

Foreword

Stichting Oost Rules! is dedicated to nurturing and promoting live music in Amsterdam Oost in a sustainable, inclusive, intercultural, innovative, and accessible way. We aspire to build an organization able to one day create and maintain a cultural center with a stage presenting diverse programming, creating new cross-community ties between the people of Amsterdam Oost. The envisioned music venue, in an area lacking in dedicated live music spaces, would not only contribute to social cohesion but also encourage cultural participation through music, drawing on the rich history of musicians in the area and establishing Oost as a music neighborhood. In order to build this space, Oost Rules! recognizes the need to bring the existing music community together. We do this through events, festivals, meetups and other activities that build community around music and cultural exploration with professional and amateur artists living in the neighborhood and tapping into existing communities and (sub)cultures.

Oost Rules! developed out of a group of neighbors and regulars of Bar Joost, musicians and music lovers who became friends over the years, frequently lamenting the lack of live music in the neighborhood. Our name stems from one of our early supporters and former neighbor, sound engineer and musician, Remko Visser. He moved to Oost (Indischebuurt) in the early 2000s. His friends in the city center questioned the move to such an uncool, much maligned neighborhood. But, here he found a supportive and diverse community of musicians who, in the era of legal squatting, had opened numerous rehearsal studios and performance spaces. In defense of their home and community, a group of musicians in the area made t-shirts that read: **Oost Rules!**

2023 was the year of our organization's birth. In just a few short months, we grew from an amorphous concept tossed around over drinks to a Stichting with a supervisory Board of three, a (currently volunteer) Director and what we call our Long Board: a group of 10 committed volunteers intimately involved in the planning and production of our activities. This core team is supported by a larger pool of occasional volunteers and donors. Everyone involved has deep connections to the neighborhood and to the cultural and social fields with many on our team seasoned music industry professionals and musicians. We have no staff in paid employment and an all volunteer Board, but we strive to pay freelancers and performers fairly, always following best practices and Dutch Cultural Codes.

Mission

Our mission is to nurture and promote live music in Amsterdam Oost in a sustainable, inclusive, intercultural, innovative, and accessible way. We believe in the social and cultural value of live music and present programming that provides space for young talent and (sub)cultures to further develop. We are working to create and maintain a cultural center in Amsterdam Oost focused on live music.

Artistic Vision

Our artistic vision is guided by our founder and Director, Katie Poltz, with direction from the Board and support from our Programming Committee. The committee meetings are open to anyone who is interested to participate and our resulting programming is truly for and by the Oost music community.

Our focus on live music comes from our view that live music is a critical, and often marginalized, element of the cultural arts. Live music, pop music in particular, has often been viewed by funders and the public as commercial entertainment only. This narrow vision of the cultural field means society misses out on artistic creation that is un- or under- funded. This issue is compounded in underserved areas such as Amsterdam Oost, where often the artists live but have no space in which to rehearse or perform for their own communities. In addition, many residents of Oost do not have the expendable time or ability to venture across town and pay the high ticket prices of commercial and mainstream pop podia in the first place.

Live music can be transformative and powerful for the performer AND the audience, who often participates in the performance itself through interaction with the stage and other audience members, on a level not usually possible in other forms of art such as theatre or film. If you want to talk about the sociocultural function of the arts, then live music cannot be forgotten. Live music is about experiencing the act of artistic creation in real time!

Programming at Oost Rules! is not defined by a genre but by the neighborhood. The throughline in our programming is the rich cultural and musical diversity of Amsterdam Oost. Because of the international character of our neighborhood, we are not limited to local artists but work to make our programming relevant to local and international audiences alike. We strive to create a welcoming space in which the intersectional identities of our neighborhood can be explored and connected, brought together by a shared love of music.

At the end of the day, our vision is to create a space in which people can connect over cultural experiences and uplift cultural producers in Oost. We believe in collaborations and facilitation, not competition. The more we come together, the better it is for everyone.

Activities 2023

Our initial meetings were held in August 2023, initiated by our founder Katie Poltz. We knew we wanted to start a live music focused cultural foundation, but what would that look like and what would we do? Over four meetings, an organizational structure began to form and initial concepts for programming were developed.

In September 2023, Oost Rules! received our first subsidy, a grant of €1440 from Mensen Maken Amsterdam's Fonds Voor Oost. This funding allowed us to:

1. Register the organization as a Stichting, covering notary and KvK fees. Our Stichting registration was completed on 9 November, 2023

2. Plan, promote and host our launch party on 27 October, 2023
3. Buy and screenprint second-hand t-shirts as incentives for individual donations

Our Launch Party was held on the birthday shared by our founder and Amsterdam itself, 27 October, 2023. The event featured performances by the Rocky Tops, Ed Bahonie, Jaapjekent'em and a b2b set by DJ Sunshine and Nautilus. We introduced the Oost Rules! concept and core team to the general public at this event and raised funds through donations for future programming. This event was held at the neighborhood bar, Krux.

Our first Musician Meetup was held 12 December, 2023. This event was funded by donations we received at our Launch Party. We served free homemade soup and the first 10 attendees received a free beer. Our meetups were inspired by the many requests we received upon launching Oost Rules! to assist musicians in the neighborhood in connecting with other local musicians. This event was held at the neighborhood bar, Bar Joost.

All of our programming responds to requests and needs of the music community in Oost and musicians, music professionals and neighbors who love music are involved as volunteers in everything we do.

Numbers and Attendance

- Launch Party
 - estimated 200 in attendance
 - 2 bands, 3 DJs
 - €638 raised in donations
 - 25 t-shirts
- Musician Meetup #1
 - Estimated 80 in attendance
 - 22 collaborators to open Spotify playlist of local music
 - 3 t-shirts

Communications

In just three short months, Oost Rules! grew from a vague concept to a community of musicians and music lovers. Our primary method of promotion has been word of mouth, Instagram, a website, a small email list and physical promotion for events (posters). With only €46 spent in promoted posts on Instagram, a website and a few posters, we managed to build a thriving and engaged community around our initial activities.

Reach (as of 31 December)

- Instagram - 530 followers (started on 1 October, 2023)
- Email List - 40 subscribers
- Website - no analytics in 2023
- Physical promotions (posters) - 10 posters per event

- Facebook - to be built in 2024

Financials

Income

Grants and Subsidies	€1440
Donations	€696
Total:	€2136

Expenses

Operations	€1295.03
Personnel	€0
Communications	€114.82
Programming	€396.25
Total:	€1806.10

Balance

To be carried over to 2024 **€329.90**