

Pokyčią Upė Flujo
Di Cambio

Correntes

de Mudança Vlny

Změn A Változás

Folyama Muutuste

Voog Muutosvirta

Flux de

Changement

Stream

of Change Fluxul

Schimbarii Kurrent

ta' Bidla Pārmaiņu

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Why does your city wish to take part in the competition for the title of European Capital of Culture?

FAR AND WIDE OVER THE YEARS, castles or monasteries have been built on the top of the hills. In Coimbra, a 2000-year-old city, a university was founded, overlooking the city, its river, and its people. For seven centuries, it has spread knowledge across the city, Portugal, and the world. Here, myths were born and a unique heritage was created. The Brazilian elites studied here, and the physicians, judges and politicians who outlined the blueprint for the country. It was Coimbra that gave its name to one of the most influential university networks in European university policy, the Coimbra Group. But all this has unfortunately become the picture postcard of Coimbra, frozen in a classical image; crystallised in this way, the city seems nostalgic and dormant to some, and arrogant and haughty to others. The words «stagnation» and «decline», applied to Coimbra, appear frequently in the media. Capital of the kingdom in the 13th century, our town suffers today from a vertiginous inferiority complex, as if its long and prestigious history had become a handicap more than an asset. Although multiplying the proofs of its resilience, it seems, in the opinion of many, condemned to a fatal inertia.



Coimbra 2027 Candidacy Video

“This Candidacy is of vital importance for the development of the whole Region.”

Ana Abrunhosa, Minister of the Territorial Cohesion

The current strength of its creativity is not acknowledged. Somewhere between tradition and invention, Coimbra is struggling with its own image and its national ranking leaves much to be desired.

The ECOC represents the perfect occasion to, **with what we have and what we are**, induce the **structural transformations we need** and produce the impact on the cultural context we want to create with a view to changing, in order to:

- 1 Combat the clichés that stigmatise Coimbra** as a city frozen in time: 1) strengthening the awareness of its citizens; 2) raising citizens' self-esteem; 3) asserting itself as a European centre of reference; 4) consolidating itself as transformative for those who pass through, and a generator of futures, for those who remain.
- 2 Create a centralness for the city and the region**, the largest Intermunicipal Community in the country, and that with the greatest capacity to counteract the attractiveness of the 2 metropolitan areas of the country, to the benefit of Portugal (as leverage for local attractions on a new map of the country, which resets the balance between the coast and the countryside, the north and the south, the urban and rural world) and Europe, as its inspiration and its mirror. This recentring of the national territory will help in: 1) combating the demographic decline of the region; 2) attracting a growing number of students and local and foreign citizens; 3) increasing its attractiveness, social and environmental cohesion and the creation of employment.
- 3 Contribute towards rejuvenating the city** in all creative areas: 1) helping it in its process of social and economic transformation; 2) creating conditions for continuing artistic output, counteracting the intermittent stalling that has historically interrupted its critical and creative thinking; 3) raising the profile of its innovative and bold creations, putting forward the Coimbra Fado as World Heritage.

To achieve these objectives, the city's cultural development strategy demands innovation, continuity, commitment and appropriate instruments: the title of ECOC will make its wealth visible, enhancing capacities and skills. Coimbra's central position in the country allows ECOC2027 to easily take on a national, European and intercontinental dimension.

But only a willingness of true change, embodied in the slogan *Stream of Change* (and in its graphic presentation – a page that unfolds like a continuous stream), can radically rejuvenate the city. And if the process of preparing the candidacy is already a catalyst for change, only the implementation of Coimbra ECOC 2027 will consolidate these transformations, integrating them into the cultural environment to bring about a long-term impact.

Does your city plan to involve its surrounding area? Explain this choice.

COIMBRA'S APPLICATION encompasses a region of 4,336 km², 19 municipalities and around half a million inhabitants, from many geographical and cultural origins.

The writer Aquilino Ribeiro used to say that the CIM-RC, cut out in the “rainbow territory”, “is *the whole world*, in an area of a few kilometres”: a synthesis which places a high value on the *natural* dimension of the territory, the colour palette of the landscapes, the movement of the rivers, the open horizon of the sea, the sophisticated sobriety of the cuisine, today reinforced with that which explicitly belongs to culture, transforming nature into *terroir* and historical wealth into creative energy.

Behind the unique features that distinguish the 19 municipalities of the CIM-RC, there is an awareness of the territory demonstrated by the “Coimbra, Region of Culture” (“*Coimbra Região de Cultura*”) Action Programme, already embodied in the creation of networks or itineraries, (the Historical Villages Network, the Schist Villages Network or the Mondego Castles and Walls Network) moulded by our present status as European Region of Gastronomy 2021, *A Million Food Stories* and by the preparation of an Application for Conímbriga to be designated a World Heritage Site. Here, a clear relationship with the past is matched with the courageous daring of innovation, *an idea of the future* based on structural “culture points”, ranging from music schools to Living Science centres, from architecture to libraries, from museums to artistic residencies, from theatre to literature, from folklore to scientific research.

Since 2017, the CIM-RC's strategic vision has resulted in unanimous support for the ECOC application. Visits were made to all municipalities, and broad consultations held with their political leaders and cultural operators. The presence of prominent members of the CIM-RC in the weekly webinars – FOR1S – since June 2020, and at the frequent meetings we hold jointly, the creation of an independent working group and the incorporation of members of the region into the application's operational teams have bolstered the involvement of all.

More than a just partner, the region is a creative agent and protagonist, involved in devising the programmes of the candidacy, its artistic content, the organisation of events and their relocation and circulation (exhibitions, music shows, theatre, handicrafts, folklore...), specific projects at the planning stage, (*Viver o Mar*, *Territórios de leitura*, the establishment of a digital library, etc.).

Always aiming at inclusion, the candidacy proposes original programmes to encourage involvement and the development of ties in the region, such as a transport network to and from the city of Coimbra, the creation of a cultural passport for the region and an ERASMIX student mobility programme.

With the “Caravana Coimbra 2027” project, we take Coimbra's candidacy out to the entire Region: to raise awareness, expand, and publicise good practices and

unique features of each municipality, through the creation of digital content (videos and photographic reports), encouraging involvement and participation, also functioning as a community “mailbox”.

Thus, “Coimbra Region of Culture” is not just an Action Programme. It is also the means through which half a million citizens nominate the place where they live – their place, our place – which exists simultaneously in the material nature of the geographies and in the immaterial nature of its inventions.

Explain briefly the overall cultural profile of your city.

OUR HISTORY, which we do not want to elude, is plural and its best moments are those in which tradition is suspended to allow invention to thrive, in a constant counterbalance between conservation and the avant-garde. And there is more: Coimbra **forms** – “this treasure that is knowledge”, as mentioned in the foundation document of the University, making it an open-air school – Coimbra **transforms** those who live or pass through the city. Coimbra **emanates**, disseminating knowledge, science, ideas, spreading around the world in the form of cultural relations and networks.

A World Heritage Site due to its University, Alta e Sofia, National Capital of Culture, Capital City of Theatre, home to Art, Literature and Music (Coimbra Fado is a unique expression of the city's spirit), of Festivals (theatre, music, dance, international magic...), biennials and large international events (Anozero Biennial, the Coimbra Estação Imagem Award, World Piano Meeting, International Blues Festival, Caminhos do Cinema Português Festival) and associations – over 3 hundred cultural, sport and youth groups. Today, Coimbra is a city where art meets science, artificial intelligence reformulates cultural experiences and humans and machines interact, music enlivens the streets, the gardens and the bars. Books overflow the libraries and invade the

circles (tertúlias), writers cohabit with the city, theatre is performed in the neighbourhoods and in the suburbs, the museums interact with the public, magic shines in the squares, dance emerges from the schools and photography from its archives, shows leave the stage to take over every corner, and cafés and esplanades dotted around the city, 100 of the world's languages are spoken. Coimbra is a multifaceted city, of Science and Art, of Health and Literature, of Heritage and Rural Life, of Music and of the silence of the cloisters, of tradition and invention, of the avant-garde and the myths, of memory and cosmopolitanism, of Museums and performances, in a bundle of non-contradictory forces, but which should be seen, through integration, as opportunities under a city project for the citizens and with the citizens! And because "one arrives in Coimbra insignificant, and one leaves empowered", as an ERASMUS student once said, something is always happening on every street corner!

These forces are incorporated into a dynamic city project, made by and for the citizens!

itself change from year to year: the water is the central element of city life, reborn in the many fountains dotted around the city.

A force of invention and innovation is the city's youth: Coimbra, a university city and a city of sport and music, of creativity and nightlife, of streets and cafés, of "students guilds" and contestation. The AAC plays a key role here. Cosmopolitanism is also a factor in movement: European integration (and exchange programmes and networks) have changed the collective spirit. Europe, a constant presence in History, bridges the gap between the city's past and its future.

The stream of change means this process of (re)building, challenging ourselves to validate Coimbra (without deviating from who we are and what we do), reimagining the city as a futures laboratory, an inspiring city.

The ECOC programme covers the rich diversity of the multiple "cities" that Coimbra embraces, in a counterbalance (and not contradiction). It is based on the idea that its complexity requires multiple viewpoints, respecting interdisciplinarity, cosmopolitanism and crossover between different practices.

In a holistic perspective and aiming at carbon neutrality, the ECOC integrates social and economic regeneration, urban and environmental policy, climate concerns and the circular economy, innovation and sustainability, health and well-being, which are indispensable to a modern vision simultaneously focusing on the present and the future. It covers various dimensions – from the popular to the erudite, from the local to the regional, from the national to the European and global – various domains, audiences, agents, and protagonists, giving a plural meaning to culture.

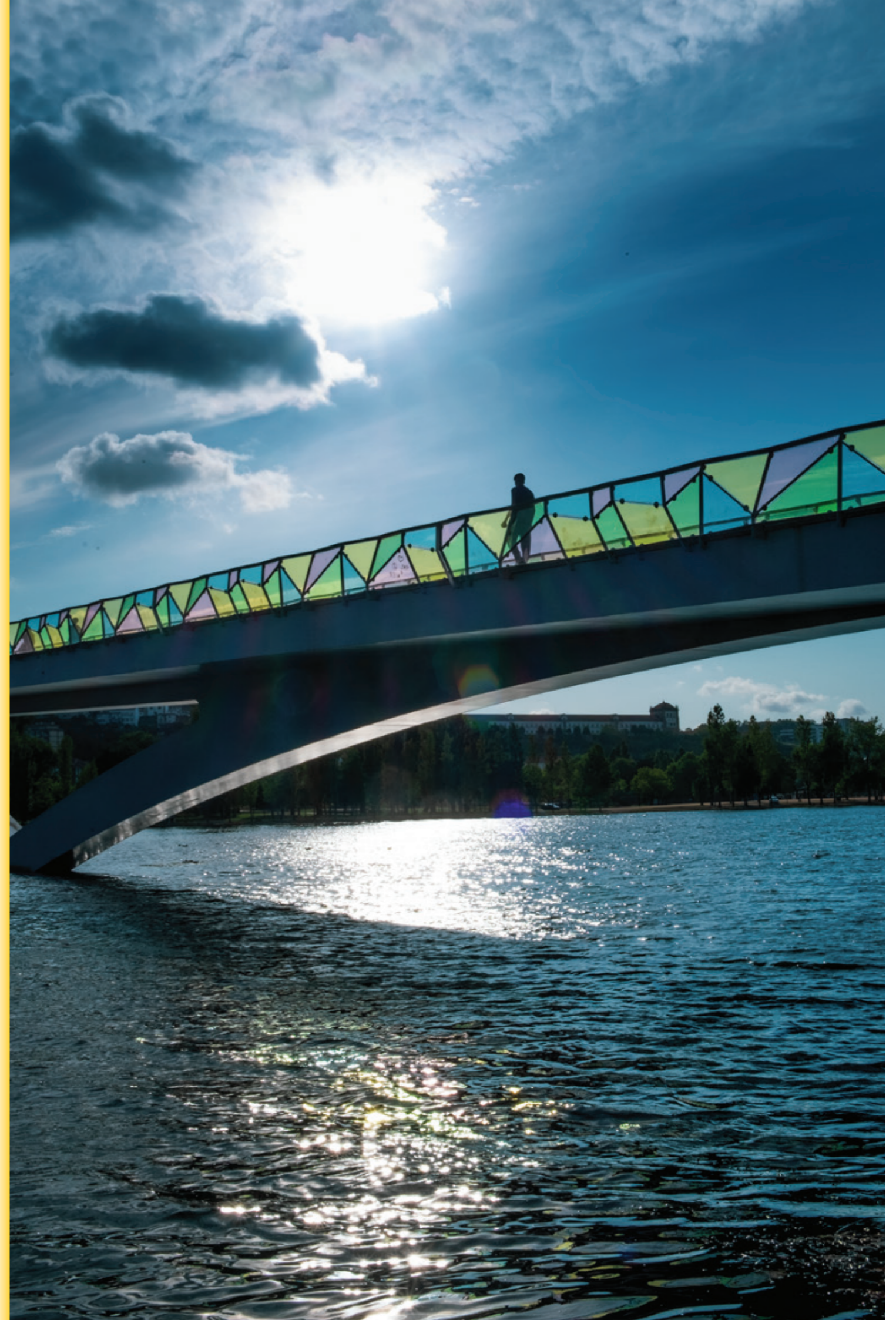
And finally it aims at enjoyment and education, teaching and learning, creation and professionalisation, involving the young and the elderly, the centre and the outskirts, the city and its entire region.

From this constellation, spring out the streams that bring the artistic and cultural content of the programme to life, in accordance with the strategic plan that will direct the next 10 years, and which will be materialised in visible and transformative projects. Planning change, extending it creatively to the multifaceted city that is Coimbra, implementing it in proposals for action: the streams interact and move the city, in 5 directions, and what unites them is the stream of change!

- 1 / THE THIRD BANK OF THE RIVER**
- 2 / THE SPIRIT OF COFFEE**
- 3 / BOOKS & STONES**
- 4 / BREAKTHROUGHS**
- 5 / WINDOWS TO THE WORLD**

FOCUSING ON THE SLOGAN of the candidacy – Stream of Change, the idea underpinning the ECOC programme is much more than a metaphorical reference to the place occupied by the Mondego River in the city and the region. If things are irreparably carried away by the river of Time, it is up to men to modify the course of History, to build and rebuild cities, to divert the waters and use their strength. It is this human capacity for change, which inspires our strategy and form the structure of the programme.

The **River Mondego**, links the various cities in the region and offers Coimbra a mobile mirror, where the city sees



Describe the cultural strategy that is in place in your city at the time of the application, including the plans for sustaining the cultural activities beyond the year of the title?

THE RECOGNITION OF CULTURE as an identity trait of the City is not a recent notion. The journey of the last thirty years shows a significant increase in the level of demand in identified domains: 1. institutional consolidation of the creative sector; 2. involvement of the sector in the establishment of the cultural strategy; 3. conservation of heritage and urban development; 4. raising of the international profile of the city; 5. positive transformation of the self-image and external image of the city.

1 Fundamental aspects to be considered: professionalisation of artistic agents; qualification of equipment; regularity of programming; strategies for attracting and involving audiences; diversity of the sector's creative cartography. In Portugal, professionalisation in the arts came late and has been inconsistent, because it has never been a focal point of public policies. The foundation of "A Escola da Noite" (1992) and "Teatrão" (1994) was important for transforming Coimbra's environment. The companies have developed their own identities, created their own audiences, brought about the appearance of other companies and established specific programming concepts for the Teatro da Cerca de São Bernardo and the Oficina de Teatro, of which they are resident companies. Recognition of the importance of professionalisation has also touched other artistic areas. The upgrading of facilities by the CMC, the UC, the IPC, the Bissaya-Barreto Foundation and the Inês de Castro Foundation has generated an interesting network of cultural spaces that fulfils ambition on a national scale. This upgrading of facilities is linked to the historical heritage of the City, as we shall see. It is therefore an unusual exercise in which the thoroughness demonstrated in the preservation of heritage, recognised by various international awards (the UC Science Museum won the 2008 Micheletti Prize for the best and most innovative museum in science, technology and industry; the Europa Nostra Prize, 2009, won by the University of Coimbra for the restoration of the Via Latina; the Europa Nostra Prize and the International AR&PA Prize, both in 2010, for the restoration of the Santa

Clara-a-Velha Monastery; the Piranesi/Prix de Rome Prize, 2014, for the Machado de Castro National Museum redevelopment project, Prize Heritage in Motion, Class "Interactives Experiences", Museum PO.RO.s) combines with contemporary artistic functionality. It is worth highlighting the Escola Artística do Conservatório de Música de Coimbra's installation of its own magnificent facilities (2010).

The cultural sector ensures a regular agenda that covers a wide range of artistic fields, and always of high quality, which we will not go into here. This activity stems from the recognition of the importance of culture by the City's governing bodies and the capacity of the creative sector. Some events have become benchmarks: "Caminhos do Cinema Português" began in 1988 and is the only Festival dedicated exclusively to Portuguese cinema. In recent years, it has significantly expanded its sphere of action; Encontros Mágicos – Coimbra International Magic Festival, one of the most renowned international magic events, has been held since 1992; the Jazz ao Centro Festival – Encontros Internacionais de Jazz de Coimbra started in 2003 and has established itself at its own venue, in the downtown area of the City, and has become an international meeting point; the Arts Festival, which has taken place in July-August since 2009, is becoming a benchmark at national and international level among open-air summer festivals. The current cultural strategy would be inconceivable without underlining two structural aspects of the creative sector: social heterogeneity and epistemological pluralism. Social heterogeneity is how we refer to the collaborative and non-contradictory coexistence of professionals, amateurs and students. Besides professional groups, in the City and in the region there is intense cultural activity among amateurs, who get directly involved in cultural output, especially in the areas of theatre and music, benefiting from cultural policies that support such involvement, in line with Agenda 21 for culture; and also a set of cultural and artistic practices developed by students via the AAC, which has been active uninterruptedly since 1887. Due to the characteristics of the city (size, centralities and common routes), these itineraries cross and enrich each other without



Working Group Report (1st year)



Working Group Report (2nd year)

losing their original characteristics. The cultural field thus conceived is unique and, in areas such as theatre, unparalleled.

At the same time, we see contributions originating from the so-called scientific areas as strengthening the creative sector. Directed towards the various forms of knowledge, this strengthening contributes towards the reimagining of the current knowledge map and the design of other theoretical configurations. Thus, also in this field, a crucial debate between tradition and invention takes place, of which the dynamics of institutions devoted to scientific culture form an integral part.

2 The creation of the Municipal Committee for Culture confirmed the involvement of the creative sector in the definition and monitoring of the strategic fronts of the cultural sector. Converging with this concern was the launch of the Participatory Budget, which empowers citizens to make direct decisions regarding the use of public money in the promotion of public policies, particularly in relation to culture. In 2021, the theme was "Coimbra 2027: candidacy to become European Capital of Culture", under the slogan "Stream of Change". The proposals answered the question: which idea or project would you invest a maximum amount of 200,000 euros in to ensure the city become European Capital of Culture?

3 It would be easy for a city with two thousand years of history, which is clearly visible in the urban fabric and in the imagination of the population (both at local and national level), to become dependent on its past, condemning itself to repeating it. The profound urban regeneration that the city has undergone since the first years of the twenty-first century has successfully mitigated that threat. The city's iconic buildings and spaces have been reinterpreted by major names in Portuguese architecture. It was a large-scale operation with far-reaching consequences: the city began to amaze itself, becoming transformed. The classification of the University of Coimbra – Alta e Sofia as World Heritage by UNESCO (22 June 2013) was a result and a step on this path of contemporary reinvention of the city and its heritage, which, since 2015, "Anozero – Biennial of Contemporary Art" has deepened, by enhancing its heritage space with contemporary art. Therefore, the city increased its knowledge of its history and, at the same time, discovered where and how to make the necessary breakaways.

4 The enlarged geographical scope of the city's international relations forms the basis of international cooperation initiatives, frequently found in scientific culture projects and in progress in the areas of the arts and humanities. The city is renowned for successfully integrating over 6,000 students of 105 nationalities into its social milieu, and a significant number of foreign citizens have settled in the wider region. In addition to the international nature of the various initiatives already mentioned in 1., it is important to remember the hosting, in 2018, of the European Universities Games, the largest multi-sport event ever held in Portugal, and which left a legacy in the city, renovating sports facilities and ensuring world-class conditions for university students to focus on their academic and sports training.

Geared towards the performing arts, "Cena Lusófona – associação portuguesa para o intercâmbio teatral" was a project launched in 1995, which also included activities related to cinema, plastic arts and music.

