

Aanvraagformulier bijdrage bewonersinitiatief tot maximaal 10.000 euro

Contact persoon

Naam:

Qiqi Jin

Ik dien deze aanvraag in als:

Bewoner

Organisatie naam:

Uw idee

In welk gebied wordt het initiatief uitgevoerd?

Noord

Naam of titel van uw idee:

Connect The Funk- Bringing Funk culture to all residents of Rotterdam Noord

Wat is uw idee?

Connect The Funk is a community-driven cultural platform founded by Qiqi Jin in February 2023, rooted in Funk music and Funk dance styles, particularly Popping and Locking. The initiative was created from a growing need within Rotterdam's dance and cultural landscape: while many events focus on competition and performance outcomes, there are few spaces dedicated to sustained gathering, knowledge exchange, and genuine human connection. Connect The Funk responds to this gap by building an ongoing cultural environment where learning, sharing, and belonging are central. During the year we bring residents together through Funk music, Street dance, and creative activities. -Weekly open Funk dance practice (all ages, free access): The free weekly sessions create an accessible entry points into Funk culture ensuring continuity, engagement and connection between residents and activate cultural participation in Rotterdam. They lower barriers for participation and help people feel safe and involved. -Dance lessons for children (6-12) and adults (+35) : We also want to pass knowledge to the youth, and develop potential talents in these dance styles (Popping and Locking). Besides we want to invite adults and the elder to participate in this culture and create even more diversity in terms of age. -Dance lessons for 60+ residents in collaboration with Culture Club - Twice a year "Living Room Funk Lovers gatherings" (Vinyl & DJ sessions): these gatherings bring together beginners, experienced dancers, DJs, and neighbours in a friendly and low pressure environment. - And the annual Connect The Funk Festival (24-25 October 2026): During two days, Studio de Bakkerij transforms into an accessible neighbourhood meeting place where residents of Rotterdam North come together through culture, creativity and exchange. The festival is not only a dance event, but a community gathering built on relationships developed throughout the year. The program begins with

inclusive workshops in Popping and Breaking, where experienced artists share knowledge in a supportive and non-competitive environment. Youth, beginners and experienced participants learn side by side, strengthening confidence, artistic skills and social bonds. Parallel to the workshops, low-threshold DIY creative spaces invite residents who do not dance to participate actively. Through clothing customisation and vinyl painting, families, children and neighbours collaborate and connect through hands-on creation. A drawing workshop expands participation even further by translating movement into visual expression. This interdisciplinary activity provides an accessible entry point for residents who may feel less comfortable dancing, ensuring broader community inclusion. Food experiences inspired by diverse cultural traditions create informal meeting moments where residents share stories and build intercultural understanding. Shared meals function as a powerful tool for dialogue and social cohesion. The video game and documentary corner offers a relaxed, intergenerational environment where participants engage with Funk culture through storytelling and play, strengthening accessibility and wellbeing. The Funk Dance Games reimagine participation by replacing competition with cooperation. Team-based challenges encourage experimentation, mutual support and shared joy, reinforcing community trust. A Pioneers Talk connects younger generations with the history of Rotterdam's street culture, safeguarding local cultural memory and strengthening identity within the neighbourhood. The festival concludes with an open Breaking Jam where residents of all levels can participate or observe in a safe, welcoming atmosphere. Over the past years the sessions, festival and gatherings in Rotterdam Noord have evolved into a stable social anchor within the neighbourhood, attended by residents and non-residents seeking deeper meaningful connection. All these activities form one ecosystem forming an inclusive cultural environment that actively engages both dancers and non-dancers. The festival is the collective highlight moment of a year-round neighbourhood work, strengthening long-term social cohesion, intergenerational exchange and cultural participation in Rotterdam North. Here some videos of some of our events - Funk Gathering 2025 -<https://www.instagram.com/p/DSxrEqRjUlt/> - CTF Festival 2024 <https://www.instagram.com/p/DA9rFU2lwd1/>

Voor welke bewoners is uw idee bestemd en om hoeveel bewoners gaat het (schatting)?

The initiative is intended for residents of Rotterdam North, especially: - Children (6-12 years) - Young people (12-25 years) - Adults 35+ - Older adults 60+ - Families - Residents from diverse cultural backgrounds - LGBTI+ community members - Amateur and professional dancers - Residents who may feel socially isolated Connect The Funk creates in general an open and welcoming space for participants of all ages, backgrounds, and skill levels. All the activities are designed to lower barriers to participation, making participation accessible to children, youth, adults, older residents, and socially isolated community members. By incorporating multicultural elements such as shared meals, diverse music, and dance styles, Connect The Funk reflects Rotterdam's rich cultural diversity, giving all residents a voice and a sense of belonging within Funk culture. We are also really proud to work closely with communities, like waacking NL that work also to give a voice through dance expression, to the LGBTQ+ communities. Estimated reach: -20-30 weekly participants in open practice -10-20 children in weekly lessons -10-20 adults (35+) in weekly lessons -10-15 seniors through Culture Club -40-50 participants in Living Room gatherings -200-450 visitors during the festival weekend In total, we expect to reach more than 500 residents directly and indirectly throughout the year.

Uw idee

Waar wilt u uw idee uitvoeren?

