SOCIALLY ENGAGED ARTS (SEA) PRACTICES: KEY SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES

KAI LEHIKOINEN

University of the Arts Helsinki

kai.lehikoinen@uniarts.fi

EEVA SILJAMÄKI

University of Jyväskylä

eeva.k.siljamaki@jyu.fi

ABSTRACT

Socially engaged arts (SEA) have evolved in multiple directions, creating new competence needs for practitioners. This article investigates SEA as a professional practice to enhance it as a field of study in higher arts education. An inductive qualitative approach is applied to analyze extant curricula, literature, and interviews to grasp how the key competences are discussed in the practitioner, educational, and scholarly contexts to identify and structure eight competence areas practitioners can benefit from. The article contributes to a deeper understanding of the changing landscape of artists' professionalism and the potential of higher arts education in supporting artists in SEA.

Introduction

The narratives framing artists' professionalism have transformed as the arts and artistic practices have diversified during the new millennium (Gielen, 2015). As part of this diversification, socially engaged arts (SEA) have evolved in multiple directions, embracing inclusion, equity, dialogue, and well-being in communities and organizations. In tandem with this diversification and the new contexts of SEA, artists' competence needs have expanded. Higher arts education institutions constitute a logical context to meet this need with training that is well-founded.

As might be expected, higher arts education institutions' interests vary from "the intra-mural world of the studio" (Jonker, 2010, p. 8) to engaging "extra-murally" (Jonker, 2010, p. 8) with society. They embrace notable traditions, artistic safe havens, ground-breaking objectives, and resumptions (Jung, 2010) and, more recently, expanding professionalism in the arts (Gaunt & Westerlund, 2021). Currently, there is a need for higher arts education to move beyond "narrow technical expertise and strict disciplinary boundaries in order to respond to the needs of complex late modern society... [and] engage in the transformation of wider society" (Westerlund et al., 2021, p. 2). That, we will argue, calls for competences beyond what is traditionally considered artistic competence.

This article aims to enhance the understanding of SEA as a field of study in higher arts education by defining and structuring key competences for SEA practice. Drawing inspiration from the artwork project, an Erasmus+-funded initiative to train artists in SEA, we conceptualize the key competences of artist-practitioners in SEA. Through qualitative analysis of literature, examination of existing curricula, and expert interviews, we propose a flexible map of eight interconnected SEA competence areas. We will start by briefly introducing our methodology. Following that, we will address SEA as an umbrella term for this diverse field of artistic practice, which is the focus of our research, and investigate SEA as a form of professionalism to strengthen its position in higher arts education. After that, we will introduce our analysis of the central competence areas of SEA. By leveraging the groundwork laid in the Training Artists for Innovation project (2011–2013), as established in the competence mapping (Hempel & Rysgaard, 2013; Vondracek, 2013) and the qualification framework (Lehikoinen, 2013), we have further explored and

expanded upon these foundations with more recent data from 2021. In doing so, we have strived to strengthen the position of SEA as a subject of study in higher arts education, building upon an earlier study while incorporating new insights and extending its conclusions.

Methodology

As a multifarious artistic practice—carried out in a broad range of contexts and serving multiple functions—SEA exemplifies expanded professionalism (Gaunt & Westerlund, 2021) in the arts. Consequently, artists in this field need a broad mix of competences beyond their core artistic skills (Lehikoinen, 2013; Vondracek, 2013). While the concept of competence has multiple definitions, it is "broadly concerned with what a person is able to do" (Lester, 2014, p. 32). Regarding professionalism in the arts, we see competence as a holistic and multidimensional concept, integrating behavioural and cognitive dimensions while considering the complexity of social practice. In that way, we understand competence as implying the ability to utilize knowledge, skills, and abilities at a certain level of autonomy and independence (Mulder, 2021).

Thus, in our research, we aimed to understand SEA from the perspective of professional practice (Green, 2009), mainly how the key competences (skills, knowledge, attitude, and capability) are defined in the practitioner, educational, and scholarly contexts to construct an understanding of the key competence areas SEA practitioners can benefit from as they work in the field of this multidisciplinary artistic practice. For that purpose, we applied a case study design (Merriam, 1998), which allowed us to focus on SEA as a particular "entity, a unit around which there are boundaries" (Merriam, 1998, p. 27). The literature review constructed our theoretical framework as part of the case study design. We collected data from multiple sources in the autumn of 2021, and data triangulation (Brewer & Hunter, 1989), together with member checks (Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2006), supported the validity (Creswell, 1994) of the research. Furthermore, both authors of this article hold experience in SEA for ten years or more. They can be thereby defined as "insider" (Kemmis, 2009, p. 29) researchers into SEA, which is the subject and phenomenon of this study. Data for this study was collected from diverse sources to capture multiple perspectives (see Figure 1).
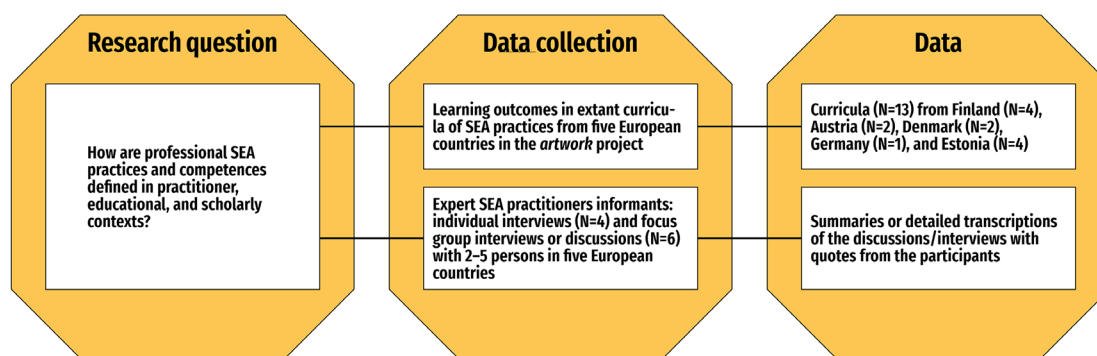
Figure 1. Research data

Applying "purposive sampling" (Merriam, 1998, p. 61), three main sources were utilized: extant curricula of SEA practice, theoretical literature, and interviews with SEA practitioners. The curricula, including learning outcomes with a SEA focus (N=13), ranged from bachelor's and master's degrees to professional specialization studies and further education courses, ranging from 6 weeks to 5 years. They were obtained from nine universities across five European countries involved in the artwork project: Finland (N=4), Austria (N=2), Denmark (N=2), Germany (N=1), and Estonia (N=4). Relevant literature was identified through online searches using Google Scholar and the keyword 'socially engaged art' and its variations (see Figure 2). Additional literature was sought based on reading and the references used in the texts.

Focus groups (N=6) and in-depth interviews (N=4) with SEA practitioners were conducted—ranging from 1,5 to 2,5 hours, some online, others live— involving a total of 24 participants with different levels of experience, SEA expertise, and artistic backgrounds ranging from music and drama to visual arts, dance, and arts education. In each country, the focus groups and interviews were conducted in the country's official language. They were conducted, recorded, transcribed, summarised, and translated into English by local researchers in each country.

We employed an inductive qualitative approach to analyze the data and develop a framework for understanding the concept of SEA and its associated key competence areas. Following Byrne (2022), we strived to identify explicit and underlying meanings in the data, considering the professional practice of SEA and the competences needed in practicing it. The analysis involved examining each data source separately and then integrating the findings in a flexible and open manner. Following Mills, Bonner, and Francis, we employed "constant comparison" (2006, p. 3) and engaged with relevant literature throughout the research process. Triangulation of data enhanced the study's reliability and provided a comprehensive understanding of SEA competences.

