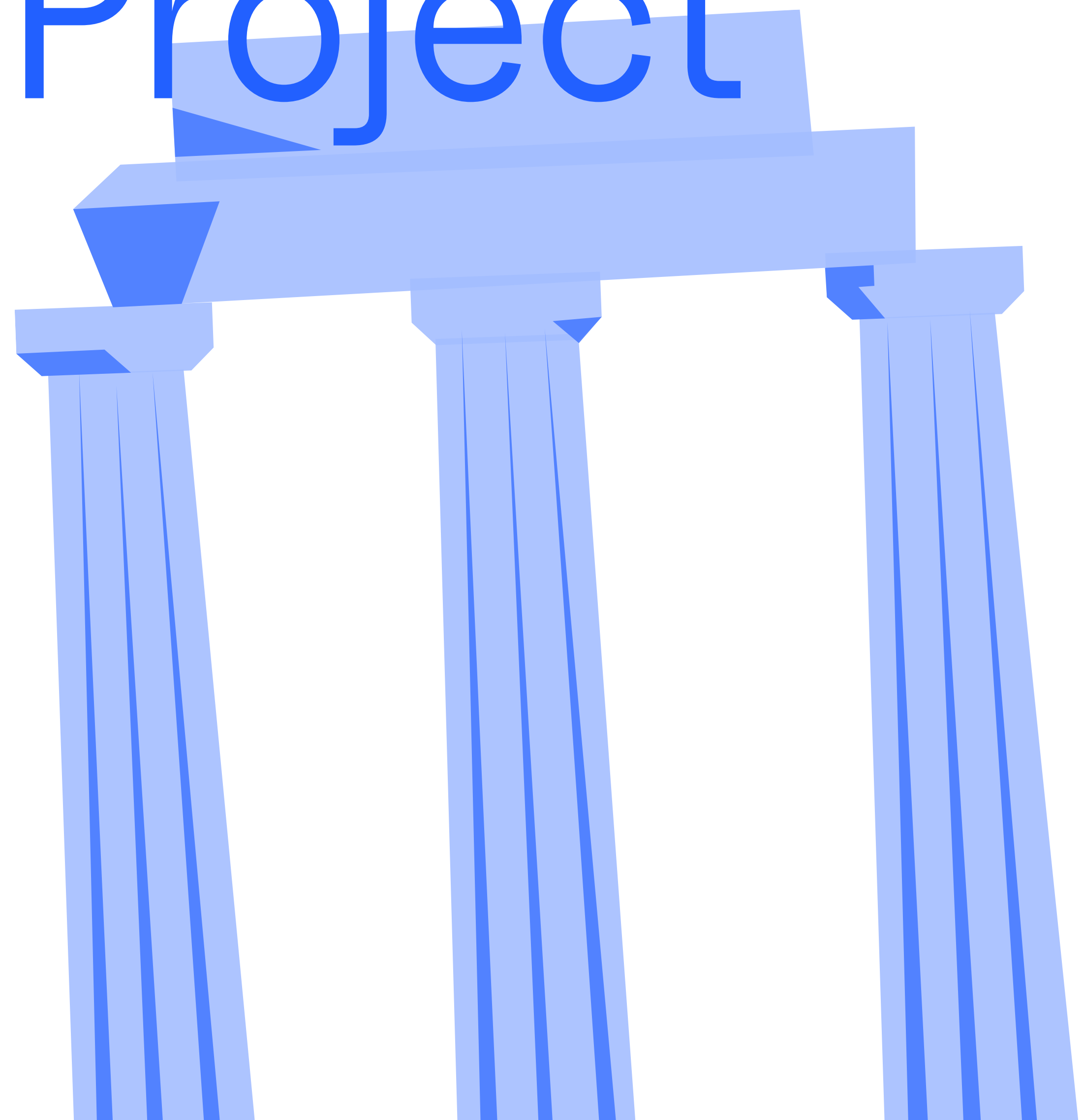# The *Oracle* Project

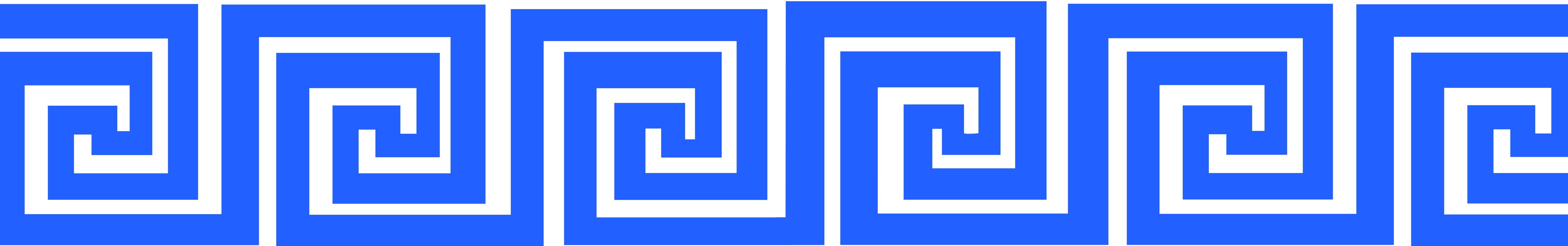## ...or how to run a sustainable cultural cooperation project

A training game for cultural students and professionals. Its goal is to improve the skills to implement international cultural cooperation and intercultural projects. The game can also be an integration tool for starting ...
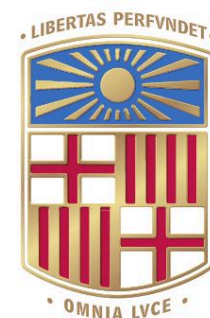
Cultural
Cooperation
Project
Management

CCProM

Training

a transnational partnership project

an initiative of:

Pedagogical *Goals* of the Game:

- To understand the specifics of cooperation in partnership projects

- To know what is the value of the international cultural cooperation projects

- To communicate precisely with project partners, considering the needs of both the consortium and those specific to its organization

- To know the importance of efficient management of uncertainty and risk

- To know the risks associated with non-enough professional project implementation

- To make choices at the intersection of project goals, limited resources, and quality of services provided

Game Setup:

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

Team Formation: We play in teams of 5 players. If your group has not enough players for another independent team, two players can combine into a single character.