The activities will take place in Rotterdam North at: -Het Oude Klooster (weekly open practice) -Studio de Bakkerij (lessons, gatherings, festival) -Culture Club at Studio de Bakkerij (60+ program) -The festival will take place at Studio de Bakkerij on 24-25 October 2026. All locations are accessible and already connected to the local community.

Wanneer wilt u uw idee uitvoeren?

Dance Lessons will start in April. Open practices have been going on since January. Living Room Funk Lovers gatherings take place twice a year will start in April the first one and the other one in July. The Connect The Funk Festival will take place on 24-25 October 2026.

Waarom is uw idee goed voor uw straat, buurt of wijk?

Our work not only directly contributes positively to the welfare assignment in Rotterdam Noord by addressing pressing social challenges in the neighborhood, including loneliness, emotional and mental health support, and overall wellbeing, but also contributes to cultural participation from the neighbours. As the founder of Connect The Funk, I have personally experienced how these activities contribute to wellbeing. I was born and raised in Spain and I moved to Rotterdam 3.5 years ago. As a Chinese-Spanish new Rotterdam resident, I struggled to find friends and I felt really lonely and depressed. What really saved me from going deeper on depression and loneliness was to start organising activities where I could share my passion for Funk Styles, have a space where it doesn't matter where you're from or the language you talk, In our community, the language we shared is dance and music — a universal form of expression — which gave me a sense of belonging, peace, and identity in a new country. I want residents of Rotterdam Noord to feel at home, hugged and welcomed, just how I once felt when I arrived in the Netherlands. Connect The Funk strengthens Rotterdam North by creating continuous meeting spaces where residents connect through culture: -Reducing social isolation through weekly accessible activities -Encouraging young people to engage positively with creativity -Connecting generations (kids, adults, seniors) -Creating collaboration between different cultural communities -Promoting inclusion of LGBTI+ residents -Activating local venues and public spaces like studio de bakkerij and Het Oude Klooster Instead of a one-time event, we build long-term engagement. The festival is the visible highlight, but the weekly activities create real relationships and trust within the neighbourhood. Dance and music function as a shared language that connects people beyond background, age, or nationality. This contributes to a lively, safe and culturally active neighbourhood in Rotterdam North.

Wordt u ondersteund door organisaties? Zo ja, welke?

We collaborate with key local organizations to broaden reach and support logistical needs:

- Studio de Bakkerij provides a discounted rental for festival space. They also offer financial support of €1,000 and help us to promote within the theatres' usual audience. Also serves as a base location for weekly classes.
- Sol Noord provides financial support for the festival of €1,500 and promotes the festival within their local community.
- Waacking_nl, representing the Waacking community in the Netherlands, contributes both promotion and volunteer support during the festival, ensuring active engagement of their members.
- Locking_nl, representing the Locking community in the Netherlands, contributes both promotion and volunteer support during festival, ensuring active engagement of their members in the festival.
- 010 Hip hop will participate with us co-hosting in the festival as we did in the past

and helping promote it within their network. •Oude Klooster community center supports promotion, and provides the space for our weekly practices on monday. Besides they connect us with different communities to expand our relationships and collaborations. •Kinderparadijs assists in reaching younger audiences through targeted promotion. •Pass da Jazz and Cult North help connect us with local musicians and communities. •Cultuur Concreet continues their long-term support by connecting us with diverse dance and cultural communities, including RIDCC, The Gully District, and VolksTheater. •International Dance League promotes our festival through their social media networks, building wider awareness. •ROFFA.nu amplifies our initiatives through promotion within their established urban culture networks. •House Jam Rotterdam supports promotion and facilitates community-building exchanges, where we share best practices with other dance organizers. •Culture Club:Through this partnership, we are able to expand our promotional reach within the senior community, strengthen our visibility among older audiences, and attract new participants through their established network. •The Notorious IBE: a well established breaking community that will support us through promotion as we are exploring the possibility of being part of their Festival program in August. They want to support Rotterdam local initiatives like ours that invest in continuous year community work.

Heeft u voor uw idee ook elders een aanvraag ingediend (subsidie/fondsen)? Wat is het resultaat hiervan?

We receive partial support from Sol Local Budget (1.500€) We have applied to Project Subsidy in Rotterdam Municipality, we haven't received a result yet. We have submitted our ideas for The lessons, Living Room Funk Sessions to Cultuur Concreet but we haven't received a result yet. This Buurtidee application is important to make the neighbourhood-focused activities and the inclusive festival possible.

