

Identification of the New East

Organisation

OID	E10196189
PIC	904497259
Full name	New East
National ID (if applicable)	40008254520
Form	Civic Society Organisation (NGO / non-profit)
Legal Address	7 Sauleskalna str
Country	Latvia
City	Daugavpils
Post Code	LV-5417
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Profile

Type of organization	Civic Society Organisation (NGO / non-profit)
Is the partner organization a public body?	Non public
Is the partner organization a non-profit?	Non-profit, non-governmental organisation Body Active at European level
Activity level	Local, Regional, National, European, International

Background and Experience

New East: Cartographies of Resistance and Collective Imagination

In an era of cultural fragmentation and socio-political volatility, New East emerges as a **radical site of convergence**—a transdisciplinary platform where artistic practice, civic engagement, and media literacy coalesce to **reconfigure the possibilities of collective agency**. For nearly a decade, New East has cultivated an alternative cartography of Eastern Europe, one that transcends hegemonic narratives and embraces the liminal, the emergent, the ungovernable.

As a **non-institutional cultural organism**, New East operates at the intersection of performative praxis, social dramaturgy, and activist epistemologies. Through **1,500 interventions—ranging from site-specific performances to media hackathons, critical pedagogy experiments to immersive theatre—New East has engaged over 50,000 participants**, shaping a distributed network of resistance and re-imagination.

A Contested Geography: Between Periphery and Center

Headquartered in Daugavpils, a city historically marked by **shifting borders, linguistic hybridity, and contested belonging**, New East functions as both a **creative hub and a critical agora**, hosting exhibitions, discourse programs, and performative laboratories that interrogate the politics of space, identity, and visibility. The organization's physical locus—a venue accommodating 150 participants—serves not as a fixed institution, but as a porous membrane, facilitating translocal dialogues and generative frictions across artistic, activist, and research-based practices.

Creative practices and pedagogy

New East's interventions are predicated on **new pedagogical architectures**—formats that subvert the static hierarchies of knowledge production. From design labs to counter-narrative gaming strategies, the organization deploys **gamification, performative disruption, and immersive storytelling** to dismantle epistemic enclosures and cultivate **new methodologies of resistance**. With **300 international partners and a dynamic cohort of 70 mentors, methodologists, and cultural practitioners**, New East fosters **infrastructures of care and dissensus**, foregrounding **decentralized authorship and non-extractive collaboration**.

The Aesthetics of Liberation: Towards a New Commons

Through its work in **film production, participatory performance, and media experimentation**, New East advances an **aesthetic of liberation**—one that is porous, non-linear, and rooted in **counter-hegemonic storytelling**. At its core, the organization is an incubator for **emancipatory cultural production**, offering an autonomous space for artists, journalists, and activists who **contest dominant paradigms, amplify suppressed voices, and envision futures**.

In a landscape increasingly dominated by reactionary forces and systemic erasure, New East asserts itself as a **living archive of resistance, an evolving assemblage of counter-narratives, and a rehearsal space for the worlds to come**. It is not merely a cultural project, but a **praxis of reworlding**—a commitment to ensuring that the **possibility of freedom, creativity, and critical dissent remains not only imaginable, but actionable**.

Education

The **Education** pillar at the New East Culture Institute is rooted in the belief that knowledge and critical thinking are fundamental to personal growth and societal progress. Our educational initiatives aim to equip childrens, youngsters, adults and seniors with the skills, resources, and confidence needed to navigate an increasingly complex world, while fostering creativity, critical analysis, and a deep understanding of media and social dynamics. Through a range of non-formal educational programs, we empower individuals to challenge norms, think independently, and actively shape the future of their communities.

A key component of this pillar is our **Media Lab, Mediathon and Capacity Labs** which focuses on developing media literacy and critical thinking skills. By educating people on how to engage with media responsibly, we help them combat misinformation and become discerning consumers and creators of content. Initiatives such as the **Media Lab Baltic acceleration program** and the **Critical Thinking program** have engaged hundreds of participants from across the region, fostering collaboration and encouraging innovative approaches to media challenges. The program's impact extends to practical workshops for young journalists, hackathons for idea generation, and international educational competitions—all designed to inspire and cultivate media-savvy leaders.