Multiple Teams: Each team plays independently, in parallel with others. No inter-team competition takes place. At the end, we will share results and compare different dynamics.

Character Roles: Each player assumes a character representing both a specific 'persona' and 'organisation', as described in the Character Sheet.

Confidentiality of Goals: Keep your individual goals confidential. Do not share them with other players.

Team Cooperation: Each player has limited resources (time & money) to be collectively invested in the decisions taken together. Everyone should play considering both common and the individual goals and available resources.

Objective & Structure:

Game Duration: The game consists of some rounds and other unexpected situations, each representing a decision-making phase in project management. There are 14 decisions to be made.

Steps in Each Round:
1. Understand the Challenge: Familiarize yourselves with the project management challenge at hand.
2. Team Decision: As a team, choose the decision you believe is most optimal (you have a set timeframe for each quest to decide).
3. Resource Allocation: Allocate the necessary resources (money tokens and working time tokens) based on your decision.
4. Submit the Decision: Communicate your choice to the Game Master.

Remember: The goal of a cooperative project is not to win individually but to cooperate with each other to achieve the mission of the project

The *Oracle* Project:

The Oracle Project is a 24-month initiative uniting 5 diverse cultural organizations - from an industrial area festival fair to a prestigious rural festival, spanning different cities and contexts.

The consortium collaborates to stimulate international cultural development and exchange through:

- A Co-production Design Workshop
- Selection of 3 joint co-productions
- Artist residencies with community engagement activities
- A joint final festival: the Oracle Gala in Mars city.

At its core, the project explores sustainable management of cultural partnerships, challenging organizations to balance artistic excellence with community needs and administrative demands.

The *Oracle* Project:

Their collaboration culminates in The Oracle Gala, but the journey there requires careful navigation of resource allocation, risk management, and strategic decisions. Through systematic decision-making and collaborative problem-solving, the project demonstrates how cultural organizations can work together effectively while maintaining their distinct identities and serving their local communities.
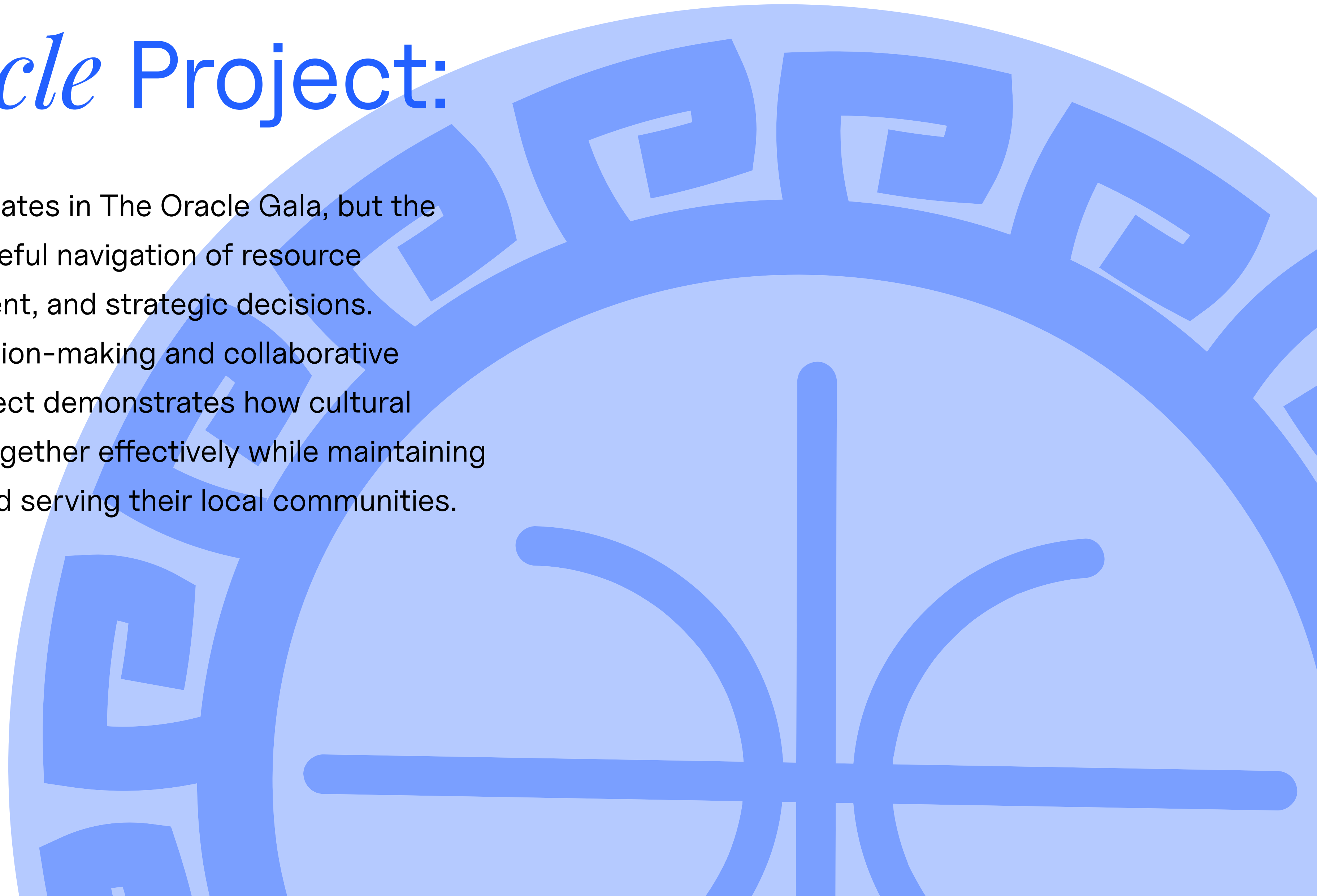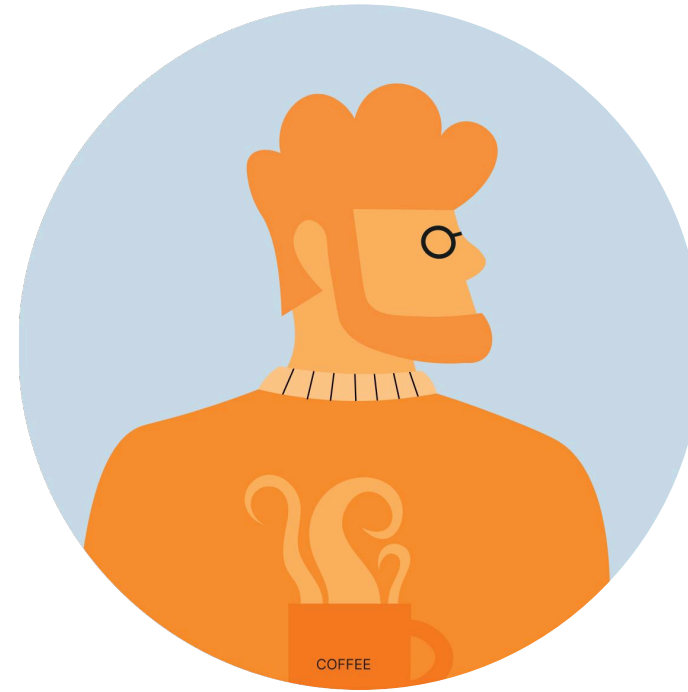
Personas:

Agamemnon

- Ministry of culture
- Loooong shade...
- Recently, he was the Olympia Festival coordinator. He's a multiplayer

Nausicaa

- Olympia Festival
- Project Coordinator
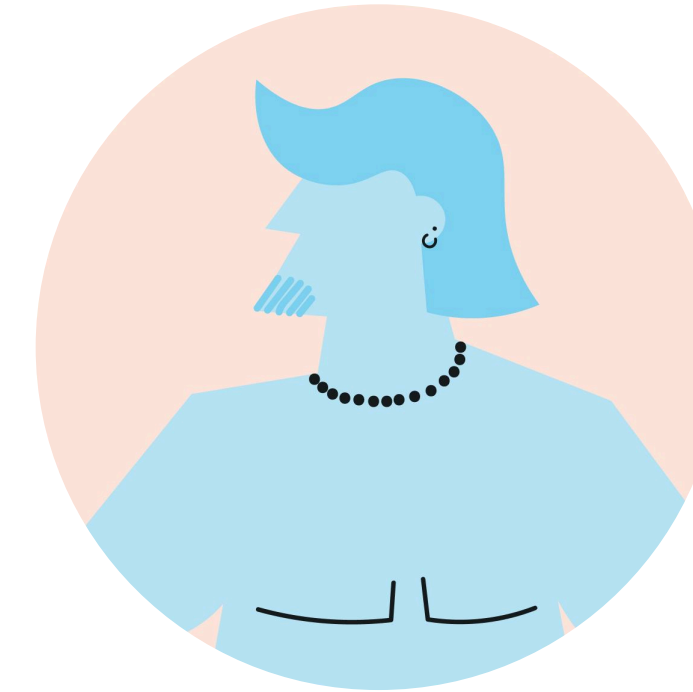- Achieve the initial goals of the project with the minimum possible devation

Nestor

- Golden Age Season
- WP2 Coordinator: Artistic residences and coproductions
- Coproductions and artistic residences programme

Gaia

- Network of Municipal Theater
- WP3 Coordinator: Engaging local communities
- Engaging local communities

Hermes

- Parnassus Circus Fair
- WP4 Coordinator: Communication
- Empowering people and projects

Helena

- Eureka Festival
- Project Partner
- Looking for artistic excellence

Partnership:

Olympia Festival

Hosted in Mars, a large historical city (1 million inhab.), with many cultural venues, vibrant cultural life and international connections. The festival is several days celebrations for the whole city, with dozens of events, international guests, media attention, whole scale promotion. The citizens live with the activities and are massively attending and participating in it.

Golden Age Season

Hosted in Neptune, a small rural town with ancient baths, with burgeose vacation villas, located in the hills of a natural park. A 30 years old small but prestigious festival, with small and dedicate international audience, but without connection with the local residents. They have mixed feeling of satisfaction that so many celebrities are coming, but also frustrated there is a wall between them.

Network of Municipal Theater.

A network of Periphery Festivals, each with a specific focus, well rooted in its communities. Hosted in Calixto, one of the 6 towns of a Network of municipalities sharing participation in international projects, located on the outskirts of a large metropolis, Jupiter. 3 of them are former industrial towns, and the other 3 are well connected to rural areas.

