

Concepts of Care for and Between Rural-based Arts Collectives
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The development of participatory policies to increase digital inclusion via interactive art-based experiences employing new technologies face unique challenges for art-collectives working in remote rural communities. Notions of freedom, expression and the challenges we face in the future are often distinct outside of a metropole and in rural parts of Europe, and so participatory new-media art which speaks to these issues must recognize this. The ability of rural-based arts collectives with these goals in mind to learn from other collectives, and to be able to transmit their own best practices more widely, is hampered by the lack of pan-European networks of such collectives, due to their relative isolation and lack of opportunities for contact and communication with other equally isolated collectives. This also makes it difficult to learn how rural-based arts collectives have addressed these issues in the past—what works and what does not.

This COST ToC Training School, run by Medea Electronique, will focus on the unique needs and practices of rural arts collectives. This workshop will address issues such as:

How can such rural collectives organize each-other to form a network of care based on their unique needs and practices?

What issues around care arise when you work in and with isolated rural communities?

What opportunities for new models of care might operating in rural settings provide?

How can rural art collectives contribute to the care, preservation and growth of rural communities, environments and culture?

How can such art be sensitive to the forward-looking needs of rural communities, and increase their access to and knowledge of new forms of interactive art?

Can rural-produced art actually be a tool of care, and if so how?

We are looking for participants who are themselves members of rural art collectives, or familiar with their operation and histories. (Although participants with a strong interest in this topic will be considered.) The training school will focus on collective discussion, and individual presentations. We hope to produce a template for establishing principles that might guide a network of rural art collectives focusing on mutual support and care.