

# Activity Report 2021

**Comment pourrions-nous** nous assurer que nous disposons de suffisamment d'outils appropriés pour favoriser le bien-être des jeunes (dans des situations incertaines, par exemple en temps de crise, de guerre...)?

**Comment pourrions-nous** sortir de sa zone de confort d'oser aller vers l'inconnu ?

**Comment pourrions-nous** encourager le bien-être des professionnels du secteur jeunesse?



# Dear Readers



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Art Square Lab believes in a respectful, just and inclusive society where people have courage to co-create their futures. In 2021, we strengthened our mission of co-creating social and economic change. In April, we obtained the SIS label from the Ministry of Labor and we defined the areas in which we can turn our dreams into concrete actions. With a team of 5 people, we have done our best, gaining confidence and motivation for future projects.

I am happy to share our Social Impact Report 2021 in which we present particular projects and efforts that use our resources and expertise in the most human and planet friendly way. We run both our for-profit and not-for-profit activities in a sustainable way: we try to reduce waste, use local resources, use supply chains with low carbon footprint, manage human resources in a circular way and offer job opportunities to those who need to return to the job market. Our focus on co-creating a society where both citizens and organizations can use their creative potential means: increasing access to innovative educational methods (like Design Thinking, Futures Thinking), sharing best practices by implementing human-centered design in order to create people and planet friendly services and, last but not least, upskilling/reskilling of people to a more problem-solving set of skills. We consider the latter a very important factor in the social and environmental change needed to face current global challenges.

We also share our challenges which we have turned into future goals: acknowledging the failures/shortcomings as part of our incremental improvement strategy. We evolve to answer the challenges of the people and planet and we stay on the leading edge of sustainability.

At the same time, we keep eyes and ears open for new opportunities and areas where our expertise could be utilized even more. We have developed new collaborations for 2022 with the community of social entrepreneurs in Luxembourg, France and in the Greater Region in order to implement more strategic approaches. We have optimized our portfolio to focus on activities that can bring more added value to the communities that need resilience in a post-pandemic reality.

We hope you can join us on our journey!  
Magdalena Jakubowska, CEO  
Luxembourg 2021



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# Chapter 01

## About Art Square Lab and our Approach

Art Square Lab's purpose is to support companies with change management and digital transformation of commercial or non-commercial activities by providing consulting and training in collaborative processes, management, social innovation and strategy. More specifically, we aim to encourage corporate social responsibility by promoting actors of the social and solidarity economy, social innovation, social and inclusive entrepreneurship and all areas related to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

We offer training adapted to people in fragile situations, either because of their economic or social situation, and maintain accessibility for all. In addition, we offer our services at reduced rates to actors of the social and solidarity economy, NGOs, non-profit associations and societal impact companies with socially innovative projects.

### OUR VISION

Art Square Lab believes in a respectful, just and inclusive society where people have courage to co-create their futures.

### OUR MISSION

Art Square Lab feels committed to create social and economic change. We are ~~human~~ **PLANET** centered. We actively pursue a better tomorrow by empowering public and private organizations, businesses and citizens with the skills, passion and purpose to make positive contributions to the world around us. We apply principles of design thinking to invent new ways of doing business and rethink our way of living. We focus on environmental sustainability, educational transition, entrepreneurial ecosystems and citizen engagement.





