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Press Release



Forces of Art: How art shapes our societies

The Prince Claus Fund, Hivos, and the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) are proud to announce the launch of *Forces of Art - Perspectives from a Changing World*. This publication is the result of a major global research project we initiated jointly to investigate the transformative force of art and culture on the lives of people and communities in different countries around the globe.

The initiative could not have come at a more timely moment. When culture is everywhere increasingly under pressure, *Forces of Art* represents an extraordinary attempt to gather a variety of voices, perspectives, and geographies in an exploration of the values of art and culture in sparking and sustaining change in our world.

Now the conclusions of over one year of in-depth research have been compiled in a book, set for release in November. *Forces of Art* is a unique, multilayered, polyvocal analysis of the importance of cultural practice in shaping societies. It showcases, explores, and questions the ways in which art brings together communities and creates space for the exploration of new ideas. It takes the question of how to measure the impact of culture head on.

From the role of cultural spaces and art events in Dakar, to digital program initiatives in South East Asia, to the experiences of Syrian diaspora artists in Istanbul and beyond, *Forces of Art* is a truly global effort that sheds new light on a critical debate about the value of the arts.

A unique approach

The *Forces of Art* approach is unique. Rather than starting with a single set of values, we commissioned 15 independent teams of researchers from different parts of the world to carry out in-depth studies of a range of projects. The teams of researchers selected a total of 38 projects among those supported by the Prince Claus Fund, Hivos, or ECF in different countries during the past decade. Researchers were free to determine their own framework and methodology. Together, the resulting studies place the diversity of art and culture in context and offer nuanced views on the ways they affect their societies.



The studies in *Forces of Art* challenge existing assumptions about the roles of artistic creation and expression in society. They propose new, sometimes unconventional ways of looking at the question of how art contributes to shaping our world and offer diverse perspectives that are better suited to understanding and representing a multiplicity of vastly different realities.

Forces of Art promises to be an important reference work in a global discussion about the role of cultural funding and the importance of art and culture in our world.

For further details about the book and inspiring examples of cultural practice around the world, please visit the [Forces of Art website](#). The book, published by [Valiz](#), will be launched online on 26 November 2020.

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The [Prince Claus Fund](https://princeclausfund.org) supports, connects, and celebrates artists and cultural practitioners where culture is under pressure. <https://princeclausfund.org>

[European Cultural Foundation](https://www.culturalfoundation.eu) is committed to promoting a European sentiment of mutual comprehension and solidarity through culture and art. We do so by developing and supporting cultural initiatives that let us share, experience and imagine our continent. <https://www.culturalfoundation.eu>

[Hivos](https://www.hivos.org) offers a positive counterbalancing force against discrimination, inequality, abuse of power and the unsustainable use of our planet's resources. Our mission is to innovate for social change. With smart projects in the right places, we work towards a free, fair and sustainable society. <https://www.hivos.org>