

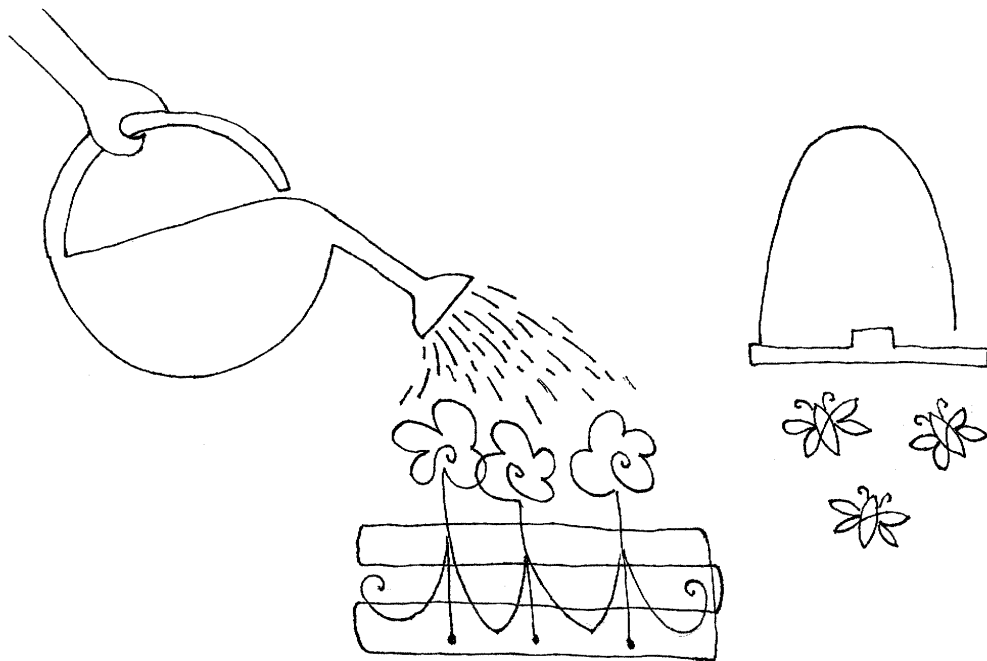


KRANJ 2025

EUROPEAN CAPITAL
OF CULTURE
CANDIDATE CITY



USODNE CIVILIZACIJE SE NE PA BISTVENO
ZBOLJŠATI. ZGRAJENA JE NA POČELU DUALIZMA
NI SPOSOBNA VZDRŽEVATI OBDOBJU MIRU BREZ
EKLENSKIH VOJN. NI SPOSOBNA ZAGOTOVITI BLAGINJE
JUDEM NE DA BI POLOVICA ČLOVEŠTVA STRADALA. 2. X
OMAJ SMO IZVEDELI DA SMO SREDI EKOLOŠKE KRIZE, KI LAHKO
NICI ŽIVLJENJE NA ZEMLJI, ŽE SMO UVIDELE DA POLITIŠNE ELITE
ISO SPOSOBNE UVESTI DOLGOROČNIH REŠITEV. NE ČAKATI!
AZVIJMO DRUGA POTA SOOČANJA Z »PONEBNIMI SPREMEMBAM
TEMELJENA NA KOMUNIKACIJI Z ZAVESTJO ZEMLJE IN NA
ODELOVANJU Z ELEMENTARNIMI BITJI NARAVE * 3 *
STVARIALNI OBSEG RAZUMSKE ZAVESTI JE IZČRPAN. PRIHAJA DO
EVARNIH STRANPOTI: ČLOVEK SE NA RAZUMSKI NAČIN UKVARJA Z
MOČI, BIVANJA, KI LEŽNO ONKRAJ LOGIČNEGA DOSEGA (ČE PLENJE ATOMOV, NANO TEHNOLOGIJE, GENSKA MANIPULACIJE)
MPAK GLEJ: KAR DANES ZNANOST OBRAVNAVA KOT NE-OBSTOJEČE
RANI V SEBI POTENCIAL BODOČIH KOMUNIKACIJ IN TEHNOLOGIJ!
LOVEKOV RAZMERJE S CELOSTJO BIVAJOČEGA IN POTREBA
EDNO ZNOVA POVEZOVATI SE S SVETOSTJO BITI JE ČLOVEK
RAVICA NEODVISNA OD OBSTOJEČIH VERSKIH IN IDEOLOŠKIH
ISTEMOV. MLADIM JE TREBA ŽE MED ŠOLANJEM OMOGOČITI, DA RAZVINEJO OSEB
ČUTLJIVOST ZA VIDNE IN NEVIDNE RAZSEŽNOSTI BIVANJA, DA BI LAHKO OBLIKOVALI
ASTEN PRISTOP K SVETOSTI, ŽIVLJENJA, SPODBUJANJE OB
UTKA ZA ŽIVLJENSKO RESNIČNOST RAZVOJ INTUICIJE IN
INTELIGENCA SRCA ZAGOTAVLJAJO, DA SE NE BOMO IZGUBILI MED NEŠTETIMI POJAVI V
EČIMI STRAN OD BISTVA. * 5 * ŽIVIMO NA PLANETO OBILJ
EMLJA JE MILIARDE LET RAZVIJALA BIOLOŠKI PROSTOR, KI
VOJO ČUDOVITO VEČPLASTNOSTJO, OMOČA NARAVNO OBILJE IN
ASLEDNI FAZI NA NARAVNEM OBILJU, TEMELJEČO RAST CIVI
ACIJ. USODNEMU ZLOMU DANE CIVILIZACIJE SE DA IZOGNITI TAK
E ČLOVEK VRNE K SVOJEMU BISTVU. PROCESU SAMOSPOZNAN
LEDI PROCES ODKRIVANJA DOSLEJ NEZNANIH RAZSEŽNOSTI ZEML
ROSTORA. TE PA SO DOVOLJ ŠIROKE, DA BODO OMOGOČILE CELOSTEN
AZVOJ BODOČE CIVILIZACIJE VKLJUČNO Z NJENIM GOSPODARSTVOM,
ULTURO IN DUHOVNOSTJO.
6 * NEMUDOMA SE JE POTREBNO UGLASITI S SAMOZDRAVILNI
ROCESI IN PREOBRAZBAMI, KI JIH JE INTELIGENCA ZEMLJE



Article 167 of the Treaty of Lisbon¹ states that in “respecting [The European Union’s] national and regional diversity” and with the noble aim of accentuating the continent’s “common cultural heritage”, the European Union “shall contribute to the *flowering* of the cultures of the Member States”. This floral metaphor blurs the definition of cultural progress, leading to interpretations where a standard, unified means of quantification proves impossible to apply. In this context, one may ponder “does cultural participation really change political values?”

