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Erasmus+ Cooperation Partnership

FACILITATOR GUIDE

Practical Guidance for Expressive Arts Facilitation

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Project Partners



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How to Use This Guide

How to Use This Guide: This Facilitator Guide translates the Poiesis methodology into practice: the how. The companion Methodology Document explains the conceptual and theoretical foundations behind the work: the why. The Replication Toolkit documents what was actually implemented in the three pilots: case studies, session designs, cross-cutting learnings, and the concrete operational detail, from tested session durations to material logistics, that supports direct replication. Readers seeking facilitation guidance should start here; readers seeking conceptual grounding may prefer to begin with the Methodology Document and return to this guide for practical application; readers preparing to run a specific session may find it useful to consult the Toolkit alongside this guide.

This guide is a practical companion to the Poiesis methodology. It was co-created with facilitators during the project's training phase and updated to reflect what was learned during pilot implementation in Austria, Romania, and Italy.

It does not offer a fixed curriculum. It offers a framework: a set of principles, a session structure, and practical guidance, that can be adapted to different communities, contexts, and artistic languages. The case examples in Chapter 8 show what adaptation looks like in practice.

Readers new to Expressive Arts are encouraged to read the guide from the beginning. Experienced facilitators may find Chapters 4, 6, and 8 most immediately useful. All readers are encouraged to explore the Replication Toolkit alongside this guide.

How to Read the Icons in This Guide

Two families of icons recur throughout this guide, each with a distinct colour and purpose.



Guinda • Session Architecture

Marks the six stages of a session (Ch.4). You will see it in the stepper, in Appendix A, and in the Session Design Sheet, always as a literal match to one specific stage.



Ecopoiesis

Gold • Core Principles. Marks where a principle from Chapter 2 becomes especially present in practice. The number on each tag matches the reference number used in Chapter 2, so you can trace any tag back to its full explanation and bibliographic source. In reality, several principles are often at work throughout a session, or in more than one place at once; for clarity, this guide marks only the two or three most relevant to each specific stage or activity.



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POIESIS

CHAPTER 01

Introduction

Chapter 1. Introduction

What is Poiesis

Poiesis comes from the Greek word "to bring forth". In this project, it refers to the unfolding of something new through artistic expression, not through control or predetermined outcomes, but through allowing meaning to emerge from the creative process itself.

The Poiesis methodology was developed within the Erasmus+ KA2 Cooperation Partnership Expressive Arts for Youths. It is both a philosophical framework and a practical approach. It explains why and how Expressive Arts can be used as a tool for inclusion, cultural heritage, sustainability, and emotional well-being in non-formal education and community contexts.

The relationship between the three project documents reflects this dual character: the Methodology Document explains the why, this Facilitator Guide translates it into the how, and the Replication Toolkit documents the what happened.

How This Guide Was Created

This guide was co-created through a process that began with an in-person kick-off meeting in Italy, where two representatives per partner organisation spent one day on formal introductions and a second day immersed in a shared Expressive Arts experience, with each country leading a part from its own expertise. Facilitator training followed: five sessions covering an initial fully experiential Expressive Arts session, two sessions connecting that experience to theoretical foundations, a session of collective feedback and closing, and a final offline session in which each facilitator designed their own Expressive Arts session for their own context. Participants received the foundations of Expressive Arts: intermodality, aesthetic presence, process orientation, and the role of the facilitator as witness, and practised practical tools for working with groups.

Building on these foundations, facilitators from IRARU, Alba Eglesia, and Creative Art Farm APS contributed perspectives rooted in direct experience with their own communities and contexts. Through this cycle of situating themselves within the shared framework, proposing how to make it their own, designing, and later piloting that design, the training gathered how Expressive Arts can enhance resources that communities already carry: artistic sensibility, cultural memory, relational capacity, and creative agency.

The guide has since been updated to reflect the learning generated during pilot implementation. Where the original version described intentions, this version describes what was learned from practice.

Who This Guide Is For

This guide is written for artists, facilitators, and organisations who wish to bring Expressive Arts into their work in community, educational, or social contexts. It can be used by:

- Artists interested in applying their practice in participatory, social, or community settings.
- Facilitators working with specific groups, including migrant communities, intergenerational groups, rural communities, or communities with limited access to arts education.
- Independent practitioners who wish to integrate the Poiesis approach into their own projects.
- Organisations seeking a replicable, adaptable framework for participatory arts work.

The guide does not require prior training in Expressive Arts. It introduces the key concepts clearly, and Chapter 8 shows how the principles were applied by facilitators with different backgrounds and in very different contexts.

No specific artistic technique is required to facilitate using this approach. The methodology is built on principles, not on mastery of particular art forms. What matters most is the facilitator's capacity to hold a space with presence, ethical responsibility, and openness to what emerges.



CHAPTER 02

Core Principles of Poiesis

Chapter 2. Core Principles of Poiesis

The Poiesis approach is built on a set of principles that connect philosophy, practice, and community engagement. Two of them, Poiesis and Phenomenology, are philosophical foundations: root orientations from which several practical principles are derived. Others describe distinct structural or methodological aspects of facilitation, independent of either foundation. Together, they guide the spirit of the work and inform every design and facilitation decision. They are not rules: they are orientations that remain constant even as activities, modalities, and contexts vary.

Understanding these principles, and how they relate to one another, is essential preparation for any facilitator working with this approach. The case examples in Chapter 8 show how each principle appears in actual facilitation practice.

PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS

Poiesis: bringing forth meaning through making ¹

Poiesis means "to bring forth". It describes the act of allowing something new to emerge through the creative process, not producing a result, but discovering and transforming meaning through making. In workshops, poiesis happens when participants encounter something unexpected in their own process: an image that surprises them, a movement that says what words cannot, a material that responds differently than expected. The facilitator's role is to create conditions where this emergence is possible.

Phenomenology: attending to what appears ²

Phenomenology is the commitment to direct, lived experience over analysis or explanation. It asks facilitators to notice what is present, what is seen, heard, felt, or sensed, before reaching for meaning or interpretation. This is the philosophical foundation beneath several of the principles below: the practice of staying with an image, a gesture, or a piece of work as it appears, rather than moving quickly to what it might mean. Dialogue with an artwork, in this approach, stays with what is observable.

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES, DERIVED FROM THESE FOUNDATIONS

Process over product: valuing the journey of making ³

Derived from Poiesis, applied to how facilitators relate to outcomes.

Poiesis values process over product. The focus is on the journey of creation, not the final artwork, not its aesthetic quality, not its coherence as an object. Transformation happens through making, reflecting, and being present. This principle has practical implications: facilitators do not evaluate work, do not ask participants to explain their creations, and do not steer the process towards predetermined outcomes. The artwork is a trace of the process, not its goal.

Ecopoiesis: nature and materials as co-creators 4

Derived from Poiesis, extended to nature and materials.

