



SUSTAIN

**making space
for art in
transitions
that matter**

SUSTAIN: Sustainable Artistic Innovation

The Spacemaker Toolbox

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History of Origin

Spacemakers make room for art – a reflection model.

Many artists, creators, and artistic researchers dedicate their work to systemic change. These changemakers seek the unknown path, question what seems logical, or connect what appears to be exclusive. However, change does not happen by itself. Precisely because access to the system is not evident, there must be space for these artists, creators, and artistic researchers in other domains.

There are increasingly more parties committed to this cause. Organizations that advocate for a strong position for art in other domains. In places where art is not a self-evident force, factor, or party. These parties are called Spacemakers. With SUSTAIN, we explore how Spacemakers create and safeguard space for art so that it can contribute to the transition to a society that is ecologically sustainable and socially just.

SUSTAIN is a research project by The Hague University of Applied Sciences (Jacco van Uden and Kim Caarls) and Avans University of Applied Sciences (Godelieve Spaas, Marga Rotteveel, and Olga Mink). One of the outcomes of this research is The Spacemaker Toolbox. A toolbox for Spacemakers to research and professionalize their own practice.

The Spacemaker Model consists of four parts:

1. Art: Qualities & Application Areas
2. The Mixing Console
3. Development of an Ecosystem
4. Positioning

Some guidelines for using the model:

- The model is available in both Dutch and English.
- The four parts of the model can be downloaded individually or as a package (including instructions).
- The recommended order is as described above.
- Above all, the model is an instrument for critical reflection on the existing practices of Spacemakers. Because differences in insight about these practices matter, we recommend engaging with the model together with

several people at the same time. These could be different employees of the Spacemaker but also the artists with whom the Spacemaker works or a party from the 'other domain' who has a good view of the Spacemaker's approach.

- Good guidance is of great importance. A guide monitors time and progress but also plays a crucial role in the quality of critical reflection. For each part of the model, we have included tips for the guide.

Manual

Model 1. Art: Qualities and Application Areas

		qualities of art				
		to investigate	to reveal /unmask	to dismantle /undermine	to imagine /speculate	to design /develop
fields of application	economy					
	society					
	ecology					
	technology					
	art					
	business					
	science					
	policy					
	education					
	other, namely...					



Purpose

As a Spacemaker, you create space for art in spheres or domains other than art itself. But in which area do Spacemakers see opportunities for art, and for which aspect of art is space specifically being made? This first exercise makes you think about which 'qualities' of art you, as a Spacemaker, deploy in which places (spheres).

Explanation

Below is the explanation of the matrix:

- Columns: Qualities of Art

Art can operate in various ways in different spheres. For this reason, we distinguish five different 'qualities' of art in the columns of the matrix. These are five ways in which art can contribute to systemic change:

1. **Investigating:** Art can examine how something works, why it works that way, and what the implications are. Artistic research draws attention to issues that may remain underexplored in other types of research, such as scientific studies.
2. **Revealing/Unmasking:** Art critically questions the current state of affairs within and of the system. Art not only shows; it challenges the status quo.
3. **Dismantling/Undermining:** Art not only addresses issues, driven by criticism of the existing system, it also tries to intervene in that system.
4. **Speculating/Imagining:** Art looks beyond the existing (system) and suggests/imagines how things could be different.
5. **Designing/Developing:** Art that explicitly wants to be part of the solution or forward movement. Art contributes concrete proposals to an economy that works.

- Rows: Application Areas

As a Spacemaker, you create space for art in other spheres. But where do you make that space with your projects? The rows of the matrix distinguish different sectors. Experience shows it's not easy to come up with a categorization of spheres that all Spacemakers can work with. The model does not rely on a classic categorization of sectors but distinguishes between different spheres. These spheres can help you differentiate according to the nature of systemic change. A few blank rows are added where not yet named but workable and relevant spheres for you can be filled in.

What Do You Need?

