MUSAE FACTORY MODEL

MENTORING GUIDELINES

During the residency, a mentor will be assigned to each selected team to accompany them throughout the DFA Method. This is a key role in this process, as it will not only guide the team on how to apply the methodology but will also support any needs the team may have and help them along the way to translate the vision they have for the project into a concept.

As most of the participants in these projects have never worked in interdisciplinary teams before, **the role of the mentor becomes a crucial part of the team that facilitates this collaboration, translating the needs of both sides while encouraging innovation,** and also keeping both parts aligned and on track.

BREAKING DOWN THE ROLE OF MENTOR

The main tasks of a mentor are:

- To **guide the team on the DFA Method**, act as a mediator to solve any questions and ensure that the Method is followed.
- To **act as a facilitator** for the activities to be performed under the DFA method.
- **Set and manage the team's expectations** throughout the process.
- To apply critical thinking to the ideas shared by the team, **acting as a catalyst.** The mentor will also raise awareness in the team about the importance of the ethical aspects of their project.
- To share their knowledge on the sector trends to **inspire them**.
- To **assess the progress** made by the team between meetings.
- To **safeguard an ethical use of technology**

Alongside their knowledge and expertise in their fields, interpersonal skills such as active listening or empathy are also a must-have for any mentor in order to handle any issue that may arise within the team.

It is important to bear in mind that throughout the stages of the project, the mentor will need to emphasise different aspects. For example, in the early stages, they may ask the team questions to kick off debates and to identify ideas, while in the last stage of the project, they should be responsible for safeguarding the ethical aspects of the project.

For this reason, the mentor needs to be flexible on two different levels; firstly on the internal needs that the team may have, and secondly, on the needs that the method itself demands during the Residency.

HOW TO ASSEMBLE YOUR MENTOR TEAM

A strong team of mentors is essential for the success of your project. Your mentors will guide your conceptual and technical development while ensuring that your work aligns with the overall project objectives. Below are some guidelines for selecting the right profiles within your organisation.

Art Mentor

Role: will challenge the conceptual approach of the artist, trying to keep their work stuck to the SME goal.

Where to find them:

- As a first option, the **(E)DIH** should have personnel trained on the DFA Method and in facilitating collaboration.
- MUSAE also has created an **Integrated Stakeholder Network** where you can find institutions (like the STARTS Regional Centers) or persons (MUSAE experts) that could accept this role.
- If none of the options mentioned above work, you can always look for cultural professionals with extensive experience in supporting cross-sectoral collaborations

Domain-specific Mentors

Role: they have either a focus on technology or on the project's topic. The first one will ensure the technical innovation of the suggested concept and will provide advice on any technical issues that may arise. Moreover, together with the Art mentor, will ensure that the collaboration is running smoothly. On the other hand, the mentor with a focus on the project's topic will guide the teams on the topic trends.

Where to find them:

- As a first option, the **(E)DIH** should have personnel trained on the DFA Method and in facilitating collaboration.

- MUSAE also has created an **Integrated Stakeholder Network** where you can find institutions (like the STARTS Regional Centers) or persons (MUSAE experts) that could accept this role.

- It is also an option, reaching out to professionals with an extensive experience in the project's domain and/or technology-related fields (academia, business.

STRUCTURING THE MENTORING PROCESS

The mentoring process accompanies the team throughout the whole Residency, holding regular meetings to face the needs of each of the phases.

In any case, the mentors will decide on each one's agenda and lead them.

1:1 meetings

Artists and SMEs meet respectively with their art and tech mentors to discuss the values, concepts and resources to be used. Ideally, these meetings take place bi-weekly during the research and conceptualization phases and are optional during the building phase.

Core team meetings

Periodically, **the whole team meets to confirm that everyone is still on track with the team's objectives.** These meetings will be the most important during the build phase, as they will allow the whole team to ensure that they are on track and that they are resolving any deviations properly. The core team should meet at least once a month.

Each mentor should be prepared to conduct additional workshops or meetings with the team to help them if they are stuck at any point in the process, such as the conceptualization or the planning of the collaboration; they should not only identify this need but also know how to respond to it.

LIST OF RESOURCES

For those interested in becoming a mentor, or in training other potential mentors, MUSAE has also created some deadlines on a specific intermediary mentoring program, following its own experience.

In addition, other open materials might be helpful for this purpose:

MAST Module online course on how to become an innovation catalyst. MAST Module is a European project that works in the intersection of Arts, Science and Technology.

The **SME & Artist collaboration guide** created within the frame of Better Factory, another project of the STARTS constellation.

To ensure the success of the mentoring process, some tools will help the mentors:

» DFA Method platform, to provide the teams with all the information regarding the Methodology to be followed during their Residency that they can check anytime.

» Shared workspace that all the team can access and with all the documents they are working on. Google Drive, Sharepoint or Microsoft Teams are same examples of a shared workspace.

» Residency calendar *(Click to download the template)* including all the scheduled sessions (both training and mentoring) that the team can easily access to.

» Meeting template (Figure 1) to be filled by the mentor after each meeting. It should include the record of the progress made and the agreements reached.

Core Team Meeting (PHASE)	
Date	
Attendees	
Expected Phase	
Actual Phase	
Next Deliverable	
Progress	
Activities	
Challenges	
Tech side	
Agreements	
To do until next meeting	

Figure 1. Example of meeting template

» Individual Mentoring Plan (IMP), *(Click to download the template)* where the team will include the information on how their Residency is planned. It should have information about the following aspects:

- o Process and timeline of the Residency, including training sessions, meetings and Milestones.
- o Contact persons within the team
- o Milestones to be achieved during each phase of the Residency.
- o Meetings scheduled with the mentors.
- o Training program, with the dates and topics of the planned sessions.

EXPLORE THE FULL MUSAE FACTORY MODEL PACK

> **DESIGN FUTURE ART-DRIVEN METHOD (DFA)**
> **RESIDENCY FORMAT**
> **OPEN CALL FORMAT**
> **MENTORING GUIDELINES**
> **TRAINING GUIDELINES**
> **DFA PROJECTS AND USE CASES**
> **INTEGRATED STAKEHOLDER NETWORK**

DOWNLOAD ALL MATERIALS FROM THE MUSAE WEBSITE
https://musae.starts.eu/factory-model-pack/

MUSAE FACTORY MODEL | March 2025

S+T+ARTS   European Commission

MUSAE

Design⁺
Futures⁺
Art⁺
driven method