Uw Begroting

Omschrijving	Bedrag
Wednesdays Dance Lessons (Popping kids 6-12 yo, Party grooves Adults +35)	€ 6900
July Living Room Funk Lovers Gathering- DJ sessions	€ 1682
Connect The Funk Festival 24-25 October	€ 18105
Marketing and PR- all activities 2h per week 40 weeks, 50€ per hour	€ 4840
Organisation: Coordinating and artistic direction. 8 h per week, 50€ hour 40 weeks	€ 19360
April Living Room Funk Lovers Gathering- Only Vinyls sessions	€ 1682
Funk Dances Open Practice (All ages, dancers and amateurs all welcomed)	€ 7260
Totaal kosten	€ 59829
Min sponsors/fondsen -/-	€ 9705
Eigen bijdrage -/-	€ 42324
Gewenste vergoeding	€ 7800

Year Plan

Date	Activity	Frequency	Location	Access Fee	Notes
Mondays	Funk Dances Open Practice (All ages, dancers and amateurs all welcomed)	Weekly	Het Oude Klooster	Gratis	-3h Host 15€ per hour - Space rental 30€ per hour (90€) 40 weeks
Tuesdays	Funk Styles Dance lessons for +60 years old	Every other month (TBD frequency)	Culture Club at Studio de Bakkerij	2,5€ per class	We collaborate with Culture Club and we don't assume any costs.
Wednesday	Dance lessons- Popping kids (6-12 yo)-Party Grooves (adults +35)	Weekly	Studio de Bakkerij: makersspace	9€ per class	Inclusive Funk styles dance lessons for adults +35 and kids 6-12
End April	Living Room Funk Lovers Gathering- Only Vinyls sessions	Twice a year	Studio de Bakkerij: makersspace	8 €	Gatherings for music and dance lovers to promote connection and engagement through real vinyls sessions so we can promote local artists
11th July	Living Room Funk Lovers Gathering- DJ sessions	Twice a year	Studio de Bakkerij: makersspace	8 €	Gatherings for music and dance lovers to promote connection and engagement through Funk music sessions so we can promote local artists
24,25 October	Connect The Funk Festival	Yearly	Studio de Bakkerij	10€ ticket	details in the "Connect The Funk Festival Sheet"

Year Plan Budget

Activity	Income								Cost
	Buurtidee	Project Subsidy	Studio de Bakkerij	Sol Local Budget	Cultuur Concreet	Own Contribution	Ticket Sales (if applicable)	Total Income	Total Cost incl VAT
<i>Funk Dances Open Practice (All ages, dancers and amateurs all welcomed)</i>	-				250	7.010		7.260	7.260
<i>Funk Styles Dance lessons for +60 years old</i>						-		-	
<i>Dance lessons -Popping kids (6-12 yo) -Party Grooves (adults +35)</i>	300				250	2.030	4.320	6.900	6.900
<i>April Living Room Funk Lovers Gathering- Only Vinyls sessions</i>	500				500	282	400	1.682	1.682
<i>July Living Room Funk Lovers Gathering- DJ sessions</i>	500				500	282	400	1.682	1.682
<i>Connect The Funk Festival 24-25 October</i>	4.500	5.705	1.000	1.500		2.500	2.900	18.105	18.105
<i>Marketing and PR- all activities 2h per week 40 weeks, 50€ per hour</i>	1.000					3.840			4.840
<i>Organisation: Coordinating and artistic direction. 8 h per week, 50€ hour 40 weeks</i>	1.000					18.360			19.360
Total	7.800	5.705	1.000	1.500	1.500	34.304	8.020	35.630	59.830
<i>% of total Budget</i>	13%	10%	2%	3%	3%	57%	13%		

Detailed budget of each activity

Dance Lessons

Concept	Description	Amount btw	excl btw	btw	Amount btw	incl
Class preparation	1 h of preparation per week, 50€ per hour		1500	9%		1635
Dance Instructor	Dance lesson 50€ per hour, 30 weeks		3000	9%		3270
Space rental	Space rental 50€, 30 weeks		3000	21%		3630
Total			6000			6900

Monday Open Practice Oude Klooster

Concept	Description	Amount btw	excl btw	btw	Amount btw	incl
Organisatie	Host 3h, 40 weeks		1800	21%		2178
Space rental	30 per hour, 40 weeks		3600	21%		4356
Promotion	1 h week		600	21%		726
Total			6000			7260

Living Room Funk Gatherings

Concept	Description	Amount excl btw	btw	Amount incl btw
DJ-set verhuur	Volledige dag, offerte van NEWJAMM 350per dag	350	21%	423,5
DJ set delivery cost		50	21%	60,5
Design & promotion	Instagram-promoties, flyers	50	21%	60,5
Organisatie	€200 per dag(programmeur, planner, coördinator)	200	21%	242
Guest NS trip	transportation	70		70
Space rental		250	21%	302,5
DJ guests	Djs market rate 120 per uur	480	9%	523,2
Total		1450		1682,2

Connect The Funk Festival

COSTS

Preparation costs

Personnel costs			5.666
	<i>Pre-production</i>		826
	<i>Artistic Direction</i>		2.420
	<i>Programmer</i>		1.210
	<i>Coordinator</i>		1.210
Totaal personeel		€	5.666
Material			
Space rental		€	3.588
Technical equipment			726
Total equipment		€	4.314
Total preparation costs		€	9.980

Implementation costs

Personnel costs			
Production		€	413
Activity (Artists, guests, hosts, teachers)			4.046
	<i>Musician</i>		1.570
	<i>Dance Workshops (Kids)</i>		262
	<i>Drawing Workshop (Family friendly)</i>		303
	<i>Video game corner (Family friendly)</i>		182
	<i>Vinyl and Clothing DIY (Family friendly)</i>		182
	<i>Breaking Jam (All ages)</i>		218
	<i>Popping, Locking, Waacking Dance Games (All ages)</i>		605
	<i>Breaking Pioneers Panel Talk (All ages)</i>		726
Totaal personeel		€	4.459
Material			
Decoration			303
Sejours			566
Total material		€	869

