The Value-Based Approach (VBA) to evaluate
the knowledge and network spillovers of
the Rotterdam Unlimited Festival

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1. Executive summary

Research objectives

Cultural and creative industries (CCIs) have proven their potential to boost innovation in other parts of the economy and society by the realisation of ‘spillover’ effects. However, very little research has been done to evaluate the broader range of contributions of those industries elsewhere. Therefore, this research aims at finding a way to comprehend the complexity of the practices that lead to CCI spillovers. There is a clear need for more comprehensive evaluation of the contribution of CCI spillovers to other parts of the economy and the society. The most difficult task is to grasp the intangible qualities of CCI impact — cultural and social — that, although not obvious to measure, are essential for the transformations that CCIs generate.

Acknowledging this need and following the conceptual and methodological considerations addressed in the tender “Testing innovative methods to evaluate cultural and creative spillovers in Europe”, the research has proposed and applied a method called Value-Based Approach (VBA) to evaluate in a systematic way the various types of knowledge and network spillover effects of Rotterdam Unlimited Festival, RU (The Netherlands).

The research was carried out by a group of cultural economists and is managed by the Centre for Research and Education in Arts and Economics (CREARE Foundation).

Method: “The Value-Based Approach” (VBA)

Conventional measurements of impact tend to focus on instrumental values, while the Value-Based Approach focuses on the goal values of an organisation/a project/a sector, or in other words the range of qualities that an organisation/a project/a sector aims to achieve. The impact is assessed through the affirmation, strengthening or change of such values. The VBA is comprehensive and theoretically rooted in a cultural economic approach. Its conceptual framework is laid out in Klamer’s recent book, “Doing the right thing: A value based economy” (2016). The notion of values and their valorisation are at the core of this approach. Klamer (2016) argues that values emerge in a cultural context and derive meanings from the context. Therefore, transformation of values goes along with transformation of culture and in order to explain the mechanism through which spillovers are realised, we need a more comprehensive framework that reflect on these transformations.

Details on the VBA are presented below in section 2.

Application of VBA to RU Festival

In the context of the Rotterdam Unlimited Festival the research tests the following hypotheses about CCI spillovers:

**Hypothesis 1:** The (systematic) engagement with culture-led creative activities facilitates the generation of new types of social interactions. This refers to knowledge spillovers in terms of increasing visibility, tolerance and engagement among different groups in the local community (TFCC, 2015).
**Hypothesis 2:** Experiencing and practicing culture-led creativity translates into new practices of social collaborations and social cohesion in a community. This refers to network spillovers in terms of building social cohesion (TFCC, 2015).

The pilot test (phase 1) of the VBA was already conducted in 2015 by Het Atelier, which has prepared the groundwork that was envisioned for this research (phase 2).

**Findings: spillovers of RU Festival**

**Core values and stakeholders**

The **most important value** of RU Festival, as defined in stage one of VBA application, is **social cohesion**. At the diagnosis stage of the VBA, the internal stakeholders built their expectations around the way in which the social cohesion can be operationalised in relation to RU objectives. Accordingly, **solidarity** and **diversity** were defined as the most important aspects (proxy attributes) of social cohesion. Further, solidarity was articulated as a *sense of belonging* and *togetherness*; and diversity – as a *societal and an artistic diversity*.

The mapping of RU Festival proves that the project brings together a **wide variety of stakeholders**. Due to the limited time and budget available for this pilot test (phase 2), the research considers only two groups of core stakeholders – festival visitors and peers.

**Evaluation of solidarity and diversity**

The application of the Value-Based Approach to the RU Festival proves that the event has very strong social dimensions by means of **bringing together a diverse group of visitors** that experiences a *sense of belonging*, and *connectedness* while enjoying the *rich and diverse artistic program* of the festival.

The analysis also proves that the RU visitors not only find important in general the *social and artistic diversity* and *connectedness between different social groups* when visiting any cultural festival, but also the majority of them **positively experienced** both set of values during RU festival. One can assume that the festival gains an image of an event not only with a distinctive program offer, but also provides possibilities to experience considerable social impact and respectfully attracts visitors with a positive attitude towards the social dimensions of a cultural event.

With regard to its social and societal impact, the results show that all stakeholders share that the **greatest (positive) impact** is realised in terms of **connectedness among people from different cultures, social backgrounds and generations**. Those social/societal dimensions have been enhanced in a greater scope by and during the RU actual event and as such the festival can contribute to the social cohesion in the city.

In terms of impact scope, the most immediate one from a visitor’s perspective relates to the **increase in their awareness and understanding of the people diversity** and gained *sense of belonging*. However, during the
interviews the respondents also clearly distinguished between “awareness” and “understanding”, whereas, according to them, the RU festival has stronger impact on the former and much less on the latter.

The visitors of RU Festival and its peers strongly agree that the festival very much contributes to the social cohesion and cultural diversity in the city. However, the results of this research indicate potential for the festival to contribute to the social cohesion among its visitors, yet it is too early to say whether it leads to a social cohesion on the city level. The latter is marked by a complex process that involves multiple dimensions and complex relationships. Achieving strong social cohesion within the city of Rotterdam will take more systematic efforts from diverse stakeholders in the city.

Benefits and limitations of VBA. Future research

The application of the method proves to bring reliable and comprehensive evaluation of the spillover effects of RU Festival. It especially considers intangible multiple contributions in terms of social and cultural values.

The way VBA is implemented allows cultural organisations and their stakeholders to be involved in the development and articulation of evaluation measures of their own work. Next to this, the method assesses an actual impact while cross-referring various experiences of the stakeholders.

Future research needs to focus on the collection of longitudinal data gathered prior to, during (when possible) and past the actual event. This will allow for testing and validation of various key dimensions of the impact that are generated during the festival and spread beyond the festival scope. It will also be interesting to be able to test the application of VBA to evaluate spillovers for more than one event in a city and as such, to be able to analyse aggregated data relevant for CCIs spillovers for the city.

Conditions for application of VBA to other projects

In order to reach an effective application of VBA evaluation to other projects, it is indispensable to:

1) Establish a good understanding with the leaders of the project what this evaluation can mean for them in terms of getting clear their goal values and in terms of their responsibilities in the process of the planning and execution of the evaluation among the stakeholders. This requires investing time and building the basis for the collaboration before beginning the evaluation itself.

2) Invest enough time in the first two stages of the evaluation (diagnosis of values and identification of stakeholders and strategies) until the researchers and the organisation representatives/leaders feel confident they are reaching a relevant set of proxies to be evaluated later. Here, it is important to find a reliable method for the determination of values and experiences of the relevant stakeholders, i.e. panels, focus groups, ethnographical observations, etc.

3) Invest in data collection from the visitors/participants before, during and immediately after the event/activity, but also repeat the survey months after the end of the activity and collect data from non-visitors/non-participants.
1.1. The Value-Based Approach: new methodology for spillover evaluation

Rationales
The method distinguishes and assesses the short- and long-term qualitative impact that arts and culture can and/or aim to achieve. It takes into account the interaction between economic, social and cultural processes, while assessing various values related to these processes and in line with the pre-set goals. As opposed to traditional output evaluation methods, this method explicitly uses stakeholders’ perspectives on the qualitative impact of different values they experience. For example, it focuses not on surface phenomena such as the satisfaction of visitors of an cultural event, but on the values of a broader range of relevant stakeholders, i.e. visitors, beneficiaries, non-funding partners, funding bodies, media partners, policy makers, etc. The assessment of values is justified by responses to questions about what is important to someone or a group of people who are representing those stakeholder groups. The assumption here is that the values of people influence their assessment of own experiences, and knowing that, supports the assessment of the impact of those experiences.

Stages of the VBA
The VBA consists of three stages (fig.1.): (1) Diagnosis of goal values; (2) Realisation of values through identification of stakeholders (internal and external) and strategies; (3) Evaluation of the impact of those values.

Fig.1. Value-Based Approach stages

The evaluation consists of three stages:

Stage 1. Diagnosis of goal values
The stage starts with a pre-evaluation to detect what each case study stands for. On the basis of inquiries with stakeholders we determined the values that are of importance for them in relation to the case study. The goal values are clustered in four different groups: personal, social, societal and transcendental (fig.1.1.).
**Fig. 1.** Value-Based Approach diagnosis of values

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### Stage 2. Realisation of values: identification of stakeholders and strategies

At this stage the method identifies how the undertaken projects/activities/interventions are implemented in relation to the important values that they aim to achieve, by determining and monitoring the **strategies** (activities, tools, working methods, communication) of the various **external stakeholders** (beneficiaries, visitors, partners, policy makers, funding bodies, media) involved.

