activists. The Stanica Žilina-Záriečie centre bases its work and programme on contemporary art and community gatherings.<sup>65</sup>

**Nová Cvernovka, Bratislava** – Nová Cvernovka, founded in 2016, is a cultural and creative centre and innovation hub for culture, operated by the Cvernovka Foundation. Located in a less populated industrial area of the city, it offers a cultural and educational programmes and functions as an open space for people from the creative industries while also playing an active social role. The centre aims to facilitate dialogue between art, culture, science, ecology, and the public. The centre operates as a community based on the values of freedom, diversity and self-realisation, and supports activities that combat discrimination and prejudice.<sup>66</sup>

**Záhřada, Centrum nezávislej kultúry, Banská Bystrica** – It is a non-profit organisation and a cultural centre, primarily focused on providing a space for the presentation of contemporary art and fostering dialogue on human rights issues within society. The Záhřada was founded in 2010.<sup>67</sup>

**Nottingham Contemporary** – It is one of the largest public art galleries in the United Kingdom. In addition to exhibitions and events, it focuses on an innovative approach, learning programmes and research. The gallery's vision is to be a place where local residents

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<sup>64</sup> TABAČKA KULTURFABRIK, *Príbeh Tabačky*, [2025].

<sup>65</sup> STANICA ŽILINA-ZÁRIEČIE, *O Stanici*, [2025].

<sup>66</sup> NOVÁ CVERNOVKA, *O nás*, [2025].

<sup>67</sup> ZÁHRADA CENTRUM NEZÁVISLEJ KULTÚRY, *O nás*, [2025].

and people from around the world come together through art to shape ideas about the future, not only in the artistic and cultural spheres but also in everyday life too. Since opening in 2009, Nottingham Contemporary has aimed to be welcoming and accessible by working with its team, trustees, and audiences. The organisation provides inclusive experiences and a sense of belonging, primarily for refugees. They celebrate the voices and contributions of the communities. They also believe that art can help us to understand the world and each other better, through innovative exhibitions, live programmes and community engagement. It is important to mention that Nottingham Contemporary is open to different perspectives, and strives to create a creative and inclusive environment where everyone feels welcome. They believe that the collaborative work between team members, artists, partners, stakeholders, and audiences can create dynamic and meaningful cultural experiences.<sup>68</sup>

**WIELS, Brussels** – This contemporary art centre was established in 2007 and is located in Brussels. Presenting itself as a place of innovation and creative experiences, it aims to enrich discussion and inspire people with its bold programme. They have created a community garden where local residents and nearby schools can meet. Their offerings include many invitations to workshops for families with children, special exhibition tours even for toddlers with plush objects, family days and bilingual tours.<sup>69</sup>

## 6.2 Selection of relevant cultural organizations in Czech Republic

**Společnost Jindřicha Chalupického, Prague** – A platform for contemporary art in an international context. Since 1990, the organisation has run the Jindřich Chalupický Award. Recognising their social responsibility, they strive to engage with a diverse audience, approaching them inclusively and with sensitivity.<sup>70</sup>

**Verejný Sál Hraničář, Ústí nad Labem** – The Hraničář Public Hall is an open platform that connects contemporary art and culture with everyday life in a rapidly changing society. The public space around them inspires them to creatively reflect on community and societal changes, primarily through art, while also addressing critical topics. They view culture and contemporary art as a tool for fostering creativity, as well as a means of communicating with the public.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> NOTTINGHAM CONTEMPORARY, *About Nottingham Contemporary*, [2025].

<sup>69</sup> WIELS, *About Wiels*, © 2020.

<sup>70</sup> JINDŘICH CHALUPECKÝ SOCIETY, *About*, [2025].

<sup>71</sup> HRANIČÁŘ, *O Hraničáři*, [2025].

**Pragovka, Prague** – The multicultural centre was founded in 2016. As an artistic community, Pragovka aims to create an environment that encourages collaboration and connections between artists, creators, and the wider public. The goal is to establish a lively, publicly accessible space supported by an accompanying programme. The core principles of Pragovka include openness, visibility, developing both the artistic and local communities, mutual support, neighbourhood growth, and cooperation with other organisations.<sup>72</sup>

**Světova 1, Prague** – The platform is a non-profit exhibition space specialising in queer and social issues, and aims to become an educational and research institute. Its main activity is organising exhibitions and providing a space for collective imagination, through art and accompanying public and educational and community activities. Their priorities are creating a safe space, fostering friendship and promoting sustainability.<sup>73</sup>

**Ústí nad Labem House of Arts** – This institution was founded by the Faculty of Art and Design at Jan Evangelista Purkyně University. Thanks to its high-quality exhibition space, workshops for new media and graphic techniques, and multifunctional hall, the House of Arts presents contemporary art and design, emphasising education, research, interdisciplinarity, and social activities. Recognising their social responsibility, they conceptually strive to create a welcoming environment and facilitate neighbourhood and community gatherings. It has been fully operational since its opening in 2021.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> PRAGOVKA, *O nás*, © 2019.

<sup>73</sup> SVĚTOVA 1, *SI*, [2025].

<sup>74</sup> DŮM UMĚNÍ ÚSTÍ NAD LABEM, *O Domu umění*, © 2025.

## 7 CASE STUDIES

Based on previous research into organisations and the chosen criteria, which primarily relate to their work with the community of the given cultural institution or organisation, two were selected for examination through a case study, because this method allows for a more thorough analysis of the issue. The studies draw only on publicly available online documents, websites, or social media.

The main goal is to conduct a more detailed study of the communication tools and activities that promote a sense of belonging and support community building in the given environment. The meaning or motivation of the organisation's work on building relationships with the community should be clarified based on available information. The case studies will also to create questions for semi-structured interviews with experts based on the findings. Semi-structured interviews precede the studies due to the need for an up-to-date overview of the activities and approaches of similarly focused organisations.

Two organisations were selected based on the following criteria and were processed into a case study:

- It is a different type of cultural institution to a university gallery.
- There is evidence of communication targeted at the community, as well as support for community life through various activities.
- It simultaneously serves as an exhibition space and provides an exhibition space for contemporary art and design.

The studies are compiled using basic information such as the organisation's founding year, location, founder and vision. This is followed by a description of the exhibition space and of the community background, or details of spaces other than exhibition areas. Next comes the presentation of activities, themes and programmes related to community collaboration. The final section consists of an analysis of possible inclusive communication strategies that primarily foster a sense of belonging.

### 7.1 Tabačka Kulturfabrik

#### 7.1.1 Introduction, year of origin, location, founder

Tabačka Kulturfabrik is a cultural centre and open art space for creativity and collaboration located in Košice. Founded in 2009 by a civic association, it is located in the former premises

of a tobacco factory. Through its activities and promotion of independent culture, Tabačka complements the network of other community hubs in the city. Since 2011, the premises have undergone significant renovation and expansion, primarily thanks to the support of the Košice Self-Governing Region, with the aim of promoting the development of the creative regional economy. Another collaboration was established with the self-governing region in 2022, with the goal of continuing to create conditions for independent culture, the creative industry and placemaking. The vision is to develop a creative district across the entire area.<sup>75</sup>

One of its main functions is to establish collaborations with other organisations, artists, creative groups, and projects from a variety of genres. This cultural centre works with international partners and supporters of independent culture, including the Trans Europe Halles network and ANTENA, a network of independent cultural centres in Slovakia.<sup>76</sup>

### 7.1.2 Space

The Tabačka Kulturfabrik provides quality and safe spaces for a wide range of audiences and gives room for other organisations and individuals the opportunity to contribute their own values through their own programmes. Currently, there are multiple special spaces, including a concert hall, a lecture hall, a space for performing arts, a cinema, a workshop space, an office space, a white cube gallery, an exterior with seating area and a food/bar zone.<sup>77</sup>

### 7.1.3 Vision, intention, goals

Tabačka's vision and intention is to create a public space for everyone – a place to meet people, share knowledge, encourage critical thinking and collaborate. Their activities, they reflect open-minded thinking, experimentation, education, and the overall support for multiculturalism. The team places a strong emphasis on fostering the community that has formed around Tabačka and continues to grow. They are also motivated to continue building mutual relationships with the community, which encourages the engagement with a wider public. The organisation's vision and goals for the upcoming year are available on the website for potential partners, collaborators, or audiences. Tabačka, as an organization, is

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<sup>75</sup> TABAČKA KULTURFABRIK, *Výročná správa 2022*, 2022, p. 14.