Additionally, New East has developed the **Business Lab**, which supports entrepreneurship and creative industries by offering workshops and training that provide young people with the tools to turn their ideas into reality. By promoting entrepreneurial skills, we inspire participants to think beyond traditional frameworks and embrace innovation as a force for social and economic change.

Through these efforts, the **Education pillar** has become a cornerstone of the New East's mission to foster a new generation of thinkers, creators, and leaders who are prepared to engage critically with their surroundings, shape the future of the region, and promote positive change in their communities.

<p>Culture</p>	<p>The Culture pillar at the New East Culture Institute is dedicated to promoting artistic expression, cultural diversity, and innovation throughout the region. We believe that culture plays a pivotal role in shaping communities, fostering dialogue, and driving social change. Through a wide range of performances, festivals, and creative initiatives, we provide platforms for both professional and amateur artists to showcase their work, while facilitating cross-cultural exchanges that strengthen bonds between diverse communities.</p> <p>One of our core activities is organising theatrical performances, which bring together professional directors, actors, and non-professional groups to explore different cultures and traditions. Our Solomon Community Theater Festival, performances, artistic events and workshops, offers young people and professionals the resources to create new works that challenge social norms and spark conversation. We also focus on engaging individuals from at-risk groups in these performances, empowering them to express themselves creatively, build self-confidence, and develop new skills.</p> <p>In addition to theater, we celebrate various art forms through concerts, exhibitions, performances, and multidisciplinary artistic events. These cultural experiences not only highlight the richness of local traditions but also create spaces for dialogue and collaboration. By championing cultural exchange, New East aims to promote social cohesion, inclusion, and understanding, contributing to the development of more vibrant, creative, and diverse communities.</p> <p>At the intersection of tradition and modernity, the Culture field at New East pushes the boundaries of what culture can achieve, using it as a powerful tool to bridge differences and foster a shared sense of belonging.</p>
<p>Media</p>	<p>The Media pillar at the New East Culture Institute is dedicated to advancing free and independent journalism, empowering young media professionals, and creating content that highlights positive change within local communities. In a time when information shapes perspectives and influences public discourse, we believe in the power of responsible, diverse, and innovative media to promote democracy, challenge stereotypes, and strengthen social cohesion.</p> <p>Our media programs focus on developing the skills and capacities of young journalists across the Baltic region, providing training, mentorship, and platforms for creative expression. Over the past eight years, we have built a dynamic team of emerging and experienced journalists who produce text, audio, and visual content that reflects the diverse narratives of Eastern Europe and the post-Soviet region. By focusing on stories of positive transformation, human rights, war, cultural initiatives, and youth empowerment, our media projects, documentaries and podcast series aim to foster a more nuanced and balanced understanding of the region's complexities.</p>

Civic Engagement

The **Civic Engagement** field at the New East Culture Institute is dedicated to empowering individuals and communities to actively shape their futures through participation in democratic processes, advocacy for human rights, and fostering community resilience. At the heart of our work is a commitment to creating inclusive societies where everyone has the opportunity to contribute and be heard. We conduct ongoing research across the Baltic States and over 10 EU countries on issues such as human rights, stereotypes, equality, community resilience, and media consumption. This research informs our programs and ensures that we address the real needs of the communities we serve, helping to challenge harmful stereotypes and promote social equality.

To strengthen local communities and make them more sustainable and audible in decision-making processes, we organize lecture cycles that focus on increasing political literacy. These lectures are designed to build the capacity of individuals and organizations, providing them with the tools and knowledge they need to engage more effectively in civic life. Our goal is to empower citizens to advocate for their rights, participate in governance, and contribute to a more democratic and equitable society.

