



## The Consultation Record as Anticipatory Co-production and the Epistemic Labour of Festival Curation

*Öngörücü Ortak Üretim Olarak Danışma Kaydı ve Festival Küratörlüğünün Epistemik Emeği*

### ABSTRACT

Curatorial studies has produced substantial theorizations of the curator as cultural producer and of the curatorial as knowledge event, but it has not examined the mechanisms through which curatorial knowledge is produced in practice: the consultation, the negotiated agenda, the co-produced material commitment. This article addresses that gap by reading curatorial consultation records - annotated agendas and outcome notes - as primary evidence of a form of knowledge production it terms *anticipatory co-production*: knowledge that is oriented toward a material outcome that does not yet exist, produced across curatorial and artistic subject positions, prescriptive rather than documentary, and partially externalized through the consultation's own documentary apparatus. The concept is derived from the convergence of five frameworks drawn from scholarship on tacit knowledge, invisible labour, articulation work, situated action, and situated epistemology, none of which has previously been applied to curatorial practice. The empirical base consists of twenty-six consultations conducted across two rounds with thirteen artists for the sixth edition of the Istanbul Digital Art Festival (IDAF'26), read as longitudinal pairs separated by a five-week interval. Three cases - in which co-produced commitments are confirmed, spatially transformed, or structurally stalled - demonstrate that anticipatory co-production operates under variable conditions of constraint and that festival curation's bureaucratic apparatus renders legible a register of curatorial labour that other formats leave tacit.

**Keywords:** anticipatory co-production; curatorial labour; festival curation; consultation records; invisible work; new media art

### ÖZET

Küratoryel çalışmalar; kültürel bir üretici olarak küratör ve bir bilgi olayı olarak küratoryel kavramları üzerine şimdiye dek kapsamlı teorik tartışmalar yürütmüş olsa da, küratoryel bilginin pratikte hangi mekanizmalar aracılığıyla üretildiğini henüz yeterince incelememiştir. Danışma süreçleri, üzerinde uzlaşılan gündemler ve ortaklaşa oluşturulan materyal taahhütleri bu mekanizmaların başında gelmektedir. Bu makale, küratoryel danışma kayıtlarını-notlandırılmış gündemleri ve sonuç raporlarını-inceleyerek söz konusu boşluğu doldurmayı hedeflemektedir. Bu kayıtlar, makalenin "öngörücü ortak üretim" (*anticipatory co-production*) olarak tanımladığı bir bilgi üretim biçiminin temel kanıtları olarak ele alınmaktadır. Söz konusu kavram; henüz var olmayan materyal bir sonuca odaklanan, küratoryel ve sanatsal özneler arasında üretilen, betimlemekten ziyade kural koyucu bir nitelik taşıyan ve danışma sürecinin kendi belge düzeni aracılığıyla kısmen dışsallaştırılan bir bilgi türünü ifade eder. Kavramın temeli; örtük bilgi, görünmeyen emek, eklemleme işi (*articulation work*), konumlanmış eylem ve konumlanmış epistemoloji literatüründen ödünç alınan ve daha önce küratoryel pratiğe uygulanmamış beş ayrı çerçevenin sentezine dayanmaktadır. Çalışmanın ampirik zeminini, İstanbul Dijital Sanat Festivali'nin (IDAF'26) altıncı edisyonu kapsamında on üç sanatçıyla iki tur halinde gerçekleştirilen yirmi altı danışma görüşmesi oluşturmaktadır. Bu görüşmeler, beş haftalık aralıklarla yapılmış boylamsal çiftler olarak analiz edilmiştir. Ortaklaşa üretilen taahhütlerin onaylandığı, mekânsal olarak dönüştüğü veya yapısal olarak tıkandığı üç örnek vaka; "öngörücü ortak üretimin" değişken kısıtlar altında işlediğini göstermektedir. Çalışma sonuçları, festival küratörlüğünün bürokratik mekanizmalarının, diğer formatlarda genellikle örtük kalan küratoryel emek katmanlarını nasıl görünür ve okunur kıldığını ortaya koymaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** öngörücü ortak üretim; küratoryel emek; festival küratörlüğü; danışma kayıtları; görünmez çalışma; yeni medya sanatı

### THE PEDESTAL AT 120 × 30 × 30 CM

On March 10, 2026, thirty minutes into a video call between Istanbul and one of the artist collectives at IDAF'26, the conversation arrived at pedestals. The work, a circular installation in which live plants generate data that drives an eight-channel sound environment, required four of them, each a different height: 120 × 30 × 30 cm, 80 × 30 × 30, 80 × 30 × 30, 60 × 30 × 30. The dimensions were not arbitrary. Each pedestal corresponded to a specific plant

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species, selected from six candidates based on flowering viability in June and practical availability in Istanbul. The tallest pedestal - 120 centimetres, narrow enough that the plant would be visible from all sides within the four-metre circular footprint - was matched to a species whose canopy height and root structure demanded vertical separation from the sensors embedded below. By the end of this exchange, both the curator and the artist knew which plant would stand on which pedestal, at what height, and why. None of this correspondence had existed before the consultation began (Note 1 in Appendix).

The pedestal decision was not the consultation's only product. In the same thirty minutes, the spatial configuration of eight speakers arranged in a circle was confirmed - visitors would pass between them to approach the plants at the centre. A ring of full-spectrum grow lights, positioned overhead, was established as a visible component of the work rather than concealed infrastructure. A closed-circuit peristaltic watering system was reviewed: the motor had been tested, the risk of clogging or leakage was reported as eliminated, and autonomous operation for the festival's two-day run was confirmed. The artist's team would handle plant care directly. Sound overlap with neighbouring works in the exhibition was raised by the curator, acknowledged by the artist, and accepted by both as a condition of the shared space (Note 2 in Appendix). An Istanbul ecology context text - a wall-mounted panel situating the work within the city's environmental landscape - was agreed upon in principle but deferred: the idea was approved, the writing had not yet begun (Note 3 in Appendix). Each of these outcomes was produced through negotiation between two positions - curatorial and artistic - within a consultation structured by an agenda the curator had prepared in advance and annotated in real time.

In June, when visitors enter the Atatürk Cultural Centre (AKM) and encounter the work, everything this consultation produced will be materially present. The tallest pedestal will stand at 120 × 30 × 30 cm. Its plant will be alive, watered by the peristaltic system, illuminated by the ring of full-spectrum lights. Eight speakers will surround the installation. The sound overlap with neighbouring works will be audible. What will not be present is the thirty minutes that determined these configurations. No trace of which plant was matched to which pedestal height, or why. No record of the moment when sound interference was weighed and accepted rather than mitigated. No evidence that the grow lights were once a design question - concealed or visible? - before becoming a settled fact. The exhibition's institutional documentation will register that these material elements exist: an installation list, a technical rider, a floor plan with dimensions. It will not register how they came to exist. This is not an archival oversight. The curatorial record is designed to document outcomes, not the epistemic labour that produced them. The decisions survive; the decision-making vanishes. This asymmetry is structural.