Parnassus Street & New Dramaurgy Fair

Located in Mercure, an old industrial periphery of a large metropolis, with social tension and intercultural clashes. Festival-fair, bet by the regional government to regenerate an old industrial area, where international programmers are invited to see the new national productions. It has residence spaces to produce shows and a collaboration program with the local community.

Eureka Festival

Hosted in Venus, a mid-size university city, known by its technological labs and new urban sustainable development. A festival that mixes art with science, at the forefront of new trends, with a hipster audience. It is a must go for dedicated companies, experimental artists, and cutting age cultural institutions. It is not huge in volume but well funded.
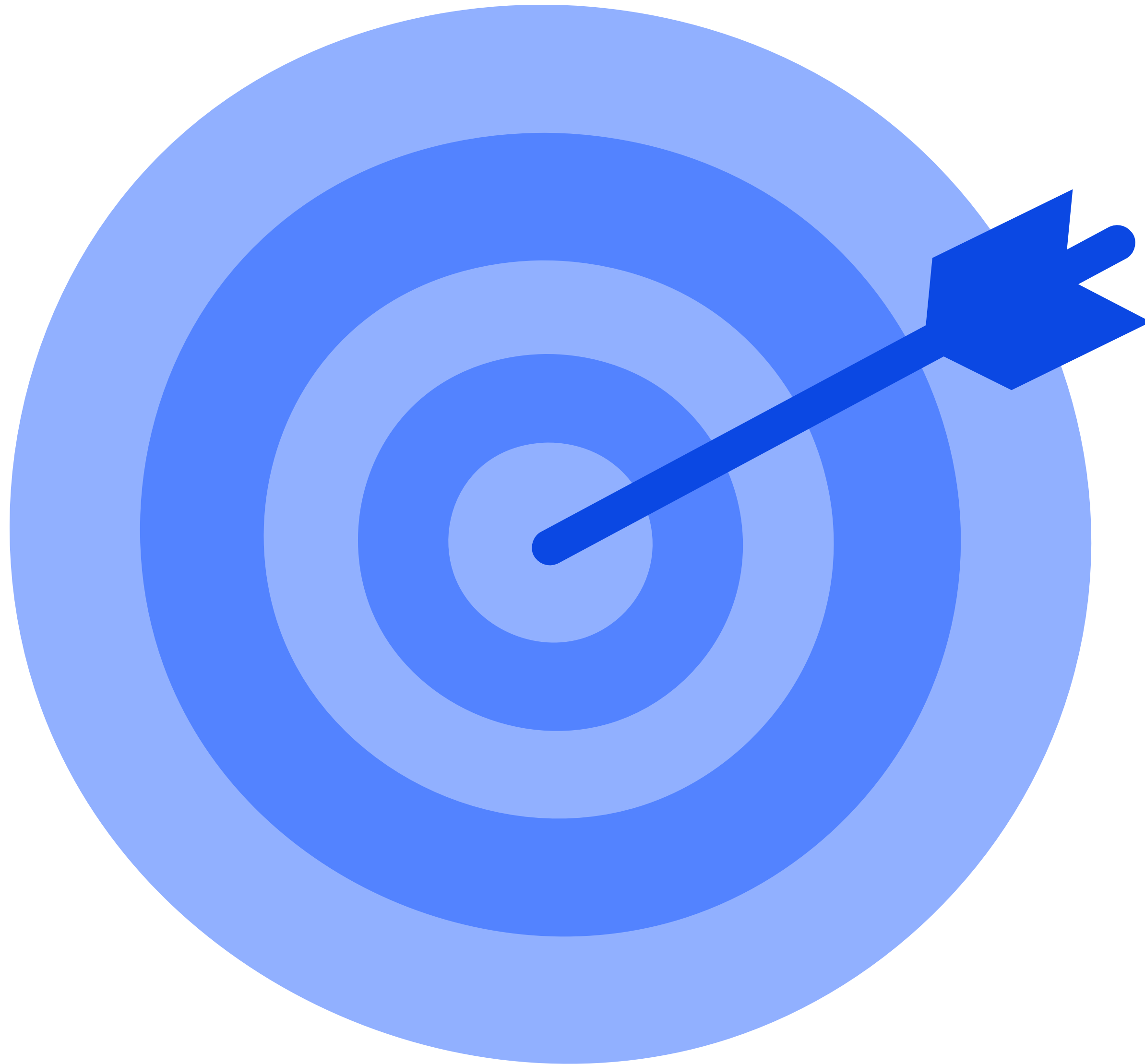
Individual Goals:

Each Persona, in addition to working with the rest of the consortium, has their own Individual Goals written on their Character Sheet. This mean balancing between their own goals and the team's goals. Let everyone familiarize themselves with their own goal in order to plan their style of play.

Timetable:

Month	Activity
-6	Presentation of the proposal
-5	
-4	Selection by the Sun Federation
-3	
-2	Internal Adjustments
-1	Grant Dissemination
1	Kick-off Meeting
2	Risk & Data Management Plan
3	Kick-off Communication
4	
5	
6	Workshop on Co-production Design
7	
8	
9	Call for Artists proposals
10	

Month	Activity
11	
12	Selection of the Artistic proposals
13	
14	Artistic residences and community work
15	
16	
17	
18	The Oracle Gala
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	Final report
25	Presentation of the financial report
26	External evaluation

3, 2, 1...

The grant and the project agreement:

Now is the time to present and comment together on the project, its mission, values and the commitment it implies for each partner.