We utilized Lehikoinen's (2013) framework of artist competences as our initial reference point but applied reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012) to identify commonalities and understand the unique aspects of SEA. The constant comparison analysis (Byrne, 2022) helped us uncover themes through multiple data readings. We also considered the diversity of SEA practices and engaged in several rounds of discussions with the artwork project partners as well as public discussion and collection of comments from SEA practitioners in Finland, which is the origin of the authors. Our research adhered to the ethical guidelines of the University of the Arts Helsinki, Finland; no prior ethical review was required for the research design.

SEA as an Umbrella Term: Multiple Contexts, Discourses, Practices

Artists in the SEA field often view their work as a vocation or calling (Bishop, 2012), recognizing the potential of art and artistic approaches to engage with communities, instigate social change, and contribute to society, thinking, and life beyond traditional art institutions (Biesta, 2017; Dewey, 1934/2005; Eisner, 2002; Greene, 1995). SEA projects vary in locations, participants, goals, and levels of participation (see, e.g., Berthoin-Antal, 2013; Schiuma, 2011). Also, they are site-specific,

Variety of definitions for SEA

Activist art	Community music	Political art
Anti-colonial art	Community-based art	Prison theatre
Applied art	Community-based art education	Public art
Applied drama	Dance ambassadorship	Queer performance art
Art activism	Dance for Parkinson's	Queer theatre
Art as social practice	Dialogic aesthetics	Relational aesthetics
Art for social change	Dialogic art	Relational art
Art in action	Experimental communities	Research-based theatre
Artistic interventions in organisations	Feminist theatre	Site-specific art
Arts-based community development	Forum theatre	Social art
Arts-based initiatives (ABI)	Healthcare musicians	Social practice
Black theatre	Hospital/medical clownery	Social practice art
Civic art	Identity art	Social practice of art
Civic engagement	Interventionist art	Socially engaged art
Collaborative art	Littoral art	Socially engaged practice
Community art	New genre public art	Theatre of the oppressed
Community cultural development	Participatory art	Workarts
Community dance	Place-based artmaking	

Figure 2. Variety of definitions for SEA practice

considering the specificity of the place and the participants, their unique history, social circumstances, and political contexts (Sachs Olsen, 2019) in addressing societal challenges and promoting learning and social transformation through interventions in social relations. For example, the Urbanauts project in Gothenburg, Sweden, involved collaborations between conceptual artist Malin Bellman, architect Sonne Andersson, the intermediary organization TILLT, the Science Museum Universeum, and the Drivhuset incubator. Through arts-based workshops, the project aimed to raise young people's awareness of the impact of global warming and rising sea levels on their waterfront city (TILLTsweden, 2014).

Due to variance, we treat SEA as an umbrella concept: a hyponym—a subtype of diverse artistic practices in many contexts informed by the plurality of discourses—under the broader hypernym of art. It embraces many terms and definitions found in practitioners' accounts and the literature (see Figure 2). These practices bear a family resemblance (Wittgenstein, 1953/2001), sharing an essential common feature, art. Also, many overlapping similarities, such as social engagement, may connect them. However, not all SEA projects share the same aspirations, such as emancipation or innovation development. Furthermore, SEA can take on distinct conceptualizations within the varied contexts of different art forms.

The non-exhaustive list in Figure 2 gives an idea of the plurality of concepts that can be captured under the SEA hyponym and how art constitutes a hypernym—a supertype for music, dance, visual arts,

circus, creative writing, spoken word, and so on, as well as their specific subcategories and stylistic orientations. These concepts highlight the divergence in SEA practices that can employ any art form and often multi- or interdisciplinary approaches in exploring defined topics that have relevance for the participants. These practices often incorporate diverse theories such as philosophical pragmatism, neo-pragmatism, and education theory from theorists such as John Dewey, Jurgen Habermas, and Paulo Freire, applying them in miscellaneous contexts. Despite variations, they commonly emphasize "creative participation, emancipation, activism, transformation, and constructing individual and collective identities" (Clements, 2011, p. 28).

The definitions of SEA are not exclusive, and artists may relate to several strands or aspects of the practice. For example, the installations and performances of Cuban visual artist and activist Tania Bruguera can be seen as related to political art, relational aesthetics, participatory art, and identity art. For her 2018 Turbine Hall commission at Tate Modern in London, the artist renamed the museum's main building the Natalie Bell Building, addressing societal invisibility. It now stands opposite the museum's extension, named after the financial donor Len Blavatnik (Bailey, 2017; da Silva, 2019). While acknowledging the need for further exploration of the relationship between SEA and its diverse contexts (cf. Wehbi, McCormick & Angelucci, 2016), we focus on understanding SEA as a complex field of professional practice to strengthen its role in higher arts education, transcending conflicting arguments and recognising its broad scope. In summary, our objective is twofold:

1) to highlight the diverse nature of SEA practice and its competence areas, and 2) to raise awareness of how SEA is driving social transformation across different spheres, encompassing personal, relational, and societal dimensions.

SEA as a Form of Professionalism in the Arts

The art field has fragmented (Gielen, 2015), and professionalism in the arts has expanded (Gaunt & Westerlund, 2021), diversifying discourse on artists' work (e.g., Danhash, 2018; Lehikoinen & Pässilä, 2016). Despite polarised views on artistic freedom and societal contribution, new job opportunities for artists have emerged in various contexts, driven by the need for arts-based thinking, creativity, and cultural well-being. The broader need to break down the boundaries between art and other institutions in a highly siloed society (Ilmola-Sheppard et al., 2021) has contributed to this development. Professionalism in our study encompasses "the conduct, aims, values, responsibilities, and ongoing development of practising professionals in the field" (Gaunt & Westerlund, 2021, p. xiv). It involves "both competencies and the enactment of ethical working practices" (Gaunt & Westerlund, 2021, p. xiv).

In our research, we adopted Green's framework in considering activity, experience, and context in SEA as "interrelated categories" (2009, p. 9) guided by 1) 'phronesis,' "rationality as an embodied process" (Polkinghorne, 2004, p. 69) and related to "practical knowledge and practical ethics... [and] practical wisdom" (Flyvberg, 2001, pp. 56–57), 2) 'praxis' understood as "theoretically informed committed action" (Green, 2009, p. 11), and 3) 'aporia' which refers to engagement with "perplexities and impossibilities" (Macklin, 2009, p. 95).

SEA praxis involves artistic processes that can be connected to personal, political, and social concerns. While such processes may vary, they can be viewed as "theoretically informed, committed action" (Green, 2009, p. 11). For example, Polish poet, performance artist, filmmaker, and conceptual artist Ewa Partum, connects to second-wave feminist concerns in her performance Change (1979) by addressing social beauty norms of the 1970s with half of her body aged, reading a feminist manifesto (Jakubowska, 2018). Theories of social justice, Marxist philosophy, and Freirean pedagogy can also inform SEA praxis, which

can be understood as "action-full-of-thought and thought-full-of-action" (Evans, 2007, p. 554). For example, Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed utilized theatre to address local issues and empower spectators to express their views collaboratively (Boal, 1979/2020). This approach has been applied to tackle various social injustices, including environmental injustice and environmental health illiteracy (Sullivan, 2018). In the 21st century, Boal's ideas have also been adapted to organizational development, taking a 'post-Boalian' approach to differentiate, for example, research-based theatre "from the revolutionist ontology of Boalian theatre" (Pässilä et al., 2015, p. 68).