<sup>76</sup> TABAČKA KULTURFABRIK, *Príbeh Tabačky*, [2025].

<sup>77</sup> TABAČKA KULTURFABRIK, *Priestory*, [2025].

perceived as a community, comprising all its components, employees, regular visitors, and city residents.<sup>78</sup>

From 2024 to 2026, they aim to develop an inclusion strategy for the space. Through organised facilitated workshops, they invited vulnerable individuals and team members to explore ways in which they could make programming, communication, organisational structure, and the physical accessibility more inclusive.<sup>79</sup>

#### 7.1.4 Program

The programme focuses on presenting Slovak and international authors and artists from various fields, including music, theatre, literature, dance, contemporary circus, discussions, lectures, film, new media, artistic residencies, visual arts, and community projects. The premises allow for the organisation of multicultural events, concerts, theatre performances, festivals, workshops, lectures, discussions, interactive installations, exhibitions, and various community activities.

The primary target group is city residents, but the organisation also focuses on a temporary audience, such as university and high school students, employees of other companies and tourists. Relationships between the organisation and its community are built and maintained with an emphasis on participation. A significant proportion of the programme (30%) consists of events initiated by local communities and residents, focusing on social activism in various areas.

The complete programme is intended for everyone; however, certain activities have been designated as 'community-based'. These include the Language Café for locals and expats, board games, the Christmas Community Day and the Living Library Project Against Prejudices.

Tabačka supports social activism initiatives in the cultural sphere, sustainability and ecology by organising community activities. The organisation is interested in social inclusion and invites people to use the space to collaborate, share knowledge and foster collective development in the neighbourhood and wider society.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> TABAČKA KULTURFABRIK, *Pribeh Tabačky*, [2025].

<sup>79</sup> TABAČKA KULTURFABRIK, *Tabačka tu chce byť pre všetkých*, 2024.

<sup>80</sup> TABAČKA KULTURFABRIK, *Programové zameranie*, [2025].

### 7.1.5 Communication

The team at Tabačka Kulturfabrik focuses on expansion and cultivating its audience. This includes improving and expanding communication channels in real time and in physical spaces, as well as online. They are committed to creating various models of audience participation.<sup>81</sup>

The organisation uses online communication media, such as the web, newsletters and social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, X and YouTube. Google Maps includes an LGBTQI+ friendly attribute and a designation for wheelchair access. Surveys conducted via apps, enabling both audience members and creators to evaluate the work and the executed programme. They actively interact with the community on social media, sharing, for example, Instagram stories tagged with the @tabacka, for example, which also serve as a form of feedback.

Information about all events, exhibitions, activities, and other announcements are primarily communicated through the weekly programme on the website, social media, and newsletters. Each event is described in detail and invites you to join in, using a friendly and informal tone. Mostly, Slovak is mostly used, but the website offers the option to change the language to English. Printed posters and the monthly schedule can be found at the main entrance to the premises.

The website specifically invites you to join creative community activities within groups in the innovation lab or the music studio. They encourage you to use Tabačka to contribute ideas and suggestions to programme, which can help foster a sense of belonging.

Examples of gender-neutral forms of address appear on the website, on social media and in annual reports. Lists of partners, collaborators, artists, media partners those acknowledged for their support, feedback, participation and cooperation are also included.

Tabačka's sustainable merchandise was created in collaboration with the fashion designer brand Handre. This project was conceived in response to one of their goals for 2022: to attract a young audience. The result was a range of meaningful, limited-edition pieces that also provided a platform for young designers and artists to showcase their work.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> TABAČKA KULTURFABRIK, *Programové zameranie*, [2025].

<sup>82</sup> TABAČKA KULTURFABRIK, *Výročná správa 2022*, 2022, p. 16.



Figure 2 Mechandise<sup>83</sup>

## 7.2 Veřejný sál Hraničář, Czech Republic

### 7.2.1 Introduction, year of origin, location, founder

Veřejný sál Hraničář is located in Ústí nad Labem. It is a cultural centre and open platform that connects culture, mainly contemporary art, with everyday life. Its origins date back to 2014 when the association Veřejný sál Hraničář, collaborated with theatre group Činoherné studio and the University of Jan Evangelista Purkyně to develop a plan to revitalise the former cinema building. The building has been fully open to the public since its renovation in 2016. The centre is a member of the Trans Europe Halles network. It is supported by partnerships with, for example, the City of Ústí nad Labem and the Ústí nad Labem Region, and with the aforementioned university, theatre, Deutsche Hygiene-Museum Dresden, among others. One of the main activities is to connect with other cultural, social, and educational institutions and associations, offering opportunities for mutual cooperation. The connection between art and everyday life is closely tied to the rapidly evolving social situation. This is why Hraničář offers a space for anyone seeking to reflect on community and societal changes. The team at the cultural centre considers contemporary art to be a means of personal development, creativity, and discovering new forms of communication within society as a whole.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>83</sup> TABAČKA KULTURFABRIK, *The Merchandise*, 2022.

<sup>84</sup> HRANIČÁŘ, *O Hraničáři*, [2025].

### 7.2.2 Space

The Veřejný sál Hraničář is a multi-genre venue, showcasing contemporary visual art, film, theatre, and music. It comprises a large hall, a foyer with a café, and a gallery. Many events also take place in the public spaces, right outside the main entrance. Outdoor seating facilities, such as benches and tables, are always in use. The extraordinary wooden bench located near the main entrance, supports placemaking and is designed for rest and relaxation, conversation, watching movies, games, and so on.<sup>85</sup>

### 7.2.3 Vision, intention, goals

This vision can be found on the website and in the annual activity reports. From the beginning, the goal has been to become a stable, internationally significant institution that provides quality and a professional approach. It maintains a politically neutral position and is ambitious to engage with the socio-cultural environment by presenting its own opinions and addressing critical current issues.<sup>86</sup>

The programme is based on collaboration with the city and the university, with the aim of becoming a focal point for them in the field of culture. The team will conduct research and interventions based on cooperation and participation. In addition to attracting a local audience, one of the long-term goals is to draw in the public from across the Czech Republic and abroad. The team also wants to establish and strengthen international cooperation with other similar organisations to learn new approaches.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> HRANIČÁŘ, *Pronájmy*, [2025].

<sup>86</sup> VEŘEJNÝ SÁL HRANIČÁŘ, *Výroční zpráva*, 2017.

<sup>87</sup> HRANIČÁŘ, *O Hraničáři*, [2025].