Culture should encourage optimism, ease feelings of solitude and loneliness, give us something to hope for, and lead us to contemplate the complexity of society and the lives we lead. Our bid interprets culture in a broad sense, placing great emphasis on resetting relationships in our modern cultural wars. We believe in the need to destigmatize certain demographics for a better common future. Our reach should extend to the weakest members of our social and natural ecosystems.

The City of Kranj, under this auspice of hope for a better common future, thereby is a prime candidate to become Europe’s important cultural city. By changing the narrative, we can help influence certain carefully-selected characteristics from the fabric of European identity; our cultural programs will be their voice, as we craft strategies for cementing and reinforcing their significance now and in aeternum. We can cultivate these values and, to borrow from the EU’s linguistic narrative, water them so they grow, blossom, and flourish.

All illustrations in the book are authored by the Unesco Artist for Peace Marko Pogačnik. The illustration on this page represents a metaphor for our vision. It likens three content pillars to plants, which prosper with the aid of three supporting pillars. These are represented as levels of soil. Means and human resources will be needed for development and growth. They are symbolised by water that wets the soil. What we achieve through our programs will be dispersed to our surroundings by bees. Right there – in the form of the bee – we can see the lines of infinity outlined in our region by the Sava river, the generator of life and creativity.

¹ <https://tinyurl.com/ue738ea>

INDEX

| | |
|--|-----------|
| C. INTRODUCTION | 3 |
| 1. CONTRIBUTION TO THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY | 10 |
| 2. CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT | 22 |
| 3. EUROPEAN DIMENSION | 42 |
| 4. OUTREACH | 47 |
| 5. MANAGEMENT | 50 |
| 6. CAPACITY TO DELIVER | 56 |

0. INTRODUCTION



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

0.1

Allow us to rephrase your question: **“Why does your city need to take part in this competition?”** Slovenian bidding cities need this title for their urban and cultural development, or else we are to remain stifled by the status quo of stagnant municipal systems in one of the EU’s 4 most centralized countries.

The size of Slovenia, which shares a similar characteristic of size with Malta, Luxembourg, and Cyprus, is too small even to be considered in studies on the centralization of EU countries². We are the sixth-smallest country by population, numbering a mere 2 million people. Germany, our slated partner for the 2025 European Capital of Culture, outsizes us by 80 million more people. Should Kranj be given the privilege of the title of European Capital of Culture alongside our

German municipal partner, it would strengthen the value of the European context considering one is a central country and another, one on the Union’s periphery.

Slovenian cities have undergone urban transformations in recent decades that are typical of other Central European cities. Historic town squares and centres have emptied as citizens flock to shopping malls on the cities’ outskirts, creating challenges for the traffic infrastructure. Sleepy

towns with compulsory commuters are an inevitable consequence of misaligned priorities in urban planning, where social infrastructure has yielded to the economic. Increasingly, residents are starting to become aware of the sentimental value of culture and heritage, as many cities are now working with the public on strategies to revive old town centres. Change is slow, but communities persevere. The first fruits from these revitalisation efforts are starting to ripen today.

²<https://tinyurl.com/ra7v8x3>

We respond to the constant challenge of insufficient participation with a reminder that this document was not written by directors of public institutions, nor did they even order it; it was not financed by international experts, but rather, driven by a group of people whose hearts and efforts reflect their true faith and belief in such opportunities that politicians address only with the proximity of an election. We who live and breathe cultural and urban development constantly work to validate and normalize marginalized topics so its intrinsic value can transcend politics of the day.

Culture's influence on urban development is increasing, but fundamental mechanisms to channel this influence are lacking at the State level. The professional management of cultural infrastructure is a rarity outside of government centres, and, even as such, initiatives are often spearheaded solely by a small group of enthusiastic individuals. The large number of Slovenian towns and cities vying for the title of Cultural Capital in 2025 is great news for everyone, as it gives confidence to the cultural sector and positions it among the other key factors shaping EU cities while boosting civic pride of the same.

Our Chance is Here

Our vision of development builds on concepts often overlooked by traditional power centres. Harmony with the environment, community decision-making, the quest for dialogue and balance, speaking for and to the unseen, and strengthening culture's role in public policy are all often assigned a secondary significance and are hidden by the interests of capital, wayward politicians, and media woke-washing. Culture's reach has shrunk, and culture itself has been shunned.

Can the unified strength of a community overcome a political status quo?

Our bid and proposed cultural strategy strives to speak as the voice of all small cities and their communities. By connecting actors throughout the region, we aim to equip the cultural sector and invite new strength and talent from the thriving cultural and creative industries in the cities and countryside of the Gorenjska region. New models of cultural management, an elevated role for culture in public policy, the emergence of community-planned co-creation spaces, and

the search for cultural production resources, along with an international flair and the blooming of new partnerships, form our pursuit of sustainable development.

Kranj's proximity to the capital makes it the perfect spot for a cultural centre with a great program, as well as an urban sandbox or laboratory where both domestic and foreign creators can experiment with ideas new and old, using new approaches to artistic discourse that is a perfect match for the common European citizen. Urbanity in the embrace of the countryside and natural environments will be the core of our bottom-up professionalized participative cultural models. Central to our strategy are programs that have been curated and elaborated, by local communities. We believe in the transformative power of the "European Capital of Culture" title (ECC) in recognizing, celebrating, and safeguarding Kranj's contributions for decades to come.