The present article argues that this vanishing is not merely a documentation gap but a symptom of a larger methodological absence: curatorial studies has theorized the figure of the curator and the concept of the curatorial with considerable sophistication, but it has not examined the granular mechanisms - the consultation, the negotiated agenda, the co-produced decision - where curatorial knowledge is actually generated. Drawing on twenty-six consultations conducted across two rounds with thirteen artists for the sixth edition of the Istanbul Digital Art Festival (IDAF'26), the article reads consultation records as primary evidence of what it terms anticipatory co-production: knowledge that is oriented toward a work that does not yet exist materially, produced across curatorial and artistic positions, and structurally erased by the very institutional apparatus that depends on it.

## WHAT CURATORIAL STUDIES SEES AND DOES NOT SEE

Over the past two decades, curatorial studies has produced a substantial body of work theorizing the curator's role and the conceptual stakes of curatorial practice. This theorization is not thin. Paul O'Neill has traced the historical arc through which the curator shifted from institutional caretaker - a figure defined by collection management and exhibition logistics - to a publicly visible agent of cultural production, one whose authorial voice, conceptual framework, and discursive positioning became as legible as the exhibitions themselves (2012). Hans Ulrich Obrist's interviews with an earlier generation of curators constructed a genealogy of the field: from the experimental institutional programs of the 1960s and 1970s through the rise of biennials, *documenta* editions, and independent curatorial practice, each stage consolidating the curator as a figure who organizes not only objects but relationships, circulations, and publics (2008). Jean-Paul Martinon pushed this further by distinguishing between "curating" - the act of making exhibitions - and "the curatorial" - a mode of thought that treats the exhibition as a knowledge event rather than a display format (2013). Taken together, these accounts establish that the curator is no longer understood as a technician of presentation but as a producer of meaning, and that curating itself operates as an epistemic practice.

This is a genuine intellectual achievement. The conceptual turn in curatorial studies made it possible to ask questions about exhibitions that display-centred criticism could not reach: questions about power, about

institutional framing, about the politics of visibility, about the curator's complicity in and resistance to the structures that host cultural production.

What this article identifies, however, is a specific register at which this theorization operates - and what that register structurally excludes. The conceptual turn theorizes the curator as auteur, as discourse-maker, as institutional agent. It theorizes the curatorial as knowledge event, as political intervention, as epistemological reorientation. What it does not theorize is the mechanism through which curatorial knowledge is produced in practice: the consultation where a pedestal height is negotiated, the meeting where sound overlap between neighbouring works is weighed and accepted, the agenda item where a wall text is approved in principle but deferred in execution. These are not anecdotal details. They are the sites where curatorial decisions acquire their material specificity - where the exhibition stops being a concept and becomes a set of committed dimensions, confirmed equipment, and allocated square metres. Curatorial studies, as currently constituted, has no analytical vocabulary for these sites.

The closest the field comes is in reflective practitioner accounts - most notably in Paula Marincola's edited collection, where fourteen curators and art historians address the concrete challenges of exhibition-making (2006). But even here, the register is retrospective and reflective rather than processual. The contributors describe what makes exhibitions work or fail; they do not examine the real-time negotiation through which exhibition decisions are produced. The consultation - as a structured encounter between two subject positions, governed by an agenda, producing commitments about a work that does not yet materially exist - does not appear as an analytical object in the curatorial studies literature. This absence is not an oversight. It is a consequence of the conceptual register itself: when the field's dominant frameworks operate at the level of the curator-as-figure and the curatorial-as-concept, the granular labour of consultation falls below the threshold of theoretical visibility. The field sees the exhibition and the exhibition discourse; it does not see the thirty-minute meeting that determined where the speakers go.

This gap matters for two reasons. First, it means that an entire category of curatorial knowledge production - knowledge that is anticipatory, co-produced between curator and artist, and oriented toward a work that does not yet exist - remains empirically unexamined. The field asserts that curating produces knowledge; it has not shown where or how. Second, the gap cannot be closed with the field's existing conceptual tools alone. Theorizing the curator-as-auteur does not generate a method for reading consultation records. Theorizing the curatorial-as-knowledge-event does not produce an analytical framework for examining how a pedestal specification or a consent panel design emerges from negotiation. Closing this gap requires drawing on frameworks that curatorial studies has not previously engaged - frameworks developed in adjacent fields for analysing tacit knowledge, invisible labour, situated action, and the epistemic work embedded in organizational coordination. The remainder of this article undertakes that engagement.

## FESTIVAL CURATION AS SITE OF EXTERNALIZATION

The gap identified in the preceding section - a field that theorizes the curator but not the consultation, the curatorial but not the negotiation - is real, but it is not uniformly distributed across curatorial formats. Different formats externalize different quantities of curatorial labour. A gallery curator preparing a solo exhibition with a long-standing collaborator may conduct the entire negotiation through studio visits, phone calls, and informal exchanges that leave no documentary residue. A biennial curator working with an established artistic director may operate within a conceptual framework that has already absorbed the processual decisions into institutional routine. In these formats, the labour that produces the exhibition's material specificity remains largely tacit - not because it does not occur, but because the format does not require it to surface. Festival curation, particularly in the field of digital and new media art, operates under a different structural condition: one that forces the processual labour into externalized, documentable form.

Beryl Graham and Sarah Cook established the analytical foundation for understanding why this is so. Their argument is that new media art transforms the curatorial task itself. When the work depends on technical systems - software, sensors, network connections, projectors, real-time data processing - the curator cannot operate as a selector and arranger of finished objects. The work's behaviour is contingent on infrastructure: it requires specific hardware configurations, continuous power, calibration periods, and technical maintenance across the exhibition's duration. Its temporal character means that it does not simply occupy space but runs, and running introduces the possibility of failure - crashes, signal loss, sensor drift - that the curator must anticipate and manage. Its interactive dimensions mean that the visitor's body becomes a variable in the work's operation, introducing questions of throughput, consent, and physical safety that static installations do not pose. Graham and Cook's contribution is to show that these are not logistical inconveniences layered on top of curatorial work; they are the curatorial work.

New media art forces the curator to engage with process and infrastructure as primary concerns rather than background conditions (2010). The conceptual decision and the technical decision are not sequential - first the concept, then the implementation - but simultaneous and interdependent.

