Healing Nature and Mind through Land Art

A Handbook for Community-Based Land Art and Nature Therapy



Co-funded by the European Union

Erasmus+

GUIDE FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF THE LAND -ART FESTIVAL

BASED ON ARTECO EXPERIENCE PAVLETIĆ

I. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Arteco Pavletić: an example of good practice

Arteco Pavletić was developed as an innovative blend of art, ecology and social entrepreneurship in a rural context. Through a series of European and national projects, the organization has gradually built a recognizable work model based on the inclusion of young people, people with fewer opportunities and the local community. Special emphasis is placed on the application of land art as an approach that connects nature, creativity and social activation.

We participated in the Interreg project Land Art Living in the Baranja region, led by the association Zeleni Osijek, in which other organizations from Hungary and Croatia also participated. The project included the development of art installations in nature, education of local communities and promotion of land art as a tool for sustainable development.

Arteco has also been recognized within the Erasmus+ program, where we have worked through projects such as "Art of Recycling , Future for Environment " and " Act Local , Think Global" implemented land art methods in working with young people from several European countries. Our methodology is based on practical work, the use of natural and recycled materials, and the involvement of participants in all stages of the process – from design to setting up installations.

As the first social enterprise in Brod-Posavina County to use land art for the purposes of education, tourism and inclusion, Arteco Pavletić represents an example of good practice that is also highlighted in documents of national bodies responsible for the implementation of EU funds, including the Ministry of Science and Education.

In May 2023, Arteco Pavletić was presented as an example of good practice at the international conference on sustainable development in education held in Kinsale Community School in Ireland. The event brought together representatives of schools, institutions and organizations from several European countries, and Arteco was chosen by the delegation of the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Croatia as an organization that successfully implements educational activities in accordance with the guidelines of the European Strategy for Sustainable Development. At the presentation, the methods of working with young people, the integration of art and ecology, and the use of natural resources through the model of land art were particularly highlighted

History of the association and mission

We founded the Arteco Pavletić Association out of a sincere need – to create something useful for the community through art and ecology. We started with ecological sculptures, grapevines and sawdust, and without much fanfare set out to shape the space around us into something more beautiful, greener and meaningful. We didn't have big words, but we had a clear mission: to connect art, nature and people – especially those who are often on the margins of society.

Over the years, we have developed into an organization that today provides formal and informal education, including young people from the NEET group, people with disabilities and members of national minorities, all through practical work in nature. In addition to working with young people and volunteers, we have also developed models of social entrepreneurship – we have employed, created products, expanded the network of cooperation. Over time, we have also become the first registered social enterprise in Brod-Posavina County.

Our work does not stop at the local level. We connect with European partners, participate in international projects and actively fight against any form of discrimination. We believe that sustainable development is not just a concept in documents, but concrete everyday work.

The Pavletić theme park is conceived as a space where art and nature are not separated - but rather reinforce each other. Sculptures are created from earth, wood, vines and everything that nature has to offer. Each installation in the park has its own story, but also a function: to raise awareness, to educate, to encourage dialogue. The park is not a museum - it is a living space that grows with the people who live in it.

In the park, we offer Robinson Crusoe-style accommodation made by ourselves – wooden houses, showers, sinks, all built according to the principles of recycling and sustainability. We prepare food with local OPGs, and programs include woodworking workshops, creative workshops for children, business education for young entrepreneurs and a series of activities to strengthen the local community. Schools, families, associations, students, sometimes even random travelers come to us – and everyone leaves something and takes something with them.

The park is our studio, our classroom, and our living room. There are no boundaries between work, learning, and socializing. And that's what makes it special.

Climate Ambassador

At the end of 2024, the European Commission directly contacted Arteco Pavletić with an invitation to nominate a candidate for the role of ambassador of the European Climate Pact for Croatia. We saw this invitation as a great recognition of our previous work in the field of sustainable development, environmental education and active community involvement through art and volunteer projects. The candidacy was accepted, and today we actively participate in the network of ambassadors across Europe who promote climate awareness and sustainable practices. The role of ambassador has further strengthened our voice in the public, but also obliged us to work even more decisively on the ground, among people, through concrete projects. Through workshops, campaigns, education and international cooperation, we continue to connect art, ecology and social justice – not because it sounds nice, but because we know that it really changes things.

Social entrepreneurship within land art

For us at Artec , social entrepreneurship within land art is not a theory, but an everyday practice – it is a way to combine creativity with economic sustainability and social responsibility. Through artistic activities in nature, we create concrete products and services that have market value, but also a clear social purpose. We work with natural, recycled and local materials to reduce our ecological footprint, while also involving young people, the unemployed and people with disabilities in education, souvenir making, leading workshops and organizing events. Land art is key here because it connects people, space and purpose – the installations that are created are not just decorative, but are part of a wider story about sustainable development, ecotourism and community involvement. Everything we do – from wooden houses to educational packages – stems from real needs and experiences, and every product or service we offer aims to give something back to the community, nature and those who are often neglected. Our model shows that art can be both a business opportunity and a social tool – if done with head, heart and honesty

Land art park as an innovative tool

the Land Art Park as an innovative tool that combines art, education, inclusion and sustainable development into one functional and living entity. It is not just a space for exhibiting sculptures, but a place where relationships are built through the creative process - between people and nature, between different groups, and between the individual and the community. Workshops, educations, festivals and stays are held throughout the park that teach people how to create, collaborate and think sustainably. The installations created in the park are not only visual attractions, but tools for raising awareness about climate change, waste, rural development and social justice. Each new generation of visitors participates in the creation of something new, which keeps the park growing and changing, just like the community that surrounds it. In this sense, the land art park is not a finished project, but an open platform that shows how art can be a means of social change.

Examples of international cooperation

Over the years, we have developed numerous international collaborations through Erasmus+ projects, European Solidarity Corps and cross-border cooperation programs. We participated in the Interreg project "Land Art Living " in Baranja, where we developed educational and artistic content in natural landscapes with partners from Croatia and Hungary. In projects such as "Act Local , Think Global" and " Greener Europe " we collaborated with organizations from Poland, Italy, Germany and Romania, exchanging methods of working with young people on the topic of ecology and social inclusion. As part of the project "Art of Recycling , Future for Environment " we hosted partners from Italy and Turkey, and sculptures were created in our park that still stand today as symbols of international cooperation and co-creation. Also, as climate ambassadors, we connect with other European initiatives aimed at raising awareness about sustainable development. The collaborations we build are not short-term – they often turn into long-term partnerships, in which we grow, learn and create change together.

History and philosophy of land art

The history and philosophy of land art began in the 1960s in the United States, as a reaction to the commercialization of art and alienation from nature. Artists such as Robert Smithson , Richard Long, and Nancy Holt left galleries and studios and began to create monumental works directly in the landscape – using stone, earth, sand, water, and other natural materials. Their works were not intended for eternity or the market, but for observation, decay, and conversation with natural cycles. The philosophy of land art is based on the idea that nature is a co-author, not just a backdrop; that art can be part of the environment, not something outside of it. Over time, this approach has spread around the world and developed various forms – from monumental installations to small, ephemeral works that disappear with the first wind or rain. In the contemporary context, land art is often associated with ecology, climate activism, therapy, and social inclusion, thus transcending the boundaries of fine art and becoming a tool for learning, healing, and connecting people with the environment.