Figure 3 Public discussion<sup>88</sup>

#### 7.2.4 Program

The exhibitions at the Hraničář Gallery are always closely connected to the overall programme. Each exhibition forms part of a larger whole, centred around a specific theme. Visitors don't just have to be motivated by visual art. The exhibition content then connects to an accompanying programme, which enables the audience to engage with the project.<sup>89</sup>

The curator Martina Johnová describes Hraničář in the article as an organisation with a multi-member dramaturgical team that proposes essential and socially resonant themes. As part of a single year-long theme, they organise two exhibitions per year. The closely related programme is interdisciplinary and primarily focuses on the local environment of the city and region. Forms of expression that connect live art and culture with a broader societal impact include cinema, discussions, lectures, multiple festivals, concerts and various workshops. An accompanying programme of high quality encourages visitors to participate in public discussions. Activities are also organised in cooperation with regional initiatives, and the organisation is gradually managing to reach a wider audience. According to the curator, people are returning to Hraničář. Selecting topics to connect with art, such as ecology, which concern everyone, encourages greater empathy and helps to deepen mutual relationships.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>88</sup> HRANIČÁŘ, *Public discussion*, [2025].

<sup>89</sup> VESELÁ, *Jazyk Hraničáře*, © 2016.

<sup>90</sup> KLIMECKÁ, „Chceme být živá, tepající věc. Ještě jsme nesklouzli k výstavě krajinomalby,...”, © 2024.

This cultural centre works closely with schools to offer art workshops, gallery activities, and educational programmes focusing on environmental and social issues. During the summer months, the centre organises an outdoor festival featuring a variety of community activities, including guided tours, discussions, and workshops. These discussions are considered crucial to the organisation's core; often, this is how the local community around the Hraničář meets, but the general public is also invited to participate in the debates.<sup>91</sup>

According to the annual report, the cinema and its accompanying programme are among the most popular with audiences, offering the greatest number of events. The film education cycle is aimed at a broad range of people, from children to seniors. At weekends, they organise film screenings and art workshops focusing on social significance and historical context. Audiences repeatedly attend other cultural events, such as lectures, theatre, and concerts.<sup>92</sup>

### 7.2.5 Communication

The public venue Hraničář actively uses online communication media such as its website and newsletter, as well as social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Google Maps. The venue is LGBTQI+ friendly attribute and has wheelchair access. The website is available in Czech, English, Ukrainian, and German, and features a contact. The names of all team members, including volunteers, are listed on the website and in the annual reports, alongside expressions of gratitude.

The gallery has its own social media profile. Activities forming part of the accompanying programme that are directly connected to the main theme and the socially engaged exhibition share the same visual identity as the exhibition. The gallery communicates on social media in Czech and in a formal tone. As previously mentioned, active audience engagement is emphasised, and the latest exhibition, which focused on public space also offered an opportunity to express ideas during discussions and lectures. Near the main entrance, on the facade, there are original cinema display cases with glass panels for posters and the monthly programme, as well as some extra space for additional information.

Merchandise supporting communication includes clothing and printed materials, such as a card game inspired by cultural environments. This game was created for an exhibition,

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<sup>91</sup> HRANIČÁŘ, *Pořady a Projekty*, [2025].

<sup>92</sup> VEŘEJNÝ SÁL HRANIČÁŘ, *Výroční zpráva*, 2023.

where members of the public could view individual playing cards by attending the accompanying programme.<sup>93</sup>

The thematic magazine 'Hraničář' is an extraordinary form of communication. Published once a year, it serves as a guide to the previous exhibition season. It contains in-depth articles on relevant topics from programme creators and students, as well as contributions from experts. Despite the more complex contributions, the content is presented in an educational and engaging manner. The magazine uses a formal tone of communication. Some issues of the magazine are available to download.<sup>94</sup>



Figure 4 Why not miss the first frontiersman's magazine?<sup>95</sup>

### 7.3 Summary of the case studies

The Hraničář Public Hall and Hraničář Gallery are conscious of their social potential; accordingly, they structure their entire accompanying programme not only thematically, but also with a focus on fostering a sense of community – a key factor in ensuring future sustainability and mutual respect within society.

Tabačka strives to cultivate an inclusive public space that encourages encounters, knowledge exchange, and collaboration, while also promoting open-mindedness and education.

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<sup>93</sup> HRANIČÁŘ, *Pořady a Projekty*, [2025].

<sup>94</sup> POKORNÝ, *Why not miss the first frontiersman's magazine?*, 2017.

<sup>95</sup> POKORNÝ, *Why not miss the first frontiersman's magazine?*, 2017.

The Tabačka team places a strong emphasis on community engagement and continues to nurture reciprocal relationships in order to reach and involve a broader audience.

Both organisations, Hraničář Public Hall and Tabačka Kulturfabrik, aim to create vibrant spaces with a diverse programme of events. They each collaborate with the city; in the case of Hraničář, cooperation also extends to the university. Both place emphasis on community and social engagement, collaboration, and the provision of spaces that promote public participation and creativity. Both organisations also utilise distinctive merchandise as a means of communication.

Hraničář Public Hall and Tabačka Kulturfabrik share several similarities in their communication strategies, including a focus on community involvement and inclusivity. However, there are some notable differences. Hraničář adopts a formal tone in its magazine and social media communications, while Tabačka uses a more informal tone on social media.

## 8 SEMISTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

In this case, the scenario questions were created in both Slovak and English, and were used during the interview, they are used depending on whether the participant was from abroad. The interviews were processed in English.

### 8.1 Participants

Five final participants were selected from the list of research candidates for the qualitative research:

Nikola Ludlová – Coordinator for inclusion and sustainability, Společnost Jindřicha Chalupeckého

Karina Kottová – Curator, project Islands of Kinship, Jindřich Chalupecký Society

Tímea Szőke – PhD candidate at the International University of Catalonia in Barcelona, researcher, and former program director of the Hungarian Contemporary Architecture Centre in Budapest

Róbert Blaško – Director and Fundraising, Cultural Centres Stanica Žilina-Záriečie and the New Synagogue Žilina

Peter Radkoff – Founder and Art Director, Tabačka Kulturfabrik Košice

Samuel Velebný – Curator of the gallery program, Tabačka Kulturfabrik Košice

Martina Johnová – Curator of the Hraničář Gallery, Veřejný sál Hraničář

Nottingham Contemporary – registered artistic and educational charity

Dapha Krygier – Audience Engagement, The WIELS

Natália Centková – Inclusive Activities Project Manager, Kino Úsmev Košice

Zuzana Doležalová – Production, House of Arts Ústí nad Labem

Zai Xu – Founder, Exhibitions & Public Programmes, SVĚTOVA 1

The final selection of participants with whom interviews were conducted:

1. Róbert Blaško, 2. Tímea Szőke, 3. Peter Radkoff, 4. Zai Xu, 5. Martina Johnová

## 8.2 The scenario of the semi-structured interview

1. Contacting the respondent by email before conducting the interview to introduce the project.
2. The video call began with welcoming the respondent being welcomed and informed about the recording.

### Questions:

1. Please provide your name, position / specialisation and the name of your organisation
2. How do you understand the concept of 'community,' and what significance does it have for you in relation to culture or place?
3. What are the benefits of supporting community life and activities in a cultural environment?
4. How important is it for you to support the community and deepen mutual relationships for the functioning of your organisation / institution whether among the audience, the artists, or the team?
5. What is the approximate proportion of community-focused activities in your organisation's/institution's program?
6. Which approaches and forms of communication do you consider to be the most effective for inviting people to participate in and engage with the programme?
7. In what ways can community initiatives based on the principles of placemaking (people-centred, designed by people) contribute to the development and engagement of audiences in cultural and artistic institutions?
8. How do you and your organisation/institution approach supporting well-being and mental health within a cultural and artistic environment?
9. When working with your team, do you prioritise inclusive and respectful communication? Or are you working on creating your own inclusion manual?
10. How can you make the space to make it a safe place where everyone feels welcome and respected?
11. In what ways is the tone of communication related to a sense of belonging within a cultural organisation? Does it influence how people feel about it?