We are deeply committed to the promotion of human rights, believing that everyone should have a voice, enjoy freedom, and be included in civil society. Our civic engagement initiatives focus on ensuring that marginalized and at-risk communities are not left out of the conversation, providing platforms for their voices to be heard and their needs addressed. Through our Capacity Lab, we offer training and resources to community organizations, helping them develop skills in advocacy, project management, and leadership. We also run a local leadership program that identifies and nurtures emerging leaders, providing them with mentorship and opportunities to build networks with other changemakers across the region.

Collaboration and resilience are key components of our approach to civic engagement. We foster partnerships between civil society organizations, government institutions, and the private sector, creating networks that work together to address shared challenges. By building these connections and promoting collective action, we help communities become more resilient, capable of addressing both current issues and future challenges. Ultimately, our work in civic engagement is about creating stronger, more inclusive societies where all individuals, regardless of their background, can participate fully in public life, advocate for their rights, and contribute to the development of a more just and democratic region.

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Skills and Expertise of key staff involved

New East operates at the confluence of culture, education, media, and civic activism, forging new methodologies of resistance and collective imagination through transdisciplinary practice. Our expertise lies in the rethinking of artistic expression, where performance, site-specific interventions, and speculative dramaturgy become tools for interrogating power, memory, and social transformation. In education, we dismantle traditional hierarchies of knowledge production, constructing participatory pedagogies that merge media literacy, counter-narrative gaming, and experimental learning environments. Our work in media challenges hegemonic narratives by amplifying marginalized voices, creating independent journalism ecosystems, and developing immersive storytelling formats that disrupt mainstream discourse. We cultivate a dynamic landscape of civic engagement, where human rights advocacy, political literacy, and grassroots organizing converge to empower communities and resist authoritarian structures. Through our Business Lab and Media Lab, we foster creative industries and media innovation, equipping emerging practitioners with the tools to navigate shifting cultural and economic terrains. Our research-based interventions explore the intersections of digital media, memory politics, and social cohesion, offering new frameworks for resilience in post-Soviet and postcolonial contexts. By integrating documentary filmmaking, performative resistance, and hybrid media strategies, we create a living archive of counter-hegemonic narratives that challenge the politics of visibility. New East is a laboratory for emergent futures, where artists, educators, journalists, and activists co-author new epistemologies rooted in care, dissent, and imagination. In an era of fragmentation and disinformation, we remain a site of convergence, fostering interconnected networks of solidarity and reworlding. Our practice is not merely an act of creation but a commitment to rupture, reconfiguration, and the perpetual construction of spaces where freedom, agency, and critical dissent are not only possible but inevitable.

Joren Dobkiewicz – Head of New East

Human Rights | Cultural Policy | International Collaboration

Joren provides visionary leadership for New East, shaping its long-term strategy, institutional partnerships, and impact-driven programming. With a deep background in cultural policy, transnational networks, and critical media studies, he spearheads initiatives that bridge participative innovation with civic activism, human rights advocacy, ensuring that New East remains a vital force for cultural transformation in the EU border region and beyond.

Alina Hachetlova – Board Member, Senior Project Curator

Program Curation | Non-Formal Education | Civic Engagement

As a senior curator, Alina is responsible for developing and overseeing flagship projects that foster social resilience, media literacy, and participatory democracy. With extensive experience in NGO leadership, educational program design, and cultural activism, she ensures that New East's initiatives remain responsive, inclusive, and impactful. An important part of Alina's experience is creating playful (gamification) methods in New East's educational programs.

Viktors Andruškevičs – International Program Curator

Global Partnerships | Cross-Border Media Literacy Programs | Policy Advocacy

Viktors specializes in building transnational alliances, expanding New East's reach through international collaborations, EU-funded programs, and global cultural diplomacy. His expertise lies in advocacy for independent cultural ecosystems, ensuring that New East serves as a critical bridge between grassroots activism and international cultural discourse. Victor's important role is working on international media literacy research and education programs across Europe.