The emergence of the movement (USA in the 1960s)

The land art movement originated in the United States in the late 1960s, as artists began to question the boundaries of the art world and society at large. Tired of the confined spaces of galleries and market pressures, they chose to work in the open landscape, where natural materials became the main means of expression. Stone, earth, sand, salt, wood, and water became the elements through which artists communicated ideas about transience, the relationship between man and nature, and resistance to the commercialization of culture. One of the first and most famous examples is " Spiral Robert Smithson's " Jetty ," a giant spiral of rocks and mud placed in Utah's Great Salt Lake. This work was not designed to last forever, but to disappear and reappear with the changing water levels—a radical concept at the time. The movement quickly spread, and artists began to use the landscape not only as an installation space but also as an essential part of the art itself, blurring the line between the artwork and the environment.

Key authors and works (Goldsworthy , Smithson , Long ...)

Key figures in the land art movement shaped its direction and philosophy, leaving behind works that continue to inspire today. Robert Smithson was among the first to radically move art beyond gallery walls; his work *Spiral Jetty* (1970), a giant spiral of basalt rock in Utah's Great Salt Lake, has become a symbol of the movement. Richard Long , a British artist, is known for his "walking sculptures" – works that emerge as a trail of walking through nature, such as circular footprints or rows of stones placed in precise lines, suggesting a dialogue between man and space. Andy Goldsworthy is probably the most famous contemporary representative of land art – his works of leaves, ice, twigs and stone are known for their sensitivity, temporary nature and almost meditative character. Goldsworthy often creates in silence, leaving the wind, water and time to finish what he has started. All three share the belief that art does not have to be permanent, that decay can be part of beauty, and that true art is created in collaboration with nature, not against it.

Eco-art and activism

Eco-art emerged as an extension of the land art philosophy, but with an even clearer message: art is not only for observation, but also for action. At its core is the idea that an artist can also be an activist – a person who uses creativity to highlight environmental problems and encourage change in society. Through eco-art, installations are created that warn about pollution, climate change, biodiversity loss and landscape degradation. Materials are always carefully chosen – natural, recycled, local – so that the form of the work itself is in line with the message. The activist dimension often includes the community: people participate in the creation of the work, dialogue, education and asking questions about what we as individuals can do. In the context of Artec , eco-art allows us to combine creative work with field education – through workshops, festivals, spatial interventions and public campaigns. We believe that art has the power to awaken emotion, and emotion is often the first step towards changing behavior. This is precisely why eco-art does not stay in the studio, but goes out into the field, into the village, into the community – where action is most needed.

Transition from desert to community

Early land art was often associated with remote, almost barren landscapes – American deserts, salt lakes, rocky outcrops – where artists could operate without restrictions and intervene in nature on a monumental scale. But over time, the need arose to bring this art closer to people, so that it would not remain isolated in the wilderness, but would become part of the everyday lives of communities. The transition from "desert" to populated areas marks the expansion of land art from experimental art to a tool for social change. Artists began to work in schoolyards, abandoned industrial zones, rural meadows and public parks – wherever there was space for change. Instead of monumental structures, the emphasis was placed on participation, education and local context. Arteco also operates in this spirit: our land art projects take place where people live – in villages, schools, local communities – and include those who otherwise rarely have the opportunity to participate in the creation of art. Thus, land art is no longer just an expression of an individual in nature, but a collaborative process through which awareness, relationships and community resilience are built.

Land art today: the state of affairs in the world, Europe, Croatia and Hungary

Today, land art lives on through global biennials, festivals and residencies that connect art, ecology and local context – such as the Swiss *Art Safienta/in* the Safien Valley or the Spanish *Karstica residency* that encourages work on the themes of the climate crisis and rural revitalization. In Europe, there is a strong network of events where artists compose works with the natural environment, promoting sustainability and social engagement. In Croatia, Baranja hosts the international *SLAMA Land Art Festival*, where Slavonian straw is transformed into large ecological installations with educational components and support. The first Croatian *Land Art Trail* of around twenty artistic interventions in the mountain landscape has been set up on Učka, an initiative by the author Boris Pecigoš that connects tourism, nature and local stories. In Croatia and Hungary, land art is returning to its neo- -avant- -garde tradition from the socialist era, where artists created artistic gestures in nature through minimalism and ecological sensibility, without aggression towards the environment – examples are groups such as Pécs Workshop in Hungary and OHO or TOK in the region, whose practices are characterized by dematerialization, spatial reflection and political sensitization. This continuity shows that land art today is not a retrospective trend, but a living, international practice that uses art as a tool for education, revitalization of space and ecological engagement.

Trends: therapeutic, inclusive, climatic land art

In the recent development of land art, three key trends are increasingly emerging: therapeutic, inclusive and climate land art. The therapeutic approach uses creation in nature as a tool for emotional expression, stress reduction and personal development – especially in working with children, people with disabilities and people facing social or psychological challenges. Inclusive land art goes a step further, including marginalized groups not only as users, but also as active participants in the creative process. Through such work, barriers are broken down, a sense of belonging is built and a space is created in which everyone has the right to express themselves. Climate land art focuses on environmental themes and uses artistic expression to highlight ecological threats such as climate change, biodiversity loss or pollution. Such works are often created in locations affected by ecological problems and serve as a visual alarm, but also an educational tool. At Artec, these three trends naturally intertwine – we work with vulnerable groups, use recycled materials, create in nature, and all with a clear message that art can heal, connect, and warn.

EU projects involving land art

Land art is increasingly used as a methodological tool in projects financed through various programs of the European Union, especially in the context of informal education, rural development, artistic residencies and sustainable tourism. Within **the Erasmus+ program** and **the European Solidarity Corps** , there are more and more projects that use land art to involve young people in creative and environmentally conscious processes. Examples include projects such as **Art & Landscape** (France), where participants from all over Europe take part in creating sculptures in nature while learning about sustainability, then **Nature as a Canvas** (Italy), which promotes environmental awareness and local culture through artistic residencies, and **Earth Art for Youth** (Slovenia), focused on working with young people from vulnerable groups through a therapeutic approach to art in nature. In the **Interreg** and **Creative Europe programs** , land art is used as part of strategies for cultural revitalization of rural areas, promotion of sustainable tourism and preservation of intangible heritage. These projects show that land art is not only an artistic expression, but also an effective tool for connecting communities, developing territories and raising environmental awareness through visually powerful and participatory methods.