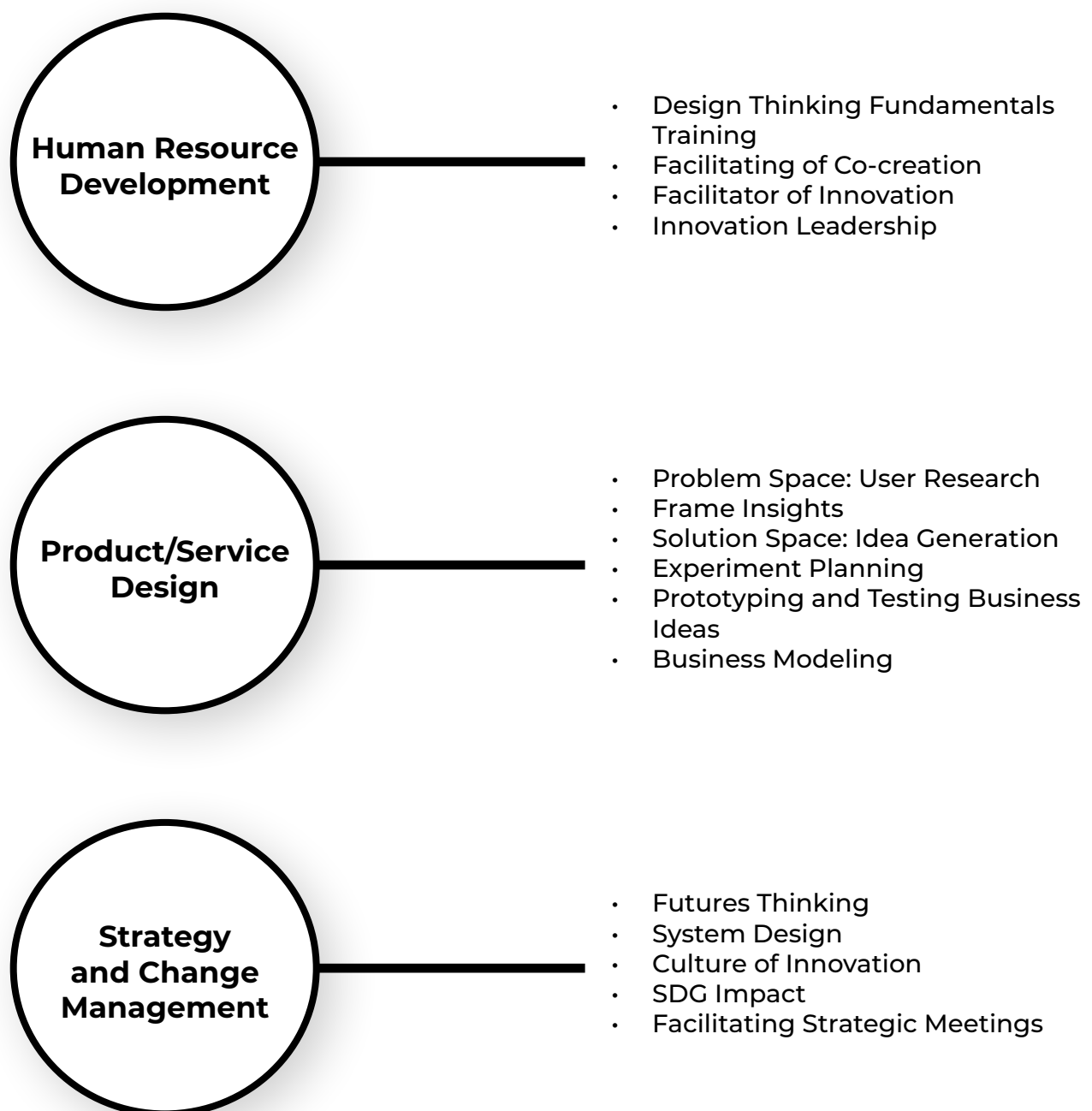
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# Chapter 02

# Our Activities

## 2.1 Our Services

In 2021 we defined 3 areas in which Art Square Lab activities bring value.





In all three pillars, we offered consulting and training services to commercial and non-commercial actors. In all of them, our mission to bring sustainable solutions for new and renovated service is a priority. With this in mind, two specific training offers were presented to the clients:

### **SDG Impact Training Offer**

Our targets are companies that want to create a positive impact on society through integrating the Sustainable Development Goals in their business activities and need guidance to start. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of the UN are used as a reference framework for companies eager to make an impact.

A 18-hour SDG-focused (blended learning) program helps the companies to align their DNA with societal and environmental needs.

The outcome of the sessions are:

- Understanding of the importance of SDGs and how they relate to the business
- Definition of own company's challenge and associated SDG goals
- Setting of an ambitious goal the company wants to reach for this challenge
- First KPI and metrics
- An actionable impact plan with a definition of internal and external stakeholders
- A communication approach
- Interaction with other companies

In 2021 the program was created in collaboration with Tanguy de Lestre, Belgian consultant specialized in impact economy. In 2022 the promotion activities will start on a larger scale.

### **Design Thinking for Sustainability Training Offer**

Current environmental and societal challenges make it clear: business and societal values must come together. Large and small enterprises align their offerings with Sustainable Development Goals, while other entrepreneurs build, from scratch, enterprises with a social impact.

This 9-hours hands-on training will help them understand how to use Design Thinking to redesign business models, improve services and how small changes in organizations can foster sustainability. The participants - entrepreneurs will get familiar with human-centered design tools for sustainability in 4 areas: economical, social, environmental and cultural.

