

# INTERREG PROJECT IDEAS

## Creative Urban Hubs for Cultural and Social Renaissance

### **Project Overview:**

Our project aims to foster cultural and social integration in the Hauts-de-France region, particularly in Wattlelos, by creating creative urban hubs within local social centers. We aim to collaborate with European partners to implement cultural and creative actions from Wattlelos to other European regions, creating significant cross-border synergies. We have already contacted Le Fresnoy and the University of Mons for collaboration and are currently awaiting their response.

### **Initiative FOCUS:**

The FOCUS (Film Ouverture Culture Union Sociale) initiative is a preliminary idea of our project, and we have not yet established formal partnerships for its implementation. It serves as an illustration of the type of action we would like to pursue in the future. It aims to develop cross-border cultural cooperation to promote film education and raise public awareness, particularly among young people, on societal and cultural issues through audiovisual art.

### **Objectives:**

- Create urban cultural and creative hubs within social centers.
- Foster social inclusion by providing opportunities for cultural education and professional training.
- Promote collaboration between local cultural institutions and the community.
- Stimulate cross-border cultural activities and cooperation, improving cultural accessibility.
- Support the discovery of careers in the cultural sector for young people and marginalized communities.

### **Target Group:**

This project targets community members in Wattlelos and the broader Hauts-de-France region, particularly focusing on young people, unemployed individuals, and marginalized groups who could benefit from improved cultural access and enhanced employability skills.

### **Potential Partners:**

We aim to work with cultural institutions such as Le Fresnoy, the University of Mons, local municipalities, as well as community organizations and creative industry actors to maximize the impact of this project.

### **Expected Results:**

- Improvement in employability and job creation through cultural activities and training.
- Enrichment of the cultural landscape in Wattlelos and cross-border regions through collaborative cultural projects.
- Enhancement of social cohesion and community identity by involving residents in cultural initiatives.

## **Impact Anticipated and Benefits:**

- **Social Impact:** The project aims to make a direct impact on the community in Wattlelos and neighboring areas by improving social cohesion and creating a network of cultural opportunities that bring people together.
- **Economic Development:** By creating job opportunities within the cultural industries and providing young people with skills, the project contributes to local economic development.
- **Strengthening Partnerships:** The project will help establish strong partnerships with European entities, creating synergies between different cultural actors and ensuring the project's sustainability.

**Participatory Approach:** The project is designed to actively involve residents at all stages, including planning, implementation, and evaluation. This will be achieved through local committees, co-creation workshops with community members, and public consultations. By involving community members, the project ensures that activities are tailored to local needs and interests, enhancing a sense of ownership.

**Evaluation and Monitoring:** The project's impact will be measured through both quantitative and qualitative indicators. Quantitative metrics will include the number of participants, jobs created, and cultural events held. Qualitative metrics will include participant testimonials and feedback from partners. The project will employ a continuous feedback cycle to adapt and improve activities based on participants' and partners' input.

**Potential for Expansion:** While the project will begin in Wattlelos, the "creative urban hubs" model has the potential to be replicated in other European cities, amplifying the project's impact. This could serve as a best practice model for fostering cultural and social integration across Europe.

## **Concrete Activities:**

- **Key Activity Example:** One key activity will be a "Participatory Film Festival" where young people and adults collaborate to create short films. This activity will illustrate the project's goals of intergenerational connection, creativity, and social cohesion.
- **Artist Residencies:** Local and European artists will be invited for residencies to collaborate with the community on cultural projects, enriching the local cultural scene and providing residents with opportunities to engage in artistic processes.

## **Cross-Border Activities:**

- **Cross-Border Artist Residencies:** Invite artists from partner countries to spend time in Wattlelos, or send local artists to other European countries for creative residencies. This fosters a shared European identity and strengthens cultural connections.
- **Bi-National Film Production Workshops:** Organize workshops where young participants from Wattlelos and another European country jointly produce short films or documentaries, alternating between partner regions. This promotes cross-border cooperation and skills development.
- **Cross-Border Storytelling Festival:** Hold a storytelling festival with participants from partner countries, featuring stories reflecting shared cultural heritage. This fosters intercultural understanding and social cohesion.