The festival format compounds this pressure. Unlike a gallery exhibition with months of preparation and a single artist's requirements to manage, a festival operates under compressed timelines with multiple simultaneous installations sharing temporary infrastructure. Technical riders must be compared across works to identify conflicts - two installations requiring the same projector specification, three works competing for ceiling-mounting capacity, a sound piece whose frequency range overlaps with a neighbouring installation's audio environment. Equipment must be procured, allocated, and scheduled for setup within windows measured in days rather than weeks. Spatial plans must accommodate works whose footprints are not fixed but negotiated, contingent on what the venue can support and what adjacent works demand. Each of these coordination tasks generates documentation: agendas, technical specifications, spatial diagrams, procurement lists, outcome notes. The documentation is produced not for archival purposes but for operational survival - without it, the festival cannot function. But its operational origin does not diminish its epistemic value. These documents are traces of the curatorial labour that produced them: they record what was proposed, what was negotiated, what was accepted, what was refused, and on what grounds.

The Istanbul Digital Art Festival's sixth edition - the empirical site of this article - adds several structural features that deepen this externalization. The open-call format means that the curator encounters each artist's work through an application rather than through prior relationship, and that the curatorial response must be articulated in documentable form from the outset. Each of the thirteen selected artists receives two structured consultations of approximately thirty minutes each, conducted by video call, governed by an agenda the curator prepares in advance. The consultations are conducted in Turkish - the working language of both curator and artists - and documented through annotated agendas and outcome notes recorded during or immediately after each meeting. The two rounds are separated by a five-week interval: the first round (March 9–10, 2026) produces initial commitments; the second (April 14–16, 2026) tests what has survived, shifted, or stalled. The result is an evidence base of twenty-six consultations - thirteen paired records - in which the curatorial labour that other formats leave tacit has been externalized by the format's own operational demands.

This externalization is the condition of possibility for the theoretical work that follows. The frameworks assembled in the next section - for analysing tacit knowledge, invisible labour, situated action, and positional epistemology - can be brought to bear on curatorial labour only because that labour has been forced to the surface by the festival's documentary apparatus. The agenda is not a preparation for the curatorial decision; it is the site where the decision is produced. The outcome note is not a retrospective summary of what was agreed upon; it is a real-time trace of negotiation between two subject positions. What bureaucratic procedure externalizes, analytical frameworks can read. Without the externalization, there would be nothing to read - the labour would remain where curatorial studies has left it: structurally present, epistemically invisible, theoretically unexamined.

## ANTICIPATORY CO-PRODUCTION

The gap identified in the preceding sections - between curatorial studies' conceptual theorization of the curator and the unexamined mechanisms through which curatorial knowledge is produced - cannot be addressed by inventing a framework from scratch. The analytical tools required already exist, developed across several decades of scholarship on tacit knowledge, invisible labour, organizational coordination, and situated epistemology. What they have not been asked to do is examine curatorial work. This section brings five such frameworks into contact with the curatorial consultation and argues that their convergence reveals a form of knowledge production that none of them, individually, fully captures: what this article terms *anticipatory co-production*.

The starting point is Michael Polanyi's account of tacit knowledge. Polanyi's central claim - that human beings know more than they can articulate in propositional form - reframes professional judgment as a form of knowing rather than a deficit of explanation (1966: 61). In the curatorial context, this reframing matters directly. When a curator determines that two works should not share a wall, or that a particular installation requires spatial isolation from the visitor flow, or that a wall text should be deferred rather than forced to completion, these decisions draw on knowledge that resists full formalization: accumulated spatial judgment, institutional memory, an internalized sense of how audiences move through exhibition architecture. Without Polanyi, such decisions are either romanticized as intuition or dismissed as arbitrary preference. With him, they become legible as epistemic acts - acts grounded in knowledge that the practitioner possesses but cannot exhaustively state. What Polanyi does not provide, however, is an account of how tacit knowledge operates when it is distributed across more than one subject position. His framework assumes a single knower. The curatorial consultation involves at least two.

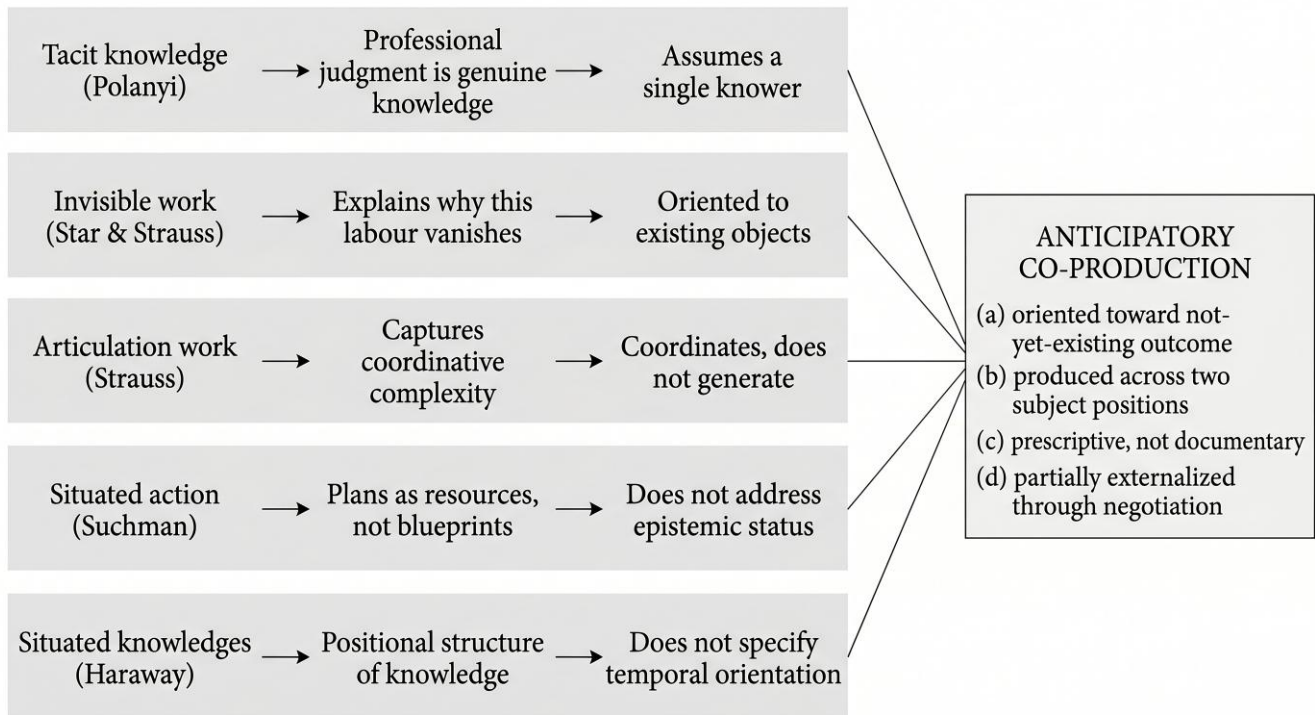
Susan Leigh Star and Anselm Strauss extend the analysis from individual knowledge to organizational labour. Their account of invisible work demonstrates that the visible outputs of any coordinated enterprise - the exhibition that opens on time, the publication that reaches print, the conference that runs to schedule - depend on a substrate of labour that is systematically rendered invisible by the very organizational structures it supports (1999: 10). The maintenance, repair, scheduling, negotiation, and improvisation that sustain institutional production are real work, but they are not recorded as such; they vanish into the background conditions of the visible result. This framework maps onto curatorial labour with striking precision. The exhibition is the visible output. The consultation - where technical specifications are negotiated, spatial conflicts are resolved, and material commitments are co-produced - is the invisible substrate. Star and Strauss give us the structural explanation for why this labour disappears: it is not that institutions fail to document it, but that institutional documentation is designed to capture outcomes rather than the processes that generate them. What Star and Strauss do not address, however, is the temporal orientation of the labour they describe. Their invisible work is contemporaneous with or retrospective to the objects it maintains - a limitation that becomes visible when the concept is brought alongside Strauss's earlier account of articulation.