Through this bid, we build the microphone that amplifies new voices. With it, we are equipped well to achieve massive reach in addressing urbanization with our strategy for sustainable cultural development. We understand the importance of both voluntary and compensated cultural work. We understand various generations' loyalties to certain trends, and we know how to unite such trends with cultural marketing. We understand communities and we know how to address them. Our creative process stems from our neighbourhood where we stage brilliant mini-art festivals, craft boutique programs for cultural tourists, and hold awareness campaigns along with local communities. Introducing new creative methods of teaching and new development models, we empower citizens to engage in society.

What do we need?

A regular Joe would likely answer this most burning question by referring to Kranj's lack of dedicated facilities. The city, e.g., lacks a functional multi-purpose hall, an artistic theatre space, or even a proper bookstore. The region's spaces suffer from a lacklustre dearth of artistic vision. The lack of public spaces for co-creation is the main reason behind limited capacities, behind pigeonholing the same communities in the same spaces, and behind the impossibility of the greater access to the spheres of culture and creation by both creators and the public.

More facilities mean more programs, more capacity, and ultimately more reach. The strategic purchase and repurpose of buildings for cultural purposes can quickly change this status in the region and city itself, both teeming with creative energy just waiting to be tapped. The diversity of regional cultural events and campaigns, bolstered by a limited number of programs with strong content, will reach a zenith in 2025, ensuring a lasting texture that should endure years after the title year has passed. Kranj will lead the course of these cultural powerhouses into the cultural centre of the cultural region of Gorenjska.

We hold true the importance of: cultural planning in collaboration with communities based on constant mapping and analysis of cultural resources, the unification of progressive expertise on culture, the environment acquired through startups and NGOs, the nexus of heritage with modern structures, the inclusion of the weak and unseen in cultural production and consumption, interdisciplinary connections, the pursuit of human well-being, and the protection of our natural environment. As such, these added values comprise the crux of our bid.

The inclusion of environmental concerns in our bid is no accident; the region's unification through the cultural development of cities and the countryside is a central strategic objective of our bid. We will unite the urban cultural centres of the entire Gorenjska region, including their cultural products and environmental initiatives, with the purpose of joint program development, the optimization of distribution and the promotion of cultural content throughout the region. With these means, we aim to empower the cultural sector, increase capacities, workforces, funds, and the frequency of information exchange.

The Gorenjska Region

Our goal is to shape Gorenjska as the prototype of a sustainable cultural region, with Kranj serving as its administrative flagship. To do so, we will increase options for drawing European cultural infrastructure funds, use joint-use models for public infrastructure to build awareness among public cultural capital, and learn good practices from European regional unification efforts. Empowering urban centres and shaping new venues for cultural production with new, decentralized municipal networks is paramount for the country's development of cultural diversity.

Gorenjska is home to 200,000 residents. Historically speaking, the region was under Germanic control for nearly a millennium, with the overwhelming majority of its territory falling under the state of Carniola. Laying at the symbolic crossroads of Europe, Gorenjska easily enters into dialogue with both the east and the west, as well as with the north and the south. Once Yugoslavia's well-developed northernmost republic, today it is again part of the south of Central Europe. We are northerners to former Yugoslavia and southerners to Central Europeans.

Towns in Gorenjska share a similar fate with other small cities in transition; the once strong industry has disappeared from urban centres and in its wake, carved out wide swaths of empty space, both physical and cognitive. Cultural production reflects these consequences, where feelings of anxiousness and inferiority dominate while the periphery wallows in its lack of ambition. We believe that the shaping of regional cultural agenda along with the rise of a smaller centre would combat the aforementioned negative conditions.

Our bid should be understood as an unmissable opportunity for the city's regeneration and the revitalization of

the cultural realm, given the region's segmented yet functioning non-governmental cultural and environmental sectors, as well as their more sustainable partnerships with state and municipal institutes, municipalities themselves, and lastly, development agencies. To facilitate a link to the rest of Europe, opportunities based on the region's cultural profile and the strategic coordination of content for urban development that connects human resources with implementational, technological, and educational capacities will be leveraged.

The priorities of using culture to unite the region include: raising the region's international profile, strengthening the image of a connected region in its inhabitants' eyes, a breath of fresh air for the region's cultural and urban spheres, a pursuit of balance between economic and environmental factors in the use of public and private infrastructure, and of the natural environment itself, the encouragement of environmental awareness, and to provoke conversation about decentralization and regionalization.

All programs we propose will be executed in the partnering regional towns. We do not wish the towns of Gorenjska contribute just their existing and already formed cultural projects and events to our content design. We strive to motivate them to follow the vision of the strategy of our bid for the title with their suggestions and ideas, as well as include their own stories and content. This is the only way for us to strengthen our capacities and give the region a new momentum.

The CULTU:RE Regional Platform

The concept of a cultural region is the brainchild of the Cultu:re platform, which has clear objectives in the timeline of our cultural strategy's activities. During the run-up to 2025, this plat-

form will help us target the mechanisms for cultural management and to improve the lives of our target communities by giving them the opportunity and the support to express themselves. Two most important tools of the capacity building development are the EU26+ and Academy for cultural managers. Until 2025, the same program will take on the function of key support infrastructure and its role will continue into the future as we use the knowledge gained as the ECC on connecting regional actors. As an example of good practice, Kranj and the Gorenjska region can spread the concept of sustainable development with twinned sister cultural regions.

Slovenian regional centres need to fight their way to greater significance and need to play a bigger role in the country's future. In light of the rampant touristification in the Slovenian capital, whose cultural programs are almost exclusively aimed at users and consumers of culture, effectively obviating opportunities for collaboration and innovation in designing cultural concepts through communities, we would like our prototype approaches to work towards the development of new urban centres and, as such, their communities (Kranj, Škofja Loka, Tržič, Jesenice, Radovljica, etc.) Decentralizing cultural production and innovating within it has particular benefits.

The approaching ECC title confronts us with the need to raise the country's level of dialogue between culture and the State, to draft recommendations and demand change in the management of key regional structures of cultural policy and to solidify the status of regional institutions and their financing methods. We will migrate sustainable cultural development from the regional scheme to the state level and in the next 5 years drive the discourse on Slovenia's regionalization.

