How this project is about

The "Oracle Project" is a training game adapted for students of artistic, cultural and project management faculties, as well as for representatives of organisations starting their adventure with international cultural cooperation, as the ones designed **within the Creative Europe program framework and similar other opportunities.**

As a game, it is a tool supporting change, especially within workshops whose goals are related to: effective project management in the cultural sector, introduction to the implementation of intercultural projects, tools and strategies for developing culture on a local and international scale, and inter-institutional cooperation.
The game can also be an integration tool, e.g. for starting a transnational partnership project.

As a result of the game, participants:

• Understand the specifics of cooperation in partnership projects;
• Know the risks associated with unprofessional project implementation;
• Can make choices at the intersection of project goals, limited resources, and quality of services provided;
• Know what values international projects contribute to the development of culture;
• Can communicate precisely with project partners, taking into account the needs of both the consortium and those specific to its organization;
• Know the importance of efficient management of uncertainty and risk.

I. Preparing for the game

1) Target Audience

- The game can be played by 1 to 7 teams, each consisting of 5 people, corresponding to the number of personas. Each player assumes a character representing both a specific "persona" and "organisation", as described in the Character Sheet.

- Each participant has a limited number of monetary units and working hours to be collectively invested in the decisions taken together, which affect the overall budget and the availability of working time of the team. Each "persona" plays considering both the common and the individual, hidden goals and resources of each institution.

- If there are more than five players, but not enough to form a second team, we recommend merging two players into one "persona".

- The game is run by 1 facilitator, whom we will call the Game Master. Only the Game Master can

assign characters to players, and eventually, make exceptions to these rules.

● When there are a larger number of teams playing, we recommend the support of a second person in the role of Game master assistant. For this purpose, a character sheet impersonating the role of observer/evaluator was created for each team, which reports the main information to the Game Master.

2) Objective and Structure

● **Goal of the Game**: Your main team's goal is to manage the project effectively throughout its lifecycle.

● **Game Duration**: The game consists of some rounds and other unexpected situations, each representing a decision-making phase in project management.

● **Steps in Each Round**:

  ○ **Understand the Challenge**: Familiarize yourselves with the project management challenge at hand.

  ○ **Team Decision**: As a team, choose the decision you believe is most optimal (you have a set timeframe for each quest to decide).

  ○ **Resource Allocation**: Allocate the necessary resources (money tokens and working time tokens) based on your decision.

  ○ **Submit the Decision**: Communicate your choice to the Game Master.

● **The goal of a cooperative project is not to win individually but to <u>cooperate</u> to achieve the mission of the project.**

3) Timeframe and Organisational Framework

● The game master's preparation takes about 40-50 minutes (downloading materials, reading the rules, clicking through the presentation, printing and cutting out the game's physical components).

● Checking if everyone is familiar with the rules and the general context and vocabulary;

● Send participants the necessary preparation material in advance: concise rules of the game, and description sheets of the general context (characters, organisations, consortium, and so on).

The game itself takes at least 3 hours:

● About 20 minutes - division into groups, introduction of rules, distribution of physical game components;

● About 120 minutes - actual gameplay;

● About 40 minutes – discussion of the game (this part can be extended according to the didactic

needs identified by the game master).

4) Organizational Framework

- Stationary workshops (the game can also be played online, but this requires additional rearrangement of several game elements);
- A room enabling the arrangement of an appropriate number of tables-islands for 1-7 teams participating in the game WiFi access for the game master and participants;
- At least a multimedia projector for the leader;
- At least one laptop per team or mobile device, adapted for joint editing of Google Sheets Prepared packages of materials for the teams;
- Each team, regardless of the number of players, should have on their position:
- 1 printed and cut "Money" resource sheet,
- 1 printed and cut "Time" resource sheet,
- A stock of printed Character Sheets placed face up in the following order: Agamemnon on top, Nausicaa, Helena, Gaia, Nestor, and Hermes below. In addition and if needed, you can also use the Observer/Evaluator's character.