Marina Ivanova – Culture and Education Program Curator

Curatorial Research | Artistic Pedagogy | Community-Based Learning

Marina designs and curates education-driven cultural programs, merging artistic expression with critical pedagogy. Her work focuses on creating accessible, interdisciplinary spaces for knowledge exchange, engaging artists, educators, and local communities in dialogues on social justice, heritage, and contemporary artistic practice. Marina is a producer of various educational and cultural initiatives of the New East Institute of Culture in Latvia and abroad.

Eduards Beļņikovs – Technical Administration, Director

Infrastructure Management | Theatrical Innovation | Event Production

Eduards oversees the technological and operational aspects of New East, ensuring seamless execution of its multimedia events, digital platforms, and performance-based projects. His expertise spans event logistics, production management, and technological integration in cultural programming. Eduard also directs some of the productions at New East, working with some of the most difficult to publicly discuss topics in our society. He also specializes in forum theater for local and vulnerable communities.

Elīna Veinšteina – Project Coordinator

Program Execution | Grant Management | Youth Outreach

Elīna ensures the smooth execution of New East's multifaceted programs, handling grant writing, logistical coordination, and stakeholder relations. With a strong background in project management and cultural administration, she facilitates collaboration between artists, funders, and partner institutions. Her role is critical in engaging and working with youth through New East's participatory programs and cultural projects.

Jegor Afonich – Multimedia Content Creator, Project Coordinator

Visual Storytelling | Film & Digital Media | Audiovisual Production

Jegor is at the forefront of New East's media strategy, producing documentary films, visual narratives, and



interactive content that amplify marginalized voices. His work bridges cinematic storytelling, investigative journalism, and digital activism, ensuring that New East's initiatives reach broad and diverse audiences.

Alisa Pukhalska – SMM and Strategic Communication, Project Coordinator

Digital Campaigns | Public Relations | Narrative Strategy

Alisa leads strategic communication efforts, crafting compelling narratives that resonate across social and traditional media platforms. She develops and implements engagement strategies that bolster New East's visibility, audience outreach, and community mobilization efforts.

Anna Jurevich – Designer

Visual Identity | Experiential Design | Brand Development

Anna shapes the aesthetic and visual language of New East, ensuring coherence across branding, print, and digital assets. Her expertise lies in translating complex socio-political themes into visually engaging experiences, making activism and cultural discourse more accessible and immersive.

The New East team is a dynamic and interdisciplinary collective of cultural practitioners, stakeholders, educators, media experts, and social innovators dedicated to fostering systemic change through art, education, and civic engagement. In addition to our core leadership, we collaborate with a diverse network of professionals who bring their expertise to our initiatives:

Artists – Visual artists, performers, soundmakers, choreographers, musicians and curators who create exhibitions, performances, and immersive experiences that challenge norms and inspire critical dialogue.

Editors and Writers – Cultural critics, journalists, and storytellers who shape meaningful narratives and alternative perspectives within independent media and publishing.

Educational Methodologists, Trainers, and Media Experts – Specialists in media literacy, journalism, and critical pedagogy, including directors, journalists, and educators, who develop transformative learning experiences for diverse audiences.

Finance and Administration Team – Professionals who ensure the sustainability, transparency, and strategic growth of New East's operations.

Volunteers – A committed group of local and international volunteers who play a crucial role in organizing and executing our festivals, conferences, hackathons, and cultural interventions.

Together, this collective forms a vibrant and ever-evolving ecosystem, where art, media, and activism converge to shape an inclusive, democratic, and culturally rich future.

Other Community Funding			
Title of the Program	Type and Number	Role and Budget (IA)	Area
MIL Skills	2023-1-LV01-KA220-AD U-000156693 (KA220-ADU)	Lead (Applicant), 250 000 EUR	Latvia, Greece, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Spain, France, Italy
Disinformation Challenge	Google funds, in partnership with CRI	National Administrator (Partner)	Latvia (and Lithuania and Estonia)
Get The Net	Erasmus FPA-OG, Operating Grants Framework Partnership	Partner Organisation, 85 000 EUR	Latvia, Spain, Romania, Portugal, Poland, Lithuania, Italy, Denmark, Croatia, Bulgaria
Media Lab > Daugavpils	2023-3-LV02-ESC30-S OL-000181679 (ESC30-SOL)	Lead (Applicant), 8 028 EUR	Latvia
New East Digital Capacity Building	2022-1-LV01-KA122-AD U-000071956 (KA122-ADU)	Lead (Applicant), 20 380 EUR	Latvia, Spain