Strauss's earlier work on articulation provides a further specification. His concept of articulation work - the ongoing effort required to assemble, coordinate, and realign the heterogeneous components of any project - captures the organizational complexity that curatorial labour involves: synchronizing artist schedules with venue availability, aligning technical requirements with institutional resources, reconciling spatial needs across multiple works competing for the same exhibition floor (1988: 174). Articulation work is essential, continuous, and largely unacknowledged. But it is, in Strauss's formulation, fundamentally coordinative. It manages the relationships between tasks that are already defined. The curatorial consultation does something that articulation work, as theorized, does not fully describe. It does not only coordinate existing tasks but produces new commitments - a pedestal at a specific height, a speaker configuration, a consent protocol - that did not exist as tasks before the consultation generated them. The consultation is not coordinating a pre-existing project structure; it is producing the project structure itself.

Lucy Suchman's account of situated action sharpens this distinction further. Suchman argues that plans are not determinative blueprints for action but resources that actors draw on and revise in the course of situated encounters (1987: 4-5). The curatorial agenda - prepared in advance, structured by topic, annotated in real time - functions precisely as Suchman's plan: it organizes the consultation without determining its outcomes. The curator enters with a structured set of concerns; the artist enters with a different set of commitments and constraints; what emerges is neither the execution of the agenda nor its abandonment but a situated negotiation in which both positions are revised. Suchman's framework captures this dynamic accurately. What it was not designed to address is the specific epistemic status of the knowledge that such encounters produce - knowledge oriented not toward an existing situation that requires navigation but toward a future material configuration that the encounter itself is bringing into being.

Donna Haraway's insistence on situated knowledges adds a final, necessary dimension. Haraway argues that all knowledge is produced from a position - partial, embodied, accountable - and that the claim to a view from nowhere is itself a political act that obscures the conditions of knowledge production (1988: 5). In the curatorial consultation, both participants occupy positions: the curator holds institutional authority, spatial overview, and responsibility for the exhibition as a whole; the artist holds material expertise, conceptual authorship, and knowledge of the work's technical and aesthetic requirements that the curator does not possess. The knowledge produced in the consultation is not the curator's knowledge applied to the artist's work, nor the artist's knowledge accommodated by the curator's framework. It is knowledge that emerges from the encounter between these two partial perspectives - knowledge that neither position could have produced alone. Haraway's framework makes it possible to theorize this positional structure without collapsing it into either curatorial authority or artistic autonomy.

Each of these five frameworks illuminates a dimension of what happens in the curatorial consultation. Polanyi establishes that the judgments involved are genuine knowledge. Star and Strauss explain why this knowledge vanishes from institutional view. Strauss specifies the coordinative complexity of the labour. Suchman captures the situated, non-deterministic character of the encounter. Haraway theorizes the positional structure from which the knowledge is produced. But none of them, individually or collectively, names the distinctive epistemic form that the consultation generates. This article proposes that form as *anticipatory co-production*: knowledge that is (a) oriented toward a material outcome that does not yet exist, (b) produced across two subject positions rather than held by either individually, (c) prescriptive rather than documentary - it determines what will be built, not what has been observed, and (d) partially externalized through the negotiation itself, surfacing in agenda annotations, outcome notes, and decision records that constitute the consultation's material trace.



**Figure 1:** The derivation of anticipatory co-production. Each framework contributes a dimension to the analysis of curatorial consultation labour and reaches a specific limit that the next framework addresses. The four-part definition emerges from their convergence, not from any single framework. **Source:** By the Author

## METHODOLOGY OF READING CONSULTATION RECORDS AS PRIMARY EVIDENCE

The empirical analysis that follows reads curatorial consultation records as primary evidence of anticipatory co-production. This is a methodological choice that requires explicit justification, because the records in question are not the kinds of documents that typically serve as data in curatorial studies. They are not interview transcripts, not retrospective practitioner reflections, not ethnographic field notes produced by a third-party observer. They are working documents: agendas prepared by the curator in advance of each consultation, annotated in real time during the meeting, and supplemented by outcome notes recorded immediately afterward. Their original function is operational - they exist to organize the consultation and to track what was agreed upon, deferred, or refused. This article repurposes them as evidence, reading them not for the administrative information they were designed to convey but for the epistemic labour they inadvertently externalize: the negotiation of commitments, the distribution of responsibility between two subject positions, the prescriptive orientation toward material outcomes that do not yet exist.

The evidence base consists of twenty-six consultations conducted with thirteen artists across two rounds for the sixth edition of the Istanbul Digital Art Festival (IDAF'26). The first round took place on March 9–10, 2026; the second on April 14–16, 2026. Each artist was consulted in both rounds, producing a paired record: two documents for the same work, separated by a five-week interval. This interval is not incidental to the research design. It is the condition that makes the anticipatory character of curatorial knowledge production empirically accessible. The first-round consultation generates prescriptive commitments - determinations about what will be built, how, with what materials, in what spatial configuration. The five weeks that follow are the period in which these commitments encounter the artist's own production process, the institutional constraints of the venue, and the material realities that the consultation could anticipate but not fully control. The second-round consultation then registers what happened: which commitments survived, which were revised, and which remained unresolved. Reading the two records together - as a longitudinal pair rather than as isolated snapshots - is what allows the analysis to track anticipatory co-production as a process rather than describing it as a single event.