### Stage 3. Evaluation of the impact of those values

In order to determine the affirmation, strengthening or changing of those values and the impact that they have, the evaluation focuses on the values that have been identified earlier. For each group of stakeholders, different grid of proxies is used which is built during the previous two stages. Those two stages are a very essential part that lay the foundation for the actual evaluation in stage 3. These stages assist both (a) the definition of the shared goal values among various stakeholders and (b) the selection of the proxies that indicate the impact to be realised. The development of the proxies, as value attributes, builds both on theory and close interactions with the stakeholders. The latter are derived from surveys, interviews and focus groups with various stakeholders and from ethnographical observations.

At this stage the Value-Based Approach provides an assessment of the impact of different values. That is the gap between what is valued by the stakeholders and what they experience, i.e. when people change their answer to the question “what they find important” as a consequence of their experiences with the activity. The method can register changes, including changes in values, when repeated. The latter outcome is important and novel for that matter, because theatre events, for example, usually aim at changing values. Exposing some stakeholders to dance may change their mind about it and later they say that dance has become more important to them as an art form and that they want to be involved more. This is a social and, possibly also, a cultural impact. The latter outcome is important and novel for that matter, because theatre events, for example, usually aim at changing values. In some cases, it is important the use of a referent group to crosscheck the self-reported changes among the various stakeholders.
Data collection methods

The VBA includes preliminary, continuous and post evaluations that help systemise the cultural, social and economic impact of cultural and creative industries. Data is collected through a range of qualitative and quantitative methods: surveys, individual interviews, focus groups, ethnological observations as well as analysis of relevant reports.
2. Presentation of the research team

The core research team consists of senior researchers who have already worked jointly on the pilot testing of the Value-Based Approach (VBA) – prof. Arjo Klamer, Lyudmila Petrova and Dorottya Kiss. In addition, the following senior researchers Leonie Kalkman, Chloé Brown and Sofie Post assisted the process of data collection (fieldwork), collation of data, and editing of the report.

**Arjo Klamer** is a Professor in Cultural Economics and holds the chair of Cultural Economics at the Erasmus University, Rotterdam. His current research focuses on the cultural dimension of economic life and the values of arts and culture. He is a member of the management boards of various cultural organisations. He is President-Elect of the Association for Cultural Economics International (ACEI). He has initiated and currently leads the academic team working on (VBA). His recent book, “Doing the right thing: A value based economy” (2016) is the foundation of the VBA. Since 2014, he has worked as Alderman at the Hilversum Municipality, responsible for the regional social policy.

**Lyudmila Petrova** is a research associate in Cultural Economics at the Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication. She is also a Director at the Summer School in Cultural Economics with the Centre for Research and Education in Arts and Economics (CREARE). She is an active member (publishing and presenting) of the cultural economics community. She teaches and does research on cultural industry and social innovation, financing of arts, creativity and innovation, and international cultural policy. Since 2013, she has been a member of the academic research team that designed the methodology “The Value-Based Approach” and undertook its implementation as an (e)valuation tool for national and international organisations.

**Dorottya Eva Kiss** holds two Master degrees in Cultural Economics and Entrepreneurship, and Arts and Cultural Sciences. Her M.A. research paper focuses, on the one hand, on the knowledge gap between cultural, economic and scientific knowledge, and (Dutch) cultural policymaking, and, on the other hand, on the sociologic and economic factors of the construction of valuation of performing artists in a changing art world climate. Besides her almost 18 years of experience in creative entrepreneurial activities, Kiss is currently a project manager, a consultant and a researcher at the foundation Het Atelier, a (freelance) lecturer at the Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication, and a consultant / trainer in NLP communications (Neuro Linguistic Programming).

**Management of the research**

The research is managed by the Centre for Research and Education in Arts and Economics, The Netherlands (CREARE Foundation, www.crearefoundation.nl). Established in 2011, CREARE has undertaken the mission of advancing international research and education in cultural economics. It aims at providing a better understanding of the particular challenges we encounter in the interaction among culture, the society and the economy, and at diffusing knowledge about the new insights generated by research in various disciplines.
3. Spillovers of cultural and creative industries

The recent transition towards a ‘new’ economy (Baumol, 2006) and the rise of both the ‘knowledge-based economy’ (OECD, 1996) and the ‘creative class’ (Florida, 2002) call for repositioning the cultural and the creative industries (CCIs) across the economy and society. In practice, the emergence of new types of CCIs interventions all over Europe, marked by close collaborations, cross-fertilization and mutual learning with creatives (artists, designers, architects, scientists, etc.) has a considerable impact on the landscape of innovation, by encouraging greater openness and inclusiveness across sectors and disciplines (Petrova, 2016). In many cases, CCIs prove their potential to boost innovation in other parts of the economy and society by the realisation of ‘spillover’ effects (Potts, 2011). CCIs open the way for a new approach to the policies for cultural and creative industries as sectors, providing services of a different quality to the society and to other parts of the economy.

Despite the recent interest in the topic of CCI spillovers, these industries are actually still on the margin of research and innovation (economic and social) policies. Very little research has been done to evaluate the broader range of contributions of those industries elsewhere (TFCC) 1. Very little is known about the actual place of arts, design and media within the contemporary innovation system or about the mechanisms of transferring their positive effects elsewhere.

This research aims at finding a way to comprehend the complexity of the practices that CCI spillovers entail. In light of this, there is a clear need for more comprehensive evaluation/assessment of their social and cultural contributions to the economy and the society.

3.1. Evaluation of spillovers of CCIs: state of art

The concept of ‘spillover’ effects has its origin in economic theory and refers to the processes of transferring benefits from one area to another. A recent report by TFCC (2015) suggests that spillovers of CCIs can generate a greater impact than previously thought. The report proposes the following definition, which aims to meet the ‘strategic and practical’ needs of various stakeholders: “[T]he process by which an activity in one area has a subsequent broader impact on places, society or the economy through the overflow of concepts, ideas, skills, knowledge and different types of capital. Spillovers can take place over varying time frames and can be both intentional and unintentional, planned or unplanned, direct or indirect, negative as well as positive” (2015, p. 15). The analysis of the 98 case studies distinguishes 17 different sub-categories of spillovers, clustered into three broader types: knowledge, industry and network 2. The proposed classification of spillovers goes beyond immediate connotations of economic values, and invites a multi-perspective (i.e. economic, social and cultural) analysis that involves an interdisciplinary approach of investigation.

However, the conventional measurements of spillover effects focus mainly on quantitative economic indicators, such as GDP, employment rate, number of patents and business transactions (Stam at al 2008;

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1 The report of TFCC (2015) reviews 98 case studies on CCI spillovers.
2 Ibid. p. 25.
Muller et al., 2009; Boschma & Fisch, 2007; Bakhshi et al. 2008), and includes a limited number of quantitative indicators. In most of the cases, those studies do not take into account the perspectives and experiences of the various stakeholder groups. It was also found that very little research has been done of the impact on qualitative factors such as subjective well-being and social innovation (ENCATC, 2015). In this respect, the TFCC (2015) report, for example, concludes that the most complex and urgent research task is to develop a mix of instruments for evaluation of the added values that the various CCI spillovers can generate. The most difficult task is to grasp the intangible values – cultural and social, i.e. values that are not obvious to measure, yet essential for the changes/transformations that CCI generates.

Acknowledging this need and following the conceptual and methodological considerations addressed in the tender “Testing innovative methods to evaluate cultural and creative spillovers in Europe”, which was launched at the beginning of 2016, the research proposed and applied a method called Value-Based Approach (VBA) to evaluate in a systematic way the various types of knowledge and network spillover effects of Rotterdam Unlimited Festival, RU (The Netherlands), by assessing the wider scope of RU intangible contributions. The approach considers spillovers in terms of social and cultural added values. As opposed to traditional output evaluation methods, this method explicitly uses stakeholders’ perspectives on the value shifts they experience. It surpasses existing methods of evaluation by differentiating between what various stakeholders value and what they experience. In this way, the VBA provides a more reliable and comprehensive evaluation of the spillover effects because the aims usually are a change in values (like an increase in the valuation of diversity or artistic quality).

4. Presentation of the methodology “Value-Based Approach”

4.1. Rationale of the VBA

The Value-Based Approach (VBA) is theoretically rooted in cultural economics principle and is developed by a group of cultural economists from Erasmus University, led by Prof Arjo Klamer. His recent book, “Doing the right thing: A value based economy” (2016) lays the conceptual foundation of the VBA.

The basic idea is that people and organizations want to realize values, or whatever is important to them. Being aware of those values is one side of the realization, the making them true, or to valorise the values the other. Spillovers occur when activities valorise other values that those intended. A cultural organization may seek to realize artistic values yet may contribute to a sense of community—a valorisation of a social value—or contributes to the identity of a city—a societal value.