- It works best if you print this map once on A0 and hang it up. If that's not possible, you can also print it for each participant on A4.
- Post-its
- Tape to hang up the A0
- Pens/markers

Step-by-Step Plan

1. Think about the projects you have run over the past few years. Write these on the post-its, one project per post-it (at least 5 and at most 15 projects in total).
2. Then, look at which cells in the matrix these projects best fit. A project can only be plotted in one cell. Therefore, answer the following questions per project:
 - With which quality of art is primarily worked in this project?
 - In which sphere is space primarily made for art with this project?

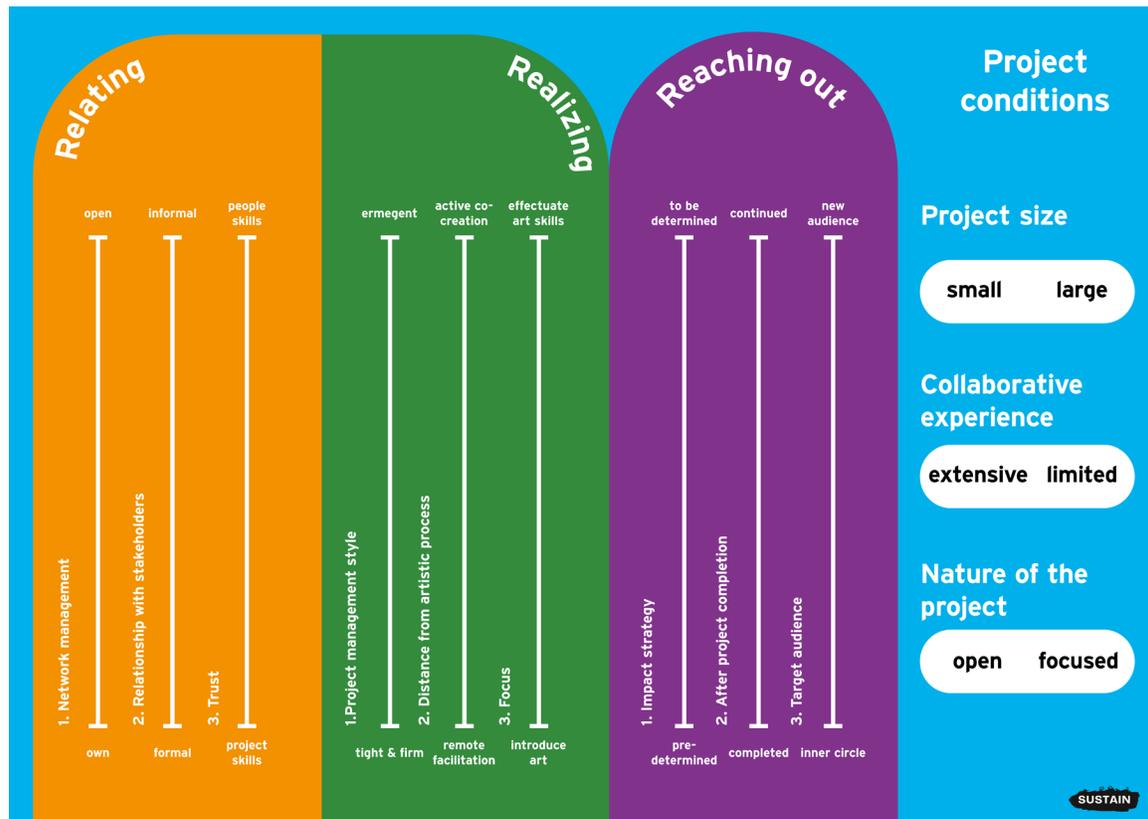
Tip: Often, it's not easy to assign a project to just one quality or application area. Force yourself to do that here. Precisely by discussing with each other what the primary quality and the primary application area are, differences in insight can be brought to the surface.