### **Consulting for Fit4Service Programme of Luxinnovation**

Since 2020 Art Square Lab has been an accredited consultant for the Fit4Service Program of Luxinnovation. Fit 4 Service allows companies to objectively evaluate the quality of their customer experience, and gives them the keys to implement simple measures that will make it stand out from its competitors in the eyes of customers.

In 2021 we implemented our first project with Yolande COOP (SIS) that resulted in identification of their customer profiles, respective customer journeys and recommendations to build further on their service potential.

In 2022 we are ready to offer our experience and knowledge to other social impact companies who intend to optimize their customer experience as well as redesign their services in a human-centric way.

## 2.2 Our services for Education

Since the beginning of Art Square Lab, we are committed to the development of the education system, bringing innovative methodologies and solutions to:

1. **Educators, teachers, youth workers**
2. **Young people**
3. **Non-formal education partners via European Projects**

## Teachers

In 2021 we implemented 3 different training modules for teachers, via our collaboration with IFEN. The following online trainings were offered in IFEN's catalog:

**Introduction to  
Agenda 2030 and  
the Sustainable  
Development Goals  
- SDGs in school  
practice**



**Agenda 2030 and  
the Sustainable  
Development Goals  
- SDGs in school  
practice**



**What exactly is  
Design Thinking?  
- Basic Workshop  
for Teachers, School  
Coordinators and  
Head Teachers**





In total 60 teachers took part in the training, run in German and Luxembourgish. One of the trainings was implemented in-house at ECG (Ecole de Commerce et de Gestion, Luxembourg City), our partner school. Together, we have prepared a course on Social Entrepreneurship that was incorporated into the BTS program at ECG. Magdalena Jakubowska joined the program committee and offered two in-house training sessions for 20 teachers and 80 students of ECG. Collaboration with ECG continues into 2022.

## Young people:

Many of the social challenges we are facing, such as climate change, inequality or poverty, have further advanced in a short space of time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It has accelerated the change in relationships between people, the world around us, our belongings, our health, our data and the relationship with government. On one hand, our connection with our immediate community became closer. On the other hand, social distancing bound us to a digital presence, with disadvantages like screen fatigue, distance from our teams, school classes, and sport groups. Many dark narratives are being created, with environmental, social and economical crisis on the front line.





In this situation citizens, entrepreneurs, teachers and especially young people need to be assisted in different ways of thinking, where creativity and creative problem solving play central roles. When young people are overwhelmed with dark scenarios, we need to revive their imagination around inventing positive future scenarios as well as support their creative courage to be the protagonists of those imagined positive futures. This is how the IMAGINARIUM - Science and Youth for Sustainable Futures Project was created.

This project is inspired in part by an approach of Rob Hopkins, co-creator of the Transition movement, to engage citizens to imagine positive, feasible versions of the sustainable future we want to live in. "Not utopias, but futures where things turned out OK" as he mentions in his new book "From What Is to What If".

Since its inception, the IMAGINARIUM project has implemented workshops offered to young people who are 16-25 years old, in the form of a Hackathon or rather, a Thinkacton - a Design Thinking based process, driven by a playful development of ideas and prototypes in dedicated teams. Moving through the structured process allows the participants to interact with various points of view and build new ideas together, using the methodology of Futures Thinking and Design Thinking which is introduced by the facilitators from Art Square Lab.



Each workshop covered a different topic related to selected Sustainable Development Goals. To strengthen understanding of these topics, three researchers were also involved.

The topics were:

- Climate Action Based Lifestyle - Can you imagine a world where our lifestyle would not affect climate change?
- Floods and Drought - Imagine a world where we would not have to worry about floods and droughts. What would it look like and how to get there?
- Sustainable Cities and Communities - What if we could all live in safe, healthy and sustainable communities?

As a result of the Thinkaton workshops, the teams of young people created prototypes of sustainable actions they can implement in their communities. The prototypes and potential action plans were evaluated by a jury (researchers and experts) who afterwards selected the best ideas to be tested in a pop-up shop in Esch-sur-Alzette.

In October 2021, the pilot project was implemented with 21 young people over 2 days. It continued in 2022 with 96 students from ECG. This is not the end - at Art Square Lab we put maximum effort into building relationships with the Youth Houses in Luxembourg in order to offer this methodology to other young people and educators. This fulfills our mission of contributing to creating a society in which young citizens can nourish their imagination to build better scenarios for their communities.