Cultural economists (Klamer, 1996; Throsby, 2001; Hutter, 2011) distinguish among various types of values, namely cultural, social, personal and financial, all of which are of a different nature. Any value is relative to its context and can be analysed and assessed only through its concrete manifestations. Klamer points out that values evolve around the “way in which values function” and “the action that comes with experiencing a
value” (2003, p. 198). This suggests that these values are not fixed and their meanings/attributions can vary when functioning within a different context. This cultural economic perspective calls for the examination of the values of cultural goods (products and services) through processes of personal and/or social experiences. The process of valorisation signifies the development, enhancement and strengthening of certain values and involves interactions among various stakeholders (Klamer, 2003). In this sense, the valorisation is a process of value production through which the good gains a worth, while its value is under construction (Vatin, 2003).

The value-based approach implies that such valorisation complies with several logics, each quite distinctive from the other. Most well-known are the logics of the market (the valorisation by means of selling for a price), governmental logic (valorisation by means of organisational or bureaucratic processes as in the case of subsidies), the social logic (by means of informal relationships usually involving gifts, contributions and sharing), the logic of the home (think of support by the family) and the cultural logic (valorising one’s ideas in the relevant cultural setting).

CCIs spillovers come about in this process of valorisation by way of any of these logics – they imply the transfer of values in terms of benefits, impact, effects, etc. from one area to another. For example, a musician may please (or disturb) her neighbours while practicing. Or an architect may be commissioned to construct a building that does not just generate benefits for the owner, but also for all people passing by. In such instances the valorisation of the work generates values for other stakeholders that were not the intended beneficiaries. The benefits or damages may be social, societal, artistic and also financial, such as when adjacent buildings go up (or down) in financial value because of the new construction.

Due their complex nature, the realisation of spillovers remains difficult to measure. Conventional measurements of the impact of cultural or social activities tend to focus on financial values (such as change in incomes, asset values and the like) and ignore social and cultural impacts (Petrova, 2016). The Value-Based Approach concentrates on the latter, at least when the main agents responsible for such activities declare social and cultural values as their main goals, and financial outcomes as instrumental and therefore subsidiary. The impact is assessed through the affirmation, strengthening, or change of the values aimed for.

The method distinguishes and assesses the short- and long-term qualitative changes that arts and culture can and/or aim to achieve. It takes into account the interaction between economic, social and cultural processes, while assessing various values (qualities) related to these processes and in line with the pre-set goals. As opposed to traditional output evaluation methods, this method explicitly uses stakeholders’ perspectives on the qualitative impact of different values they
experience. For example, it focuses not on a surface phenomena, such as the satisfaction of visitors of a cultural event, but on the values of a broader range of relevant stakeholders, i.e. visitors, beneficiaries, non-funding partners, funding bodies, media partners, policy makers, etc. The assumption here is that the values of people may influence their assessment of their own experiences, and that the values may change because of the experiences (as is usually the intended outcome of the activity). The changing of values is a sign of impact.

Suppose a group of stakeholders evaluate an activity they experienced as unchallenging or not thought-provoking. For people who value being entertained, that is a good thing, but for people who value being challenged and provoked, the activity will be "boring" or "uninspiring". When this is the outcome of the evaluation, the organisers and funders can then do several things. They could make the activity more challenging to satisfy the challenge-seekers or they could convince the comfort-seekers to value being challenged more. Alternatively, they could convince the challenge-seekers to appreciate being entertained from time to time. Of course, the best practice depends on the values that they aim for. When they aim for activities that make a difference, that get people to think, they can better choose for the first two options. Here the practical side of the methods shows.

4.2. Stages of the VBA

The methodology consists of three stages:

Stage 1. Diagnoses of goal values

This stage starts with a pre-evaluation to detect what each case study stands for. On the basis of inquiries with (internal) stakeholders, the values of all stakeholders are determined. The VBA distinguishes between four different groups of values: personal, social, societal and transcendental (fig.2).

Fig. 2. Value-Based Approach diagnoses of values
Stage 2. Realisation of values: identification of stakeholders and strategies

At this stage the research identifies how the undertaken projects/activities/interventions are implemented in relation to the important values that they aim to achieve.

This is done by determining and monitoring the strategies (activities, tools, working methods, communication) of the various stakeholders. The Value-based Approach distinguishes between internal (an organisation’s or project’s team) and external (beneficiaries, visitors, partners, policy makers, funding bodies, media) stakeholders.

Stage 3. Evaluation of the changes that can be detected

In order to determine the affirmation, strengthening or changing of those values and the impact that they have, the evaluation focuses on the values that have been identified earlier. For each group of stakeholders, a different grid of proxies is used, which was built during the previous two stages. The proxies describe attributes of personal, social and societal values. The first two stages are a very essential part that lay the foundation for the actual evaluation in stage 3. These stages assist both (a) the definition of the shared goal values among various stakeholders and (b) the selection of the proxies that indicate the impact to be realised. The development of the proxies, as value attributes, builds both on theory and close interactions with the stakeholders. The latter are derived from surveys, interviews and focus groups with various stakeholders, and from ethnographical observations.

At this evaluation stage the Value-Based Approach provides an assessment of the impact of different values. That is the gap between what is valued by the stakeholders and what they experience, i.e. when people change their answer to the question “what they find important” as a consequence of their experiences with the activity. The method can register changes, including changes in values, when repeated. The latter outcome is important and novel for that matter, because theatre events, for example, usually aim at changing values. Exposing some stakeholders to dance may change their mind about it and later they say that dance has become more important to them as an art form and they want to be involved more. This is a social and, possibly also, a cultural impact. The latter outcome is important, and novel for that matter, because theatre events, for example, usually aim at changing values. In some cases, it is important the use of a referent group to crosscheck the self-reported changes among the various stakeholders.

4.3. Data collection methods

The VBA includes preliminary, continuous and post evaluations that help systemise the process of cultural change in terms of the achieved progress and the weaknesses and the strengths of the process.

Data is collected through a range of qualitative and quantitative methods: surveys, individual interviews, focus groups as well as analysis of the reports on the project.
4.4. Innovative elements of the VBA

- The combination of various qualitative methods allows for the assessment of a broader range of impact rather than only the measurement of CCIs economic contribution.
- The method not only allows evaluation and assessment of spillovers as concrete tangible outcomes/products, but also goes deep in the process of CCI spillovers, by recognising their tangible and intangible characteristics.
- It can evaluate the affirmation, strengthening or changes of values at different stages of the activity.
- The indicators to measure the impact are tailored concretely for each project by developing a proxy grid. It was made as a result of engagement with the stakeholders from the very beginning of the work.
- It assesses the changes of values using not only self-reference, but also the assessment by reference groups (other stakeholders involved in the concrete activity).
- It detects the dimensions of the impact and explains their scope and why they take place.
- It assesses real impact based on experience vs. intentional/optional/perceived impact. It is applied during and/or after the project/activity takes place so that the information collected can measure the actual experience and when it is applied over time it can evaluate immediate and longitudinal trends.
- It builds on interdisciplinary collaborations.
- It can be applied to small-, medium- and large-scale organisations, events, activities and projects where data is not collected or is limited. It provides an opportunity to develop a framework where data can be entered.
- It has clear-cut stages in which the toolkit can be easily applied.

5. Presentation of the case study

5.1. The performing arts sector

Under the scope of this research tender, the VBA was applied to the performing arts. A distinctive feature of the performing arts, and especially in the case of the Rotterdam Unlimited Festival (presented below), is their realisation in a closed space to a limited number of visitors with wide-ranging spillover effects. Even though the production and experience of an artistic work is the main goal, the spillover effects can be social, cultural and economic. For example, one of the assumptions shared most often is that because a theatre performance brings people together, it might contribute to social innovation realised as an effect on social cohesion and the strengthening of communities. The question is whether a festival such as Rotterdam Unlimited can accomplish all that with respect to several groups of stakeholders involved. Apart from the
producers and the visitors, the following groups can be involved: the wider artistic community, the (local) government, the business community, or a neighbourhood.

The research uses the case of Rotterdam Unlimited because it is: a) manageable, b) amenable to our approach. In addition, it has already made a pilot test in 2015 by Het Atelier, which has prepared the groundwork that was envisioned for the research (the activities undertaken by Het Atelier are described under section 7.1.1., p. 16).

5.2. Rotterdam Unlimited Festival - background

RU is a festival that came to life in 2013 by merging two festivals that have been held for 3 decades: the DUNYA Festival and Zomercarnaval (Summer Carnival). In 2013 DUCOS Productions launched the first edition of Rotterdam Unlimited. The festival, of which Dunya Festival and Zomercarnaval are the foundation, revolves around the multi-coloured identity of the city and takes it as a focal point for international programming. The cross-cultural character makes this festival unique in The Netherlands. Rotterdam Unlimited wants to grow to become an international city event, and shares these ambitions with Rotterdam Festivals (RF), one of its subsidiaries.