  Game components:

- Powerpoint presentation with the course of the game
- Google Sheet: Facilitator's Tool for Value Points
- Character Sheets - .pdf file for print
- Resources Sheets - Time - .pdf file for print
- Resources Sheets - Money - .pdf file for print
- Names and organizations - labels for players - .pdf file for print

5) Game Master Guidelines for International Cultural Cooperation Game

- Pre-Game Preparation: The Game Master's expertise in international cultural projects will significantly enhance the gameplay experience. While detailed content about project management, artistic development, and Creative Europa can be valuable additions, these should be incorporated as supplementary elements rather than core gameplay mechanics.
- Essential Tools: The Game Master relies on two primary tools throughout the session: the Presentation Deck, which serves as the main narrative guide, and the Facilitator's Tool for Value Points, which is essential for scoring and post-game discussion.
- Value Points System: During the gameplay, participants will complete their sheets while the system automatically calculates points and tables. The Game Master works with pre-configured data sets to ensure smooth facilitation and accurate scoring.
- Technical Setup: Before launching the Oracle game, the Game Master must thoroughly review all sheets in the Facilitator's Tool for Value Points. The next crucial step involves hiding the first

four sheets using the hide function. This ensures that when the file is shared, players will only see the intended view designed for participant interaction.

- Game Facilitation Tips: Effective facilitation relies heavily on the Game Master's ability to connect game scenarios to real-world examples. By drawing from professional experience, the Game Master can make situations more relatable and authentic. Throughout the session, they should guide discussions to highlight practical applications while maintaining an engaging narrative flow. The post-game feedback session becomes particularly valuable when the game master can effectively bridge the simulation experience with real-world cultural project management scenarios.
- Feedback: After the game is over, the Game Master should restore full visibility of the sheets, to have access to the tools with which he will discuss the game.

II. Gameplay & Game structure

The Oracle game unfolds in a specific sequence, beginning with essential setup phases.

1. First, the Game Master presents the rules to all participants. This is followed by introducing the plot and narrative elements that form the game's foundation. The game master then presents the various characters and their respective organizations.
2. Each player receives their Character Sheet, which they must keep private from other participants. Players are then given identification materials - labels and badges displaying their names and organizations.
3. The resource allocation phase comes next, where team members must distribute 28 units of Time and 50 units of Money among themselves. Players have 4 minutes to complete this distribution in whatever manner they choose.

Core Gameplay Elements: The main game consists of 9 quests (rounds), 2 random events/challenges, and 2 Agamemnon's calls.

1. Quest (Round) Structure: Each quest round follows a consistent pattern. The Game Master begins by displaying a slide and reading the situation description, then presents the possible decisions available to teams. Each decision requires an investment of team resources. Teams receive from 2 to 10 minutes to select their decision and determine how to divide the resource costs among members, as equal distribution may not always be possible.
2. Teams record their chosen answer in their designated tab of the shared Google Sheet, which aids the game master's final summary. The round concludes when the team leader announces their decision at the game master's prompt.

Random Events

1. The game incorporates two hidden random events, symbolizing unexpected situations that arise

during project lifecycles. When encountering these events, the Game Master asks teams to choose which event to reveal.

2. After revealing the first event and having relevant teams complete the required actions, the Game Master returns to the random event selection screen using the "back" button before proceeding with the second event in the same manner. Once both events are resolved, gameplay continues to the next quest.

Agamemnon's Calls

The game features three of Agamemnon's calls throughout the session. Agamemnon represents a dual metaphor: both an influential community member and a public authority figure. His presence is symbolized by a label placed on the table, serving as a constant reminder of oversight without being assigned to any player.