The video from the process:



## 2.3. Our contribution to projects on European level

In 2021, we continued to develop educational tools within the framework of Strategic Partnerships of Erasmus Plus program. Among our main partners are: the University of Turku from Finland, M-Powered from Ireland, the Commune of Cinisello Balsamo in Italy, Co-Actions from France, Cap Solidaire from France. Two last actors, especially, are strategically important for us due to their involvement in the Social Economy within the region of Bordeaux, France. They generously share with us their expertise and good practices.

European Projects are our chance to develop innovative tools (such as Open Badges), test new ideas (e.g. Creativity Measuring Tool) and produce educational materials (the Tool Box with Creativity Tools for Youth Workers or Design Thinking MOOC for students of Entrepreneurship) on European level and subsequently, offer them in Luxembourg.

The following projects have been implemented in 2021:

**a) “Creative and Design Thinking MOOC” course for students of Entrepreneurship (in partnership with Ecole de Commerce et de Gestion and the University of Turku, financed by the EU Erasmus Plus Program (November 2019-November 2023))**

An interactive MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) offers inspiring tools in Creative Problem Solving, Design Thinking and Human-Centered Design for successful ventures. The project CDTMOOC promotes open education and innovative practices in a digital era thanks to an interactive MOOC based on gamification approach together with digital guides.

The project aims at disrupting the learning environment through innovative pedagogies. The following results are expected:

- Good Practice examples about innovation in enterprises
- Evidence-gathering report on entrepreneurship and learning
- A free MOOC course about innovative entrepreneurship
- Guides for Creative Problem Solving, Design Thinking and Human-Centered Design as dynamic pdf documents
- Joint Staff Training event for the staff
- Multiplier events in Finland, Italy, France, Luxembourg and Iceland for dissemination purposes
- Web platform (website and Facebook page)
- Newsletter

More information can be found here: [cdtmooc.eu](https://cdtmooc.eu)



**b) “Volunteering in Local Development - VOLEM” project financed by EU Erasmus Plus program in partnership with Cap Solidaire (FR) and Commune of Cinisello Balsamo (IT) - December 2019-December 2022**

This project aims to strengthen the recognition of the key skills acquired by young people during volunteer activities in the field of local development and to promote these skills as useful for their entry into the labor market. The project stems from the general conclusions that point to the recognition of these competences as not properly tackled after volunteering. With this innovative consortium we will try to combine the three perspectives to better understand the skills developed by young people, see how far they facilitate employability and come up with tools to foster the validation of competences.

The project objectives are:

- To raise awareness and improve the skills of volunteers and youth workers regarding innovative youth volunteer experiences (in the field of local development), and
- To design a skills framework utilizing Digital Badges to validate the skills acquired through voluntary action.

More information can be found here: [www.volem-project.eu](http://www.volem-project.eu)

**c) “Imaginarium: Creative Youth for Sustainable Futures”, financed by EU Erasmus Plus program (March 2021-March 2023)**

In the project “Imaginarium” partners from Luxembourg (Art Square Lab), France (Co-Actions), Ireland (M-Powered) and Finland (University of Turku) promote creative thinking using Design Thinking and Futures Thinking methodology that will enable a proactive youth-led search for development solutions of tomorrow.

The partnership’s expected impact will be considered a reference point for future creative activities in the field of education (using Futures Thinking and Design Thinking) thanks to the innovative methodologies, tools and approaches used and produced during the Imaginarium project.

These include:

