

DEPARTEMENT CULTUUR, JEUGD & MEDIA

ULTIMAS 2016
Flemish Culture Prizes
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ULTIMA 2016 Cultural entrepreneurship Timelab

The jury nominates Timelab as the winner of the Ultima for Cultural Entrepreneurship in association with the Fonds Cultuurmanagement (Cultural Management Fund).

Timelab is an open city laboratory for new cooperation models. Entrepreneurship and collaboration with other sectors are in the organisation's DNA. The jury thus feels it is a logical choice to award the Ultima for Cultural Entrepreneurship to Timelab.

Timelab stimulates entrepreneurship in a tangible way by supporting value-driven makers who develop products, with their creation, production, execution and marketing. Timelab pioneered this approach and founded the first Belgian maker's lab. In the meantime, fab labs have become ubiquitous, and maker's places are seen as an essential link to ensure innovation in an urban context.

The jury appreciates Timelab's impact-driven approach. For each product, not only is the economic influence checked, but the social and ecological impact are also considered. Everything Timelab does is pervaded with social responsibility, peppered with enterprise and entrepreneurship. Moreover, an artistic attitude is the starting point. Timelab formulates an answer to the question of how to build bridges between modern art, new economic models and sustainability. Products like Ginderella, a delicacy gin with invasive plants and weeds and the Canadian geese pâté are just a few examples of concrete collaborations.

Timelab's value-driven approach manifests itself in the way it consistently promotes its own values:

Open source, cooperative structure, participation in the social environment in which it works, environmentally responsible materials in the lab, etc.

Based on open source principles, Timelab makes as much knowledge and as many methodologies as possible available to the community. Timelab thus serves as an example for cooperative culture and the sharing economy which is becoming more widely adopted in both society and the cultural landscape. The organisation model also developed in a remarkable way. Timelab was initially a non-profit organisation. A strong community gradually developed around the organisation, so it seemed a logical step to translate this community feel into a CVBA SO (cooperative company with limited liability for social purposes). The jury feels this is a suitable legal form. The existence of a CVBA in addition to the vzw (non-profit organisation) ensures that there can be a symbiosis between the artists and/or designers of a specific project and any commercial operators of that project.

The jury wants to reward Timelab for many years of sustained commitment and flexibility. Despite the disappointment that Timelab recently experienced regarding its new place of business, it didn't give up and actively started looking for a new home for its innovative activities. Compared to similar European initiatives (such as Waag Society in Amsterdam), Timelab works with limited resources. Nevertheless, the organisation's activities permeate all layers of society. The jury believes that Ultima can be a lever, on the one hand to reward Timelab's entrepreneurial attitude and on the other to ensure that its activities are better known in Flanders and far beyond.