"École des Maîtres", one of the most significant international advanced theatrical training projects, is a benchmark project on the programme of the Teatro Académico de Gil Vicente and takes place in several European cities, and in Coimbra, always under the guidance of outstanding personalities such as Tiago Rodrigues Davide Carnevali or Angélica Liddell. CEARTE – Centro de Formação Profissional para o Artesanato e Património participated in the project "Crafting Europe", between 2019 and 2022, funded as part of the Creative Europe Cooperation projects call EACEA-34-2018, along with institutions from eight other European countries. The project aims to build the capacity of the handicraft sector and address the systemic challenges faced by its professionals, businesses and the organisations in Europe that play a role in the sector's development. The City's governance strategy has been to support and ensure the appropriate conditions for the successful realisation of the initiatives and to work on their joint promotion in order to progressively raise the City's international profile.

5 Widespread international recognition of the quality and demanding standards of Coimbra's cultural agenda is a fundamental instrument for positive affirmation of the City's self-image.

Describe the city's plans to strengthen the capacity of the cultural and creative sectors, including through the development of long-term links between these sectors and the economic and social sectors in your city.

THE STRATEGY TO STRENGTHEN the cultural and creative sectors is implemented at various levels.

Becoming familiar with the situation on the ground in greater detail and consolidating the involvement of stakeholders was a fundamental concern. Thus, in 2018, the CMC commissioned the UC Centre for Social Studies (CES) to carry out the "Study on practices of cultural participation in the municipality of Coimbra". The CES is a prestigious Portuguese scientific institution, particularly relevant to the researchers of the "Cities and Urban Cultures" research group. The findings of the investiga-

tion – the like of which had never been carried out in this exact format – remain an indispensable instrument for determining cultural strategy. A convergent concern resulted in the establishment of the Municipal Council of Culture, a long-standing aspiration of the city's cultural and creative sector that it had not hitherto been possible to achieve: representatives of the sector can now actively participate in and monitor implementation of the major strategic guidelines.

The carrying out of the Study and the establishment of the Municipal Council of Culture within the same time frame therefore constitute the first strategic level for strengthening the cultural and creative sector of the city, which benefits from the definition and monitoring of the major strategic fronts of the city's cultural policy and is fortified with more precise knowledge of its capacities and weaknesses.

The consolidation of the current cultural strategy has become more precise and clearer. We have condensed this cultural strategy into three structural fronts and two transversal vectors.

STRUCTURAL FRONT 1: TRANSFORMING HISTORICAL WEALTH INTO CREATIVE ENERGY.

The *historical* understanding of the History and Heritage of the City of Coimbra obliges us to not repeat the past or consider it as a value in itself. It is necessary to enhance what has proved innovative and disruptive in each era, at times with transnational influence. It is necessary to manifest, even if experimentally, that which has not yet been achieved! In this process, when awareness of the solidarity of tradition with modernity weakens, the City favours traditionalism and conceals or devalues its creative energy.

The European Centre of the Museum of the Portuguese Language is a structural project of this counterbalance and its virtues. In close relationship with the Museum of the Portuguese Language in São Paulo, Coimbra will forge a space for dialogue between Europe and the Portuguese-speaking regions, promoting the Portuguese language as an important literary workshop and driver of new ideas, without neglecting to examine its colonial heritage in a post-colonial context.

Through the excellence of its results, the profound process of rehabilitating heritage that has taken place in Coimbra in recent decades has proved the need to pursue this strategy. The City has become better acquainted with its History and is in a better position to be recognised and to recognise itself as a protagonist in Portuguese, European and World History.

In this sense, the programme of "Anozero – Biennial of Contemporary Art" is relevant: by transforming heritage into a prime space for presenting contemporary art, it transforms heritage sites, which are no longer confined to a memorial role, and allows the works of art to dialogue across time in a manner they would not do in other spaces.

The creation of the Centre for the Interpretation of the History of Coimbra and the setting up of the City Museum are equally important. The history of the city of Coimbra, of the region directly associated with the candidacy and of the territory situated between the River Douro and the River Tagus offers the inhabitant,

the interested individual, the scholar and the tourist a diverse range of heritages, landscapes, creative activities and traditions. These crystallise fundamental stages of the historical formation of the country as it is today, the understanding of which should be made available in attractive discourses and devices. The City Museum is an irreplaceable element in this understanding: it involves the visitor in the narrative of a complex process of urban formation and, due to its multi-polar structure, invites the visitor to travel through the city, to cross a long period of time and to get to know several stages of this recovered and preserved, partially in situ, urbanisation, which the citizen of Coimbra can integrate into a narrative that feels like their own, encouraging a feeling of belonging. Caring for the territory "Coimbra University – Alta e Sofia" is another strategic concern. Here, caring means continuing the work to preserve and enable access (both material and cultural) to this Heritage, to be re-discovered and even re-invented.

In 2022, the extraordinary collection of the University of Coimbra will be available in a disruptive rethinking that also continues the current configuration of the Museum of Science. It is an uncommon corpus: it documents the formation and stabilisation of all regions of the modern map of the physical and natural sciences, including the crucial nucleus resulting from anthropological missions, which the current historical and social investigations put into context and interpret.

STRUCTURAL FRONT 2: DEFINING POLICIES FOR ATTRACTING AND RETAINING CREATIVE ENERGY.

A long-term cultural strategy must identify and encourage areas of possible breakthroughs of the "new" and create conditions for "invention" – without forgetting that heritage is the consolidated "new". The untimeliness of the breakthrough always raises more problems. One is running the risk of experimentation and error. The first step of a policy to attract and retain creative energy is curiosity, attention to what is new, an appreciation of spaces that are considered unconventional and inorganic or nomadic projects.

The second step is to mobilise resources to encourage budding proposals and to identify and welcome creative minds with the capacity to catalyse emerging proposals. Coimbra has been and continues to be the space and circumstance for the genesis of projects in all cultural fields, including, of course, those related to scientific culture and the cultural dimension of science. It has been and is a place of breakthrough and experimentation. It has often been, and continues to be, a focal point that disseminates this experimentation to the Country and to the World. It is a question of consolidating in the long term this unique capacity to be a City throughout the world.

STRUCTURAL FRONT 3: STRENGTHENING AN ORIGINAL, PLURAL AND SOCIALLY RELEVANT CREATIVE SECTOR.

The City of Coimbra has a significant creative (cultural and artistic) sector: a consolidated professional sector, with regular activity and of acknowledged merit; student activities originating from cultural bodies and sections of the AAC; an amateur sector originating from active, robust and dynamic popular collectives, in particular

in theatre and music; a number of high quality facilities; a network of educational and training institutions, of which the array of libraries, museums and archives of European dimension forms an integral part; a critical mass of renowned specialists in all areas.

On a path of unequivocal consolidation, the City of Coimbra has enriched and enhanced the substance of the creative sector.

In 1991, the Pedro Nunes Institute was created to promote innovation and technology transfer between the scientific and technological community and the productive fabric. In 1992, Coimbra was Capital City of Theatre. In 2003, it was designated the National Capital of Culture. In 2013, the University of Coimbra – Alta e Sofia was classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Over the last twenty years, the city has undergone a thorough redevelopment of its exceptional cultural heritage, under the responsibility of the most important Portuguese architects: today the city is an anthology of the best Portuguese architecture.

Any one of these circumstances has generated novelties that have been consolidated: new artistic collectives, new events, new audience dynamics, new perspectives.

In 2011, on the occasion of the commemoration of the granting of the City charter by Count D. Henrique and D. Teresa (1111), an ambitious programme was developed with diverse activities that deepened the relationship of citizens with the city and excelled in its originality: the Portuguese Society of Authors considered it the "Best Municipal Cultural Programme of 2011".

The preparation of the Candidacy is an opportunity to pool resources, combine knowledge, associate experiences and broaden horizons to intervene in a problem that changes in Portuguese society have made unavoidable and that has no sectoral solution: the combined effects of the metropolitan concentration of Lisbon and Porto and a reduction in the population aged between 15 and 60.

The city is in a position to respond successfully to this challenge, expanding a strategy that induces multiplying effects and organising, for a decade, the City's existing creative potential. The challenge, in the current situation aggravated by the pandemic, is to promote a *change of scale*, inevitably accelerated by the current emergencies: it is to consolidate the favourable conditions for cultural dynamics of ambitions, projects and logistical conditions on a European scale.

The power of the imagination runs through spontaneous convivial experiences and takes elaborate forms, in writing, the sciences and the arts. The City represents an ideal space for the circulation of this energy: ties for life, intense controversies, questioning and research.

This change of scale will result from the success of the cultural strategy established by the municipality and reached by consensus in the City. The protagonists will be the activists with their important ongoing activity (as referred to in the previous question) and new protagonists that the expansion of the strategy will incorporate into the Coimbra cultural scene.

Together with the vitality in the area of theatre, the implementation of a professional Dance company will fertilise the field of performing arts. This will happen by 2023 and will boost and increase the involvement of the various existing dance schools. In this field, the ECOC 2027 programme aims to transform the city into a **leading**



Regulations Municipal Council
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European hub in the conservation of the **memory**, the **study**, and the **transmission** of the history of contemporary dance.

In the same vein, the Plan for the Revitalisation and Dissemination of the *Canção de Coimbra* will be implemented from 2022 onwards. The first results are expected to appear by 2025, the centenary year of the guitarist Carlos Paredes: scientific research, re-production of classic works, dissemination works, diversification of music venues. Under the itinerary opened in 2018 by the Festival "Correntes de Um Só Rio. Encontro da Canção, do Fado, da Música e das Guitarras de Coimbra", to be held annually, the Plan aims to deepen the knowledge of Fado and the *Canção de Coimbra* and to highlight the aspects that distinguish them from other musical traditions.

The Centre for Contemporary Art, officially opened in July 2020 "with eyes on Coimbra 2027", as the Mayor emphasised, has installed a very significant collection of 20th and 21st century Portuguese art in Coimbra. Its development in relation to the unique collection and activity of the Círculo de Artes Plásticas, the important photography collection of the Visual Arts Centre and the Telo de Morais collection installed in the Chiado Building will allow original itineraries to be defined for the Portuguese visual arts and relationships to be consolidated, which will renew knowledge of the European and transnational influence of Portuguese visual arts.

It is also under the deepening of Coimbra's vocation for the reinvention of transnational relations that the International Literary Meeting "Invisible Cities" should be mentioned. Focusing on the relationship between City and Literature, each year there will be a specially invited City. The Meeting flows above all (but not exclusively) from Literature and proposes to participants an immersion in imaginary urban and transnational expe-

Q/1.3

How is the European Capital of Culture action included in this strategy?

riences. In the wake of Italo Calvino's celebrated work, "Invisible Cities", it also intends to constitute an original revisiting of the process already known as "progressive urbanisation of the world", a central issue of the 21st century. At the same time, it is a structural element of the Programme "Coimbra, City of Literature", the overarching aim of which is to explain the central importance of Coimbra's relationship with Literature.

In many ways, under their own dynamics, actors in the cultural and creative sector in Coimbra are actively participating in a "Futures laboratory". More than at any other time, the reimagination of communities and the redesign of relations and frontiers represent pressing issues for creative people from all areas. Therefore, it is essential to endow this "Futures Laboratory" with an effective institutional existence, but with a malleable structure. It is charged with thinking about borders and limits, daring experimentation, cultivating disciplinary transgressions – from the very outset, the dichotomies that are perhaps today more of an obstacle than a condition for thought and action: arts/sciences; rural/urban; actor/performer.

There are two transversal axes that coexist with these strategic fronts.

AXIS 1: TECHNICAL CAPACITY-BUILDING. Systematic work on technical capacity-building among officials and the programming and management of culture is a basic requirement. Generally, in Portugal, the professionalism of the cultural and creative sector needs to be enhanced and personnel, qualified. This is the case in some areas of strictly artistic trades, as a result of the geocultural asymmetries that characterise Portuguese society. It is necessary to strengthen the professional dimension of key artistic structures, bringing adequate resources for the clear definition of artistic careers. The problem also arises in areas that are indispensable for the proper functioning of existing cultural facilities, and in the intermediary areas of decision-makers in the cultural field. In various educational institutions, there are training departments that can take responsibility for the development of effective training programmes.

AXIS 2: INTERNATIONALISATION. Another requirement is to strengthen international ties among cultural and creative entities, particularly at European level. An indispensable element for the strengthening of the cultural and creative sector is the establishment of an "international cooperation stimulation unit", a small unit that is operationally flexible, but also incisive in its purpose to disseminate opportunities for funding, support the preparation of applications, seek partners, and work on acquiring funding.

THE ECOC represents a central element of this strategy. External recognition of the European dimension of its cultural development impacts the citizenry. It leads to the adoption of demanding European criteria in the definition of coordinates for structuring cultural policies. It promotes the integration of areas relevant to the cultural and artistic sector into European dynamics. It allows continuity of cultural production to be ensured with a high degree of quality. It consolidates conditions for supporting creative energy. It increases consistency and accelerates awareness of belonging to a vast region that jointly involves the city. From culture, it contributes towards rebalancing spatial planning.

As requirements for the ECOC, these elements individualise particular aspects of the overall strategic dimension of which only this candidacy can be the catalyst: reconnecting citizens to an *idea of City* more mobilising and that demonstrates unambiguous capacity for transformative intervention in the national social equilibrium and active participation in the ongoing dynamics of global change.

ECOC constitutes a decisive external impulse for the city to rediscover, consolidate and expand that which characterised it in its most creative periods: being a forward-looking and supportive futures laboratory.

"It is difficult to find a city where Culture more fully embraces, not only Art and History, but Knowledge, Education and Science."

António Sampaio da Nóvoa, Former Ambassador of Portugal to UNESCO

If your city is awarded the title of European Capital of Culture, what do you think would be the long-term cultural, social and economic impact on the city (including in terms of urban development)?

THE PREPARATION OF THE APPLICATION, on the structural plane and beyond ecological and scientific impacts, breaks out as follows:

CULTURAL IMPACT: to consolidate the functioning of an international cooperation office, geared towards the European integration of the cultural and creative sector; major effort to internationalise the normal cultural and artistic agenda, with sustained integration of the city's facilities into the international events circuit and raising the degree of professionalisation of the cultural and artistic sector of the city/region, an essential condition for resolving the intermittent stalling of activities and reducing asymmetries; the training of those in charge and the operatives active in cultural management and programming, as an essential condition for ensuring the proper performance of the existing facilities; encouragement of a regular response by cultural agents to requests from international agencies in the sector.

SOCIAL IMPACT: to expand the reciprocity of the impacts of university networks like the Coimbra Group and the Community of Mediterranean Universities on the city/region; to reinforce the importance of the River Mondego and other rivers that flow through the regional territory as structural elements, seeking to optimise conditions of biodiversity for sustainable development; to strengthen programmes within existing networks and new programming networks and contribute towards a reduction in tensions between the centre and the suburbs of the city and between the different geographical areas of the regional territory; to establish zones where there is a crossover of already existing competencies in the fields of education and health, in particular in education for culture and the understanding of all-round

health, aiming for the strengthening of a supportive city /region with a reduction in the tendency towards internal asymmetries; to promote intergenerational communication through cultural experiences and contribute towards restoring a strong spirit of civic duty from the past among communities that may generate futures.

ECONOMIC IMPACT: major increase in the degree of internationalisation of cultural and artistic events; sustained consolidation in the city/region of cultural and creative industries to ensure the competencies generated in the cultural environment of the city remain there, and to attract and establish external competencies; conversion of precarious employment into permanent work and net creation of new jobs; strengthening of the attractiveness of the cultural agenda of the city/region.

URBAN IMPACT: major intervention to preserve Sofia Street, the sensitive area of the World Heritage Site; strengthening of an important Green Circuit in the Alta da Cidade through an International Competitive Bidding procedure for the regeneration of the area hitherto occupied by the Prison; a new cultural and touristic approach to the Mosteiro Novo de Santa Clara; construction of the Mondego Arena, a multipurpose venue capable of hosting up to 5,000 people, indoor sports events, fairs and conferences, and featuring rehearsal rooms, technical resource rooms and shared production rooms; expansion of the experience of the public space through the attractiveness of the architecture and the programming of the cultural facilities, strengthening formal or informal territorial communities and consolidating the conditions of a cultural metropolis; provision of various circuits, all highly technological, to enhance the digital experience of the city.

“To help set up in Coimbra the European Hub of the Portuguese Language Museum motivates and mobilizes the team of the Roberto Marinho Foundation, strengthening the integration of the International Community of the Portuguese language speakers through its cultural richness and expressive diversity. We are firmly and fully committed to work together in this extraordinary endeavor.”

José Roberto Marinho, President of the Roberto Marinho Foundation, Brazil

Outline briefly the plans for monitoring and evaluation.

EFFICIENT MONITORING and evaluation will enable us to identify needs, establish targets and monitor progress. The ECOC, as a grand public initiative, will involve geographically different areas and a large number of people, audiences and partners. A detailed impact analysis is underway which will enable us to follow up and monitor the entire course to 2027. The data will be collected mainly (but not exclusively) from three different sources, with adaptations being made with regard to specific events.

- ~ Organisation: number of events, participants, partners, artists – internal data;
- ~ Participant satisfaction surveys: satisfaction, quality, overall impression – impact felt;
- ~ Specialists: inhabitants, technical panels: overview of the entire initiative, overview of the events – follow-up data.

The data set obtained during an event and the follow-up data after the event will enable us to understand their impact and the use of new cultural infrastructure and venues. The technical panels will allow us access to groups of people, from different origins or levels of cultural participation, who participate in feedback research processes for a period of time. As well as internal data and the satisfaction surveys completed by participants, these panels represent an up-to-date barometer of the impact of each event. Before the event, recording tools (essentially digital) are provided to the organisers and participants so that all the data may be collected. Additionally, a pre-selected group of respondents will be chosen to participate in specific analyses, as needed.

The following tables summarise very briefly the follow-up and monitoring strategy that will be implemented, and that will allow us to obtain detailed output regarding the impact of the Ecoc. Taking the general objectives of the programme as a starting point, as detailed in question Q/2.2, we present a summary of some of the strategic objectives already established:



CODE EO	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	CODE GO	GENERAL OBJECTIVE
A1	To create a new centre point in the city, taking the river as the focal point	A	The Third Bank of the River
A2	To return the city to its citizenry (pedestrian zones, green areas...)		
A3	To connect communities and cultures, rethinking territorial cohesion, tackling (territorial) inequalities of opportunity		
A4	To marry urban life with rural life, placing a high value on water and biodiversity (the city green deal)		
A5	To involve the citizenry, prioritising shows and experiences for all		
A6	To respond to the UN Sustainable Development Goals: 3 – Good health and well-being; 6 – Clean water and sanitation; 7 – Affordable and clean energy; 10 – Reducing inequality; 13 – Climate action; 14 – Life below water; 15 – Life on land.		
B1	To create new forms of sociability in the city	B	The Spirit of the Café
B2	To advance the associative spirit and the role of young people in the construction of a new anthropology of the space: new venues for sharing and debate – the Students Guilds, the Casa das Artes, the Casa da Esquina, the Grémio Operário, the Ateneu, the “classic” neighbourhood cafés – in liaison with today’s venues (Liquidámbur, Salão Brasil...)		
B3	To place a high value on the memory of the elderly and stories without history: accentuation of the educational dimension of the narratives		construction of a collective memory and
B4	To consolidate the presence of Coimbra in the Historical Cafés Network		
C1	To upgrade historical heritage (Sofia Street)	C	Books and Stones
C2	To encourage the regular functioning of the RUAS Association		
C3	To erect signage that allows creative circulation within the territory		
C4	To promote the creation and dissemination of relevant scientific, cultural, and artistic documentation		
C5	To support initiatives that advocate heritage as an invaluable platform for presenting contemporary art		
C6	To consolidate the concept of the City Museum		
C7	To strengthen Coimbra – Museums Network		
C8	To create new pedestrian spaces (outside the riverside zone)		
C9	To rethink crossing the city (using a new overground metro line)		
D1	To consolidate the programme – Coimbra: City of Literature	D	Breakthroughs
D2	To consolidate the area of dance in Coimbra		
D3	To internationalize and create itinerancy of cultural agents		
D4	To implement an incubator of creative activities, equipped with an appropriate and functional team, resources and facilities		
D5	To develop a consistent policy of artistic residencies		
D6	To consolidate the “Mondego Platform, land of the performing arts”		
D7	To consolidate the area of cinema: From Cinephilia to CineCidade		
D8	To position Coimbra within an active network of cities of knowledge and culture		
D9	To rethink the information and mediation process for science/socialisation of scientific knowledge/interdisciplinary undertakings (at the meeting point of artificial intelligence, cognitive psychology, philosophy and the arts)		
E1	To create a dynamic of miscegenation	E	Windows to the World
E2	To promote interculturality		
E3	To integrate foreign residents		
E4	To activate international networks		

“The city of Coimbra and the Coimbra Group are inscribed in the DNA of Europe.”