Ecopoiesis expands the idea of poiesis to include nature, place, and materials as active participants in the creative process, not as objects to be used, but as partners in making. In practice, this means attending to the qualities of materials (their texture, origin, weight, impermanence), working with locally available and sustainable resources, and recognising that the environment where a workshop takes place is rarely neutral.

Aesthetic presence: attending to what emerges 5

Derived from Phenomenology, applied to the facilitator's own attention.

Aesthetic presence is full attentiveness to the creative process without judgement of quality or beauty. It means noticing what resonates: in a gesture, a colour, a silence, a material choice, and staying with it rather than explaining or evaluating it. For facilitators, aesthetic presence means holding the space with genuine curiosity about what participants are making and experiencing. For participants, it means being invited to notice rather than perform.

Facilitator as witness: holding space without directing 6

Derived from Phenomenology, applied to how facilitators relate to participants' work.

In the Poiesis approach, the facilitator is not a director, interpreter, or teacher of art. The facilitator is a witness: someone who accompanies the process with ethical and aesthetic responsibility, who sees what emerges without appropriating or redirecting it, and who creates conditions for participants to encounter themselves through the work. Witnessing is an active stance: it requires full presence, non-interpretive attention, and trust in the process.

This does not mean passivity. At times the group or the process itself calls for the facilitator's active presence and participation: entering the artistic field alongside participants rather than observing from its edge. Whichever position is called for, the same care applies: attention stays with what the process and the people being accompanied need, not with the facilitator's own expression.

STRUCTURAL AND METHODOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES

Intermodality: moving between artistic languages 7

Intermodality is the movement between artistic languages: image, movement, sound, writing, voice, text. Each transition opens new layers of expression. Shifting modalities helps participants access experiences that a single form cannot reach alone. A poem becomes a drawing; a drawing becomes a gesture; a gesture becomes a shared reflection. This principle means that facilitators do not need to specialise in one artistic discipline: they need to understand how to invite transitions between modalities and what those transitions make possible.

Liminality: working in the threshold space 8

Liminality refers to the in-between space: the threshold between what is known and what is not yet formed. It is a moment of uncertainty that can open possibilities for change. In a session, liminality appears during transitions: the moment before making begins, the shift between modalities, the silence before reflection. Facilitators who understand liminality learn to protect these threshold moments rather than filling them, because that is often where something new can emerge.

Relational Landscapes: navigating between individual and collective 9

Relational Landscapes emerged from the pilot experience as a framework for understanding how individual and collective processes coexist and influence one another throughout a session or series. Groups rarely unfold in linear ways. Participants arrive with different experiences, resources, and rhythms. Meaning-making happens not only within individuals but also through the relationships that develop between participants, artistic processes, materials, and shared contexts.

For facilitators, thinking in terms of Relational Landscapes means attending to the field between people: noticing where connections form, where tensions arise, where a single person's artistic gesture enters into dialogue with the group's, where shared images appear without having been directed. This framework supports facilitators in navigating between individual and collective without forcing either: participants do not need to share identical experiences to develop meaningful connections, and collective creation does not require consensus or uniformity.

This concept is particularly useful when working across languages, cultural backgrounds, or lived experiences: contexts where direct verbal sharing may be limited, but where artistic processes can create permeability between individual and collective experience. The case examples in Chapter 8 show how this appeared in each country's pilot.

Note on theoretical sources: The principles above draw on the theoretical foundations of Expressive Arts as developed by Knill, Levine, and others. These texts were developed in therapeutic and clinical contexts; the Poiesis project adapts them for non-formal education, community arts, and participatory practice. The philosophical foundations, particularly the emphasis on artistic process, aesthetic inquiry, and meaning-making through making, transfer across contexts. The clinical and therapeutic applications do not.

- 1 Knill, P. J., Levine, E. G., & Levine, S. K. (2005). *Principles and practice of expressive arts therapy*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers. (Adapted for non-clinical use.)
- 2 Estrella, K. (2005). Expressive therapy: An integrated arts approach. In C. Malchiodi (Ed.), *Expressive therapies* (pp. 183–209). Guilford Press.
- 3 Levine, E. G., & Levine, S. K. (Eds.). (2011). *Art in action: Expressive arts therapy and social change*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- 4 Levine, S. K., & Kopytin, A. (Eds.). (2022). *Ecopoiesis: A new perspective for the expressive and creative arts therapies in the 21st century*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- 5 Levine, S. K., & Levine, E. G. (Eds.). (2017). *New developments in expressive arts therapy: The play of poiesis*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers. (Adapted for non-clinical use.)
- 6 Knill, P. J., Levine, E. G., & Levine, S. K. (2005). Same source as note 1 above; the concept of the facilitator as witness is developed throughout this text.
- 7 McNiff, S. (1992). *Art as medicine: Creating a therapy of the imagination*. Shambhala Publications.
- 8 Turner, V. (1969). *The ritual process: Structure and anti-structure*. Aldine.
- 9 Original framework developed within the Poiesis project, grounded in the pilot experience. See Replication Toolkit, §7.2, “Relational Landscapes and Participation in Diverse and Vulnerable Contexts”, p.77.



CHAPTER 03

The Role of the Facilitator

Chapter 3. The Role of the Facilitator

Facilitators are at the heart of the Poiesis approach. Their role goes beyond leading activities or introducing artistic exercises. In this methodology, the facilitator embodies an attitude of presence, care, and responsibility that shapes the entire group experience.

Attitude and Ethical Presence

Facilitators are not neutral observers: they bring their own sensitivity, awareness, and ethical responsibility into the space. This presence requires openness, humility, and respect for the voices, rhythms, and processes of participants. Ethical presence also means being conscious of power dynamics and striving to create horizontal relationships, where each person's contribution is valued. Facilitators bring their own artistic identity into the space, not as an authority, but as a resource.

Witnessing Rather Than Directing

The facilitator in Poiesis does not impose meaning, interpret participants' creations, or steer the process towards a predefined goal. Instead, the facilitator acts as a witness: someone who accompanies and mirrors what emerges, without judgement or correction. This witnessing creates a space where participants feel free to explore, knowing that their expressions will be seen and acknowledged, but not appropriated, explained, or redirected by someone else.

Witnessing is not passivity. It requires full presence, careful observation, and the capacity to remain attentive to both individual participants and the group as a whole: what the Relational Landscapes framework calls attending to the field between people.

Creating a Safe, Inclusive, and Non-Judgemental Space

Safety in Poiesis is not only physical: it includes emotional and aesthetic safety. Facilitators set the tone by welcoming all forms of expression and affirming that there is no "right" or "wrong," "beautiful" or "ugly." By emphasising process over product, facilitators help participants move beyond fear of judgement and into authentic engagement with their own creativity.

Inclusion goes beyond welcoming everyone into the room. It means designing participation pathways that allow people to engage through different modes: movement, image-making, observation, writing, conversation, or presence, so that verbal contribution and artistic confidence are not prerequisites for meaningful participation.

Practical Strategies

Several practical strategies support this facilitation role:

1

Opening & closing rituals

Mark the threshold between ordinary life and the session space.