- **Multilingual Digital Library:** Create a digital library with cultural materials produced by participants, available in multiple European languages. This promotes language diversity and accessibility.
- **Cultural Heritage Walks:** Organize guided tours in collaboration with partners, highlighting shared cultural histories. These walks will reinforce the sense of interconnectedness between regions.
- **Joint Open-Air Cinema Events:** Host open-air cinema nights showcasing films produced by project participants in multiple partner locations, encouraging dialogue across borders.
- **Cultural Hackathons:** Organize cultural hackathons with participants from different countries to develop creative solutions for community challenges, promoting digital skills and cultural innovation.
- **Exchange Trips:** Plan exchange trips for participants from Wattrelos and partner regions to visit cultural hubs, enhancing direct cultural exchange and empathy building.
- **Intergenerational Workshops:** Hold workshops for young people and seniors from different countries to collaborate on cultural activities, fostering both intercultural exchange and intergenerational solidarity.
- **Collaborative Performances:** Create joint music or dance performances with artists from different countries, celebrating cultural diversity and strengthening international ties.
- **Cultural Competitions:** Organize competitions where teams from different partner countries create short films or other cultural projects, encouraging creativity and teamwork.
- **European Cultural Heritage Digital Archive:** Develop a collaborative digital archive showcasing cultural heritage from each participating region, promoting diversity and cultural preservation.

**Communication Plan:** To ensure the project reaches a broad audience, a detailed communication plan will be implemented. This will involve promoting the project through social media, hosting public events, and working with local media outlets to increase visibility and encourage community participation. The aim is to make the project's cultural activities accessible to as many people as possible.

**Sustainable Approach:** The project will also focus on cultural and environmental sustainability by using local resources and organizing activities that are environmentally friendly. Audiovisual creations will also promote sustainability values, encouraging participants and audiences to adopt more sustainable behaviors.

**Funding and Potential Partners:** The project will seek funding from Interreg funds, local sponsors, and cultural patronage. Potential partners will include NGOs, local businesses interested in cultural sponsorship, and educational institutions. European partners will contribute expertise, resources, and human capital to ensure successful implementation.

## **Why This Project is a Great Fit for Interreg**

### **1. Cross-Border Cultural Integration**

- Encourages cultural exchange and strengthens shared European identity.
- Connects diverse regions through collaborative cultural activities, creating a strong cross-border community.
- Promotes cross-border cultural cooperation through activities like artist residencies, storytelling festivals, and joint film production workshops.

### **2. Social Impact and Inclusion**

- Improves social cohesion by involving different generations and community groups, including marginalized populations.
- Offers educational opportunities, specifically targeting youth and unemployed individuals, which contributes to increased employability.
- Bridges the gap between social and cultural domains, connecting social centers with cultural initiatives, creating a more inclusive community environment.

### **3. Economic Development and Employability**

- Creates employment opportunities in cultural and creative industries, supporting economic development at the local level.
- Provides professional training and skill-building opportunities that equip young people for careers in the creative sector.
- Promotes cultural tourism, attracting visitors to cultural events and enhancing the economic vibrancy of the area.

### **4. Strong European Partnerships**

- Establishes partnerships with cultural institutions across Europe, fostering long-term collaboration.
- Encourages cross-border partnerships and knowledge exchange, which strengthens the cultural landscape of all participating regions.
- Creates a network of cultural actors, municipalities, educational institutions, and social centers that contribute collectively to shared goals.

### **5. Potential for Replicability and Expansion**

- The "Creative Urban Hubs" model can be replicated in other European cities, offering a scalable solution for fostering cultural and social integration.
- Establishes a framework that could be adopted by other regions seeking to implement similar cross-border cultural initiatives.
- Encourages other European regions to adapt the project model to their local contexts, multiplying the impact across borders.

### **6. Sustainability and Long-Term Impact**

- Focuses on sustainability by promoting environmental awareness through cultural activities, supporting green initiatives.
- Encourages long-term community engagement, with cultural hubs serving as permanent centers for learning and creativity.
- Develops skills and networks that will continue to benefit the community beyond the life of the project.

## 7. Participatory and Community-Focused Approach

- Actively involves community members in the planning, implementation, and evaluation phases, ensuring the project meets local needs.
- Fosters a sense of ownership within the community, as residents help shape and contribute to the cultural activities.
- Strengthens community identity by celebrating local culture and promoting inclusivity through cross-border partnerships.

