

Euroopan kulttuuripääkaupunki 2026 raadin kokoonpano ja esittely



Riitta Vanhatalo

FT Riitta Vanhatalo on kulttuuriperintöalan ja viestinnän asiantuntija. Hän työskentelee toiminnanjohtajana Suomen Kotiseutuliitossa, joka edistää mm. kulttuuripalvelujen saavutettavuutta, osallisuutta kulttuuriperintöön ja kaupunkikulttuurin kehittämistä.

Vanhatalo on opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriön asettaman kulttuuriperintöalan neuvottelukunnan jäsen, Turun kansainvälisten kirjamesujen päätoimikunnan jäsen, ja toiminut aiemmin myös Euroopan kulttuuriympäristöpäivien Suomen työryhmän puheenjohtajana.

Vanhatalo on työskennellyt 20 vuotta Ylessä toimittajana, tuottajana ja päällikkönä mm. Yle Radio Suomessa, Yle Radio 1:ssä ja Ylen kulttuuriohjelmassa. Lisäksi hän on ollut kirjastotoimenjohtaja ja kulttuurisihteeri.

Puheviestinnän alan väitöskirja vuonna 2014 käsitteli verkostojen vuorovaikutusta, päätöksentekoa ja johtamista.



Kai Amberla

Kai Amberlalla on pitkä kokemus kulttuurialan johtotehtävistä. Hän toimi 1990-luvulla ensin musiikkilehti Rondon päätoimittajana ja sen jälkeen Suomen Sinfoniaorkesterit ry:n toiminnanjohtajana.

Vuonna 2001 tie vei Suomalaisen musiikin tiedotuskeskuksen Fimicin (nykyinen Music Finland) toiminnanjohtajaksi. Vuonna 2007 alkoi edelleen jatkuva toiminnanjohtajan pesti Finland Festivals -yhdistyksessä, johon kuuluu lähes sata kulttuuri- ja taidefestivaalia eri puolilta Suomea.

Kai Amberla on lisäksi toiminut lukuisissa luottamustehtävissä musiikki- ja kulttuurialalla niin Suomessa kuin ulkomailla. Tällä hetkellä hän on mm. International Society for the Performing Arts (ISPA) -järjestön hallituksen jäsen.



Beatriz Garcia

Director, Cities of Culture Research Observatory (and former Head of Research, Institute of Cultural Capital), University of Liverpool (2010 to present), directing major research programmes in the areas of culture-led regeneration and mega event impact analysis with a focus on European cultural policy – in particular, the European Capital of Culture Programme and the cultural policy of the Olympic Movement and Olympic Games and methodologies to capture cultural value and the effects of media narrative on

city image.

Member, Culture and Olympic Heritage Commission, International Olympic Committee

Expert Advisor, Agenda 21 for Culture- Pilot Cities, United Cities and Local Governments
Director, Impacts 08, The Liverpool Model: European Capital of Culture Research Programme, 2006-2010
Lead author of the study "European Capitals of Culture. Success Strategies and Long Term Effects"



Pierre Sauvageot

He is a composer and director of a cultural institution.

He is the director of Lieux publics, the French National Creation Center for arts in public spaces in Marseilles. Supported by the Ministry of Culture and local authorities, Lieux publics welcomes and supports spectacles of any disciplines created for and with public space. Lieux publics give them tools and places for working and explore: workshops to build scenographies, rooms for writing and rehearsals, try out with audience, performances in Marseilles and around, special events designed with the residents... Lieux publics was a main actor of Marseille-Provence 2013, European capital of culture.

Lieux publics is the pilot of IN SITU, the creation platform for arts in public spaces supported by European Commission from 2003 and which include 25 festivals and institutions in 15 European countries (not yet in Finland !). Each year, the network supports 10 new artistic creations, and help European artists for touring in other countries.

Concerts interpreted by the public, Rite of Spring performed by a locomotive orchestra, he composes for the City, in the City, with the City. His "Harmonic Fields", a musical journey with 500 instruments playing by the wind, have been performed in whole Europe for 200 000 peoples, and presented during the Helsinki festival in 2013. His new « Grand Ensemble » mix the inhabitants sounds and testimonies with a symphonic orchestra installed on building balconies.



Jelle Burggraaff

He is a senior project manager with over 15 years work experience in the cultural and educational field. He was involved in the Dutch European Capital of Culture Leeuwarden-Friesland2018 from the bidding process until the evaluation phase. As Head International Cooperation, he was responsible for the implementation of the European Dimension of the project. Previously, he set up different EU-funded cultural projects between educational institutes in Europe.

Jelle Burggraaff currently works as Director International Participants for the International Horticultural Expo Floriade Expo 2022 taking place in Amsterdam-Almere. Since 2020, he has joined the Expert Panel for the European Commission for the European Capitals of Culture 2020-2023.

Jelle Burggraaff holds a Master in Euroculture: Europe in the Wider World and firmly believes in the value of supporting countries, artists, cultural organisations, and educational institutions to work together on the global level.



Jiří Suchánek

Since 2016, Director of DEPO2015, which is a creative and cultural hub in Pilsen (Czech Republic);

From 2013 to 2015, CEO of Pilsen 2015, European Capital of Culture (2013 to 2015); From 2011 to 2013 Executive Director of OKD Foundation in Ostrava (Czech Republic);

From 2008 to 2010 Pavilion Deputy Manager in the Commissioner General Office (Czech government) for the EXPO 2010 Shanghai (one year in China);

From 2007 to 2011, founder and coordinator of SOBOfest, which is a sports and music festival in Sobotka (Czech Republic).