From the twenty-six consultations, three cases are selected for close reading. The selection criterion is structural variation, not typicality. Each case exhibits a different pattern of what happens to co-produced commitments across the five-week interval: in one, the commitments are confirmed without significant revision; in another, the foundational spatial commitment is replaced by a different configuration that both positions negotiate as an improvement; in the third, several commitments that should have advanced remain unresolved, and one proposed expansion is refused on grounds generated by the consultation's own ethical commitments. These patterns - labelled

*held*, *shifted*, and *deadlocked* - are not imposed a priori but derived from the empirical record. The labels name what the paired documents show; they do not classify the consultations into pre-existing categories. The inclusion of a case in which commitments remain unresolved is deliberate: if anticipatory co-production were examined only through cases where it succeeds, the analysis would overstate the form's efficacy and fail to identify the structural conditions under which it reaches its limits.

The consultations were conducted in Turkish. All translations from consultation records are the author's. Turkish-language originals are preserved in footnotes throughout the empirical section, allowing readers with access to the source language to assess the translation choices. This is not a neutral procedure - translation involves interpretive decisions, and the author's dual position as both translator and analyst means that the same person who conducted the consultations is selecting which formulations to render and how. This circularity cannot be eliminated; it can only be declared and managed.

That declaration extends to a more fundamental methodological condition. The author of this article is the curator who conducted all twenty-six consultations. The agendas were prepared by the author; the annotations were made by the author in real time; the outcome notes were recorded by the author. The analysis is therefore autoethnographic in Ellis and Bochner's sense: it draws on the researcher's own professional practice as the primary site of inquiry, treating the researcher's subject position not as a source of bias to be eliminated but as a constitutive condition of the knowledge the research produces (2000: 739-741). This framing is not a licence for unexamined self-reporting. It is a methodological commitment to treating the curator-scholar's dual position as an analytical resource. The analysis has access to the consultation's texture precisely because the analyst was a participant while acknowledging that this access comes with a specific partiality. That partiality takes a particular form in one of the three cases.

One case requires additional positional disclosure. The artist in Case B is a doctoral student whose dissertation the author supervises. The consultation relationship - curator and artist - is therefore overlaid with an advisory relationship - supervisor and doctoral candidate - that introduces a structural asymmetry absent from the other two cases. The author's analytical attention to this case is shaped by a familiarity with the artist's conceptual framework that exceeds what the consultation record alone could provide, and the artist's responsiveness within the consultation is conditioned by an institutional relationship that extends beyond the festival. This asymmetry does not disqualify the case. It does mean that Case B cannot be read as if the two subject positions it brings into encounter were symmetrical in the way that Cases A and C more closely approximate. The asymmetry is declared here rather than managed out of the analysis; the reader should hold it as a condition of the case's evidence rather than a deficiency.

Three safeguards constrain the analysis. First, all three cases are read through the same analytical framework - the four components of anticipatory co-production defined in the preceding section - so that the interpretive lens is consistent across cases rather than tailored to produce favourable readings. Second, the analysis is limited to what the consultation records externalize: agenda items, annotations, outcome notes. Claims about what the curator or artist intended, felt, or privately assessed are excluded unless they are registered in the documented record. The consultation may have involved dimensions of judgment, affect, and relational negotiation that the records do not capture; the analysis does not speculate about these dimensions. Third, the pattern labels are descriptive rather than evaluative. *Held* does not mean successful; *deadlocked* does not mean failed. Each label names a structural configuration - a relationship between first-round commitments and second-round outcomes - without attributing normative value to the configuration it names.

### THREE CONSULTATION PAIRS READ STRUCTURALLY

The three cases that follow are drawn from the twenty-six consultations described in the preceding section. Each pairs a first-round consultation (March 9–10, 2026) with a second-round consultation (April 14–16, 2026) for the same artist and work. The cases were selected not for typicality but for structural variation: each exhibits a different pattern of what happens to anticipatory co-production across the five-week interval between rounds. The patterns are named descriptively - held, shifted, deadlocked - and the analytical interest lies not in the labels, but in what each pattern reveals about the epistemic form that this article has been theorizing.

#### Case A: Information Dump (held)

In the first-round consultation, the conversation turned to a plexiglass box. The work - an interactive installation in which visitors navigate a data environment through a joystick and keyboard - required its input devices to be physically protected from the festival audience. The joystick would be enclosed in a plexiglass housing, mounted on a fixed pedestal, with all cabling concealed inside or secured to the structure (Note 4 in Appendix). The concern

was not aesthetic but operational: in a public festival environment, exposed hardware is vulnerable to displacement, disconnection, and damage. A spare joystick and keyboard set was identified as necessary. The vandal-proofing specification - plexiglass enclosure, fixed pedestal, concealed cabling, spare hardware - was a commitment that neither the curator nor the artist held independently before the consultation produced it. The curator brought the institutional knowledge that festival environments exert physical stress on interactive works; the artist brought the technical knowledge of how the specific hardware could be enclosed without obstructing visitor interaction. What emerged was a prescriptive determination: the input devices *will be* protected in this specific configuration.

The same consultation produced a cluster of adjacent commitments. The hardware platform was narrowed: a Mac Mini was the first preference, but any Windows PC with sufficient processing power would serve, since the work - a web-based JavaScript piece - ran on both operating systems (Note 5 in Appendix). The risk of browser crashes in a five-day continuous run was raised by the curator and addressed jointly: the browser would operate in kiosk mode, with an automatic page refresh at set intervals and, on macOS, a launch agent to restart the application in the event of a full crash (Note 6 in Appendix). A wall text was agreed upon in concept: the artist's reference to Paul Virilio and the metaphor of the 'information dump' would be condensed into a one-to-two-paragraph summary with an accompanying visualization, produced by the artist (Note 7 in Appendix). A screen specification was confirmed: one 65–75-inch display at 4K resolution, oriented vertically, with a total footprint of approximately three by two metres (Note 8 in Appendix). Internet connectivity was confirmed as unnecessary; the work operated locally.

Five weeks later, in the second-round consultation, every one of these commitments was confirmed. The artist would bring the plexiglass box, the pedestal, and a spare keyboard (Note 9 in Appendix). The hardware had been settled - a Windows PC with 32 GB RAM and a dedicated graphics card, with the work adjusted to match and no loss of data density (Note 10 in Appendix). The auto-refresh mechanism had been implemented, with both soft and hard refresh cycles built in (Note 11 in Appendix). The wall text and infographic were reported as complete (Note 12 in Appendix). Setup was scheduled for one day before the festival opening.