## 8. Clear Objectives and Measurable Results

- Well-defined objectives that include cultural integration, employability, social inclusion, and community cohesion.
- Clear metrics for success, such as the number of participants, jobs created, and community feedback, ensuring accountability.
- Regular evaluation ensures the project remains adaptable and continuously aligned with its objectives.

This project exemplifies the Interreg spirit by fostering cross-border cultural integration, social inclusion, and economic development through creative and collaborative activities. By connecting cultural institutions, social centers, and communities across Europe, the project not only enhances cultural diversity but also empowers local communities and promotes sustainability. Its strong potential for replicability and expansion further makes it an ideal candidate for the Interreg framework, contributing significantly to cultural cooperation and cohesion in Europe.

## Digital and Online Components

- **Online Platform for Community Engagement:** Create a dedicated online platform where community members can access project information, register for events, and participate in discussions. This platform could also host a digital library sharing the content created by the project.
- **Virtual Workshops and Screenings:** In addition to in-person activities, online workshops and screenings will be organized to allow a broader audience to participate, including those unable to attend in person.
- **Digital Archives:** Develop a digital archive to document artistic creations produced throughout the project, including videos, photos, and testimonials. This will help share the results beyond the local community and create a cultural heritage accessible to all.

## Expected Long-Term Outcomes

- **Community Hubs as Permanent Institutions:** The creative urban hubs will become permanent cultural centers that continue to offer activities even after the initial project funding ends. They will serve as meeting places for creation and sharing for future generations.
- **Strengthening Cross-Border Cultural Networks:** Establishing strong relationships between social centers in Wattrelos and European cultural institutions will open the door for future collaborations, reinforcing a shared culture within Europe.
- **Economic Opportunities Beyond Project Duration:** By training young people in creative industries, the project will contribute to local economic growth by developing a vibrant cultural sector, creating new businesses, and generating employment.

## Best Practice Inspiration

- **Learning from URBACT Creative Spirits:** The project draws inspiration from Creative Spirits, which used art as a tool for urban regeneration. Our project goes further by creating a model of social integration through culture, actively involving social centers to reach the most vulnerable communities.
- **Expanding on CRE**

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successfully established hubs to support creative industries. In addition to creating hubs, our project aims to use them as vectors for social cohesion and cross-border development.

- **Building Cultural Bridges Inspired by Borderless Culture:** Like the Borderless Culture project, we emphasize cross-border cooperation. However, our project adds an intergenerational and film education component to strengthen mutual understanding across generations and borders.

## Communication Channels

- **Local Media and Press:** Collaborate with local media (newspapers, radio stations) to ensure coverage of events and keep the community informed about project progress.
- **Social Media Campaigns:** Use social media to reach a young and dynamic audience by posting updates about activities, participant interviews, and videos of events. Platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok will be used to reach diverse audiences.
- **Community Newsletters:** Publish community newsletters (online and print versions) with testimonials, updates on upcoming events, and information on project outcomes. This will enhance transparency and community involvement.

- **Public Events and Open Days:** Organize public events such as open days to draw attention to the project, share successes, and encourage new participants to join the initiatives.

## **Innovation Highlights**

- **Combining Social and Cultural Hubs:** The connection between social centers and cultural institutions is innovative because it is rare to see these two fields working so closely together. By combining social support with cultural activities, the project creates a unique space for personal and collective development.
- **Intergenerational and Cross-Border Cooperation:** The project's innovation lies in its intergenerational and cross-border approach. By involving young people and seniors, and working with European partners, the project creates an exchange of knowledge and perspectives that transcends both age groups and national borders.
- **Use of Digital Tools for Inclusion:** The use of digital tools to include participants who are far away or unable to travel is another innovative aspect. This ensures that the project's impact is not limited by physical barriers and adapts to new digital realities.
- **Audiovisual Projects Focused on Memory and Cultural Heritage:** Encouraging young people to explore local history and cultural heritage through audiovisual creation is an innovative way to preserve collective memory while using modern and engaging means to appeal to younger audiences.

## Project Components and Their Interconnections