SEA practices, like other artistic practices, involve uncertainties and not-knowing during the process and decision-making. For instance, Koskinen (2021) describes how using a devising approach for a theatre performance involving prisoners created uncertainty, requiring a significant amount of trust from the prisoners since they initially did not know the artists. This trust was identified as one of the most significant requests throughout the entire project. Consequently, the concept of "aporia" is integral to SEA, as it addresses perplexities and impossibilities (Macklin, 2009, p. 95).

Lehikoinen (2013) provides a framework for SEA practice, specifically focusing on artistic interventions in organizations. This framework has been used to inform the training of artists in higher education, such as the Artists as a Developer program offered by the University of the Arts Helsinki's Theatre Academy. The framework includes four competency strands (cognitive, functional, personal, and ethical) that intertwine with seven key competency areas (contextual, pedagogic, artistic/creative, research, social, project management, and marketing) (Lehikoinen, 2013). Lehikoinen emphasizes the importance of artistic competencies and the need for a context-sensitive and needs-based approach, which calls for 'flipping' the focus from the artist's personal interests to the community. Such renewed focus connects to the social turn in the arts (Helguera, 2011) with SEA emerging from social, pedagogical, and ethical shifts in contemporary arts (e.g., Bishop, 2006, 2012; Lacy, 1995; O'Neill & Wilson, 2010; Rogodd, 2008). Bishop, for example, views SEA as a means "to overturn the traditional relationship between the art object, the artist, and the audience" (Bishop, 2012, p. 2) (Figure 3).

Competence Areas in SEA

Our analysis indicates that SEA practice necessitates eight interconnected areas of competence and capabilities (Figure 4). These areas are not fixed or disparate but dynamic and interconnected, with their emphasis varying depending on the project's characteristics, influential features, and functions. That is, not all these competences are required all

Figure 3. An overturn in the relationship between the artist, audience, and art object, as argued by Claire Bishop (2012, p. 2)

the time or in every SEA project. Rather than being a rigid template, our competence mapping should be viewed as a dynamic framework that adapts to the specific requirements of each distinct context, situation, and artistic field. It provides a unique configuration of competences within the practice of SEA to be modified to accommodate the particular demands of each case.

In our mapping, artistic competence forms the core of SEA practice, with social, pedagogical leadership, and ethical competences building upon and expanding it. All competence areas are influenced by the contextual competence area, which provides the frames for practices and decision-making. Additionally, research, development, and entrepreneurship competences provide support to the core. The following sections will explore these competence areas in detail, examining their defining knowledge, skills, attitudes, and capabilities (Mulder, 2021, p. 111; Walker, 2012). Each component encompasses multiple interconnected sub-components that contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the competence areas.
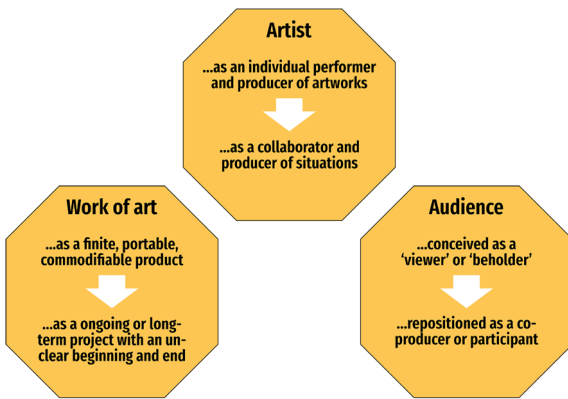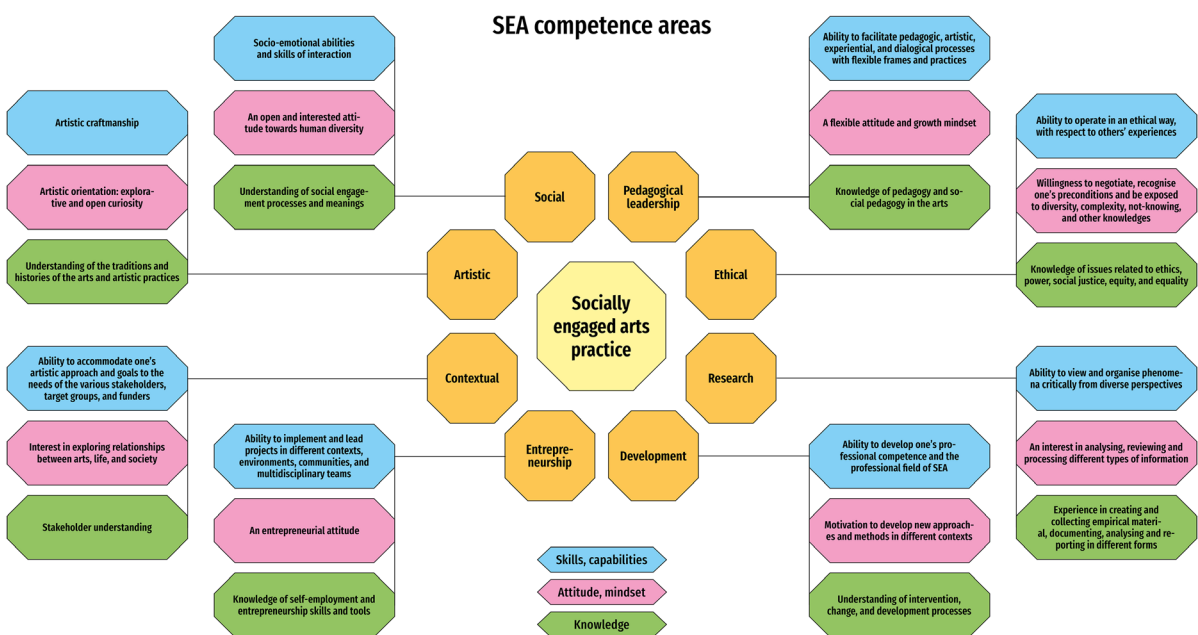
Figure 4. SEA competence areas

Artistic Competence Area

Our analysis identifies artistic core competencies (Figure 5) as central to SEA practices, encompassing three interconnected components: 1) artistic orientation with an explorative mindset: characterised by open and curious observation, 2) artistic craftsmanship, and 3) understanding of the traditions and histories of the chosen field of arts and artistic practices. Artistic orientation, which is historical and includes craftsmanship, relates to sub-components such as artistic thinking, perception, exploration, understanding of artistic processes and creativity, as well as artistic meaning-making, interpretation, and the desire to express and communicate. These core competences intertwine with knowledge and practical skills in artistic and arts-based approaches, practices, and methods. Additionally, a sense of courage, trust in explorative processes, and embracing uncertainty often underpin artistic orientation and processes.

The sense of artistic freedom and authenticity, rooted in the modernist discourse of artmaking, constitutes a sub-component, highlighted by Vondracek (2013) as follows:

> Artistic mindset, artistic thinking, artistic way of perceiving life . . . live accordingly to your own values, not the values that are put on you by people in the organisation; Artistic freedom; Authenticity. (p. 21)

In contrast to modernist discourse, SEA practices generally—but not always—diverge from the notion of creating art for art's sake by incorporating artistic thinking and creativity in a participant- and needs-oriented manner. Collaborative processes in SEA challenge the traditional image of the solitary artist, as they are often intertwined with the project's social context and shared objectives. In our data, the Finnish SEA professionals in dance, music, and performance art exemplified this shift by emphasizing the flexible utilization of artistic skills, pedagogical expertise, and tools. Notably, they emphasize a transition from a purely artistic focus to participant-centered perspectives and a shift in the perceived value of the arts from intrinsic to instrumental. The following excerpts from interviews illustrate this perspective:

> [the artist] should somehow flip their thoughts around when they start working in the field of so-called applied arts.
> (Runo, Finland)

flip your thinking concerning what the significance of the group is.
(Liekki, Finland)

This shift in mindset is something described as "the art being an instrument" (Runo, Finland), more specifically, "between you and the group, a connecting bridge, so to speak" (Liekki, Finland). The new mindset is articulated as follows:

> ... art would be the instrument of training... we trained professionals... with art as a tool... that somehow gave people a much better understanding than merely sitting together in a lecture type of training.
> (Muisto, Finland)

> Approach the group by way of art and... take impulses from the group...
> (Aale, Finland)

The excerpts above indicate that artists in SEA practice should possess a foundational understanding of their artistry. This view is affirmed by Vondracek (2013) and Lehikoinen, who notes that "[a]rtistic competencies are the very core of artistic interventions. Without artistic perception, there would be no artistic inquiry and, subsequently, no artworks" (2013, p. 54).