The organisation

Besides the festival director, who is responsible for the overall management (Guus Dutrieux), and the artistic director, responsible for the programming and the preservation of the artistic quality in relation to the mission and goals of the festival (Claudia Raven), there are 4 other people involved in the daily operations of the organisation: (1) a financial manager who is simultaneously responsible for the coordination of production management; 2) an internal affairs coordinator who is also responsible for the coordination of the Zomercarnaval; 3) a PR-marketing coordinator and 4) a coordinator who is responsible for the financial coordination of the sponsors and partners with which the festival is involved. Other than this group, every year, there are several project-based volunteers and short-term employees. There are several committee and foundation members (in total 15) who on a voluntary basis preserve the mission, vision and goals of the festival.

Visitors

The festival attracts more than 900,000 visitors from both within and outside The Netherlands. There is a culturally diverse public with approximately 50% Western European (from The Netherlands, Spain and Portugal) and another 50% non-Western European ethnicities (from Curaçao, Aruba, Bonaire, St. Maarten, Cape Verde, Trinidad & Tobago, Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, St. Domingo, Suriname, Saba, St. Eustatius, North-West Africa for instance). With regard to social groups the festival is attracting a wide range of visitors from different social, cultural, ethnical, and educational backgrounds.
Objectives

Besides having an artistic/cultural objective, the festival has a societal objective that is strongly connected to the diverse programming as an instrument for reaching this purpose. The concept of social sustainability plays an important role in the motivation of the festival. Both the Government and the business sector are increasingly acknowledging the importance of a socially sustainable society. By organizing an (inter)national art festival, RU aims to contribute to a society where social cohesion is a central value, contributing to the ability to cope with the rapid global changes. In order to achieve change, RU aims to improve the climate in society so that diversity is seen as a building block of a common thinking.

Programming

RU is a 5-day city event (e.g. yearly festival) in Rotterdam (The Netherlands) presenting a wide range of dance, music, film and poetry genres from acknowledged and upcoming artists for local, national and international visitors of all ethnicities, ages and social backgrounds. The festival entails yearly an approximate number of 79 performances both indoors (theatre and cultural centres) and outdoors (on the street; street parade). RU’s aim is to present a platform of a diverse cultural programming that is either affordable\(^3\) or freely accessible.

The festival has a unique character in the country. The Netherlands currently has no other festival that takes the multi-ethnic cultural identity of the modern metropolitan as a starting point for its programme. There is no other event in which the massiveness of cultural history, traditions, the backgrounds and collaboration between all these cultures would stand in the forefront. RU represents the multicultural character of the city centre of Rotterdam and aims at exerting a social impact, thereby having a positive influence on the ‘sense of belonging’ and on the connection among different cultural groups within the (Rotterdam) community.

Funding context

The festival is organised through public-private funding, although public funding prevails. It receives direct public funding (56 per cent) from the Regional/Provincial Government, Rotterdam Municipality, as well as subsidies from public funds (5 per cent) such as Rotterdam Festivals Foundation Promotion of People’s Power, Prince Bernhard Culture Fund, VSB Funds and Performing Arts Fund. The festival generates about 14,5 per cent of the total budget by realizing own income and 24,5 per cent by sponsoring and renting. The private funders include Robin Online, Robin Mobile, Jupiler Belgian Beer, Coca-Cola, OLA, Mijnders Transport, Faber Vlaggen, Catharinenburg, Lipton Ice Tea, Palmuno 2015 Caribbean and Latin Festival. It also receives private donations.\(^3\)

\(^3\) An impression of some of the performances can be found here:
6. **Main hypotheses and sub-hypotheses**

In its mission statement, the Rotterdam Unlimited Festival aims at impact on the social cohesion in the city of Rotterdam. Therefore, this research, through the application of the VBA, tests the following **hypotheses**:

**Hypothesis 1:** The (systematic) engagement with culture-led creative activities facilitates the generation of new types of social interactions.

**Hypothesis 2:** Experiencing and practicing culture-led creativity translates into new practices of social collaborations and social cohesion in a community. Each hypothesis consists of different sub-hypotheses (table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Sub-hypotheses</th>
<th>Indicators/proxies</th>
<th>Methods of data collection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 1</strong></td>
<td>The (systematic) engagement with culture-led creative activities facilitates the generation of new types of social interactions.</td>
<td>1. The project generates shared emotional experience and affects the openness among different participants in the visitors.</td>
<td>Focus group, Interviews, Survey</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• The visitors reach</td>
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<td>• The diversity of the visitors (age, nationality, ethnic background, education)</td>
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<td>• The level of sharing</td>
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<td>• The level of solidarity</td>
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| Hypothesis 2 | Experiencing and practicing culture-led creativity translates into new practices of social collaborations and social cohesion in a community. | 1. The project generates a sense of belonging                                    | Interviews, Surveys                   |
|              |                                                                                | 2. It boosts solidarity                                                            |                                     |
|              |                                                                                | 3. It encourages integration in the community through social diversity            |                                     |
|              |                                                                                | • The increased awareness and understanding among different social groups        |                                     |
|              |                                                                                | • The increased sense of belonging                                                |                                     |
|              |                                                                                | • The increased social interactions among different social groups of the community |                                     |

With reference to the type of spillovers presented in the report of TFCC (2015) the hypotheses related to both:

- **Knowledge spillovers:** increasing visibility, tolerance and engagement among different groups in the local community
- **Network spillovers:** building social cohesion.

7. **Methodological approach of the research project**

7.1. **Data collection methods**

For the purposes of RU evaluation data is collected through a range of quantitative and qualitative methods: surveys, interviews, focus groups as well as analysis of RU reports.

The data collection consists of two stages:
The pilot test of VBA for RU undertaken by Het Atelier during and after the RU edition in 2015 (this stage is not funded by the tender “Testing innovative methods to evaluate cultural and creative spillovers in Europe”);

Complimentary data collection during and after the 2016 edition of the RU Festival undertaken by CREARE Foundation (this stage is funded under the tender “Testing innovative methods to evaluate cultural and creative spillovers in Europe”).

7.1.1. Data collection stage 1
In 2015, Het Atelier undertook the implementation of VBA for the RU. In 2015 the research surveyed the various groups RU considers as its most important stakeholders: the visitors, the cultural field professionals, politicians and internal stakeholders (employees, committee and board members).

Data collection internal stakeholders

- Online survey: 15 (out of 17) responded to all listed questions;
- Focus group with the employees (excluding the overall management and the artistic director in order to preserve validity and reliability);
- Interviews with the artistic and foundation director.

Data collection external stakeholders

- 150 completed online surveys with visitors (out of 190 collected), of which 118 were filled in by visitors of the festival.
- 8 (out of 22) interviews with politicians. The sample included 22 individuals who were on the list of RU. However, only 8 politicians responded in the first part and only 6 completed the entire interview.
- 7 (out of 22) interviews with peers. The sample included 22 individuals who were on the list of RU as the most important arts and culture peers to question. However, only 7 managed to complete the questionnaires.

7.12. Data collection stage 2
The biggest part of the additional data collection took place during the RU Festival (e.g. 26-30 July 2016) and after the event took place (early August - September 2016). The concrete samples of respondents were built to compliment the previously collected data from stage 1. The research from stage 1 functions as a highly valuable pilot study on how to measure an organisation’s social cohesion/impact and is used as a solid base for a future research method to measure intangible values during stage 2. To better evaluate the realisation of the social and societal levels, this stage includes:

- 20 interviews with visitors (13 during the festival and 7 after the festival);
- 20 online survey with peers (16 completed);
• 198 survey questionnaires with visitors (98 face-to-face during the festival and 100 online). The sample for analysis includes only 145 surveys that were 100 per cent completed from visitors of RU. The questionnaires for the interviews with visitors and peers included closed- and open-ended questions, while the questionnaires for the visitors survey included only closed-ended questions (Annex 1). To operationalise the concept of social cohesion and its underlying values (solidarity, togetherness, and diversity), the research translated these into concrete attributions (proxies) and questions. The development of the proxies, as value attributes, builds both on theory and close interactions with the stakeholders during the previous stage of the VBA test. To operationalise the impact of the festival, the questionnaires include questions on the experience of the festival, which is cross-referenced with the questions on what they find important when visiting a cultural festival in general.

7.2. Data analysis

Data analysis in this research builds on the merge of data of the visitors from both editions of the RU in 2015 and 2016. The quantitative data is analysed (answers to the closed-ended questions) with SPSS. The qualitative data from the open-ended questions is analysed by ATLAS. The (predetermined) codes for the qualitative analysis inter alia emerge through the underlying meanings (‘sub-values’) of social impact/social cohesion.