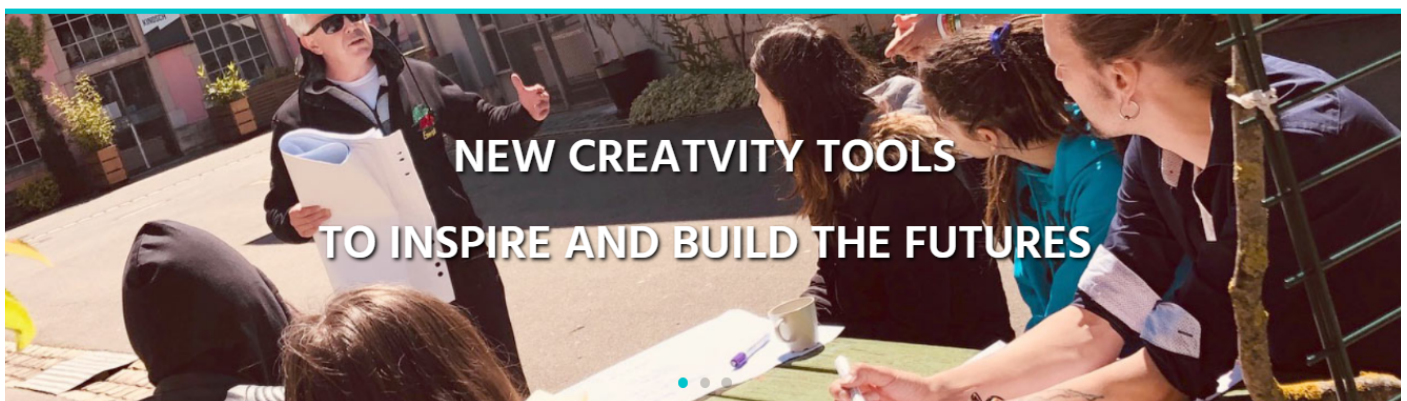
- Bringing creativity into the non-formal educational system with the help of Design Thinking, Futures Thinking and creative problem-solving methodologies.

- Supporting students and educators with the development of new sustainable ideas for more positive futures.
- Supporting educators by providing materials useful for teaching creativity and sustainability.
- Supporting educators by providing a tool to measure the creativity of young people.
- Providing professional development opportunities for staff and stakeholders: intensive training on the use of creativity in the education of young people.
- Encouraging young people to implement their ideas by supporting them in the creation of a basic project and informing them on the funding possibilities for Solidarity Projects (Erasmus Plus EU Program).
- Teaching management skills fostering social entrepreneurship and employment.

The tool box can be found here: [imaginarium-toolbox.eu](https://imaginarium-toolbox.eu)



HOME ABOUT TOOLBOX ▼ CONTACT



**Imagination and creativity** are important to the success of young people. We want to make sure they have the best environment to develop the creativity needed **to inspire and build** their personal, professional and sustainable community's futures.

The goal of IMAGINARIUM project is to co-create **new creativity tools**, using expertise of youth workers and experience of partner organisations in Design Thinking, Futures Thinking and sustainability.

## 2.4. Other Projects in the Education Sector at the Local Level

### a) “Plan B - Resilience in the Youth Sector”, financed by Oeuvre Nationale de Secours Grande-Duchesse Charlotte (Oct 2021-December 2022)

This project is focused on non-formal education actors, especially youth workers and graduate and post-graduate educators, to support them in practice of resilience in post-pandemic reality.

How best to deal with change? How to develop resilience? How to have an agile approach to problem solving being flexible instead of rigid? These are all challenges of the pandemic that can also be opportunities for renewing methods in the youth sector. As in Art Square Lab we have an expertise with “future-proof” organizations in business, we have decided to transfer this know-how to education, using Design Thinking methodology:

- User research: interviews with youth professionals on the field (2021)
- Identification of best practices and challenges: co-creation workshop to find best solutions for the challenges
- Resilience Academy to test the solutions with youth professionals
- Designing the manual/tool kit with best practices

We strongly believe that the tool kit will serve as a reference material to those youth professionals who would like to be prepared for the unexpected.

More information: [artsquarelab.net](https://artsquarelab.net)





**b) “Design a Youth Information Space” for Agence Nationale pour l’Information des Jeunes (ANIJ asbl) (Oct 2020-August 2021)**

The objective of this project was to redefine the space of the Youth Information Center in Luxembourg. In a world of constant and rapid change, as well as entry into the digital age, the needs of young people in terms of information have also changed. The idea of taking a step back to reflect on new trends in information seeking and expectations of users, was to allow for adapting, if necessary, the framework offered by the Youth Information Center.

Another objective was to improve the current physical space and services using an innovative approach that engages and involves the target population (youth and youth workers). With the emergence of social networks and its stream of opportunities and uncertainty, access to information has changed. The physical space for young people needed to be revisited as the space was not always considered “friendly” enough for young people and the range of services offered was not in line with their current needs.

The project relied on the participatory method of Service Design to conduct research on user needs which were then used to co-create and develop prototypes and recommendations regarding how to design and implement the new Youth Information Center (spaces, customer journey, welcome services in multichannel). Final report from the process was handed in to ANIJ and disseminated among youth professionals in Luxembourg.





