



**Activist Summer Campus of European Alternatives -
Call for applications open!
August 23-27th 2016 - Schloss Wartin, near Berlin**

Shifting baselines

Why organizing the Campus of European Alternatives?

We are experiencing the phenomenon of shifting baselines. The standards by which we judge what is acceptable are changing, gradually and often unnoticed. When it comes to treatment of people fleeing war, to social security and solidarity, to what a good economic model is, what 'democracy' means, what 'privacy' means: in each of these areas, there has been a shift, too often to the right, a race to the bottom. Centrist politicians today follow right-wing demands for exclusion, collection of private data for market or government ends has been accepted as status quo.

Shifting baselines leaves open in what direction the shift happens. For us it means we need to work to shift Europe in a direction that we can define as forward, radically democratic, commons-based and catering the needs of all. We have the tools to solve today's challenges if we frame them right. Otherwise we are fighting today's problems, issues and wars with yesterday's frameworks. We believe collaboration across our borders and disciplines, building and strengthening of our networks and tools is a way to both react to and propose shifting baselines.

After a first successful #FixEurope campus in October 2014, we, at European Alternatives would like to go forward fixing Europe, redefining and shifting practices, narratives and imaginaries for a more progressive, democratic and open transnational community. In the past years, we have edited a Manifesto for European democracy, equality and solidarity— a result of hundreds of citizens' panels across Europe where individuals gave their opinions and inputs on what needs to change in today's Europe. We have also been organising the Transeuropa Festival for seven years, and have run several transnational campaigns on fundamental rights and migrant rights, as well as the European Citizens Initiative on media freedom. We have launched an innovative media channel, TalkReal, to bring progressive voices to debate on burning issues across the continent. We have run capacity building programs such as the Citizens Rights training to connect activists beyond their areas of work and create opportunities to cooperate across struggles, and beyond borders.

What is it about?

At this year's Campus we propose to work on four main areas. These are areas we have worked on from several months to several years and in which we have gathered new and existing networks and expertise to strengthen our outputs. We will create a working environment during 3,5 intense days, outside of the city, allowing us to reach concrete results. This means putting together a mix of people that can tackle the challenges we gave ourselves and are rooted in practices and places to take on and continue the fruits of our work. The four works streams will become more defined and refined by the time we get to the summer with your inputs and the different participants profiles present. There will also be a timeline of events and actions following the Campus integrating the results into existing activities.

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The four main workstreams defining the Campus programme are:

1 - Shifting narratives – Develop a transnational communication and media capacity that transcend national perspectives and brings a new light on the issues we are facing across the continent; What kind of strategy to mainstream progressive voices/narrative in the media? What kind of audience do we need to reach out to and how does this transnational media engage with people? We want to continue drawing with media partners, journalists, and a/v activists, a common roadmap to reach the right audience with the right tools in the media landscape. We want to have the space to develop a transnational media that transcend national perspectives and brings a new light on the issues we are facing across the continent. After having our first transnational media meeting held in May we want to continue the discussion of best practices in a changing multimedia context. How can we disseminate content at a transnational level? How can we use media tools to shift the mainstream narrative? How can we reinforce ties between us? How to address the diversity of languages in the EU in what is still a national media context?

2 – Shifting institutions – Learn from citizens-led coalitions and new municipalism to demonstrate the power of active citizenship in building more equal and democratic communities; What are successful citizens initiatives able to reclaim democratic power over their lives? How do we support these initiatives to get their messages across and come to power? How do we ensure the transition is a success and reflects the change wanted by the people?

The beginning of 2015 has been for us a year of reinforcing networks with (capital) cities around Europe: we believe that experiences like the impressive achievement of many cities in Spain, bringing activists to the city government, are examples of the real potential to extend these realities to other cities in Europe. Bringing all this experiences together, discussing with grassroots movements and promoting collaborations between ongoing alternative governments, are the way the next step to spread the spirit of the “rebel cities”.

3 – Shifting networks – Create the synergies between the transnational and national networks that mutually support our commonalities, challenge our differences and tackle tools for transnational activism; How can we mutually support each network to strengthen active citizenship and social movements? What is the best combination of tools that can help us connect better as networks and inside our networks? What action plan can we develop together? This workshop is there to come out with a clearer understanding of what civil society networks are out there building a solidarity Europe and what is the common value set that keeps us together and forms the basis of the nascent transnational civil movement in Europe that we urgently see the need for.

4 – Shifting imaginations – Bringing together those that see art as a form of political engagement, we want to explore the current social relevance of activism through (digital) activism and the overlaps between art and scientific or socio-political fields in artistic and discursive ways. In 2013, we developed with a group of artists the radio ballet ‘ Air time’ and we have collaborated with the Cuban artist Tania Bruguera who has just founded the Hannah Arendt International Institute of Artivism (see interview here). How does artivism work as a form of protest? What do we make of the situationist do-it-yourself dream when we no longer need mass media to be heard if we are inventive enough? Can we develop a common idea that could lead towards the 2017 edition of Transeuropa Festival?



The type of formats will range from participative, outcome oriented workshops, inspirational talks, and opportunities to get to know each other. We encourage you to bring your own ideas and inputs and we will develop a programme around the workstreams that will leave us more connected and enthused.

Participants' profiles

When we tackle politics, art, technology and the media we strive for diversity in terms of gender, tech literacy and professional background as well as expertise. We bring a wild mix of people together to stimulate collaborative creativity. There will be people coming from grassroots experiences, political art practices, experts working in municipal processes, media makers, border-crossers and men and women of diverse skill sets, political orientations, passions and talents.

Good to know

The Campus will take place from August 23rd to 26th at Schloss Wartin near Berlin. It will be followed by the Open assembly of European Alternatives as well as a public, festive closing event in the centre of Berlin on August 27th.

The language of the Campus will be English. We will provide reading material and preparation texts in time before the Campus and all workstreams will be facilitated by professional facilitators as well as some of the people of European Alternatives.

Find out more about European Alternatives and who we are at www.euroalter.com and follow us on social networks twitter, facebook, periscope. We are a membership organisation so join and support us.

The venue of the Campus is at an old castle in a very beautiful natural setting, roughly 1,5 hours North of Berlin. There are lakes nearby and we will spend plenty of time outside in the gardens. The venue for the final day in Berlin will be announced shortly.

Apply here

for four days of hands-on project and ideas development, intense inputs, shared best practices and learnings, open debates and cheerful exchanges.