12. Which forms of communication or activities would you use to help someone feel a sense of belonging?
13. How do you collect feedback?
14. Which communication tools do you use to get to know your audience best?

### **8.3 Data interpretation**

The interpretation of the recorded responses is divided into thematic units for clarity and due to their differing focus.

#### **8.3.1 Concept of community**

The concept of community is generally broad.

Most respondents conceive the term 'community' as something integral to their work in the cultural sectors. Several respondents emphasize the importance of interpersonal relationships in fostering collaboration and building a sense of community. In addition, three respondents describe community as central to the organisation's existence and purpose.

Respondent No. 5 emphasises that the term 'community' holds significant importance, is highly respected, and is frequently used within their organisation. The organisation itself was founded in response to the needs of the community – particularly those of active individuals seeking to engage with art and public space. Numerous individuals and volunteers have contributed to the organisation's operations over the past ten years. The respondent further notes that they understand the community as a target group of individuals who collectively care for a specific place or generate content that continuously contributes to its cultivation.

According to Respondent No. 5, a distinction is made between an audience with occasional attendance – individuals who may feel a certain connection to the place but do not engage with it actively – and a community, which returns to the location and gathers there when significant issues are addressed. Furthermore, it is precisely this community surrounding the organisation that is capable of offering an intangible service by raising awareness of the place, simply through discussing it and feeling at ease within it. In this way, experiences are gradually shared, potentially attracting new individuals.

Respondent No. 4 explains that the concept of community is fundamental to them, since it is precisely this community who has created the space of the art centre and is vital to its operation. The communal dimension is as important as the artistic activities themselves, since people constitute the space, and the centre, in turn, engages them through motivation and its programmes and addresses their concerns. As a non-profit organisation, they are unable to provide financial remuneration to everyone; consequently, they strive to cultivate a space that offers fulfilment to volunteers.

Respondent No. 1 perceives the community as a larger whole – composed of artists engaged in long-term collaboration, audiences, supporters, sponsors, cultural projects, civil servants, other organizations and institutions, a broad network of allies, civic associations, and donors – and describes the contribution of their initiative in terms of steps taken toward becoming a cultural-community centre. They started as an art centre, focused only on contemporary art and experimentation. In order to avoid being perceived by the city's residents as an exclusive space, they opened up to collaboration with associations, activists, civic groups, and individuals. This openness is demonstrated by the blending of contemporary art exhibitions with community programming, such as chess tournaments or meetings for mothers with children. They observed that the space comes to life when its doors are open to a wider range of activities. Their commitment to community work is also evident in their proactive efforts to remove barriers and to engage disadvantaged individuals and smaller communities. They have defined and communicate the space as a meeting place. They believe that through encounters between different groups, new, larger collectives as well as new projects can emerge.

Respondent No. 3 expressed that their perception of community has evolved over time. In the past, when independent cultural centres were being established, they were clearly aware that their efforts were directed towards a specific, sizeable community of people to whom they were offering something meaningful. It was a vibrant community composed of individuals who knew each other by name and regularly attended concerts and exhibitions – even in the absence of social media. At that time, they did not yet realise to what extent to which the concept of 'community' would later acquire such significance. They add that communities possess the power to be active agents of change, capable of influencing the world around us. Today, they perceive the role of communities as even more crucial, suggesting that they will increasingly be supported and recognised as a standard component of life in a democratic society.

As he indicated, community engagement is seen as an integral part of the centre's mission – developing community activities alongside the support of contemporary art. Even during the renovation of the premises, emphasis was placed on creating a high-quality infrastructure for the community, which has since manifested in a rise in community-oriented events that respond directly to the needs of their audience.

Respondent No. 3 describes relationships through a hierarchical model of a cultural centre, in which elements of community-based management founded on trust have been integrated. He perceives all professions as equal and essential parts of a single organism. The original community is being expanded with new layers – through collaboration and sustained relationships with coworking spaces, audiences, artists, ensembles, music agencies, and others.

Respondent No. 2 highlights that the concept of community is often romanticised by the assumption that working with a community will resolve all problems. This notion frequently appears, even in strategic documents and across various disciplines. According to the respondent, the perception of communities is complex: in the past, they were clearly defined geographically, but today cities are large, dynamic, and constantly evolving. As a result, communities are difficult to define, although they remain important to people because they are based on relationships and connections. She draws attention to the relationship between digital and physical communities and recommends that organisations clearly define how they understand the concept in order to work with it effectively. It is important to recognise that community is unstable, alive, and in flux. Furthermore, building collaboration and communication within cultural settings requires deliberate engagement of the community. Cultural practitioners should create various opportunities for people to participate, thereby fostering a strong community or audience. She adds that engaging with or addressing the community must be intentional. It is the organisation's responsibility to create multiple layers that facilitate diverse forms of contribution to the system, organisation, or activities, thereby building a community or audience with whom they wish to collaborate.

Respondent No. 2 believes that art and culture hold significance only when they reach people who understand and reflect upon them. Culture is created by people, and without them – whether we call them a community or not – culture cannot exist; one without the other is meaningless. A community may simply be a work team or a group with whom one collaborates. Organisations governed by a horizontal model require the active involvement of people. Relationships must be built from the outset and are as important as reciprocity.

This involves strengthening mutual connections among all involved parties in a way that is also beneficial. The respondent further adds that to create a living system around one's organisation, one must foster relationships; otherwise, it will merely be about sharing information.

### **8.3.2 Programme, engagement, communication, placemaking**

There is broad consensus that community activities are essential to the organisation, and their inclusion in the programme in sufficient number is well justified.

The majority of respondents state that the activities constitute a significant part of the programme. Most responses once again emphasised the importance of a personalised approach to communication, alongside the need to create a collaborative space with the community.

All respondents, in some form, acknowledged the necessity of engaging diverse groups – including disadvantaged individuals, families, the LGBTQI+ community, volunteers, and others.

Respondent No. 1 stated that whereas the ratio of community activities to high-art events was previously around 10% to 90%, it has now shifted to an even 50% to 50%. He added that smaller community events do not require the same level of professional production as a three-day festival or an exhibition.

Respondent No. 5 also estimated the ratio to be 50:50. Consequently, part of the programme is either community or commercially oriented, which serves to attract a larger audience to the venue.

Respondent No. 4 indicated that between 70% and 80% of the activities they organise are community-focused, community-themed, or community-created.

Respondent No. 3 explains that relatively few grants are specifically allocated to community activities; the majority of funding is directed towards cultural initiatives, particularly live arts such as music and performance, mainly through the Arts Support Fund. The gallery runs its own programme, with community activities integrated throughout the organisation. Prior to the pandemic (2017–2019), approximately 1,100 events were organised annually, around 350 of which were community-oriented. Even when the total number of events declined in the post-pandemic period, the proportion of community-focused events has remained largely

consistent. Despite the overall reduction in events, I still consider the number of community activities to be adequate.

Respondent No. 2 provided an example from her work, describing how the team create a network and platform for knowledge sharing, collaboration, and workshops through a lab. They recounted their experience with the Hungarian Centre for Contemporary Architecture, where most efforts were concentrated on community building and making architecture accessible to the public. Projects mentioned include the celebration of centenary buildings in Budapest and educational activities for children. Although not all activities were community-based, public projects primarily aimed to engage people and encourage reflection on the built environment.