Croatian examples (Arteco as the leader)

In Croatia, land art is developing as a combination of artistic expression, ecological awareness and work with local communities, but it is still rarely systematically and institutionally supported. Among the rare and consistent examples, Arteco Pavletić stands out, which, through numerous projects and activities, has set standards for the application of land art in education, inclusion and social entrepreneurship. Through projects such as **Land Art Fest** (I, II, III), held in the Pavletić Theme Park, Arteco has gathered participants from several countries, connected volunteers, artists and educators in the creation of sculptures and educational content in nature. In implementing one edition of the festival, we collaborated with **Nikola Faler** , a renowned artist and leader of the Slama association from Baranja, which further connected the two most important land art directions in Croatia – Baranja and Slavonia. Arteco also participated in **the Interreg project Land Art Living** , in partnership with Zeleni Osijek, where land art was used as a tool for sustainable development and revitalization of space in Baranja. In addition, we have successfully integrated land art into projects funded by the European Social Fund and the Erasmus+ program, in work with young people, people with disabilities, and members of minorities.

Hungarian land art scene and development potential for rural tourism

The Hungarian land art scene is developing more quietly than in some Western European countries, but with a clear local character and a growing potential for linking with rural tourism. Artists and organisations in Hungary often draw on the legacy of experimental art collectives from the 1970s and 1980s, such as the **Pécs Workshop group** , which created a strong connection with the natural landscape through minimalism and spatial interventions. Today, initiatives are being developed in rural parts of Hungary, especially in the border regions, that use land art as a means of revitalising cultural and natural resources – including thematic routes, artist residencies and open workshops for locals and visitors. As part of the Interreg project Land Art Living , Hungarian partners have been working with Croatian organisations, including Arteco Pavletić, to develop joint approaches that combine land art, environmental education and rural tourism. Special attention has been paid to interpreting local heritage through art installations, thus increasing the attractiveness of rural areas for visitors and creating added value for local communities. All of this indicates that Hungary, although still without a widely spread land art network, has significant development potential precisely at the intersection of art, nature and tourism.

II. WHY LAND ART FESTIVAL

The Land Art Festival is not just an artistic event – it is a tool for connecting the community, promoting sustainable development and creating a space where nature, art and society intertwine. For us at Artec , the festival is a response to the need for rural areas to receive content that is not just touristic or seasonal, but also educational, engaging and long-term beneficial. Through the festival, we bring together different groups – young people, artists, volunteers, local residents, people with fewer opportunities – and together we create something lasting, not only in a physical sense, but also in the form of experience, knowledge and relationships. Land art as a medium allows everyone to contribute, regardless of previous knowledge, because working with natural materials does not require perfection – it requires presence, cooperation and respect for space. The festival also brings visibility to rural areas that are often out of focus – it shows that even in small places, great meanings can be created. That is why we believe that the Land Art Festival is not just a cultural program, but also an engine of social, ecological and economic revitalization .

Goals and purpose of the festival

The goals and purpose of a land art festival must be clearly defined before the organization begins, because everything else depends on them – the choice of location, partners, participants, content and communication with the public. A festival does not need to have hundreds of participants or a huge budget to be successful – it is enough to have a clear purpose and local support. Key goals can include encouraging artistic expression in nature, raising environmental awareness, involving the community, promoting sustainable practices, opening up space for vulnerable groups or strengthening local identity. We recommend that the organizer set a maximum of three to five main goals to keep the festival focused and feasible. Each goal should be linked to specific activities: if the goal is environmental education, let these be workshops and talks; if the goal is artistic expression, let the focus be on creating and exhibiting installations; if the goal is the development of rural tourism, let the content include local producers and tours of the area. It is important that all goals can be evaluated later, so that the festival can be improved and justified to funders or the community. In planning, use questions such as: *Why are we doing this? Who is it intended for? What do we want to achieve?*– these are the questions that shape the identity of a festival and distinguish it from an ordinary event.

Artistic expression and ecology

Artistic expression and ecology are at the core of any quality land art festival – the two are not mutually exclusive, but rather complementary. The idea is to create a space where participants can express their creativity through materials found in nature, while respecting the environment and leaving no damage behind. When organizing a festival, it is recommended that the artistic part is not planned as a competition, but as an open process in which anyone can participate, regardless of experience – from professional artists to children and local residents. Installations should be time-limited or designed to decompose naturally, and all activities should be aligned with the principles of sustainability. Workshops can involve working with branches, leaves, sawdust, stone, clay or even elements of waste found in nature, with clear education on distinguishing between useful and harmful. It is particularly important to guide participants through a process of reflection: *Why do we use this material? What does it tell us about the space? What message are we sending through the installation?* In this way, artistic expression also becomes a tool for learning about the environment and responsibility towards the space. It is ideal when installations are created in silence, through collaboration and respect for the landscape – because such work creates not only art, but also connection.

Encouraging togetherness and creativity

One of the most important goals of a land art festival is to create a space where people collaborate, share ideas and build something together – with their hands, words and a sense of belonging. Unlike typical art colonies that often emphasize individual work, a land art festival encourages togetherness through a group process of creation. Creativity here is not measured by talent but by the willingness to participate, listen to others and contribute to a common goal. The festival organizer can encourage this through teamwork on installations, mixed workshops (where children, young people and the elderly work together), shared meals, experience sharing circles and open evening programs. Through such activities, the boundaries between "audience" and "artist" are erased, as everyone becomes part of the process. If possible, it is recommended that at least one artwork be created entirely collectively – without a predetermined author – in order to further strengthen the sense of co-creation. The togetherness born in this process often remains after the festival, in the form of new friendships, collaborations or ideas that continue to develop in local communities. By encouraging community and creativity, the festival doesn't just build sculptures – it builds people too.

Education about the environment and climate change during the festival

The Land Art Festival is an excellent opportunity for informal education about the environment and climate change, as it combines natural space, creative expression and people open to new knowledge. Educational activities should not be boring presentations or lectures, but dynamic content that encourages reflection, participation and experiential learning. We recommend that organizers include workshops on climate change, the circular economy, nature protection and the principles of sustainable living throughout the festival – but always connected to practice. For example, participants can learn how to make a sculpture without plastic, how to recognize invasive species in the environment, how to recycle materials from nature or how to save water and energy in camping conditions. It is also good to have information panels, posters or QR codes next to the installations that explain the ecological message of each work. If possible, the education can be conducted by experts from associations, schools, nature parks or climate ambassadors, but the participants themselves can also share their knowledge and experiences. The key is that the messages are not imposed, but naturally woven into the program, through joint work and conversation. Learning that happens in a meadow, in the mud, under the sun, and with creative engagement - most often stays forever

Arteco experience: how we defined the purpose of the festival

At Artec, we defined the purpose of the festival through the real needs of the community and our long-standing practice of working at the intersection of art, ecology and social inclusion. Before launching the first Land Art Fest, we gathered a team and asked a few key questions: What is missing in this space? Who do we want to give a chance to? How do we connect artists, local residents and volunteers? The answers quickly became clear – we wanted to create an event that would be more than a festival: a platform for expression, learning and togetherness. Our goal was not just to exhibit sculptures in nature, but to activate people – to participate, learn from each other and leave a mark in a space that is both physical and symbolic. We shaped the purpose of the festival so that every part of it – from workshops and communal cooking, to the creation of installations and the final exhibition – was aimed at inclusion and creating a sense of belonging to something that has a deeper meaning. Over time, through experience and evaluation, we added new goals: connecting with rural tourism, promoting local products and strengthening international cooperation. In this way, the purpose of our festival stays alive – it grows along with the people who create it.