Ludovic Thilly, President of the Executive Board of Coimbra Group, Professor at the University of Poitiers

The following table illustrates, through some examples, the monitoring of some of the actions defined for each strategic objective, with some examples of indicators already consolidated within the evaluation strategy:

The entire monitoring process is dynamic and under constant development. At the time of the preparation of the bid-book, for the various general and strategic objectives, the evaluation system consisted of an array of 6 dozen actions and 70 indicators.

CODE EO	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	CODE AC	ACTION	CODE IND	INDICATOR
A1	To create a new centre point in the city, taking the river as the focal point	1.1	The rewinding of the banks	2	Increase citizens' sense of belonging to a common cultural space, citizens' perceptions of being Europeans
A1	To create a new centre point in the city, taking the river as the focal point	1.2	The construction of a new pedestrian bridge	47	Value of the investment in infrastructure and cultural facilities
A2	To return the city to its citizenry (pedestrian zones, green areas...)	1.5	The upgrading of Parque da Cidade	11	Number of local popular initiatives, including European partners or intercultural themes
A2	To return the city to its citizenry (pedestrian zones, green areas...)	1.7	The footpath on the left bank until Choupal	47	Value of the investment in infrastructure and cultural facilities
B1	To create new forms of sociability in the city	2.1	Tours of Uptown Coimbra: Tall stories unleashed	13	Increase visits to heritage sites (number of people and duration of visits)
B1	To create new forms of sociability in the city	11	Students Guilds open to the city	11	Number of local popular initiatives, including European partners or intercultural themes
C4	To promote the creation and dissemination of relevant scientific, cultural, and artistic documentation	3.3	To promote the advancement of the agencies of Coimbra and the Region	14	Increase in support for multicultural projects, e.g. those pertaining to cultural minorities
D1	To consolidate the programme - Coimbra: City of Literature	4.8	To organise (annually) an Exhibition on "The Book"	36	No. of events and initiatives that encourage active involvement and offer opportunities for different levels of participation



What is the artistic vision and strategy for the cultural program of the year?

THE IDEA OF CHANGE inspires the candidacy: Coimbra does not present itself as a city that merely wishes to show completed works – 1 monument, 1 building, 1 artistic creation, 1 show – but rather as a place where everything has to happen, continually and on a daily basis, where creation is an obligation and the urban and cultural transformations project into a future under construction, into a new ecological, social and economic equilibrium.

More than a place where things happen, Coimbra should be the place that makes things happen!

Strategically, we want to: 1) create conditions for continuity in avant-garde thinking, allowing its heritage to leverage the future, a model for other regions and cities in Europe; 2) overcome divides (tradition/invention) and compartmentalisation (science/art, culture/nature), focusing on the transversal dimension of knowledge and interdisciplinarity; 3) integrate the new technologies into the associative and cultural fabric of the city, deepening the digital dimension of artistic output.



Video «The Animals»

The following underpin the programme:

EDUCATIONAL, TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL IMPERATIVES: in the construction of an innovative programme for children and young people, in the area of aesthetic training, which goes beyond formal learning, along the lines of a CMC project that takes theatre and music to schools and retirement homes. The cultural trades will deepen existing training and specialisation structures, professionalising their agents and actors.

ECOLOGICAL IMPERATIVES: art and culture, at the heart of sustainable development – in the wake of the Municipal Programme for Climate Change, SDO targets, Glasgow 2021 – will incorporate decarbonisation targets into cultural production and enjoyment, promoting greater social compliance and joint individual and collective accountability, respecting the circular economy that will govern the preparation of all materials, events and shows in the Capital.

SOCIAL IMPERATIVES: bringing the multiple suburbs of the city to the centre, the Arts take on a central role in knowing how to live together, contributing toward citizens' quality of life, well-being, and happiness.

All this assumes the participation of the people: 1) in the sharing of personal stories, memories and experiences, within the communities where they live, through interviews with people of all ages and from all social, cultural and economic backgrounds; 2) in the integration of different generations from diverse backgrounds, in a crossover between learning, knowledge, skills and artistic practices; 3) in the inclusion of international residents in the co-creation of projects.

The issue of audiences is strategic: we question passivity in the face of “culture” created by others, we rethink the relationship between culture and audiences in terms of co-creation and access to a common European heritage in order to reach new audiences (which interdisciplinarity will favour).

The **ECOC** understands culture not as a mere spectacle or commodity, but as construction, revelation, learning and empowerment of a multifaceted and plural city! For everyone and with everyone!

“This work, genuinely devoted to a cause, testifies to a thorough knowledge of the city and its region, as well as it reveals a perfect understanding of the aims of a European Capital of Culture.”

Patrícia Salvação Barreto, Cultural Counsellor, Portuguese Embassy in Berlin

1 / THE THIRD BANK OF THE RIVER 2 / THE SPIRIT OF COFFEE 3 / BOOKS & STONES 4 / BREAKTHROUGHS 5 / WINDOWS TO THE WORLD

THESE ARE THE “STREAMS” that cross and come together to tell the city's story: the **river** is a powerful symbolic element, fundamental in the design and development of the city, with a combined function for the region; the effervescence of thought, ideas and activism live in the **spirit of the café**, a logosphere where different social voices clash; the city-heritage, stratified in space, is felt everywhere, as the creative city evolves over time. Coimbra thus becomes a cosmopolitan body, which fosters multiculturalism and spreads and emanates around the world.

In opposition to the natural and historical landscape of the city, we have the place of the Imaginary, where heritage is constantly reinvented, giving life to new forms. This is the *third bank*¹. It illustrates the realm of possibilities and expectations. The realm of freedom, a utopia where citizens and artists shape the future: from this horizon, the stream of change pour over Coimbra, from which we wish to capture energy.

To achieve its strategic objectives, three major flows will cross these streams from 2023 to 2027:

- ~ Capacity-building in the cultural sector, of regional and national importance, easily connected with European networks such as TransEuropeHalles, Culture Action Europe and ENCATC.
- ~ Engagement of audiences with arts and artists, leading to development, which the innovative cultural industries will favour.
- ~ Transversal dimension “carbon positive”

¹ A *Terceira Margem* (“The Third Bank”), the title of a short story by the Brazilian writer Guimarães Rosa (1962), gave the name to the 3rd Edition of the Anozero Biennial, in Coimbra.

Give a general overview of the structure of your cultural program, including the range and diversity of the activities/main events that will mark the year.



1/ THE THIRD BANK OF THE RIVER

THE VIEW

A shifting and immutable witness to the history of the city of Coimbra, the River Mondego, which owes its Latin name to the purity of its waters, exists on two planes: the physical, which makes it the only major water course entirely inside Portugal, enlivening the region from Serra da Estrela to the Atlantic coast, and the mythical, which generations of poets have sung of, from the thirteenth century until modern times.

The Mondego crosses the city, creating two rival banks, one on the left, contemplative Santa Clara, with majestic religious buildings stretched over the hill, the other political, turbulent and studious, dominated by its centuries-old university. Five bridges span the gap between these two worlds. Spared by industrialisation, the waters of the Mondego also symbolise the harmonious development of **one nature**, which has remained largely intact, to which the exceptional local biodiversity bears witness, and which justified the creation at the University of a Unesco Chair devoted to ecological themes. Following an oblique path **from the mountain to the sea**, the Mondego unifies the region it crosses, and to which the CIM-RC provides territorial cohesion.

THE VISION

The Mondego reinvented

The two banks of the river have become stable, yet presenting a landscape open to change. The third bank of the river is the stability of ongoing change, made from the silence of the creative convulsions, from the depth of innovative enigmas, from a lost and present spring.

OBJECTIVES

- ~ To reorder the City around the river and its banks, in natural and urban terms
- ~ To enhance public leisure spaces in the riverside area, with particular focus on the accessibility, safety and inclusiveness of green spaces, and paying special attention to people with disabili-

- ities, the elderly and children
- ~ To strengthen the urban ecosystem, through the sustained permeability of the various areas of the city, with emphasis on the surrounding rural areas and the protection and regeneration of the river course and adjacent areas. To create a new ecological way of life for the city (letting the rural world enter the city through its left and right banks).
- ~ To support the already regular practice of water sports and enhance existing sports facilities.

ACTIONS

- ~ Rewilding of the river banks (centuries-old orange trees, the variety of fauna, the trees in the Choupal forest, the luminosity of the dark sky, the assimilation of the hydrographic basin and the fertile agricultural plain it flows into) / the recovery of farmhouses on the right bank of the river
- ~ Clearance of riverside land, which is currently occupied by the SMTUC, and restoring the respective urban landscape.
- ~ Creation: 1) of green and pedestrian areas on the left bank, 2) a new footbridge, 3) a footpath on the left bank to the Choupal, currently underway
- ~ Regeneration: 1) Parque da Cidade (ongoing), 2) Praça da Canção, 3) Santa Clara-a-Nova Monastery (ongoing)
- ~ Construction of a multi-purpose pavilion, the Mondego Arena (in Praça da Canção)
- ~ Consolidation of the Resilient Cities Festival, started in 2021 to be the space for discussing the future of cities and exploring new solutions for cities in the twenty-first century.

IMPACT

- ~ Strengthening of the City's sustainability, inclusiveness and resilience.
- ~ Bigger and better city: the third bank: 1) the ideal projection of a place devoted to the joy of living together, 2) a new destination, key for the objectives of the EU Green Deal, 3) tourist attraction
- ~ The city as a national centre point: the Mondego Arena (part of the Praça da Canção redevelopment) will be the only one of its kind in the central region.

- ~ Installation of creative industries /job creation
- ~ Increasing Commerce in Downtown Coimbra

PARTNERS

CMC, UC, IPC, FBB, EDP, 19 Municipalities CIM-RC, Águas de Coimbra, UNESCO Chairs, Gerador (Independent platform for Journalism, Culture and Education), GNLL (Nuno Lacerda Lopes Office), Agency for the Promotion of Downtown Coimbra, Arsuna, (studio of Architecture and Performing Arts)

Readings of the Territory

The river's current, a link between cultures and communities, brings the inter-municipal territory and its "Roads to 2027" to centre stage in the Capital:

OBJECTIVES

- ~ To give value to the river, in its geographical, symbolic and social dimensions
- ~ To map the diversity that, in the currents of the river and its tributaries, carries the depth of active cultural participation:
 - › Historical (from Romanisation to thematic itineraries: Jewish tour, Napoleonic tours, liberalism tour, medieval castle and walls tours, schist villages...)
 - › Natural (from the Mira fish-tanks to the rice fields of Montemor and the salt pans of Figueira da Foz)
 - › Cultural: from gastronomy to handicrafts, from the sacred convents and monasteries to the profane rituals of folklore and paganism of the lands, from the memory of places to the glorification of women, from literature to the regular practice of performing arts, especially music and theatre.
- ~ Map cultural facilities and agents across the territory of the CIM-RC.
- ~ To deepen the relationship between Literature and the territory.
- ~ To improve technical capacity-building among those responsible for governance, management and cultural mediation.
- ~ To stimulate partnerships between cultural and artistic agents and encourage the expansion of projects supported in partnerships.

- ~ To progressively establish a cultural agenda for the territory that is capable of inducing a strengthening of the capacity of the cultural sector [Specific Ecoc objective]

ACTIONS, BY WAY OF EXAMPLE, FROM AMONG THOSE ALREADY IN PROGRESS

- ~ Promoting the river, along its entire length
- ~ Linhas da(s) terra(s): performative visits around the territory
- ~ Homens e Terras: exhibitions at the Pavilhão de Portugal (temporary and rotating)
- ~ Documentary editions (biodiversity, fertility of the soils, variety of crops)
- ~ Consolidating the "Books that help us grow" project: promoting the Sustainable Development Goals set by the UN among pupils from the 1st key stage of primary education, through the selection of 17 books, one for each of the SDGs, reading them and developing classroom activities.
- ~ Setting up the "Writers' Tour" Programme.
- ~ Creating the Observatory of Culture for the Coimbra Region Intermunicipal Community

IMPACT

- ~ Capacity-building among the human, technical and operational resources of the CIM-RC
- ~ Raising awareness of the territory
- ~ Upgrading of the territory
- ~ Tourist attractions
- ~ The 21st-century concept of One Health, enhanced by conservation of classified nature reserves in the region
- ~ Emphasis on the central importance of the river at urban, national and international level.

PARTNERS

CMC, all the Municipalities of the CIM-RC and all its public and private cultural structures and associations.

The River as a stage, throughout 2027

- (and from 2022 onwards)
- ~ Major shows at the (new) Praça da Canção
- ~ Dance show "on" the river (floating)
- ~ Sound and light on the city hill
- ~ Picnics in the green park
- ~ Water sports Regattas

"To be European Capital of Culture is to create community!"

Clara Almeida Santos, former Vice-Rector of Coimbra University

2/ THE SPIRIT OF COFFEE

After the spices brought from the East by the navigators, coffee arrived from Brazil, São Tomé, Angola and Mozambique. And with it, meeting places and lively discussions. As well as in lecture halls and classrooms, transformative debates on literature, art and politics also take place in cafés and taverns.

If the aroma of the café is not sufficient to explain the city's particular intellectual effervescence, it is a current of change, a symbol of the intensity of a nightlife where the future is outlined in high spirits. In 1865, one of the most famous controversies of the 19th century, known as the "Coimbra Question", pitted the defenders of academic romanticism against the advocates of realism. The city's journalists and lawyers joined forces with the students from the "Repúblicas" (university communities with their own rules) in lively encounters.

DIRECTIONS TO CHANGE

The Memory of/in Words:

One has to know how to listen to the continuous rumour of legends and myths, the **voices** that surround places and objects, sometimes even the trees (the ancient olive tree of the Sé Velha cathedral): the great tales of its foundation and evolution, its small stories, the chronicles where figures like Inês de Castro, Princess Cindazunda, Marshal Massena, the young monk known as António "de Pádua", Fernão Mendes Pinto or Jorge de Montemor stand out... Stories with history make Coimbra a city that mirrors words. In libraries or offices, in solitary rooms or in the calm of the cloisters, reading and writing go on: yesterday, by candlelight, today, on a computer or tablet, the voices of the silence come alive.

OBJECTIVES

- ~ To give visibility to Coimbra's noosphere
- ~ To recover memories of places, objects and people.
- ~ To promote the "Voices of the Silence" (diaries, private correspondence, archives full of echoes of an inner, spiritual or sentimental life)

ACTIONS

- ~ Tours: in the Uptown part of the City: *Alta(s) histórias soltas* ("Tall stories unleashed") Project (curator: Helder Wasterlain)
- ~ Creation of themed audio-tours
- ~ A walk in Literature: discover the places and itinerary of great Portuguese writers.
- ~ Objects: 1) the organisation of items from a wide range of collections (paintings, musical instruments, etc.), 2) objects that speak in the silence (unique pieces from the Science Museum)

IMPACT:

- A greater sense of the City and the CIM Region belonging to their History, through:
 - › Open access to archives and documents
 - › Visibility of unknown or non-curated archives
- ~ Capacity-building to respond to Ministry of Culture and European Commission projects



Presentation of the Coimbra 2027 Candidacy

PARTNERS

CMC, Higher Education Institutions, PNL (National Reading Plan), AML (Brussels Archives and Literature Museum), "Bruits de Langues" Festival, Association Culture LL, Poitiers, Galabra Group (Galicia).

The Coimbra tertulia:

As in all modern cities, in Coimbra the café was and is a place of social, cultural and political activity. Since 1928, the Brasileira café has been the stage for political and literary tertulias, which have also taken place at the Arcádia, Nicola, Central and Mandarin cafés, and which still take place at the Tropical café. The Santa Cruz Café, with its neo-Gothic decoration, still today offers a model of inventive fraternity for such **gatherings**. Other spaces for debate and creation prolong and attest to the richness of these associations.

OBJECTIVES

- ~ To promote the activities of the Portuguese Historic Cafés Association, with emphasis on the creation and consolidation of the Historic Cafés Tour on the Iberian Peninsula (Cultural Tourism Award in the category "Transnational Thematic Tourism Products", in 2020), as a European Cultural Tour
- ~ To bring new life to historic cafés, places of memories and social gatherings
- ~ To promote conventional spaces for sharing and collective creation
- ~ To create and develop innovative spaces for digital social interaction

ACTIONS

- ~ Organisation of one of the next editions (2023 or 2024) of the Council of Europe's annual Consultative Forum on Cultural Tours, in which the ECOC has already officially signalled strong interest
- ~ Set up a central hub for associative development (2003-2005)
- ~ Supporting and publicising artistic achievements away from conventional artistic venues (performances, music, cinema, exhibitions and debates at new venues for social interaction)
- ~ Organisation of a Colloquium on Smart Cities

IMPACT

- ~ A new lease of life for historic cafés, places of memory and social gatherings
- ~ New conventional spaces for sharing and collective creation

PARTNERS

CMC, Portuguese Historic Cafés Association (ACH), European Historic Cafés Association (EHICA)



Historic cafes tour

3 / BOOKS & STONES

Coimbra bears traces of a glorious past, but also conceals treasures, which may be revealed through patient decoding. The "inspired hill" is a secret location, which owes much to the monastic orders that meditated and prayed there for centuries, to the cult of the spiritual values that have not lost their fervour, despite secular studies taking over the abandoned cloisters, replacing religious life with a quest for knowledge, the memory that forms the spirit of a place. Heir to a rich and noble past of which it is justifiably proud, Coimbra, while refusing to be considered a museum city, is nevertheless acutely aware of the precariousness of this material and spiritual heritage and the need to constantly improve it. If restoration work encouraged by UNESCO was successfully started 20 years ago, much remains to be done to combine harmoniously tradition and invention.

DIRECTIONS TO CHANGE

The Stones – regeneration of the material heritage:

OBJECTIVES

- ~ To change the function of and upgrade the space occupied by Coimbra Prison in the City centre.
- ~ To rebuild the extensive green corridor linking Avenida Sá da Bandeira, Sereia and the Botanical Gardens, interrupted by the existence of Coimbra Prison
- ~ To intensify policies to preserve Sofia Street, heritage classified by UNESCO under the recognition of the University of Coimbra, Alta e Sofia, as a World Heritage Site
- ~ To recover the historical buildings of the Geophysical and Astronomical Observatory
- ~ To raise the profile of space discovery, which, from the cosmographers of the late Middle Ages to today's astrophysicists, at the Living Science Exploratorium or the Astronomical Observatory, contributes to our knowledge of the universe, today incorporated into the uc.Space project, which intensifies uc space research.
- ~ To make Coimbra's downtown area a real urban space of

"The WHPO was the cornerstone of the strategy of UC World Heritage candidacy, showing how our art, our intellectual and cultural influence have spread through various countries, with which we maintain strong ties of friendship."

Fernando Seabra Santos, former Rector of Coimbra University

enjoyment that facilitates social inclusion, health and human well-being and promotes dialogue between people and different cultures and transforms daily life, through an urban plan for pedestrianised streets, the electrification of public transport and a reduction in road traffic.

- ~ To deepen knowledge of the City and particularly of the territory "University of Coimbra, Alta e Sofia"

ACTIONS

- ~ Launching of an international competition seeking ideas for regeneration and a new approach to the space occupied by the Prison.
- ~ Alignment of urban development policies with the New Urban Agenda and SDG (PAS 2060 or COP26 Glasgow).
- ~ Creation of a History of Coimbra Interpretative Centre which offers visitors basic tours through more than two thousand years of history.
- ~ Creation of the City Museum: this multi-hub structure invites visitors to travel through the city, across a long time span, and discover various recovered and preserved stages of its urban development, partially in situ; the citizens of Coimbra have been incorporated into a narrative that they feel is their own, intensifying a sense of belonging.

IMPACT

- ~ Large-scale urban renewal
- ~ Expansion of the Green City
- ~ New accessibility in the city
- ~ Greater number of tourist attractions
- ~ Creation of employment

The Books

Birthplace of books in Portugal, from the "scriptorium" of the monastery of Santa Cruz (12th century) to the incubator of the 15th century, the city has remained faithful to the worship of writing, as reflected in the numerous libraries, including university libraries (the Joanina is a treasure, the first university library to be distinguished with the European Heritage Label), ecclesiastical libraries (the Seminário Maior, now open to the public), municipal libraries (2022 will mark the 100th anniversary of the Municipal Library) and private libraries. A major stocktaking and digital indexing of the deposits and funds spread throughout the CIM-RC territory now makes it possible to measure the role that reading has occupied for centuries in the region: but the transformation of books (not least their disappearance in traditional form) forces us to ask questions about new ways of writing and reading.