Total implementation costs	€	5.327
PR & Marketing		
Personnel	€	1.634
Materials		303
Total publicity	€	1.936
Unforeseen (5%)	€	862
Total COST	€	18.105

INCOME

Audience revenue (Ticket sales) 10 € per ticket	€	2.900
<i>hypothesis 290 total visitors, we keep the price the most affordable for inclusivity</i>		
Subsidies		
Project Subsidie Rotterdam		5.705
Buurtidee	€	4.500
Sol Local Budget		1.500
Total Subsidies	€	11.705
Personal contributions		
Connect The Funk own contribution	€	2.500
Studio de Bakkerij co-producer		1.000
Total own contributions	€	3.500
Total income	€	18.105

CONNECT THE FUNK FESTIVAL 2026

1. Organisation

About Connect The Funk

Connect The Funk is a community-driven cultural platform founded by Qiqi Jin in February 2023, rooted in Funk music and Funk dance styles, particularly Popping and Locking. The initiative was created from a growing need within Rotterdam's dance and cultural landscape: while many events focus on competition and performance outcomes, there are few spaces dedicated to sustained gathering, knowledge exchange, and genuine human connection. Connect The Funk responds to this gap by building an ongoing cultural environment where learning, sharing, and belonging are central.

The project is guided by three interconnected pillars:

- Knowledge
- Exchange and connection
- Popping & Locking culture preservation

These pillars shape not only the annual festival but also a continuous yearly practice that culminates in the Connect The Funk Festival as its collective moment of celebration and reflection.

As a founder— a Chinese-Spanish artist who moved to Rotterdam 4 years ago — I experienced firsthand how cultural participation can counter loneliness, social isolation and create a strong sense of belonging. Through organising Funk-style gatherings, dance became my shared language beyond nationality or spoken language, giving me a sense of belonging and identity in a new city. This lived experience forms the foundation of the project: creating spaces where Rotterdam residents feel welcomed, connected, and seen.

About our work in Rotterdam: A Year-Round Cultural Ecosystem

The festival does not stand alone but grows from a living ecosystem of weekly and recurring activities that continuously activate cultural participation in Rotterdam.

Weekly Funk Styles Practice sessions at **Oude Klooster** and **Millinxparkhuis Community Center**, supported respectively through space provision and funding from **Cultuur Concreet Charlois**, provide accessible entry points into Funk culture. These gatherings bring together beginners, experienced dancers, DJs, and neighbours in a non-competitive environment. Over three years, the sessions have evolved into a stable social anchor within the neighbourhoods, attended by residents and non-residents seeking connection beyond daily pressures.

International and Rotterdam local pioneers such as **Edson Themen**, **Noah Campbell Lock**, and **Gerrit** regularly share knowledge, bridging generations and preserving embodied cultural history. These weekly encounters directly reflect the pillar of **knowledge**, while fostering **interconnectivity** between artists, residents, and cultural communities.

Parallel initiatives such as **Poppers Get Together**, supported by **Sol Local Budget Feyenoord**, born in 22nd of March 2025 in Rotterdam from the need to unify and strengthen connections among Poppers scattered across Rotterdam and the Netherlands.

This initiative is part of a larger project that extends to other communities across the Netherlands. We host Poppers Get Together in multiple cities: Utrecht, led by Yordana Rodriguez of IRC Company; Den Bosch, led by Jeffrey Hoofs and Marchano Sarijoen of Denbotics; and Rotterdam, where I host alongside various Popping representatives, such as Argil from X-Gen Crew in the last edition.

Staffing & Roles

Connect The Funk Festival is organised through a combination of artistic leadership, freelance professionals, community collaborators, and volunteers. The structure reflects the project's collaborative and participative nature while ensuring clear responsibilities and professional execution.

- Artistic Direction & Project Coordination: Qiqi Jin (Founder of Connect The Funk) is responsible for artistic vision, program curation, partner coordination, artist selection, and overall project management. This role oversees the coherence between artistic content, community engagement, and municipal objectives
- Workshop Leaders & Artistic Contributors: Professional dancers, DJs, speakers, and visual artists are engaged as freelance contributors to lead workshops, talks, jams, and interdisciplinary activities. Their responsibilities include preparation and delivery of educational and participatory sessions, knowledge sharing, and interaction with participants. Artists are selected based on:
 - o Demonstrated experience within Funk and street dance culture
 - o Capacity for teaching and community engagement
 - o Contribution to cultural diversity and intergenerational exchange
 - o Alignment with the communities' pillars of knowledge, exchange, and preservation
- Production & Technical Support: We work with different freelancers with mainly dance or performing arts background.
- Community Partners & Facilitators: Partner organisations assist with outreach, participant engagement, and program facilitation within their networks, helping ensure accessibility for diverse audiences across Rotterdam (mentioned in more detail section C.Partners and Collaborators).
- Volunteers: A team of community volunteers supports reception, participant guidance, workshop assistance, documentation, and general event logistics. Volunteers are recruited primarily from weekly participants and local communities, strengthening ownership and involvement in the festival.