2

Accessible materials

Choose materials that are familiar and respectful of participants' contexts and cultures.

3

Silence & pauses

Use silence and attentive waiting as facilitation tools, not gaps to fill.

4

Multiple modes of reflection

Offer writing, image, gesture, or simply witnessing another person's work.

5

Adaptive pacing

Adjust pacing continuously in response to the group's energy and what is emerging.

6

Consistent, non-evaluative tone

Maintain the same tone throughout: in language, gesture, and response.

Ultimately, the facilitator in Poiesis is not the centre of the work, but the one who holds and sustains the space where something new can emerge.



CHAPTER 04

Architecture of a Session

Chapter 4. Architecture of a Session

The Poiesis methodology proposes a flexible but clear structure for facilitating Expressive Arts workshops. This structure is not meant to be rigid: it is a container that supports both individual and collective processes. Its six stages create a coherent arc that can be adapted to different durations, group sizes, and contexts without losing its integrity.

The arc moves from arrival to extraordinary experience and back again: participants enter their ordinary lives, cross a threshold into the artistic space, engage in something that expands their perception, and return to everyday reality carrying a new trace of experience.



STAGE 01

Check-in

Every session begins with a check-in. This moment marks the threshold between everyday life and the shared artistic space. It frames the experience: clarifying the shape of the session, welcoming participants as they are, and opening the philosophy of the space. The check-in allows participants to arrive, ground themselves, and name their current state or intention.

The check-in need not be verbal. It can take the form of a gesture, a movement, a choice of colour or object, or simply a moment of shared silence. What matters is that participants feel seen and that the space is clearly opened with care.

PRINCIPLES:*

 Liminality ⁸



STAGE 02

Awareness-raising

Once participants have arrived, the facilitator introduces activities that awaken the senses and activate creativity. These practices invite participants to enter an artistic language, opening channels of perception and expression. Awareness-raising creates a bridge from ordinary reality to the possibility of something different.

Activities in this stage might include sensory observation, movement warm-ups, listening exercises, or gentle exploration of materials. The key is that they are accessible: they ask participants to notice and respond, not to perform or produce.

PRINCIPLES:

 Aesthetic presence ⁵

* Gold tags mark where a core principle from Chapter 2 is especially present at that stage; the number traces each tag back to its full explanation there.



STAGE 03

Art experience

At the centre of the session is the art experience. Participants are invited into free or directed artistic exploration. The facilitator may offer a prompt or invitation, but the process remains open-ended and focused on expression rather than outcome. Here, intermodality becomes essential: movement between artistic languages, from movement to drawing, from sound to words, from image to poetry, expands the range of action and allows new meanings to emerge.

Facilitators maintain a witnessing stance during this phase: present, attentive, and non-interpretive. The space should be held consistently so that participants can take risks without fear of judgement.

PRINCIPLES:

 Poiesis ¹

 Intermodality ⁷

 Facilitator as witness ⁶

 Relational Landscapes ⁹



STAGE 04

Aesthetic analysis

After art-making, the group engages in aesthetic analysis. This is not evaluation or interpretation: it is careful, attentive looking and listening to what has emerged. Participants dialogue with their creations: sometimes through words, sometimes through observation, sometimes through placing works in relationship with one another.

Useful facilitation prompts at this stage stay close to the aesthetic: What do you notice? What stands out? What mood or character does this work have? The aim is to acknowledge what is present in the work without explaining or reducing it.

PRINCIPLES:

 Phenomenology ²

 Aesthetic presence ⁵

 Process over product ³



STAGE 05

Reflection and integration

The process turns towards reflection and integration. Participants are invited to harvest something from the experience: what do I take away? What touched me or surprised me? This can happen through writing, drawing, conversation in pairs, group sharing, or a symbolic gesture. The aim is to connect the extraordinary experience of the workshop back to everyday life, not to conclude or summarise, but to carry something forward.

Integration does not require resolution. Participants may leave with an open question, a new image, or simply a shifted quality of attention. These are valid outcomes.

PRINCIPLES:

 Process over product ³



STAGE 06

Check-out

The session closes with a check-out. Participants share how they are leaving the space and what they are taking with them. The facilitator may introduce a brief ritual, a gesture, a collective word, or a simple act to mark the ending and offer care. This closure reinforces safety and respect, and helps participants transition back to daily reality with intentionality.

The check-out mirrors the check-in: it marks the threshold again, this time as a departure. Whatever entered the session as ordinary life departs enriched, even if the change is subtle and difficult to name.

PRINCIPLES:

 Liminality ⁸

The session arc is a guide, not a script. Facilitators should feel free to adjust the length, pace, and emphasis of each stage in response to what the group needs. What should remain consistent is the overall movement: arrival → opening → making → witnessing → integration → closure.



CHAPTER 05

Transversal Axes for Implementation

Chapter 5. Transversal Axes for Implementation

The Poiesis methodology integrates four transversal axes that guide how workshops are conceived and practised. These axes are not themes to be delivered: they are values that cross through every stage of facilitation, shaping both the content and the ethics of the process. Each pilot adapted these axes differently depending on community context, available resources, and local priorities.

Sustainability and Conscious Materiality

Every workshop involves materials, spaces, and resources. In Poiesis, the choice of materials is rarely neutral. Facilitators are encouraged to use sustainable, recycled, or locally available elements, treating nature as a partner rather than a resource to be consumed. This principle is rooted in the idea of ecopoiesis and connects artistic practice to ecological awareness.

Practical approaches include: ephemeral work using organic materials that return to the soil; natural pigments prepared from plants, earth, or minerals; recycled and upcycled materials gathered from local communities; and life-cycle reflections that invite participants to think about where materials come from and what happens to them. The choice of materials is itself a facilitation decision with artistic, ethical, and ecological dimensions.

Cultural Heritage and Collective Memory

Communities carry deep layers of history, tradition, and shared memory. Workshops become spaces where cultural heritage can be honoured, re-imagined, and transmitted, not as fixed forms to be preserved, but as living material that participants engage with creatively. Collective art-making offers participants the chance to see their experiences inscribed in a shared narrative, strengthening their sense of belonging and continuity. Facilitators should approach cultural heritage with humility, listening before assuming what matters to a community.

Emotional Well-Being and Resilience

Artistic processes open pathways for self-expression and inner movement. In community contexts, this can be an essential resource for resilience. Expressive Arts do not aim to diagnose, treat, or intervene therapeutically: this project is explicitly a non-clinical, non-formal education practice. What the methodology does create is conditions where emotions can be safely expressed, witnessed, and integrated through artistic process. The focus on aesthetic presence allows participants to find ground in the creative act, often experiencing moments of clarity, relief, or connection within challenging circumstances.