Respondent No. 2 contends that communication intended to encourage participation is inherently contextual. This is because working within an organisation and on projects, as well as community-building, is not a mechanical task but rather a continuous process of fostering trust, care, and transparency, which is closely connected to the pursuit of shared values. In one of the projects, the recipient engaged individuals through personal invitations, a method that is now less convenient. Personal recommendations were also employed among volunteers; when people heard positive feedback, they chose to join. Respondent emphasises the significance of reciprocity, noting that volunteers would not become involved unless they believed their contributions were meaningful. She explains that if an organisation expects contribution and collaboration, it must, in turn, offer something in return.

The view that participation is motivated by a sense of meaningfulness and reciprocity – volunteers and participants engage when they feel their contribution matters and the organisation gives something back – was mentioned by respondent No. 4 in the previous community concept unit.

Respondent No. 1 describes that their communication depends on the type of programme. Sometimes a call-out on social media is sufficient, while on other occasions they must attend the location in person to invite collaboration. They give an example of frequently needing to engage disadvantaged groups directly. Their approach is centred on natural inclusion and the principle of "mixability" – the capability of being mixed – facilitating access to activities for people with disabilities.

Respondent No. 5 stated that the team convenes quarterly to reflect on the annual theme and plan organisational activities. Additionally, they collaborate with smaller communities,

activists, families with children, the queer community, and others. Engagement is facilitated through organisers who themselves are members of these communities and act as intermediaries. Information is also disseminated via social media, establishing a distribution network of long-term contacts, with one individual responsible for managing communications. Due to limited advertising resources, they frequently rely on personal contacts.

Respondent No. 3 states that the organisation has strong social media networks with reach both domestically and internationally, but does not consider the overall communication to be ideal. They suggest establishing ambassador groups at universities and secondary schools to engage the younger generation, who are often not involved in the programme. Social media is no longer functioning as effectively, and attendance is declining. They add that there were plans to introduce monthly cultural subscriptions costing around €10, aimed at fostering community and enhancing communication beyond social media. The project is demanding, and the PR department is reluctant to participate due to established routines. They acknowledge that the issues may stem from the communication, the programme itself, or the visitors.

Respondent No. 2 explains that 'placemaking' refers to the practice of co-creating spaces in collaboration with the community. Within cultural or artistic institutions, it can serve as an effective strategy for audience development, as it involves individuals in the creative process, thereby fostering their interest in and connection to the space. A key distinction between a 'space' and a 'place' lies in the emotional attachment associated with the latter – for instance, the difference between a building and a home. The respondent adds that when an organisation succeeds in transforming a space into a place imbued with a sense of belonging, ownership, and responsibility, it contributes organically to the development of a community.

Respondent No. 3 stated that the organisation wishes to provide, and indeed offers, opportunities for individuals to propose the experiences they wish to have – this aligns with the principles of placemaking. However, they assess public interest as limited. The organisation is also criticised for hosting only a small number of concerts. Low attendance hampers the staging of high-quality events, which in turn leads to dissatisfaction. The issue lies not only in communication but also in a wider social crisis and the challenges faced by cultural centres.

Respondent No. 4 believes that placemaking principles can foster greater audience engagement. They themselves focus on methods of actively involving the community, including through volunteer programmes.

Respondent No. 1 concurs that placemaking principles can enhance audience participation. According to them, activities proposed by the public have the potential to attract new audiences and groups. They add that their role is to provide production and technical support. Furthermore, they note this is advantageous because these groups communicate in their own language, thereby reaching additional people.

Respondent No. 5 expressed that their organisation is open to collaboration. They offer opportunities to implement projects and experiment with new ideas. The collective's openness is demonstrated by their willingness to realise ideas tailored to specific locations. Simultaneously, individuals from smaller communities help to raise awareness of the organisation's work, share their impressions of the place, and discuss the quality of the programme and venue.

### **8.3.3 Well-being, belonging, inclusive communication and space**

Most of the respondents broadly concurred that clearly defined rules, established boundaries, and shared values constitute a crucial factor in creating a safe environment where both the audience and the team should feel comfortable and secure. A safe and respectful space is the outcome not only of visibly communicated rules but also of inclusive and empathetic communication, team training, and a personalised approach. They perceive this as a continuous process requiring ongoing effort and adaptation to the needs of those who use the space.

Respondent No. 4 mentions that clearly defined and visible rules regarding space and community guidelines simultaneously serve as effective tools for preventing and resolving potential conflicts. Their organisation also strives a personal approach, welcoming visitors by personally handing them a printed brochure about the exhibition.

Respondent No. 1 describes that their organisation is considering creating a code of conduct which all, including artists, would be expected to agree to, in order to respect the values of the place. By displaying rainbow-coloured signage on the facade, they clearly convey that the space is safe and inclusive for everyone. However, they note that they encounter difficulties because society is polarised or radicalised. The respondent also stated that they have a relaxation room, which visitors use during larger events.

Respondent No. 3 describes that they have been working since their beginnings to establish a safe space where clearly defined values and rules are visible in the area by the entrance. They communicate the safe space through inclusive communication, which is managed by an activist specialising in this field. Respondent No. 1 provides a similar response, stating that to ensure an inclusive approach and effective communication, dedicated resources and a person assigned exclusively to this task will be required.

Respondent No. 2 considers it important to create such a safe space, especially when someone wants to engage in dialogue, learn together, share, and explore. Moreover, authenticity, building trust, and observing various groups contribute to this. If an organisation strives to create a space with empathy and care, people should feel naturally safe within it. Creating such an environment requires repeated effort and understanding of what works for the audience.

In response to the question of environment, Respondent No. 5 emphasises the importance of providing facilities and background support for mothers with children, offering them a space where they can spend time comfortably. Although the venue is not yet fully accessible to wheelchair users, efforts are underway to improve access to the upper floors. The development of such an environment is also connected to the frequent use of the space by students and other individuals, who utilise it as a place to relax and socialise. She adds that various groups regularly contact us to organise meetings, and the organisation provides technical support for these events, as the necessary facilities are available.

In response to the follow-up question regarding the creation of a creative community space directly within the gallery, Respondent No. 5 stated that it is possible, provided there is sufficient space for movement and interactivity. However, this should not be to an excessive extent – rather, it should be balanced, taking into account the exhibited art. An example mentioned was Plato in Ostrava, which functioned both as a gallery and a community space.

The respondents had various experiences with approaches to inclusive and respectful communication, with a focus on belonging; however, their responses generally reflected similar views.

Two respondents highlight the importance of accessibility and clarity of information. Respondent No. 4 emphasizes the importance of accessible and understandable information about events, highlighting it as a crucial step. They consider the most significant measure to be the accessibility form, which they prepare for each program and event. This form

describes details about the venue and how the event will be conducted. It originated from the specific needs of one team member, who began to identify various ambiguities in communication. Respondent No. 2 states that she includes various notices and descriptions in event communications to ensure that everything is clear and that attendees have accurate expectations. She stresses the importance of clarifying what the organisation offers and what it does not.

The respondents indicated the importance of inclusive communication. Respondent No. 3 emphasised the ethical code and the values they uphold, which include fundamental principles such as tolerance and inclusion. They endeavour to employ respectful communication and appropriate forms of address in their written correspondence.

Respondent No. 1 associates the feeling of belonging with identification with the organisation's values. Colleagues from their environment often wear the organisation's merchandise. To foster a sense of belonging among the audience, it is important to create an atmosphere where individuals feel welcome to enter. They consider meetings and community activities successful when attended by visitors who do not usually participate. According to them, community programmes help break down barriers and prejudices towards the venue. It sometimes happens that, thanks to a community event, visitors are introduced to the exhibition space or exhibition for the first time. The organisation has developed a document or manual outlining how to approach diversity and disadvantage.