However, with its phronesis striving first and foremost for social transformation, SEA's orientation differs from more conventional forms of artistic practice where techne strives for the production (poiesis) of art. SEA practitioners demonstrate this 'flipped' mindset, embracing an open approach to applying artistic skills across diverse settings and contexts. They go beyond autonomous artistic work, utilizing artistic inquiry for broader purposes, where collaboration, and thereby the social, can become the founding essence of the professional practice. The connection to utilitarian aspirations arises from the potential of these methods and practices to stimulate creativity and innovation in addressing social and environmental issues. Such approaches often require improvisation, creativity, and a receptive mindset, qualities present not only in artmaking and performance but also in everyday conversations and spontaneous activities (Bresnahan, 2015). The strength of these practices lies in their ability to communicate beyond verbal language, utilizing the body, imagery, metaphors, and soundscapes.

Artistic

| Skills, capabilities |
| Attitude, mindset |
| Knowledge |

Artistic craftmanship

Artistic orientation: explorative and open curiosity

Understanding of the traditions and histories of the arts and artistic practices

Sense of artistic freedom and authenticity

Critical thinking and reflexivity

Artistic thinking, perception, and exploration

Understanding of artistic processes and creativity

Arts-based approaches, methods, and practices

Open, flexible and curious mindset: improvisation and creativity

Sense of security, courage and trust in explorative processes and not-yet-knowing

Artistic meaning making and interpretation

Communication beyond words: imagery, metaphors, soundscapes

Artistic inquiry as a means for something other than autonomous artistic work

An open attitude towards applications of artistic skills in diverse settings and contexts

An urge to express and communicate

Figure 5. Artistic competence area

Social

| Skills, capabilities |
| Attitude, mindset |
| Knowledge |

Socio-emotional abilities and skills of interaction

An open and interested attitude towards human diversity

Understanding of social engagement processes and meanings

Knowledge and understanding of group dynamics, group processes, and people skills

Knowledge of social psychology and social work in the arts

Motivation to interact also outside the arts field

Self-confidence and maturity

Understanding of diverse cultures and power hierarchies

Ability to to interact with diverse groups and people with diverse skills and abilities

Active listening and feedback skills

The handling of spoken and written communication in a relevant tone

Ability to handle different types of personalities, motivation triggers, and collaboration opportunities

Ability to take into account the interests and needs of the community

Ability to guide and promote interactive activities ethically and flexibly
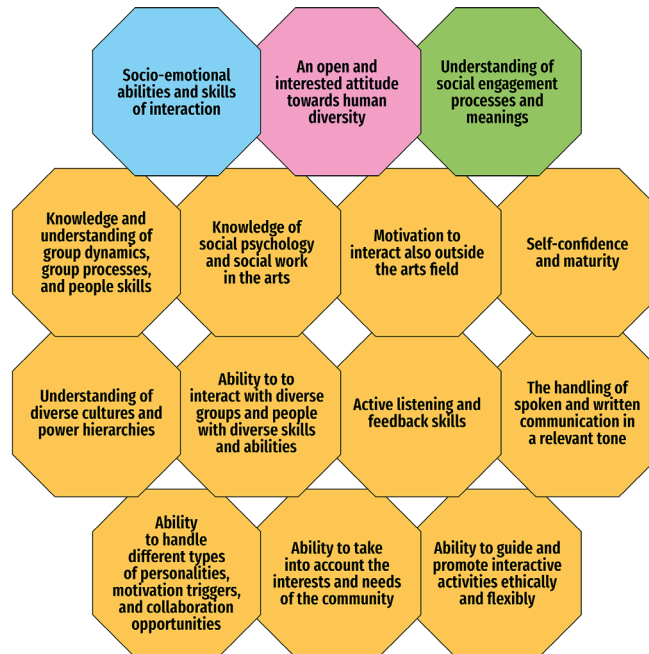
Figure 6. Social competence area

Critical thinking and reflexivity, sub-components of SEA practices, are influenced by critical pedagogy found in community art forms such as Augusto Boal's (1979/2020) Theatre of the Oppressed, his Forum theatre method, and feminist pedagogy in radical art. These approaches share a common goal of emancipation, urging individuals to question their social circumstances, empower themselves, unveil power dynamics, and liberate both themselves and marginalized groups from oppressive systems (Alexander & Schlemmer, 2017; hooks, 2010; McLaren, 2005; McLaren et al., 2010).

Social Competence Area

SEA is inherently participatory and interactive, with artists engaging with participants, colleagues, and partner organizations—often in multidisciplinary or trans-professional contexts. Therefore, social competence, encompassing multidisciplinary collaboration and group work, is the second key competence area (Figure 6) in our analysis, comprising three interconnected components: 1) the understanding of social engagement processes and meanings, 2) socio-emotional abilities and skills of interaction, and 3) an open and interested attitude towards human diversity. In our analysis, these components link to the motivation to interact, which is fundamental for dialogue with others, while self-confidence and maturity generally contribute to social relationships (Harris & Orth, 2020).

Understanding social engagement involves three sub-components: knowledge of social psychology and social work in the arts, understanding of group dynamics and people skills, and awareness of hierarchical positions and diverse cultures. These components enable SEA practitioners to navigate the complexities of communication and social interaction, including cultural nuances, power dynamics, and emotional aspects. As one of our interviewees addressing prison theatre work noted, it is crucial to have

> fluent interaction between all groups involved, which means the participants – inmates, in other words – we art professionals, and the staff. So basically, communication and cooperation between all these groups must work, because otherwise there will be congestion that probably hinders the process, maybe even stops it. (Silmu, Finland)

Social interaction in SEA involves flexibility in engaging with diverse groups, considering their interests and needs. This requires active listening, providing feedback, and managing communication constructively. SEA practitioners also need to guide and promote interactive activities ethically, handle diverse personalities and motivations, and identify collaboration opportunities.

SEA, regarded as egalitarian and resilient, potentially providing "a liberating space that abolishes norms . . . " (Aart, Germany), is not detached from the social environment but emerges through participants, challenging values, discursive norms, preconceptions, habits, and power. The social context shapes SEA approaches to promote power awareness and self-reflection, questioning the participants' role in upholding norms. Such approaches also allow for the imagination of alternative possibilities, akin to interpretative phenomenology (Horrigan-Kelly et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2009). Social contexts can also yield complex ethical considerations and should be integrated into the artistic process from the outset.

Pedagogical Leadership Competence Area

Pedagogical leadership in SEA practice (Figure 7) is crucial for creating a safe and collaborative learning environment. It encompasses three key components: 1) a flexible attitude and growth mindset, 2) an understanding of learning, transformational processes, and pedagogical tact, and 3) the ability to flexibly facilitate pedagogic, artistic, experiential, and dialogical processes. These components involve sub-components such as knowledge of pedagogy, understanding of learning environments, and the ability to adjust interventions and methodologies to meet needs. Additionally, pedagogical leadership requires attitudes and motivations that contribute to others' development and embrace dialogical leadership. Adaptability in roles and the use of various pedagogical approaches are also essential for a SEA practitioner.