Inclusion and Multiple Voices

One of the central aims of Poiesis is to create conditions where diverse voices can contribute, including voices that are often unheard. Inclusion here goes beyond participation: it is about co-creation. Facilitators are invited to recognise participants as experts of their own experience, fostering horizontal relationships where each voice carries weight. Inclusion is also structural: it requires designing participation pathways that accommodate different languages, literacies, care responsibilities, and levels of artistic confidence. The pilots showed that meaningful participation often depends as much on logistical and organisational adaptation as on artistic design.



CHAPTER 06

The Implementation Process

Chapter 6. The Implementation Process

Implementing the Poiesis methodology requires preparation, sensitivity, and the capacity to adapt tools to each context. The process is not about reproducing a formula: it is about cultivating conditions where creativity and meaning-making can emerge. Four interconnected phases support this implementation.

Phase 1: Preparation, Knowing the Context and Community

Before entering a workshop, facilitators need to understand the community they will be working with. This involves listening to local partners, understanding social and cultural dynamics, and identifying both challenges and existing strengths and resources. Preparation also includes reflecting on the facilitator's own position: what perspectives and assumptions they bring into the space, and how to hold these with awareness.

Preparation is not only contextual: it is also relational. Building trust with a community partner, understanding what participants are carrying when they arrive, and knowing what the space can and cannot offer are all part of the work before the first session begins.

Key preparation questions:

- ? *Who are the participants? What do they bring as resources: artistic, relational, experiential?*
- ? *What practical conditions shape participation: language, literacy, care responsibilities, scheduling, geography?*
- ? *What cultural references, materials, or spaces might be meaningful as entry points?*
- ? *What are the ethical responsibilities and consent frameworks appropriate to this context?*

Phase 2: Workshop Design

The session architecture provides orientation, but design must remain flexible. A facilitator may select a theme as an entry point: belonging, memory, ecology, identity, and choose artistic modalities that connect with it. The theme functions as an invitation into exploration, not a predetermined outcome.

When deciding which artistic modalities to use, consider:

- ? *What modalities are accessible to this community without requiring prior artistic training?*
- ? *What local materials, spaces, or cultural references might enrich the process?*
- ? *What senses does this modality engage, and what awareness-raising will prepare participants to enter it?*
- ? *How will transitions between modalities be invited, and what might they make possible?*

Design decisions are not only artistic. Across the pilots, participation depended as much on structural conditions as on the artistic process itself: caregiving responsibilities, language diversity, literacy, transport, and scheduling all shaped who was able to take part, and how. Creating space, early on, for participants or community partners to share access needs, language preferences, or scheduling constraints allows these realities to inform the design, rather than surface as obstacles later.

- ? *What caregiving, language, literacy, transport, or scheduling factors might shape who can take part, and how?*
- ? *Is there a way to ask participants or community partners about these realities before the design is finalised?*

Good design creates a clear arc and enough openness within it for improvisation and unexpected directions. The design should integrate the transversal axes of sustainability, cultural heritage, inclusion, and emotional well-being, not as separate topics but as orientations woven into facilitation decisions.

Time allocation is itself a design decision, not only a logistical detail. In larger groups, even a brief individual sharing round, two or three minutes per person, can absorb thirty to forty-five minutes of collective time before transitions and further dialogue are considered. Combining brief individual reflection, paired dialogue, and collective sharing, rather than defaulting to a single full-group round, can protect time for artistic exploration while still ensuring participants feel heard.

A useful facilitation concept when designing is to think in terms of Relational Landscapes: how will the design support movement between individual experience and collective encounter? When will participants work alone, in pairs, and as a group, and how will these dimensions connect?

In the Austria pilot, this took a concrete form. Participants first created individual artistic landscapes, using personal photographs, natural pigments, and found materials, before these were brought together into a shared collective landscape during a closing session. Personal pieces remained visible and distinct even as they became part of a larger composition: a relational space where differences and resonances could coexist without requiring a shared narrative or consensus. Designing with Relational Landscapes in mind means treating the movement between individual and collective work as part of the artistic process itself, not only as a logistical transition.

Phase 3: Facilitation in Practice

When the workshop begins, the facilitator's main responsibility is to hold the space with aesthetic and ethical presence. This means balancing clarity and openness: providing enough structure to create safety while leaving space for participants' voices and creativity.

Chapter 4 sets out the six-stage arc in detail. What follows here is different: not what each stage is, but what can arise within it, why, and what a facilitator can do, moving through the same six stages in order.



STAGE 01

Check-in: holding the threshold

What can arise: facilitators or participants may rush through check-in as a formality, or feel uneasy with the uncertainty this moment opens.

Why: the whole session is a **liminal**⁸ experience: an alternative way of being in the world, a passage between entering and returning to literal reality, carrying something different or new. Check-in is not a bookend to that passage: it is the threshold itself, the exact point of crossing. Rushing it, or over-structuring it, closes the very opening it exists to hold.

What to do: design check-in to hold that uncertainty rather than resolve it quickly: pauses, non-verbal options, and enough time for the crossing to actually happen, not just be announced.



STAGE 02

Awareness-raising: sensitising the senses the session will need

What can arise: this stage can become a generic warm-up, the same one or two exercises regardless of context, disconnected from what the session actually needs.

Why: **aesthetic presence**⁵ is a trained attentiveness to what is already there. Connecting to the light in the room, the temperature or smell of a material, the texture underfoot, is already aesthetic presence in action: approaching what surrounds us as if it were new, allowing ourselves to be surprised by it, is what sensitises us.

What to do: design this stage around the specific senses the session will need: the temperature or texture of a material if the art experience calls on touch, light and colour if it calls on the eye. Inviting participants to approach these as if for the first time, rather than as something already known, is what turns this stage from filler into preparation.



STAGE 03

Art experience: holding what looks unresolved

What can arise: a facilitator can feel unsure whether to intervene when a process looks stuck, chaotic, or when individual and collective energies pull in different directions at once.

Why: this is where **poiesis**¹ is most alive, meaning emerging through the making itself rather than applied from outside, so it can look uncertain before it looks like anything.

Intermodality⁷ means that uncertainty can often be moved through, not solved, by shifting into another language when one is stuck. **Facilitator as witness**⁶ means holding that uncertainty without correcting it, and also means witnessing one's own state: a facilitator's insecurity is not neutral, it can be sensed by the group and can deepen its own. The facilitator also guides from whatever energy is available; recognising how one feels, being a witness to oneself as well, and working from that awareness when needed, is part of witnessing too. And underneath all of this, **Relational Landscapes**⁹ is already at work: this is often where individual and collective processes first touch, a participant absorbed in their own image, a shared rhythm rising in the room without anyone naming it.

What to do: resist the urge to resolve what looks unfinished. Offer a modality shift, not a solution. Notice, without necessarily naming it aloud, where individual and collective energy are meeting or diverging, and where your own state as a facilitator may be shaping the room. Supporting this movement between individual and collective is also a matter of timing and materials, not only attention. If individual absorption is left entirely unstructured, a participant may not arrive at the collective moment with their own process ready to meet others, so gently naming or marking time as it moves is part of the facilitator's role: a guardianship of timing, not an interruption of it. Materials ask for the same care: offering them all at once can overstimulate and add uncertainty about what to do, while introducing them progressively, as the moment calls for, and in quantities suited to individual or collective work, keeps the process legible. Even how materials are offered, gathered at the centre for people to take, or distributed one by one, shapes pacing: the second can slow a process enough to break its rhythm.

