ROCK

Julie's Bicycle
SUSTAINING CREATIVITY

January 2018

PARTNER INTERVIEW
JULIE'S BICYCLE

ROCK WHO IS WHO ?

Question 1:   Why are you taking part in the ROCK project ?

The **environmental dimension of cultural heritage management** is frequently overlooked in favour of focusing exclusively on tourism, culture, and historical preservation. There is a need for cultural heritage to position itself in the context of climate change, biodiversity loss, air pollution, and other environmental challenges facing our societies at present. There is an urgent need for cities and administrators of cultural heritage to explore the relationships between preserving the past, engaging audiences in the present, and shaping a sustainable future so that cultural heritage can continue to be enjoyed and valued by generations to come.

Julie's Bicycle's vision is **a creative community with sustainability at its heart** and our mission is to provide the inspiration, expertise and resources to make that happen. We are very excited to support the ROCK cities in developing their narratives, strategies and practices connecting culture and climate, make use of the vast economic, social and cultural opportunities available, with the overall ambition of supporting the preservation of cultural heritage and its contemporary relevance to a 21st Century context.

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Question 2:   What are for you the challenges of cultural heritage in cities at the moment?

Climate change and environmental degradation are resulting in incalculable losses to our shared and unique natural and cultural heritage. It has been frequently documented that severe weather and rising sea levels are more likely to cause catastrophic or progressive damage and destruction to cultural heritage; furthermore as our physical environment degrades, intangible heritage values associated with the environment will also be lost. This will likely lead to difficult choices on what to try to preserve and what to let go (ICOMOS). Managing this challenge requires stewardship of a different order altogether.

However, it also presents opportunities. Many custodians of cultural heritage are already reframing environmental action as an opportunity to demonstrate civic responsibility, increase public engagement, access new funding and investment, and improve health and wellbeing**. Critically, arts and culture's response promotes positive environmental action and behaviour in society and enables the shifting of cultural values and perceptions on climate change and environmental issues.** Responses have been diverse and creative, reflecting the uniqueness of their buildings, sites, monuments and collections.

Question 3:   How do you see the future of cultural heritage ?

The only future for cultural heritage is cultural heritage that exists in the context of environmental sustainability. Climate change is ultimately the result of a set of values which are incommensurate with the finite resources of planet Earth – values that uphold the human over the animal, the individual over the collective, the extractor over the regenerator, the consumer over the steward, and the present over the future. If climate change is driven by cultural values, logic dictates, it can only be tackled effectively by shifting them – **the climate movement is in fact a cultural movement**. That's why cultural heritage plays such an important role! Heritage presents an ideal opportunity to not only connect people with the past, but to reimagine our collective future.

We at Julie's Bicycle aspire towards cultural heritage which embeds environmental sustainability in values and mission, governance and management, policy, strategy, internal and external communications, maintenance and preservation, investment decision-making and fundraising; and collaboration and partnerships.

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Question 4:   What creative districts/ cities inspire you at the moment ?

There are so many cities and civic networks doing really exciting work at the moment, for example, Manchester Arts Sustainability Team (MAST) united in response to Manchester Council's first climate change strategy and has gone on to significantly influence the city's second strategy; it has also achieved an average CO2 reduction of 7% every year since 2011/12. New York's Materials for the Arts has reimagined its waste materials as art supplies and has set up a facility to share them. Melbourne has been exploring the role of culture in building climate-related disaster preparedness in its project Refuge. There is also an exciting interplay between city-level and national policy-making which holds huge potential. Successful initiatives when proven, can be scaled up to national level. For example, London's creative community guided a set of environmental resources, which in turn, influenced the embedding of environmental sustainability into Arts Council England's national funding requirements.

You can read more in the Culture and Climate Change handbook. In collaboration with Julie's Bicycle and the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, World Cities Culture Forum has produced this handbook for city leaders to inspire and help build environmental sustainability into cultural policies, programmes and solutions.

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About: Lucy Latham, Project Manager at Julie's Bicycle

Lucy joined Julie's Bicycle in September 2013 to work with the Environmental Sustainability Team on embedding operational sustainability and environmental management within artistic and cultural venues and activities; in the UK and Europe. She works on a variety of programmes, facilitating and delivering workshops and training, as well as offering consultancy. Lucy's academic background is BSc Environmental Science from Newcastle University, and following that has worked in a variety of paid and voluntary roles including two years as a Sustainability Officer, a Scientific Field Officer in the forests of Honduras and an Environmental Education Officer in Botswana.

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