While flexibility and resilience, crucial qualities in guiding social, artistic, and group processes, were not explicitly addressed in the examined curricula, the interviewed experts in Austria and Finland strongly emphasised their need in the social, artistic, and productional processes of SEA:

> We have basic structures, of course, but it is very fluctuating. And, to me, it is also a part of

Pedagogical leadership

Skills, capabilities

Attitude, mindset

Knowledge

Ability to facilitate pedagogic, artistic, experiential, and dialogical processes with flexible frames and practices

A flexible attitude and growth mindset

Understanding of learning, human development, transformational processes, and pedagogical tact

Ability to use pedagogical leadership skills

Interest and ability to design environments for learning and interventions

Willingness to contribute to the development of others

Ability to flexibly adjust one's role as a teacher, instructor, leader, facilitator, or enabler

Knowledge of pedagogy and social pedagogy in the arts

Interest in dialogical leadership: understanding of pedagogical leadership, facilitation, critical and emancipatory pedagogy

Ability to utilise appropriate pedagogic approaches and methods of feedback to individuals, groups, and hesitant participants

Ability to set the scene and create an encouraging atmosphere with safety and trust

Ability to adjust the intervention contents and methodologies to match them with individual participants' needs and learning styles

Knowledge of meaning-making and the situational nature of learning processes

Knowledge of pedagogic concepts and learning environments

Understanding of experiential and transformational learning as well as life-long and life-wide learning

Ability to accommodate the goals and intentions of the participants with the artistic goals and approaches

Ability to facilitate and evaluate learning processes and give constructive feedback

Figure 7. Pedagogical leadership

Ethical

Skills, capabilities

Attitude, mindset

Knowledge

Ability to operate in an ethical way, with respect to others' experiences

Willingness to negotiate, recognise one's pre-conditions, and be exposed to diversity, complexity, not knowing, and other forms of knowledge

Knowledge of ethics, power, social justice, equity, and equality issues

Ability to take into account the interests and needs of the community

Willingness to unlearn and recognise otherness

Knowledge of situational, relational, artistic, and care ethics

Ability to engage in ethical reasoning when confronted with challenging situations

Understanding of ethical questions and challenges in SEA

Understanding of ethics, sustainable development, social justice, and cultural sensitivity

Ability to negotiate ethical questions

Ability to consider ethical challenges and professional conduct in SEA

Knowledge of research ethics, confidentiality, and anonymity
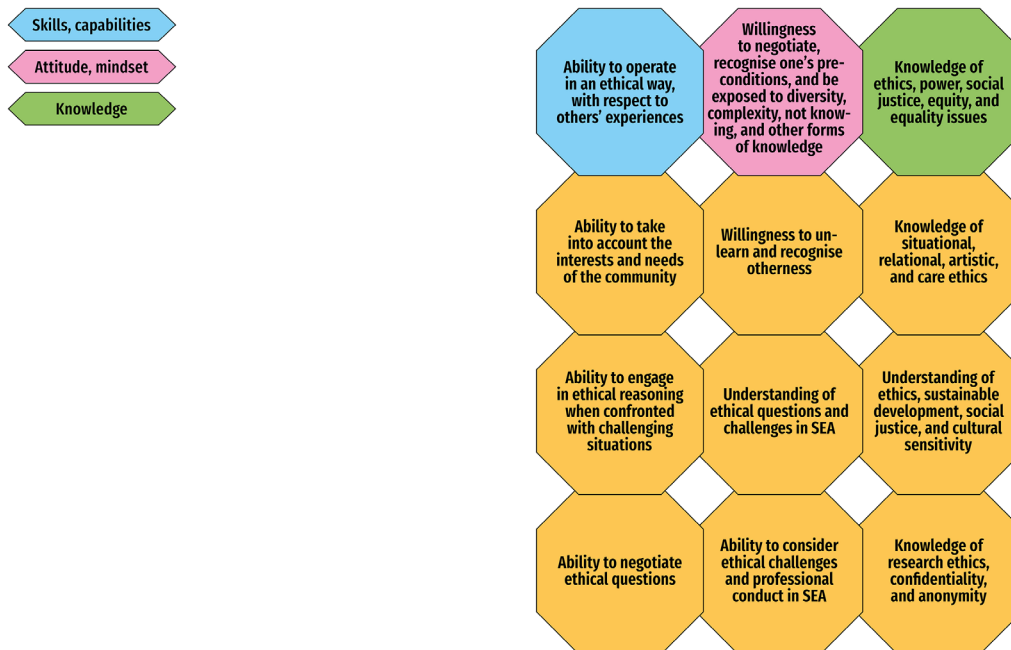
Figure 8. Ethical competence area

this line of work that a high degree of flexibility is required.
(Aada, Austria)

The acceptance of change or expecting it: there are, in fact, no situations where you follow a clear script.
(Havu, Finland)

The excerpts above suggest that facilitating SEA projects requires a balance of structure and fluidity, akin to improvisation in teaching (Holdhus et al., 2016; Sawyer, 2011; Shem-Tov, 2011). Improvisation, essential for SEA practitioners, enables them to navigate social interactions, project contexts, and creative outputs, making informed or intuitive decisions. It involves resilience, divergent thinking, and the ability to adapt artistic approaches to accommodate group dynamics and shared goals.

Finally, pedagogic leadership in SEA requires a growth mindset and a lifelong learning attitude involving "*reflection-in-action* and *reflection-on-action*" (Bolton, 2014, p. 6, emphasis in original), as noted below:

> You learn so much more spending two days doing rough practical work and leaving your comfort zone and taking care of stuff that you would learn in a ten-week training where you listen to instructions in an auditorium.
> (Pyry, Finland)

Such reflection often involves unlearning privileges, critically evaluating personal biases, and detaching from outdated dualisms (Haapalainen, 2021).

Ethical Competence Area

The separation of aesthetics and ethics in the arts is a relatively recent view, originating in the late eighteenth century (Carroll, 2000; Gielen, 2019). However, the 21st-century arts field has experienced an ethical turn, emphasizing the engagement of art and artists with political, environmental, social, and cultural contexts (Bishop, 2006; Campolmi, 2016; Reves-Evison, 2020). In SEA, ethics guide practical choices influenced by the situation and context. Transformative aspirations in SEA require informed consent and recognition of ethics-related conflicts (Matarasso, 2019, 1996). Also, co-creation involving social interaction can present unpredictable and ethical challenges that necessitate

co-reflection and negotiation of aims and values (Kantonen & Karttunen, 2021; Koskinen, 2021). For example, in the Finnish National Theatre's Second Home project (2016–2018), professional artists from refugee backgrounds collaborated to create theatre and music. Actor-researcher Jussi Lehtonen (2021) notes how ethical challenges arose from participants' asylum processes, tensions stemming from civil wars in Syria and Iraq, and strained relations between Shia and Sunni Muslim communities. Additionally, participants faced ethical challenges related to freedom of speech due to persecution in their home countries. Despite these challenges, the project provided an opportunity for participants to express and perform their lived experiences (Lehtonen, 2021).