Respondent No. 2 emphasises the importance of understanding the audience in order to respond effectively to their needs. She adds that, in many projects, careful attention is consistently paid to intellectual and mental disabilities, emotional sensitivities, and sensory differences. Minor details and activities are designed to be accessible to all participants. Although it is not possible to include absolutely everyone, the aim is to address the needs of as many participants as possible. This process is ongoing and necessitates continual adjustment. She highlights the significant role of language and bilingualism. The use of newsletters as a means of communication is particularly meaningful, as it provides a detailed insight into the organisation's work.

Respondent No. 2 reflects on their experience with cultural and artistic organisations, noting that efforts to include everyone are often ineffective or even counterproductive. She believes it is more meaningful to support those who can genuinely engage with and identify with the organisation's work, rather than trying to reach a broad public that is largely unknown. Inclusion is important, but there are not enough resources to include everyone.

Respondent No. 5 contends that fostering a sense of belonging is intrinsically linked to the integration of programme promotion with the organisation's objectives. She suggests enhancing the communication of the organisation's message, spaces, and values to increase openness and reduce existing barriers. Communication is particularly effective when delivered through a newsletter that employs a respectful tone and appropriate language. Furthermore, she noted that volunteers are recruited by designated coordinators, often via social media platforms, to encourage participation. Efforts are also made to engage senior members, who contribute by assisting during film screenings.

The vibrancy of the space is further reinforced by community-centred celebrations, such as the organisation's anniversary and Christmas events.

Respondent No. 5 explained that they aim to promote inclusive and respectful communication by involving the queer community and expanding language use. They try to use respectful terms in contexts like newsletters and gallery materials, though consistency across all communication is still developing. They observed that, while not universally accepted at first, such language is becoming more common within the organisation. Although there is no formal guide yet, they see the value in creating one.

All respondents strongly agreed on the importance of well-being within the cultural environment and emphasised the need for its systematic support. However, their responses primarily concentrated on the well-being of employees and volunteers, as this has a substantial impact on the overall functioning and performance of the organisation.

Respondent No. 4 reports that a team well-being meeting is held quarterly. One team member is responsible for organising a leisure activity, which is followed by a reflection session. The coordinator within the organisation ensures that the number of hours worked by volunteers does not exceed the weekly limit. Similarly, respondent No. 3 refers to the implementation of regular, structured weekly meetings, which have been positively received by the team, alongside team-building activities. Furthermore, they organise team-building activities and venue anniversaries. He mentioned issues such as insufficient staffing levels and limited financial resources, which adversely affect mental well-being.

Respondent No. 2 is part of an artistic collective that explores ways to use art to achieve better mental health and balance. She points out the misconception about well-being – that it is something people should only focus on in their free time. According to her, although mental well-being is acknowledged in many organisations, it needs to be connected with the

communities themselves. She believes the goal should be to create a better work culture and environment that naturally considers everyone's mental well-being. In her view, people who collaborate but are not well themselves cannot sustainably produce fully valuable outcomes. This should be part of the organisation's core values and actively addressed in everyday practice. She thinks that organisational values should be developed collaboratively with the people who work in and contribute to it. The fact that people are sensitive is often overlooked and only comes to light when they feel good, seen, appreciated, and supported. These are crucial aspects. There are many barriers – such as institutional systems and learned patterns.

Respondent No. 5 indicated that their organisation seeks to promote well-being and mental hygiene among the public through exhibitions, viewing this as a relevant and significant concern. For instance, one such exhibition centred on mental health and was accompanied by a supplementary programme that served as a space for sharing and collective therapeutic engagement among participants. Internally, these issues have not yet been systematically addressed. However, the respondent identified facilitated workshops as a potential approach – providing opportunities for team members to build stronger interpersonal connections, enhance communication under pressure, and foster greater empathy. It is suggested that such practices could, in time, become standard within the organisation. In smaller teams, such as theirs, organising feedback-driven workshops is more feasible than it would be in larger institutional contexts. Although the organisation does not impose strict working hours and encourages a supportive, collaborative environment, challenges remain. Overwork persists due to the absence of clearly defined boundaries between work and leisure. As much of both occurs within the same physical setting, personal time often overlaps with professional responsibilities.

#### **8.3.4 On the obtention of feedback**

All respondents agreed that personal communication and asking questions directly on-site – either immediately after the event or during informal activities – is highly effective and facilitates the collection of numerous personal impressions.

Respondent No. 3 considers in-person questioning after the event to be the most sincere and impactful – as well as during a site tour.

Respondent No. 2 believes that people are generally enthusiastic to share their opinions, but sometimes the wrong questions are asked or they are posed in an unsuitable manner.

Respondent No. 1 also mentioned occasional informal discussion as a form of feedback.

According to Respondent No. 2, the most effective way to get to know people is through personal connections. Building connections requires engaging with people in the places they already frequent, rather than expecting them to attend a predetermined location. A common ground is necessary – one that includes shared language, accessibility, and mutual interests. The majority of respondents indicate that the most common method is a physical or online questionnaire.

Respondent No. 1 stated that the most effective way to get to know their audience and collect feedback is through questionnaires, primarily in digital form but also on paper. They often use QR codes, allowing people to leave different kinds of message.

Respondent No. 3 mentioned that their questionnaires typically include questions about the audience's preferences or wishes.

Respondent No. 4 uses Google Forms, which are also made available on a permanent physical noticeboard located in the workshop area of the art space. They also share the questionnaire on social media and their website. An anonymous questionnaire is sent to volunteers, as well as to the artists after each exhibition.

Respondent No. 2 found the feedback technique called "Rose, Bud, Thorn" particularly useful, especially after events or workshops involving larger groups. She also mentioned their positive experience with the effectiveness of anonymous feedback – such as creative methods where people can stick notes, use noticeboards, guestbooks, or even draw.

Respondent No. 5 states that they collect feedback through a web form or email. They do not conduct surveys immediately after the event. However, by organizing programs for seniors or parents with children, they are able to collect more data through interaction. Sometimes, people contact them directly by email or through social media. The respondent adds that it is important to work on this more to improve openness and programming, but of course, it requires a dedicated person to take care of it.

Face-to-face communication is regarded as the most effective method for obtaining sincere and impactful feedback. Structured tools, such as questionnaires (whether digital, paper-based, or QR code – enabled), are also commonly used. Collecting feedback is important not only for recording audience attendance or useful data for grant applications, but also as a source of insights for updates. Feedback can help identify needs, preferences, and barriers, as well as provide a better understanding of the community itself. The collected data helps to track changes and adapt to new situations. It does not concern only visitors, but

also the work team, volunteers, students, artists and other involved individuals. Thanks to feedback, we can evaluate all activities and prepare future ones more tailored to people's needs—more inclusively, with the aim of increasing the sense of belonging.