2. Project Summary

Connect The Funk Festival — A Collective Gathering

The Connect The Funk Festival represents the annual convergence of the ongoing work developed through the Connect The Funk platform. The **third edition** of this festival is taking place on **24th and 25th of October 2026 at Studio de Bakkerij** in Rotterdam Noord.

The festival transforms ongoing weekly workshops, jams, and creative activities into a **two-day public celebration** of Popping, Locking, Breaking, and Funk culture. Through dance workshops, panel talks, DIY creative spaces, Funk Games, drawing sessions, food experiences, and intergenerational jams, the festival creates a safe, inclusive environment where residents of all ages and cultural backgrounds can connect, learn, and celebrate.

Building on a year-round program of community engagement and supported by partners including *Studio de Bakkerij, Oude Klooster, KinderParadijs, Pass da Jazz, Cult North, Cultuur Concreet, Sol Noord, waacking_nl, locking_nl amongst others*, the festival combines **artistic innovation, cultural preservation, and social cohesion**. By offering accessible, educational, and participatory activities, Connect The Funk directly contributes to Rotterdam’s cultural priorities of **Inclusivity, Innovation, and Interconnectivity**, fostering belonging, skill development, and sustained community bonds.

A video of past editions of Connect The funk Festival

<https://www.instagram.com/p/DA9rFU2lwd1/>

3. Project description (timeline, activities, objectives, marketing plan)

3.0 Project timeline

3.1

Period	Phase	Key Activities	Purpose
January – March 2026	Concept Development & Partner Alignment	Artistic concept refinement; confirmation of festival format; initial meetings with Studio de Bakkerij, Oude Klooster, Cultuur Concreet, Sol Noord and partners; funding applications submitted.	Establish artistic direction, feasibility, and collaborative framework.
April – June 2026	Program Development	Confirmation of artists, workshop leaders and speakers; development of Funk Games structure; coordination with community partners; continuation of weekly sessions feeding into festival content.	Translate artistic vision into concrete program activities rooted in community practice.
July 2026	Production Kick-off	Public announcement of festival dates; launch of promotion campaign; technical planning with venue; volunteer recruitment begins.	Start public visibility and operational preparation.

August 2026	Community Outreach & Promotion	Flyer distribution; outreach to schools, youth organisations and community centres; targeted engagement with diverse and LGBTBI+ communities; ongoing social media promotion.	Expand audience reach and ensure accessibility for diverse participants.
September 2026	Final Program Preparation	Confirmation of schedules and logistics; artist coordination meetings; intensified marketing campaign; production planning and equipment coordination.	Secure readiness for implementation and strengthen audience awareness.
October 1–23, 2026	Final Production Phase	Artist briefings; technical preparation; volunteer coordination; final promotional push; behind-the-scenes communication.	Ensure smooth execution and strong audience engagement.
October 24–25, 2026	Festival Implementation	Workshops, DIY activities, drawing sessions, Funk Games, Pioneers Talk, Breaking Jam, food experiences, video game & documentary corner; live promotion and documentation.	Public presentation and community gathering; artistic and social culmination of year-round work.
November 2026	Evaluation & Documentation	Participant feedback collection; partner evaluation meetings; financial reporting; media documentation and dissemination; publication of highlights.	Reflect on outcomes, measure impact, and inform future editions.
December 2026	Continuity & Future Development	Integration of learnings into weekly programs; planning next activities and partnerships.	Sustain long-term cultural impact beyond the festival.

3.1. Activities

Workshops: Learning as Cultural Transmission- *Saturday & Sunday (11-12h)*

Workshops in Popping and Breaking form the educational heart of the festival. Led by respected practitioners including Patrick Do Santos, founder of 010 Hiphop, alongside Popping artists Qiqi Jin, the workshops prioritise learning within supportive environments rather than performance pressure.

Participants, particularly youth and amateur dancers, develop artistic skills while simultaneously building confidence and social relationships. Knowledge transfer between experienced artists and newcomers strengthens cultural continuity and directly contributes to the preservation pillar of Connect The Funk.

By offering accessible entry points **regardless of experience level**, the workshops support Rotterdam’s goal of inclusivity while encouraging meaningful **social interaction** that **reduces isolation** and **fosters belonging** within the neighbourhood.



Locking Workshop 2025 by Robba Locka at Studio de Bakkerij

DIY Creative Spaces: Creativity as Social Connector - Saturday & Sunday (All day)

DIY activities such as clothing customisation and vinyl painting invite residents to participate creatively without requiring dance experience. Families, children, neighbours, and visitors work side by side, transforming artistic creation into a shared social process.



DIY corner at Connect The Funk Festival 2025 at Studio de Bakkerij

These spaces activate spontaneous exchange and conversation, embodying the pillar of connection and exchange. By lowering participation barriers, the activities represent innovation in cultural programming, expanding participation beyond traditional dance audiences and welcoming residents who may otherwise feel excluded from cultural events.

Drawing Workshop: Expanding Cultural Expression- Saturday & Sunday (10-14h)

The drawing workshop led by Thomas Rietberg — a break dancer with more than 20 years of experience and an established 2D character illustrator — expands the language of Funk culture beyond movement by translating dance into visual storytelling. Rooted in his long-standing involvement in street dance culture, the workshop invites participants to observe rhythm, posture, and musicality and reinterpret these elements through drawing and character design.