3. When you have filled in the different projects, critical reflection begins. Discuss this filled-in matrix together with questions like:
 - What's the overall picture? Do you see a strong spread of projects over spheres and qualities? Or clear clusters around preferred qualities and spheres?
 - Does the overall picture mainly evoke recognition or surprise?
 - Does the picture correspond with how you see your own Spacemaker practice?
 - What are the advantages and disadvantages of the current distribution of projects over spheres and qualities?
 - Take enough time to name and delve into the similarities and differences.
4. For each participant: then select three projects that, according to you, most clearly bear the signature of the Spacemaker ('signature projects'). Discuss

the outcomes of the top three choices with each other. Are you on the same page regarding the selection of projects? Are there significant differences in insight? How can these potential differences be explained? Try to clarify together: what makes a project a signature project, a project that is unmistakably 'ours'?

5. The last step in using this tool: jointly choose one project that will be central in the use of the next tool. A signature project that all the different players are familiar with.

Model 2. The Mixing Console



Purpose

The use of the mixing console enables Spacemakers to precisely investigate how they function under various project conditions. There are several ways to use the mixing console:

- **As a means for self-reflection:** The mixing console encourages Spacemakers to become explicit about the choices they make at the project level, bringing even the implicit decisions to light.
- **To identify differences in insight:** By collaborating with different colleagues or other stakeholders familiar with the Spacemaker's approach, it becomes clear how each person interprets and understands the Spacemaker's strategy.
- **As part of the strategy formation process:** The mixing console can be used to compare the current situation and approach with alternative approaches, serving as an important element in shaping the strategy.

Explanation

The mixing console stimulates self-evaluation and aims primarily to initiate a process of self-reflection or discussion. The mixing console consists of two main components:

1. **The project conditions ('structure')**: These are the knobs on the right side of the mixing console, i.e., the elements that are more or less fixed. As a Spacemaker, you generally have little to no control over these project conditions.
2. **The choice menu ('agency')**: These are the sliders or faders on the left side of the mixing console: these are the variables that you, as a Spacemaker, can largely influence yourself and therefore vary according to your own insight.

What Do You Need?

- The mixing console printed in color on A0 size paper.
- Pens/markers.
- Tokens or pawns for each player, each in a unique color.

Step-by-Step Plan

1. The project conditions ('structure')

The mixing console covers three different project conditions. By setting these project conditions before you start with the choice menu (the sliders), you clarify the type of project you are working on. If you have already completed the first model "Art: Qualities & Application Areas," now bring out your signature project. If you haven't done this yet, make sure to choose one specific project.

The three project conditions are:

1. Project size: Small vs. Large

Explanation: Not all projects are the same. Some projects involve a lot of time and money. Other projects are modest in both time and budget. What type of project are we talking about here? Small or large?

2. Collaboration experience: Extensive vs. limited

Explanation: As a Spacemaker, you participate in projects involving various parties from different backgrounds. Sometimes, these parties have extensive experience with such interdisciplinary collaborations, while in other projects, parties are coming together for whom this cross-boundary collaboration is new. Is there extensive or limited experience in collaboration in the selected project?

3. Nature of the project: Open vs. focused

Explanation: Some projects in which you are active as Spacemakers have an exploratory character without a clearly defined goal. Other projects are more structured, for example, because they must contribute to a solution for a specific problem or because they must lead to the development of a prototype. What type of project are we talking about here? Open and exploratory or focused and specific?

Background: By 'fixing' the project conditions, you can prevent players from having to conclude that the way of working strongly depends on the project when using the mixing console. Such a conclusion might be valid but also stands in the way of a targeted reflection on one's own practice.

2. Activities ('agency')

After setting the project conditions, you can indicate how you work or have worked within the chosen project using the sliders in the choice menu. Based on the SUSTAIN research, the mixing console distinguishes between three types of activities:

1. **Relating:** These are all the activities you undertake as a Spacemaker within the project related to shaping and maintaining relationships with the project stakeholders.
2. **Realising:** This includes the activities you undertake within the project to complete the actual work and achieve goals: getting the job done.
3. **Reaching out:** These are the activities you undertake to bring the project results to a wider audience and make them known in the world.