Examples of our programs from the past year		
Pillar	Name of the program/event	Contact person
Education	Media Lab Borderlines , Conference in Riga	Joren Dobkiewicz, joren@neweasteurope.com
	Skills Lab for Seniors in Latgale	Alina Hachetlova, alina@neweasteurope.com
	Media Lab > Warszawa	Alina Hachetlova, alina@neweasteurope.com
	MIL Skills	Viktors Andruskevics, viktors@neweasteurope.com
Culture	Performance " The Man and the Tyrant "	Marina Ivanova, marina@neweasteurope.com

Examples of our programs from the past year

	Exhibition " Ukraine. Rupture "	Joren Dobkiewicz, joren@neweasteurope.com
	Performance " To Close To See "	Eduards Belnikovs, contact@neweasteurope.com
	Exhibition " 25 Steps To The Freedom "	Viktors Andruskevics, viktors@neweasteurope.com
Media	Media Lab > Daugavpils	Jegor Afonich, neweasterasmus@gmail.com
	Documentary " Heteropils "	Jegor Afonich, neweasterasmus@gmail.com
Civic Activism	Events to support Ukraine in Daugavpils	Alisa Pukhalska, alisa@neweasteurope.com
	Research about interethnic and intergender conflicts in Latvia	Joren Dobkiewicz, joren@neweasteurope.com

Our Partners

Strategic Partners: Google, European Commission, State Education Development Agency, US Embassy in Latvia, US Embassy in Tallinn, Fundacja Pomoc Polakom na Wschodzie, Nordic Council of Ministers, Goethe Institut Riga, OIP, Zinc Network, Israel Embassy in Latvia, Netherlands Embassy, Embassy of Ukraine in Latvia.

Partners: Baltic Centre for Media Excellence, Civic Resilience Initiative, Latvian Civic Alliance, DOTS Foundation, Festival Lampa, Riga TechGirls, Debunk.org, Zuzeum, Rothko Museum, TechSoup Europe, Integration Foundation, Voluda, Cita Daugavpils, USA Information Center in Daugavpils, Latgale Regional Library, American Space in Narva, VitaTiim, Centrum Edukacji Obywatelskiej, Latvian Association of Contemporary Culture NGO's, VabaLava, Mikhail Chekhov Riga Russian Theatre, Civitta Latvia, 3D Friends,

Academia: Warsaw University (Institute of Information and Book Studies), European Humanities University, Stockholm School of Economics, Daugavpils University,

Media: LTV, ETV+, TVNET, Delfi, Chayka, LRT, Latgales Laiks, Current Time, Novaya Gazeta, Latvian Radio, Lakuga, Nara Zurnalistika, ReBaltica,

Travel Information

Daugavpils is Latvia's second-largest city, located in the southeastern part of the country near the borders of Lithuania and Belarus. Known for its rich multicultural heritage, Soviet-era architecture, and vibrant contemporary art scene. Easily accessible by train, bus, or car, Daugavpils is about 230 km from Riga and 180 km from Vilnius, with regular train and bus connections taking approximately 3 to 4 hours. The city offers a mix of historical landmarks, such as the 19th-century Daugavpils Fortress, and modern cultural spaces, making it an evolving hub for artistic and civic engagement in the Baltic region.

In the heart of the old town is our New East space with more than 300 square meters, several co-working rooms, a space for exhibitions and performances, a hall for small events and events for more than 100 people. Here is more about how to get to us: https://www.instagram.com/p/C6qhdeLMHlt/?img_index=1

500 m	Bus station and Railway station	Daugavpils
180 km	Airport	Vilnius
230 km	Airport, Ferry terminal	Riga