In doing so, participants learn to recognise dance not only as physical expression but as a source of imagination, narrative, and artistic reflection.



Local artist teaching a young kid 2D illustration at Connect The Funk Festival 2025

By shifting from body to image, the activity creates an **accessible entry point** for participants who may feel less confident dancing while still allowing them to engage deeply with Funk culture. Movement becomes line, gesture becomes composition, and personal experience becomes visual expression. This **interdisciplinary exchange** strengthens the pillar of **knowledge** by demonstrating how cultural practices evolve across artistic mediums, while simultaneously fostering **exchange and connection** as participants share interpretations and creative processes.

The workshop also supports Rotterdam's municipal priorities by encouraging inclusivity through low-threshold participation, promoting innovation through cross-disciplinary artistic practice, and reinforcing **interconnectivity between dance, visual arts, and community engagement**. Through structured yet playful creation, participants experience belonging and emotional wellbeing, discovering new ways to connect with culture and with one another.

Food Experiences: Culture Through Shared Meals- Saturday & Sunday (All day)

Food functions as an essential social connector within the festival. Shared meals inspired by Asian, Surinamese, Caribbean, and African traditions create informal gathering moments where residents exchange stories, memories, and cultural traditions.



Chinese food stand (Wenzhou Region cuisine) at Connect The Funk Festival 2025

These encounters reflect the multicultural identity of Rotterdam and contribute directly to inclusivity by allowing cultural diversity to be experienced collectively. Shared dining becomes a tool for encouraging dialogue between generations and communities.

Video Games and Documentary Corner - Saturday & Sunday (13-20h)

The Video Games and Documentary Corner provides a relaxed, playful, and inclusive space where residents of all ages can gather, socialize, and engage in low-pressure recreational activities. Participants can **play interactive games**, explore dance-themed or culturally relevant video content, and watch short **documentaries about Funk and street dance history**. This corner encourages intergenerational exchange, collaboration, and creativity, offering opportunities for participants to bond over shared interests, experiment with movement and strategy, and connect with neighbours in a safe, welcoming environment. By combining digital play and cultural storytelling, this space strengthens social cohesion, mental wellbeing, and community belonging, while complementing the festival's pillars of Knowledge, Exchange, and Connection.



Videogame presentation at Connect The Funk Festival 2025

Funk Dance Games: Reimagining Participation- Saturday (17-21h)

The Funk Dance Games evening intentionally moves away from competitive battle formats that often dominate street dance culture. Instead of prize money, participation itself becomes the reward, creating a safe and playful environment where dancers of all levels feel encouraged to experiment, make mistakes, and reconnect with the joy of movement. The structure of the games reflects the core pillars of *Connect The Funk* — **knowledge, exchange and connection, and preservation** — while supporting Rotterdam's municipal goals.

Qiqi Jin (representing the popping community), together with Ellis Nguyen (representing **waacking** community) and Judy Liu (representing **locking** community) will host these games showing a collaborative work amongst dance cultures and communities.

The evening begins with short rotating challenges — **five minutes per style (Popping, Locking, Waacking and All Styles)** — creating a 25-minute shared experience where participants are invited to explore unfamiliar styles and connect across dance backgrounds.

Game Example 1: Still Statue

Participants dance freely until the music suddenly stops; at which moment everyone must freeze in a pose while completing a changing physical challenge. The difficulty gradually increases. Each interruption introduces a new rule, encouraging adaptability, humour, and awareness of others. The exercise develops body control and creativity while generating spontaneous interaction and laughter, reinforcing connection through shared vulnerability.

Game Example 2: Direction Game (Locking / Waacking / Popping)

Two dancers face each other. At the end pose, one dancer must look while the other points. If both look in the same direction, they reset; if directions differ, the pointing dancer takes the position. This simple mechanic transforms musical interpretation into a dialogue, sharpening reaction skills and encouraging playful communication between dancers rather than confrontation.

Game Example 3: Team Games

Team-based activities emphasise cooperation over individual performance, strengthening community bonds.

- **Memory Cypher** — dancers form circles where each participant adds one move; anyone who forgets exits, encouraging focus and shared learning.
- **Musicality Exchange** — dancers create rhythms for each other to interpret and integrate, deepening listening skills and collaborative creativity.
- **Dance Obstacles** — moving participants become living obstacles, requiring dancers to navigate space creatively without collision.



Funk Games 1.0 at Connect The Funk Festival 2025

Pioneers Talk: Preserving Cultural Memory- Sunday (15-17h)

A central moment of preservation takes place during the Pioneers Talk featuring Hakan Aslan, DJ Cutnice, Paulo Nunes, and Edson Themen. Through archival footage and personal storytelling, they share the history of Rotterdam's breaking and popping scene from the 1980s onwards.

This intergenerational dialogue connects younger participants with the roots of local street culture and ensures transmission of cultural memory. The activity directly embodies the preservation pillar while contributing to Rotterdam's objective of strengthening sustainable cultural ecosystems.