Each participant has their own colored tokens. The process proceeds from left to right, with each topic being addressed separately. In total, there are nine topics, and for each topic, you determine the position on the slider where you want to

place your token. This can be at the ends ('extremes') of the slider but also at any intermediate positions. Only after each player has made their choice do the players place their tokens on the slider.

Below is the explanation of the nine topics. See further below for the questions to guide the discussion.

RELATING

Network management: Own vs. open

Explanation: Spacemaking always happens in networks of parties. How would you describe your view and place in the network based on the relationships within this project? How do you see your network management? Are you as a Spacemaker busy building, maintaining, and cultivating your own network? Or do you see yourself more as a participant in an open network?

Relationship with stakeholders: Formal vs. informal

Explanation: Spacemakers maintain relationships with various stakeholders. How do you shape these relationships? Is the emphasis on a business-like and formal approach? Or are the relationships more informal in nature?

Trust: Project skills vs. people skills

Explanation: Trust is essential in all facets of Spacemaking. But how do you build trust within the collaboration? Does it mainly stem from your skills in project management (trust based on your knowledge of project execution), or are it primarily interpersonal skills with which you create trust by closely guiding the individual participants?

REALIZING

Project management style: Tight & firm vs. emergent

Explanation: Projects can be managed in different ways. What is your approach? Would you characterize your project management style as 'tight and firm'? Or do you work according to the principle that projects gradually develop and that the project management approach flexibly adapts to this?

Distance to the artistic process: Remote facilitation vs. active co-creation

Explanation: In creating space for art, you must also decide on the level of involvement you have in the artistic process. Do you facilitate the artist's artistic

process from a distance as a Spacemaker? Or are you more of an active co-creator in the artistic process?

Focus: Introducing art vs. effectuating art

Explanation: Creating space for art in other spheres consists of two 'movements'. The first movement is introducing art into another sphere. In other words: making art happen in a place where it normally does not occur. This is a disruptive movement. The second movement relates to the aftermath, effectuation, or 'implementation' of the art in that other sphere. This is the movement in which the art must be integrated and made operational. Which movement receives the most attention from the Spacemaker?

REACHING OUT

Impact strategy: Pre-determined vs. to be determined

Explanation: When do you determine the strategy for creating impact with the project? Is that something you establish beforehand at the start of the project? Or is the impact strategy flexibly determined as the project develops?

After project completion: Completed vs. continued

Explanation: Once a project is officially completed, you face a choice: do you consider the project as concluded and completed ("tie a bow around it")? Or do you see the formal end rather as the beginning of a new phase, for example, further development, spill-over, or spin-off?

Target audience: Inner circle vs. new audience

Explanation: When disseminating the project results, do you primarily focus on the 'inner circle' of those directly involved in the project? Or do you strive to actively bring the project results to new target groups?

3. *The Mixing Console Discussion*

The mixing console primarily serves as a conversation starter. More important than the specific positions of the sliders on the mixing console - there is no "ideal setting" - is the quality and depth of the reflective conversation that follows after setting the positions. A good conversation with the help of the mixing console brings essential issues to light. It raises questions such as: How did we go about this project, and why? Which aspects do we consider self-evident in our approach? What is the role of previous decisions and agreements, and what about the

expectations of stakeholders? How do personal competencies (what we are good at) or developmental areas (where we need to grow) influence our way of working? This exercise also offers the opportunity to explore how participants interpret the practice of the Spacemaker, including the similarities and differences between their perspectives.