Phase 3: Facilitation in Practice — continued



STAGE 04

Aesthetic analysis: witnessing rather than decoding

What can arise: participants and facilitators can default to asking "what does this mean?", turning analysis into interpretation.

Why: **phenomenology**² asks us to stay with what appears, what is seen, heard, felt, before reaching for meaning. **Aesthetic presence**⁵ is the facilitator's own trained attentiveness that makes this possible: noticing colour, gesture, mood, or silence without judging whether it is good or resolved. Together they hold this stage as witnessing, not decoding.

What to do: redirect interpretive questions ("what does it mean?") toward observational ones ("what do you notice?", "what stands out?"). Allow silence before anyone is asked to speak. Inviting participants to share their work with a partner or small group, so they can hear what others notice in it, lets the work speak through other eyes as well as their own; a simple practice that supports this is offering words as a gift, to oneself and to others, gathering more phenomenological information about the work itself, rather than only one person's own interpretation of it.



STAGE 05

Reflection and integration: carrying something new, not a conclusion

What can arise: a session can feel incomplete to a facilitator if participants leave without a resolved feeling or a clear conclusion, or time may simply run out before there is space to share, leaving the experience as a pleasant creative moment rather than something that continues to reveal itself.

Why: **process over product**³ means the value of a session is not measured by a tidy ending. What a participant integrates is often new information, a colour, an image, a word, a shifted quality of attention, that keeps working itself out after the session ends, not an answer settled within it. Much of what becomes revealing, though, arrives not only from one's own process but from hearing others': a participant who takes nothing individually from their own work may still take something from someone else's reflection.

What to do: invite participants to name what they are carrying forward as something new, rather than asking what they concluded. Treat an open question as a valid, valuable outcome, not a gap to fill. Protect enough time for group sharing, even briefly, rather than letting it be the first thing cut when time runs short: it is rarely the facilitator who offers answers here, but the group itself, feeding back to one another from its own processes and artworks.

**STAGE 06****Check-out: the threshold, in reverse**

What can arise: participants may leave still absorbed in the work, or the group may want to linger past the planned ending.

Why: check-out is the other side of the same threshold crossed at check-in: the return, rather than the entry, into the **liminal**⁸ passage the whole session has held. It is not only a moment for the facilitator to register how each person is leaving: it is a space to feel how the group as a whole is, and to sense what it needs in order to close. Sometimes a single word is enough; sometimes the group needs a small act of voice, movement, or gesture to close together, and from the body.

What to do: give check-out the same care as check-in: read what the group needs rather than defaulting to the same closing format each time, and allow enough space for that need to be met, whether a word, a shared sound, or a physical gesture. The threshold back into literal reality needs to be crossed again, not only announced.

Phase 4: Documentation as a Methodological Tool

Documentation in Poiesis is not an administrative task performed after the workshop: it is an integral part of the methodological process. It is how the project learns from itself, how facilitators develop their practice, and how the knowledge generated in each session becomes available for future replication.

The pilots demonstrated that meaningful documentation requires dedicated structures and time. It is difficult to simultaneously facilitate and fully document. Where possible, co-facilitation or collaboration with a partner organisation to share observation responsibilities significantly strengthens both the participant experience and the quality of learning generated.

Beyond its value to individual facilitators, documentation made it possible to compare experiences across the three pilot countries and generate transferable knowledge from practice: the Replication Toolkit itself is a direct result of this process. Understood this way, documentation is not only an evaluation requirement, but a tool that supports reflection, adaptation, and long-term transferability.

Documentation practices include:

1

Session Design Sheet

Prepared before the session: design intentions, facilitation decisions, anticipated challenges.

2

Participation List

Records attendance and basic session information for each workshop.

3

Group Process Observation & Resonance Sheet

Documents what the group brings and what emerges through the artistic experience.

4

Impact Evaluation

A short participant-facing form, used where individual written feedback was practicable.

5

Facilitator Observation Sheet

Completed after the session: what was learned, what would be done differently.

Documentation should be handled with consent and respect for participants' voices. Photographs, written reflections, and audio recordings should only be made with explicit permission, and participants should understand how this material will be used.

Documentation formats should also be adapted to participants' circumstances. Where literacy or digital access cannot be assumed, alternative approaches, oral reflection, drawing, or facilitator-recorded notes, allow documentation to remain participatory rather than becoming another barrier to access.

These five instruments are presented in full in Appendix B, and adapted versions appear in the Replication Toolkit's annexes as working tools for future implementations.



CHAPTER 07

Ethical Considerations

Chapter 7. Ethical Considerations

Working in community and participatory contexts through Expressive Arts requires more than creative skill. It requires a strong ethical foundation that guides how facilitators relate to participants, to materials, and to the collective process. Ethics in Poiesis are not abstract rules: they are a way of being present with sensitivity, responsibility, and respect.

Consent and Agency

Participation in any workshop must always be voluntary. Facilitators must ensure that participants understand what the process involves and feel free to decide how and to what extent they wish to take part. Consent is not obtained once at the beginning: it is ongoing, and must remain open to being revisited at any point. Participants remain the authors of their own expressions, with the right to share or keep private what they create. Agency is not a courtesy: it is the foundation of the approach.

Safe and Inclusive Spaces

Safety in this context means cultivating an environment where participants feel emotionally, physically, and aesthetically protected. Safety does not mean the absence of challenge: it means participants can take risks within a supportive framework. Inclusivity extends to welcoming different languages, cultures, identities, and forms of participation. A space becomes inclusive when each person can find a way to engage that is genuine rather than performed.

Respect for Vulnerability and Participant Rhythm

During workshops, facilitators may encounter strong emotions, silences, or resistance. Ethical facilitation does not push participants to reveal more than they want, nor does it impose interpretations on their artistic expressions. Respecting vulnerability means allowing participants to set their own rhythm and depth of engagement. What is not spoken can be as significant as what is expressed.

This project is not therapeutic. Facilitators are not counsellors or therapists. If a participant is clearly in distress beyond what the artistic space can hold, facilitators should respond with care and, where appropriate, with referral to appropriate support. Understanding the boundaries of facilitation, what the space is and is not, is itself an ethical responsibility.

Cultural Sensitivity and Representation

When working with communities whose cultural backgrounds, languages, and histories differ from the facilitator's own, representation and cultural sensitivity become essential. Art should be a space for self-representation, not for the facilitator's assumptions about what is culturally meaningful. Facilitators are invited to approach communities with genuine curiosity, to acknowledge traditions and local resources, and to avoid stereotypes or romanticised views. Cultural heritage belongs to those who carry it.