What makes this case analytically significant is not the individual commitments but the pattern across the interval. Every prescriptive determination produced in March survived contact with the five weeks that followed - the period in which the artist's own production process tested whether the co-produced specifications were adequate to the work's actual requirements. The second-round consultation functioned as confirmation rather than revision. This is what held means as a structural pattern: the anticipatory knowledge generated in the first round proved sufficient to the material conditions it was oriented toward. The commitments produced across two subject positions in March were adequate - not because they were correct in advance, but because the co-production was precise enough that the artist's subsequent work validated rather than disrupted them.

### Case B: Infrastructural Images (shifted)

In the first-round consultation, the dominant question was square metres. The work - a three-zone installation in which visitors move sequentially through environments labelled Operation, Memory, and Power, with real-time facial data captured by cameras and processed into outputs including thermal prints - required between sixteen and twenty-two square metres of partitioned space (Note 13 in Appendix). Each zone occupied four to six square metres. Three transition thresholds - corridors ninety centimetres wide and 120 to 150 centimetres long - separated the zones, functioning not as mere passages but as experiential intervals designed to produce a perceptual reset between environments (Note 14 in Appendix). The circulation sequence was fixed and non-negotiable: Operation first, then Memory, then Power, with no option for visitors to enter out of order or reverse direction (Note 15 in Appendix). The partition solution was negotiated as a hybrid: rigid panels for the main spatial divisions, curtains for the threshold transitions - a configuration that reduced cost while preserving the experiential function of the thresholds (Note 16 in Appendix). Cameras required ceiling mounting for optimal facial capture. Hardware was confirmed as modest - a standard laptop, USB webcams, a thermal printer with spare rolls. The logistical assessment was frank. This was one of the festival's most complex installations, with three laptops, three screens, three cameras, partition elements, a sound system, and ceiling mounts requiring coordinated procurement and at least four days of setup before the opening (Note 17 in Appendix).

Five weeks later, the spatial foundation of this entire configuration had moved. The second-round consultation opened with a location briefing that placed the work not in the main exhibition hall but in the passage area between the theatre foyer and the Music Platform - a transitional architectural space connecting two larger zones of the venue (Note 18 in Appendix). This was not a logistical concession. The passage area offered three specific advantages that the consultation identified. It did not constrain visitor movement through the theatre foyer, and it functioned as a physical bridge between two programmatic spaces, and, most significantly, it produced a

conceptual alignment between the work's subject matter and its spatial situation. A work about infrastructural visibility, about the operational systems that process and classify human presence, was now located in an infrastructural space, a passage that visitors would move through on their way from one part of the exhibition to another (Note 19 in Appendix). The transition thresholds that the first round had negotiated in the abstract - panel-and-curtain divisions between zones - would now operate within a geometry that was itself transitional.

Some commitments from the first round survived the relocation intact. The directed circulation sequence remained fixed: Operation followed by Memory followed by Power, implemented in an L or U configuration fitted to the passage geometry (Note 20 in Appendix). The hardware specifications were unchanged. The ceiling-mounted cameras were confirmed (Note 21 in Appendix). The artist would supply the thermal printer and spare rolls (Note 22 in Appendix). Setup was compressed from the four-day minimum discussed in March to a two-day window (Note 23 in Appendix). The Istanbul context text - a wall-mounted panel situating the work within the city's surveillance and data infrastructure - was identified as still needing preparation (Note 24 in Appendix).

The analytical structure here is different from Case A. What *shifted* means is that the foundational spatial commitment of the first round - the premise that the work would occupy a bounded area within the main exhibition space - was replaced by a different spatial logic, and this replacement was itself a product of anticipatory co-production. The relocation was not imposed by the curator and accepted by the artist; it was negotiated as an improvement, with both positions contributing to the rationale. The curator held the spatial overview of the venue and the knowledge that the passage area had become available; the artist held the conceptual framework that made the passage legible as an appropriate site rather than a compromise. Neither position alone would have produced this outcome. The curator without the artist's conceptual vocabulary would have seen a logistical solution; the artist without the curator's spatial knowledge would not have known the passage existed as an option. The co-production was genuinely bilateral, both positions contributed knowledge that the other did not hold, even as it operated under the positional asymmetry declared in the methodology section: a consultation relationship overlaid with a supervisory one. It was anticipatory in the precise sense that it oriented both positions toward a material configuration that did not yet exist but that the consultation was bringing into being.

What the shift reveals about anticipatory co-production is that the knowledge it generates is not fixed at the moment of its first externalization. The March commitments were real - they prescribed specific material outcomes. But the five-week interval introduced a new condition (the passage area's availability and spatial logic), and the second round demonstrated that co-produced knowledge is revisable without being arbitrary.

### Case C: E·NA/CT (deadlocked)

In the first-round consultation, the artist's team proposed that a separate body and voice performance artist would work within the installation, performing alongside the psychophysiological experience and guiding visitors through it (Note 25 in Appendix). The proposal was noted and deferred - the curator indicated it would be evaluated. By the second round, five weeks later, the proposal had been refused. The refusal rested on two grounds: the performance artist had not applied through the open call and was therefore not part of the curated selection, and the proposed role - directing visitors' experience within the installation - would contradict the ethical consent protocol that the work itself required (Note 26 in Appendix). The consent panel, which both rounds had identified as a necessary component of the installation, promised visitors that their participation was optional and that their psychophysiological data would be processed in real time without storage (Note 27 in Appendix). A performer guiding visitors through the experience would compromise the autonomy that the consent framework was designed to protect. The refusal was not the curator overruling the artist. It was a prescriptive determination - anticipatory co-production operating in the negative register, specifying what the work *will not* include - that followed from commitments the consultation process itself had generated.

The refusal, however, was only one element of a broader pattern. E·NA/CT is a psycho-physiologically responsive installation requiring two projectors, a surround sound system, a ceiling-mounted grid for curtain structure and projection equipment, a floor platform, and sensors capable of collecting EEG, electrodermal activity, and heart rate data from visitors (Note 28 in Appendix). In the first round, the technical requirements were established in considerable detail. The projectors - 4,500 and 4,600 ANSI lumens, no edge blending required - needed either ultra-short-throw capacity at the venue or, failing that, short-throw lens adapters or mirror systems as an interim solution. The question was left conditional: *if* AKM lacks UST capability, *then* alternative optical solutions must be sourced (Note 29 in Appendix). A minimum three-day setup and calibration window was identified, with two to three hours of initial calibration after spatial installation and approximately fifteen minutes of daily recalibration throughout the festival run (Note 30 in Appendix). Visitor throughput was a point of tension: the artist's team had

planned for five to six visitors per hour, but the curator pressed for seven to eight, noting the strain between the work's experiential depth and its accessibility to a festival audience (Note 31 in Appendix).