Despite its small size, Slovenia is one of the EU's most diverse countries. Being surrounded by 4 different major European language groups gives it a unique position. Diverse geography and changes to political systems therein are but 2 of the factors that influence the development of Slovenian towns over the years, determining whether a certain town becomes a leading city or remains on the margins.

Kranj's Relationship with Europe

Modern Europe may be just around the corner, but it is still quite far, truth be told. The problems of modern Europe are just partly the problems of Kranj and Gorenjska. We have high levels of awareness and highly-educated communities, which nonetheless spend their days within their comfort zones. Confronting Europe and the Union means confronting all the problems of our modern era, inherently an uncomfortable ponderance. Cultural organizations do not avail themselves of mechanisms for drawing from European funds. Limited capacities result in the incomplete conversion of craft approaches into real work opportunities in the cultural sector. Such limited capacities and the lack of ambition are the sector's most oppressive factors, ones that define the city's cultural profile.

Kranj's Relationship with Itself

Let's take a stroll. Imagine an ethereal garden before the castle of a city, whose relative unimportance makes it more of a manor than a castle. The garden is surrounded by a stone wall, shining brilliantly in the western sun as a gentle breeze stirs the majestic willows. There is a white fountain in the garden, adorned with four creatures, as St. John of Nepomuk fights with two octopodes, and a grieving widow mourns above him. The legendary Slovenian sculptor Franc Berneker carved it from premium Carrara marble between 1911 and 1913. Decades ago, it was considered of Kranj's most treasured pieces of sculptural heritage – today, though, its octopodes are dead. It has been bone-dry for years. Although this scene appears par for the course in our city, our bid is a battle cry to combat this purported fate.

There is a low level of ambition and absolute lack of ambitious productions, especially among public cultural workers with strategies that can only be considered the bare minimum, in

which there are no international projects or intersectoral connections. The national promotion of cultural content is negligible, while smug satisfaction with minor half steps is epidemic. The shortage in human capital is palpable, along with a lack of spaces for co-creation; doors remain locked, facilities themselves neglected to fall apart in their solitude. Desire and will from creators and the population, on the other hand, is insurmountable. Creative communities are strong; they look forward to creating small miracles out of thin air. On the receptive end, the well-educated public appreciates the various creative projects.

Where are we?

Kranj is a small European city boasting a skyline from the Middle Ages and parts of the old wall constructed in antiquity. There are factories below the city, some of which still produce for growing markets, with adjacent others that have long since shut their doors. Kranj has undergone many such transformations to reach its current status, which is relatively good, even great in places. For example, Kranj enjoys the lowest unemployment and the highest birth rates in the country, a high purchasing power, an airport in its backyard, a train station and highway, plenty of interesting products and services in a beautiful natural setting, tons of opportunities for sport and leisure, delicious drinking water, relatively decent public infrastructure and infrastructure, all in a negligible distance from the country's capital.

The City Municipality of Kranj has 160 hectares of urban zones in some form of dilapidation, left to rot and to be ignored, and the problem is growing and becoming more complex. Seven formerly industrial areas in various stages of degradation have been identified as dilapidated in the immediate vicinity of the Sava River, the so-called old industry belt, and the old historic centre and the biggest residential

zone, Planina, have also been identified as such.

Rising against these challenges of urbanization, Kranj comprises of natural, technical, and cultural heritage which boost the inspiration and momentum for developing programs that contain a European dimension. Kranj, which was home to Slovenia's greatest poet France Prešeren, also hosts recipients of his eponymous award. The Prešeren Award Laureates Gallery presents the country's very best artists and lends Kranj an air of prestige. Prešeren Day, the annual Slovenian Cultural Holiday held on the 8th of February has its most significant celebrations in Kranj itself. The city's cultural institutions mark the most visits of the whole year on this day, propelling them into a new cultural year.

Kranj clocks the year around unique art festivals that are fueled by local artistic communities. The cultural content it produces is unique and intertwined with stories of cultural heritage and modern methods of expression. The week of drama, the festival of fine arts, the piano festival, jazz fest, the festivals of modern dance, photography, and pottery, collages and urban culture, art in public places, the country's biggest celebration of the cultural holiday, and a swarm of small-scale events blend with the region's big festivities, with the world music, folk music, and chocolate festivals taking centre stage.

The town faces an unfavourable public image. National media outlets rarely portray it as a cultural centre and the national tourist organisation never includes Kranj in its campaigns. The city's unique range of cultural products and services is drawn from a plethora of microworlds that are tackling the problems of lack and uneven distribution of funds. With the help of our program's pillars of support, they can develop into resounding and profound European stories.

Nonetheless, the city still isn't charging ahead at full steam; it still hasn't spread its wings and soared, as if moored by some intangible anchor. These are the culture wars waged between progressive and conservative factions typical of modern Europe. It is a conflict between those who treasure the inviolable sanctity of Carniolan sausage and those pushing hard for climate justice.

Overcoming Obstacles

Our historic town centre is, geometrically speaking, perfectly situated within its natural surroundings. Kranj's first architects and the masters that followed them treated the town harmoniously. Imbalances formed with the rise of industrialization and rampant materialism, as shopping malls, business centres, industrial zones, and strips of other materialistically-oriented business took shape. These imbalances today are hardly reflected just in shopping centres, but also in interpersonal relationships and traditions. If we understand what function traditions serve, then we can together innovate upon them. If we understand what our heritage is communicating, then as a society,

both Slovenian and European, we can revitalize it.