OBJECTIVES

- ~ To deepen historical knowledge of the Portuguese language
- ~ To foster knowledge of literary cultural heritage
- ~ To continue transforming these collections of documents into a digital library
- ~ To establish a publication programme for classical works, rare editions and relevant documents in exacting editions aimed at scholars, teachers and students at various levels of education

ACTIONS

- ~ Creation in Coimbra of the European Hub of the Museum of the Portuguese Language, to be set up in a prominent building in the City classified as heritage by UNESCO (in partnership with the Museum of São Paulo)
- ~ Setting up of a specialised editorial series to bring together

studies related to the classification of Coimbra as a World Heritage Site, which renew knowledge of the classified territory (in paper and digital format)

- ~ Document editions: 1) "A cidade no espelho das palavras" ("The city in the mirror of words" – memories of the city and cities-CIM), legends, myths, conversations with History, 2) "o murmúrio dos papéis" ("the murmur of papers" – manuscripts), intimate diaries, correspondence...
- ~ National digital library, with free access, based on the archives of Municipal Libraries and private collections

IMPACT

- ~ Internationalisation of access to heritage culture
- ~ Deepening of knowledge of the heritage city

PARTNERS

CMC, UC, EDP, Museum of the Portuguese Language in São Paulo.

NEW ART IN THE OLD CITY

- ~ Organisation of performances at abandoned or underused venues
- ~ Construction of tactile exhibitions
- ~ Organisation of exhibitions: photographs of Mars and the Sun
- ~ Immersive multimedia shows at heritage sites around the city
- ~ Organisation of a European /international handicrafts show
- ~ Creation of interactive spaces for children (philosophy of discovery, learning and games through tactile experiences, and not through technology such as computer and video games; exhibitions and activities that encourage visitors to taste, feel, smell and explore their way through the interactive space)

“Coimbra has always been phenotypically irreverent. Generation after generation, the city makes future out of memory.”

José Manuel Mendes, President of the Portuguese Writers Association

4 / BREAKTHROUGHS

The history of Coimbra appears to obey two timescales: the continuous duration of the thesaurus – over which its rich heritage was slowly constructed – and the timeline broken up by **moments of creation, where the genie was unleashed.** However, sudden changes, both in political ideas and in arts and techniques, cannot be understood without the process of maturation that prepares them. In its quest for wisdom, Coimbra knows how to gain inspiration and audacity, and from its apparent slumber, its metamorphoses germinate.

DIRECTIONS TO CHANGE

Coimbra Experiments

OBJECTIVES

- ~ To outline policies for attracting and retaining creative energy.
- ~ To bring together competencies already established or to be established for the operation of a “Futures Laboratory”, with the purpose of forming more beautiful, sustainable and inclusive ways of living together according to the New Bauhaus. The line of approach of the “Laboratory” is “change” and its respective formats and configurations.
- ~ To explore **new scientific and technological dynamics** in ambitious social projects, within an ecosystem that is mindful of environmental and ecological issues.
- ~ To encourage the spirit of dissension and the avant-garde that resides in the soul of a young, irreverent, confrontational and dissatisfied Coimbra, in the theatre scene – both professional and amateur, involving students and neighbourhoods – in the visual and plastic arts, in an entire aesthetic born from

the most advanced technology.

- ~ To consolidate a permanent cultural programme in the city, covering and crossing multiple areas, of which this year’s programme will be an example.
- ~ To promote the exceptional range of Science museums in the City, which document the relationships between continuity and invention and traces significant moments in science up to the present day.

ACTIONS

- ~ Coordination of the organisation of a creative activities incubator with the Pedro Nunes Institute
- ~ Holding of the annual “Estado Crítico” seminar, a knowledge transfer initiative associated with the “Futures Laboratory” involving citizens in shared reflection on societal dynamics.
- ~ Support for initiatives that promote scientific culture, with emphasis on innovations such as that of the Marionet Theatre Company, with ongoing work in crossing the performing arts with science and involvement in advanced training and participatory science projects.
- ~ Promotion of the Documentation Centre in Performing Arts and Science

Territory of the Performing Arts

Coimbra forms part of a region that is very much dedicated to the performing arts, especially theatre and dance. In the field of theatre, there are professional companies, academic bodies and amateur groups. In the field of dance, despite the great interest reflected in the existence of various dance schools and the Abril Dança Festival, a gathering of the national and international creative dance scene, there was and is no professional company.

For this reason, there is a pressing need to create a Dance Company to play a leading role in international choreography. To new **rhythms**, the creativity of the territorial communities will be tested, mixing audiences in innovative and inclusive initiatives of citizen neighbourliness: to occupy the public space is to experience the city in a different way, identifying an emotional geography in a choreographic narrative that combines the hyperlocal with the universal. Outside of language and words, dance promotes internationalisation!

OBJECTIVES

- ~ To provide the Coimbra cultural scene with a professional Dance Company
- ~ To create a regular meeting in the field of the performing arts

ACTIONS

- ~ In 2022, start of *Corpo Cidade*, a regular programme for the dissemination of contemporary dance using film and video, discussion and editing, to be developed across 3 fronts:
 - 1) memory and transmission;
 - 2) creation and circulation;
 - 3) civic duty and inclusion
- ~ Establishment of a Professional Dance Company in Coimbra from 2023 onwards.
- ~ Creation of a Performing Arts Biennial

Coimbra, City of Literature

From its medieval origins, literature has always explored the inexhaustible field of the possible, at times at the cost of violent breakaways from the canon. Today, the evidence of a Coimbra City of Literature can be seen in all its splendour.

OBJECTIVES

- ~ To reinforce national and international recognition of Coimbra as a City of Literature
- ~ To establish the territory as “Coimbra, City of Literature”.
- ~ To develop “The Book Place” Programme.
- ~ To develop the “*Todo o Modernismo, em suma!*” Programme



CIM - Coimbra Region website

ACTIONS

- ~ Organisation of “Invisible Cities. International Literary Festival” (starting in 2021, it will continue until 2027 – Latvia’s winning city will be invited, and beyond: in 2022, Poitiers, 2023, Bologna, 2024, Berlin, 2025 Leuven...)
- ~ Organisation of the exhibition “The Book Transformed” (The Book in its material dimensions showing its “lives” and “metamorphoses”)
- ~ Celebration of the centenary of the Magazine *Presença* in 2027 (as the conclusion of a cycle of research developed in previous years)

Coimbra, Orchestral City

The diversity of musical creation, the number of formal (conservatories) and informal music schools, philharmonic bands, musical groups of various types and a classical orchestra (occ), **make Coimbra an orchestral city.** And if the modern Cultural Centre of the São Francisco Convent can receive the grandest operatic productions, the “*Canção de Coimbra*” will be sung on each forecourt or corner of the city, not mentioning more trendy sounds.

OBJECTIVES

- ~ To train and professionalise those involved in the actions described
- ~ To broaden the range of citizens’ musical interests through knowledge and experimentation
- ~ To provide contact between different types and genres of music in order to share languages and access to creative contexts
- ~ To establish ties between Europe’s musical past and the creation of future artistic works
- ~ To support research on the *Canção de Coimbra*

ACTIONS

- ~ Creation of the Casa da Canção
- ~ Recovery of the historical organisations of the Region, enabling the presentation/performance of a varied European repertoire from different eras. Creation of conditions for the installation of a symphonic organ for the presentation of repertoire composed from the 19th century onwards
- ~ Equipping of each of the CIM-RC municipal auditoriums (grand piano, stage lighting) with a regular programme of shows/concerts, specifically Classical Music and Jazz.
- ~ Creation, with the UC, of a line of research on the *Canção de Coimbra*.
- ~ Extension to the localities of the CIM-RC of the Sons da Cidade Festival (annually organised by the UC), which establishes links between built heritage and musical heritage (in their various forms)
- ~ Production of a multilingual rock opera (based on the figure of Inês de Castro, with a multidisciplinary team, on violence against women, with the support of the National Commission for Equality)
- ~ Organisation of an international (annual) Early Music festival, establishing a link between the musical works and the historical contexts in which they were generated, with dual artistic and educational objectives
- ~ Organisation of the Festival Internacional de Música das Cidades e das Regiões (concerts, workshops, lectures, masterclasses, documentaries and dramas) – taking the Portuguese Guitar and the Fado/*Canção de Coimbra* as a starting point, aiming to establish a dialogue with the musical instruments and genres that



reflect the identity of European cities and regions (such as the Greek Bouzouki and Rebetiko, the Spanish Guitar and Flamenco, the Italian Calabrian Lira and Trallalero, etc.)

- ~ Reinstatement of the presentation circuits of European and international performers, to enhance the artistic development of local musicians and the critical capacity of audiences.
- ~ Setting up of a regional network of regular music seasons (of various types), with the dual function of mobilising audiences and promoting the circulation of national and foreign artists.
- ~ Support for the UC research project *Mundos e Fundos*, responsible for restoring the works of anonymous composers from the Santa Cruz Monastery, and names like Pedro de Cristo and Duarte Lobo, choral and instrumental music composed or deposited here in the 16th and 17th centuries, to their artistic environments: their connection to musical production collectives is responsible for enriching the universe categorised as “Early Music”, which has been very popular in Europe since 1975.

Visual Coimbra

Photography and cinema have intermittently played a major and prominent role. Today, with the transformations that relations between artistic practice and the cinematic experience have undergone, it can be said that this importance remains, albeit in a transformed state.

OBJECTIVES

- ~ To support the organisation and promotion of the Plastic Arts Biennial
- ~ To support the Visual Arts Centre, heir to the Encontros de Fotografia, a pioneering organisation in Portugal recognised across Europe.
- ~ To consolidate the Contemporary Art Centre.
- ~ To expand bold curatorial projects that interconnect important collections in the City and the CIM-RC.
- ~ To strengthen conditions for the Festival “Caminhos do Cinema Português”, which will allow for the successful development of

the most visible transformations in the latest editions.

- ~ To support the programme and activities of the Casa do Cinema.
- ~ To raise the European profile of the City through potential partnerships.
- ~ To lay the foundations for a qualitative transformation that will enable the film industry to establish itself in the region.

ACTIONS

- ~ Consolidation of the importance on the regular cultural agenda of the Plastic Arts Biennial, exhibitions at the Visual Arts Centre and the Contemporary Art Centre, the “Caminhos do Cinema Português” Festival and the Casa do Cinema.
- ~ Consolidation of the Estação Imagem.

Virtual Coimbra

During the pandemic, the ECOC has been attentive to efforts to reinvent the entire cultural sector. In Coimbra, there were 3 notable examples, resulting from the originality of contemporary thinking and its capacity to respond promptly. During the first 12 months of the pandemic, 3 ground-breaking shows put Coimbra in the spotlight at national and international level.

OBJECTIVES

- ~ To create creative cultural alternatives to the live audience model
- ~ To access knowledge from the CIM-RC libraries’ archives
- ~ To make relevant CIM-RC documentation available in digital format
- ~ To organise the visual image of the territory

ACTIONS

- ~ Never-before-tried show formats:
 - 1) **the Drive-in concept:** turning big car parks into safe venues for concerts, theatre shows, disco nights and magic shows. Example: “Estúdio33 Drive In”,
 - 2) **the Hybrid format:** shows where anyone buying tickets to physically be at the venue would also receive complimentary online access codes to share with family and friends anywhere in the world. The actual show being the result of the interaction of performers, venue spectators and home

participants. Example: “LM CONECTADOS”, 3) **the Virtual immersive experience:** Highly produced shows where spectators are at home and yet participate as if they were at the venue, reaching levels of interaction never seen before. Example: “LM BACKSTAGE”.

- ~ Support for research and invention in the field of computational creativity
- ~ Progressive unification of access to CIM-RC libraries through a digital catalogue
- ~ Create the Inter-Municipal Imagotheque, amplifying the practice developed by the Coimbra Imagotheque

GENERAL IMPACTS

- ~ Strengthening of an original, plural and socially relevant creative sector.
- ~ Combating the seasonal nature of culture.
- ~ Consolidation of intense periods in the life of the city – with its Meetings and/or Festivals (of the arts, jazz, cinema, magic, literature), alongside daily exhibitions in the field of music, theatre, visual arts, folklore.
- ~ Increase in Artist Residencies, which will develop works to be presented during the ECOC and will become part of the archive of the city of Coimbra.

PARTNERS

CMC, UC, IPC, Luís de Matos Produções, and all local and regional cultural agents and respective national and international partners. Organisations such as the Cité de La Villette, the Louvre Museum, the Association of Writers of Galicia, the Archives and the Brussels Museum of Literature (AML) have already been contacted

“The river Mondego does not end in Figueira da Foz, but flows out through the world.”

Elias Torres Feijó, Professor at Santiago de Compostela University



5 / WINDOWS TO THE WORLD

Coimbra welcomes 125 nationalities from the 5 continents. A place which, since the Middle Ages, has been a centre of European knowledge, the city attracts and retains foreigners, students, researchers, who turn it into a harmonious microcosm, promoting cultural synthesis. Being proportionally the most cosmopolitan city in the country, it is home to foreign communities with significant involvement in associations and cultural movements, to which increasing attention should be paid in the forthcoming decade.

Coimbra lives in the streets, where the traditional festivals, with their folk groups, the solemn celebrations in confraternities and processions, the artistic performances, the magic, the philharmonic bands and the concerts create waves of emotion. The students enliven the three neighbourhoods where the university hubs are located, but gather in the downtown area of the city, where they mix with local residents and tourists. Major works are in progress to limit road traffic and restore the space to the citizenry, favouring initiatives aimed at making the old Muslim medina, the popular heart of Coimbra, even more welcoming and visitor-friendly. Through its University and all its other higher education institutions, Coimbra is a place of national and international networks, which open dialogues regarding science and civilisation, knowledge and culture.



UC Science Museum

DIRECTIONS TO CHANGE

Coimbra in movement

If the presence of foreign residents – just over 10% of the population – does not cause any social tension, the question of their increased participation in local life arises. More than half (6,500) belong to the Portuguese-speaking world and it is important to give a voice and visibility to these men and women from Brazil, Angola, Mozambique... whose integration has been facilitated by the fact that they speak the same language. Most of the immigrants (including dozens of Syrian and Afghan refugees) will become European citizens, thus fulfilling the dream that led them to leave their country of origin. We need to involve them more closely in the city's cultural activities, bringing them out of invisibility, enabling them to express their own creativity and contribute to the stream of change in the city.

OBJECTIVES

- ~ To create an International Relations Office, in the CMC, to support and build the international capacity of Coimbra's cultural fabric and associations
- ~ To show Europe what Coimbra "hides", and that it is surprisingly attractive
- ~ To give visibility to the presence of migrant populations that the city welcomes (e.g. from Syria)
- ~ To promote genuine intercultural and interfaith dialogue
- ~ To make Coimbra's cosmopolitanism a political, social and cultural force, getting Erasmus and volunteer students, as well as the 15,500 foreign residents, to participate more actively in the life of the city.
- ~ To support the Syrian migrants integration: creation of the "SOULMATE" Platform, embedded in the ECOC 2027 stream of change, represents social transformation through culture using a networked, transdisciplinary approach.

ACTIONS

Coimbra moves

- ~ Tales of many cities (the districts of Coimbra, according to the Athens Charter)
- ~ Street art in Coimbra (*Reskate*, María Lopez & Javier de Riba)

Coimbra in a network

- ~ Holding an Intercultural Dialogue from the Chairs "Intercultural Dialogue on Heritage under Portuguese Influence"
- ~ Constructing 1 Atlas of the World: Coimbra in the World
- ~ Bringing annually young Europeans to Coimbra, from each university in the CoimbraGroup (41), to complete a summer internship to develop innovative projects (in all areas)
- ~ Carrying out exchanges in the network of European Botanical Gardens (CoimbraGroup)
- ~ Creating a student mobility programme in the CIM-RC, Erasmix.



Video about the Syrian citizen who did postgraduate studies at UC

Multicultural Coimbra:

- ~ Reviving the different civilisational heritages, crossing them with today's multiculturalism to make it more visible and active in the city
- ~ Rekindling the traces in stone and in the toponymy: the Jewish tour, the Phoenician and Greek, Roman and Suevi, Arab and Viking periods.
- ~ Creating a photo mosaic with all foreigners who live in Coimbra

Coimbra emanates:

To show the cultural impact of Coimbra since the Enlightenment, projecting European culture in the New World, the great philosophical voyages, precious testimonies of that universal curiosity and the encounter with the other that the era of planetary and instantaneous communication does nothing but intensify.

IMPACT

- ~ Opening the city to Europe, to the Lusophone world, to the entire planet
- ~ In the knowledge of its role in European history and its dissemination to the world
- ~ In the integration and miscegenation work understood as a force for development for the city and for job creation
- ~ In the consolidation of the network of twinned towns and European networks (Culture Action Europe, Europa Nostra)

PARTNERS

CMC, artists and creatives, Portuguese Red Cross, Centre for the Prevention and Treatment of Psychological Trauma, High Commission for Migration, CAWTAR (Centre of Arab Women for Training and Research) UN.

GENERAL ACTIONS

- ~ Melting point: 1 annual event based around foreigners in Coimbra
- ~ Multilingual theatrical performances
- ~ Street scenes
- ~ Experiences of territorial communities
- ~ Tours (Jewish, Arab, Roman): technological shows

AS WE HAVE ALREADY MENTIONED, Coimbra is not one city, but many cities, it is not uniform, but multiform, it cannot be reduced to an unequivocal identity, but welcomes a myriad of faces and facets where every man and every woman reflects on himself or herself and finds himself or herself reflected. As we also said in the beginning, Coimbra needs to resolve that which is still very often thought of as a dual identity, creating true coordination between tradition and modernity.

In this sense, we have already launched some strategies, to be developed by 2027, as verifiable answers to the challenge of the old and the new:

Occupying Historical sites

This is a clear purpose of the cultural programme:

- ~ to place artistic expressions, performances and experimentation at heritage sites, combining the memory in stone with the voice of innovation.
- ~ occupying sites with History and tradition through the words of poetry, the performance of bodies, the sounds of the city, light, colour and movement of images virtually projected, associating the power of exhibition (which exists, and one sees) with that of revelation (which exists, and one does not see).

The heritage site has become a place for contemporary artistic intervention, connecting centuries of history, to which it bears witness, to the spectacle of the present, recomposing it in moments of epiphany that go beyond passive contemplation and project it into the very dynamic of experimentation and innovation.

Making the stones of the city speak the language of today is what happens with the project "Lugares Património Mundial do Centro", financed by European funds and in which Coimbra participates.

Surprising the (and in the) everyday place

Another key challenge:

- ~ to transform the traditional space of the city – gardens, neighbourhoods, squares and streets – adding enjoyment to their current use value.
- ~ We propose a view of the city that shows the dialogue between eras and peoples: placing the unexpected in it – a *planet walk* in the green park, *The Mysterious Star* of Tintin at the Astronomical Conservatory – by revealing that which is ignored – the tour of the fountains and drinking fountains of the city (Fonte dos Três Bicos, Fonte dos Judeus, Fonte do Gato, Fonte dos Amores...) in the sacred and pagan imagination – by scattering contemporary artistic works (sculptures) at unlikely sites, by exhibiting ancient objects at the premises of public services (Loja do Cidadão), by opening up run down neighbourhoods to *street art*, reserving a place for popular creativity.

Bringing experimentation out of the laboratory

Strongly marked by the excellence of the research performed at its higher education institutions, Coimbra is also a city concerned with communicating the science that it produces inside its laboratories and writes in its books. Three examples illustrate this desire for crossover and communication and dissemination of science to the city.

- ~ The Pedro Nunes Institute (named after a sixteenth-century mathematician and cosmographer)

Explain succinctly how the cultural programme will combine local cultural heritage and traditional art forms with new, innovative and experimental cultural expressions.

promotes innovation and technology transfer, connecting the scientific and technological environment to the productive fabric and fostering the creation of technology-based companies through its business incubator.

- ~ The Living Science Exploratorium, essential for the connection established between scientific culture and the community, bringing scientists closer to the population, stimulating the taste for studying science.
- ~ The Rómulo de Carvalho Centre (the professor of Physical-Chemical Sciences is also António Gedeão, the poet of "The Philosopher's Stone"), a living example of the crossover of areas and different sensibilities.

