Dear {{ contact.FIRSTNAME }}

December has come around again, doesn't time fly! We can't help but reflect on the incredible journey we've had this past year. It has been a time filled with inspiring moments, significant milestones, and the unwavering support of our incredible community.

There are many highlights from 2023, one being the launch of the Emerging Leaders Artivism Alliance program, which is boosting leaders across Europe and Africa in the realm of art and activism, creating spaces for meaningful expression and change. Additionally, the merging of Fast Forward & Up Collective shows our commitment to innovation and progress in the future world of work. Finally, the successful conclusion of our EU-funded EMBRACE Project after two years marks a great achievement in our continuous dedication to connecting newcomers with decision-makers through public leadership.

On a community level, we've seen the exciting growth of the PLACE Team, now with 11 team members! We've rekindled old friendships, forging stronger connections, and extended a warm welcome to numerous new friendly faces. As we say goodbye to 2023, we want to express our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has been riding along with us this year. Your unwavering enthusiasm has been a key motivation, and we couldn't have done it without you. Read for more info on what happened this month with PLACE Network...

Artivism Alliance Catalysts are shining bright through our partners

Our Emerging Leaders Artivism Alliance partner, CAN (Community Arts Network), have featured two PLACE Catalysts in their latest Newsletter. The article focuses on how the arts can empower refugees and migrants across the world. For Uzoamaka Asiegbu, migrant, gender, and disability inclusion specialist, the act of storytelling from people with lived experiences is key to shifting harmful narratives. And filmmaker Cedric Bichano is cited in his work of boosting refugee voices through telling ‘untold stories’.

Read more about Uzoamaka and Cedric, alongside other inspiring stories such as the Tumaini Festival in Malawi’s refugee camp, in the article here

Read the article here
Closing the EMBRACE program with a bang

This December, our Director Shawqi Ahmed and Public Leadership program manager Selma Rassoul gathered for one last time with the partners of the EMBRACE program in Prato, Italy! After two years, this key pilot in creating a two pronged approach toward more democratic participation aimed at newcomers as well as host cities has come to an end. As a group, partners and participants from all over Europe took stock of the work accomplished and reflected on the impact the project has already had. To give you a sense of the bubbling energy of the gathering, who better to hear from than a Catalyst who shared what she felt during this program? Nassira, who joined the program from Prato and ended up joining both the Emerging Leaders fellowship and accelerator says PLACE gave her the confidence to be the best leader she can be. She highlighted some specific events that the program matched her with: two trainings in Slovenia on mentorship and her enrollment as a BMW Responsible Leader, all thanks to the recommendation of PLACE. This closing event was also the opportunity to release the final EMBRACE Booklet: Guideline on promoting Migrant Leadership: From Capacity-Building to Practical Experiences.

Through EMBRACE, a two-pronged training path has been developed, aimed at building the capacity of newcomers to engage socially and politically, and at developing in local governments the competencies needed to include them in policy development. After two years, EMBRACE is proud to present this final booklet, reflecting the activities, learnings, and guidelines learnt from the project. In 2024, the Resilient Cities project will pick up on this foundational work to extend these methods across Europe; stay tuned!
Thanks for joining us at Entrepreneurship Fest 2023!

A resounding THANK YOU to everyone who made Entrepreneurship Fest 2023 on December 6th an unforgettable success! We were honoured to welcome both Paola Salazar to talk about the incredible work Unir does in facilitating the academic integration of newcomers, and Marie Cohuet from Ben&Jerry’s France to discuss their current activism campaigns, such as ‘Enfant Avant Migrant’ with Utopia56.

This year’s fest showcased the remarkable achievements of our Fast Forward cohort (so far), a group of ambitious newcomer women in Paris who have been diligently crafting their projects through our Innovation Labs since September. This event marked a pivotal moment in their career-accelerating journey, and we couldn’t be prouder of their accomplishments in ideating, prototyping, and pitching their entrepreneurial projects! Click the button below to find out more information on the individual projects. You’ll find support services for new working moms, an app to ease the understanding of skincare, and much more!

See the project booklet

Their journey is not over yet, and until their Graduation in March we will be continuing to develop their transversal innovation skills through online workshops that ensure they are ‘future-proofed’ in the world of work. There is much more in store for them alongside their coaching sessions and partner networking events, so keep an eye out!

Food for Thought: Creating spaces for belonging

What does it take to make you feel like you belong somewhere? This was the question we asked the PLACE Team during our Winter Retreat, and their responses were nothing short of inspiring. Through the lens of creative expression, our
team shared their thoughts and feelings, offering a glimpse into the essence of belonging.

Curious to see what they said? Take a moment to watch this video that captures the unique perspectives of the PLACE Team.

This question not only provided a platform for self-expression but also allowed us to think deeper about the importance of creating spaces for belonging, especially for newcomers. Addressing social, emotional, and practical needs is at the core of our mission and by fostering inclusive, supportive, and thriving environments, we empower everyone to feel welcomed and valued in our community.

As we reflect on these insights, we invite you to share your thoughts. What helps YOU feel a sense of belonging? Connect with us on social media and let us know!