7.3. Timetable implementation VBA for RU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Evaluation of RU social impact</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>VI</th>
<th>VII</th>
<th>VIII</th>
<th>IX</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>XI</th>
<th>XII</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Set-up phase</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Structural preparation for the evaluation phase, incl.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparation of survey/interviews with visitors and peers</td>
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<td><strong>Data collection</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Survey + interviews with visitors</td>
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<td>26-30</td>
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<td>Interviews with other stakeholders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transcription of the interviews</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Data analysis - evaluation of changes</strong></td>
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<td>Analysis</td>
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<td>Evaluation report - 1st draft</td>
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<td>Final draft evaluation report</td>
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<td>15</td>
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</table>

| B. Communication and reporting for both case studies | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|---|----|-----|------|----|---|----|-----|
| **Internal communication with the extended team**   |   |    |     |      |    |   |    |     |
| Communication with the European Research Partnership - ERP |   |    |     |      |    |   |    |     |
8. Findings

Taking into consideration the rationale and the stages of the Value-Based Approach, the findings are presented here as follows: (1) Shared core values and related stakeholders; (2) Demographic characteristics of visitors; (3) General attitude of RU visitors to cultural festivals (expectations); (4) Visitors’ experience of RU Festival; (5) Specific outcomes and impact of RU Festival – according to the festival visitors and peers.

8.1. Shared core values and related stakeholder

The Value-Based Approach distinguishes between internal and external stakeholders. The mapping of RU festival proves that the project brings together a wide diversity of stakeholders (table 2). However, due to the limited time and budget available for this pilot test (second stage), the research considers only two groups of core stakeholders – highlighted in the table – i.e. festival visitors and peers.

Table 2. Categories and sub-categories of stakeholders of RU festival

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal stakeholders</th>
<th>External stakeholders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>RU team</strong></td>
<td><strong>Beneficiaries</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee members</td>
<td>Visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation members</td>
<td>Citizens Rotterdam</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Partners</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peers Associations</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Policy makers</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Politicians Civil servants</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Funding bodies</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Grant-giving foundations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Companies Corporate foundations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Awarding bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>Broadcasters Print media Social media</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The core values of RU were defined during the first stage of testing the VBA for RU (2015). Following a desk research, focus group and interviews with the organisation, the most important values of RU in relation to its social impact is identified as social cohesion. At this stage the internal stakeholders also built their expectations around what way the social cohesion can be operationalised in relation to RU objectives. Accordingly, solidarity and diversity were identified as the most important aspects/attributes of social cohesion (table 3).

Table 3. Values map related to core stakeholders of RU festival

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Values</th>
<th>Proxies</th>
<th>Stakeholder group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solidarity:</td>
<td>• Sense of belonging</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Togetherness – shared (emotional) experience</td>
<td>Internal stakeholders Visitors Peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity:</td>
<td>• Societal diversity (multicultural, intergenerational and the cohesion of all layers of society).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cultural/artistic diversity</td>
<td>Internal stakeholders Visitors Politicians</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8.2. Demographics of the visitors

The analysis of the demographic characteristics of the sample of respondents (2015-2016) proves that RU attracts visitors with quite a diversity of demographic characteristics.

**Gender, Age, Nationality/ Ethnicity, Place of residence**

Bigger share of the visitors are women (66 per cent). The majority of the respondents are between 20 and 40 years (62 per cent, fig. 1). The visitors between 40 and 50 years and between 50 and 60 years are evenly represented (14 per cent).

Fig. 1. Shares of visitors (%) by age, 2015/2016

With regard to nationality, the greatest share of the visitors is Dutch (93 per cent). Nevertheless, the most important factor to consider is the ethnical background of the visitors based on the family origin (fig. 3). More than half of the visitors (56 per cent) is of Dutch origin, and more than 25 per cent represents different ethnicities (Antillean, Ecuadorian, Surinamese, Indonesian, etc.). About 8 per cent come from families with mixed Dutch – other ethnicity origins. The non-Dutch, Western public was represented by a smaller share (5 per cent).

Fig. 2. Shares of visitors (%) by nationality, 2015/2016
Fig. 3. Shares of visitors (%) by family origin, 2015/2016

Education, Average Yearly Income

More than 50 per cent of the respondents have a higher education (University, HBO), (fig.4) and a greater share (37 per cent) earn and yearly average income (about €30,000 and €40,000), (fig.5). Except for the highest income level, above €55,000 (only 10%), other income levels between are also sufficiently represented among the respondents.
Respondents could indicate their level of education. In the Netherlands, there are different types of primary, secondary and higher level of education. Despite its more practical orientation, ‘HBO’ is considered as a (close to) university level of education. LBO, VMBO after primary education, are two possibilities to consider. Only VMBO makes it possible for students to have the options for higher education (university level for instance). If a student did LBO for example he/she needs to go to MBO and only then could be accepted to a higher level.

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8.3. General attitude of RU visitors towards cultural festivals

This section provides the analysis of the data collected from the visitors’ surveys and interviews. It aims to reveal the general attitudes of RU visitors towards cultural festivals and thus their general expectations with respect to the core values **solidarity** and **diversity** (program and visitors) when visiting any cultural festival.

On the scale from 1 (not important) to 5 (the most important), the visitors identified their general preferences towards any cultural festival (fig. 6 and fig. 6.2.). The analysis is based on the aggregated data for 2015 and 2016.

*Program diversity: expected*

A closer look at the visitor expectations concerning the program diversity (fig. 6.) suggests that the visitors of RU in general have almost **equally high expectations** for a *broad range of art forms* (3,9), followed by a *broad range of emerging and well-known artists* (3,86) from *different generations* (3,85) who are presenting *culturally and ethnically diverse arts* (3,8) from a *broad range of genres* (3,71). The majority of the visitors (between 65 per cent and 71 per cent for the combined period 2015-2016), find mainly important or very important the program diversity when visiting any cultural festival (fig. 6.1.).

*Solidarity and social diversity: expected*

The cohort of the RU visitors assessed as important (3,5) and mostly important (4,3) the social aspects of visiting cultural festival (fig. 6.2.). The analysis of their assessment reveals that in general the visitors find **significantly important** (4,3) to have *fun with friends* when attending cultural festivals. Other **equally important** social values that the visitors pursue in general when attending cultural festivals are *multicultural communication* (3,7), *communication among different generations* (3,5) and the *communication among diverse social groups* (3,6). It is interesting to acknowledge that the bigger shares (between 55% to 90%) of RU visitors in 2016 registered slightly higher positive expectations with respect to those social sub-values when comparing to the cohort in 2015 (fig. 6.3.).
Fig. 6. Visitors’ expectations for programme diversity when visiting cultural festivals - by extent of importance: 1 (not important) - 5 (the most important)

Fig. 6.1. Visitors’ expectations for programme diversity when visiting cultural festivals by share of visitors (%) who value positively those aspects.

Fig. 6.2. Visitors’ expectations for social diversity and solidarity when visiting cultural festivals by extent of importance: 1 (not important) - 5 (the most important)
Fig. 6.3. Visitors’ expectation for social diversity and solidarity when visiting cultural festivals - by share of visitors (%) who value positively those aspects.

In addition to the aforementioned social aspects, the research in 2016 includes also another sub-value of solidarity, i.e. sense of belonging. When compared to the expectations of sharing (3,6) and solidarity (togetherness) (3,8), the average importance of this value is considered rather low (3,3) in the expectations of the visitors (fig. 6.4.).

Fig. 6.4. Visitors’ expectation of social values when visiting cultural festivals by extent of importance, 2016.

1 (not important) - 5 (the most important)

8.4. Concrete experience of RU festival by its visitors

This section focuses on the visitors’ concrete experience of RU Festival.

In terms of visitors’ overall concrete experiences with RU Festival, figures 7 to 7.4. summarise the main findings. The responses are set on the scale from 1 (not important) to 5 (the most important) for each year individually and for the combined period of 2015 and 2016.

Programme diversity: experienced

For the combined period of 2015-2016, on average, the experience of diverse artists’ generations is valued the most (3,9) and the broad range of genres the least (3,6) by the RU visitors. The participation of emerging and well-known artists as well as the experience of ethnically and culturally diverse art are almost equally
valued (3,8). The experience of *diverse art forms is assessed as mainly important* (3,7) (fig.7). Respectfully, the *majority* (70 per cent) of the visitors *find mainly important and very important* in their experience the *diverse artists’ generations*; (67 per cent) the participation of *emerging and well-known artists*; (64 per cent) the experience of *ethnically and culturally diverse art*; (60 per cent) *broad range of art forms* and (51 per cent) the experience of *broad range of art forms* (fig. 7.1).