Documentation and Confidentiality

Documentation is a valuable tool for reflection and dissemination, and it must always respect participants' rights. Photographs, recordings, or written accounts should be made only with explicit consent, and facilitators must clarify how this material will be used. Participants must have the power to withdraw their permission at any time. What is shared within the group must remain protected, so that participants feel secure in their expressions.

Ethical considerations are not an additional layer placed on top of the methodology: they are integral to it. They ensure that Poiesis remains a practice of inclusion, trust, and genuine encounter.



CHAPTER 08

Case Examples from the Pilots

Chapter 8. Case Examples from the Pilots

The following three case examples document selected experiences from the pilot implementation in Austria, Romania, and Italy. They are not full case studies: those appear in the Replication Toolkit, where interested readers will find complete session documentation, facilitator observations, and detailed learnings for replication.

What these examples offer is something different: a view into how the Poiesis principles appeared in actual facilitation, what decisions were made and why, what emerged through the process, and what each context revealed about the methodology's flexibility and its coherence. Each vignette focuses on a specific aspect of the approach in action.

Taken together, the three examples demonstrate what the cross-cutting learnings of the project confirm: methodological coherence can be maintained without standardisation. Different communities, artistic modalities, and implementation conditions produced different experiences, while the underlying principles remained consistent.

8.1 Austria (IRARU / LEFÖ): Between Individual Memory and Collective Landscape

The Austrian pilot worked with a group of mainly Latin American migrant women connected to LEFÖ, an organisation supporting migrant women in Vienna. Participants brought diverse migratory trajectories, lengths of residency, and personal histories. While migration provided the thematic framework, the workshops were not designed as spaces for testimonial sharing: they were designed as artistic and relational encounters.

The facilitation arc across the series moved from individual to collective. Early sessions invited participants to create individual artistic landscapes using personal photographs, natural pigments, mixed-media composition, and reflective dialogue. Photographs were not prompts for storytelling: participants were invited to work with them as artistic material, cutting, layering, combining, responding to colour and texture before attending to personal associations. This created multiple entry points into the exploration of memory and migration without requiring disclosure.

In the collective closure session, adapted from the original two-group plan after one session was cancelled due to attendance, participants from both groups integrated their individual artworks into a shared large-scale composition. The process required minimal instruction. Participants explored how individual pieces related to one another within a larger visual landscape, creating new relationships between images without dissolving the uniqueness of each contribution.

For facilitators, the key learning from this case is about pacing between individual and collective. Providing sufficient time for individual artistic exploration before moving into collective work created a foundation from which the group could come together without needing consensus or shared biography. When individual artworks entered the collective space, they were already complete: they could speak for themselves, and their relationships with other works could be discovered rather than constructed.

The case also demonstrated something important about facilitation under changing conditions. When the original plan changed, a session cancelled, attendance variable, group composition shifting, what maintained coherence was not the structure of activities but the principles behind them. Attention to artistic exploration, voluntary participation, phenomenological observation, and careful pacing provided continuity even when practical adaptations became necessary.

Full case documentation, session designs, and learnings for replication are available in the Replication Toolkit, Sections 5.3 and 6.3.

8.2 Romania (Alba Eglesia): Participation Under Access Constraints

The Romanian pilot worked in contexts shaped by social and economic disadvantage: limited access to arts education, variable literacy, time scarcity, and for some participants, care responsibilities that could not simply be set aside. Several participants arrived hesitant, uncertain whether art was something for them. Some attended with their children, which was quietly accommodated through how the space and pacing were held.

The facilitation team made a deliberate choice to use object-based collage with recycled materials, familiar, accessible, requiring no prior artistic skill, and monotype printing, which carries a liminal quality: participants press a leaf or their hand onto inked paper and do not know what will emerge until the paper is lifted. This moment of revelation became one of the most generative elements of the process.

Safety emerged through structure, not through verbal disclosure. As facilitation steps remained consistent and predictable, choose, place, adjust, commit, trust built through doing rather than explaining. When reflection was offered in multiple forms (pointing to an element, choosing one word, observing in silence), participation widened. Literacy variation was held through the design, not addressed as a problem.

The case was then replicated in a different setting (Sighișoara) to test whether the same principles would hold. Similar engagement patterns appeared: cautious arrival, increased focus during making, stronger confidence after visible results were produced and shared. The transferable element was methodological integrity: clear arc, witnessing stance, multiple entry points. The adaptable element was the specific design, calibrated to local constraints.

For facilitators, the central learning from this case is that inclusion is built through design decisions, not through inclusion policies. Familiar materials, predictable steps, non-evaluative framing, and space for care responsibilities to coexist with participation: these are not accommodations added onto the methodology. They are expressions of it.

Full case documentation, session designs, and learnings for replication are available in the Replication Toolkit, Section 5.2.

8.3 Italy (Creative Art Farm APS): Embodied Ecology in a Rural Community

The Italian pilot took place in the Montepulciano Public Library, a rural cultural setting where access to structured artistic and emotional expression spaces is limited. Participants arrived in varied emotional states: some carrying agitation, anxiety, or anger; others bringing curiosity, warmth, and a desire to experiment. The group included participants with migrant backgrounds from South America alongside people from outside Tuscany, creating an intercultural dynamic that had not been explicitly programmed.

The facilitation began with guided bodily movement supported by rhythmic music. The decision not to begin with visual production was intentional: it allowed participants to enter through sensation rather than performance, reducing self-judgement and activating internal awareness before any mark was made. The transition from movement to abstract painting was designed as a continuous process rather than a change of activity: music remained present as a stabilising thread, supporting emotional flow between phases.

No technical guidance was provided during the painting phase. Participants worked with colours, shapes, textures, and gestures according to their own rhythm. Natural objects collected from the surrounding environment, leaves, pinecones, feathers, were available as visual and tactile references, grounding the abstract process in the local landscape. This integration of local materials brought ecopoiesis into the session not as a theme to discuss but as a material reality to engage with.

The group responded with strong participation and emotional openness. Several participants articulated feeling "free to make art without fear." The case confirmed that material simplicity, a limited set of tools, clearly introduced, without skill requirements, can function as aesthetic containment that supports both accessibility and depth.

For facilitators, the key learning is about sequencing: beginning from the body before moving to image is an effective approach for groups arriving in varied emotional states, or in contexts where artistic self-confidence is low. The body is a more universal entry point than a blank page.

Full case documentation, session designs, and learnings for replication are available in the Replication Toolkit, Section 5.1.



CHAPTER 09

Final Reflections

Chapter 9. Final Reflections

This guide was co-created before the pilots were implemented and updated to reflect what was learned from them. The distance between those two moments, intention and practice, is itself one of the project's most important learnings.

What the three pilots demonstrated, taken together, is that the Poiesis methodology is transferable not because it can be replicated identically, but because its principles can hold across very different conditions. Austria, Romania, and Italy worked with different communities, different artistic modalities, different durations and settings, and different thematic entry points. What remained consistent was not the activities: it was the facilitation stance, the session arc, the commitment to process over product, the resource-oriented framing, and the attention to what participants bring rather than what they lack.