More specifically, we wish to advance areas such as robotics and computational creativity, promoting the creation of electronic games based on the results of historical research and heritage (e.g. the Portuguese Way, from Coimbra and the region), bringing together the playful and the educational. In the field of transmediation, we will embrace projects involving the computational transformation of texts from Portuguese literature (in particular, the classics) converted into different editorial or digital objects and modelled by means of sonification processes (e.g. the work *Os Lusíadas* in music). The new *Máquinas de Ouvir* offer metamorphoses of the voice of the diseur into performative graphical oscillations...

Fertilising the traditional forms of art

The traditional forms of art – handicrafts, folklore – incorporate innovation and experimentalism. Handicrafts, a centuries-old tradition in Coimbra and the surrounding region – ceramics, basketmaking, weaving... – reflecting uses and rituals of the populations that settled and adapted themselves, are today enriched by the modern techniques of design and production of the artefacts, specifically in relation to the role of new technologies.

How has the city involved, or how does it plan to involve, local artists and cultural organizations in the conception and implementation of the cultural program?

THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE ARTISTS and cultural institutions is a must for the candidacy, and based on the construction of a future which reflects the city. The ECOC process is a 3-year participatory journey of:

- ~ face-to-face, individual consultations with cultural agents from Coimbra, higher education institutions, school groups, cultural and recreational associations and political agents;
- ~ weekly public webinars, with large audiences, which began in June 2020, with prominent figures from the region, country and abroad, from the fields of education, science, creation and culture.
- ~ calls to the city's creative minds to collect transformative ideas and projects: dozens of proposals were presented at hearings held in weekly webinars over the course of 2 months.

An international meeting – For1C A European Capital of Culture in the 21st Century, in March 2019 – offered an opportunity for local artists to engage in a dialogue with high-ranking figures, discussing an integrated and forward-looking strategic vision for Coimbra.

In June 2019, cooperation was encouraged between the cultural institutions of its twinned European cities – Salamanca, Santiago de Compostela, Zaragoza, Poitiers, Aix-en-Provence, Esch-sur-Alzette, Padua, Halle

and Lund – creating a network of artistic and cultural exchanges to be developed into a specific work programme. The seminar brought together representatives of the cities present, some of which are former ECOC cities – Santiago de Compostela, Salamanca, Aix-en-Provence (with Marseille) – or future ones, such as Esch-sur-Alzette and artists and creators from Coimbra, leading to the establishment of partnerships to be consolidated under the ambit of ECOC 2027.

The creation of the Municipal Committee for Culture of Coimbra, in 2020, responds to a long-standing structural desire of those involved in culture in Coimbra to create an official body to coordinate agents, actors and associations, as significant momentum to the preparations for the candidacy. The CMCC has already hosted discussions on the major strategic fronts for the area of culture, with active and effective mobilisation of cultural agents in the preparation of the ECOC 2027.

The confinement experienced since March 2020 led to the option of a virtual model for holding regular discussions and meetings. The changes in the paradigm of the cultural market, of the audiences and of the labour fabric itself linked to culture had implications for the idea of community, and in particular the cultural community, which was forced to rethink its way of life (and survival) and the usual forms of creation and sharing. The very concept of culture (and its “institutionalisation”) needs reviewing, redefining, questioning the issue of the individual and the collective, solitary creation and sharing, the on-site and the virtual, luxury and survival, the civilising element.

There was an urgent need to share the central (and agonising) question: what is the resumption of culture going to be like? How is it going to work? with the creative fabric of the city (and the country), showing the need to overcome the (apparent) loneliness to which they all found themselves subject. Since June 2020, we have gathered local, national or international figures to debate Coimbra and the preparations for the ECOC, in weekly Webinars which have been enthusiastically received by the public. Fifteen months on, the sessions still exceed several thousand auditors (live or deferred) who send their comments. This trend has inspired a stream of change to the programme.

In this broad consultation, a consensus was created in the city, between institutions and independent organisations, regarding collective ownership of the ECOC project. The investment by all is evident in the structure of the programme and in the quality and nature of the projects (international dimension, training, transversal, innovative...).



Expresso Newspaper Supplement "Coimbra 2027"



Give a general outline of the activities foreseen in view of:

- A/ Promoting the cultural diversity of Europe, intercultural dialogue, and greater mutual understanding between European citizens;
- B/ Highlighting the common aspects of European cultures, heritage, and history, as well as European integration and current European themes;
- C/ Featuring European artists, cooperation with operators and cities in different countries, and transnational partnerships.

THE EUROPEAN DIMENSION is one of the driving engines for our venture to become a European Capital of Culture. Opening our city and surrounding region to surprising impulses is part of our city's DNA. Certainly, the University as a magnet for intellectual and creative endeavour has always been an important factor in Coimbra's development. But our historical bonds with Europe are no longer sufficient. We need to update our cultural relations, bring expertise and experiment from other countries, revitalize our self-image.

Coimbra has always been at the spiritual heart of Europe, at least since the Middle Ages, primarily because of the University's reputation and scope, which formed privileged relationships with foreign educational institutions. Countless international artists (architects, painters, sculptors) have contributed to the city's heritage, their influence still evident today. Coimbra is ready to bear witness to the European spirit born by values of collaboration, diversity and fruitful exchange of knowledge and resources.

And it seems to be a particularly opportune time for this to happen: in the EU, in Portugal, in Coimbra. Faced with multiple threats – the environmental crisis, nationalism, health risks – we have come to understand that urgent change is necessary. And that it can only be done by sharing research, education and culture with rapid engagement at all levels: local, national, European, global. This is the **"Stream of Change"** that we intend to navigate while becoming a Capital of Culture. And we know we can't do it alone.

The European dimension, and more broadly, the international dimension, is projected in a long-term strategy that we are actively constructing for Coimbra. The ECOC

candidacy is a central element in this strategy. Lasting relations with European cultural networks need to be built. Co-productions and shared urban strategies need to be created; intercultural competence needs to be cultivated. Obviously, this is a process, already under way during this early phase of the candidacy. We have begun the journey. We see contours and possibilities. But we know that the first steps we take may lead to unimagined collaborations. Our curiosity will guide us. We want first to create the **conditions** for cross-border projects. The first few years leading to 2027 will be dedicated to research, to increased international engagement. During this part of the journey, relationships will be built, leading to concrete projects, only some of which we can define today. So, we respond to sub-questions about the European Dimension based on a simple template:

- ~ What does Coimbra have?
- ~ What does Coimbra need?
- ~ How do we get there?

We have begun with a **mapping** of our present resources/limitations – cultural strategies, institutions, civic engagement, artistic initiatives. These are root capacities that Coimbra already has at its disposal: our history, our traditions and our citizens.

We then continued with a **critical analysis** of what's lacking: challenges we face, gaps between who we are and who we wish to become, weaknesses we need to address. Finally – and we aren't there yet – we will **identify** which structures, relationships and expertise from Europe are necessary to enrich our capacity to generate the changes our city desires. And Coimbra 2027 will be the platform for the encounters.



Coimbra Group website

We start with a central Current: Learning, the foundation of anything mutual.

Univer[sc]ity – linking city and context

The University of Coimbra is a central pillar in our city. It is essentially European. Exchange of lecturers, researchers and students – even prior to the extraordinary stimulus injected to mobility by the **Erasmus** programme – continues with academics from all over Europe. UC contributed as part of the initial core of universities from the **Coimbra Group** that "tested" the first versions of the EU program, which has since become **Erasmus+**.

What we have

The **European Campus of City Universities (ECCU)** is a **multi-cultural and multi-lingual Alliance** consisting of seven long-standing, education- and research-led, locally and globally engaged universities from four regions of the European Union: the **University of Coimbra** (Portugal), **Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi** (Romania), the **University of Jena** (Germany), the **University of Pavia** (Italy), the **University of Poitiers** (France), the **University of Salamanca** (Spain) and the **University of Turku**

(Finland). It represents a community of 160.000 students and 20.000 staff, directly affecting more than 1.600.000 citizens. The Alliance's **ambition is to develop an innovative space allowing mobility to flow freely between the seven universities and associated cities.** The 7 universities of the consortium are also members of one of the most prestigious European higher education networks, the **Coimbra Group**, founded in Coimbra in 1985, when the UC celebrated its 700th anniversary.

Another platform to be mobilized during the Coimbra 2027 process is the **Community of Mediterranean Universities (CMU)**, which deals with a range of topics central to the construction of Europe today: migration and integration of African communities, water management, health and the environment, inter-faith and intercultural dialogue.

What we need

Coimbra has a tendency to get stuck in the past, locking itself away in an ivory tower, a kind of self-sufficient cultural introversion.

We strive to overcome contradictions, perceived or real, between the price we put on our heritage and the irresistible appeal of the future; between youth each year arriving from countries all over the world but ultimately departing in search of employment; between protecting our environment and stimulating business. This is what we mean by imagining a **"third bank of the river"**, where the **Stream of Change** flows.

How do we get it?

We intend to go beyond a purely commercial and entertainment definition of culture. We will explore **inclusivity**, through **participatory artistic practice.** We know that there are advanced experiments throughout Europe which can inspire and guide us, as we look to generate creativity and not just consume it. These are the potential partners that will help to lift our sights above our own little world.

"Coimbra Calling" – Beyond post-colonialism

Any Portuguese city desiring to assume the title **European Capital of Culture 2027** must courageously and **critically deal with colonial history**, a socially painful and culturally enriching phase, for more than 5 centuries. As Europe and the world come to grips with the absolute interdependency of all people, on all continents, the pandemic is only the latest example that exposes our mutual fragility. Climate change, human rights, migration, global health – our world has been linked forever. We quickly need to find ways of adapting. Common experiences and conflicts, both in and outside of Europe, have impacted our contemporary reality. Future generations must confront and manage the legacy of colonialism. The **Portuguese language**, spoken by more than 250 million people, allows for a dynamic and revised exchange, which will be allowed by the setting up of the European Hub of the São Paulo Portuguese Language Museum.

What we have

Naturally, this means that Coimbra's role, and sometimes fruitful contribution as a Portuguese catalyst for education, social organisation, health care and governance – in **Portugal, Brazil, Angola, Cape Verde,**

Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, East Timor, Goa, and Macau, so called **Lusophone countries** – is essentially a **European narrative.**

The most prestigious network of Brazilian higher education institutions, accounting for 90% of the research carried out in the country, takes the name **GCUB – Coimbra Group of Brazilian Universities.** A touchstone for trans-continental exchange.

Another factor is Coimbra's potential to strengthen relationships between European cities and the Lusophone world, becoming a portal to other continents. Among its twinned cities are **Beira** (Mozambique), **Curitiba, São Paulo and Santos** (Brazil), **Dili** (Timor-Leste), **Mindelo** (Cape Verde) and **Ilhas** (Macau). The twinning program will be reinforced on the way to 2027.

What we need

Gaining insight through cultural exchange with post-colonial cultures must be a part of a long-term healing process. Traces of both tragedy/resistance and dialogue / fusion are still evident throughout the world. We need to cultivate the courage to take a leading role in Europe to meet this legacy and change it.

How do we get it?

Several projects are under development that allow Coimbra 2027 to become a platform for trans-continental exchange. The University of Coimbra already has bridges with the academic sector in Brazil and other Lusophone countries. The museums in Coimbra and the region are forging plans for further exchange, potentially in cooperation with other European museums and heritage sites, **critically re-examining** the impact of the colonial wars on both cultural expression and educational development.

Europe lacks cultural leadership to face the colonial legacy. It is no longer about shame. It is about understanding the context, opening windows to reciprocity, based in shared languages and intertwined narratives. Coimbra 2027 has the capacity and the will to lead this shift.

Closer ties with the **WHPO** (World Heritage Portuguese Origin) are inevitable. Coimbra is a central player. For example, on two occasions in recent years the University of Coimbra, in partnership with **UNESCO** and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), brought together a global network, initiating a pioneering process in the history of Portuguese cultural cooperation – recognizing the role cultural heritage plays in the construction of identities and cultures.

Coimbra's multiculturalism also led us to take part in the **Soulmate** project, managed by a foreign organisation currently working in a refugee camp. Seeking to raise awareness among the Portuguese population and strengthen our ties with Syrian refugees, the "Soulmate Project", part of the **stream of change** we want for Coimbra 2027, is a 7-year-long journey aimed at contributing to the solution of a human problem facing Europe and the world with catastrophic consequences for all. For us, Soulmate represents a form of transformation through Culture using a transdisciplinary network, in an approach that combines the humanitarian, the economic, the sociological, public health and art.

No one knows what the future holds, but we wish to create the conditions so that it can be as good as the one we

dream of. There is an urgent need to prevent humanitarian disasters, which can only be achieved through action. There is no doubt that the world needs a global plan based on genuine international cooperation and shared responsibilities. In Coimbra, with the “Soulmate Project”, we want to and can collaborate to create the conditions to bring about change. Long-term strategy, networking and full integration are the keys to reducing the amount of evil in the world.

Finally, it is important to mention the Portuguese communities spread around the world, mostly located in France, Brazil, the USA, Canada, Switzerland, Germany, the United Kingdom, Venezuela, South Africa and China (including Macau and Hong Kong). The **Portuguese diaspora**, more than 5,3 million people, maintains Portugal as an integral part of its identity. This is a rich fountain of engagement and experience to be tapped in the coming years.

One basic “stream” of our Bid Book is **Tradition & Re-invention**. It is at the root of Coimbra 2027 planning. The University, with rich architectural and intellectual traditions, already maintains ongoing relations with quality universities throughout Europe. Urban planning faces exciting challenges of respectful modernization and fruitful contrasts between old and new. These are basic European issues. Only by learning from each other can we polish our strategies.

WHAT WE HAVE

History

The exceptional archaeological site at **Conímbriga** – from which Coimbra takes its name – is a shining witness, presently in the process of being recognised by UNESCO, of the Romanisation of the Iberian peninsula. Although Conímbriga was not the largest Roman city in Portugal, it is the best preserved. Archaeologists estimate that only 10 percent of the city has been excavated.

One of the oldest cities in Portugal, Coimbra was built by a mix of peoples and cultures. Viking invasions, the lengthy Muslim presence, the early settlement of Jewish families in the region – the oldest document attesting to the presence of Jews in Portugal belongs to Coimbra – all this confirms Coimbra as a synthesis of civilizations, intimately mirroring a shifting Europe.

Today, 125 nationalities are represented in Coimbra. They form an international experience unique in Portugal. To wander the city of Coimbra is to pass through centuries of history, visible in streets, squares, monuments and neighbourhoods. The European spirit has been practiced to perfection: borrowing, adapting, sharing, challenging, changing.

Coimbra as a European microcosmos

We recall: Coimbra was the birthplace of **Barjona de Freitas**, the spokesman for a ground-breaking law that abolished the death penalty in 1867. Coimbra ignited the first movements of student activism in April 1969. A wave of antifascist resistance was inspired by the protest singer **Zeca Afonso**, who recorded his first album in 1958, “Baladas de Coimbra”. In Coimbra, a model of the national health system (SNS) was created, the IT solution

for the Schengen area was built. These are anecdotes that reflect the best of what Europe as a cultural project stands for: the right to life and liberty, health care and education, free movement of citizens and ideas. **Coimbra 2027** – European Capital of Culture plans a prolonged celebration of those values.

It is no accident that in a city with 140,000 inhabitants, 15,500 are foreign born from 125 nationalities. Over 6,000 students from 105 countries constitute nearly 21% of the student population at the University of Coimbra. The fundamental endeavour of “**learning**” has informed our city for centuries, a place to grow, reflect ... and change. The issues we face as Europeans, both dangers and solutions, are fundamentally cultural issues.

The mission to implement a European Cultural Capital is an appropriate response to the threatening disintegration of Europe. Close collaboration with artists and cultural activists, both local and foreign, is a primary approach. The main task of Coimbra 2027 is to create conditions for creative action and critical thinking, at a local level, with international impact.

- ~ The **Associação Académica de Coimbra (AAC)** is the student union of the University of Coimbra. It is the oldest and largest student union in Portugal. It produces numerous festivals and international events – music, theatre, cinema, sport.
- ~ Music: Jazz in the centre – jazz festivals of Coimbra, World Coimbra Piano Meeting, Festival of Artes na Colina of Mondego (Quinta das Lágrimas), Out of Time Festival (Oliveira do Hospital), Ceira Rock Fest, Da Alta à Baixa Warm-up Festival...
- ~ Literature, through **International Literary Festivals – Invisible Cities**



European Semester in Coimbra (CSF)

- ~ Magic, with **International Magic Festivals**, which will commemorate their 30th anniversary in 2022
- ~ Film: Cinema, CineEco, International Festival of Environmental Cinema, Festival of French Cinema, Exhibition of Italian Cinema...

Of the numerous cultural events offered, we highlight just a few that guide our developing strategy, enriched by European impulses and participation:

For originality:

- ~ The partnership between **Cité La Villette**, in Paris, and the Living Science Exploratorium, in the area of **astronomy for babies** (a project certified by the French-Portuguese *Saison Croisée* 2022).

For reach and impact:

- ~ **Linha de Fuga**, an international festival and creative laboratory that seeks to promote a meeting of creators, artists, and thinkers from different countries, with the audience and the city of Coimbra. It takes place biennially for 3 weeks at various locations in the city, in partnership with various local and international venues. It boasts an intense programme of performances, workshops and conversations.
- ~ **Contemporary Art Biennial, Anozero**, an initiative led by the Plastic Arts Circle of Coimbra, jointly organised with the City Council and the University. Confronting Coimbra's new reality, a city boasting world heritage, the biennial proposes an encounter between contemporary art and heritage, exploring the risks and possibilities. In its 3rd edition (2019) **The Third Bank**, 39 artists from 21 countries took over the city.

For scale:

- ~ Europe in Coimbra – EU Presidency 2021

As a prelude to the process of becoming ECOC 2027, the City of Coimbra organized a semester coinciding with the **Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU**, January-July 2021. Cultural events from Member States were presented, a vibrant celebration, in dialogue with local/national artists. The **São Francisco Convent** acted as centre for encounter, bearing witness to the city's capacity to manage a prolonged programme (6 months, 88 events). The “European City of Culture 2021” was organised with different Embassies in Portugal of EU member states, an important exercise for our candidacy.

Our cultural strategy is grounded on the principles of **cooperation** and **co-creation**. These are not simply buzz words. Engaging in common work is the most empowering way to learn with and from each other. Our intention is to create conditions for projects involving multiple players, including from other countries. Reciprocity is the key. We will not “import” exotic artistic work; we will build space for encounter and production, across national and cultural borders. This is what will make Coimbra 2027 a unique complement to local and national artistic work already being done. This is the European dimension reflected in the studio, the rehearsal room, in public spaces, concrete encounters, artist to artist and artists to audience. Finding contrasts. This means investing in **creative production time**, through residencies and co-productions, not simply passing through. Cultural intimacy.

Connected Cities

A web of twinned cities offers multiple opportunities for internationalisation of the city. The cooperation with **Santiago de Compostela**, **Salamanca** and **Zaragoza** (Spain), **Aix-en-Provence** and **Poitiers** (France), **Halle** (Germany), **Lund** (Sweden), **Padua** (Italy) and **Esch-sur-Alzette** (Luxembourg) maps journeys still to be embarked on. Many of these cities gathered in Coimbra, in July 2019, for the seminar “Europe of Cities, Europe of Culture” – and it already generated increased cultural exchange and mobility, to be developed in the years leading to 2027.

The International Literary Festival – Invisible Cities, which was launched in direct cooperation with Coimbra 2027 will invites one European city each year – in 2021 Santiago de Compostela, in 2022 Poitiers, in 2023 Bologna, in 2024 Leuven... and in 2027, the chosen European Capital of Culture in Latvia. Starting from a bilateral relationship each year, growing wider into an informal network of literary cities, all intersecting in Coimbra, an emerging meeting point for European literature.

In 2022, under the auspices of the **France-Portugal Saison Croisée** (February – October 2022), two initiatives from Coimbra's application received the seal of approval from the Season, together with Poitiers: the **II International Literary Festival**, involving writers, editors, and booksellers, and the project “**Alternative Journeys**”, involving ecological mobility of young people between the 2 cities.

WHAT WE NEED

Coimbra strives to develop sustainable international connections. This is a key element in our **Stream of Change**, from local to global, from **tradition to re-invention**. Only by establishing a free flow of experience **beyond** our local and national reality can our city **flow** into the future. This is a basic EU ethic for the entire ECOC programme; we share this intention totally. Our pride in our own city must not blind us to the beauty and potential of neighbours and beyond. Our city is a river and its **sources** come from afar.



Museum PO.RD.S (Europa Nostra Award 2018)



HOW DO WE GET IT?