## 9 G18 GALLERY

The G18 Gallery is a cultural and exhibition space run by the Faculty of Multimedia Communications at Tomas Bata University. Designed by architect Eva Jiříčná, the gallery is located within the university building. During its time in operation, the G18 Gallery has presented a number of exhibition projects focused on current tendencies shaping contemporary design. These have been complemented by lectures, workshops and gallery educational activities. This approach enables the gallery to explore themes beyond the boundaries of traditional exhibitions and share them with both target groups and the general public. The gallery's management has long collaborated across disciplines with students, graduates, and faculty members from the studios of the Faculty of Multimedia Communications at UTB for a long time. The gallery also establishes beneficial international contacts with lecturers, guest organisations and touring exhibitions, and participates in various local projects.<sup>96</sup>

The internal documentation characterises the gallery as a platform for design and art interpretation, as well as research projects. Additionally, the G18 Gallery serves as a practical training facility for students within the Faculty of Multimedia Communications at Tomas Bata University. It also serves as a space for informal meetings and for strengthening relationships within gallery's surrounding community. The core values are fundamental to the gallery, as they underpin its overarching concept, creating programme, and commitment to fostering an inclusive environment: diversity, respect, open dialogue, accessibility, social responsibility, innovation, inclusive education, transparent and open communication, and the representation of diverse perspectives. The gallery's vision is to serve as an open and inspiring place that supports art, design, academic research, and interdisciplinary collaboration, while actively contributing to the local cultural life. The gallery strives for sustainable operation and continues to support collaboration with all stakeholders within the university, including the gallery board, studios, departments, and students. It also seeks to further cultivate community spirit and enhance well-being support. More active participation and engagement, whether between university departments or with the audience, require communication effort and gathering feedback into every exhibition project and beyond.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> G18 GALLERY, *O galerii*, © 2025.

<sup>97</sup> Internal documentation, 2025.

## 9.1 Target Groups at the G18 Gallery

Students and academic community of the Tomas Bata University – This gallery primarily offers space for participating in various projects and creating exhibitions. It also provides internships and research space, as well as hosting formal and informal meetings for students and academics.

The inhabitants of Zlín and its surroundings – The exhibition place is open to local residents, expats, associations and project initiatives.

Students of primary and secondary schools – One of the principles of exhibition preparation is to design accompanying programmes and activities that engage young people, encouraging exploration and sparking interest.

Cultural and Creative Organizations – The G18 Gallery collaborates with other institutions, organisations, and events.

Expert Public – A variety of lectures, networking opportunities and discussions are on offer for professionals in the fields of design, art, and the creative industries.

## 10 ANSWERS TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The first research question explored how communication could support the growth of a community emerging around a cultural organisation or **institution (RQ1: Which forms of communication would best support the expansion of community around the cultural organisations and institutions?)**.

In the context of this thesis, the term 'community' refers to a group of people united through collaboration in a specific place, to which they both contribute and utilise in various ways, as stated on p. 18, chapter. 2. As the author notes on p. 19 of the same chapter, mutual collaboration and audience participation can enhance attendance while simultaneously laying the foundations for a strong community, which, in turn, supports the ongoing development and enrichment of the place.

Communication always depends on the situation and context; there is no universal formula. As noted on p. 52, chapter 8 communities are fundamentally rooted in the cultivation of relationships and connections. The strengthening of the community entering the organisation is supported through the creation of opportunities for engagement, communication, and purposeful, targeted outreach. Beyond relationships, reciprocity is fundamental. To engage a broader audience, it is essential to provide and clearly articulate incentives for their continued involvement, thus fostering motivation to participate.

Expansion is closely linked to participation. When an organisation creates opportunities for involvement, it encourages active engagement, and promotes collaboration; it enables volunteers, members, and the broader community to share meaningful experiences, build collective memories, and gradually form an emotional attachment to the place. As noted by a respondent in chapter 8, p. 50, these individuals play a key role in transmitting such experiences, raising awareness of the place, and potentially contributing to the community's growth. By staying open, creating space, and supporting core community initiatives, the organisation helps bring together diverse groups – fostering renewed interest as a result.

The growing interest may also be supported by the space itself, which seeks to respond to the needs of both the audience and the team. Through its spatial design, the organisation can communicate openness, accessibility, safety, and a welcoming atmosphere. As the respondent describes on p. 59 in chapter 8, the organisation could place greater emphasis on promoting the location itself, its potential, and more frequently highlight the values and objectives it strives to achieve.

Improving accessibility in communication, particularly when driven by the needs of disadvantaged groups, can have the effect of reaching a broader audience, as accessibility tends to benefit everyone. A good example of this is the 'accessibility event form' described by Respondent 4 on p. 57, in chapter 8. The form provides information about spatial arrangements, language options, and the type of event.

Effective work and communication begin with gathering feedback, as this enables the organisation to respond to needs or suggestions and to plan further steps in support of a long-term process.

The second research question explored how communication can be conducted to cultivate a sense of belonging within the context of a cultural and artistic organisation. **(RQ2: In what ways can communication be used to foster a sense of belonging?).**

The response also relates to the first research question, particularly with regard to participation and engagement. As the authors note on p. 23 of chapter 2, the key to inclusion is identifying ways to engage everyone, ensuring that each individual experiences a sense of belonging. The aim is to foster an environment in which individuals feel secure – both emotionally and physically – and free to express their authentic selves. This is generally achieved through the cultivation of meaningful relationships.

As the author notes on p. 23, chapter 2, communication that cultivates a sense of belonging requires creating opportunities for participation and extending invitations to engage in something meaningful. For example, an organization might increase volunteer opportunities and take a more active role in community-based initiatives related to the theme or exhibition.

Creating a sense of safety and a welcoming atmosphere is closely linked to accessibility and a comfortable, thoughtfully designed environment. By equipping the space and making it available for shared use, the organization fosters a sense of belonging. Not only spatial, but also informational and visual accessibility contribute to this sense of belonging.

Equally important and closely related is the application of respectful and inclusive language in both written and spoken forms, as outlined on p. 31 of chapter 4.

As several respondents agreed in chapter 8, the open and transparent communication of certain rules and values helps to create a safe environment and can foster an individual's identification with shared values. As previously mentioned, a detailed description of the

location, along with the features of the venue or event, can provide valuable information and help to eliminate barriers.

## 11 RECOMMENDATIONS, IDEAS, INFOGRAPHIC

The G18 Gallery is characterised by specific features in terms of both its spatial layout and organisational structure, which should be carefully considered. Provided recommendations and suggestions provided are intended primarily as points for reflection or potential sources of inspiration for the gallery team, should they wish to pursue further development in this area in the future. The mind map / infographic in the picture contains all the suggestions and recommendations; the most interesting ones are summarized in the following subchapter.

### 11.1 Summarized ideas and recommendations

A production of bilingual newsletter that uses respectful language can offer deeper insights into the team's work, clarify its goals and mission, and present upcoming topics. Regular communication of objectives and values is essential to help the audience become more familiar with them.

Clearly displaying a list of the space's values and regulations could help foster a safe and inclusive environment.

Occasional production of sustainable merchandise items serves as an invitation to collaborate with young fashion and graphic designers, utilizing upcycling or silkscreen printing techniques.

Creating and offering more volunteering opportunities for all generations to foster a sense of belonging. The docent program may appeal not only to seniors but to people of all ages.

Organizing regular informal team meetings focused on wellbeing.

Feedback is essential – to truly understanding the needs, desires, and challenges of the community. It enables the gallery to adapt, enhance activities, and plan future events that are more inclusive and meaningful for all participants. Methods include: in-person dialog immediately after events, questionnaires available both online and offline (for, audience, students, artists), creative approaches like feedback boards, stickers or integrating feedback opportunities directly within exhibition spaces and workshops.

A Permanent Creative Zone: a semi-enclosed space – part studio, part laboratory – within the gallery, continuously active and evolving. The spatial layout and facilities adapt seamlessly to the exhibition themes and programmatic needs.

The gradual integration of respectful language into written materials to promote a sense of belonging.

A space for communication, interaction, feedback, networking, collaboration, message sharing, displaying and exchanging publications and zines, a small free library, relaxation, and an audience memory wall.

Inclusive invitations with a focus on accessibility.

When promoting future events or the gallery itself, provide more detailed descriptions of accessibility – for example, what barriers exist and what the gallery is doing to eliminate them.