Following Bowman et al, our analysis identifies ethics as the fourth competence area (Figure 8), including "(a) principled moral reasoning, (b) recognition of ethics-related conflicts, (c) refusal to do something unethical, and (d) application of ethical theory" (2004, p. 26). The ethical competence of SEA is characterised by its situational, relational, and care-oriented nature, acknowledging the perspectives of post-humanism and the rights of other species (cf. Eisenman, 2013; Gielen, 2019; Noddings, 2013; Stuart Fisher & Thompson, 2020). Its key components include continuous negotiation to recognise one's preconditions and be exposed to diversity, knowledge of ethical concerns—e.g., power, social justice, equity, and equality—and the ability to operate ethically and consider the experiences of others, including other species. These components involve sub-components such as willingness to unlearn, recognition of otherness, understanding of ethical questions, and consideration of research ethics. Ethical concerns in the participatory process require respecting the experiences of others, negotiating ethical questions, and engaging in ethical reasoning. Reflective practice in SEA involves critically scrutinizing ethical challenges and the ethics of professional conduct, considering the balance between autonomy and social intervention.

The ethical aspects of SEA encompass various interconnected sub-components, including the willingness to unlearn and embrace diversity. A comprehensive understanding of ethical considerations in SEA involves knowledge of situational and relational care ethics and artistic ethics. These practices entail ethical awareness concerning sustainable development, social justice, and cultural sensitivity, and the rights of

other species. Furthermore, SEA practitioners must navigate research ethics, such as integrity, confidentiality, and anonymity.

Ethical concerns within the participatory process require SEA practitioners to respect others' experiences and consider the community's interests and needs. This involves negotiating ethical dilemmas and engaging in ethical reasoning in challenging situations. Therefore, ethics are integral to reflection, involving critical examination of ethical challenges and professional conduct in SEA. This includes addressing the tension "between autonomy and social" intervention discussed by Bishop (2006, para. 19), who cautions against ethics that prioritize "truthfulness and educational efficacy" (Bishop, 2006, para. 19) over grappling with complex aspects of our quandary.

Contextual Competence Area

SEA, occurring often at the intersection of the arts and other fields, involves artists engaging with diverse individuals, communities, and groups. Each project has a unique context with specific opportunities and constraints. Following Green's (2009) notion that phronesis in professional practice entails cautious and well-informed judgments that need to be "context-sensitive" (Dunne, 2005, p. 376), we propose contextual intelligence (Figure 9), defined as "a keen awareness of one's surroundings" (Kutz, 2011, p. 8), as the fifth competence area in SEA practice. According to Kutz, it encompasses considering "contextual variables . . . [such as] political climate, personal values, economic environment, precedent, social and organizational culture, future goals, and stakeholder values" (2011, p. 8), identifying shifts, and adapting quickly.

Our analysis identifies three key components of the contextual competence area: 1) an interest in exploring art-life-society relationships, 2) stakeholder understanding, and 3) the ability to align artistic goals with stakeholder needs. These components are supported by an open attitude towards new practices, collaborative work, and sharing artistic abilities. Also, they are intertwined with and related to sub-components that include understanding human development, interrelations between the arts and well-being, key concepts and practices in SEA, and awareness of political and societal issues. Abilities such as self-reflection, contextual knowledge gathering, and overcoming project challenges are also crucial. Developing contextual competence

helps artists navigate the unique aspects of SEA projects. High contextual intelligence enables SEA practitioners to make relevant and sensitive judgments in specific situations (Dunne, 2005), which can also help overcome some of the challenges concerning uncertainties that projects often entail.

Research Competence Area

Artists require research competences to effectively prepare, facilitate, and evaluate arts-based projects with communities and organizations. Thus, research is the sixth SEA competence area (Figure 10) with three key components identified by our analysis: 1) an interest in analyzing, reviewing, and processing different types of information, 2) the ability to view and organize phenomena critically from diverse perspectives, and 3) experience in creating and collecting empirical material, documenting, analyzing, and reporting in different ways.

These competencies support stakeholder engagement to understand their interests and priorities, gain deep insights into the community or organization, identify needs and opportunities for art-based interventions, and justify using various art forms and techniques. Throughout the project, research competences aid in collecting empirical material, documenting the process, analyzing materials, and reporting results. Strong research skills in SEA offer benefits such as contextual awareness, increased empathy, the ability to challenge assumptions and biases, and the development of respectful and sensitive approaches. Research competence in SEA is interconnected with the other competence areas. It necessitates taking different perspectives, critical thinking, analytical abilities, theoretical understanding, and proficiency in research approaches and methods.

Development Competence Area

In the SEA field, especially artists working on processes entailing explicit innovation development objectives, such as in research-based theatre (Pässilä, 2012), need development competences. Development objectives in SEA projects may relate to questions concerning, for example, "how an organisation is run, and how organisational actors identify practice, learning, participation, and innovation as part of their day-to-day work and practices" (Pässilä, 2012, p. 15). From such a perspective, innovation activities can be understood as
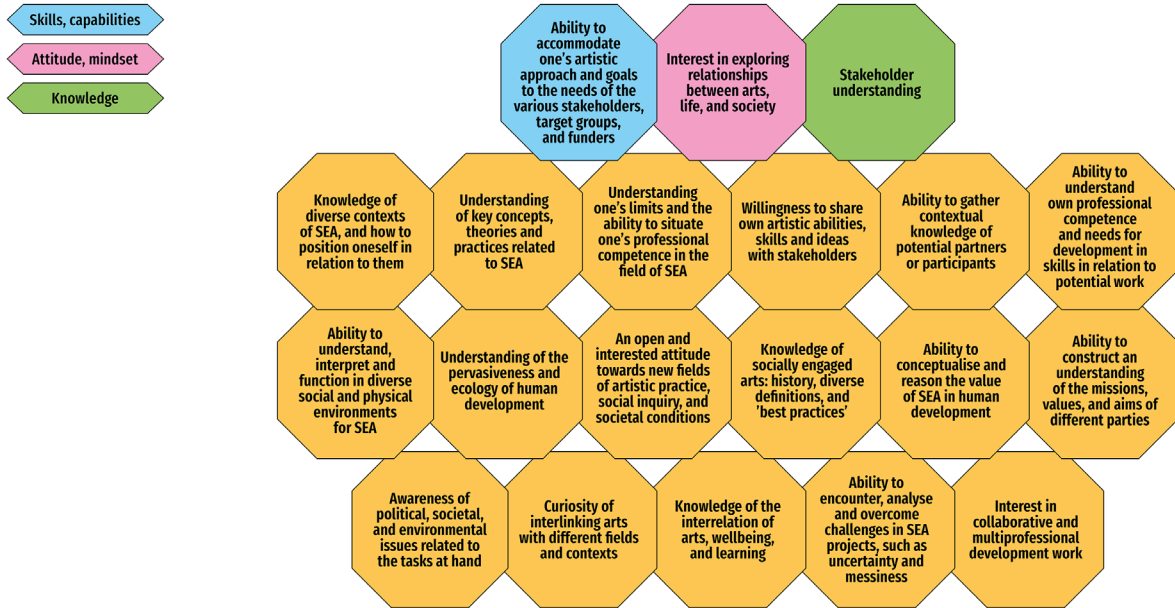
Contextual

Skills, capabilities

Attitude, mindset

Knowledge

Ability to accommodate one's artistic approach and goals to the needs of the various stakeholders, target groups, and funders

Interest in exploring relationships between arts, life, and society

Stakeholder understanding

Knowledge of diverse contexts of SEA, and how to position oneself in relation to them

Understanding of key concepts, theories and practices related to SEA

Understanding one's limits and the ability to situate one's professional competence in the field of SEA

Willingness to share own artistic abilities, skills and ideas with stakeholders

Ability to gather contextual knowledge of potential partners or participants

Ability to understand own professional competence and needs for development in skills in relation to potential work

Ability to understand, interpret and function in diverse social and physical environments for SEA

Understanding of the pervasiveness and ecology of human development

An open and interested attitude towards new fields of artistic practice, social inquiry, and societal conditions

Knowledge of socially engaged arts: history, diverse definitions, and 'best practices'