This distinction matters for any facilitator or organisation considering using this approach. The question is not: can I do what was done in Austria, Romania, or Italy? The question is: can I work from these principles in my own context, with my own community, with the modalities and materials I know?

What Facilitators Learned

Across the pilots, facilitators consistently identified the following as central learnings, shared here not as conclusions but as invitations to reflection:

1**Facilitation begins before the first instruction**

The quality of space, the tone of the welcome, the pacing of the opening, shapes what participants feel is possible.

2**Emotional diversity is not a problem to manage**

A coherent intermodal arc can hold participants who arrive with very different states, without requiring equalisation or verbal processing.

3**Time is a facilitation decision**

How long to stay with making, how to balance individual and collective, when to introduce a transition: these are methodological choices.

4**Belonging does not require shared biography**

Connections emerge through artistic resonance, shared images, and acts of witnessing, not agreement on a common narrative.

5 Documentation is a practice of care

Documenting with attention, not for reporting but for learning, preserves the knowledge the community generated.

An Invitation to Adapt, Not Replicate

This guide is an offer, not a prescription. The Poiesis approach does not require uniformity: it requires integrity, fidelity to the principles while adapting their expression to the context at hand.

Future facilitators are invited to:

- Work from principles rather than activities. Understand why each facilitation decision is made, not only what the activity is.
- Consult the Replication Toolkit alongside this guide for detailed session documentation and learnings from the three pilots.
- Adapt materials, modalities, and themes to the community and context they know, while maintaining the session arc and the facilitation stance.
- Document their own practice with the same care that the pilots demonstrated. Each implementation generates knowledge that belongs to the field.

Poiesis, at its root, is about trust in the process. Trust that meaning will emerge through making. Trust that the group will find its own coherence. Trust that the facilitator does not need to direct, only to hold. These are not naïve commitments. They are the result of practice, reflection, and the willingness to let something genuinely new come forth.

For full case studies, session documentation, cross-cutting learnings, and replication tools, see the Poiesis Replication Toolkit. For the theoretical and conceptual foundations of the approach, see the Poiesis Methodology Document.



APPENDIX A

Toolbox of Practices and Prompts

Appendix A. Toolbox of Practices and Prompts

The following practices offer a starting point for facilitators designing sessions. They are organised by session stage, mirroring the architecture introduced in Chapter 4. Each practice can be adapted to different modalities, durations, and group contexts. They are not prescriptive: they are invitations.

Check-in Practices

- **Arrive with a gesture.** Each participant enters the space with one gesture that says something about how they are arriving today: no words needed.
- **Colour of the moment.** Participants choose or point to a colour that feels close to their current state. No explanation required.
- **One word or one silence.** Participants may offer a word, an image, or simply a moment of silence to mark their arrival.
- **Threshold crossing.** A simple physical act that marks the beginning: stepping over a line on the floor, placing both feet on the ground, or taking three slow breaths together.

PRINCIPLES: *

 Liminality ⁸

Awareness-Raising Practices

- **Sensory walk.** Moving through the space noticing one thing seen, one thing heard, one thing felt on the skin.
- **Material exploration.** Before any making begins, participants handle available materials with curiosity: texture, weight, smell, temperature, without a goal.
- **Body mapping.** Participants draw or trace the outline of their own body and mark where they feel something today: weight, warmth, tension, ease.
- **Sound and movement echo.** The facilitator introduces a simple rhythm or movement; participants respond in their own way. No correct response.
- **Drawing with the non-dominant hand.** A brief, accessible exercise that decentres habitual control and opens different channels of expression.

* Gold tags mark where a core principle from Chapter 2 is especially present at that stage; the number traces each tag back to its full explanation there.

PRINCIPLES:  Aesthetic presence ⁵  Ecopoiesis ⁴

Art Experience Prompts

- **Landscape of belonging.** Create an image, using any materials, of a place where you have felt you belonged. The place can be real, remembered, or imagined.
- **Memory object.** Bring or choose an object that carries a memory. Work with it: trace it, photograph it, draw around it, write about it, without explaining what it means.
- **Movement into image.** Begin with free movement to music; when the music stops, move directly to paper and mark what was in your body.
- **Collage of what I carry.** Using found images, torn papers, and marks, create a landscape of what you carry with you: visible and invisible.
- **Conversation with a material.** Choose one material and spend time with it, noticing how it responds. Let the material guide the making rather than your intention.
- **From sound to image.** Listen to a piece of music and draw or paint in response, not what you imagine, but what the sound does in your body.

PRINCIPLES:  Poiesis ¹  Intermodality ⁷  Ecopoiesis ⁴

Aesthetic Analysis Prompts

- What do you notice? (rather than: what does it mean?)
- What mood or character does this work have? What word might you give it?
- Is there something in this work that surprises you?
- If this work could speak, what might it say?
- Walk slowly around the works. Notice what attracts your attention. Notice what you might overlook.
- **Silent witnessing.** The group observes the works in silence for two minutes before anyone speaks.

PRINCIPLES:  Aesthetic presence ⁵  Facilitator as witness ⁶

Reflection and Integration Practices

- **Three words.** Each participant offers three words, one word, or stays in silence about what they are taking from the session. Silence and simple presence are valid, deliberate ways of taking part, not the absence of participation.

- **Letter to the work.** Write a brief, private letter to the artwork created today. What do you want to say to it?
- **Paired witnessing.** In pairs, each person shares one thing that surprised them in the process. The listener only witnesses: no response required.
- **Image of what I am taking.** Make a quick, small mark: a symbol, a line, a colour, that holds what you are carrying from today's session.
- **Naming what was difficult.** Was there a moment that felt hard during the process? What helped you move through it: a material, a pause, someone's presence?

PRINCIPLES:  Process over product ³  Relational Landscapes ⁹

Check-out Rituals

- **One gesture of departure.** Each participant closes with one gesture that says something about how they are leaving.
- **The word I offer.** Each participant offers a word to the group as a closing gift, something from the session they want to leave in the space.
- **Collective breath or silence.** A shared moment of stillness before the session formally ends.
- **Placing the work.** Participants place their work in a shared space as a final collective act: the works remain visible as the group departs.

PRINCIPLES:  Liminality ⁸  Relational Landscapes ⁹

END OF APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B

Documentation Tools

Appendix B. Documentation Tools

The following five instruments were developed during the Poiesis project. Most were used across the pilot implementations in Austria, Romania, and Italy; the Impact Evaluation form (04), completed directly by participants, was used mainly in Austria, where logistics and language allowed individual written feedback, while Romania and Italy gathered equivalent input through the group-based tools below. Together, they form a complete documentation cycle: from session design before the session, through observation during it, to reflection and evaluation after.

Each instrument can be used on its own or as part of a series. Adapt them freely to your context, community, and language.