Rotterdam Breaking Pioneers panel talk at Elements of Pioneers 2024

Breaking Jam - Sunday (17-21h)

The Sunday Breaking Jam, hosted by **Patrick Do Santos**, founder of 010 Hiphop with over 20 years of experience in the breaking scene, provides a rare **non-competitive cypher environment** where dancers of all ages and levels can share, improvise, and experiment freely. Unlike conventional battle formats, this jam emphasizes **organic exchange, creativity, and peer learning**, allowing participants to explore new movement vocabulary while fostering mutual respect and connection. By creating a space for both beginners and seasoned breakers to interact, the jam strengthens **intergenerational bonds, knowledge transfer, and cultural preservation**, ensuring that Rotterdam's rich street dance history continues to inspire new generations.

Here a link to a past breaking jam we organised at de Doelen in collaboration with 010 Hiphop

<https://www.instagram.com/p/DBEVsOQNUMg/>

3.3 Objectives

Inclusivity

Connect The Funk Festival creates an open and welcoming space for participants of all ages, backgrounds, and skill levels. Workshops, jams, and DIY activities are designed to lower barriers to participation, making the festival accessible to children, youth, adults, older residents, and socially isolated community members. By incorporating multicultural elements such as shared meals, diverse music, and dance styles, the festival reflects Rotterdam's rich cultural diversity, giving all residents a voice and a sense of belonging within Funk culture. We are also really proud to work closely with communities, like waacking NL that work also to give a voice through dance expression, to the LGBTQ+ communities. Moreover, through our very diverse team, we make sure that the volunteers of staff can express part of their identity or background through any of the activities, encouraging to give their personal touch (workshops, food, Clothing DIY etc).

Innovation

The festival fosters artistic innovation by blending traditional Funk dance with interdisciplinary creative activities. Programs such as Funk Dance Games, dance-to-drawing workshops, and the video game/documentary corner reimagine participation in urban dance culture. Specially with the **Funk Games** participants are encouraged to **experiment, take creative risks, and explore new artistic expressions**, whether through storytelling, improvisation, or translating movement into other mediums. This innovative approach transforms conventional dance events into **dynamic cultural laboratories** that generate fresh ideas and creative exchange.

Interconnectivity

Connect The Funk strengthens connections across generations, communities, and artistic disciplines. Weekly activities, collaborations with local organizations, and intergenerational programming create sustained relationships between residents, professional artists, and cultural partners. By linking established partners such as Studio de Bakkerij, Cult North, Pass da Jazz, Oude Klooster, locking_nl, Culture Club, waacking_nl with newcomers to Funk culture, the festival fosters a network of shared knowledge, cultural exchange, and community support, reinforcing Rotterdam as a cohesive and interconnected cultural ecosystem.

3.4 Marketing plan

A. Target people

We want to target from kids to elder people, we want our gathering to be family friendly as it has been the past 2 years. Intergenerational exchange is really important in our community. We also target residents from diverse cultural backgrounds (Asian, Surinamese, Caribbean, African, Turkish) who benefit from community bonding, cultural exchange, and inclusion activities. We also welcome **LGTBI+ residents** as Waackers (originally african american queer community) are also very active in the funk community.

B. Community Engagement

Our weekly programs at **Oude Klooster and Millinparkhuis Community Center** form the backbone of community engagement. Through regular workshops, jams, and creative activities, we maintain ongoing contact with residents, who are invited to actively co-create aspects of the festival program. This continuous engagement builds trust, motivates attendance, and ensures that the festival reflects the community's needs and interests.

C. Partners and Collaborators

We collaborate with key local organizations to broaden reach and support logistical needs:

- **Studio de Bakkerij** provides a discounted rental for festival space. They also offer financial support of €1,000 and help us to promote within the theatres' usual audience.
- **Sol Noord** provides financial support of €1,500 and promotes the festival within their local community.
- **Waacking_nl**, representing the Waacking community in the Netherlands, contributes both promotion and volunteer support during the Funk Games, ensuring active engagement of their members in the festival.
- **Locking_nl**, representing the Locking community in the Netherlands, contributes both promotion and volunteer support during Funk Games, ensuring active engagement of their members in the festival.
- **010 Hip hop** will participate with us co-hosting the breaking Jam as we did in the past and helping promote it within their network.
- **Oude Klooster and Millinpark huis community centers** supports promotion, as the festival is an extension of our ongoing weekly work in Rotterdam Noord and South.
- **Kinderparadijs** assists in reaching younger audiences through targeted promotion.
- **Pass da Jazz** and **Cult North** help connect us with local musicians and communities, strengthening the festival's musical program.
- **Cultuur Concreet** continues their long-term support by connecting us with diverse dance communities, including RIDCC, The Gully District, and VolksTheater.
- **International Dance League** promotes the festival through their social media networks, building wider awareness.
- **ROFFA.nu** amplifies our initiatives through promotion within their established urban culture networks.

- **House Jam Rotterdam** supports promotion and facilitates community-building exchanges, where we share best practices with other dance organizers.
 - **Culture Club:** Connect The Funk delivers dance workshops for older adults throughout the year at Studio de Bakkerij. Through this partnership, we are able to expand our promotional reach within the senior community, strengthen our visibility among older audiences, and attract new participants through their established network.
- D. The Notorious IBE:** a well established breaking community that will support us through promotion as we are exploring the possibility of being part of their Festival program in August. They want to support Rotterdam local initiatives like ours that invest in continuous year community work.