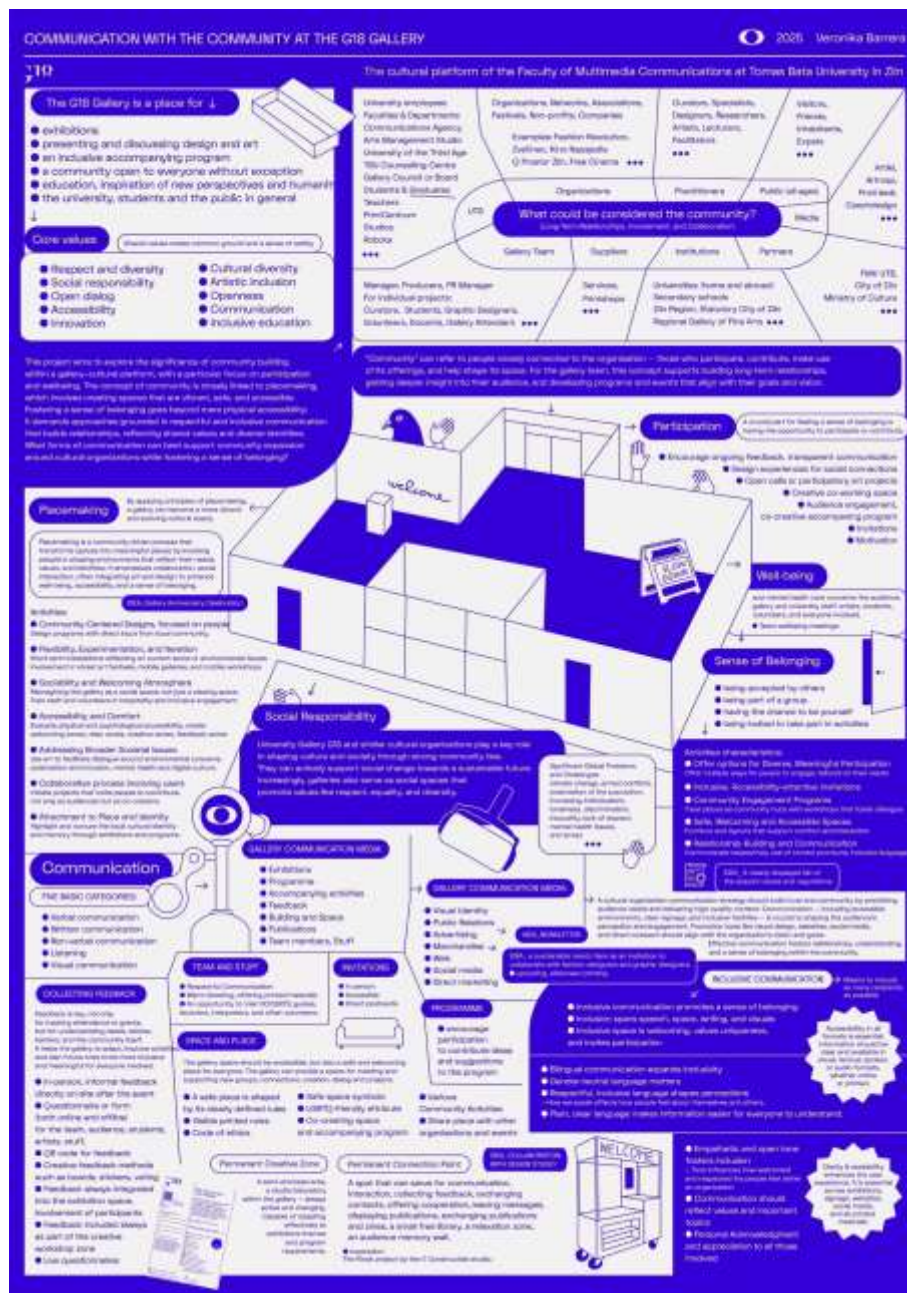


Figure 5 Infographic intended for presentation and exhibition

(source: own elaboration)

## CONCLUSION

The term 'community', widely used in contemporary discourse, is understood from multiple perspectives. This thesis, beyond its primary objectives, seeks to offer an exploration of the concept of community and its significance within cultural and artistic environment. Furthermore, it strives to integrate the concept of 'placemaking' – a practice dedicated to fostering dynamic spaces primarily defined by the individuals who utilize and actively engage with them.

The initial premise of this study proposed that an active space could attract a larger public audience over time. It also aimed to clarify the objectives of engaging with the community and to identify effective ways to communicate with the community that unites around the organisation. The reason for paying attention to this issue is further supported by the gathered information regarding challenges highlighted by experts from museums and galleries, the importance of mental health, wellbeing, and social responsibility to fight societal problems affecting all generations.

The primary focus of this thesis, however, was communication, specifically in relation to cultural organisations, audiences, and communities. The thesis primarily aimed to investigate the communication methods and tools employed by the organisation, with a particular focus on nurturing a sense of belonging.

The research also highlights that, in addition to setting objectives, an organisation must clearly define what 'community' means to them and identify whom they aim to work with, in order to effectively engage their audience or team. The research confirmed that inclusive communication processes are inherently unstable and dependent on context. While it may not always be possible to involve everyone, seeking ways to engage as many people as possible remains important and worthwhile.

The outcome of this work may seem somewhat abstract; however, it is intended primarily as a source of inspiration. This work is intended to be a map of ideas and recommendations, not a manual of instructions. Before taking any concrete steps, the gallery's management may wish to consider the author's suggestions.

According to the author, the G18 Gallery has actively sought collaborations from the outset, establishing a network of local and international contacts and encouraging a community of individuals who either participate independently or return on a regular basis. While the gallery's primary role is to provide a space for the student training and exhibitions, it also

offers considerable potential to expand informal community events and cultivate stronger connections. In doing so, it would not only fulfil contemporary museum requirements but, more importantly, allow the gallery to continue fostering community engagement and connection. Maintaining a vibrant environment requires proactive effort, cultivations of relationships, and the pursuit of effective communication methods.

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

|         |                                                                                                              |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Etc.    | Et cetera                                                                                                    |
| No.     | Number                                                                                                       |
| LGBTQI+ | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, and the "+" represents other identities |
| UTB     | Tomas Bata University in Zlín                                                                                |
| RQ      | Research Question                                                                                            |

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix P I: A file containing semi-structured interviews

Appendix P II: Infographic

## **APPENDIX P I: A FILE CONTAINING SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS**

Recorded audio, Róbert Blaško, Director and Fundraising, Cultural Centres Stanica Žilina-Záriečie and the New Synagogue Žilina

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1qbfMwFKVIT0-LTp1A6sp59B8hl1KC9Qh>

Recorded audio, Martina Johnová, Curator of the Hraničár Gallery, The Hraničár Public Hall

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1iOuWt45ho483JCH6j9lDjTuubKy3v2aZ>

Recorded audio, Peter Radkoff, Founder and Art Director, Tabačka Kulturfabrik Košice

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1qbfMwFKVIT0-LTp1A6sp59B8hl1KC9Qh>

Recorded audio, Tímea Szőke, PhD candidate at the International University of Catalonia in Barcelona, researcher, and former program director of the Hungarian Contemporary Architecture Centre in Budapest

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YBTHITJoSNABGF66HynqVzX52SUpqIU->

Recorded audio, Zai Xu, Producer – Founder, Producer – Exhibitions & Public Programmes + Operations Manager, SVĚTOVA 1

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1bXRaUCXKBbF4Z\\_SNZgAyeiNf7lidALO5](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1bXRaUCXKBbF4Z_SNZgAyeiNf7lidALO5)

## **APPENDIX P II: INFOGRAPHIC**

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ERqNn8Dr6ZkjdWrsvY1ur9gAlCl4MMv1>