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# Chapter 03



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## Social Impact at Art Square Lab

The above mentioned activities show our great commitment to the improvement of society. The team at Art Square Lab performs its best competences in the field of training in Design Thinking methodology and providing service design consulting. We are growing into an important partner of organizations who seek innovation, human-centric transformation or want to manage change in a sustainable and planet-centric way. Thanks to our experiences in Luxembourg we manage to connect our clients with one another, avoid repetition of actions and prevent waste of resources.

*“ I consider that the ASL services are very valuable for any company or organization which seeks to upgrade its performances on the market or realize any type of change. The method which is used generates a high level of participation and is therefore highly efficient. The ASL team is brilliant and great fun to work with.*

*The ASL service is custom-made and therefore was highly adapted to our needs given a specific structural situation which needed to be considered.”*

*Daniel Tesch, Director of ULESS*



In order to measure our impact and broaden it, the following social impact indicators were set up for 2021:



## Indicator 1: Number of clients who benefited from the company's services

**20H**

Pro bono service  
to Croix Rouge  
Luxembourgeoise

In 2021 we offered 20h pro bono service to Croix Rouge Luxembourgeoise (April/May 2021) to support their project involving housing renovation in Sub-Saharan Africa. We consider it very important to disseminate the creative methodologies in the sector of international cooperation/aid, especially in areas affected by environmental disasters. We have contributed with our Design Thinking expertise to the preparation and implementation of an international workshop.

**50%**

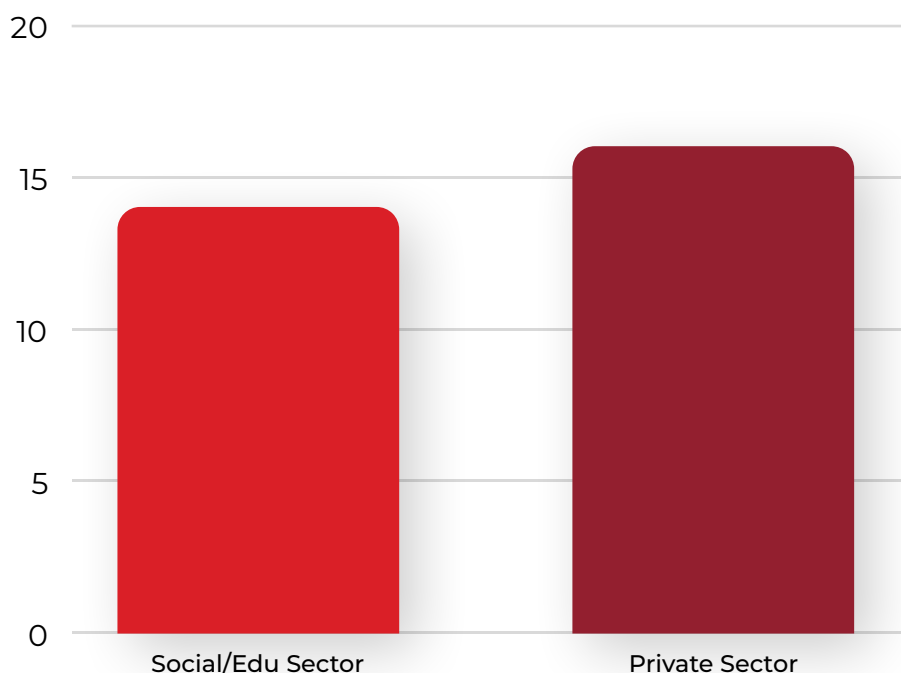
of our clients  
operating in the  
social/educational  
sectors

In addition to that, almost half of our clients in 2021 are the organization's operating in the social/educational sectors : ULESS Asbl, ANEFORE Asbl, ANIJ, SNJ, EURODESK Asbl, Yolande COOP SIS, CAP Solidaire and University of Turku.

All of them benefitted from reduced tariffs for training and consulting as well as event development.



## Indicator 2: Proportion of customers who used the company's services at a reduced rate by category



All benefitted from reduced tariffs for training and consulting as well as event development.

