

Barcelona Treball

Summary of sector trends: Cultural management

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Social and professional recognition of the cultural manager

Culture plays a very important role in society, and the work of cultural managers is increasingly important. However, the role of the cultural manager does not have still the recognition it deserves. This lack of recognition is mainly due to the evolving definition of this professional.

The cultural and technical manager profile in Spain is diffuse and has had little social and professional recognition. The diversity cultural managers' working activities and areas is one of the reasons. The APGCC (Association of Cultural Management Professionals of Catalonia) has made significant efforts to reduce this uncertainty and improve the recognition of cultural managers. In this sense, the APGCC has defined the cultural manager as “**a person who has the responsibility for promoting cultural development**, as a mediator between the expressive and creative phenomena and the audiences. The aim of the role of the cultural manager is to establish channels to **promote people participation in territorial cultural dynamics** which, at the same time, feeds and stimulates creative phenomena and cultural habits”.

Lluís Bonet, in his article “The profile of the cultural manager in the XXI century”, develops the term, pointing out the characteristic elements of a cultural manager:

- Mediator between creation, participation and cultural consumption.
- Professional who may help develop the artwork and insert it into a social, territorial or market strategy.
- Profession that makes a cultural product viable (economically, socially, artistically, politically).

Generically there are two categories in the field of cultural management¹. On the one side there is the figure of the **general cultural manager**,

who operates in cultural organizations (usually public sector) and aims at all sectors. Within this category we can distinguish different profiles:

- Senior management profiles: responsible for setting up cultural policies.
- General management: services, programs or cultural facilities.
- Profiles with specialized functions in cultural organizations: professionals working in the cultural sector but not specialized in a culture subject (i.e. marketing, accounting or HR).
- Research or forecast profiles, who study the ways to extend the theoretical knowledge on a particular subject.

On the other hand, we find the role of the **sectoral cultural manager**, devoted to cultural management activities in specific sectors and in different tasks (production, management, distribution, etc.). This profile develops management functions not involved in artistic creation. Anyway, the progressive development of different cultural areas will need increasingly specialized knowledge and skills to perform the tasks successfully.

¹ Cultural Management. A complex profession. José Luis Melondo, 2010.

Impact on the sector

In 2005 the First International Conference on training culture managers was held, within which **the need for consolidation and recognition of the profession was reaffirmed**, and the training needs of cultural managers were studied. This Conference was really important to the profession, as it was the first time that there was a public explanation on cultural managers at state level in Spain.

Since then, the cultural management social and professional recognition is one of the main challenges in the field. To achieve this goal, the government chose to **strengthen** and enhance the **associations of cultural managers** like the APGCC or the Federation of Associations of Cultural Managers (FEAGC), as they are considered to provide more strength and power to cultural managers than individual actions. These entities are emerging as agents that can do, ponder, and dialogue or be a valid and effective mediator between the government (Ministry of Culture, Cultural Councils, Municipalities, etc.) and culture management professionals. The following are some of the activities carried out in recent years:

- To press administrations and universities for the establishment of training on cultural management.
- To promote the adjustment of cultural managers job vacancies in public administration.
- To act as an actor to dialogue with training organizations in cultural management.
- To participate in government's cultural planning.
- To strengthen the independence of cultural workers from the political power, thus strengthening the professional role of the cultural manager.

This work has been rewarded. In 2011 the Public Employment Services participating in the *Grupo de Seguimiento de las Tablas del Sistema de Información de los Servicios Públicos de Empleo (SISPE)* have agreed to include the profession of "Cultural Manager" in the occupational classification SISPE 2011 (CO-SISPE 2011).

Official and social recognition of cultural management is a strategic factor for maximizing the impact of culture in society. The increasing complexity of cultural management asks for professionals with enough technical knowledge to better use society's cultural capital. In this sense, the decision of including cultural management in the National Occupational Classification (NOC) is a breakthrough in the professional and social normalization of the activity carried out by cultural managers and technicians.

The recognition of the cultural manager's role has implications, not only on professionals but also on the number of companies in the sector and cultural consumption. According to the Ministry of Culture's 2012 Cultural Statistics Yearbook, the number of cultural companies in Spain remained stable in recent years, and **there is a slight upward trend in Catalonia**. In 2011, the cultural consumption of Spanish households amounted to more than 14,300 million euros, a figure that is around 2,600 million euros in Catalonia. The annual average expenditure per person is 358 € in Catalonia and € 313 in the entire state. However, experts point out that the recent increased VAT in cultural activities (from 8% to 21%) may change this trend.

The State Federation of Associations of Cultural Managers gathers 17 associations from different Spanish territories

In 2010 there were 20,740 cultural companies in Catalonia, 103,134 in Spain

In Catalonia, in 2010 each person spent, on average, 280 euros in cultural goods and services.

Impact on professional profiles

It is estimated that 89% of cultural managers have attended university, regardless of whether their studies have been directly related to cultural management or not.

Currently, the percentage of cultural managers working in the public sector accounts for approximately 60%, whereas this figure is 40% in the private sector

73% of Catalan cultural managers believe that planning capacity is a core competency for the performance of their duties.

Most cultural managers have a university degree related to the arts and social sciences. However, associations of cultural managers are pushing up for the creation of a specific training branch on cultural management, which is expected to become official in the near future. On the other hand, in any case, an increase has been detected in unregulated training targeted at cultural managers, supplied by both private and public entities such as universities.

Cultural managers are around 40 on average and work mainly in the public sector, while showing a smaller presence in the private sector. Professional recognition sets the expansion of the percentage of cultural managers working in the private sector as a challenge.

The fact that the role of the cultural manager is relatively new implies that the associated knowledge and skills are not fully defined. As a professional who is dedicated to management, the cultural manager must have knowledge and skills in this area: planning and organizational, and result oriented skills, ability to assess the relationship between investment and results, project management capacity, etc. However, it must bear in mind that their work focuses on the world of culture, which has some specific distinguishing features.

The process of professional recognition process has expanded and diversified the associated fields of knowledge. According to APGCC, to be a good cultural manager, requires having knowledge in the following areas:

- Cultural policies.
- Cultural economy and business economy.
- ICT and cyberculture.
- Cultural marketing.
- Management of cultural facilities.
- Cultural cooperation.
- Creativity and innovation in cultural management.
- Cultural regulation (rights' management, legislation, permits, job security, etc.)
- Languages (especially English).

The social and professional recognition of cultural managers also implies a diversification of the required skills. Cultural managers themselves suggest that the main skills are²:

- **Analytical skills**, to diagnose the context of action, and implement and evaluate the own actions.
- **Ability to dialogue**, to mediate and negotiate among the different actors in the field of work.
- **Innovation and creativity**, in order to generate new proposals.
- **Ability to communicate**, to coordinate and disseminate information about the activity or cultural service.
- **Artistic and cultural sensitivity**.
- **Ability to adapt** and renew itself to different environments and changing scenarios.
- **Leadership**, to act as a coordinator.
- **Entrepreneurial attitude**.
- **Ability to program**, plan and evaluate.
- **Teamwork** and ability to adapt to different organizational models.

More information about the industry is available on the Barcelona Treball website

[Market >Industries > Cultural Management](#)

This section of the website contains a report on the industry covering aspects on employment issues, where you will be able to take a look at occupational fiches for various job profiles and learn the main resources needed to find a job in the industry.

² Crossed paths. The current profile of the cultural manager in Catalonia. Tino Carreño, 2010.

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