The role of festivals in community and rural development

A land art festival can play a strong and multifaceted role in a community, especially in rural areas where cultural, educational and social activities are often limited. Instead of remaining an isolated artistic event, a well-designed festival can become a means of activating a village – a space for connecting locals, young people, visitors and organisations. In practice, this means involving local associations, schools, family farms -, craftsmen and institutions in the preparation and implementation of activities. Through participation, people gain new knowledge, a sense of belonging and a concrete contribution to the community, while the local environment opens up to the outside world and becomes more visible on the map of cultural and tourist events. A land art festival can also stimulate new initiatives: exhibitions, educational programmes, volunteering activities or even small entrepreneurial ideas related to nature and creativity. For rural development, this means more than symbolism – these are concrete steps towards sustainability, hospitality and the creation of a community that relies on its own resources, but thinks globally. The festival can also become an occasion for the revitalisation of unused spaces – schools, forestry offices, old farm buildings – which are temporarily or permanently revived for the needs of the event. The role of the festival is not to be a one-time event, but to start processes that will last even after the last installation is dismantled.

Inclusion of marginalized groups

The inclusion of marginalized groups is one of the fundamental principles of any socially responsible land art festival, especially in rural areas where such groups are often further isolated. This includes young people from the NEET group, people with disabilities, members of national minorities, the elderly, but also all those who are excluded from cultural, educational or social activities for any reason. The key is to invite them not only as an audience, but to actively participate in the design, organization and implementation of the festival. This can mean leading workshops, helping to create installations, participating in food preparation, photographing events or simply socializing together that breaks down prejudices. We recommend that the organizer, already in the preparatory phase, contact associations, institutions and initiatives that work with vulnerable groups and offer cooperation on an equal basis. It is also important to ensure accessibility of the space (e.g. for people with disabilities), communicate information clearly and simply and adapt activities to different abilities. At Artec , we have had participants from marginalized groups throughout all our festivals so far, not as "users" but as co-organizers, volunteers and artists. This experience shows that when people are given trust and space, they fulfill it - and often in ways that exceed expectations.

Activation of unused spaces

A land art festival has a strong potential to activate unused spaces, especially in villages and rural areas where many meadows, abandoned properties, forest paths, old orchards or neglected buildings have been unused for years. Instead of such spaces remaining symbols of decay, the festival can transform them into places of gathering, creation and new meaning. The key is to view the space not as "empty" but as "potential" – every overgrown path can become an art route, every barn a temporary gallery, and an abandoned meadow a workshop space. In practice, this means that the organizer needs to map local terrain, contact the owners or the municipality, and agree on temporary use with minimal intervention. It is important to work with respect for the space: do not concrete, do not build unnecessarily, but use natural materials and sustainable methods that will not damage the environment. The festival's installations and programs thus become a tool for revitalization, and often for the re-inclusion of these spaces into the everyday life of the community. At Artec , for example, we transformed forgotten parts of the estate into hubs of creativity and gatherings through land art festivals, which later inspired other local initiatives. When a space takes on a new function through culture and community, the perception of the entire place begins to change.

Strengthening the local economy

well-designed land art festival can have a concrete positive impact on the local economy, especially in smaller communities where opportunities for additional income are rare and seasonal. It is recommended to involve local family farms -, caterers, craftsmen and service businesses already in the festival preparation phase – whether through the procurement of food and materials, accommodation for participants, logistics or promotion. Festival participants and visitors bring in turnover, but more importantly – they create new acquaintances, collaborations and open doors to future initiatives. If the programme includes stands with local products, souvenir-making workshops or presentations of local traditions, the festival becomes a showcase for everything the place has to offer. In addition to direct income, such events increase the visibility of the destination and raise its image in the long term – which can encourage the arrival of new visitors and investments, and even the return of young people. At Artec , we have consciously linked the festival with social entrepreneurship: the products we create (wooden souvenirs, educational programmes, workshops) are created in cooperation with local communities and have market potential.

Arteco experience: local impact and village transformation

Over the years of organizing the land art festival, we at Artec have witnessed a real transformation of space and relationships in our village. At first, we were viewed with reservations – as some weirdos who arrange vines in the yard and talk about art under the open sky. Today, many locals actively support us, attend events, participate in workshops, and some have developed their own ideas or businesses through collaboration. Once neglected spaces have become gathering places, and many young people have started volunteering, learning and creating. Through the festival, we have managed to connect people of different generations, cultures and life stories, in a way that is not intrusive or elitist – but natural, open and honest. Together with local OPGs, schools and municipalities, we have created a model that shows that even the smallest place can become a point of meeting, dialogue and change. Transformation does not happen overnight, but with persistence, transparency and respect for space and people – it happens.

Inclusive and educational potential

The inclusive and educational potential of the land art festival lies in its openness – everyone can participate regardless of age, experience, knowledge or physical abilities. Unlike closed educational programs, the festival enables informal learning through practice, togetherness and spending time in nature. We recommend that the organizer foresee activities that will be adapted to different groups: children, young people, the elderly, people with disabilities, but also those who may have never had the opportunity to participate in the artistic process. Education can be carried out through workshops, conversations by the fire, practical work with materials and joint reflection at the end of the day. It is important not to set up barriers – neither physical nor mental – but to create a space where everyone is welcome. In this way, the festival turns into an outdoor classroom, where ecology, creativity, teamwork, empathy and shared responsibility are learned. With good planning and a clear purpose, a land art festival can become a powerful tool for personal growth and strengthening social cohesion – without the need for formal education or expensive infrastructure .

Working with people with disabilities and young people

Working with people with disabilities and young people requires careful planning, but it brings enormous value to the festival – both human and social. It is recommended to contact associations and institutions that work with these groups early in the festival, so that activities can be adapted to their real needs. The space should be physically accessible: flat paths, sitting areas for rest, simple toilets and clearly marked zones. Workshops should be run at a leisurely pace, with enough assistance and the opportunity to contribute in different ways – through drawing, preparing materials, photography or making installations. It is useful to work with young people in smaller groups and give them specific tasks that develop responsibility, creativity and team spirit. It is good to have a person or team who will be in charge exclusively of the inclusive aspects of the festival – not as a separate part, but as a fully equal component. When people with disabilities and young people are given space to create and express themselves, they not only participate – they change the atmosphere of the festival, making it deeper, more sincere and truly human.