Ability to conceptualise and reason the value of SEA in human development

Ability to construct an understanding of the missions, values, and aims of different parties

Awareness of political, societal, and environmental issues related to the tasks at hand

Curiosity of interlinking arts with different fields and contexts

Knowledge of the interrelation of arts, wellbeing, and learning

Ability to encounter, analyse and overcome challenges in SEA projects, such as uncertainty and messiness

Interest in collaborative and multiprofessional development work

Figure 9. Contextual competence area

Research

Skills, capabilities

Attitude, mindset

Knowledge

Ability to view and organise phenomena critically from diverse perspectives

An interest in analysing, reviewing and processing different types of information

Experience in creating and collecting empirical material, documenting, analysing, and reporting in different ways

Ability to search and critically review information with different methods and from diverse bodies of knowledge

An interest in and ability to stimulate critical inquiry

Ability to think theoretically and employ theory in practice

Knowledge of different research approaches

Ability to think and act reflexively

Ability to collect information and analytical skills

Knowledge of research based methods in the arts

Understanding of relevant paradigms and methodologies of research

An interest in encouraging others to collaborative perception and interpretation

Ability to change positions from insider to outsider and back

Ability to document and inspect a process or a phenomenon from diverse perspectives

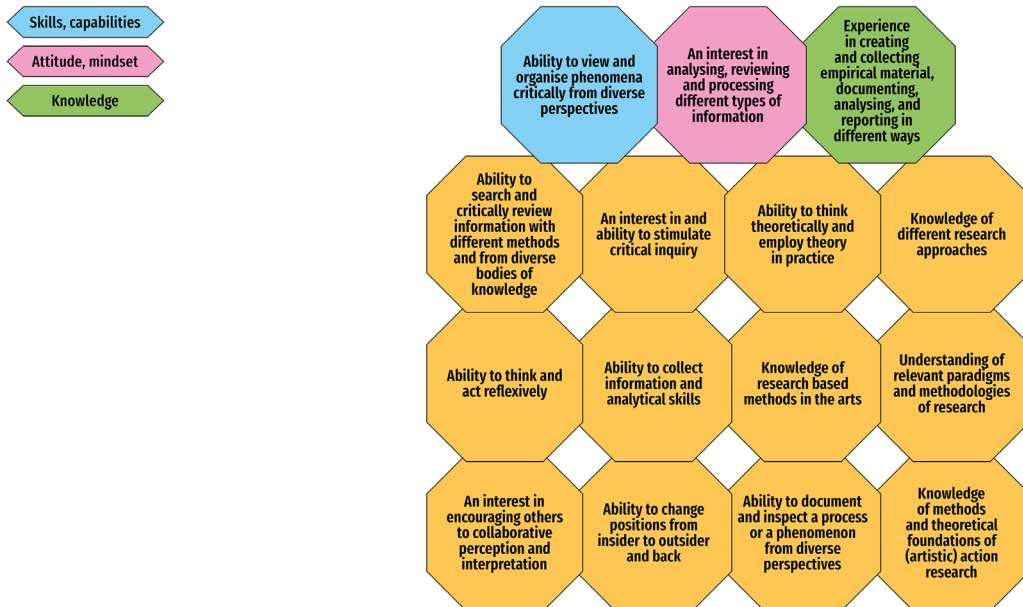**Knowledge of methods and theoretical foundations of (artistic) action research**

Figure 10. Research competence area

"learning steps aiming at the creation of innovation wherein all organisational actors are understood as critical innovators" (Pässilä, 2012, p. 16).

Thus, development constitutes the seventh SEA competence area (Figure 11). It encompasses: 1) motivation to participate in development and develop new approaches, 2) understanding of intervention, change, and development processes, and 3) ability to develop professional competence and the SEA professional field. In SEA, artists need a solution-oriented mindset and a deep understanding of intervention and change in development processes.

SEA artists can benefit from updating their understanding of theories, frameworks, research, and trends in artistic undertakings for societal development, seeking inspiration for their work, and advancing the field by staying connected to the SEA community and pursuing professional development opportunities. Thus, social and pedagogical competences related to collaboration are crucial in considering the strengths and weaknesses of different development methods and their inclusivity. Also, as mentioned in reference to pedagogical leadership, networking is essential for professional development, ensuring connectivity with new initiatives, insights, trends, and lifelong learning.

Entrepreneurship Competence Area

In the SEA field, artists who often work as self-employed or with project funding require entrepreneurial competences to conceptualize attractive and economically viable proposals to collaborate with communities and organizations, manage the finances of their projects, and sustain their professional practice, including continuing income streams. Thus, our analysis proposes entrepreneurship as the eighth SEA competence area (Figure 12) with key components such as 1) an entrepreneurial attitude, 2) knowledge of self-employment and entrepreneurship skills and tools, and 3) the ability to implement and lead projects in different contexts, environments, communities, and multidisciplinary teams. These key components encompass a range of knowledge, skills, capabilities, attitudes, and mindsets that enable artists to navigate various entrepreneurial and economic aspects of their SEA work.

Artists in the SEA field often need to possess the ability to conceptualize, design, organize, manage,

and complete projects in diverse social settings with groups, communities, and multidisciplinary teams. This includes understanding different roles and responsibilities, preparing proposals with realistic budgets, and negotiating goals, intents, and contracts with different stakeholders. In doing so, artists can benefit from user-centered and needs-based understanding, service thinking, and design thinking to apply them to their artistic framing and overall approach to SEA work. More generally, they can benefit from a strong foundation in project management, including experiential knowledge and know-how in planning, budgeting, and monitoring. Also, they should be able to evaluate SEA processes, projects, and their outcomes collaboratively with other stakeholders.

The entrepreneurial mindset in SEA also includes an open attitude towards networking and actively seeking relevant stakeholders, funders, and new employment opportunities. Thus, artists in this field need to learn to utilize collaboration and networking to their advantage. Perhaps most importantly, they need to learn to recognize the potential value their professional competence can generate for others, price it accordingly, and communicate it assertively to potential collaboration partners, customers, funders, and other stakeholders. In doing so, they should be familiar with digital tools for visibility, project management, and facilitation, leveraging them to enhance their professional presence and high quality.

Finally, entrepreneurial competence in SEA pays attention to occupational well-being, helps artists set limits and take proactive measures to ensure their sustained practice and healthy work-life balance. Overall, acquiring and developing entrepreneurial competencies enable artists in SEA to navigate the complexities of their profession, establish meaningful connections, and create sustainable opportunities for their work.

Discussion and Conclusions

This study utilized a specific dataset encompassing diverse art forms and their respective subfields. We do not claim our mapping to be all-inclusive, and we encourage others to complement it from different perspectives. Limitations of this study include the lack of detailed contemplation of the influence of specific artistic features, as it fell outside the
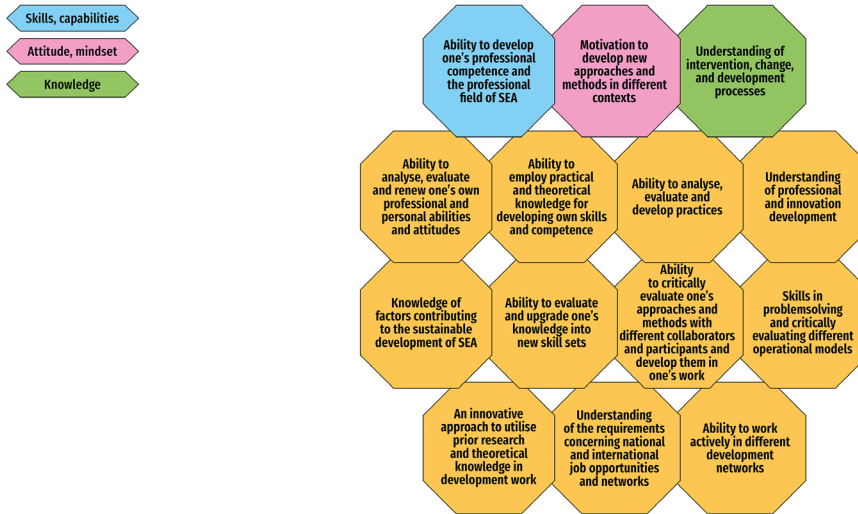
Development