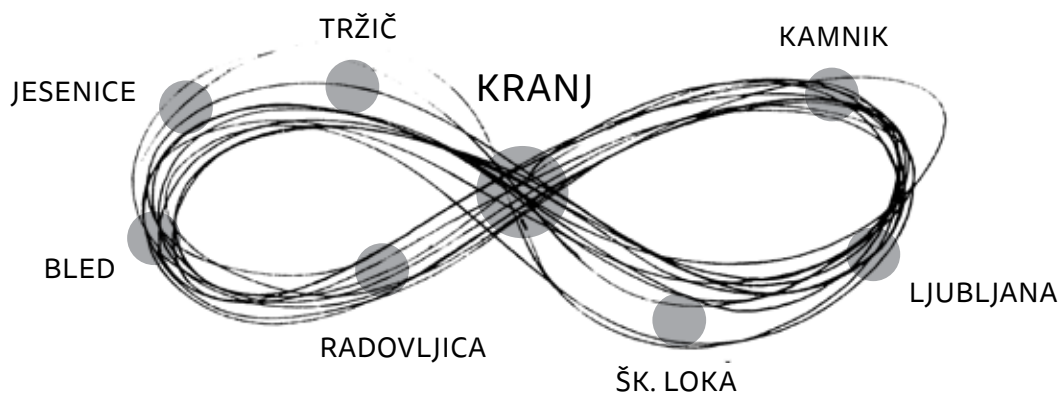
In recent years, Kranj has undergone a regeneration of cultural development, with attempts at urban renewal, led primarily by tightly-knit NGOs and individuals working in culture who knew how to seek a conversation with the city, its public institutions, and the business community. That collaboration has paid off nicely, inspiring new impetus. The city has awoken culturally and conversations about Kranj are again on the tongues of those who live outside the city's borders. Residents and visitors have learned Kranj's secrets and are excited about what more there is to learn, bringing to light the previously forgotten.

To be Culture Capital, is to grasp the opportunity for a permanent symbiotic arrangement of cultural dynamics, creative enterprise, and an environment that fosters social innovation. In other words, the title is a catalyst for everyone in the city and region to become responsible – together – for development. A narrative of positive transformation will allow us to breathe with lungs wide open. As Slovenia assumes the presidency of the EU Council in just over a year, we are set to take on the first such challenge in combining policies and programs aimed at culture and the environment. Notably, just 4 kilometres from Kranj's core, the Union's future will be discussed by elite members of European politics at the Brdo Estate.

Explain the concept of the programme which would be launched if the city is designated as European Capital of Culture.

0.4

Figure 1: **The Infinity of Connections of the Gorenjska Towns**



Our concept aims to highlight sustainable symbiotic development through a scheme of sustainable culture. Ecologically-centred concepts are becoming topics of household debate and we must once again take inventory of the relationship between us and the surrounding world. Alongside climate justice, it is essential to pay our attention closer to food equality and take another, more intimate look at food policy with a new food pyramid suitable in this new millennium. Intergender and intergenerational relationships must be revitalized as a sine qua non for finding a common language of racial and spiritual tolerance, and even tolerance for the animals in our living environment. These are our challenges in carving out Europe's future.

What inspires us?

We sought out inspiration for our program in the natural heritage of the region carved out by the meandering Sava River, which twists like a blue spine through the Gorenjska region. Its riverbed forms the shape of the letter S, since, just as any given aquatic system, we always return to basics, to the beginning, rounding out the remaining sides of the infinity symbol. We see a bee inside this shape, the symbol of imbalanced environmental development and its consequent effect on the human world. The inextricable dance of cause and effect lies in the never-ending outline of the infinity symbol itself. Its middle point represents Kranj as the region's centre, gaining in importance and relation. Every end is a new beginning, with interconnectedness being the vital, crucial concept conveyed by its design.

The Infinity of time and Finality of Space

Kranj's physical appearance is strongly coloured by the jutting cliff on which its centre was built, the cultural rock and archaeological gemstone, jutting proudly over the confluence of two rivers. The rivers tell a tale of cycles, impermanence, antiquity, and self-evidence. Life along these rivers is living heritage, explaining the character of the region and city, and it tells stories of migrations to and from. Migrations are an omnipresent part of nature. How do birds migrate, where do the freshwater fish go, what about alpine insects and other fauna? As the sands of time fall, which grain disturbs them? What is disturbing them now, in the Anthropocene? How does human existence disturb them? Slovenia is extremely agrarian in nature, and by far the most invasive species here is corn, feeding both humans and animals. Residents are ever more affected by agricultural and environmental policy, as well as cultural politics. How can we connect agricultural and cultural policy at the European level? By establishing a dialogue between urban centres, residents and artists alike will be extremely important for understanding the region's future.

Old Lady Europe

Central Europe is losing its old-growth forests, its native flora and fauna, and the landscape has been severely

over-engineered. Climate change relentlessly transforms our traditional 4 seasons into 2: summer and winter, both in their extremes. The meek of the earth are found in every nook and cranny of our social and natural surroundings.

Women's rights and equity are an eternal topic of modern discourse, both in Europe and around the world. Our programs seek to address this topic without limiting discourse to natural gender. What research can we conduct, and what art can we make to portray topics that reach above women's rights? We would shift the focus on women's struggle to the rights of all those who lack agency and the effective means of decision-making. We connect the unseen groups in every layer of society through the topic of European diversity and demographics. A new social class is emerging, one of single-member households, senior citizens, women living with the consequences of regulated natural processes, lonely men, misunderstood individuals, those suffering from modern social illnesses. Concurrently, environmental regulation is carving out a new link between the social rights and the rights of plants, animals, waterways, etc.

In European demographics, the overbearing number of senior citizens cannot be considered a problem. A society's very success is measured by the health and long life of its oldest members. It follows, then, that a society with many healthy seniors is a flourishing society.

The Infinity of Thought

Nature invented its own system for self-regeneration; we humans should internalize this system for our own and for our symbiotic development. The onslaught of new inventions aimed at manipulating nature encumber the quest for sustainability. The conversation between us and nature is one of yin and yang, or man and woman, equal and opposite forces that must meet as one. Natural principles have been forgotten, though their traces can be found in our country's folk mythology. Modern heritage defines principles for us that were forged in an era and word that cherished a pioneering spirit, new inventions, and the march of progress.

Gorenjska (like Europe itself) is full of primarily male pioneers who shaped the region's cultural profile. We stand today on the foundations of that heritage of land, language, and myth. The data cloud gives us new perspectives on identity and collective memory with new technological mechanisms. New voices, new narratives, and new ways of using information shed light on new angles and show heritage more broadly and critically, not merely as a collective sum of knowledge, relationships, and convictions. Jointly addressing personal inheritance and collective heritage opens a broad field, where the difference between genders in the course of history plays an important role.