Conduct the conversation based on questions like:

- What initial impression emerges upon seeing the whole?
- What stands out about the way players determine their position on the mixing console? Do participants make decisions quickly, or do they seem to hesitate? What could this mean?
- Do you and your fellow players primarily focus on the ends of the slider or more in the middle? Are there outliers at the ends on certain sliders while the rest are in the middle? Can you explain the different positions?
- When a slider is in the middle, always ask: what does this mean? Does it represent a compromise between the two ends, thus a balanced position? Or is it rather because you are not sure?
- Also, investigate whether the sliders seem to influence each other (emotionally). Does the position of one slider seem to affect the position of another? What could be the reason for this?
- In evaluating the different participants, look for similarities in how you interpret the current situation. What does this say, and is it desirable for you all to be on the same line? Also, find differences in the interpretation of the current situation between participants. What does this mean, and how important is it that you do not all have the same viewpoint?

If this mixing console discussion has been satisfactorily conducted, you may choose to organize one or more additional rounds of play. This can be done in two ways:

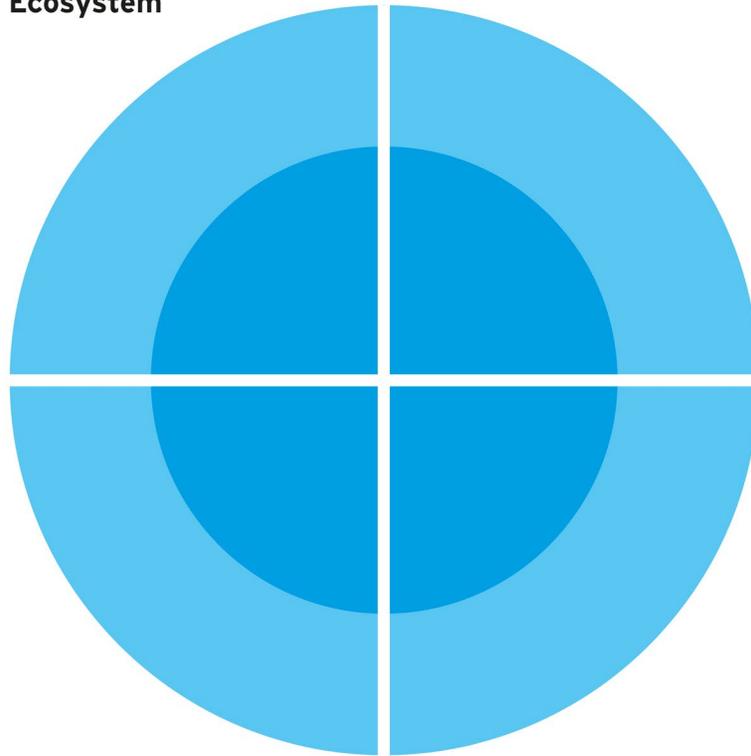
1. Take the chosen signature project as a starting point again but approach it with an ideal future image in mind: if we were to execute this project again, where would we like to position ourselves on the sliders? Then explore: what is the difference between the current situation and this future vision? What changes are taking place, and why? What steps are needed to realize this ideal future scenario? And after considering everything, is it something we

want to strive for and are capable of achieving? What concrete steps would we then need to take?

2. Another possibility is to choose a new signature project and then investigate whether there are similarities or differences when we compare the two projects side by side. What explains these similarities or differences? Can the similarities and/or differences be adequately explained, or do they raise questions?

Model 3. Developing an Ecosystem

Spacemaker Ecosystem



SUSTAIN

Purpose

In the previous two sub-models, the emphasis was on the choices that you, as a Spacemaker, have control over. At the same time, the effectiveness of a Spacemaker is significantly influenced by the degree to which the field in which the Spacemaker operates is receptive to the kind of work they do. To what extent do relevant parties consider it logical, beneficial, important, urgent, or necessary for the Spacemaker to create space for the arts? How conducive is the environment in which the Spacemakers work? To address this, we introduce the concept of the 'Spacemaker ecosystem.' As a relatively small and emerging 'sector,' Spacemakers play a crucial role in developing such an ecosystem. This involves engaging in activities that benefit the sector as a whole in the long term. Systemic change necessitates dynamic collaboration among all stakeholders. As a Spacemaker, you are both a part of and a developer of an ecosystem focused on the transitions that concern you as a Spacemaker.