Workshops open to everyone

Workshops open to all are the foundation of an inclusive festival and the best way to actively involve the local community in the program. They do not need to be complex or formal – it is important that they are accessible, clear and adapted to different levels of knowledge and abilities. We recommend that workshops be organized in an open space, in the shade, with enough materials to work with (e.g. branches, stones, soil, sawdust, ropes, natural paints). Workshop leaders should be patient and open to communicating with different profiles of people – from children to the elderly. It is good to define simple topics in advance (e.g. "Wish Tree", "Sculpture from my imagination", "Message to the Earth") that encourage participants to think and be creative, but leave them freedom of expression. Each workshop should also have an element of learning – through materials, messages or the process of work itself. It is important to emphasize that no one is an "expert" here – we are all participants, and everyone contributes according to their abilities. Such an approach breaks down barriers and creates an atmosphere of trust and community, which is one of the most valuable things a festival can offer.

Art as a form of social therapy

Art as a form of social therapy in the context of a land art festival is not a formal therapy, but a deeply healing practice that works through creativity, nature and interpersonal connection. Many festival participants come with emotional or life burdens – loneliness, stress, trauma, unemployment – and through the process of creation in nature they find a space for expression, liberation and connection with others. It is recommended that organizers plan workshops that are not only focused on the result, but also on the process: simple installations done in silence, walking through nature while collecting materials, writing messages to nature or creating shared mandalas. It is important that there is a safe space, without judgment, where participants can express themselves without pressure. Leaders who run such workshops should be empathetic, unobtrusive and able to recognize the needs of the group. It is not uncommon for participants to share personal stories, emotions or simply find peace that they have not felt for a long time. In this sense, land art becomes more than art – it becomes a silent therapy that connects people and heals through contact with nature and togetherness.

Arteco experience: inclusion through land art

At Artec , we have found a powerful tool for real, not declarative inclusion through land art. From the very beginning of the festival, we have tried to include those who are often left out – young people without support, people with disabilities, members of minorities, the elderly from rural areas. We do not do this out of obligation, but because we believe that art only makes sense when it is accessible to everyone. For us, inclusion does not mean a special program "for them", but joint work in which everyone has their own role, according to their capabilities and interests. Through workshops, preparations, installation, shared meals and conversations – a space is created in which differences are erased and relationships are strengthened. We had examples where young volunteers worked side by side with people with disabilities for the first time, and lasting friendships were born from this. Or where older locals learned from children how to convey a message through sculpture. All these situations are not planned with "strategies", but arise when people are given space and respect. Land art, with its simplicity and openness, has proven to be the perfect medium for building bridges between people.

Land art as a tool for art-rural tourism

Land art is a natural ally of rural tourism because it uses exactly what villages have in abundance – space, silence, nature and authenticity. Unlike mass tourism, which often depletes local resources, art-rural tourism develops more slowly but more sustainably, because it is based on experience, creativity and a real connection with the place. A land art festival can become an attraction that attracts visitors not because of large investments, but because of its unique offer: natural galleries, workshops in the forest, shared dinners, local souvenirs, open-air exhibitions. It is recommended that organizers cooperate with local accommodation, OPGs and guides to offer guests a complete experience – from making sculptures to tasting local food. It is also important to think about continuity: installations that remain after the festival can become part of a thematic route or outdoor exhibition, thus expanding the tourism potential throughout the year.

Visual attractiveness of the space

The visual appeal of the space is key to the experience of a land art festival and one of the reasons why this type of event naturally attracts visitors. When installations are placed in the landscape – between trees, at the edge of a field, along a path or in a meadow – the entire space becomes a living open-air gallery. It is recommended that organizers walk the terrain in the preparatory phase and choose locations that are naturally photogenic: a view of a forest, a hill, water, an old tree or even a ruin. The installations should be arranged in a way that visitors have the experience of walking, discovering and being surprised. It is also important how the sculptures "fit" with the space – they should not dominate, but complement nature. In the morning, at noon and in the evening, the space looks different – that is why it is useful to think about light, shadow and weather conditions. A good visual display not only attracts tourists, but also journalists, photographers and people from social networks – which further expands the visibility of the festival. And when the space itself becomes art, people no longer see it as an empty meadow, but as a place worth attention, preservation and return to.

Cooperation with family farms and tourists

Cooperation with family farms, tourists, tourist boards and municipalities is key to a successful, sustainable and recognizable land art festival. Family farms can be involved by offering local food, making souvenirs, organizing workshops or guided tours of the farms, which gives the festival a local character and supports the rural economy. Tourist boards who come to the festival often look for exactly such authentic experiences – something that will connect them with the place, people and tradition. Tourist boards play an important role in promoting the festival, creating promotional materials, informing visitors and networking with other events in the region. It is recommended to contact them in the early stages of planning so that the program can be jointly shaped and integrated into the wider tourist offer. The same applies to municipalities, which can help logistically (e.g. communal support, use of space, transport), but also financially, through competitions and co-financing. When all these stakeholders are involved with an understanding of the purpose of the festival, a synergy is created that raises the quality of the event, ensures greater attendance and leaves a long-lasting positive mark in the community.

Arteco experience: cultural-inclusive - tourist model of the park

At Artec, we have developed our own model that combines culture, inclusion and tourism, through practical fieldwork, rather than theoretical strategies. Our Pavletić Theme Park functions as a space open to all – it is where art installations are created, education is conducted, volunteering, spending time in nature and collaborating with the local community. Visitors do not just come to watch, but to participate: they make sculptures, learn about sustainability, eat local food from a family farm -and even sleep in Robinson Crusoe accommodation that we built ourselves. Through land art festivals and other projects, we have developed an offer that simultaneously strengthens the cultural life of the village, includes marginalized groups and creates content for responsible tourism. We work with young people, people with disabilities, volunteers from Europe and locals from neighboring villages, creating a space where everyone has a place and contribution. Collaboration with tourist boards and the municipality has enabled us to gain additional visibility and connect with other local initiatives. Our model was not copied - it was created out of necessity, trial and error, but that is precisely why today it serves as an example of how a living, inclusive cultural space with tourist value can be created with little resources and a lot of will.

III. PREPARATION AND PLANNING

Planning a land art festival begins long before the first sculpture is installed – it is based on a clear vision, good preparation and a realistic assessment of the possibilities. The organizer should first define the purpose of the festival, its goals and key activities: will it be a one-day event or a multi-day stay with workshops? Who are the target groups – artists, children, local residents, volunteers? Where will it be held and with what resources? It is recommended to create a simple plan that covers the main components: space, people, program, promotion, logistics and security. It is a good idea to assemble a small organizational team with clearly divided tasks and involve local partners as early as possible – schools, OPGs, the municipality, the tourist board, associations. The documentation does not have to be complex, but it should contain a time plan, budget, activity plan and communication strategy. Planning also includes preparing the location: cleaning, marking zones, providing basic infrastructure (toilets, water, shade, shelters). It is important to remain flexible – a festival in nature always carries unpredictable elements.