Program Concept and Vision

Our program for the European Capital of Culture is aimed at realizing citizen initiatives by using urban cultural formats and empowering cultural communities, not just in Kranj and Gorenjska as a region, but throughout Slovenian and beyond, as well as uniting sustainable environmental narratives with cultural ones. Our communities are not passive, but active, full of ideas and momentum; what they lack is a proper public support environment, facilities, and a place in our adopted political strategies. The importance of support environments as a mainstay, not just in the years running up to 2025, cannot be stressed; their role is primary, not secondary. Our programs are designed as three web-like structures, concentric rings of support, in which all stakeholders, collaborators, and programs themselves have a part to play. The three levels together, along with the strategic framework, comprise the basis of our **Sustainable Cultural Region**.

Urban renewal facilitates the existence of new facilities for creation and new platforms for tackling societal relations and traditions in need of a fresh new look. **The innovation centre** invites researchers and forges links between research and art, while credibility and reach are achieved through the prototyping of models and the encouragement of innovation in our everyday lives. **The Prešeren residences** bearing the name of Slovenia's greatest poet are now becoming a network and an institution in its own right. Within its walls, the borders

between consumers and producers of culture are crumbling, as well as those between amateur and professional art. New models of dealing with cultural resources are arising, new publics are reached, and high levels of quality are sought in design and implementation.

In relation, three programs are executed to form a yearly program strand called **Trilogy**. Firstly, **TAKT** is a program where the world slows down and takes a moment for contemplation. It researches spaces of wonder, the tactile nature of beauty, and the

meaning of good thinking. Secondly, **BIEN** is the biennial of simple living, well-being, and sustainable progress that we are launching in 2021. It was drawn from the fabric of biological, geological, and archaeological knowledge about our land, its environment, identity, industrial heritage, and tradition. Finally, **START** is a playground where innovations and a pioneering spirit overlap. It takes an obsession with technology and redirects it towards productivity, innovation, and new reinterpretations. There are three

primary categorical programs, coupled with support programs, to form a comprehensive common thread and program triad.

Legacy of the Program

The support structure was built to ensure that the content programs become permanent. As part of TAKT, the Museum of Modern Agriculture will be built, while BIEN will help us launch the Biennale of Well-Being, and through START, we will unveil The Pioneer Awards.

Figure 2: **Concept of the Program**

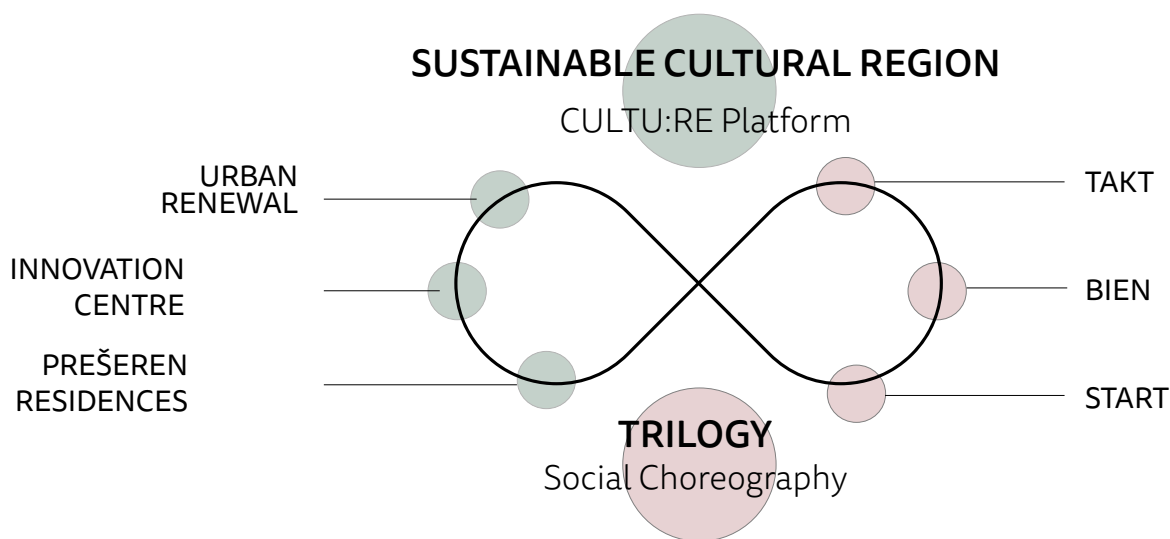
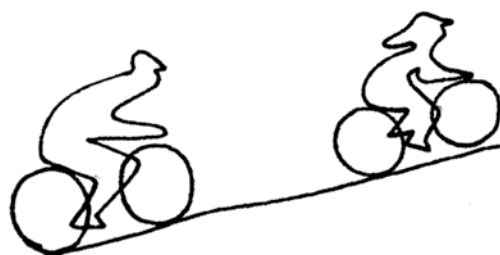


Table 1: **Strategic Frame**

| THEMATIC OUTLINE | SUPPORT STRAND | CALL TO ACTION | CONTENT STRAND | THEMATIC OUTLINE | EFFECTS | LEGACY |
|------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|------------|----------|
| COMMON | URBAN RENEWAL | CLAIM | TAKT | ENVIRONMENT | CULTURAL | MUSEUM |
| SOURCES | INNOVATION CENTRE | THINK | BIEN | WORK | SOCIETAL | BIENNIAL |
| CHANGES | PREŠEREN RESIDENCES | PLAY | START | KNOWLEDGE | ECONOMIC | AWARD |
| DEVELOPMENT | SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL REGION | SUSTAIN | TRILOGY | RIGHTS | ECOLOGICAL | MODEL |
| | CULTU:RE PLATFORM | WALK THE TALK | SOCIAL CHOREOGRAPHY | | | |
| | Capacity Building Strategy | Audience Development Strategy | Participation Strategy | | | |

1. CONTRIBUTION TO THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY



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?

1.1

Kranj has been lacking a strategic vision for decades. It is in sore need of a plan that would seek to answer questions about what kind of cultural and urban development we want and deserve. In fact, there has been practically no vision of cultural development to speak of in regional strategies whatsoever. This is not merely restricted to Kranj, though, as an artistic vision has been missing at the state level as well. We pursue the priorities of EU Agenda for Culture and our common sense in an aim to change this.