Explanation

'A healthy, mature, and fruitful ecosystem'

In the Spacemakers' 'ecosystem,' we refer to a unified network of participants whose formal and informal connections mutually influence their performance and impact on their environment. As a Spacemaker within this ecosystem, you have the opportunity to undertake activities focused on reinforcing this unified network and cementing your place within it. The goal is to 'build a healthy, mature, and fruitful ecosystem.' Therefore, we're discussing activities that are distinct from those tied to specific project activities (as outlined in The Mixing Console). The development of an ecosystem includes activities that go beyond the scope of individual projects, occurring in the broader context or beyond the confines of specific projects.

By exploring the various types of activities that take place outside of projects, you can gain insight into what your own 'ecosystem' looks like or should look like. It's important to ask for clarity about the activities to also understand 'resource allocation': where do you invest your time? And where would you want to invest your time?

This component offers insight into your Spacemaker Ecosystem and the choices you make concerning activities that focus on this ecosystem, which occur around and between projects. It encourages self-reflection on your actions. Furthermore, it can reveal potential differences among Spacemakers' employees. Moreover, this component allows for the comparison of current practices and situations with envisioned future scenarios, thereby aiding in the development of strategic processes.

What Do You Need?

- The Spacemaker ecosystem (the circles with a cross through them) on A0 size.
- The table 'Building a healthy, mature, and fruitful ecosystem' on A0 size.
- The table 'Activities and Players' on A0 size. It works best if you print the ecosystem (circles) and the tables on A0 size and hang them next to each other.
- Tape to hang the Spacemaker ecosystem and the table.

- If you have also completed the first model 'Art: Qualities & Application Areas', bring out the matrix.
- Post-its.
- Pens/markers.

Step-by-Step Plan

1. *Who are in your Spacemaker ecosystem?*

- Use the Spacemaker ecosystem (the circles with a cross through them) below and select 4 application areas.
- If the first exercise 'Art: Qualities & Application Areas' has also been done, you can return to the matrix and choose the 4 main application areas there.
- Now, take post-its and write down the players in your Spacemaker network (one per post-it). These are all the players you consider relevant and with whom you have an active relationship.
- Choose and position the most important players in your Spacemaker network: in the inner circle, you place the most important stakeholders/relevant players for your Spacemaker practice, and the further out, the less important the players are.
- Reflect on the chosen players. Is your network now complete? Are there important players missing? Are there players not yet in your network (with whom you don't have an active relationship but who you consider important or relevant) that you would like to include? Write these down (in a different color/on a different color post-it) and position them on the map.

