



**dala** *verb; to make/create [isizulu]*  
aspires to the passionate and compassionate art in city making



## statement of need

Historically, the people that live and work in cities are rarely involved in the planning of how public spaces are designed and used. This results in somewhat dysfunctional cities and can entrench inequalities. Healthy democratic cities are ones where there is rich and varied communal public life, that involve the active participation from those who live, work and play in urban spaces.



## vision

South African cities are still marked by the physical and geographical remnants of apartheid that need to be challenged in order to move towards a greater goal of building democracy. Apartheid policies made gathering in public spaces illegal and the legacy of this lives on in the use (or lack thereof) of public spaces in South African urban contexts. Public space is in many ways still vastly under-used. Public space tends to be viewed as transitory - people moving through space to get to a geographical end-point (home / work / shopping). It is also often viewed as unsafe and alienating. Decision-making as to how cities should look (and by implication feel) primarily occurs within institutional parameters, by economists, architects and urban planners. To a large extent, the people who live and work in cities have had very little say in the construction of built environments. This has a fundamental impact on how citizens interact with cities on a daily basis. Broader national goals for transformation and social justice are mainly addressed through economic empowerment programmes.



## vision

Too often, especially in the 'south', the focus of development in cities revolves around socio-economic variables and tends to ignore the human desire for creative innovation and stimulation. Art is often relegated to controlled (and often alienating) spaces - largely indoors - in galleries and museums. Art often has the stigma of being based on the aesthetic decadence of the middle and upper classes. Creative work falling without these spaces are often deemed as 'lesser' and classified within a notion of cultural production attached to craft. People forget, ignore or do not recognize the art of the every day. Although critical engagement of these ideas exists, the dialogue often remains within academia and specific intellectual circles. Globally, there is a tendency for urban art projects to function primarily in two ways: first, as a way to memorialize certain spaces, people or events (or a combination of all three); and secondly, as form of beautification within cities. These two approaches do have merit (and varying degrees of success); however they are often complemented with urban regeneration projects, which are primarily geared towards the gentrification of specific urban contexts



vision

Therefore, dala aspires to the passionate and compassionate art of city making. City-making involves that cities 'should not seek to be the most creative city in the world (or region or state) - it should strive to be the most imaginative city for the world' (Landry, 2007:1). Ultimately, a creative city is one that focuses on how to develop a sustainable approach to civic creativity. dala imagines eThekweni as a city that nurtures the inherent creativity within it. This has local, regional and global implications for more just societies.



## mission

dala plans to implement a spatial philosophy of urban creativity:

- That embraces the notion of a creative city
- Where there is a re-conceptualisation and re-appropriation of public life - a resurrection of the 'commons', where, through creativity, citizens reclaim the use and responsibility of urban spaces
- Where an active engagement with spaces and the people who function within public places, a more multi-faceted urban transformation is possible in the endeavour to create more inclusive and liveable cities.
- That nurtures an active public dialogue about a creative society - not only in the classrooms, but also and more importantly, on the streets. This dialogue is fundamental to democratic practices of knowledge production.



## mission

dala plans to implement a spatial philosophy of urban creativity:

- Where citizens can contribute their voice to urban development in the interest of democracy in practice. With participation comes responsibility, and
- dala imagines a city where citizens (in the broadest sense) actively engage with spaces to build cities that are sustainable and that are sensitive to natural resources and the environment.
- Where to effectively intervene in public space, citizens must clearly understand, engage and challenge the socio-economic and spatial issues that are at play in the city. In order to do this, a variety of participants must be included in the process - the creative practitioners, people who live and work in the city, organisations, and the municipality.
- A city where creative collaboration is key - where the aesthetic is built into the functional and vice versa

- To challenge and shift the normative perceptions of South African space-scapes through interdisciplinary creative initiatives in eThekweni
- To act as a hub for thinking and action in the pursuit for innovative approaches and collaborations in creating more humane and liveable cities
- To develop and nurture a collaborative and participatory work method in all projects in order to fully engage public space and the communities that function within them
- To work with the city to establish working spaces for an interdisciplinary network of creatives

## objectives



**in order to  
meet the  
objectives  
dala aims  
to :**

- **Work on creative projects with interdisciplinary teams of creative practitioners**
- **Work in collaboration with the city on developing cultural hubs in eThekweni**
- **Develop residency programmes for a variety of both local and international creative practitioners (artists, architects, researchers, performers, curators) who are interested in working in public space**
- **Develop regional and national projects critically engaging the creative use of public space**
- **Develop educational components with relevant primary, secondary and tertiary**
- **Act as an intermediary between the municipality, the corporate sector, non-profit and non-governmental organisations, and creative practitioners in the context of building a creative city**
- **Act as a contact point and host for international projects that share the same vision as dala**

Trading name as : **dala**

Type of company : Non Profit Organisation

Company registration number : Registration in process

VAT number : Exemption upon registration

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#### Partner Organisations:

##### International

Les Pas Perdus, Marseilles, France. [www.marimira.com](http://www.marimira.com)

Cascoland, Amsterdam, Netherlands. [www.cascoland.com](http://www.cascoland.com)

Teaterkunst, Copenhagen, Denmark. [www.teaterkunst.dk](http://www.teaterkunst.dk)

Raw Foundation, Amsterdam, Netherlands. [www.rawprojects.org](http://www.rawprojects.org)

Metropolis Biennial, Copenhagen, Denmark. [www.cph-metropolis.dk](http://www.cph-metropolis.dk)

Form Associates, London, United kingdom. [www.formassociates.eu](http://www.formassociates.eu)

CEIA, Belo Horizonte, Brazil. [www.ceia.art.br](http://www.ceia.art.br)

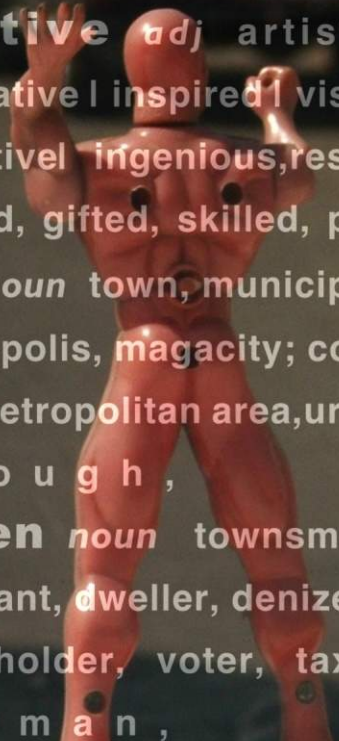
Doualart, Douala, Cameroun. [www.doualart.org](http://www.doualart.org)

##### Local

kznsa Contemporary Visual Culture, Durban, South Africa. [www.nsagallery.co.za](http://www.nsagallery.co.za)

The Durban Art Gallery, Durban, South Africa. [www.durban.gov.za](http://www.durban.gov.za)

Imagine Durban, Durban, South Africa. [www.imaginedurban.org](http://www.imaginedurban.org)



**creative** *adj* artistic, inventivel  
imaginative | inspired | visionary | original |  
innovativel **ingenious**, resourceful, clever,  
talented, gifted, **skilled**, productive, fertile  
**city** *noun* town, municipality, metropolis,  
megalopolis, magacity; conurbation, urban  
area, metropolitan area, urban municipality;  
b o r o u g h , t o w n s h i p  
**citizen** *noun* townsman, townswoman,  
inhabitant, dweller, denizen, local, resident  
, householder, voter, taxpayer, burgher,  
f r e e m a n , s u b j e c t