When the proposal was presented to the Sun Federation, the partners committed to contribute a total of 28 work units (8 from the coordinator and 5 each from the other four partners). For its part, the Sun Federation has granted them funding equivalent to 50 budget units to be distributed among members.

#1 To renegotiate the Grant Agreement or not

10'

The deliverables you want to produce will easily exceed the allocated budget and working time availability, but at the same time for you is very important to reach good external evaluation.

Discuss the potential outcomes and determine which strategy you will pursue.

1. Renegotiate the Budget: Reach out to the Sun Federation's project officer to negotiate adjustments to the budget, allowing the project to be implemented within the allocated resources. This approach may be risky, as it could reflect poorly on your professionalism in front of the project officer and external evaluator.

2. Secure Additional Funding: Instead of renegotiating, each partner will seek additional funding to increase the project budget. This would allow you to carry out the original plan as proposed to the Sun Federation, but you cannot be sure if/when you will find additional financing

You must collectively invest: 2   1

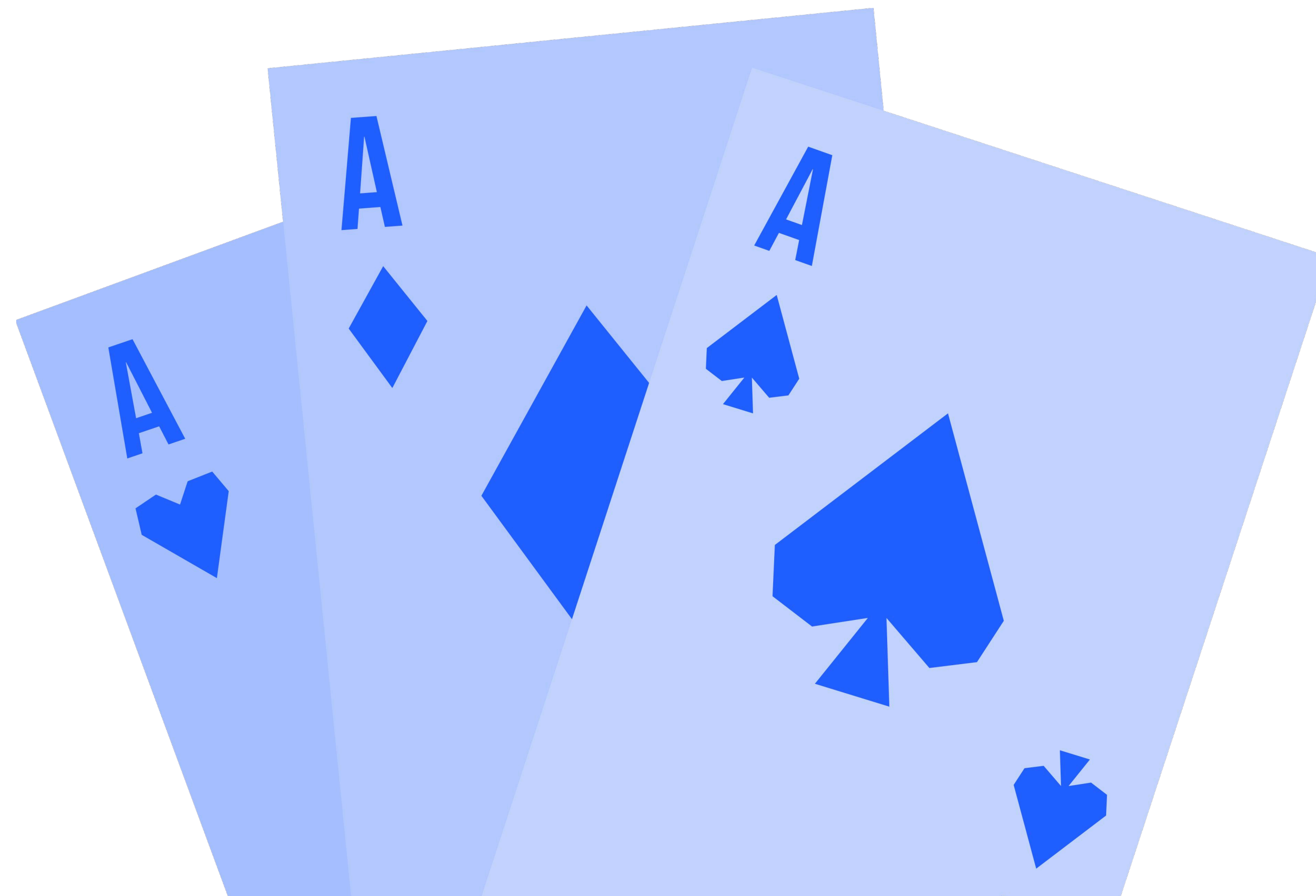You must collectively invest: 6   3

#1 To renegotiate the Grant Agreement or not

10'

After a difficult negotiation, which has left a bad memory in the Sun Federation staff, you obtained 6

From your effort on additional fundraising, you obtained 15

#2 Distribution of the grant

12'

In the moment before signing the Project Agreement between the partners and the Federation, the latter asks how to distribute the 50 monetary units.

(OR what would be left after deciding on option one or two from the previous quest).

In this meeting, partners must agree on how much is due to each of them based on the volume of responsibility that each assumes.

It is therefore necessary to decide how many units correspond to each partner.

#3 Risk Management Plan

The Consortium needs to decide what steps and actions will be taken to secure various possible aspects of the project implementation. They partially seem to be bureaucracy... But at some point, it might be useful to have them (e.g. Data Protection Rules, Risk Management Plan ...)