2. *Gathering relevant ecosystem activities*

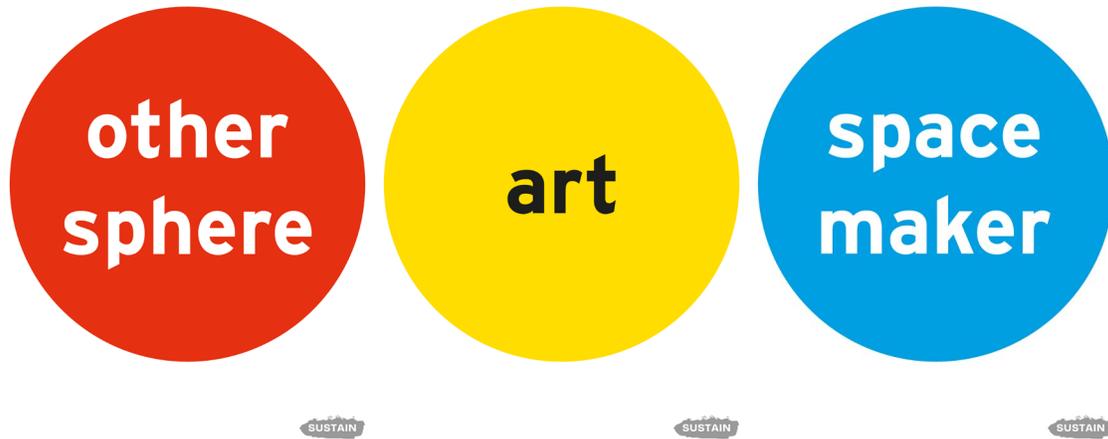
- Write down the activities you perform as part of developing your ecosystem on post-its (1 per post-it).
- Place the post-its in the table to map out the activities you perform as part of your ecosystem development. The table has three categories of activities: activities related to publishing (online or offline), activities involving participation (in committees, interest groups, or other professional networks), and activities about presenting (think of keynotes, guest lectures, etc.). To get you started, here are some examples of such activities (note: this list is not exhaustive):

- Talks/keynotes
- Social media posts
- Participation in expert groups
- Participation in committees
- Participation in interest groups
- Participation in sector-specific seminars/conferences
- Publications in sector-specific journals
- Publications in the public domain (newspapers)
- Publications on your own website
- Academic publications
- Lobbying
- Informal networking (e.g., golfing, coffee meetings, lunch appointments)

3. Do the activities match the players?

- Now use the table below: it works best to print this table large (A0) and hang it up.
- In the first column, enter the player according to their position on the map.
- In the second column, look at the activities from the previous table and fill in which activities are currently directed at which stakeholders.
- Now take a good look at the overall picture: are your activities (well) aligned with your relevant players? Is the resource allocation correct?
- The third column is for reflection and further thinking together: what would you want/could/must do differently to reach the more important players for you (better)?

Model 4. Positioning



Purpose

This section aims to help you gain insights into your position relative to the art you wish to facilitate space for and in relation to the other sphere where you intend to create this space. The other components of the Spacemaker Model are primarily cognitive in exploring Spacemaker practices. This positioning exercise, however, leans more on an intuitive, spatial, and systemic approach.

Explanation

In this systemic exercise, you will focus on the entire system, incorporating the three key components of the Spacemaker system: you as a Spacemaker, the alternate sphere, and the art. During this exercise, you will either physically position yourself in formations or set up these formations by arranging the three components, represented as dots, in a space in a way that mirrors your practice. This hands-on method enables you to reveal unconscious patterns and relationships within your Spacemaker practice in relation to the other sphere and the art.

It is vital that you feel empowered to actively explore and engage with the concept of positioning. The act of searching is a fundamental aspect of the exercise. Take your time and do not rush the process. A key principle of this exercise is that the

physical manipulation of dots and arrows is part of the exploratory process. It represents a form of thinking with your hands and feet.

What Do You Need?

- The three dots printed in large size
- Arrows printed on A4 paper

Step-by-Step Plan

1. There are three dots: one for the Spacemaker, one for the other sphere, and one for the art. Also, there are arrows to better visualize the direction of the relationships. It's easiest to start with a concrete project, for example, the signature project that was also central to the mixing console exercise.
2. By manipulating the configuration (how the dots and arrows relate to each other) and also considering the distances between the various elements, you get a sense of how you position yourself as a Spacemaker in relation to the other actors. You are encouraged to verbalize your reflections on the accuracy of the positioning ("No, we were closer to the artist, perhaps even behind the artist").
3. The other participants ask questions and encourage trying out different positions if they notice that the person arranging the setup is uncertain.
4. Observe and compare the positioning among (employees of) Spacemakers. Do you arrive at similar or different positionings? What does this indicate?
5. Optionally, you can repeat this positioning exercise with another project. Do you then see similarities or differences? What explains these differences or similarities?