## Indicator 3: Number of adapted trainings that have been offered by the company

In 2021, we adapted our offers to address the special requests coming from the social/educational sector, who were facing a post-pandemic reality. That resulted in an implementation of on-line trainings for teachers, and digital skills trainings for people affected by chômage partiel:

IFEN: Three trainings for 60 teachers:

- Introduction to Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals - SDGs in school practice
- Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals - SDGs in school practice
- What exactly is Design Thinking? - Basic Workshop for Teachers, School Coordinators and Head Teachers



# Boost your digital skills

**USE YOUR GOVERNMENT BON WITH  
ART SQUARE LAB.**

Have you been partially out of work this year? Boost your employability by developing your digital skills. Use your government bon to train with Art Square Lab in essential digital methods and tools. Find online training courses in English and French

 ARTSQUARE  
LAB

The Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Economy (MTEESS) has launched a voucher pilot for a “Digital Skills” training ending in 2021. Art Square Lab is an approved training provider for training modules focusing on: using online creative tools, facilitating online co-creation, and thinking outside the box. 12 people took part in the following trainings:

- Thinking Outside the Box: Creative Problem Solving and Decision Making;
- Digital Skills for Work and Life: Brainstorming, Mind Mapping and Decision Making in Digital Meetings.



## Indicator 4: Proportion of clients in situations of economic or social fragility who have benefited from adapted training.

In 2021, we offered inclusive training for 25% of the total number of training participants.





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# Chapter 04

## Our Commitment to Sustainable Development Goals

Let's walk the talk! At Art Square Lab we continuously increase our efforts to achieve social impact and we use the 17 SDGs to determine what goals we are going for.

In 2021 we targeted 3 out of the 17 goals:



### **SDG 4 - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**

Continuous contribution to improvement of educational tools and methods in formal and non-formal education in Luxembourg is an important aspect of our social impact. At Art Square Lab we believe that we have adequate expertise and practical experience in the field of future skills (empathy, problem solving, creativity, thinking out of the box, co-design and co-creation) and it is our duty to share it with the education ecosystem. We pay attention to those who might stay on the outskirts of mainstream due to economic or social reasons and make sure that they have opportunities to get involved in local activities like Imaginarium and international training activities through EU projects. Thanks to our collaboration with 4motion asbl we were able to offer educational activities to 10 young people and hope to continue this partnership in 2022.

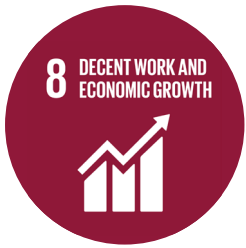
In 2021, the post-covid reality limited our ambitions for direct contact with our target groups but we worked hard to make sure that our network in the youth field increased. Last but not least, in our Art Square Lab team we are life-long learners and we take part in multiple trainings and events that keep us updated and motivated to serve others.

*I really loved the way the training was run, the breadth of coverage and the applied-nature of it. It felt like a great balance doing a mix of theory and practice (I have found other courses do only theory!).*

*I'd really love to stay connected, and will be watching ArtSquareLab on their journey.*

*Joshua, participant of the training*





## **SDG 8 - Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**

Diversity, equity and inclusion are important factors in our work. In order to “walk the talk”, we promote diversity in our team and are open to inclusive employment policies. Besides our employees, we support young people who seek internships (1 person in 2021 who obtained a regular job directly after internship) and those who intend to re-enter the job market (2 people in 2021). It is important for us to offer “circularity of competences”- an opportunity to test skills, upskill or re-skill in the safe (but demanding) environment of Art Square Lab.



## **SDG 12 - Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns**

Finally in 2021 we have also completely changed our compliance policy towards suppliers. For all events (training and conferences) that we organized in office, we benefited from the services of sustainable suppliers (other SIS e.g. Yolande COOP) or we have encouraged our partners to pay attention to various elements such as : waste reduction (carbon footprint, local products, reduction of plastic waste), fair trade, environmental impact of the event and supply chains. That absolutely requires strong knowledge of the local partners and their offers. Therefore, we continuously make efforts to network with ULESS members and understand their missions and business objectives, as well as other actors of social impact economy in the Greater Region and French region of Nouvelle Aquitaine.

We continue to improve our own efforts with the resources we use during our training (shopping for the materials in local shops, re-use of materials, limited printing). We have gotten trapped by economic aspects and prioritizing cost benefits over sustainable consumption to fit into (sometimes) low budgets. Taking this into consideration, we have already begun acting on the decision to pay better attention to budget planning in 2022.

In 2021 Art Square Lab joined IMS and started close collaboration with the ULESS network, to continue our efforts in partnership with other local actors. Stronger together!





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