Location selection and preparation

Selecting and preparing a location is one of the key steps in organizing a land art festival because the space does not just serve as a backdrop – it becomes part of the artwork. First, you need to find a location that is spacious enough, accessible and safe for people to work and stay. Ideally, it should be a natural landscape with diverse elements: forest, meadow, water, hills, but also shelter from wind and sun. It is recommended to visit several potential locations and take photographs, sketches and short notes about each space. Special attention should be paid to ownership – is it public land, private land or a combination? It is important to request permits in time and define the terms of use, preferably through a written agreement with the owner or municipality. The location should be prepared minimally, with respect for the environment: mow the path to the main zones, set up signs, arrange a gathering area, water and garbage. Installations must not endanger plants, animals or the stability of the soil. Good preparation means that participants will feel safe and free, and visitors will be able to enjoy art in a space that is natural but organized. We always return to the same principle: less is more – nature is already the scenography .

Ecological sensitivity

Ecological sensitivity must be the guiding principle in every step of the preparation and implementation of a land art festival, especially when working in natural or semi-natural spaces. Before choosing a location, it is important to check whether there is any special protection for the area – e.g. a nature park, Natura 2000 zone, forest or water belt – as this implies additional conditions and restrictions. During the festival, care should be taken not to trample sensitive vegetation, disturb wildlife and not bring in anything that is not biodegradable. Installations should be made of natural or recycled materials that are already present in the environment – never plastic, glue, paints containing chemicals or metals that can harm animals. The organizer should ensure separate waste collection, the use of environmentally friendly sanitation and energy-saving sources. It is also advisable to introduce basic rules of conduct in nature and instruct participants on how to treat the space with respect. Each location has its own rhythm and vulnerability, and the organizer's task is to leave it in a better condition after the festival than they found it. Ecological sensitivity is not an obstacle, but a standard – and it distinguishes a serious land art festival from a superficial event in nature.

Theme and artistic concept

Choosing a theme and artistic concept for the festival is crucial for directing the creative process and connecting all elements of the event into a coherent whole. The theme can be very broad (e.g. "Nature and Man", "Time", "Climate Change") or narrowly focused (e.g. "Root", "Silence", "Water as Life"), but it is important that it resonates with the space and community in which the festival takes place. We recommend that the theme be chosen in consultation with the organizational team and, if possible, in collaboration with artists and local partners. The theme can also be linked to the educational content of the festival, as well as promotion – because it gives the event an identity. The artistic concept refers to the way in which the theme is interpreted through works and activities: will all works be individual or collective, will they be created spontaneously or according to pre-developed sketches, will they contain text messages, audience interaction or performative elements. It is important that the concept is clearly communicated to the participants before the start – through introductory workshops, a text or a short presentation – so that everyone knows in which direction it is moving. A good artistic concept does not limit, but inspires - it provides a framework, but leaves freedom of expression .

Thematic framework of the festival

Thematic frames of the festival serve as a bridge between the main theme and the concrete activities that will be carried out during the event. They help organizers and workshop leaders to structure the content, and give participants a clearer context in which to create. It is recommended to develop 2 to 4 thematic frames that can be used as sub-themes for workshops, installations, conversations and performances. For example, if the main theme of the festival is "Connections", the thematic frames could be: "Connections with Nature", "Connections between People", "Connections with the Past" and "Breaking Connections". Each frame could have its own workshop, its own location in the field or even its own artistic material (e.g. stone for the past, wood for relationships, water for emotions). Such an approach helps in organizing the work, but also gives a deeper meaning to the entire festival. It is important that thematic frames are clear enough, but not too narrow – to leave room for personal interpretation and creative freedom of the participants. A good frame does not restrict, but offers direction and inspiration.

Artistic direction and co-creation

Artistic leadership and co-creation are key elements if we want the festival to have direction, but not become rigid. It is recommended that the organizer appoint one or two people at the beginning to lead the artistic part – the so-called artistic leaders. Their role is not to supervise or evaluate, but to help participants express their ideas in accordance with the theme and space. They should be available on the ground, have an overview of the location, monitor the work of all groups and ensure the visual and conceptual coherence of the festival. It is recommended that a joint walk through the space with the leaders be held on the first day, where potential zones, ideas and techniques will be discussed. Co-creation means that participants are not only "executors", but also co-authors of the festival. This is achieved by allowing them to propose ideas, jointly decide on the implementation and exchange opinions. A good tool for this is the "morning circle" – a short daily meeting of all participants where tasks are agreed upon, impressions are exchanged and the work plan is adjusted. The artistic leader serves as a support and coordinator, not as an authority. In this way, a sense of shared ownership of the festival is created - and this is visible in every detail.

Arteco topics: advice for others

At Artec, we have always chosen themes that are deeply connected to the local cultural heritage and identity of Slavonia. Instead of abstract concepts, we opted for symbols that have meaning in our space and among our people. So, one year we worked with the theme of **the Slavonian horse** – as a symbol of freedom, strength, and the connection between man and nature. The second festival theme was **Kozarčeva Tena** , through which we questioned the beauty, social frameworks, and strength of the female character in Slavonian literature. One year, we were inspired by **characters from Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić's fairy tales** , especially those who live in forests and speak in the language of nature – which perfectly suited the concept of land art. We also used art as a tool for satire, social criticism, and freedom of expression through the theme **of Satire** , combining local humor and a contemporary message. We recommend that other organizers search for local themes themselves – because when a community recognizes its story in art, then art becomes a powerful means of connecting and raising awareness.

Content and schedule planning

Planning the content and schedule is crucial for a functional and enjoyable festival – without it, even the best idea can collapse into chaos. First, a rough schedule is created by day, clearly indicating the arrival of participants, introductory activities, time for working on installations, educational and creative programs, joint meals, rest and evening activities. We recommend that workshops and fieldwork be planned for the morning and late afternoon, when it is not too hot, while the middle part of the day is left for lunch, rest and informal activities. Be sure to include time for flexibility – in nature, things do not always go according to plan, so it is important to leave some "leeway". It is also useful to have parallel activities for different profiles of participants – for example, while some work on installations, others can participate in a workshop, space preparation or exhibition. When preparing the content, it is important to take into account the balance: too many activities create pressure, too few leave a void. A good schedule is based on the rhythm of the group and space, and not just on paper – that is why daily evaluation and adjustment are recommended, if necessary. And remember: structure is there to support creativity, not stifle it.

Structure of the day

The structure of the day at the land art festival should be clear, but flexible enough to follow the rhythm of nature and the group. The recommended daily dynamics looks like this:

- **08:00 – 09:00** – Morning meeting and breakfast (easy start, day's discussion, task distribution)
- **09:00 – 12:00** – Morning work: installation work, workshops, field work
- **12:00 – 14:30** – Lunch and break (time for food, shade, informal conversations)
- **14:30 – 17:00** – Afternoon activities: continuation of work, thematic workshops, visits, interviews with local residents
- **17:00 – 18:00** – Break / free time (washing, relaxing, preparing for the evening)
- **18:00 – 20:00** – Evening program: shared meal, discussion, presentation of works, concert, projection, sharing circle
- **20:00+** – Informal socializing, fire, rest

It is recommended to have **a morning circle** at the beginning of each day for a short discussion and motivation, and **an evening circle** for sharing impressions and evaluation. A good structure of the day allows participants to feel organized, but also free – because when they know the rhythm, they can more easily surrender to the creative process.