Those activities are not directly influencing the events realizations.

You have 2 potential solutions, each with its pros and cons. Discuss the possible outcomes and choose the strategy you will pursue.

#3 Risk Management Plan

6'

1. We definitely must invest some time and money to prepare all the documents, samples and procedures. We may not see them, but we will have them!

You must invest: 8 🎿 6 ⧗

2. Yes, we will do it, because it is important to have all those rules.
At this moment it is not the most important part of the consortium work. Later on, we can focus on that and build the framework...

You must invest: 0 🎿 0 ⧗

#4 Kick Off Communication

5'

The Consortium needs to decide on the approach towards communication and dissemination. Some elements were put during the application, but it was written in a hurry, so we have to decide on final approach.

1. **Build From Scratch:** We will create all the communication channels and content from the ground up: project website, project's digital presence ourselves, and budget to maintain control over the entire process.

You must invest: 4 🦉   3 ⧗

2. **Leverage Existing Channels:** We will utilize the content we've created under the shared key visual. Each partner will contribute to dissemination using their own existing communication channels and staff.

You must invest: 0 🦉   1 ⧗

Agamemnon is calling...

Nausicaa will you pick up the phone from your colleague?

Yes, I will

No, I won't

Agamemnon is calling...

Nausicaa picked up the phone...

Nausicaa didn't pick up the phone...

Agamemnon asks you to support the Ministry conference in terms of content. It is an honor and you are involved,

but it costs 6 ⧗

Nothing happened

#5 The Co-production Design Workshop

5'

We know what we want, but soon the content must be delivered. We planned to meet at partners premises. It requires travelling abroad (time and money) but we think it will fasten works and also support integration between partners.

There was an idea to put format to hybrid, so some savings could be introduced (money and time of course!), but questions on the efficiency arouse.

We must decide between:

1. On-Site Collaboration: We'll invest four days meeting in person. This allows us to ensure that all parties involved have a clear vision of the project's common output. Plus, we'll enjoy local cuisine and strengthen our working relationships.
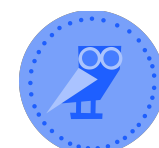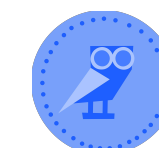
2. Hybrid Collaboration: Partners are busy, and traveling would disrupt other processes. While some have unreliable internet connections and time zone differences, we'll save time and money by working virtually.

You must invest: 10   3

You must invest: 6   5

#6 Call for Artistic Proposals

10'

As the project progresses, it's time to invite artists to join. But with whom we want to work? We put into the application basic requirements, but it was unclear if we fully opening the call for artists or if we have a possibility to nominate the artists that would fit into expectations.

1. Open Call: We will announce an open, non-discriminatory call for artists, seeking diverse and inspiring portfolios. This approach supports innovation and diversity but can sometimes lead to frustration, as some artists may not be as reliable as hoped. However, it provides a platform for emerging talent.

You must invest: 6   3

2. Curated Nominations: Some partners insist on selecting proven artists to work with, minimizing the risk and ensuring that we meet our artistic and financial goals. Each partner has potential candidates, but we need to choose three. This route could bring us well-known artists with large followings, but it also narrows our scope.

You must invest: 2   3

Fate

Challenge:

A large international event attracted
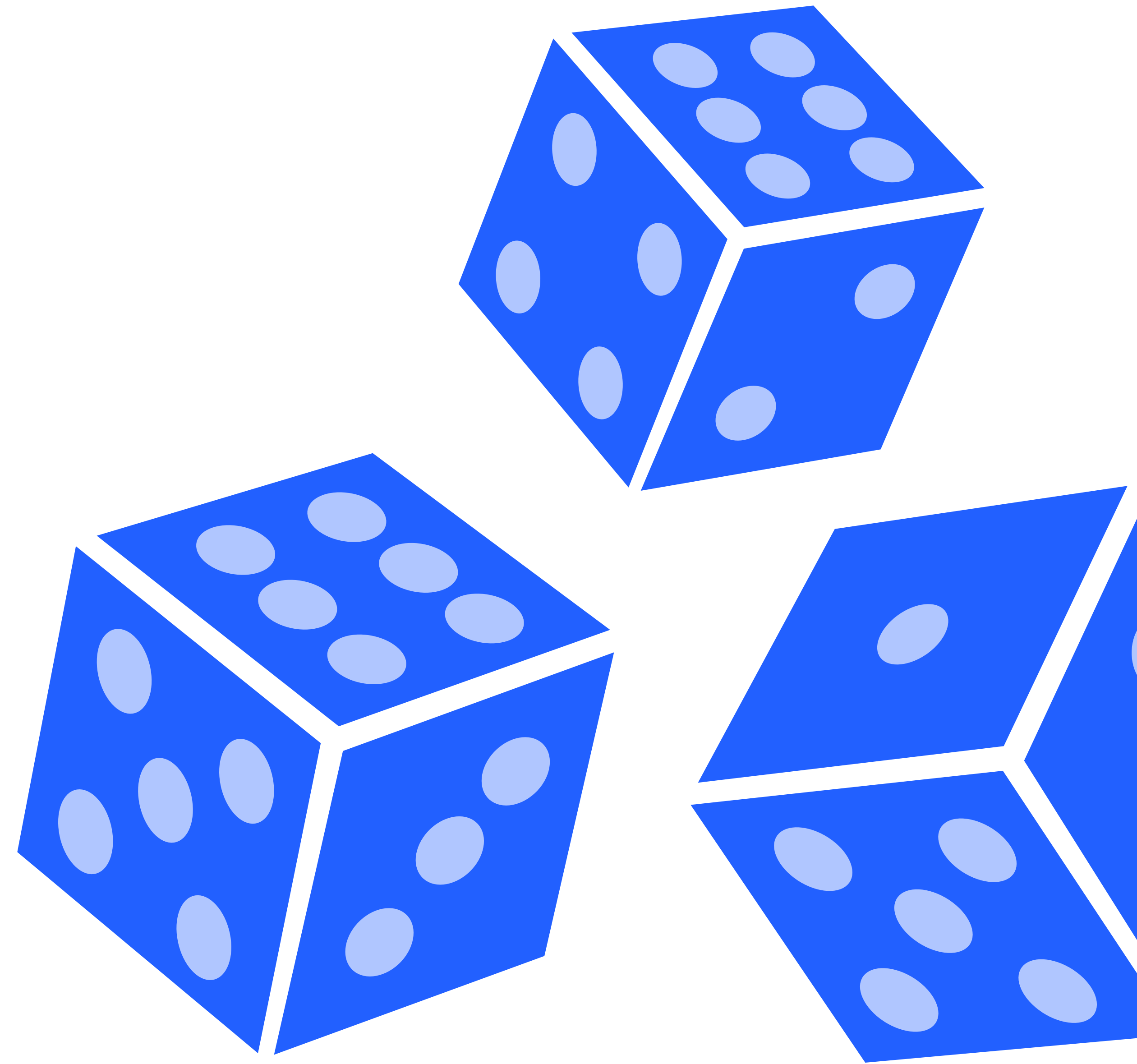most of your volunteers.
Discuss what to do...
If you have risk management plan (Q#3
- Option 1) then it will cost