In the second round, the UST question had not been resolved. The April consultation note asks explicitly whether the short-throw solution discussed in March had been clarified - the phrasing itself registering the gap (Note 32 in Appendix). The consent panel, agreed upon in principle in March, still lacked content: the April note records it as "to be prepared." (Note 33 in Appendix). The wall text and infographic were similar in situation (Note 34 in Appendix). The work's spatial situation had also shifted - it was now assigned to the Coffee World area of AKM, operating as what the consultation notes describe as a "satellite box": a space with independent operational logic, exhibited separately from the main visitor flow, which created a wayfinding challenge that the first round had not anticipated (Note 35 in Appendix). The throughput target of seven to eight visitors per hour was confirmed, along with the cooling period between visitors required for sensor data clearance, but the physical conditions that would make this throughput achievable - the projector solution, the ceiling grid capacity, the platform feasibility - remained questions rather than commitments.

What *deadlocked* means, analytically, is not that the consultation failed. It means that anticipatory co-production encountered a boundary condition: the gap between what the two subject positions could co-produce through negotiation and what required institutional resources that neither position controlled. The curator could negotiate throughput targets, refuse scope expansions, and establish ethical parameters. The artist could specify technical requirements, confirm team availability, and prepare conceptual materials. But neither could resolve whether AKM's ceiling grid would support the projector configuration, or whether ultra-short-throw lenses were available within the festival's procurement capacity. These are determinations that depend on a third term - the institutional infrastructure of the venue - that participates in the material outcome but is not a subject position in the consultation. The deadlock is structural rather than interpersonal. It marks the point where anticipatory co-production reaches the limit of what bilateral negotiation between curator and artist can prescribe, and where the institutional conditions that will determine the work's material form remain underdetermined.

The performance artist refusal and the projector impasse are, in this sense, complementary. The refusal demonstrates that anticipatory co-production can operate prescriptively in the negative - it can determine what will not be built and do so on grounds that emerge from the consultation's own commitments. The projector impasse demonstrates that anticipatory co-production cannot prescribe outcomes that depend on conditions external to the two positions it brings into encounter. Together, they define the epistemic boundaries of the form this article has been theorizing.

### Cross-case

The three patterns are not a typology. They are three empirical configurations of the same epistemic form - anticipatory co-production - observed under different conditions of constraint. What varies is not the form but the resistance it encounters: technical feasibility in Case A, spatial logic in Case B, institutional infrastructure in Case C. Together, they demonstrate that anticipatory co-production is not a smooth or guaranteed process but one whose outcomes are contingent on conditions that the consultation can surface but cannot always resolve.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The pedestal at 120 × 30 × 30 cm is still there, or rather, it will be, in June, when visitors encounter it without knowing that its height was negotiated in a thirty-minute video call three months earlier. This article has argued that the negotiation matters: not as anecdote but as evidence of an epistemic form that curatorial studies has not examined. The form - anticipatory co-production - names knowledge that is oriented toward a material outcome that does not yet exist, produced across two subject positions, prescriptive rather than documentary, and partially externalized through the consultation's own documentary apparatus. The concept was not invented to fill the gap identified in Section 2; it was derived from the convergence of five frameworks that, brought into contact with the curatorial consultation, revealed a structure none of them individually described. The three cases demonstrated that this form operates under variable conditions of constraint - confirmed without revision, transformed through bilateral renegotiation, or stalled at the boundary where co-production meets institutional infrastructure neither position controls - and that each configuration is analytically productive rather than evaluatively ranked.

The contribution is methodological as much as conceptual. Reading consultation records as primary evidence - annotated agendas, outcome notes, paired across a five-week interval - is not standard practice in curatorial studies. The field's empirical base has been built from exhibition analysis, retrospective interviews, and practitioner reflection. This article proposes that the processual register requires processual evidence: documents produced during the labour rather than after it. The paired-record structure makes anticipatory character visible in a way that

single-round data cannot, because it is the interval that reveals what co-produced commitments do when they encounter the conditions that they were designed to anticipate.

The limits are real. The evidence is drawn from a single festival edition, curated by the author, analysed by the author - a circularity that the methodology section declared but cannot eliminate. Whether anticipatory co-production operates in formats with longer timelines, established curator–artist relationships, or institutional rather than festival contexts remains an open empirical question. The concept's extensibility is a claim this article has constructed but not tested beyond its originating site.

One question, finally, that the analysis surfaces but does not resolve: if institutional documentation is structurally designed to capture outcomes rather than the labour that produces them, then what would a documentary practice look like that preserves the consultation's epistemic texture without converting it into an administrative record? The answer is not self-evident. But asking the question is already a departure from a field that has not yet noticed the disappearance.

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## APPENDIX

The consultation was conducted in Turkish. All translations from consultation records throughout this article are the author's.

Ses çakışması olacak ve bunun farkındalar" [There will be sound overlap and they are aware of it].

"Daha sonra üzerinde çalışılacak. Genel olarak metin olumlu" [To be worked on later. The text is generally positive].

"Kaidenin kendisi sabit olacak. Joystick bir pleksiglas kutu içinde olacak ve kaideye sabitlenecek" [The pedestal itself will be fixed. The joystick will be inside a plexiglass box and secured to the pedestal].

"Kavram bakımından yoğunluk önemli. Mac Mini ilk tercih ama eşdeğeri bir Windows PC de olabilir" [Conceptual density matters. Mac Mini is the first choice but an equivalent Windows PC is also possible].

"Tarayıcı çökerse otomatik yeniden açılma macOS'ta bu bir launch agent ile yapılmalı" [If the browser crashes, automatic restart on macOS should be done via a launch agent].

"Sanatçının sunduğu referans metninin 1-2 paragraflık özeti ve görselleştirilmesi bir duvar metni olarak sanatçı tarafından sağlanacak" [A 1-2 paragraph summary and visualization of the artist's reference text will be provided by the artist as a wall text].

"1 adet 65-75 inç ekran ihtiyacı var. [...] Ekran dikey yerleştirilecek. Toplam ayak izi olarak 3×2 metre" [1 display of 65-75 inches is needed. (...) Display will be oriented vertically. Total footprint approximately 3×2 meters].

"Hem kaideyi hem kutuyu sanatçı kendi getirecek ayrıca yedek bir klavye de sağlayacak" [The artist will bring both the pedestal and the box and will also provide a spare keyboard].