Engaging with European Networks

Involving local and regional associations and institutions with relevant European partnerships is **early-stage responsibility** for an ECOC. There are numerous important platforms for different sectors and issues. Sharing innovative approaches, forming project partnerships, participating in advocacy for cultural investment at both the national and EU level – these are only some of the advantages of joining forces with other Europeans. During the lead time until 2027, Coimbra will host encounters and conferences in collaboration with leading networks: **Culture Action Europe (CAE)**, IETM, **Trans Europe Halles**, Network of European Museum Organizations (**NEMO**), **Opera Europe**, **Airwaves** and many others, each with a specific focus, each contributing to a dynamic European cultural debate. Coimbra's culture makers engage.

Contributing to Co-productions

The intention is to support local institutions and independent associations in efforts to co-create with European peers. This is an approach to both strengthen and challenge **local artistic capacity**; at the same time to bring surprising sounds and images to their audiences. Such co-productions may also attract **foreign audiences**, increasing the flow of visitors and diversifying the cultural offer of the city.

In some cases, co-productions (theatre/dance, exhibitions, concerts) will also become **extensions into Europe**, touring outwards and carrying the message of **Coimbra 2027: Stream of Change**. This will have a positive impact on local artists' careers, expanding their market.

Inviting Special Guest Productions

Although an ECOC should **not** be simply a touring destination for foreign artists, Coimbra 2027 will **support existing festivals/institutions** to bring exceptional high-quality work to Coimbra 2027. Guest performances (music, theatre, magic, dance) raise ambitions of both artists and audiences, heighten expectations, set standards of excellence.

When establishing cooperation between Coimbra and other European cities, preference will be given to cities with similar characteristics: small to medium-sized, with a significant university presence: Münster and Karlsruhe (Germany), Leuven (Belgium), Toulouse (France), Salamanca (Spain), Oxford (England), Bologna and Padua (Italy) are cities that promote cultural output in tune with the most striking scientific ambitions of their learning centres. For example, the University of Karlsruhe, one of the most prestigious in the domain of technology, has an extraordinary output of digital art. In short, Coimbra will position itself among active cities that prioritize the **bridge** between **knowledge** and **culture**.

FIRST, WE MUST DISTINGUISH between a "broad European and international public" and "tourists".

What we have

Coimbra already attracts half a million tourists a year, who visit a predefined circuit, in particular the UC. This **tourism**, while not entirely neglecting culture, focuses on monuments and heritage, through organised "packages" and with limited time, which obstructs the freedom to choose alternatives. Dozens of busses visit the Alta part of the city, "disturbing" the rhythms of academic life. It already has had an impact on historical sites: the **General Library** no longer welcomes tourists; the **Joanina Library**, the most visited site in Coimbra, faces difficulties to preserve its space and its books, due to changes in levels of moisture caused by human breathing and harmful effects of light and dust from constantly opening, forcing a change in the route. If the "tourist" wanders to the **Baixa** part of the city, crossing the city on walking streets packed with shops that destroy its characteristic charm. This public does not linger in Coimbra, does not really explore the city, looking for its heartbeat, does not participate in the cultural life, the bars and restaurants, the gardens and secret corners. It rarely stays overnight, at best for only one night. One of the first transitions is to re-imagine Coimbra as a city where visitors melt into the flow of those who live there, discovering hidden trails and unexpected pleasures.

What we need

This requires investment in new attractions, offering a more complex visitor experience. **Museum tours** that intersect the University and the City, **Science tours** that link the two banks of the river, a **Jewish tour** recognizing a cultural legacy nearly lost. We need to highlight the performances, concerts and exhibitions that form Coimbra's core cultural offer. A re-invented concept designed for "temporary citizens" that opens paths to include the entire region, from heritage sites to museums, from food to landscape. Visits based on welcoming guesthouses, from mountains to sea, from sweet to salt. As a European Capital of Culture, it is our task to make our city accessible, to reveal its secrets, both past and present. To both make visible what we have, and to add what we are missing.

There is already a large "European and international public" in Coimbra. Nearly 26,000 students live, study and work in the city. In Portugal, there are 660,000 residents, according to the 2020 census, an increase of 12% from 2019. They are a **target audience for European and international encounters**. They should be encouraged to participate in the urban cultural life of the regional capital Coimbra, its neighbourhoods, taverns and restaurants, its homes. **Our own citizens**, with backgrounds from all over Europe, or outsiders in their own region, have the most to gain from the European Dimension. Finally, it is its own diversity that makes Coimbra unique.

How do we get it?

Attracting a European and international public requires a **curated and relevant cultural program**. To this must be added an appropriate **communication campaign** which inspires both locals and strangers, multi-lingual, fulfilling multiple expectations. Incentives will be used to

Can you explain your overall strategy to attract the interest of a broad European and international public?

attract visitors from beyond Coimbra, including flexible packages of hotels, restaurants and events. A serious and long-term **web of tourist operators**, **diaspora** associations, arts and culture organizations and information bureaus will be needed to sensitize both locals (**reception capacity**) and potential visitors (**attraction and curiosity**). It is one thing to invite them to Coimbra; it is even more essential that they feel welcome and informed. Digital tools (tour apps, easy one-stop ticket booking, comfortable and efficient public transport) are core instruments. Only through a **coordinated effort across all municipal departments** can a healthy and accessible environment be created, the essential **undercurrent** of any cultural strategy. Coimbra is committed to making cultural activity a priority for **all public services**, from travel to accommodation, from carbon-zero infrastructure to the excellence of the cultural content, from public spaces to green areas. The ECOC title obliges all of our city, intersecting different departments and authorities, to engage. Culture as the motor for sustainable change. We align with the many cities of Europe that build **inter-sectoral** initiatives that include culture.

As part of the **Capacity Building Current** aimed to strengthen skills for both tourist and cultural management, a first phase is to offer innovative tools for visitor reception. **Workshops**.

A well-designed **Volunteer Current**, based on available models from earlier European Capitals of Culture, will increase the values of a visit to Coimbra 2027. This has two objectives: the **active engagement of local citizens** and a **welcoming environment** for the foreign visitors.

To what extent do you plan to develop links between your cultural programme and cultural programmes of other cities holding the European Capital of Culture title?



Citizen of Latvia explains Coimbra



THAT PORTUGAL AND LATVIA will share the title of European Capital of Culture 2027 carries a certain symbolism: located in the far west and far east of Europe, the two countries are at the edges of a vast community. Their peripheral positions stimulate an intense desire to belong. Countries at the core of European history harbour a certain disregard for smaller member states with complex histories: for Latvia due to the Soviet occupation, achieving independence first in 1989, after years of struggle; for Portugal, tainted by its troubled Second Portuguese Republic (the *Estado Novo*), which ended first in 1974, when popular resistance began to re-construct the country on democratic principles. Therefore, we focus on a “bridge across Europe”, uniting two stubborn peoples who won their freedom from repressive regimes only a generation ago. Their struggles bond the two nations hosting European Capitals of Culture 2027. We await the final decision of the Panel in April 2022, in order to develop further our first ideas with the winning city. But already during the preparation of our Bid Book, we contacted candidate cities in Latvia – Cēsis, Daugavpils, Liepāja, Jelgava, Jēkabpils Kuldīga, Valmiera and Jūrmala – and Zoom meetings were held with teams from each city. We compared our similarities and differences. We brainstormed on themes which we could develop into future partnerships.

Daugavpils, Liepāja, Jūrmala, Valmiera

Four cities were shortlisted after the first phase for the title of European Capital of Culture in 2027. During our informal talks with the shortlisted Latvian cities, we formed first drafts of potential collaborations:

- ~ **Daugavpils** represents a priority partner, not only due to its historical dimension and ecological concerns, but also in terms of music, dance, and the arts. Coimbra is already planning to participate in its Jazz Festival.
 - ~ With **Liepāja**, Latvia’s third city, dialogue connects above all in the domain of climate change and environmental action, concerns that unites us, as well as tourism and public engagement in the cultural life of the city. As a harbour city, they understand the power of water.
 - ~ After exchanging ideas on ECOC themes prioritised by **Jūrmala**, we are attracted to their **Cultural Patterns** idea. A balance between nature and heritage, tradition, and modernity, with focus on quality of life and sustainability of social support are overlapping aspects with our own developing vision.
 - ~ With **Valmiera**, we share the strategic vision of the river – the city lives around the Gaujas River, which reconstructs, through art, its banks and enjoys crossings and promenades. And also the historical city that values the surrounding nature, crossed by trails and ecological paths.
- This common ground promises fruitful partnerships.

And the third country is...?

And an “unknown” Cultural Capital from a non-EU State, still to be announced, will join Latvia and Portugal in sharing the title. This offers an exceptional third partner during the 2027 process. Together with Latvia, we form a triangle across Europe, as it is likely that the chosen city will come from a Balkan neighbour state. At the corners of Europe, cultural identity has been forged in the heat of resistance and struggle. Sharing now a European space, there is much to be learned. We welcome the opportunity.



Explain how the local population and your civil society have been involved in the preparation of the application and will participate in the implementation of the year.

OVER 3 YEARS OF PREPARATION, the City got involved with hopeful enthusiasm! The work began to the sound of a protest song by Zeca Afonso – which exalts the unifying feeling of the true causes that mobilise people in solidarity. It has been exhilarating to experience how the city as a whole, and every one of its inhabitants, has got on board with the ECOC candidacy, as a common point of contact. The desire to be European Capital of Culture in 2027 is shared unanimously!

The setting up of an Advisory Board, consisting of high-level local, national and foreign figures who have accompanied our work from the outset, was a priority. These meetings, held with the cultural agents and the data from a study on “Cultural Participation Practices in the Municipality of Coimbra” carried out by the Social Studies Centre (CES) of the UC, fuelled part of the actions taken in favour of the involvement of the local communities, which had the following objectives: to hear the people, include them and involve them, emanating and publicising the information.

To this end, various working sessions were held, in a spirit of commitment and absolute willingness to get involved:

- ~ with political actors – parties and citizen movements with seats in the Municipal Assembly – and with prominent figures in the city.
- ~ with institutional representatives: the Minister of Culture, the Head of the Portuguese Tourist Office, the Central Regional Director of Culture, and the President of the Regional Coordination and Development Commission, “Coimbra 2027” being the first application to approach these institutions.
- ~ with citizens of Coimbra who spontaneously wished to talk or who the GT called upon, in face to face or remote sessions.

Various contributions were also received through written documents containing an important series of reflections and suggestions, from individual citizens and organised groups.

To publicise its work, share the spirit of the project, answer questions and receive suggestions, 4 public sessions open to the city were held, with a few hundred citizens,

at symbolic sites around the city (Café Santa Cruz on 12.10.2018, Chemical Laboratory of the UC on 4.01.2019, Machado de Castro Museum on 28.10. 2019, and Salão Brasil on 4.03.2020), interrupted by the pandemic.

Invited to participate in the sixty-fifth anniversary of the Lions in Portugal, and in the presence of all national clubs and representatives of the Lions Club International from Brazil and Tunisia, the ECOC presented the major fronts of Coimbra’s application. The enthusiastic welcome shown was a clear sign of the international dimension and reach of our city. Thus, the Governor of the District of Minas Gerais, Brazil, proposed the support of his region for Coimbra’s application and announced a proposal to get Brazil on board, presenting a motion to the 27 Lions Governors, at their National Convention, which was held on 26.04, in Minas Gerais, where 700 participants unanimously approved Coimbra’s application.

Simultaneously, debates were organised, open to the entire city, of which the following are examples:

Ideas Night, January 2019, around “An idea for Coimbra European Capital of Culture in 2027”: what we should do – and what we will do! – to prepare the city and return it culturally richer to the citizens who choose it as their home?

Liquidâmbar, June 2019. Meeting between businesspeople and residents of Praça da República and adjacent areas (TAGV, CAPC, Aqui Base Tango, Casa de Chá/APPACDM, Liquidâmbar, Casa das Artes and traders from the Praça) to discuss the central and symbolic place of the Praça da República, from the perspective of the ECOC 2027.

There were various ideas contests launched under the auspices of the Application, of which we only mention:

- ~ The logo of the capital, an international contest that received more than one hundred entries
- ~ *Acordar Coimbra* (March 2019): promoted by the Junior Company of Students from the Faculty of Economics (JEEFEUC), with the objective of fostering projects and encouraging the emergence of new ideas to improve Coimbra, in 3 areas: social, environmental and urban planning.
- ~ Participatory budget 2020: on the initiative of the CMC, *Coimbra Participates* and *Coimbra Youth Participates* sought the involvement of citizens in deciding the allocation of existing resources to municipal public policies, under the slogan of the application “Stream of change”. Most of the proposals originated from artists and cultural actors, with a view to boosting, transforming, and enlivening the city and its districts. The projects selected seek to put on events and create lasting works, with the underlying aim of attracting new audiences and revitalising new venues.

Various other calls are planned, specifically for the special occasions that the city is going to organise by 2027: the 100th anniversary of the Municipal Library (2022) and the 250th anniversary of the UC Press (2022), the 10th anniversary of inclusion on the UNESCO World Heritage list (2023), the 50th anniversary of the 25 April revolution (2024), etc...

The civic and cultural participation of citizens from Coimbra and its CIM-RC is a starting condition and an end goal, with particular focus on the transformative power associated with the status of ECOC. The transversal and civilisational aspirations of the population require a repeated process of consultation, participation

and communication, under an endogenous mechanism of good public practice and social innovation.

Coimbra has the largest number of foreign students in Portugal, in particular those from Portuguese-speaking countries (and especially from Brazil) and from the EU, who are already involved in an ongoing cultural and civic volunteering programme with cultural institutions and regular or extraordinary events in the city and the region. During 2027, many free, open access outdoor events will be organised.

Calls for projects will be opened and microfinance will be created for multiple initiatives, with simplified bureaucratic procedures.

A “friend of culture card” will be created, which will facilitate access to cultural events from an economic standpoint, and which should begin operating from 2022.



Study “Cultural Practices in Coimbra” by CES

THE IDEA OF INCLUSION: a capital belonging to all, for all, has governed the ECOC work over the past 3 years. By 2027, we will seek to expand the work started many years ago by different organisations and institutions:

- ~ with the penal institution of Coimbra, developing initiatives already underway in the field of handicrafts, in the consolidation of painting and restoration studios, reading and digital literacy and visual and performing arts. Training courses, shows and exhibitions will be organised.
- ~ with hospitals, in particular the Children’s Hospital and the IPO, establishing a partnership with professional artists (actors, clowns, musicians, etc.), with performing arts experience and specific training in a hospital setting.
- ~ with institutions that work with people with cognitive impairment or other disability, namely the APPACDM, equipping them with certified professional, personal and social skills consistent with the job market. The training activities to be created must have a strong practical, inclusive, and contextualised component, also in the artistic domain.

Constant work will be carried out to publicise the concept of “tactile photograph”, which, in the absence of sight, favours another sense as the source of new information and sensations, along the lines of the project *O menino com olhos de gigante* (“The boy with the giant’s eyes”), by Paulo Abrantes (Coimbra 2003): allowing the world to be “seen” through touch is a form of inclusion that we will explore during the preparation of the capital programme.

A partnership was established with the *Manicómio* project (co-founded by Sandro Resende), where artists work with patients diagnosed with mental disorder through art, seeking to combat social marginalisation.



Luis Taklin Infographics

Explain how you intend to create opportunities for participation of marginalised and disadvantaged groups.

There are cultural and artistic operators who are working continuously on a programme “to promote the involvement of the public in the different neighbourhoods”. There are educational institutions that enable innovative intervention in relationships between culture and communities. This work is ongoing and will continue with a strong and well managed communication programme. There is a long history of work carried out by professional theatre groups with the neighbourhoods and territorial communities. The involvement of the local populations led to the development of shows entirely performed by amateurs from outlying or deprived districts, such as Bairro da Rosa, Ingote and Arregaça, labelled citizen intervention. With the Orquestra Clássica do Centro and Teatrão, the Municipal Socio-educational, Intergenerational Cultural Programme boosts activities that involve the participation of children and seniors, counting for that purpose on the collaboration of the School Groups and Charities. As occurred in the market town of Brasfemes, where a road was opened symbolically named “Rua inventário das memórias 2021”, the name of an ongoing theatre project (the Aluvião programme), by the Teatrão Group, a series of initiatives will run their course until 2027, seeking the social and artistic transformation of the local communities specifically involved in the Capital programme. The work requires stamina, and must be continued and deepened, and the ECOC will bring to it social impact and a fresh dynamism. These initiatives extend to all municipalities in the CIM-RC, as happens in Figueira da Foz with the integration and dissemination project “Portugal needs collectives”.

The ECOC programme is based on a territorial rationale, with cultural creation and enjoyment driving a strategy of frequenting the city, reviving undervalued areas, and curbing the stigmatisation or “ghettoisation” of certain districts, by developing projects directed towards the

Explain your overall strategy for audience development, and in particular the link with education and the participation of schools.

IN THE MEETINGS HELD with the cultural agents, what was highlighted was the attention and concern with audiences, to whom the cultural output is directed, it being agreed that it is necessary to attract new audiences, bringing university students (often confined to artistic manifestations, within the scope of AAC) and visiting students into the cultural space, as members of a cosmopolitan population who should not be overlooked.

It is also necessary to meet the expectations of children, the elderly and the inhabitants of the suburbs by organising suitable and mobilising initiatives in terms of themes and social impact, and creating the conditions for urban accessibility (a night-time transport network), for a culture for all. But Coimbra is a city where the importance of school and education are central elements: the focus on educational communities – from preschool to university and polytechnic education – is essential to the dissemination of, and growing involvement with, the ECOC2027 programming.

The UC is a partner of the ECOC, as shown by the document that was unanimously approved on 05/09/2018. Other institutions in the city, namely the Polytechnic Institute of Coimbra and the Bissaya Barreto Foundation, have become an integral part of this project, and have shown enthusiasm and a desire to participate in the work to be carried out jointly, in particular by involving their students through their cultural and sports departments. The involvement of the schools in the city and the region, consumers and producers of culture, is one of the ECOC's priorities. The Municipality's Network of School Libraries forms a fundamental part of the link between education and culture. At various meetings held with the directors of schools or school groups, we have sought to establish a set of priorities. Four lines of approach will be followed, simultaneously:

~ a deepening, at each institution, of a School Plan for Culture, which will take initiatives currently in progress as its starting point – the existence of writing studios, art clubs and a Europe Club, resident artist

programmes, mobility and international exchanges, as well as the use of the free curriculum granted to Schools to increase awareness of Culture and for informal artistic creation, accessible to all.

- ~ the harmonisation of cultural programmes among the schools, with contests – writing, painting, design, video – that promote a view of the Capital of Culture city, the creation of the project *Conhecer Coimbra e a sua Região* ("Getting to Know Coimbra and its Region"), which engenders among children and young people a more intimate relationship with the city's streets, and the organisation of shows to be incorporated into the 2027 programming. E.g.: the Alice Gouveia School and the Association of South Coimbra Schools designed the project *Coimbra intemporal* ("Timeless Coimbra") to be developed in 2022, at all levels of education.
- ~ the mobilisation of the Coimbra Conservatory of Music, an institution of the national network of artistic education with two decentralised hubs (in Sertã and Arganil), in the dual capacity of cultural agent (through the involvement of its teacher-musicians and its students) and as a venue for musical programming with a view to educating the broadest range of audiences.
- ~ The setting up of an exchange programme between students in the 7th and 9th years of schooling, involving schools in Coimbra and the CIM-RC, entitled *Erasmix*.

A working group has been created to monitor and support a strategic reflection on culture, through the mobilisation of schools, their teachers and students and, in liaison with the ECOC, set up projects to be developed until 2027 and culminating in effective cultural and artistic programming.

O Mundo na Escola ("The World in the School") is an example of a project for the Cinematographic Training of Children and Young People, proposed by the Association of Cinematographic Arts of Coimbra that seeks, through the cinematographic arts, to show to school communities the involvement of individuals with the world, taking a structural theme to the cinema workshops and sessions in each of its editions. The project, which is to be extended to European partners, uses cinema as a tool for boosting the integration of children and young people, through the introduction of new forms of artistic expression for their ideas and through the understanding of others' ideas.

As well as cinematographic training, it is also proposed that the students should be given the tools for personal and collective expression, which aim to promote a more informed, critical and tolerant spirit of civic duty in the face of differences. The introduction of real agents with a recognised body of work will allow the creation of *personas*, in which the students may find the journey of the hero that undoes the myth of making cinema, encouraging them to a de facto making and seeing of cinema. The project's practical approach will seek to motivate the students to share personal experiences as the basis for creative work over the course of a multistage educational process, making cinema a more intimate creative and collective tool marked by emotional empathy.

All the schools will be granted special access, largely free of charge, to the initiatives of the Capital.