**Solidarity and social diversity: experienced**

When asked about the social dimensions of their experience, the visitors shared quite high satisfactions – between 4,2 and 3,7, fig. 7.2. (for the combined period 2015-2016). A significant 81 per cent of the visitors experienced the benefit of *having fun with friends*, which on average was important as of 4,2 (fig. 7.3.). Another highly valued social outcome for the bigger part of the visitors (70 per cent) is the possibility to *interact and communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds*. Its average importance is assessed as 3,9. The visitors of RU highly and equally valued (3,7) the fact that they could communicate with people from different generations and with people from different social groups. Each aspect is experienced positively from 70 per cent of the respondents.

Fig.7. Visitors’ experience of programme diversity during the RU festival by extent of importance,

1 (not important) - 5 (the most important).
Fig. 7.1. Visitors’ experience of programme diversity during the RU festival by share of visitors (%) who value positively those aspects.

Fig. 7.2. Visitors’ experience of social diversity and solidarity during the RU festival by extent of importance, 1 (not important) - 5 (the most important)

Fig. 7.3. Visitors’ experience of social diversity and solidarity during the RU festival by share of visitors (%) who value positively those aspects
In 2016, the visitors of RU were also asked to assess to what extent they find important the sense of belonging in their experience to the festival. On average, the experience of solidarity (3,9), sharing (3,8) and belonging (3,8) are almost equally highly valued by the RU visitors (fig.7.4.).

Fig.7.4. Visitors’ experience of social values when visiting RU by extent of importance, 2016

8.5. Specific outcomes and impact of RU Festival

In this section the analysis focuses on the specific impact of RU in relation to the social and cultural values it aims to realize. The impact of the festival is assessed on the basis of the difference it makes for its visitors and representatives of the cultural and arts sector (experts and peers), by comparing what they value in general with their assessment of those values during the actual event. The gap between both (actual and expected) means, illustrates one of the impacts for both groups as part of their cultural and social benefits from the festival. The bigger the gap, the greater the positive impact was.

Impact of RU, 2015-2016: visitor perspectives

Fig. 8 and fig. 8.1. summarised the results of impact of RU for the visitors. A closer look at the social and artistic dimensions proves a bigger impact of the core social dimensions of the festival (fig. 8).

In terms of what the visitors in general find important when visiting cultural festivals, the greatest majority of the visitors (87 per cent) value the most to have fun with friends. On average this social aspect was valued the most (4,3) in comparing to the others. However, this was experienced positively during the festival, but to a slightly lesser extent (4,1) and from a smaller share of the visitors (81 per cent). With regards to the communications among people with different cultural backgrounds, from different generations and diverse social groups, these aspects are seen as important in general for more than half of the visitors, and were experienced even more so by an average of 8 per cent more of the visitors during the actual event. The biggest gap, thus the greatest (positive) impact was realised with regard to multicultural communication (3,7-3,9), followed by intergenerational communication (3,5-3,7) and communication among diverse social groups (3,6 – 3,7) (fig. 8).
With regard to the artistic diversity, the *broad range of art forms and genres* was experienced during the RU to a **lesser extent than valued** (fig. 8). Although a considerably large share of the visitors, respectively 71 and 65 per cent, valued these artistic dimensions as important (3,9; 3,7), only a smaller share of the visitors, 60 per cent and 51 per cent, experienced them. The majority of the visitors, from 64 to 71 per cent (fig. 8.1.), experienced the programming of the **culturally and ethnically diverse art**, the participation of **different generations of artists**, both **emerging and well-known**, as **significantly important** (3,8-3,9). These met their expectations of diversity in the artistic programming (fig. 8).

Fig.8. Visitors’ perspective on RU social and cultural impact: expected vs. experienced by extent of importance, 2015/2016; 1 (not important) - 5 (the most important)
In addition, in 2016 the visitors were asked to rate their actual experience of social dimensions. The importance for the visitors of sharing, belonging and solidarity during the actual event is rated higher when compared to the means given to these values in general (fig. 8.2.) With regards to the impact, the greatest gap of means, thus greatest impact is estimated for the realisation of sense of the belonging (3.4 to 3.8), followed by sharing (3.6 – 3.8) and solidarity (3.8 – 3.9).

Fig. 8.2. Sharing, solidarity and belonging experienced during the festival by extent of importance, 2016.
1 (not important) - 5 (the most important)
Fig. 8.3. Sharing, solidarity and belonging experienced during the festival by share of visitors (%), 2016

The interviews with visitors also shed a light on the possible reasons for their strong experience of the togetherness/sense of belonging (fig. 8.4.). For the majority of the respondents the atmosphere of the RU event was described as “great”, “nice”, “party feeling”, “celebration”, “relaxed”, or “fun”. The interviewed visitors associated the feeling of togetherness/belonging with the “energy of the group”, “enthusiasm and diversity of the crowd”, “openness among diverse people”, or “happiness, joy, group feeling”. For a smaller portion of the respondents the event remained too “messy” and “busy” and didn’t meet their expectations.

Fig. 8.4. Visitors’ description of their experience of RU, 2016 – “word cloud” image

Impact of RU, 2015-2016: peer perspectives

The cohort of peers assessed positively both the social and artistic impact of RU. In general peers have much lower expectations than the visitors - valued on average about 3 on the scale of 1 to 5 – but in their experience of the actual event the peers encountered more social and program benefits than expected (on average up to 3,8). The biggest gap, thus the greatest (positive) impact was registered in regards to communication among different generations (3-3,9) and the culturally and ethnically diverse programing (3 – 3,7),(fig.9).
With regards to the artistic dimensions of the festival, the peers valued the festival’s artistic addition on a clearly lower scale (about 3), but they experienced those dimensions rather positively, especially the cultural and ethnic programing and the diversity of artists from different generations.

Fig. 9. Peers’ perspective on RU social and cultural impact: expected vs. experienced by extent of importance, 2015/2016: 1 (not important) - 5 (the most important)
The interviews with the peers, also show that at the festival that peers generally highlight the festive and approachable characteristic of the festival that is very much based upon the diversity of art forms and genres that, all in all, are attracting a wide range of audiences that is a well-suited reflection of the Rotterdam society (fig.10).

Fig. 10. Peers’ description of their experience of RU, 2016 – “word cloud” image

Key dimensions of RU impact, 2016: visitors’ perspectives

In 2016, the research included other dimensions – awareness of people diversity and sense of belonging - as key dimensions of the impact that were assessed by the visitors. In terms of the core social values, the festival did make a difference for the respondents (fig.11). For almost half of the respondents (48 per cent), their attendance of the festival increased their awareness and understanding of the people from a different social and cultural background. Attending the festival also enabled 53 per cent of the visitors to gain a sense of belonging. On average, both changes are considered rather important and valued respectively between 3.4 and 3.8 on the scale from 1 to 5.

Fig. 11. Key dimensions of impact for the RU visitors by share of visitors (%) who value positively those changes, 2016.
Nevertheless, this positive result, the visitors who were interviewed also clarify that the festival actually might increase the awareness of the diversity in the city, but does not necessary add to the understanding of those diverse groups. In this respect, at least half of the respondents were very explicit about the differences between “awareness” and “understanding”. For example, the visitors suggested the following:

“Yes, it gives everyone the opportunity to taste and experience the atmosphere and the traditions of other cultures, but it is too short to have an effect on the understanding.”

“We were definitely aware of the diversity of cultures of the people at the festival, both in the public and in the performances, but I wouldn’t say that my understanding for them has increased. I would say that the festival increased our awareness of the diversity of Rotterdam.”

“In part, it [the festival] makes it clear that you live in a city with people with many cultures. But, I sincerely hope that for other people it matters and makes them want to see who other people are. But does this work this way? That is the question.”

In addition, it was suggested that the latter requires more effort over the long-term.

It is also interesting to discover that RU visitors and peers, perceived the positive impact of RU to the diversity of the artistic offer in the city and to the social cohesion (fig. 12.). The visitors consider both of a high and an equal importance (4) and the peers perceived higher (4,6) the impact of RU on the artistic diversity in the city. Nevertheless, these statements need to be investigated further with post-event research including a broader sample representing more than just the RU visitors. At this moment, this might be considered only as illustration of the potential impact of the festival than its real impact on the city.

Fig.12. Visitor and peer perspectives on RU impact on the social cohesion and artistic diversity in the city by extent of importance, 2016; 1 (not important) - 5 (the most important)
8.6. Findings: concluding remarks

The most important value of RU Festival as defined during the diagnoses stage of application of VBA, is **social cohesion**, for which the most important attributes for RU were identified as **solidarity and diversity**. Solidarity was articulated as sense of belonging and togetherness; and diversity – as societal and artistic.