Backup plans

Contingency plans are an essential part of organizing any land art festival – nature is unpredictable, and working with a large number of people always brings elements of surprise. The most important thing is to foresee alternatives for **time** , **location** , **materials** and **human resources in advance** . If it rains, you should have a shelter ready (tent, canopy, school hall) or switch the program to dry workshops (e.g. sketching, model making, concept discussions). If the temperature is too high, activities are moved to the shade and shifted to the morning and evening hours. If one of the key leaders cancels at the last minute, it is good to have a person in reserve or another team member who can take over their role. Also, if some materials are late or not enough, it is useful to have a "plan B" with local resources (e.g. branches, stones, soil from the field). It is recommended to create **a short crisis plan** with emergency contacts, agreed protocols and clearly divided roles. Backup plans are not meant to control everything, but to keep the group calm and ready when things go differently than expected - because flexibility is half the success in nature.

Organizational structure and tasks

A good organizational structure is essential for a clear flow of the festival and reducing stress during implementation. It is recommended to form a small core team of 4 to 6 people who will cover the basic areas: artistic part, logistics, communication, work with volunteers, finance/budget, and security. Each person or subgroup should have clearly defined tasks, responsibilities, and contact persons with whom they collaborate. In addition to the main team, it is desirable to have a wider network of volunteers and support from the community (OPGs, teachers, local associations) who can help on the day of the event, in preparations, and in final cleanup. It is a good idea to create a simple task table with deadlines and responsible persons - e.g. "setting up an info point by Friday – responsible person: at the festival itself, it is useful to have people on duty in each zone (art space, kitchen, accommodation, registration), so that everyone knows who to contact. A short daily team meeting (in the morning or evening) is also recommended for quick coordination. The key to a successful structure is not hierarchy, but good communication and the feeling that everyone knows their role – and that everyone is committed to the same goal .

Team roles and responsibilities

Team roles and responsibilities should be clearly defined in advance, so that all members know what is expected of them and how they fit into the bigger picture. It is recommended to divide it into basic functional units:

- **Artistic Director** – coordinates everything related to installations, themes and work with artists; approves the locations of works, advises participants and ensures the aesthetic and conceptual coherence of the festival.
- **Logistics Coordinator** – responsible for all physical space: setting up infrastructure, transporting materials, setting up toilets, tents, lighting and marking zones.
- **Volunteer Coordinator** – manages shift schedules, work instructions, volunteer reception, orientation, daily tasks, and takes care of their satisfaction and needs.
- **Communications manager** - in charge of media relations, social media posts, creation of visuals , promotional materials and contact with the audience.
- **Participant safety and care person** – monitors health status, accessibility, first aid, communication with emergency services, and general safety on the field.
- **Financial Coordinator** – tracks expenses, keeps records, coordinates payments, and communicates with donors or partners.

Volunteers and participants

Volunteers and participants are the heart of any land art festival, so their involvement and organization are key to success. First, you need to decide how many volunteers you realistically need – and for what tasks. Common tasks include: helping with set-up and tear-down, assisting artists, taking care of guests, information desk, logistics, and kitchen.

Before arrival, it is advisable to hold an online meeting or send a guide with basic information – where they are coming, what awaits them, what to bring, what they will receive. On site, orientation and agreement on the rules are mandatory. Let the volunteers be involved in the creative processes, not just in the physical tasks – this gives them a sense of belonging and motivation.

Festival participants, especially if they come from other countries or regions, need clear information about what to expect: from food and accommodation, to the schedule of workshops and exhibitions. If it is an international project, it is good to have a translator or at least basic communication in English.

Arteco model: young people as carriers (youth club and young volunteers)

In the Arteco model, young people are not just guests of the festival – they are its real bearers. Through the Arteco Youth Club and a network of young volunteers, we involve them in all phases – from the idea, planning and promotion, to the actual implementation and evaluation of the festival. This is not just a practice of involving young people, but a real school of informal learning, where they learn how to lead teams, plan an event, collaborate with institutions and communicate with the public.

Young people also participate as educators, workshop moderators and exhibition guides. Our approach is not: "let the young help", but "let the young lead, let the older ones support". This creates a sense of ownership of the project and empowers them for future independent initiatives.

Financing and budget

Planning the finances for a land art festival must be thorough and realistic. First, make a rough budget: how much you need for materials, accommodation, food, fees, promotion and logistics. Then, research sources of income – don't rely on just one. Combine public funds (e.g. municipalities, counties, ministries), EU funds (Erasmus+, ESC , Interreg), social entrepreneurship (souvenir sales, workshops), donations and sponsorships.

It is important to have a clear plan of how the money will be spent and what the priorities are if the budget is reduced. Keep detailed records, not only for reporting purposes, but also so that you know what awaits you next year. If you are planning several editions of the festival, try to establish a long-term financial strategy already in the first year.

Sources of income

To successfully implement a land art festival, it is necessary to develop a realistic financial plan with diverse sources of income. It is crucial to combine multiple sources to reduce risk and ensure sustainability. The most common sources include:

- **EU funds and public tenders** – for example, programs such as Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps, national funds for culture, the environment or youth.

- **Local and regional self-government units** - municipalities, counties and tourist boards often support projects that contribute to the visibility and development of the local community.
- **Sponsors and donors** – local businesses, crafts, and enterprises may be willing to support the festival with donations or material resources.
- **Own income** – through the sale of souvenirs, registration fees, workshops open to the public, tourist packages and cooperation with family farms.

Cost categories

When planning the budget for the land art festival, it is important to clearly allocate all expected costs by category in order to avoid unpleasant surprises and ensure transparency towards financiers and partners. Recommended categories include:

- **Material and equipment** – natural and recycled materials for making sculptures, tools, protective equipment, tents and technical equipment (electricity, lighting, sound system if necessary).
- **Accommodation and food** – costs of Robinson Crusoe or camping accommodation for participants, cost of food preparation, groceries (preferably local and seasonal), water and sanitation.
- **Travel expenses** – arrival of participants, artists, lecturers, including local transportation (e.g. excursions, field activities).
- **Honoraria and compensation** – for workshop leaders, artistic directors, professional associates, logistics and technical staff.
- **Visibility and promotion** - creation of banners , flyers, promotional materials, social networks, local media.
- **Organizational costs** – administration, insurance, permits, cleaning, technical support and unforeseen costs.

IV. PERFORMANCE AND PRACTICE

After careful planning, comes the most exciting part – implementing the festival on the ground. In this phase, all plans become reality, and good preparation and clearly defined roles are key to success. It is important to ensure that all team members know what their task is, that materials and tools are ready, and communication between organizers, artists and volunteers flows without a hitch. At the same time, remain flexible – nature, inspiration and the audience often bring unplanned but precious moments. Here, we bring concrete guidelines and advice on how to complete this phase with minimal stress and maximum impact.