Skills, capabilities

Attitude, mindset

Knowledge

Ability to develop one's professional competence and the professional field of SEA

Motivation to develop new approaches and methods in different contexts

Understanding of intervention, change, and development processes

Ability to analyse, evaluate and renew one's own professional and personal abilities and attitudes

Ability to employ practical and theoretical knowledge for developing own skills and competence

Ability to analyse, evaluate and develop practices

Understanding of professional and innovation development

Knowledge of factors contributing to the sustainable development of SEA

Ability to evaluate and upgrade one's knowledge into new skill sets

Ability to critically evaluate one's approaches and methods with different collaborators and participants and develop them in one's work

Skills in problemsolving and critically evaluating different operational models

An innovative approach to utilise prior research and theoretical knowledge in development work

Understanding of the requirements concerning national and international job opportunities and networks

Ability to work actively in different development networks

Figure 11. Development competence area.

Entrepreneurship

Skills, capabilities

Attitude, mindset

Knowledge

Ability to implement and lead projects in different contexts, environments, communities, and multidisciplinary teams

An entrepreneurial attitude

Knowledge of self-employment and entrepreneurship skills and tools

Ability to apply service thinking and facilitate service processes in one's work

Ability to design, organise, manage and complete SEA projects and services

Ability to estimate costs, calculate budgets, price services, and negotiate client deals

Ability to evaluate a SEA process, project, and its results collaboratively with relevant stakeholders

Ability to evaluate, verbalise and document outcomes of the SEA project in writing and visually, or artistically

Ability to identify challenges, articulate targets and devise time plans

Ability to lead and adapt complex and unpredictable projects

An open attitude towards networking

Ability to manage time realistically and reliably

Ability to negotiate goals and intents of a project with diverse stakeholders

Ability to perceive different forms and possibilities of employment and actions that help becoming employed

Ability to recognise and understand different operational environments and utilise facets of collaboration and networking

Ability to verbalise own professional competence and its value to possible funders and other stakeholders

Ability to uphold one's wellbeing at work

An open attitude towards multiprofessional working fields and multidisciplinary working contexts

Knowledge of digital tools for visibility and project management

Knowledge of funding bodies and networks in the field

An open attitude towards skills required in entrepreneurship and selfemployment

An open attitude towards verbalising own competence to other stakeholders and potential employers

Experiential knowledge and know-how of project management: planning, budgeting and monitoring

Knowledge of service models and concepts and how to develop them; knowledge of service design and service thinking

Knowledge of the user-driven perspectives and how to implement them in one's artistic framing

Skills in networking and ability to recognise relevant stakeholders and funders

Understanding of different roles and responsibilities when working in the field of SEA

Understanding of marketing and communications to makes one's professional competences available and known
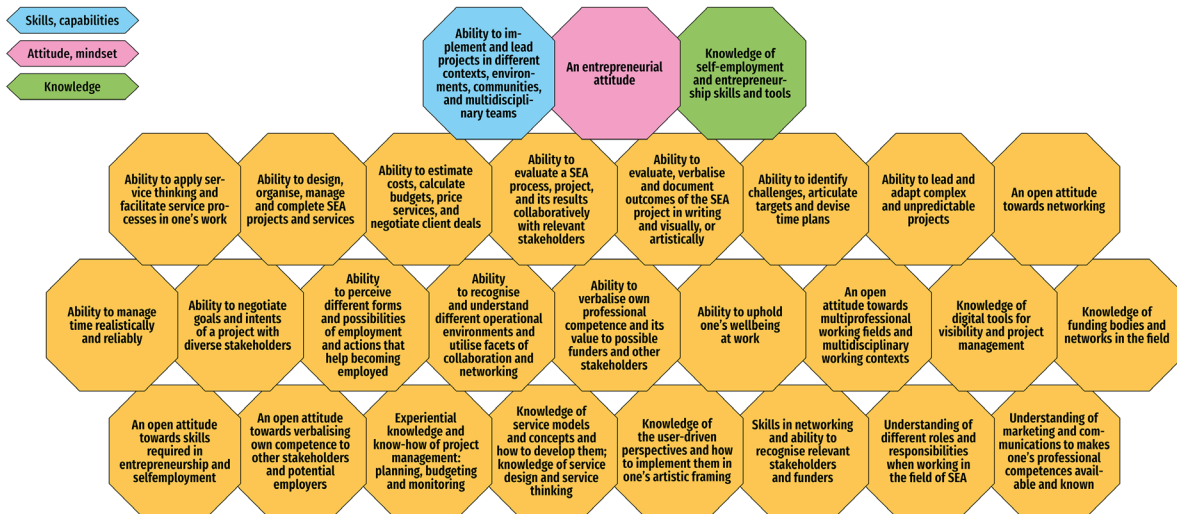
Figure 12. Entrepreneurship competence area

study's scope. Rather, we aimed to present a comprehensive overview of the SEA practice. While the data was collected in five European countries and involved curricula and experts, we acknowledge that the study's findings cannot be universally generalized. Instead, we see this research representing a crucial step towards acknowledging the extensive and multifaceted requirements of the practice and supporting the establishment of SEA as an independent field of research and education.

To strengthen SEA as a subject of study in higher arts education, our qualitative research explicated SEA as a professional practice and produced a flexible map of eight interrelated competence areas: artistic, complemented by social, ethical, pedagogical, contextual, research, development, and entrepreneurship competence areas. However, we want to point out that not every artist constantly needs all these competencies.

Collaboration with other SEA practitioners, multi- and transprofessional work, and the use of mediators in the field of SEA can lead to a reconstellation of competence areas, with some areas gaining prominence while others diminish. More generally, we wish to emphasise the value that emerges from the multidisciplinary and transprofessional collaborations, often forming the very foundation of SEA projects.
Such collaborations enable artists to recognise the interdependence and flexibility of competence areas, unlocking the potential to transcend limitations and forge invaluable partnerships across disciplines. By embracing this multi-faceted approach, artists can harness the power of cross-disciplinary collaboration, foster innovation and contribute to the world at full capacity.

Our analysis reveals SEA as a complex professional practice and a subject of study with its central organising concepts, principles of procedure, criteria for success, and interests (see Adshead, 1981; Pring, 1976). Therefore, it deserves to be studied and taught from within and not from the perspective of more traditional art forms or other outside interests such as well-being. By saying this, we do not mean to deflate the research done about cultural well-being, for example. Instead, we wish to highlight the need for an in-depth investigation of SEA to understand its complexity and relevance for higher arts education to provide a plausible framework for much-needed degree programmes and courses in SEA.

We share Lyons' (2020) view that higher arts education plays an important role in situating SEA within its historical context and establishing its legitimacy. However, Bishop (2012) raises concerns about the compatibility of SEA with traditional hierarchies in the art world. Prior research underscores the value of time and immersion in SEA and the development of artistic identity (Helguera, 2011; Lyons, 2020). While the fit of these ideas in academic contexts is beyond this article's scope, it is crucial for higher arts education institutions to examine SEA to develop relevant degree programs and teaching methods that support the professional growth of SEA artists and contribute to the field's success.

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