E. Targeted Promotion

We implement a **multi-channel promotion strategy:**

- **Social media campaigns** (Instagram, Facebook, TikTok) to share workshops, artist profiles, and community stories.
- **Local posters and flyers** distributed at community centers, libraries, schools, and nearby shops.
- **Direct outreach** to local schools, youth organizations, and senior networks to ensure age-inclusive participation.
- **Cultural and LGBTBI+ networks** engagement to ensure inclusivity and representation. We work with nl_waacking community to ensure representation in this target.
- **Word-of-mouth promotion** through volunteers, participants, and community leaders, particularly effective for socially isolated residents.

This layered approach ensures maximum visibility, engagement, and attendance across the festival’s diverse target groups.

F. Overview Promotion Planning (Starting July)

Month	Promotion Actions
July	Announcement of festival dates; teaser posts on social media;
August	Distribute flyers in schools, libraries, and community centers; Weekly social media updates highlighting workshops and activities; begin targeted outreach to culturally diverse and LGBTBI+ communities; newsletter to past participants.
September	Intensify multi-channel campaigns; short video clips on TikTok, Instagram; countdown posts;
October (1–23)	Share behind-the-scenes preparation; final reminder emails and posts; coordinate community ambassadors for last-minute outreach; feature artist spotlights on social media.
October (24–25)	Festival live promotion: Instagram stories, TikTok live clips; encourage audience-generated content; live updates to partners and sponsors.

Month	Promotion Actions
-------	-------------------

November	Post-festival reporting; thank-you posts to partners and community; share highlights and learning outcomes; engage press for coverage and evaluation; document lessons learned for next edition.
----------	--

G. Expected Reach

Based on previous editions, a **one-day festival attracts 150–200 participants** from all ages and cultural backgrounds. With the planned **two-day format**, we anticipate **over 200-450 attendees**, ensuring strong community participation and exposure for all festival activities.

4. Artistic Vision

The project positions Popping, Locking, Breaking and related Funk-based expressions as evolving artistic practices whose value lies equally in transmission, experimentation, and collective participation. Rather than presenting dance as spectacle alone, Connect The Funk treats culture as a process — something practiced, exchanged, and continuously reinterpreted by the people who gather around it.

What makes Connect The Funk artistically distinctive is that we go beyond dominant competition-driven formats (i.e: International Dance League asked us to contribute in their last year's program with a Popping Jam) that currently shape much of the street dance landscape. While battles and performances remain important, they often prioritise virtuosity and visibility over learning, dialogue, and cultural depth. This project intentionally creates alternative artistic spaces where dancers and amateurs meet on equal ground, allowing artistic development to emerge through genuine and human interaction, spontaneous improvisations, and shared discovery through playfulness and fun. The artistic value lies in restoring the original social function of Funk culture: connection, self and group expression, play, and mutual inspiration.

As founder and curator, my vision is guided by my experience as a popper and cultural organiser who understands Funk styles as values, sense of belonging, identity and knowledge systems passed from generation to generation. Programming choices are therefore not random activities but carefully connected moments of transmission. Workshops emphasise learning and mentorship; games reframe improvisation as creative research; talks with pioneers situate contemporary practice within historical context. Each element contributes to a holistic artistic ecosystem where participants experience culture from multiple perspectives and *we encourage to involve their families too*, as historically the participation in street dance culture was highly neglected- and still to this day- from families, as it was judged and connected with street activities.

The artistic relevance of Funk styles today lies in their ability to respond to contemporary social realities. In an increasingly digital and individualised society, these dances offer embodied communication — a non-verbal language capable of connecting people across age, background, and nationality. Funk culture historically emerged from communities creating joy, resilience, and identity under challenging conditions. Recontextualising these practices in Rotterdam today

allows them to function as tools for belonging, expression, and cultural dialogue within a super-diverse urban environment.

Preservation and innovation coexist at the core of the project. Preservation occurs through direct knowledge transfer from experienced practitioners and pioneers, safeguarding histories, musical understanding, and stylistic foundations. Innovation emerges through format experimentation: non-competitive games, interdisciplinary workshops, collaborative jams, and participatory structures that invite new audiences into the culture. By respecting roots while encouraging reinterpretation, Connect The Funk keeps tradition alive not by freezing it in time, but by allowing it to evolve organically.

For this reason, Connect The Funk Festival is more than a community gathering; it is an ongoing cultural practice. The festival represents the visible culmination of year-round artistic research taking place in weekly sessions, collaborations, and exchanges across Rotterdam's dance network. It functions as a temporary cultural commons where artistic creation, education, and social encounter merge. Through this approach, Funk culture becomes both artistic expression and social methodology — a way of creating meaning, relationships, and shared cultural ownership within the city.

Ultimately, the artistic vision of Connect The Funk is to position Funk styles as a contemporary cultural practice that bridges heritage and experimentation, individual expression and collective experience, demonstrating that artistic quality can emerge not only from performance excellence but from the depth of connection created between people through culture.