Materials and tools

For a successful land art festival, it is crucial to use appropriate materials and tools that are in line with sustainable and ecological principles. It is recommended to use natural materials such as wood, stones, leaves, branches, grass, sawdust, soil or sand, as well as recycled materials that can be found locally. Tools should be adapted to the type of material – e.g. handsaws, hammers, battery-powered drills, buckets, carts, ropes, knives and gloves. It is important that the tools are safe to use and available in sufficient quantities for all participants. Before the festival, make a list of the tools you will need and ensure safe storage. Always have a basic first aid kit and an emergency response plan on hand in case of injuries at work.

Local, natural, recycled materials

When organizing a land art festival, it is important that all the materials you use are in line with the environmental values of the festival. The focus should be on what is locally available – old trees, branches, sawdust from local sawmills, stones, corncobs, straw, clay, dry leaves or discarded wooden elements. If you use recycled materials (e.g. pallets, cardboard, ropes, plastic bottles), choose those that have already been used and that will not end up as new waste after the festival. Involve local residents and OPGs who can donate materials to you. This not only protects the environment, but also further connects the community. A simple rule: anything that nature can easily return or that has a second life – is welcome!

Sustainable use of tools and precautions

The tools you use at the festival should be simple, safe and easily accessible – saws, hammers, pruners, cordless drills, ropes and ladders. But with every tool comes responsibility. Before you start working, make sure to give a short safety briefing to all participants. Let everyone know what they are allowed to use and what is exclusively in the hands of the leader or more experienced members. Gloves, goggles, a back belt or a simple reminder not to run with a saw in your hand – all of this can prevent an accident. Prepare a basic first aid kit. And another important rule: use tools only as much as necessary and carefully – because sustainability starts with taking care of the things we already have.

Promotion and visibility

Good promotion starts months before the festival. Use social media, local media, schools and municipal channels. Create simple visuals , flyers, posters – but let the message be clear: art, nature and togetherness. During the festival, document every day – photos , videos, short texts. After the festival, publish a summary, video, gallery – leave a mark, but also an invitation for next year.

Communication channels

Use a combination of online and offline channels: Facebook, Instagram, local portals, radio, school newsletters and community bulletin boards. Involve partners and participants to share content. Open a dedicated email address or WhatsApp group for questions and applications. Simple, clear and accessible to all

Promotional materials

Create posters, flyers, banners and t-shirts with simple, eye-catching designs. Use local symbols and natural motifs. If you have the budget, add a promo video or short teaser . Make everything you share visually appealing, clear and related to the festival theme.

Security and logistics

Safety is the foundation of any good organization – ensure clear protocols, contact persons and duty rosters. Prepare basic first aid, mark exits and dangerous areas. Logistics includes the distribution of equipment, arranging transportation and planning the movement of people and materials. Everything must run smoothly, without panic – even art does not like chaos .

Health protection

Provide drinking water, regular meals, and shelter from the sun or rain. Inform participants about possible allergies (e.g. to plants or insects), provide basic first aid, and have a contact for a nearby ambulance. Prevention is always better than cure.

Accessibility and first aid

The location should be adapted for people with disabilities wherever possible - paved paths, access ramps and mobility aids. There must always be a first aid kit and a person in charge of safety on site, ideally with basic first aid knowledge.

Arteco experience: shade, water, duty schedule

At Artec , we always make sure there is enough shade (tents, canvas, canopies), available drinking water, and a clear duty schedule – who is on duty when and what they are responsible for. This includes a security person, activity leader, and logistics, which ensures a peaceful and safe festival.

Documentation and evaluation

Documentation and evaluation are crucial for the development and repetition of the festival. Everything you do - take photos, record and record. It not only remains as a memory, but also serves as a learning and promotion tool. Evaluation includes gathering feedback from participants, team reflection and analysis of what went well and what needs to be improved. Without it, each new year starts from scratch instead of on a solid foundation .

V. SUSTAINABILITY AND LEGACY

The sustainability of a land art festival does not stop with the last day of the event – it begins right there. The goal is not just to make something beautiful and forget about it, but to create a mark that remains in the space and the community. A legacy is built through caring for the installations, using the park throughout the year, connecting with other initiatives and involving local people in further development. The festival is just the beginning of a long-term process of cultural, ecological and social transformation

Space maintenance and installations

After the festival, it is important to regularly visit the site and check the condition of the installations. Those that are permanent (e.g. wooden or vine) can be cleaned, stabilized or partially restored, while those that are naturally degradable are left to decay in accordance with the cycles of nature. It is crucial to involve the local community in maintenance – whether through volunteer actions, schools or workshops, which keeps the space in use and alive.

Local maintenance initiatives

Maintaining the space is most effective in the long term when it is taken over by local initiatives – schools, associations, OPGs, individuals. It is recommended to form a "guardian group" or an informal network of interested parties who will at least seasonally check the condition of the park, repair minor damage and organize cleaning campaigns. This way, the park remains active and connected to the community that sees it as its own space.

Arteco practice: long-term placement

At Artec, we strive to ensure that each installation has a long lifespan – we choose materials that last, but wear out naturally. We don't remove the works immediately after the festival, but periodically renew, upgrade or reinterpret them with new generations of participants. This way, the park remains alive and changes over time, and visitors can follow its evolution.

Use of the park throughout the year

A land art park does not need to remain active only during the festival. It can be used throughout the year for education, art workshops, ecological tours, outdoor exhibitions, school excursions and recreational visits. Activities can be seasonally adjusted – spring plantings, summer workshops, autumn programs for schools. It is important to have a calendar of events and openness to cooperation with associations, schools and local initiatives to keep the space alive and functional all year round .

Arteco model: activities of the YEAH center (theme park)

Throughout the year, the YEAH center offers a series of activities that go beyond the duration of the festival - educational workshops for schools, trainings for young people, inclusive camps, thematic exhibitions and eco-actions. Events related to sustainable development, social entrepreneurship and art are organized throughout the season, and the park space also serves as a base for youth exchanges and volunteer initiatives. Thus, the center becomes a constantly active place of learning, creativity and community involvement.

Arteco model: from local to international festival

Our land art festival started as a small local initiative in the village of Malino, with the support of the community and young volunteers. Over the years, through cooperation with organizations from Croatia and abroad and participation in EU projects, it has grown into an international event. This development model shows that it is possible to build a large cultural and educational festival from humble beginnings, with a clear identity, quality content and a consistent vision.

Conclusion: Art that changes the community

Land Art Festival is not just an event – it is a movement that connects people, blurs the boundaries between art, nature and society, and leaves a mark that goes beyond the duration of the event itself. Through the Artec experience , we have seen how even the smallest community can become a center of creativity, sustainability and inclusion. The guide you hold in your hands is not the end, but the beginning – an invitation for you to shape your own version of this festival, adapted to your area, the people and the nature that surrounds you. Art is freedom. Use it – and leave a mark.

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