Strategic context

The struggles so typical of Kranj and other towns in Gorenjska include insufficient capacity, ultra-centralized production, unambitious programs, and a simple lack of facilities. Some of our problems are shared by the rest of the country, too. We are a nation with strongly defined negative emotions towards institutional incompetence. We are nostalgic about the past, embarrassed about our small size and insignificance, and we poorly understand that meaning of greater public good and cultural development, which are both often framed as unnecessary expenditures. As Europeans and citizens of the world, we are further burdened by the gravity of cultural and technical heritage, largely formed by a subset of over dominant males in the public sphere. Despite our (real and imagined) hin-

drances, we are nonetheless as a society faced with three strong drivers of change: the huge capacity for mobilization, keen awareness about environmental issues, and passionate positive emotion for the international achievements of Slovenian groups and individuals.

A low level of ambition coupled with a lack of reach and any semblance of a visionary mindset are common problems plaguing many strategies adopted ahead of the ECC. That they do not understand or, worse, do not even know how to ensure that a strategic objective is met translates to a fragmented and impotent vision of cultural progress. Other strategies fail to view culture as the connective tissue joining all other sectors as one. Some of them stoop so low as to mention culture merely in passing. This irresponsible approach denies our city

and region's great potential which is teeming with culture, bursting with opportunities for local communities' projects and new forms of cultural tourism. Accordingly, we worked with the city's administration, which thankfully supports our ideas and intentions (our bid was supported by all municipal groups), with the administrations of other towns in Gorenjska (our bid is officially supported by 18 municipalities), and with producers of cultural content, communities, and partners to set the ball in motion towards positive change. New priorities – namely being awarded the title ECC – led us to set in place new strategic objectives for cultural development, as well as to include in the regional strategy cultural development per se, its significance, and the importance of establishing intersectoral and international connections.

Status Quo

Various other strategies adopted through 2020 include the Kranj Cultural Program 2015-2020, the Tourism Development Strategy 2020, and the Gorenjska Regional Development Program 2014-2020 (RRP).

On the right their key priorities and bullet points of visions are featured.

We are a tool, a means to the end of realizing our common, unified vision of cultural development

The decision for Kranj and Gorenjska to campaign together for ECC is a catalyst for our smouldering creativity and for the need to come together. The temporal overlap of the strategies, which are in an active phase of formation, is extremely important for the decision to spearhead a sustainable cultural model for the city and region. The 4 strategies in formation are the (i) MOK Cultural Strategy 2021-2026, (ii) Regional Development Program 2021-2027 (led by the regional development agency BSC), (iii) the Gorenjska region's Sustainable Cultural Region plan, and (iv) Kranj's Strategy for Urban Development to Achieve the Title of ECC.

The cultural model in place, which we would like to develop further with the city's administration and other regional structures, is based on sustainability and fiscal responsibility. The logic behind development follows the concept of Kranj as a city with immense potential and of its transformation during the candidacy and the model's subsequent dispersion throughout the broader region. The current challenges facing us are the cause behind the search for the best way to outline strategic guidelines, ones that understand the seemingly endless array of cultural workers, link them, and give them an international platform.

Priorities of the regional development vision laid out by RRP 2014-2020:

1. Gorenjska should be diverse and easily accessible
2. Gorenjska should be a hub of corridors, countries, worlds
3. Gorenjska should rejuvenate itself, and
4. Gorenjska residents should respect tradition while still innovation

Priority guidelines for the Kranj municipality's development in the RRP 2014-2020:

1. Care for the environment
2. Smart city infrastructure
3. Knowledge hub
4. Open city (culture & tourism)
5. A community of healthy and happy people
6. An athletic city

Key bullet points in the MOK TUS 2016-2030 vision include:

1. Becoming a more attractive place for businesses, new technologies, young and talented workers, new IT and tech solutions
2. Facilitating active, healthy, creative lifestyles for all generations
3. Ensuring better transportation options to the suburbs and countryside, more public transport, cycling, and walking
4. Creating a city centre that is attractive for living, shopping, recreation, and tourism
5. Treating our environment and cultural heritage with delicacy and care, and ensuring that local farms process local food

Priority guidelines for cultural development in the MOK's 2015-2020 strategy:

1. Improving the expertise and collaborative potentials of stakeholders working in culture
2. Increasing the importance and significance of culture as a prospective field for the municipality
3. Achieving an open city by encouraging the quality of cultural activities, events, and our "cultural patterns", i.e. our tolerance, openness, level of appreciation, and our willingness to engage in cultural dialogue

Kranj's development and marketing vision as a tourist destination through 2020:

1. Becoming a known and recognized tourist destination
2. Exciting people with the city's incredible appearance and vibe, its events, meetings with locals, towering names from the past, and the history of the city's golden era
3. Let's take advantage of the city's central location and position ourselves as the perfect place to start exploring Slovenia
4. Ensuring a feeling of safety and neighbourhood belonging with events that make people happy

KRANJ'S CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Kranj's Cultural Strategy 2021-2026 will be built upon 5 objectives, which link all the strategic priorities of our bid and the absolute necessities of the city itself.

Cultural and urban development lead to a higher quality of life in the city and the region:

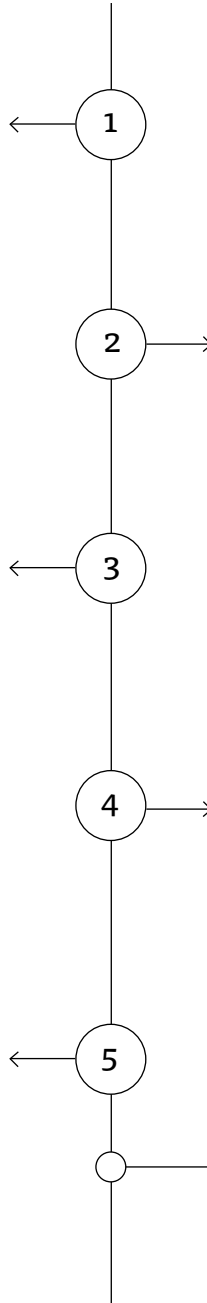
art is a process, evolution; development must be pre-meditated and constant, aligned with long-term sustainable effects; cultural content must be disseminated more evenly; spaces must be open to the whole spectrum of voices; cultural stakeholders must have options for education and for familiarization with other cultural models.

