

What comes to mind when you think of infrastructure (infra)? Is it roads, cables, data centers, or sewers? These are infras, but they are also examples which are often out of reach. They are buried or protected, physically and socially, and cannot be shaped or transformed by the people who live with them.

We can be more generous with our definition of infra, moving the focus from big projects that are out of our reach, to smaller scale and community run projects e.g. community bridges, gardens or libraries. These local infras are maintained and shaped through care-full community relations which are multiple and situated.

In-grid aims to surface technical infras so that they can be shaped by us, and those we care for and with. In practice, this has challenged.

## What is infra?

Some of the joys of artist and community made infras are their idiosyncrasies and inefficiencies. Rather than reflecting or perpetuating a standardised system which emphasises efficiency, DIY infra can be shaped to reflect the values, desires, knowledge and practices of it's makers. Making your own infra lets you determine at which capacity to operate: financially, ecologically, relationally and individually. For example one community's infra might prioritise data security, another working only with low power or recycled devices, and

## Why build your own infra?

what is and who has expertise, and how that determines what infras are and can do. For us, this offers a promise of how infra can be brought close, and shaped by the local matters and desires of different communities

Rather than assume what you might desire to do socially or technically, here are a few questions to help inform your decisions depending on your capacity, equipment, materials or technologies.

- How can the infrastructure you desire be within reach? What do you want to do,

## How to start

another that might work around its maintainers' capacity for it to be activated.

For In-Grid, we work with the principles of CCAR (Creative Commons 4 Reuse) so the desire for this type of infrastructure is less about "sovereignty" or "ownership", but rather towards creating a place to access, test out, and make sense of the infrastructure through local collective actions.

and what is the easiest way to action it now? Make sense of how that goes and grow from there.

- How long do you want your infrastructure to last? Is it temporary, intermittent, indeterminate or permanent? What resources and capacities do you have available? This could be how much time can you offer, how much money or head-space can you invest
- Who will use the infrastructure? What does it take to support the. Can you share the maintenance of the infra?
- How accessible do you want your infrastructure to be? Does it require a level of technical skill, or how might you care for those less comfortable with the technical or social practices of the infra?
- Is someone else doing it? Rather than reinvent the wheel could you become involved in an existing project, use services run by collectives or be informed by their methods? Many community and collective groups are more than happy to collaborate or offer advice. Reach out!

## Artist lead infras

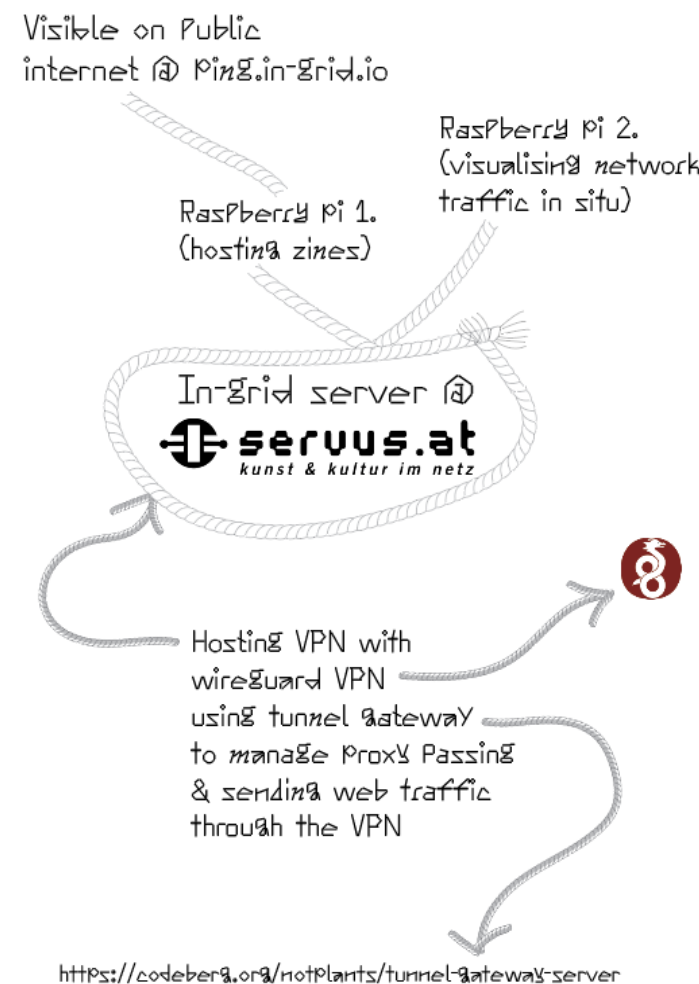
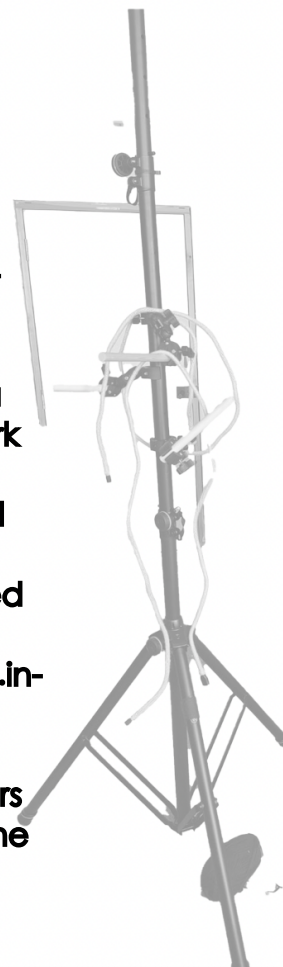
Artist run infras have existed as long as artists have, and we don't claim to be experts or determine how they should/are run. To illustrate the variety and scope of artist made infra here is a none exhaustive list of collectives and projects we know and admire (in no particular order):

CC ([https://cc.practices.tools/wiki/Main\\_Page](https://cc.practices.tools/wiki/Main_Page))  
Varia (<https://vvvvvvaria.org/>)  
Constant (<https://constantvzw.org/>)  
Hackers and Designers (<https://hackersanddesigners.nl/>)  
Servus (<https://core.servus.at/>)  
Autonomic (<https://autonomic.zone/>)  
Systerserver (<https://systerserver.net/>)  
Anarchaserver (<https://anarchaserver.org/>)  
Pirate care (<https://pirate.care/pages/concept/>)  
Common Internet (<https://gateway.commoninternet.net/>)

## PING

For those of you who are interested in how In-grid set up the installation 'PING' at Creative Intelligence @ Southbank "26 here is a diagram of our network set-up.

PING is an installation and a piece of artist made network infrastructure. The structure holds a series of small board computers and screens, which are servers connected through a Virtual Private Network (VPN) hosting ping.in-grid.io in the space. Visualisations show connections made by visitors via the website, revealing the connections and messages sent between the devices and visitors.



## Weaving Infrastructures

an intro to DIY, community and artist made infrastructures

by In-grid