

Pedagogical approach

All educational activity at CIVA aims to nurture questioning, creativity, experimentation, wonder and knowledge, by exploring the themes of the city, architecture, and green spaces in Brussels.

CIVA's educational service is open young people and children (from 3 years old), inviting them to explore different themes and artistic practices. The aim is to encourage each participant to alter their perception of the environment in which they live; to be open to other ways of thinking and to articulate their experience of urban space and architecture; to question the city as a common good; and to look afresh at the built environment.

The methods used are inspired by the models of active teaching which have shaped the educational identity of the service.

CIVA's educational project is based on the following seven principles:

1. *Favouring a multidisciplinary approach*

Each facilitator enriches the programme of activities with their own expertise (art history, architecture, design, engraving, dance, illustration, fine arts, photography, theatre, drawing, botany, model making, etc.). This variety of artistic techniques enables a cross-disciplinary approach to architecture and urbanism.

CIVA's approach benefits from developing and maintaining partnerships with numerous cultural actors in Brussels, so that we can be receptive to other disciplines, places and methods. We work with the Design Museum Brussels, the Villa Empain, Iselp, the ICA, Jeunesse Musicale, the commune of Ixelles and many others.

2. *Prioritising the pathway*

This means emphasising the learning process rather than the result. The final achievement is not an aim in itself, nor is it a substitute for the steps on the road towards it. The focus is on the journey: activities are proposed that call for no previous technical expertise and that lead each participant to advance without noticing the difficulties they are overcoming. This approach allows them to surpass themselves, without aiming to surpass others.

3. *Experimentation*

The trial-and-error approach is favoured in order to emphasise experimentation with a technique: manipulation and reiteration as a skill that can only be acquired through practice. The facilitator sets the framework, makes creative proposals, stimulates every sensitivity and the emergence of every talent. This experimentation is intentionally playful in order to fully ground each individual's experience.

4. *Contextualising the experience*

We favour the inductive approach, also called the empirical inductive approach. This method starts from facts, investigation, real and visible raw data, with a view to discovering an explanation for them.

Observing a particular phenomenon in the field, especially in the "Cit  des Enfants" or out in the street, brings the participant to an understanding of a more global phenomenon. The aim is always to start from the particular and move towards the general.

5. *Verbal expression*

Exchange and dialogue between participants is encouraged. The city and architecture are marvellous vectors of research that allow participants to express their questions, their experiences, their daily lives, their relationship with the community, etc.

6. *Play at the heart of learning*

Play is a natural learning process that also allows connections to be made between different participants of all ages. It offers everyone the opportunity to engage actively and imaginatively in the activity. Through play, participants can organise, build, investigate, create, interact, and make sense of their imagination.

7. *Developing self-confidence*

Ultimately the pedagogical service aims to enable each participant to flourish, to become more confident and more autonomous through the enactment their own experience. The child is at the centre of the learning process.