1. Throughout the game, Agamemnon initiates contact with Nausicaa. These interactions present her with a choice: she may either accept or decline his calls, with each decision triggering distinct consequences within the game. The presentation includes a clear visual system for these interactions. Slides featuring Agamemnon's phone calls are distinctly marked with yellow shapes, making them immediately recognizable to all players;

2. Decision Process: When Agamemnon calls, each Nausicaa in the teams must make an independent decision regarding the call. While the final choice rests with Nausicaa, her team members may offer advice and insights to inform her decision. This creates an interesting dynamic between individual choice and team strategy.

3. The Game Master systematically explores both potential outcomes for each call. They guide teams through the consequences of both accepting and declining the call, implementing the appropriate effects based on each Nausicaa's individual decision. This process ensures that all teams experience the full impact of their choices while maintaining game balance.

Value Points System

Throughout the quests, each team accumulates Value Points based on their decisions. These points are tracked in the Facilitator's Tool for Value Points. The final tally determines the External Evaluator's assessment of the project's quality upon completion.

- For reference, teams can accumulate between 3 and 33 Value Points throughout the game. This range represents the spectrum of possible project outcomes and management approaches.
- Each team operates independently, running their project parallel to other teams. This structure emphasizes that teams are not in competition with one another. Instead, the focus remains on internal team cooperation and effective decision-making within each group.
- The game concludes after teams complete the ninth and final quest.
- Following this, the session transitions into a coaching discussion phase. During this debrief, teams can reflect on their journey, examining their decisions, strategies, and outcomes. This

discussion provides valuable insights into project management approaches and team dynamics.

Post-Game Reflection Guide: Exploring Cultural Cooperation Dynamics

FIRST VERSION

• Would you ever like to implement a project that is the axis of the narrative in a game? If so, why? If not, why?
• What was the most difficult moment of the game for you?
• Describe your reactions to... What would you indicate as the most effective strategies in this game?
• If you played again and in the same group, to what extent would you modify your previous methods of action?
• What surprised you?
• How can you transfer your understanding of the Quest Number X that occurred in the game to your everyday activities?
• Was it difficult to implement hidden individual goals? How did you manage to connect them with team goals?
• How did you decide who would use what resources? To what extent did you have conflicts in this regard?
• How did you develop your relationship with Agamemnon? In retrospect, how would you play this part of the game now? How do you build your relationships with public authorities in real life? Are they symmetrical?

SECOND VERSION

● Strategic Vision & Values: "What profound insights about cultural cooperation emerged through your decision-making process? How did your initial assumptions about international collaboration evolve throughout the experience?"
● Leadership Transformation: "Describe a moment when your understanding of leadership in international contexts was fundamentally challenged. How has this experience reshaped your perspective on collaborative leadership?"
● Resource Philosophy: "Beyond simple allocation, how did your team's values and principles guide your resource decisions? What deeper understanding of resource management in cultural projects emerged?"
● Power Dynamics & Relationships: "Reflecting on your interactions with Agamemnon, what did you discover about the nature of power relationships in cultural cooperation? How did these interactions challenge or confirm your understanding of institutional dynamics?"
● Conflict & Resolution: "When tensions arose around resources or decisions, what deeper patterns of group dynamics did you observe? How did these moments transform your understanding of international collaboration?"

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- Impact & Legacy: "Looking beyond immediate outcomes, what lasting impact do you believe your decisions would have on the cultural landscape? How does this align with your broader vision of cultural development?"
- Cultural Boundaries: "How did the experience challenge your preconceptions about cultural boundaries and cooperation? What new insights emerged about navigating cross-cultural partnerships?"
- Ethics & Decision-Making: "When faced with complex choices, how did your team navigate ethical considerations? What principles emerged as fundamental to your decision-making process?"
- Innovation & Tradition: "How did your team balance innovative approaches with respect for established cultural practices? What insights did this give you about sustainable cultural development?"
- Personal Growth: "What fundamental truths about yourself as a cultural leader or collaborator did this experience reveal? How has this transformed your approach to international cultural work?"

III. Credits

Game development:
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