The mapping of RU Festival proves that the project brings together a wide diversity of stakeholders. Due to the limited time and budget available for this pilot test (stage 2), the research considers only two groups of core stakeholders – festival visitors and peers (arts and cultural sector).

The application of the Value-Based Approach to the RU Festival proves that the event has very strong social dimensions by means of bringing together a diversity of visitors that experiences a sense a belonging, togetherness, solidarity while enjoying the rich program diversity during the festival. The RU gathers quite an ethnic diversity of visitors and brings together diverse generations and people who are evenly distributed among low and high yearly income and education.

Generally speaking, when attending any festival RU visitors value highly both set of values – solidarity and program diversity - whereas the **program diversity** (as a combination of diverse art forms, genres, diverse artists, etc.) is considered **slightly more important** than the social aspects of festival attendance.

The analysis also proves that the RU visitors not only finds important in general the **social and artistic diversity** and **connectedness between different social groups** when visiting any cultural festival, but also the majority – between 50 and 80 per cent – of the visitors **positively experienced** both set of values during RU Festival. The visitors considered their experience with RU on average to be **mainly important** (3.6) and **very important** (4.2). Respectively, one can assume that the festival gains an image of an event, not only with a distinctive program offer, but also as providing possibilities to experience social impact and respectfully attracting visitors with a positive attitude towards social experiences.

With regard to its social/societal impact, evaluated by the gap between what was expected and actual experience, the results show that all stakeholders share that the **greatest (positive) impact** was realised in terms of **connectedness among people from different cultures, social backgrounds and generations**. Those social/societal dimensions have been enhanced by and during RU actual event.

In terms of key dimensions of the impact, the most immediate one from the visitors’ perspective relate to the **increase in their awareness and understanding of the people diversity** in the city and **gained sense of belonging**. However, during the interviews the respondents also clearly distinguished between “awareness” and “understanding”, whereas, according to them, the RU festival has stronger impact on the former and much less on the latter. In terms of RU spillovers, this might mean that in order for the social capital generated during the festival to have a lasting effect for the city social cohesion, it might take more systematic efforts from various stakeholders in the city.
Here it is important to distinguish that the results of this research indicate that the festival contributes to the social cohesion among its visitors, yet it is too early to say whether it leads to a social cohesion at the city level (a spillover for the city) as it is a complex process that involves multiple dimensions and complex relationships that need to be studied further.

9. Limitations and future research

The following section deals with the opportunities and challenges of the Value-Based Approach when applied to events of RU Festival scope.

9.1. Limitations

In relation to the visitors, the collection of data presented several challenges. The study was dealing with a complex issue: the value of social cohesion. Despite the fact that the sub-values (‘solidarity/togetherness’ and ‘diversity’) somewhat simplified the multifaceted value of social cohesion, several questions in the survey might have been complicated to some respondents (for example the differences between “awareness” and “understanding” of the other cultures). While this might be a challenge for the respondents to the online survey and in the face-to-face survey, the interviewers were able to clarify some of the questions. Nevertheless, the aspect needs to be considered in relation to the robustness of the data if a bigger data set would be executed in the future.

The reach of respondents for the online survey was also limited by the less effective communication between the research team and RU organisation (meanwhile the RU team went through a reorganisation and, at some moments, it was difficult to get their attention for the field work of the evaluation). Another limitation for the data collection and the reach of the respondents was the timing of the festival. A festival only truly ‘lives’ when it is taking place. The research dealt with data collection that was executed both during and after the festival’s events. During and right after the event took place, the collection of visitor survey responses was very effective. Yet, executing interviews afterwards was rather challenging. One possible solution to avoid this obstacle is to allocate more resources (human and financial) and collect all the visitor surveys during the event itself.

The response of the peers to take part in the interviews/surveys was also affected by the timing of the festival and the limited time for data analysis afterwards (after the holiday period from July to August, getting experts’ attention in September was rather difficult). This affected the number of surveys filled in.

Future research therefore needs to give more attention to engagement with these external stakeholders in either the quantitative and/or the qualitative data collection. In addition, special attention needs to be given to the peers and politicians with regard to their real experience of the event. All these aspects also will require different resources – financial and human – in order to implement VBA in its full scope.
9.2. Benefits of applying VBA and future research

Despite the data collection and coordination challenges encountered during the second stage of the evaluation of RU Festival, the application of the Value-Based Approach to assess the intangible benefits/impact of a cultural festival achieved its initial objectives. The application of the method proves to bring reliable and validated analysis of the social and cultural contributions and thus spillovers of RU.

The way VBA is implemented allows cultural organisations and their stakeholders to be involved in the development and articulation of measures of evaluation of their own work. The significant qualitative part of the evaluation can be very beneficial for various stakeholders (especially the visitors) to learn how to take a critical assessment. Next to this, the method assesses an actual impact while cross-referencing various experiences and comparing them to expectations.

Future research needs to focus on the collection of longitudinal data collected prior to, during (when possible) and past the event, which will allow for testing and validation of various trends, not only during the actual event, but also afterwards. It will also be interesting to be able to test the application of VBA to evaluate spillovers for more than one event in a city and, as such, to be able to analyse aggregated data.

9.3. Feedback on collaboration with case study institution

The collaboration with the RU institution was not as optimal as planned. Despite the fact that the organisation was very open and willing to help and contribute wherever it was needed, both during the pilot research in 2015 and the research for this tender (2016), there are several aspects that made the efficiency of the collaboration on this evaluation challenging. The willingness was present, yet the actions taken were far from effective. The organisation of RU seems to be operating around a few coordinators, who seem to have too much to deal with. In addition, the PR-Marketing coordinator left the organisation during the course of the research, which resulted in an unnecessary delay while collecting the data. This resulted in slow, ineffective and time-consuming communication without reaching the intended results.

Conducting these two research projects has enhanced the organisation’s awareness of their spillovers. As a result, they have strengthened their communication and marketing efforts to highlight the importance of RU spillovers. The organisation did hope that their aim to have a societal effect (spillover) would indeed be realised. According to RU, this has been confirmed by these two researches.

9.4. Conditions for application of VBA to other projects

In order to reach an effective application of VBA evaluation to other projects, it is indispensable to:

1) Establish a good understanding with the leaders of the project what this evaluation can mean for them in terms of getting clear their goal values and in terms of their responsibilities in the process of the planning and execution of the evaluation among their stakeholders. This requires investing time and building the basis
for the collaboration before beginning the evaluation process.

2) Invest enough time in the first two stages of the evaluation (diagnosis of values and identification of stakeholders and strategies) until the researchers and the organisation representatives/leaders feel confident they are reaching a relevant set of proxies to be evaluated later. Here, it is important to find a reliable method for the determination of values and experiences of the relevant stakeholders, i.e. panels, focus groups, ethnographical observations, etc.

3) Invest more in data collection before, during and immediately after the event, instead of in data collection months later via online platforms.
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Annex 1

Survey visitors

De organisatie van Rotterdam Unlimited (inclusief 'Zomercarnaval' en 'Dunya Festival') wil graag weten wat u van hun activiteiten vindt. Om een goed beeld te krijgen, hebben wij uw respons hard nodig. De vragenlijst zal slechts enkele minuten van uw tijd in beslag nemen. De vragenlijst is anoniem en uw antwoorden zullen vertrouwelijk worden behandeld.

1. Demografische gegevens
   Geslacht M/V
   Leeftijd: .................
   Nationaliteit: .................
   Afkomst moeder: .................
   Afkomst vader: .................
   Hoogst genoteerde opleiding:
   Lagere school, VMBO, MBO, HAVO, VWO, HBO, WO............
   Woonplaats: .................
   Gemiddeld jaarlijks inkomen (omcirkel juiste optie):
   • <10.000;
   • 10.000-20.000;
   • 20.000-30.000;
   • 30.000-40.000;
   • 40.000-50.000;
   • 50.000 <

2. Welke van de volgende aspecten vindt u in het algemeen belangrijk als u een cultureel festival bezoekt? Beoordeel alstublieft de relevantie van ieder statement op een schaal van 1 (erg onbelangrijk) tot 5 (erg belangrijk).
   Plezier maken met vrienden/familie.
   Communiceren met mensen van verschillende culturele achtergronden.
   Communiceren met mensen van verschillende leeftijden.
   Communiceren met mensen van verschillende sociale achtergronden.
   Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan diversiteit van kunstvormen (bijv. muziek, dans, film, poëzie, etc.)
   Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan diversiteit van kunstgenres
   Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan cultureel en etnisch diversiteit in muziek, dans, film, poëzie etc.
   Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan optredens van jonge en oude (verschillende) generaties aan artiesten
   Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan optredens van bekende en opkomende artiesten

3. Hoe belangrijk is het voor u om uw festivalervaring ter plekke samen met anderen te delen?
   Beoordeel alstublieft de relevantie van ieder statement op een schaal van 1 (erg onbelangrijk) tot 5 (erg belangrijk).

