

# eremuak

## programmatic document

### introduction

#### the art world in the basque

eremuak has emerged from an awareness that the contemporary art scene is very diverse and that local art systems are necessarily related to the national and international art worlds.

In the knowledge that creative environments are not produced by political decisions or administrative measures alone but result from many different converging factors, the current programme limits its aspirations to coordinating activities that may contribute to foster, optimise and/or improve the creative environments in which contemporary art develops in the Basque Country.

To do this it is essential to become aware of the real conditions that exist in the art world in contemporary society, the problems that restrain the development of art and the factors that help art to flourish. A systemic approach should include the following: a discussion about the concept of 'cultural policy' and the function of public entities and funds; an analysis of differences and links between art and culture (the singularities of art still forming part of culture; the anthropological and the discipline-based concepts of art); an understanding of the different forms of art distribution and of points of contact and convergence with other environments (geographical, discipline-based, historical or cultural); an analysis of differences between creativity and art creation; a new approach to the contemporary notion of heritage, and to the place of art as generator in the value chain (conservation, restoration, creation of new works, experience and transmission); an analysis of the ways contemporary art is absorbed into contemporary society and of the presence of art in the mass media; an understanding of the situation of art and artists in administrative and tax terms; and a new approach to ideas about what is contemporary, current, up to date etc.

eremuak, the current **open programme**, cannot aspire to an overall understanding of all these complex problems, and certainly cannot hope to find solutions for them. However it can hope to propitiate a system that makes it possible to coordinate these aspects and be aware of them in a structured way, not as much (or not only) in order to 'write treatises about them', but in order to think about and work towards the best ways of dealing with them. This systemic awareness and this open and structural vocation become simultaneously content, objective and method.

### presentation

eremuak is a project intended to help activate the sphere of action of the Basque Government's cultural policy on plastic and visual arts using a continuous open programme designed to optimise

contemporary art environments.

eremuak is one of the activities carried out by the Basque Government's Department of Cultural Promotion. Its main objective is to initiate and incentivise processes leading to the formation of creative environments that bring systemic cohesion to the complex area of contemporary art in the Basque Country.

eremuak is not intended as a substitute for the existing grants programmes for art work and art dissemination developed by the Basque Government. Its aim is to complement these programmes with a support structure arising from a structural or systemic approach to the art scene as a whole within society and to the Basque art world within the context of the global art system.

The approach promoted by eremuak affects, and is affected by, the other aspects of the Basque Government's cultural policy with regard to contemporary art and this may lead people to reconsider the programmes that are currently in force and those that may be proposed in the future. eremuak's complex approach makes it easier to conceive of art and art practices as a social system like any other, without that causing art to lose the specific nature of its contribution to socio-historical development.

eremuak is an **open programme** in the sense that it does not feel affected by 'territorial' restrictions, whether in the context of artists' birthplaces, creative projects shared by various artists, or cross-disciplinary projects. In this way it can provide an space for making art visible that is radically inclusive of all practices, whatever their positioning and whatever arguments sustain and promote them. This open or complex approach, should be promoted by public policymakers aiming to obtain an image that comes as close as possible to the ever changing 'intuited' world of art. The open approach reinforces the idea that programmes implemented by public authorities in creative environments in society should not have a priori limitations and should be radically open to interaction and to resource processes. This is the only way to understand that the product may at the same time be the producer. In other words, the product and its effects are necessary for their own production.

## general objectives

eremuak's main objective is to contribute to the development of contemporary art environments in the Basque Country. Its first priority is to optimise the existing infrastructures and human resources in order to promote excellence, increasing the potential of aspects that favour this aim and reinforcing fragile aspects that impede further development.

The eremuak programme promotes Basque activities and accepts external projects, making a continuous call for projects to which all kinds of artists and collectives connected with contemporary art can respond, whether they work in the area of creating art or that of art interpretation and mediation.

eremuak is an **open programme** promoted and produced by the Department of Culture of the Basque Government.

## Specific objectives

### promoting excellence in the field of artistic creativity

eremuak aims to promote the best conditions of production for artists and to substantially raise the level of expectations and demands. This means valuing art processes that show outstanding sensitivity, constancy and originality, that can interiorise and integrate the transtemporal wealth of art heritage and are able to orientate society towards surprising ways of seeing things.

### promoting excellence in the field of interpretation

eremuak aims to foster textual practices and publishing projects that are capable of weaving art practices into the fabric of general debates, historical contexts and networks of human knowledge, thus providing creative environments with a place in society. These projects will be chosen independently of the disciplines from which they start (art history, anthropology of art, sociology of art, etc.). This means valuing research processes that are outstanding for their sensitivity, complexity and richness, for their methodological consistency and for their capacity to set up shared discussions and find ways of production and distribution that favour them.

### promoting excellence in the field of mediation

eremuak aims to foster mediation practices and curatorial or agency projects (including transversal projects for training, teaching and divulgation) that are directed towards creating the best conditions for appreciating contemporary works and art events. This means valuing projects that are outstanding for their sensitivity, complexity and richness, for their methodological consistency and for their capacity to transmit in different contexts the richness and complexity of the art experience to the culture and society in which it emerges and to which it is addressed, conveying its value and the contribution it makes to sensitivity, emotional awareness, ideas or heritage.

### continuous programme

The **programme** aims to be **continuous** and uninterrupted. It therefore presents itself as a structure or network of favourable factors, upon which projects and activities can operate. It is not a question of 'producing' lines of thought, but of promoting favourable factors and fostering excellence and self-management in the art system.

## conditions of development

### the committee of experts

To structure its ideas, eremuak has created a Committee made up of three representatives of contemporary art from the areas of art criticism, curating, art theory and art practice. The Committee will be the final authority in defining the problematic areas, precise objectives and particular strategies of each eremuak programme and will also be responsible for selecting suitable projects. It will duly justify its selection decisions within the context of the open programme.

a programme based on processes

eremuak will be submitted to continuous assessment by the Committee with the aim of gradually incorporating any modifications needed to fulfil its objectives in the best possible way.

regional ambit: projects from, about and for the local context

To attain the objective of developing the creative environment in the Basque Country it is necessary to do more than consider projects and activities localised in this geographical area or carried out by cultural agents born or resident in this historical region. The systemic awareness that underlies the eremuak programme leads it to understand that the task of developing creative environments in the Basque Country includes inserting them into global contexts. Therefore eremuak is open to promoting projects from, about or for the Basque Country and these may be carried out by people or teams from other regions or countries. Nonetheless, special consideration will be given to projects from the Basque Country itself.

types of activity included in the programme

- a. External activities and projects, requested by any participant or team in accordance with the **continuous programme**. Projects must specify exactly how they will be carried out in practice, and where they will take place. Projects may be set up not only in physical places but also on Internet, in virtual spaces, in productions or in publications and may even be developed in various combinations of these. All projects must be completed within the maximum period of two year whether the activity is intermittent, continuous, planned according to a programme, or spread over different periods.
- b. Activities promoted by the eremuak programme itself (seminars, publications, reports, etc.) and activities of **evaluation and transmission of results** (publications, information and dissemination activities, etc.)

# eremuak

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