FINANCE
CITY BUDGET FOR CULTURE

“A European Capital of Cultural is a celebration too.”

Isabel Pires de Lima, Former Minister of Culture



Q/5.1

What has been the annual budget for culture in the city over the last 5 years (excluding expenditure for the present European Capital of Culture application)? (Please fill in the table below).

OVER THE PAST DECADE, the Municipality of Coimbra has assumed a commitment to consistently increase its annual budget for culture. In absolute terms, this currently exceeds 5 million euros per annum, for a resident population that currently stands at around 140,000. The city's annual budget for culture over the past five years is shown in the table below. Expenditure on the preparation of the application for the ECOC (not represented in the table below) has gradually increased since 2017 to around 2% of this budget.

YEAR	ANNUAL BUDGET FOR CULTURE IN THE CITY (IN EUROS)	ANNUAL BUDGET FOR CULTURE IN THE CITY (AS A % OF THE TOTAL ANNUAL BUDGET FOR THE CITY)
2017	6,300,000	5.1
2018	4,900,000	3.7
2019	5,400,000	4.1
2020	4,700,000	3.5
2021	5,700,000	3.5

As well as the Municipality's annual budget, the budgets of the remaining 18 municipalities that comprise the CIM-RC (with a population of around 500,000 inhabitants), over the past 5 years, was as follows:

YEAR	ANNUAL BUDGET FOR CULTURE IN THE REMAINING 18 MUNICIPALITIES OF THE CIM-COIMBRA (IN EUROS)	ANNUAL BUDGET FOR CULTURE IN THE REMAINING 18 MUNICIPALITIES IN THE CIM-COIMBRA (AS A % OF THE TOTAL ANNUAL BUDGET FOR EACH MUNICIPALITY)
2017	11,834,000	4.0
2018	12,880,000	3.7
2019	16,126,000	4.5
2020	16,606,000	4.6
2021	18,173,000	4.6

Q/5.2

In case the city is planning to use funds from its annual budget for culture to finance the European Capital of Culture project, please indicate this amount starting from the year of submission of the bid until the European Capital of Culture year.

ON 22 JUNE 2017, the President of the CMC proposed to the CIM-RC that it formally support and associate itself, through its member municipalities, with Coimbra's candidacy, giving it a combined supra-municipal dimension. In June 2018, a working group was formed that began to work on the application for ECOC 2027. The CMC created a specific item in its budget to fund the preparation phase of the application (2018-2021) for the ECOC 2027 project. This funding was distributed in the following manner:

YEAR	ANNUAL BUDGET FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE ECOC 2027 APPLICATION (IN EUROS)
2018	100,000
2019	500,000
2020	1,000,000
2021	1,000,000
TOTAL	2,600,000

This total amount is to be used for funding specific events related to the application, communication costs, working group operating costs and consultancy. The ECOC project has no direct effect on the annual budget for culture. However, in the coming years and until 2027, the Council will allocate funds from the culture budget to fund activities related to the ECOC project. However, these activities will be aligned with the city's cultural programme. In the meantime, the city plans to use additional funds to finance the ECOC project, as follows:

YEAR	ANNUAL BUDGET OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF COIMBRA FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE ECOC 2027 APPLICATION (IN EUROS)
2022	1,300,000
2023	1,300,000
2024	1,600,000
2025	2,000,000
2026	4,500,000
2027	7,500,000
TOTAL	18,200,000

Q/5.3

Which amount of the overall annual budget does the city intend to spend for culture after the European Capital of Culture year (in euros and in % of the overall annual budget)?

THE OBJECTIVE IS TO GUARANTEE the sustainability of the financing of culture (which has been growing since 2012). After the Capital year, the Municipality wishes to guarantee the funding of structural projects created under the ECOC project, so that they may continue beyond the year of the title. Mechanisms will be created to provide professional support to the cultural entities to boost applications for external funding, while at the same time promoting existing or potential international ties and cooperation and driving cultural entrepreneurship. This calculation assumes an average increase of 2% in the city's overall budget, using 2021 as a reference year.

YEAR	REFERENCE (2021)	2028	2029
Total budget in euros	162,730,000	183,260,000	186,925,000
Cultural budget in euros	5,700,000	7,500,000	8,500,000
ECOC budget in euros	1,000,000	1,500,000	1,000,000
Total cultural budget in euros	6,700,000	9,000,000	9,500,000
Cultural budget as % of total budget	4.1	4.9	5.1



Andrea Bocelli and Mariza in Coimbra

OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE TITLE YEAR

Income to cover operating expenditure:

Q/5.4

Please explain the overall operating budget (i.e. funds that are specifically set aside to cover operational expenditure). The budget shall cover the preparation phase, the year of the title, the evaluation and provisions for the legacy activities. Please also fill in the table below.

THE BUDGET ESTIMATE to cover operating costs is based on the direct involvement of the Government, the project's 18 partner municipalities, the CIM-RC itself, as an independent entity promoting specific events across the 19 Municipalities that comprise it, plus the Municipality of Coimbra, leader of the application. Funds emanating from the private sector are here estimated prudently, but ambitiously.

TOTAL REVENUE TO COVER OPERATING EXPENSES (IN EUROS)	FROM THE PUBLIC SECTOR (IN EUROS)	FROM THE PUBLIC SECTOR (AS A %)	FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR (IN EUROS)	FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR (AS A %)
60,000,000	55,200,000	92	4,800,000	8

INCOME FROM THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Q/5.5

What is the breakdown of the income to be received from the public sector to cover operating expenditure? Please fill in the table below:

INCOME FROM THE PUBLIC SECTOR TO COVER OPERATING EXPENSES	IN EUROS	AS A %
Central Government**	18,000,000	33
City	8,200,000	15
Region*	4,000,000	7
EU (except the Melina Mercouri prize)**	25,000,000	45
Other		
Total	55,200,000	

*Includes the income of each of the 18 Municipalities and the income of the CIM-RC.

** By mutual agreement with the other Portuguese candidate cities. The negotiations with the government about the actual budget and how it will be distributed over the years are not closed. The figures given here are therefore guideline figures. The budget will be adjusted as required depending on the outcome of these negotiations.

Q/5.6

Have the public finance authorities (City, Region, State) already voted on or made financial commitments to cover operating expenditure? If not, when will they do so?

DURING THE PROCESS of preparing the application, the unequivocal support of all the entities involved has been confirmed on several occasions. The CIM-RC has publicly stated its support for the application on several occasions and has specifically set up a working group consisting of members from all the Municipalities, which has worked regularly on the preparation of the application. In turn, the Municipality of Coimbra recently approved, unanimously, in the Municipal Assembly, the Pact for the City, which provides evidence of the unanimous support of all political actors. Finally, when presenting the call in November 2020, the Government publicly declared funding for the winning city amounting to 25 million euros.

Moreover, we could mention the operational programmes of the Centre Region Coordination Commission, CCDRC, the scope of which will intersect with the objectives and actions of the ECOC.

INCOME FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR

THE ACQUISITION of funds from the private sector, developed on 4 fronts, is in the development phase: A campaign was launched with the inhabitants of the CIM-RC (19 municipalities consisting of around 500,000 inhabitants). An application partner card will be created (with various levels of loyalty). Subscription to this card assumes the payment of an annual fee (at least until 2027). The cardholder will be offered discounts at local businesses that sign up to the initiative, and discounts on tickets for shows that take place under the auspices of the ECOC. Objective: € 2 million. Start of the campaign: 2023. A campaign will be launched in conjunction with the business sector of the CIM-RC (small and medium-sized companies). A corporate card will be created for application partners. A fee will likewise be charged for this card, with different subscription levels. According to the type of subscription, participating entities will be entitled to

sets of tickets for shows under the auspices of the ECOC, which may be offered to their customers, and participation in the marketing campaigns to be developed until 2027. Objective: € 1 million. Start of the campaign: 2023. Campaigns will be launched in conjunction with large domestic and international companies, some of which have already been contacted, to raise funding for specific events. These entities will be included in marketing campaigns, according to the event and the funding involved. Objective: € 1 million. Start of the campaign: 2023. A wide range of merchandising products – some of them being already programmed in the logo dossier, will also be created, to be sold at a store specially created to raise the profile of the application among tourists who visit the city, and in partnership with local businesses. Objective: € 800 thousand. Start of the campaign: 2023.



City Pact for Coimbra 2027



OPERATING EXPENDITURE

Q/5.8

Please provide a breakdown of the operating expenditure, by filling in the table below.

PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE (IN EUROS)	PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE (IN %)	PROMOTION AND MARKETING (IN EUROS)	PROMOTION AND MARKETING (IN %)	WAGES, OVERHEADS AND ADMINISTRATION (IN EUROS)	WAGES, OVERHEADS AND ADMINISTRATION (IN %)	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) (IN EUROS)	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) (IN %)	TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURE
42,000,000	70	8,400,000	14	9,600,000	16			60,000,000

BUDGET FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Q/5.9

What is the breakdown of the income to be received from the public sector to cover capital expenditure in connection with the title year?

Please fill in the table below:

BOTH THE MUNICIPALITY OF COIMBRA and the remaining 18 municipalities that comprise the CIM-RC have a huge range of investments in infrastructure projects for their territories, with funding already having been secured for many of them for the coming years. Many of these projects have a direct link to the ECOC 2027. The table below summarises the funding already guaranteed for the larger-scale projects mentioned in question Q/5.12, for the Municipality of Coimbra:

INCOME FROM THE PUBLIC SECTOR TO COVER CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	IN EUROS	%
National government	971,000	2
City	20,441,000	43
Region		
EU (with exception of the Melina Mercouri Prize)	26,372,000	55
Other		
Total	47,784,000	

Q/5.10

Have the public finance authorities (City, Region, State) already voted on or made financial commitments to cover capital expenditure? If not, when will they do so?

DESPITE THE FACT THAT NO VOTE has been held or commitment made by the various Municipalities of the CIM-RC regarding specific investments included in the capital expenditure for Coimbra's ECOC application, from among that which each municipality has planned in terms of structural investments, the estimated investments in infrastructure having a direct impact on culture are significant. The Municipality of Coimbra has various infrastructure projects already approved, for which funding has been authorised. Some of the projects, directly connected to the application, have not yet been submitted for approval, as they depend on the success of the application.

Q/5.11

What is your fund raising strategy to seek financial support from Union programmes/funds to cover capital expenditure?

ALL THE MUNICIPALITIES in the CIM-RC are committed to seeking support in community programmes to cover capital expenditure associated specifically with infrastructure that will have an impact, and this should fall under the ECOC in 2027. It is worth highlighting the Strategic Urban Development Plans (PEDU) of the 19 municipalities, which include the promotion of low-carbon strategies for the whole territory, the adoption of measures to improve the urban environment, revitalise cities, recover and decontaminate abandoned industrial areas (including reconversion areas), reduce air pollution and promote noise reduction measures, the granting of support for the physical, economic and social regeneration of disadvantaged communities in urban and rural areas. Due to its scale and inter-municipal impact, the cycle route is enhanced along the river Mondego, from Coimbra to Figueira da Foz, around 40 kms crossing 3 Districts of CIM-RC (already in process of construction) and along the river Ceira, through its hydrographic basin, should be mentioned here. It consists of around 140 kilometres of cycle paths, which are planned for the implementation of Ceira On Bike, a project that constitutes the longest cycle route in the country. The path crosses 6 municipalities of the CIM: Arganil, Coimbra, Góis, Lousã, Miranda do Corvo, and Pampilhosa da Serra. It involves an investment of around 3 million euros and should be finished in 2025. It has been presented to the public and funds are currently being sought for its execution.

Under the Municipality of Coimbra investment programme, the strategy followed by the municipality of Coimbra is described under the following question, which, due to its scale, reflects the strategies followed by all the remaining 18 municipalities of the CIM-RC.



CEART website



If appropriate, please insert a table here that specifies which amounts will be spent for new cultural infrastructure to be used in the framework of the title year.

THE MUNICIPALITY OF COIMBRA has concluded various investments with the Central Region Operational Programme, based on four main fronts, all of which fall under the principles of ECOC 2027:

STRATEGIC FRONT 1 – UPGRADE PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND PROMOTE SOFT MOBILITY

The aim is the structuring, expansion and upgrading of cycle lanes and pedestrian networks, linking residential areas, school facilities, and interchange hubs, allowing their use in day-to-day travel in safety and comfort.

STRATEGIC FRONT 2 – REVITALISE THE HEART OF THE CITY

Reasserting the heart of Coimbra as a central and cohesive component of the urban system, thus contributing towards the structuring of the different urban axes and polarities into a network, based on a series of distinctive features that generate attraction, and which no other venue in the city can offer: multifunctionality, cultural heritage and tourism potential.

STRATEGIC FRONT 3 – RENOVATE BUILDINGS AND UPGRADE THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Guaranteeing the adaptation of dwellings to today’s living standards, the modernisation and renovation of shop and service spaces, and a high-quality and inclusive public space, which encourages use in comfort and safety in accordance with the new standards of urban living and environmental sustainability.

STRATEGIC FRONT 4 – BOLSTER COHESION AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Guaranteeing that Coimbra provides, to all its inhabitants, the conditions necessary for healthy and rewarding development in all stages of life, with particular attention

given to the needs of the elderly and families and encouraging young people to remain in the region. Carrying out integrated and territorially-oriented interventions, geared towards the most disadvantaged communities /territories, where there is a concentration of deficiencies and phenomena linked to exclusion.

Of the interventions already agreed, many of which are already being implemented, those relating to urban mobility (1st phase of the Coimbra cycle network (Coimbra B / Vale das Flores / Portela stretch and construction of footpaths), urban regeneration (upgrading of various public spaces and streets in the urban centre, including recovery of Largo da Sé Velha) are particularly prominent, due to their scale and impact.

In total, these projects involve interventions over an area of around 5,000 m2 of public buildings and around 146,000 m2 of open spaces, and will lead to an estimated reduction in emissions of carbon dioxide (CO2) into the atmosphere of around 6,700 tons.

The total value of the investment approved is around € 20 million, of which 85%, amounting to € 16.9 million, represents support from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

Mention should also be made of the Mondego Mobility System (a light rail transit system in the municipalities of Coimbra, Miranda do Corvo and Lousã), which will bring to the region a modern means of transport suitable for transit in an urban and suburban environment. This megaproject already having reached an advanced stage (with some subprojects already underway), its full commissioning will profoundly change mobility in the city of Coimbra and the Municipalities affected. The overall investment will be around € 149 million.

Various features of the river banks project, directly related to the objectives of ECOC 2027, are under execution, such as the rehabilitation of Manuel Braga park (a public garden since 1920), stabilisation and rehabilitation of the banks of the Mondego within the city boundaries (rehabilitation and recovery of the natural and constructed elements of the land on the banks of the Mondego, with the creation of accesses and facilities that link the City to the River).

The following table specifies some of the investments to be made in new cultural infrastructure expected for 2027:

PROJECT	ESTIMATED BUDGET (EUROS)	COMPLETION DATE
Footbridge	8,000,000	2027
Mondego Arena	28,000,000	2027
Municipal Contemporary Art Centre	16,000,000	2026
Banks of the river	14,000,000	2025
European Hub of the Museum of the Portuguese Language	6,000,000	2026
History of Coimbra Interpretative Centre	3,000,000	2026
Santa a Clara-a-Nova Monastery	5,000,000	2027
Salão Brasil	1,000,000	2023
Museum of Science of the University of Coimbra	6,000,000	2023
Revitalisation of the urban centre (former Prison)	15,000,000	2026

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

THE GOVERNANCE MODEL for Coimbra 2027 aims to respond positively to 3 strategic challenges of the overall programme:

Artistic and Executive Independence

The legal establishment of a Foundation that brings together public, private and social institutional partners should legitimise the corresponding independence of political power and municipal and regional politics, with an independent decision-making and programming capacity, notwithstanding proper reporting and oversight of the public monies involved;

Selection by means of an international competition for executive (C-level) positions requires special responsibilities of transparency and meritocracy of the overseeing Foundation, and contractual terms (of 4 years) should be implemented that allow rotation on the service committees, with a limit of up to 2 consecutive contracts for the Executive Committee (Board);

Local, regional, national and transnational cooperation

The Founding Committee of the overseeing Foundation will be the collegiate body that will set out the vision and mission of this entity, created to reflect the cultural strategy inherent to Coimbra 2027. It will consist of:

- ~ The Government of the Republic, through the Ministry of Culture and/or other entities to be defined;
- ~ The Inter-municipal Community of Coimbra and /or the respective Municipalities;
- ~ Other domestic Inter-municipal Communities or Metropolitan Areas;
- ~ Coimbra City Council;
- ~ The University of Coimbra;
- ~ The Polytechnic Institute of Coimbra;
- ~ The Academic Association of Coimbra (Autonomous Sections and Bodies);
- ~ Domestic and international civil foundations;
- ~ Museums;
- ~ Cultural associations and entities;
- ~ Companies;
- ~ Institutions from the social sector;
- ~ Domestic and international collectors;

Zero-Carbon Certification

This constitutes one of the most important societal challenges of Coimbra 2027 – reaching carbon neutrality in the programme through active measures in the planning and management of the environmental impacts resulting from the various activities planned, in compliance with the PAS 2060 standard.

Coimbra’s application aims to reach a net-zero impact through the direct involvement and certification of the organisation the Carbon Trust in establishing and implementing a Strategy and Action Plan for emissions objectives 1, 2 and 3 during the entire Coimbra 2027 programme.

Zero-Carbon certification attests to our intention to reduce our carbon footprint, but also to contribute positively to local biodiversity, to the central impor-

tance of the River Mondego as a national and European environmental asset and to the implementation of a multifaceted cultural strategy that reconciles values of environmental and heritage conservation with artistic creation and cultural output.

Positive results in terms of the cultural transformation of Coimbra and its region will depend, in large part, on the efficacy and efficiency achieved in the various interdependent domains of the proposed programme. It should be added that the very model of governance must induce good practice with practical implications that cut across the territory, the cultural agents and the international dissemination it may foster.

We highlight, from the outset, some distinctive factors of the proposed governance model:

Please give an outline of the intended governance and delivery structure for the implementation of the European Capital of Culture year



- 1 / INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY
- 2 / RISK MANAGEMENT
- 3 / DIVERSITY
- 4 / PROJECT TEAMS
- 5 / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1 The central conceptual importance of innovation and sustainability will be promoted under a concept of universal opening up to the new and to knowledge in its multiple expressions, with reflexive safeguarding of environmental impacts, understood both in terms of biodiversity and environmental health, the resilience of the city or the local and regional economy;

A model of executive committee with 5 members led by the CISO (Chief Innovation & Sustainability Officer) is proposed, reflecting a welcome development in the interdisciplinary and civilisational consolidation of the Coimbra 2027 programme, strengthening the central nature of innovation and creativity, along with the environmental, social, and economic sustainability desired by the local, national, and European community;

From the outset, an organisational structure certifiable under ISO 56000 and 9001, with respect to internal organisational processes and innovation and quality management, will be implemented, specifically at the interfaces of the generation of ideas, human resources management, and relations between the various cultural, economic, social and institutional agents in order to optimise performance and the achievement of the planned results;

2 A Risk Management Plan will be drawn up with both internal and external auditing, which will be based on progress reports and mitigation or alternative measures in the effective monitoring of all projects under the Coimbra 2027 programme. The internal auditing will fall under the remit of the Chief Operating Officer (COO), who will report quarterly to the Board; A commitment is made to prepare an Annual Report open to public consultation for 30 days, under the responsibility of the independent external auditors, comprised of experts of recognised merit. This Report must be presented to the Municipality of Coimbra and to the Inter-municipal Community of Coimbra, with the public contributions and a maximum of 5 main recommendations for the proper development of the Coimbra 2027 programme;

3 We advocate an inclusive policy that respects the diversity of educational, social, and cultural origins, under the primacy of individual merit and with special positive discrimination in terms of opportunities for disabled citizens at all levels of the executive and organisational structure of Coimbra 2027;

We will arrange an open international competition for all positions on the executive committee (C-Level) as a way of guaranteeing equal opportunities regardless of nationality or gender, and national competitions for the remaining operating levels of the executive structure of Coimbra 2027, maintaining principles of transparency, merit and gender equality at all times;

4 An executive structure based on multidisciplinary project teams is proposed, with mandatory incorporation of artistic creators and members with advanced training in innovation and sustainability; A flexible and eminently horizontal functional organisational chart will be drawn up, with programmatic duties under the responsibility of curators or curatorial teams and executive implementation by transversal project teams, to which sectoral projects developed by local, national, and international creators and entities will be added;

5 Public participation will be bolstered at three distinct levels of evaluation and programmatic modelling, covering both institutional mechanisms – in particular, the Municipal Committee for Culture and the Inter-municipal Assembly of the Coimbra CIM – and informal mechanisms of civic cooperation; The special civic tradition of the city will be given special attention, in particular by the student community, with preferential recourse to informal digital means as channels for information, inquiry and educational and cultural involvement.