An extra 3 🔵 and an extra 3 ⧖

If not, then

An extra 4 🔵 and an extra 4 ⧖

#7 The Selection Process

12'

The call for applications was quite successful, and now we have 7 brilliant candidates wanting to join our activities !

We need to perform selection process and pick only 3 proposals.

We need to consider all the aspects: their artistic portfolio, capacities, and hidden assets they might bring to our project.

This time...   You have to invest: 2   1

Artistic Applications		Production Cost	Community Involvement	Artistic Relevance	Previous Contact
1. Revolution	Representatives of the new urban scene that gives voice to the problems and frustrations of the youngest. It will be their second production, but it the first one they have well connected with the young audience. The show will mix live music with dance and video projection.	Low	High	Medium	The group is from Mercure, well known by Hermes
2. Learning from madness	A whirlwind of visual poetry and aerial fragility, where the theme of mental health is present throughout the theatrical performance, and which has a prodigious sound environment. Designed for family audiences and the elderly.	Medium	High	Low	No previous contact
3. Sky is the limit	Large-format vertical dance show that revolves around knots and maritime elements. It tells us about the duality and confrontation between the sea and the sky through incredible stage elements and spectacular aerial exercises with harnesses. A show where the artists exhibit circus work developed over the last 3 years.	High	Low	Medium	Hermes met them in another festival
4. Sound scapes	Interdisciplinary approach connecting young musicians, visual artists and urban planners/ architects in creating a sound sculptures performances by using elements from the environment from the local area	Medium	Medium	High	No previous contact
5. sister revisited	A contemporary dramatized adaptation of Anton Tsekhov's novel "Three Sisters." The play tells of the decadence and aspirations of a wealthy family living in the provinces who long to return to Moscow.	Medium	Low	High	Helena's best choice
6.Death gives us life back	Directed by an award-winning choreographer and dancer, it is a tribute to the Dance of Death. The aim is to transform and give a new look to this dance to shape each of us in life.	Medium	Low	High	Nestor knows them very well
7. Surprise	Through body expression, humor and movement, this production allows us to rescue personal and collective memories, small and large gestures and deeds with the language of the clown.	Low	High	Medium	No previous contact

Agamemnon is calling...

Nausicaa will you pick up the phone from your colleague?

Yes, I will

No, I won't

Agamemnon is calling...

Nausicaa picked up the phone...

Nausicaa didn't pick up the phone...

Agamemnon asked: What are the results of selection process?

He has recommended you to a technology patron of culture. They will support your gala in the case you selected "Death give us life back". You are winning extra 6 🦉

Would the team be willing to change their selection? What implications would it have?

You don't know he has recommended the gala to a Technology patron, so you cannot count on the extra resource.

#8 The Residence: Community Work

Finally, our artists started their residency programme. They are excited and so are hosts. Important part of the project activity are community works performed by artists. Such an approach will contribute to keeping local aspects into the grand performance prepared by the residents.

At the same time on human level real interactions are inspiring for both sides. There are few factors to be taken into account: language difference, organizational aspects, strong personalities of artists and potential challenge on reaching to local community and including all key audience group into workshops.

How to proceed with it to keep max. effectiveness?