4. Hoe belangrijk is het voor u om zich solidair (verbonden) te voelen met anderen tijdens een cultureel festival?
   Beoordeel alstublieft de relevantie van ieder statement op een schaal van 1 (erg onbelangrijk) tot 5 (erg belangrijk).

5. Heeft u tijdens uw bezoek aan Rotterdam Unlimited een van volgende dingen ervaren en zo ja, in welke mate was dit belangrijk voor u?
   Beoordeel alstublieft de relevantie van ieder statement op een schaal van 1 (erg onbelangrijk) tot 5 (erg belangrijk).
   Plezier maken met vrienden/familie.
   Communiceren met mensen van verschillende culturele achtergronden.
   Communiceren met mensen van verschillende leeftijden.
   Communiceren met mensen van verschillende sociale achtergronden.
   Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan diversiteit van kunstvormen (bijv. muziek, dans, film, poëzie, etc.)
   Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan diversiteit van kunstgenres
   Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan cultureel en etnisch diversiteit in muziek, dans, film, poëzie etc.
   Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan optredens van jonge en oude (verschillende) generaties aan artiesten
   Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan optredens van bekende en opkomende artiesten

6. Bent u het eens met de volgende beweringen?
Beoordeel alstublieft de relevantie van ieder statement op een schaal van 1 tot 5

Het festival heeft mijn bewustzijn en begrip voor mensen met een andere sociale of culturele achtergrond en andere leeftijdscategorie vergroot.

Ik ben met mensen omgegaan van een andere sociale of culturele achtergrond en andere leeftijdscategorie als ikzelf.

Ik voelde mij onderdeel van een grotere samenleving.

Ik heb meegemaakt dat mensen met verschillende achtergronden zich met elkaar verbonden voelden.

Rotterdam Unlimited draagt bij aan de sociale cohesie in Rotterdam.

Rotterdam Unlimited draagt bij aan de diversiteit van het cultureel aanbod in Rotterdam.

7. Hoe zou u het gevoel van de onderlinge communicatie/interactie tussen mensen van verschillende achtergronden tijdens Rotterdam Unlimited beoordelen? (1 (erg onbelangrijk) tot 5 (erg belangrijk))

8. Hoe zou u het gevoel van verbondenheid (met een groep) tijdens Rotterdam Unlimited beoordelen? (1 (erg onbelangrijk) tot 5 (erg belangrijk))

9. Hoe zou u het gevoel van solidariteit tijdens Rotterdam Unlimited beoordelen? (1 (erg onbelangrijk) tot 5 (erg belangrijk))

Interviews visitors

De organisatie van Rotterdam Unlimited (inclusief 'Zomercarnaval' en 'Dunya Festival') wil graag weten wat u van hun activiteiten vindt. Om een goed beeld te krijgen, hebben wij uw respons hard nodig. De vragenlijst zal slechts enkele minuten van uw tijd in beslag nemen. De vragenlijst is anoniem en uw antwoorden zullen vertrouwelijk worden behandeld.

1. Demografische gegevens
   Geslacht M/V
   Leeftijd: ..................
   Nationaliteit: ..................
   Afkomst moeder:.......... 
   Afkomst vader:...............
   Hoogst genoten opleiding:
   Lagere school, VMBO, MBO, HAVO, VWO, HBO, WO............
   Woonplaats: ..................
   Gemiddeld jaarlijks inkomen (omcirkel juiste optie):
   • <10.000;
   • 10.000-20.000;
   • 20.000-30.000;
   • 30.000-40.000;
   • 40.000-50.000;
   • 50.000 <

2. Welke van de volgende aspecten vindt u in het algemeen belangrijk als u een cultureel festival bezoekt? Beoordeel alstublieft de relevantie van ieder statement op een schaal van 1 (erg onbelangrijk) tot 5 (erg belangrijk).
   Plezier maken met vrienden/familie.
   Communiceren met mensen van verschillende culturele achtergronden.
   Communiceren met mensen van verschillende leeftijden.
   Communiceren met mensen van verschillende sociale achtergronden.
   Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan diversiteit van kunstvormen (bijv. muziek, dans, film, poëzie, etc.)
   Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan diversiteit van kunstgenres
   Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan cultureel en etnisch diversiteit in muziek, dans, film, poëzie etc.
   Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan optredens van jonge en oude (verschillende) generaties aan artiesten
Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan optredens van bekende en opkomende artiesten

3. **Wat zijn uw redenen voor het bezoeken van dit festival?**

4. **Kunt u knoopp uw ervaring bij Rotterdam Unlimited beschrijven?**

5. **Draagt Rotterdam Unlimited bij aan uw begrip voor mensen met een andere culturele en sociale achtergrond en andere leeftijd?**

Zo ja, kunt u dit toelichten? Kunt u verschillen aanduiden met andere culturele festival ervaringen?

Zo niet, kunt u aangeven waarom niet?

**Interviews peers**

De organisatie van *Rotterdam Unlimited* (inclusief ‘Zomercarnaval’ en ‘Dunya Festival’) wil graag weten wat u van hun activiteiten vindt. Om een goed beeld te krijgen, hebben wij uw respons hard nodig. De vragenlijst zal slechts 15 minuten van uw tijd in beslag nemen. De vragenlijst is anoniem en uw antwoorden zullen vertrouwelijk worden behandeld.

1. **Bent u bekent met Rotterdam Festivals (en/of Zomercarnaval / DUNYA Festival)**
   - Ja
   - Nee
   - Een beetje

2. **In welke van de volgende aspecten zou een cultureel festival volgens u moeten voorzien?**
   *Beoordeel alstublieft de relevantie van ieder statement op een schaal van 1 (erg onbelangrijk) tot 5 (erg belangrijk).*

3. **Welke van de volgende aspecten vindt u in het algemeen belangrijk als u een cultureel festival bezoekt?**
   *Plezier maken met vrienden/familie.*
   - Communiceren met mensen van verschillende culturele achtergronden.
   - Communiceren met mensen van verschillende leeftijden.
   - Communiceren met mensen van verschillende sociale achtergronden.
   - Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan diversiteit van kunstvormen (bijv. muziek, dans, film, poëzie, etc.)
   - Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan diversiteit van kunstgenres
   - Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan cultureel en etnisch diversiteit in muziek, dans, film, poëzie etc.
   - Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan optredens van jonge en oude (verschillende) generaties aan artiesten
   - Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan optredens van bekende en opkomende artiesten

4. **Kunt u vertellen welke functie van het festival Rotterdam Unlimited u vooral interessant vindt? Wat vindt u in het specifiek interessant aan het festival?**
   *Gelieve te verklaren.*

5. **Kunt u aangeven hoe u Rotterdam Unlimited (inclusief 'Zomercarnaval' en/of 'DUNYA Festival') ervaart?**
   *Beoordeel alstublieft de relevantie van iedere bewering op een schaal van 1 (zeer mee oneens) tot 5 (zeer mee eens).*
   - Plezier maken met vrienden/familie.
   - Communiceren met mensen van verschillende culturele achtergronden.
   - Communiceren met mensen van verschillende leeftijden.
Communiceren met mensen van verschillende sociale achtergronden.
Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan diversiteit van kunstvormen (bijv. muziek, dans, film, poëzie, etc.)
Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan diversiteit van kunstgenres
Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan cultureel en etnisch diversiteit in muziek, dans, film, poëzie etc.
Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan optredens van jonge en oude (verschillende) generaties aan artiesten
Het meemaken van een verscheidenheid aan optredens van bekende en opkomende artiesten

6. **In hoeverre bent u eens met de volgende stellingen?**
   **Beoordeel alstublieft de relevantie van iedere bewering op een schaal van 1 (zeer mee oneens) tot 5 (zeer mee eens)**
   Het festival verhoogt het onderlinge begrip en bewustzijn van mensen van allerlei achtergronden (bijvoorbeeld verschillende culturen, leeftijden en sociale achtergronden).
   Rotterdam Unlimited draagt bij aan de sociale cohesie (verbondenheid) in Rotterdam.
   Rotterdam Unlimited draagt bij aan de diversiteit van het cultureel aanbod in Rotterdam.

7. **Beoordeel alstublieft de relevantie van iedere bewering op een schaal van 1 (zeer zwak / laag) tot 5 (zeer sterk / hoog).**
   Hoe zou u het gevoel / ervaring van de onderlinge communicatie / interactie tussen mensen van verschillende achtergronden tijdens Rotterdam Unlimited beoordelen?
   Hoe zou u het gevoel / ervaring van verbondenheid met een groep tijdens Rotterdam Unlimited beoordelen?
   Hoe zou u het gevoel / ervaring van solidariteit tijdens Rotterdam Unlimited beoordelen?