01. Session Design Sheet

Before the session · for the facilitator

Purpose: this sheet supports facilitators in designing and documenting their Poiesis session. It helps translate the key ideas of the methodology into concrete and meaningful practice.

Each session is an opportunity to explore the dialogue between inner and outer landscapes, connecting personal experience with collective, social, or environmental realities. Poiesis values the process more than the product, and encourages facilitators to work with presence, curiosity, and care.

You do not need to be an Expressive Arts expert to apply Poiesis. The goal is to integrate its principles in a way that feels authentic and appropriate to your own field and community.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Workshop title

Facilitator(s)

Date & duration

Location / context

Target group

Number of participants

1. TRANSVERSAL AXES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Tick one or more and describe how your session connects to them.

- ☐ Sustainability and conscious materiality
- ☐ Cultural heritage and collective memory
- ☐ Emotional well-being and resilience
- ☐ Inclusion and multiple voices

Describe: how are these themes reflected in your session, through materials, participants, context, or artistic choices?

2. CORE PRINCIPLES OF POIESIS IN PRACTICE

These principles guide the spirit of Poiesis. Choose what feels most relevant for your context.

- ☐ **Intermodality:** moving between art forms (sound, movement, image, word) to open new perspectives.
- ☐ **Aesthetic presence:** paying attention to what feels alive, meaningful, or resonant in the process.
- ☐ **Facilitator as witness:** accompanying participants with respect and without judgment or interpretation.
- ☐ **Process over product:** focusing on the creative journey rather than the final result.
- ☐ **Liminality:** allowing moments of uncertainty and transition as spaces of transformation.
- ☐ **Ecopoiesis:** recognising materials, nature, and place as active partners in creation.
- ☐ **Relational Landscapes:** attending to the field between participants, noticing where individual and collective experience connect and shift.

Describe briefly: which of these principles will you keep in mind while facilitating, and how do you imagine they will show up in practice?

3. INTENTION AND FOCUS

Main objective: what is the purpose of this session? Does this respond to a current need of the community you will be working with?

Poetic or sensitive intention: what inner question, emotion, or experience would you like to open?

4. STRUCTURE OF THE SESSION

Keep it flexible. The structure is a frame, not a rule.

Session Stage	Elements	Your Notes / Proposal
 CHECK-IN	Framing / Philosophy of the space	
	How participants arrive	
	Guiding question / intention	
 AWARENESS-RAISING	Awakening creativity and senses	
	Entering the artistic language	
 ART EXPERIENCE	Free art-experience	
	Directed art-experience	
 AESTHETIC ANALYSIS	Observation of what has emerged	
	Dialogue with the image / artwork	
 REFLECTION / INTEGRATION	Reflection on the process	
	Harvesting messages	
 CHECK-OUT	How are participants leaving?	
	Brief ending ritual	

* Register: write down key points during the session, whether the facilitator records them or each participant writes on a piece of paper, which is then collected or photographed.

02. Participation List

During the session · for participants

Organisation

Number of participants

Workshop title

Date & duration

Project responsible (name + signature)

#	Date	Name and Surname	Attended Hours						Signature
			1hr	2hr	3hr	4hr	5hr	6hr	
1			☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
2			☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
3			☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
4			☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
5			☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
6			☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
7			☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
8			☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
9			☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
10			☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
11			☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
12			☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
13			☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
14			☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
15			☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

03. Group Process Observation & Resonance Sheet

To be completed during and at the end of the session

Purpose: this sheet accompanies the Poiesis process as a documentation tool for group-based work. Its purpose is to record what the group brings into the session and what emerges through the artistic experience, using observable traces rather than interpretation.

This is not an evaluation and does not collect personal data. Reflections recorded here may be collective or individual, documented through photos, short texts, or observation notes. Individual perspectives may be included as long as no names or identifiable information are used.

Date

Workshop title

Country / partner organisation

Facilitator(s)

Number of participants

Context / setting (brief)

BEGINNING: INTENTION / WISH

To be completed at the beginning of the session.

1. How did the group arrive today? During the opening circle, invite the group to express how they are arriving using words, short phrases, metaphors, colours, gestures, or spatial indications. Record what the group shared, capturing the initial atmosphere as it was collectively expressed (e.g. scattered, hesitant, curious, noisy, withdrawn, grounded).

2. What brings you here today, and what is your wish for this experience? Based on the collective check-in or intention-setting activity, invite participants to express a word, a short phrase, or a question that reflects what they would like to explore through the arts at this moment. Record what the group shared:

ARTISTIC EXPERIENCE DOCUMENTATION

To be completed at the end of the session. If this documentation is kept digitally, the link to a shared cloud folder (e.g. Google Drive) may be recorded here instead of, or alongside, printed photos.

1. Process documentation: add one or more photos that document the artistic process as it unfolded (working moments, material engagement, spatial arrangements). These images should help contextualise how the process developed. Avoid identifiable individuals whenever possible.

2. Final pieces or shared arrangements: add one or more photos of the final pieces or shared arrangements created during the workshop. These may include individual works, collective compositions, or spatial configurations that remained at the end of the session.

CLOSING: HARVEST / CRYSTALLISATION

To be completed at the end of the session.

1. What messages or traces emerged through the artworks or the process? Invite participants, if they wish, to express any message, trace, image, gesture, word, or quality that emerged through the artworks or the process. Record the most significant expressions here, using participants' own words or forms of expression.

2. What connections were expressed between these messages or traces and the initial wishes or questions? When participants choose to do so, invite them to name any connections they perceive between what emerged and the wishes expressed at the beginning. Record the connections articulated, using participants' own words, images, or metaphors.

04. Impact Evaluation

To be completed at the end of the session · by the participant

Note for the facilitator: this form is completed directly by participants. Consider the following when using it: (1) if participants do not speak the language of the form, arrange for translation or an oral version; (2) if literacy is limited in the group, read the questions aloud and record answers collectively or individually with support; (3) participation in the evaluation is voluntary. No personal data should be required.

Name (optional)

Date

Workshop title

1. How much do you feel this session has touched, inspired, or left something meaningful in you? Mark a number that feels right to you.

1

very little

2

3

4

5

deeply

2. Please write down the message you take from this experience.

3. Any other comments you consider relevant or would like to share with us.

Thank you for your participation.

05. Facilitator Observation Sheet

After the session · for the facilitator

Purpose: to reflect on what happened after the session ends. This sheet supports the facilitator in observing what unfolded, identifying what was learned, and carrying that learning into future practice. Complete it as soon as possible after the session while impressions are still fresh.

Questions	Reflection Notes & Observations
Phenomenological observation of the group: what did you observe, without interpretation? What was the atmosphere, the energy, the quality of engagement?	
Any individual cases to consider? Were there participants who seemed to need particular attention? (Do not use names.)	
What moments felt most alive or meaningful?	
Were there any surprises? Something unexpected happened. What was it?	
Were there difficulties? How was the difficulty held or navigated?	
Was the objective achieved? How did the artistic proposal help?	
What do I take from this session into future practice?	

END OF GUIDE

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