#8 The Residence: Community Work

7'

Artist Residency Management Options

1. Hire a Community Manager: To ensure smooth interaction, we'll hire an experienced community manager who can build connections between artists and the local community. While this adds to our costs, it will significantly enhance the effectiveness of the program.
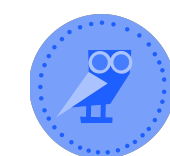
You have to invest: 8 1

2. Local Hosting: We will have local families host the artists, giving them deeper insights into the community's values and cultural expressions. This approach fosters mutual understanding through hospitality but may lack the professional structure a community manager would provide.
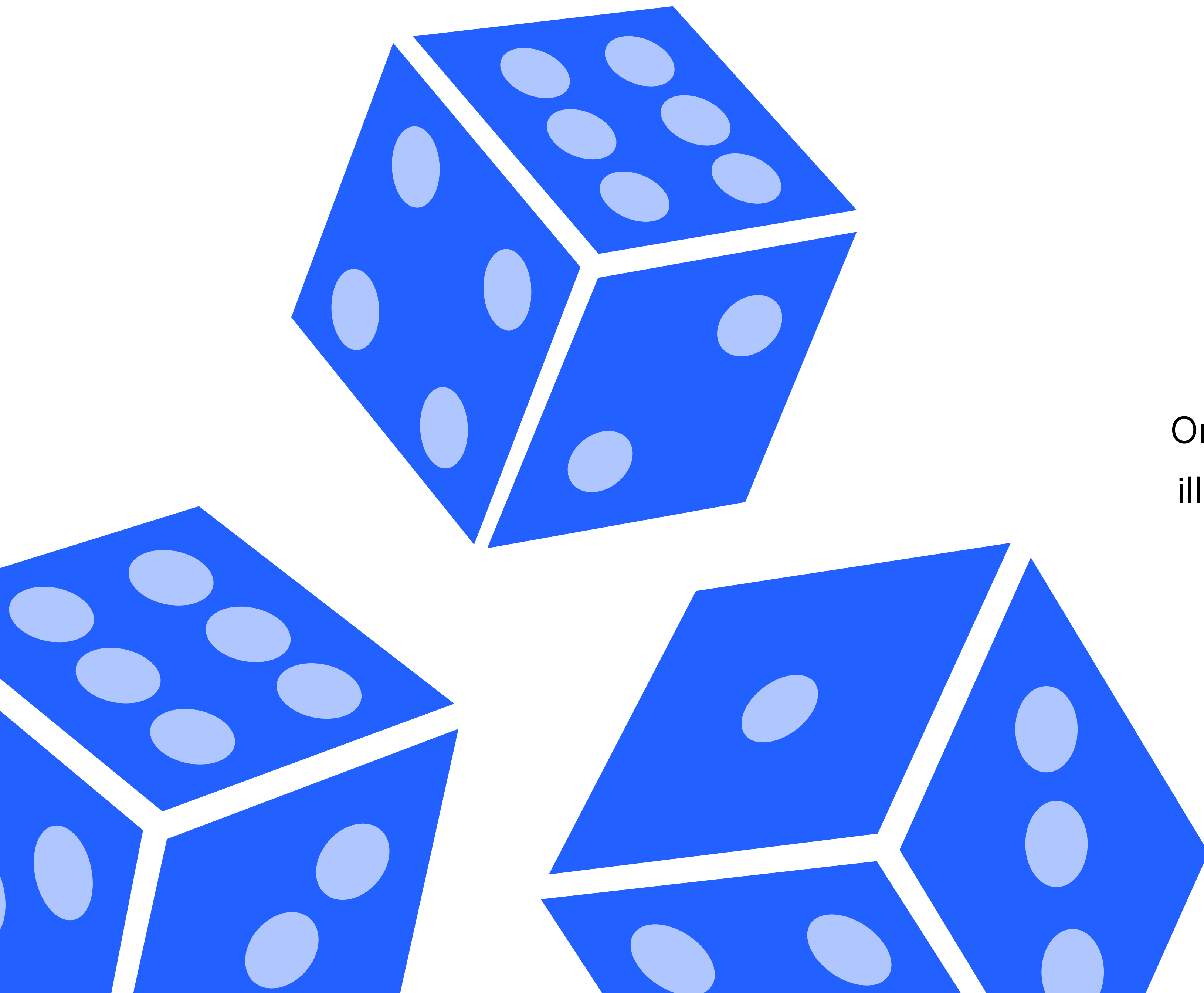
You have to invest: 2 3

Fate

Challenge:

One of the artists you selected is
ill and will not be able to perform

You have to pick another one.

This will you cost:

6 🦉   3 ⧗

#9 The Oracle Gala Outreach

The Oracle Festival, the most awaited event of the season. Everything must be polished and prepared in advance.

The success of the event is a guarancy for our outreach and fulfilling.

However, our budget is tight, and we can't fund everything we'd like. How will we ensure the event reflects our cultural cooperation goals on an international scale?

#9 The Oracle Gala Outreach

5'

1. Idol Dimension: Inviting and hosting international producers and festival directors, bringing an intercultural dimension to the gala.

You have to invest: 🔵 10 ⧗ 3

2. Digital Outreached: broadcast and share gala content across various media platforms, making the festival accessible to a global audience.

You have to invest: 🔵 6 ⧗ 1

#10 The Final Report

5'

The Final Report, something that cannot be forgotten. The project is at the end and everyone are worn out and running out of resources. Will we be able to report everything in an orderly, punctual and high-quality manner?

Option 1: We take a spontaneous approach, with the team working overtime and postponing other tasks to focus on the report. We'll rely on pre-made solutions and add some flair where we can. While this might help us meet the deadline, it risks sacrificing quality and consistency.
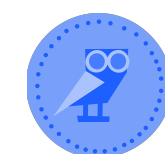
You have to invest: 0 🦉 3 ⌛

Option 2: We take a more structured approach, with the team working systematically to refine each section. We'll allocate time to prioritize accuracy and ensure the report is thorough and polished. Though this requires careful time management, it guarantees the professionalism and quality the project demands.

You have to invest: 4 🦉 3 ⌛

The evaluator gives you the Evaluation *score* and *comments*

Finally!

Happy end of the project!

Well done!