Agnieszka Wlazel

Audience development specialist since 2008;

In the framework of various civic organizations - CEO and artistic director of international art festivals since the 1995, initiator and board member of a European network River//Cities (art in the public spaces), CEO of the Impact Foundation (2008-2014). Dealing with programme development, audience engagement, marketing and PR campaigns, fundraising etc.

Since 2008, assessor in charge of evaluating applications submitted to local, national and European funds, such as the EU Youth and Creative Europe programmes;

PhD researcher at University of Leeds in the area of audience engagement and Virtual Reality art.



Paulina Florjanowicz

She is archaeologist, graduated Warsaw University in 2000 (M.A. in mediaeval and modern times archaeology).

Since 2016, Director of the Department for Cultural Heritage at the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, supervising the museum sector, remembrance policy and memorial sites. General Coordinator of the national "Niepodległa" program for the centenary of Poland regaining its independence. For the past twenty years, she worked for several national and international

NGOs and public institutions of the culture sector, including Stefan Batory Foundation, National Center for Culture and Center for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage.

Director General of the National Heritage Board of Poland (2010-2013), then responsible for international relations at the National Institute for Museums and Public Collections (until 2016), as well as research coordinator for the European Archaeological Council (2014-2016). Member of various national and international expert and advisory panels (including EU & Cultural Heritage Reflection Group, member of the Board for ICOM's International Committee for Museum Security, currently member of the jury for European Capital of Culture).

Project evaluator in different EU culture and education programs, university lecturer and expert on heritage management, cultural policy, museums, remembrance, memorial sites, and social and economic impact of heritage.



Sylvia Amann

She is director of inforelais - a consultancy in Austria specialising in tailored services for culture and creative industries development, which she founded in the year 2000.

She is member of the European Capital of Culture Expert Panel nominated by the European Parliament, member of the Advisory Board of UNESCO Media Art City Linz and co-chaired the OMC expert group of EU Member States on Creative Industries.

Sylvia is also cultural expert for the global network United Cities and Local Governments and senior expert for the Creative FLIP project on resilient access to finance policies for the creative sectors. She works globally for strategic cultural policy development and can rely on a substantial network of policy, institutional and sector contacts in Europe, Asia and Africa.



Dessy Gavrilova

She is co-founder and Director (2000-2011), then Chairwoman of the Red House Center for Culture and Debate in Sofia - a socio-cultural center presenting contemporary innovative and socially engaged art, producing debates, public talks and lectures on relevant socio-political and cultural topics and developing proactive socio-educational programmes. She co-founded and is the chairwoman of the European Network of House for Debate "Time to Talk" (2015 onward).

Co-founder and curator of the Vienna Humanities Festival (2016 onward), and co-founder of www.knigovishte.bg - an online platform promoting reading comprehension and functional literacy among the pupil in primary schools in Bulgaria.

Dessy is a long-standing cultural consultant, and serves on several boards of cultural and civil society development organizations, as well as expert committees of e.g. the European Commission programs (ECOC, EHL, Creative Europe...).

In 1996, she was the founding manager of the Open Society Institute's performing arts program, which in the 1990ies has supported independent performing arts projects in 28 countries in the former Soviet bloc. Before that started and successfully developed a prototype of the programme for Bulgaria.



Christina Farinha

She is researcher and policy analyst specialized in the cultural and creative sectors, notably on issues such as internationalization, cooperation, mobility and cultural diplomacy; in this capacity, she has collaborated with diverse organizations such as More Europe – Cultural External relations, European Cultural Foundation, Interarts and Asia Europe Foundation;

Lecturer at Creative industries and Cultural Management at University of Santiago de Compostela/Spain since 2015 and Catholic University of Porto/Portugal (2015-19);

From 2016 to 2018, senior expert in charge of reporting on the development of cultural and creative industries in the six countries part of the EU-Eastern Partnerships: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine;

From 2012 to 2016, Executive Director of ADDICT Creative Industries Portugal;
Since 2012, National Expert for the Compendium for Cultural Policies and Trends In Europe/CoE - Council of Europe;

Acted as local expert for the ex-post evaluation of Guimarães ECOC 2012 within the team of Ecorys UK;
Assessor in charge of evaluating proposals submitted to European funds, within the programmes: Creative Europe - Culture, Erasmus +, H2020, Urban Innovative Actions; and nationally, for the Grants scheme of the Directorate-General for the Arts/Portuguese Ministry of Culture.



Alin Nica

Since 2004, Mayor of Dudestii Noi municipality in Romania, in this capacity supporting the revitalization and valorization of cultural heritage in his commune as well as initiating, organizing and coordinating major cultural events;

First Vice-President of the Commission 2017-2019 for Social Policy, Education, Employment, Research and Culture (SEDEC) at the Committee of the Regions, Brussels (2017 to present);

Chair of the Committee on Education, Culture, Youth and Research (EDUC) at the Committee of the Regions, Brussels (2010-2012);

European Youth Capital jury member (2010-2012 and 2018-2019)

Musician (2006 to present) and choir member (2016).