Critical Software Awards at CSF

CONTINGENCY PLANNING

THE DESIGN AND DRAFTING of the application were marked by a clear and critical awareness of the strengths and weaknesses that characterise the city, of which we list a few of the most significant.

Strengths

In-depth knowledge of the city / realistic detection of the city's weaknesses and difficulties / comprehensiveness of the proposals, with careful attention to all areas (artistic, educational, social and environmental) and the encouragement of transdisciplinarity and experimentation / consistency of the artistic and cultural content with the strategic plan for culture / strong territorial cohesion and involvement of the CIM-RC, which, from the outset, spoke with one voice / the proposed governance model / environmental and energy concerns / the affirmation of culture as an expression and mediation of the relations between art and life.

Weaknesses

Ambiguity of our presentation of the city, both critical and apologetic / the failure to establish the structure of the governance model that will preside over the ECOC at the time of drafting the bid book / the holding of two elections between now and 2027 and the uncertainty surrounding the outcome* / the requirement to involve large private companies to implement the more ambitious content of the project: will they be prepared to understand urgent and necessary change and will they maintain their support over the medium to long term? / the inefficient communication, both internally and externally / the persistent difficulty of bringing about a profound change in mindset / the conviction that the existing tendency in the city towards self-deification by some and self-denigration by others will not allow for the implementation of a process of change that the candidacy has already set in motion, and which only the granting of the title of European Capital will overcome and resolve.

Remediation

To remove the subjectivity from the process of change and contribute towards continuous rigorous monitoring, an impact matrix has been created, which will fol-

low up the execution of the proposal, guaranteeing that the strengths are realised, and the weaknesses remain residual and are eliminated.

Still, we will be looking out for:

- ~ The creation of transversal projects that promote productive crossover between the various disciplines (visual arts, theatre, music, dance, cinema, literature, architecture, design, etc.), also with a view to finding and sharing target audiences.
- ~ The development of projects and programmes that promote productive relations between cultural and artistic facilities and agents, and entities and actors outside the areas of culture – companies from the different sectors of economic activity, social institutions and public and private schools at the various levels of education.

Likewise, we will seek to:

- ~ Reshaping the role of the university in the city, through greater involvement with cultural and artistic experiences and dynamics, viewing culture and art as fields of enormous potential in the renewal of teaching/learning processes, in scientific research and in the production of knowledge.
- ~ Make the great questions of contemporary art that are the subject of study and university research in the fields of social and human sciences, philosophy, even natural sciences, and medicine.
- ~ Map cultural facilities and agents across the territory of the CIM-RC.

In technological terms, we will promote the increased digitisation of content, a costly process, but one likely to be generously financed by European money, namely through:

- ~ The creation of the European Hub of the Museum of the Portuguese Language (POMLP), an immersive, almost entirely digital experience that may be accessed remotely, and a Portal for the POMLP, which will allow direct contact (virtual), in real time, between people from different corners of the world.
- ~ Organisation of "Backstage" shows.

What are the main strengths and weaknesses of your project? How are you planning to overcome weaknesses identified?

“Coimbra is knowledge and love.”

Elsio Summaviele, President of the Belém Cultural Center, Lisbon



Q MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

THE TITLE OF EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE represents a unique opportunity to create new publics, attract visitors and develop dynamics of cultural production in the host city. Coimbra does not want to be the exception to this legitimate ambition to promote the ECOC brand, not only within Portugal, but also internationally. To do so, it will develop a comprehensive communication and marketing plan, strongly based on strategic partnerships and, simultaneously, directed at amplifying all the initiatives and values associated with this landmark year. The communication and marketing strategy is divided into several areas, each one consisting of different objectives and target audiences. Examples of this are:

Press Office

Communication via the press is one of the most efficient ways of attracting positive attention to a project of this scale. Coimbra 2027 wishes to communicate with and through the media, in the press, on the radio, on television and online. For this, it will have a dedicated communications team to drive forward the different themes and approaches in constant liaison with the media.

- ~ At national level, the communication seeks to amplify the various initiatives and protagonists, in the different cultural dimensions of the project. Interviews with artists and curators, reports on exhibitions and concerts, articles on the European project that forms the basis of this title.
- ~ Internationally, the objective is to boost the Coimbra brand and its historical connection with culture, through the title of ECOC2027. The strategy consists of inviting some of the most prominent international media (such as the BBC, the New York Times, El País, Le Monde and Der Spiegel, among others) to get to know and discover the city, its cultural dynamics, and this European project.

Launch campaign

The communications kick-off must take into account the Coimbra 2027 brand. For this, a top-quality advertising film will be produced, consisting of a shorter version (20 minutes) and a longer version (2 hours), to be broadcast on the major national television channels. It will be an exercise in self-affirmation that will help to set the tone for communication during the course of the year.

Media partners

As an annual project with a wide range of content, it is essential that a series of media partners should be secured to guarantee the regular amplification of communication. A television station, a national radio broadcaster, a general interest newspaper, different cultural platforms and the regional press. Communication does not end with the media partners, but many times stems from them at moments such as the opening and closing, which, historically, have had an extremely strong impact in the media and wide coverage on television.

Please provide with an outline of the city's intended marketing and communication strategy for the European Capital of Culture year.

Media plan

The entire brand campaign and the main programming initiatives will also be leveraged under a plan of offline and digital media that guarantees broad local, national, and international dissemination. For this, a concept of graphical communication will be developed to give Coimbra 2027 its own identity and help in the consolidation of the project.

- ~ In Portugal, the plan is to focus on outdoor advertising (local and national), as well as advertisements in the press, on the radio, on television and online, at Multibanco ATMs and on posters.
- ~ At international level, the preferred channel will be online, with paid campaigns on social networks and selected media. Once again, alternating brand campaigns with the promotion of moments of communication capable of attracting a wider international audience.

Owned media

Coimbra 2027 will also have its own communication channels. A broad range of media will guarantee the desired frequency and accuracy of communications and allow total autonomy and independence over the communication process. These media span different formats and objectives.

- ~ WEBSITE AND SOCIAL NETWORKS | For real time, consistent reporting. The website will function as a hub for all communication and the social networks as aggregators of a community that we hope to see grow and become international. For this, videos and podcasts will be formats to be explored.
- ~ LOCAL NEWSLETTER | Because the local community will play a pivotal role in the assertion of a feeling of belonging with respect to the project, Coimbra 2027 wishes to prioritise these ties. For this, a local publication will be created and directed towards all those who enjoy and experience this unique year.
- ~ PROGRAMMING SUPPORT | An app and a monthly schedule with all activity for each month and for each area – essential features in public perception and the organisation of every event – as well as theatre programmes and booklets for major shows.

~ Coimbra 2027 Magazine | Because culture needs the right amount of time, and not everything can be fast and immediate. The Coimbra 2027 magazine intends to reflect, analyse, and give impressions regarding everything that happens around Coimbra 2027. A bilingual publication for national and international opinion makers, which seeks to celebrate Europe and immortalise culture in Coimbra. It will also have digital versions in Spanish and French.

Programming events

And because there is a need to maintain the frequency of communication and manage the year at different times, Coimbra 2027 will have a calendar of events that will bring new impetus over the course of the year, without losing the initial effect of the launch. Themed quarterly organisation that allows for new launches and new discoveries, without the project losing its initial impetus. This organisation will dictate the form in which Coimbra 2027 projects itself in Portugal and the world, celebrating a Europe that it is hoped will become even more united and connected culturally.

How does the city plan to highlight that the European Capital of Culture is an action of the European Union?

TO BE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE is a clear celebration of Europe and of Culture, and the most effective way of showing even the most sceptical the unequalled strength and virtues of these two pillars of our development. For this, all communication of Coimbra 2027 must take into account the European project and the direct connection to the EU, using English to facilitate international communication and, in particular, celebrating the values of a free, democratic, inclusive and cultural Europe. The programming and communication of the ECOC must emphasise and enhance this connection, either through the promotion of artists from member countries, or with specific programmes of connection to the EU and its projects, or, above all, with cultural output and productions that plant new seeds of the European project in the territory. All information on Coimbra 2027 – namely the magazine Coimbra 2027 – will aim to promote this umbilical link to the EU, reiterating the strength and energy generated by the many Capitals over the past decades. Coimbra aims to be the fourth

European Capital of Culture in Portugal – after Lisbon, in 1994, Porto, in 2001 and Guimarães, in 2012 – taking advantage of all the good things that were achieved and learning from that which proved least effective. It will thus be a Capital that champions Portugal within the European area, around 40 years after the country's entry into the then EEC. Coimbra's cultural vigour, allied with the prestige of its University and the energy of a new and emerging economy, will make Coimbra 2027 a new milestone in the manner in which cities of medium size have welcomed and promoted this grand European initiative: this is perhaps the great challenge that the European Capitals of Culture face, given that the phase involving bigger cities has now ended. Most of the success of this endeavour lies in the strengthening of ties with the EU and the European project. Coimbra wishes to be European Capital of Culture 2027 and will produce, welcome and exhibit the best that Europe has to offer in terms of culture, reaffirming its status as the cosmopolitan city of knowledge, as it has been known for centuries.



1st Test Concert performed after Covid



Sounds and gestures of the Coimbra Fado



Please confirm and supply evidence that you have broad and strong political support and a sustainable commitment from the relevant local, regional and national public authorities.

THE GOVERNMENT OF PORTUGAL, through the Ministry of Culture, has already declared its unconditional support for the winning city, with the allocation of a grant of 25 million euros.

Locally, the Municipal Assembly of Coimbra, the seat of all its elected political power, including the leaders of the District Councils and Merged Districts, voted unanimously in favour of a document proposed by the GT entitled **Pact for the City**, a political guarantee of the ECOC application, in which unequivocal trust in the committee preparing the application is confirmed, along with an absolute commitment to create the conditions to enable the city to become ECOC in 2027.

The CIM-RC also approved a resolution of support for Coimbra's application, signed by the 19 Municipalities. Alongside these initiatives, a lot of formal support has been received: The Medical Association of the Central Region, the Lions Club of Coimbra and the Lions Club of Brazil, the University of Coimbra, the Polytechnic Institute of Coimbra, Schools and School Groups from Coimbra, the Municipal Committee for Culture...

Please confirm and provide evidence that your city has or will have adequate and viable infrastructure to host the title. To do that, please answer the following questions:

A/ Explain briefly how the European Capital of Culture will make use of and develop the city's cultural infrastructure.

B/ What are the city's assets in terms of accessibility (regional, national and international transport)?

C/ What is the city's absorption capacity in terms of tourists' accommodation?

THE CITY'S CULTURAL OUTPUT IS REGULAR, diverse and of a high quality. The distinction of the cultural and artistic operators demonstrates their strong creative capacities. This distinction, due to the "catalysing" effect of the ECOC, has allowed a "qualitative leap" to be made, which has raised the degree of artistic creation, public reception and involvement to a more demanding plane. Every year, Coimbra hosts hundreds of cultural events of national and international scale in all domains of art and knowledge, in which the academic and university community is also involved, participating in multicentre networks of creation and cultural diffusion. Its experience in the organisation of large-scale events of prolonged duration – National Capital of Theatre, in 1992, National Capital of Culture, in 2003, the World Health Alliance Forum, in 2018, or the European Universities Games, in 2019, among many others – leaves the city well suited to taking on a programme that is demanding in terms of density and intensity.

Representing Portugal as ECOC will bolster Coimbra's 2020-2030 cultural strategy, with desirable impacts on civic participation, formal and informal learning and on cultural production, before and after 2027. Indeed, the recognition of the University, Alta e Sofia, as a World Heritage Site in 2013 corresponded to a concerted strategic effort, which is developed in the implementation of the ECOC in 2027.

"Culture is the peaceful celebration of difference."

Viriato Soromenho Marques, Philosopher, Professor University of Lisbon

The city boasts an active cultural sector, with acknowledged experience of partnerships that involve a wide range of operators on a broad artistic spectrum, from avant-garde cultivators of experimentation to collectives based on popular culture. The specific capacity-building for 2027 will result from ongoing cultural amplification and detailed executive planning – the departments of the CMC already boast a range of deployable skills – which sustains a cultural strategy of civic, economic, and social involvement, locally, regionally and nationally.

Coimbra enjoys a pivotal geographic position, with international rail links and expanding ports and airports for easy connections.

The city also boasts facilities of various kinds for putting on shows / concerts / exhibitions / performances, and multiple venues – squares, parks, gardens, cloisters... – many forming part of the city's heritage, all prepared to host events of different natures and scales. In fact, at the centre of the ECOC2027 cultural strategy is the quality and diversity of the facilities in Coimbra and in the region, with emphasis on the São Francisco Convent, one of the country's architectural treasures.

As a project that generates great interest, the geographical scope of the ECOC reaches way beyond the city boundaries and includes the surrounding region, under a single drive for rich and multifaceted development and output in terms of accommodation, connections and mobility. Coimbra has reacted to the adversity of the pandemic with creativity, developing various mechanisms to support cultural associations and pioneering the revival of cultural activities. The experience gained has prepared the city for other potential future emergencies.

In a decade of cultural transformation, Coimbra will know how to optimise financial resources from public and private sources. The ECOC will be proof of good contemporary management and sustainability as public policy in an efficient crossover of the environmental, economic, civic, social and cultural dimensions. The development of a growing process will cause a paradigm shift in the city and guarantee continuity beyond 2027.

A university city, Coimbra hosts numerous scientific meetings (seminars, colloquia, conferences) which, over the years, have contributed to the expansion of the region's hotel facilities. A cultural and tourist city, it has also seen the development of the B&B formula, rural tourism, residential tourism, time-sharing and other forms of accommodation. Thus, a total of more than 10,000 rooms, spread between the city centre, the outskirts and neighbouring towns, offer a well-structured and diverse response to local and regional needs for accommodation, run by private operators with international experience. For this sector and its facilities, the prospect of 2027 provides an additional stimulus for its constant improvement.

Let's remember that the Coimbra School of Hotel Business, one of the most renowned in the country, plays a remarkable role in our *capacity-building*, ensuring the conditions for qualified *lifelong learning*, particularly in terms of foreign language learning, for the employees of establishments in the region.



In terms of cultural, urban and tourism infrastructure what are the projects (including renovation projects) that your city plan to carry out in connection with the European Capital of Culture action between now and the year of the title?



Mondego River

THE ECOC should be an opportunity to strengthen, and coordinate the facilities and cultural agents operating in the city, specifically the museums, art centres, theatres and concert halls, cultural organisations and associations and informal groups of people. A priority lies in the commitment to boost and expand dynamics, methodologies in networks, rethink the vocation of each of the different existing facilities, raising the objectives and scope of action of the various local agents.

The projects identified below, the result of new structures or rehabilitation, are intimately related to the ECOC strategy. The overall investment is close to €100 million. The plan for investments in material and immaterial infrastructure results from strategic coordination between public, private and social institutions at local, national and international level.

We highlight the following public projects due to their transversal nature and social and cultural impact, fulfilling the zero-carbon targets of the application as a whole, some of which are in progress:

- 1 Upgrading of the banks of the River Mondego, under an urban public space regeneration programme and environmental conservation of the biggest common asset in the city and the region:
 - ~ Construction of a new footbridge between the banks with an increase in green zones and cycle paths, strengthening the link between Downtown Coimbra and prominent cultural and sports facilities;

- ~ Design and construction of the Arena Mondego, a multipurpose venue for cultural and artistic shows for up to 5,000 people, using bioclimatic architecture, renewable energies and technologies to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases, with a zero-carbon balance (the first cultural building of its kind in Portugal);
- ~ Trails for observing the biodiversity of the ecosystem of the River Mondego and cultural, scientific, and artistic production in this setting, involving the various municipalities from the entire central region of the country;
- ~ Rehabilitation of the Santa Clara-a-Nova Monastery as a new community creative space (CCS), allying the cultural aspects of the Plastic Arts Circle's Contemporary Art Biennial with a new centre point of cultural and creative industries, as embodied in the new Creativity and Technology Centre. This space will provide a range of rehearsal rooms (studios), workshops and studios (for artisans, plastic artists, among others) for established and/or emerging projects requiring work space; it will accommodate a Municipal Resources Centre responsible for the occasional loan of various items of equipment (sound, lighting, props, etc.), to support artistic and cultural activity, and a training centre that will offer a venue for capacity building among cultural agents (both professional and amateur).
- ~ Implementation of a model of the Auditory Vessel proposed by Artists and Architects from Coimbra;



- 2 The upgrading of Sofia Street, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, which includes the road and pedestrian layout, the upgrading of urban buildings by the private and social sector and the establishment of the European Hub of the Museum of Portuguese Language in one of the medieval University Colleges;
- 3 The upgrading of the space now occupied by the Prison, located in the middle of the Historic Centre of Coimbra, through an International Architecture and Ideas Contest that re-establishes the green corridor between two of the city's most famous Gardens (Santa Cruz and the Botanical Garden of Coimbra).
- 4 Expansion of the University of Coimbra's Museum of Science in an innovative, multicentre format that upgrades former Faculties and university facilities, in particular the existing technical and scientific collection, which dates back to the foundation of modern science;
- 5 The upgrading of the building that will house a significant part of the Ministry of Culture of the Portuguese State Collection, constituting the new Contemporary Art Centre of Coimbra;
- 6 The establishment and upgrading of Salão Brasil, a place of worship for jazz lovers with a strong tradition in Coimbra since the 1960s, with a music school and small-scale jazz, indie and experimental music record labels.

We also highlight the following projects of private and social initiative, which intrinsically cross over with the Coimbra 2027 programme:

- ~ The opening of new tourist and cultural venues, related to Fado and Canção de Coimbra;
- ~ The implementation of a Contemporary Dance Company and a National Dance Archive;
- ~ The upgrading of Coimbra Editora by the company Critical Software, with a new business hub open to the city and citizens with its own cultural programming and involvement in the area of mental health (Manicómio project);
- ~ The expansion of "Portugal dos Pequenitos" – the most visited children's theme park in Portugal – by initiative of the Bissaya Barreto Foundation;
- ~ The upgrading of informal venues in rural and suburban districts of Coimbra and the CIM-RC region, for new types of low-density cultural events, with different themes.



CMC website

PROMOTING ENTITIES

Coimbra City Council, CMC
 Coimbra Intermunicipal Community,
 CIM-RC

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ACRONYMS

CIM-RC – Coimbra Region-Intermunicipal
 Community
 UC – University of Coimbra
 IPC – Polytechnic Institute of Coimbra
 FBB – Bissaya Barreto Foundation
 AAC – Academic Association of Coimbra
 EDP – Energies of Portugal
 SMTUC – Coimbra’s Municipal
 Urban Transport Service
 APPACDM – Portuguese Association
 of Parents and Friends of Citizens
 with Mental Disabilities
 ICOMOS – International Council
 of Monuments and Sites
 TAGV – Gil Vicente Academic Theatre
 UNESCO – United Nations Educational,
 Scientific and Cultural Organization

PHOTOGRAPHY

Inês Gonçalves: pgs. 5, 34, 49, 52
 Sergio Azenha/FBA/DRI: pgs. 12, 17,
 36, 37, 41, 55, 57
 Daniel Santos/FBA: pgs. 29, 59
 UC: pgs. 9, 25, 47
 Arquivo CMC: pgs.15, 23,
 29, 32, 42, 44, 59

PRINTER

Gráfica Maiadouro S.A.

This bid book was designed
 by Daniel Santos and João Bicker,
 at FBA., a Coimbra based design
 consultancy, using Grosa and
 Grotzec, by the Portuguese type
 designer Mário Feliciano.

*We are alluding (question Q/5.5, p.51, “Weaknesses”) to the municipal elections held during the final phase of the writing of this document. At the date of the delivery, the newly elected Mayor of Coimbra, assuming the direct responsibility for the municipal department of Culture, acknowledges the importance of this Candidacy and welcomes and adopts the program worked out by our team.

The complete terms and contents of this Candidacy, answering the common application form, as defined in the annex 1 to the “Invitation to submit a candidacy for the action of the Union – European Capital of Culture – for the year 2027 in Portugal” are to be found in the numbered pages on the first side of this document and comply with the obligation of not exceeding 60 A4 pages.

The back of this document, occupied with a visual artefact illustrating the Candidacy claim, translated into the 28 official languages of the EU, is deprived of any element entering the Candidacy evaluation and does not need to be consulted. The same applies to the contents of the cover and the QR codes.