"Monster marka 32 GB Ram, 500 SSD ve güçlü bir ekran kartı olan bir Windows PC (iş bu buna uygun ayarladı ve veri yoğunluğu kaybı yok)" [A Monster-brand Windows PC with 32 GB RAM, 500 SSD, and a powerful graphics card (the work has been adjusted accordingly with no loss of data density)].

"AUTO yapılmış, SOFT ve HARD refresh de olacak" [AUTO has been done, SOFT and HARD refresh will also be included].

"Duvar metni ve infografik HAZIR" [Wall text and infographic READY].

"Her zone 4–6 m<sup>2</sup>, toplam zone alanı 12–18 m<sup>2</sup>, üç geçiş eşiği toplam yaklaşık 4 m<sup>2</sup>, genel toplam 16–22 m<sup>2</sup> veya en az 20 m<sup>2</sup>" [Each zone 4-6 m<sup>2</sup>, total zone area 12-18 m<sup>2</sup>, three transition thresholds approximately 4 m<sup>2</sup> total, grand total 16-22 m<sup>2</sup> or at least 20 m<sup>2</sup>].

"Bu eşikler sadece geçiş değil, deneyimin parçası - bir zone'dan diğerine geçerken izleyicinin algısal sıfırlanması, önceki deneyimin sindirilmesi için tasarlanmış" [These thresholds are not just transitions but part of the experience - designed for the viewer's perceptual reset when passing from one zone to the next, for digesting the previous experience].

"Operation → Memory → Power sırası sabit, esneklik yok" [The Operation → Memory → Power sequence is fixed, no flexibility].

"En verimli seçenek hibrit yaklaşım - pano ile ana bölümler, perde ile eşik geçişleri" [The most efficient option is a hybrid approach - panels for main divisions, curtains for threshold transitions].

Asıl zorluk lojistik tarafta: üç laptop, üç ekran, üç kamera, bölme elemanları, ses sistemi, tavan montajı - bunların tedariki ve koordinasyonu festival organizasyonunun omurgasını zorlayacak" [The real challenge is on the logistics side: three laptops, three screens, three cameras, partition elements, sound system, ceiling mounting - procurement and coordination of these will strain the festival organization's backbone].

"Geçiş alanı: fuaye ile Müzik Platformu arası" [Passage area: between fuaye and Müzik Platformu].

Geçiş alanının avantajları: fuaye hareketini kısıtlamıyor, iki mekan arası köprü, kavramsal uyum (altyapısal geçiş = fiziksel geçiş)" [Advantages of the passage area: does not constrain fuaye movement, bridge between two spaces, conceptual alignment (infrastructural transition = physical transition)].

"L/U konfigürasyonu" [L/U configuration].

"Tavan montaj kapasitesi (3 kamera, tavana monte)" [Ceiling mounting capacity (3 cameras, ceiling-mounted)].

"Termal yazıcı + yedek rulo: SANATÇI KENDİ GETİRECEK" [Thermal printer + spare rolls: ARTIST WILL BRING HERSELF].

"1-2 HAZİRAN" [June 1-2].

"HAZIRLANACAK VE ALANA GETİRİLECEK" [TO BE PREPARED AND BROUGHT TO THE VENUE].

"Ayrı bir beden ve ses performans sanatçısının da kendi işinin içinde bir performans yapıp izleyicileri yönlendirmesi isteği iletildi" [The request for a separate body and voice performance artist to perform within the work and guide visitors was conveyed].

"Bu sanatçının festivale başvurmamış olması, açık çağrı seçkisine ve bu nedenle de kürasyona dahil olmaması nedenleriyle reddedildi. Ayrıca böyle bir durumun eseri deneyimlemeye gelecek kişileri ve onların deneyimlerini yönlendirmek anlamına geleceği ve bu nedenle de etik onama aykırı olduğu ifade edildi" [Refused because this artist had not applied to the festival and was therefore not part of the open call selection and thus not part of the curation. Additionally, it was stated that such a situation would mean directing the people coming to experience the work and their experience and would therefore violate ethical consent].

"Bilgilendirilmiş onam (informed consent): mekâna girmeden önce verilerinin toplandığını ve anlık olarak kullanıldığını kısa bir bilgilendirme panosu olacak ve katılım opsiyonel olacak" [Informed consent: there will be a brief information panel before entering the space stating that data is collected and used in real time, and participation will be optional].

"Psikofizyolojik veri toplama: EEG, EDA (deri iletkenliđi), kalp atıř hızı" [Psychophysiological data collection: EEG, EDA (skin conductance), heart rate].

"2 projektör kullanılacak [...] Eđer AKM'de UST yoksa, kısa atıř (short-throw, ~1-1.5m mesafe) lens adaptörleri veya ayna sistemleri de bir ara çözümler olabilir" [2 projectors will be used (...) If AKM lacks UST, short-throw (~1-1.5m distance) lens adapters or mirror systems could be an interim solution].

"En az 3 günlük kurulum ve kalibrasyon süresi beklentisi var. Mekân kurulumu tamamlandıktan sonra, ilk kurulum için 2-3 saat kalibrasyon süreci gerekmektedir" [A minimum 3-day setup and calibration period is expected. After spatial installation is complete, 2-3 hours of calibration are required for initial setup].

"Saatte 5-6 kiři planlamıřlar ama eserin kavramsal derinliđi ile izleyici erişilebilirliđi arasında hissedilebilir bir gerilim olacaktır. En az 7-8 kiři olmalı devir hızı" [They planned for 5-6 people per hour but there will be a palpable tension between the work's conceptual depth and viewer accessibility. Throughput should be at least 7-8 people].

"UST/short-throw lens durumu: ilk toplantıda 'AKM'de UST yoksa kısa atıř lens adaptörleri veya ayna sistemleri' denilmiřti. Çözüm netleřti mi?" [UST/short-throw lens status: in the first meeting it was said 'if AKM lacks UST, short-throw lens adapters or mirror systems.' Has the solution been clarified?].

"Onam paneli tasarımı: içerik taslađı var mı? HAZIRLANACAK" [Consent panel design: is there a content draft? TO BE PREPARED].

"Duvar metni ve infografik HAZIRLANACAK" [Wall text and infographic TO BE PREPARED].

"Uydu kutusu statüsü: bađımsız operasyonel mantıđın tanınması, ana akıřtan ayrı gösterilme gerekçesi → yönlendirme ve dikkat çekme ihtiyacı" [Satellite box status: recognition of independent operational logic, rationale for exhibiting separately from main flow → need for wayfinding and attention-drawing].