Strong communication of content through insistence on the quality and excellence of our programs:

responsibly addressing pressing global issues; developing programs for the diversity of cultural and artistic experience through messages of sustainability; fearlessly addressing unpleasant local topics and correcting pain points through art; destigmatizing unseen groups and empowering their messages; preserving and lending new strength to already extant content.

Education and tourism as key development mechanisms for culture:

education for all generations, not just children, but addressing volunteer-based inter-generational education; linking art with the education system; increasing the range of products and services in cultural tourism and including them in civil society's initiatives; shaping models to convert consumers into producers; implementation of examples of good practice from throughout the region.



The capacity of facilities, human resources, the public, and inter-resource and international networking are all increased: cultural models are prototyped that link the private sector and creative workers in light of the cultural sector's principle weakness – dependence on public, municipal funds; educating cultural workers on EU financial funds; opening dialogue with national institutions and the joint development of long-term plans for managing facilities and programs; revitalization of facilities and increasing human resources.

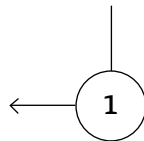
Equitable distribution of activities through the meticulous planning of content: shaping the city's structural operating body and including regional cultural workers, who work together to manage the annual timeline, connect and coordinate programs, and enhance large sporting events with increased capacities and an increased range of cultural products and services; initiate and identify substantive campaigns in the years of preparation ahead of 2025, giving major festivals and heritage sites a boost so as to maximize their reach.

Long-term Sustainability Plans

The cultural strategy's five objectives will help ensure balanced long-term sustainable plans. The program will be built between 2020 and 2030, outlined as budget constraints allow as we constantly look for more funding possibilities. 2025 falls right at the end of the new financial framework EU, meaning that we will have options for developing our HR capacities after the prospective year 2027. We will ensure the continuation of newly created programs through the joint development of existing public finance programs. The knowledge and experience we acquire as the candidacy's program take shape will be expanded after 2025 to culturally and infrastructurally less developed regions, especially ones in former Yugoslavia and elsewhere in the Balkans.

OBJECTIVES TO MAKE GORENJSKA A SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL REGION

The centres of culture in Gorenjska newly designed and revitalized: programs embedded in the program's art networks; permanent workshops and interactive activities for all generations established, markedly strengthening links between the educational and cultural sectors



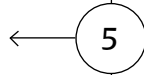
The region's cultural capacities are connected and united: ambitious programs are encouraged; the Cutu:re platform translates to a visionary mentality that transcends the local environment, invites participation; Gorenjska 2021 cultural program is designed to accompany the Slovenian presidency of the Council of the EU

Mobility, cycling and walking, and handicapped access: become the priorities in designing cultural infrastructure; cultural infrastructure is not being built again from scratch, but rather, crucial infrastructure is revitalized, together with program content and human resources.



Tourist points become accessible: promotional materials and communication tools optimized to reduce consumption; maps and signage updated and harmonized, with high-tech communication solutions introduced; natural landmarks carefully preserved, in part through increased communication on the region's most vulnerable and over visited landmarks.

People encouraged to spend more time in the region, cultural tourists included more in the production of cultural events, exhibitions, land art installations, etc. The region being made interesting due to its people and their talents, in addition to its stunning views, impressive mountains, and pristine environment, all of which are diminished by rampant touristification.



The cultural strategy's objectives and programs will be re-evaluated upon the end of the bid's first phase in the spring of 2020.

Sustainable Cultural Region

The objectives of the towns in the region were included in Gorenjska's plan as a sustainable cultural region. Small urban centres near Kranj are united in a joint program, and increased capacities are planned at the level of drawing funds, human resources, and audience reach. The most important stakeholders in drafting the region's strategy are municipalities, regional agencies, the private, cultural, and creative sectors, with an emphasis on increasing the role of the body in charge of regionally connecting NGOs, cultural workers, environmentalists, and agriculturalists. Increased mobility for all between towns and cities in the region must be ensured by creating handicapped access points, bike and walking paths, and increasing the capacities and lines of public transport from cities to the countryside and other points of interest. The region's touristification is handled delicately, with both its positive and negative effects addressed, focusing on a more sustainable and even distribution of visitors throughout the region.

Regional Priorities 2020-2030

The Gorenjska region's tourism strategy rests on two pillars: (a) Alpine environments with rich, well-maintained natural features, and (b) cultural heritage in old town centres and in the countryside. Key objectives include (i) making Gorenjska a well-organized and well-known tourist destination, (ii) developing attractive, integral tourism products with added value, (iii) increasing the quality of tourism infrastructure, (iv) encouraging sustainable development, and (v) encouraging small businesses and individuals toward increasing the competitiveness of products and services given market demands.

Jesenice:

1. Building cultural programs into products attractive and interesting for the public, networking for programs and experience,
2. Increasing the quality and competitiveness of tourism-based products and services,
3. Increasing interest in culture, engaging with the cultural system, educating citizens for art, reading, and library culture

Tržič:

1. Encouraging cultural creation, linking amateur cultural organizations and individuals, cultural education

Radovljica:

1. Become Gorenjska's most important culinary centre (the Radol'ca brand for chocolate and honey products, the planned Chocolate House, the development of organic farming and bee-keeping),
2. Launching an experiential park dedicated to Avsenik, the world-renowned accordion virtuoso

Culture Climate Change - Kranj's Development Strategy to Secure the ECC Title

Changing the perception of culture in the public eye through methodical regional connections that transcend unambitious public programs and the reminder of living on the periphery is imperative. The ECC guidelines demand strategies for cultural development in the city and region. To this end, we will build networks that increase the capacities of cultural production at four levels, namely developing audiences, empowering cultural management, opening renovated spaces, and internationalization. Furthermore, these networks will be emboldened by brave messaging. Bold communication helps us identify with communities and bridges topics important for urban and social development (stigmatization, morbid heritage, environmental problems, gender roles). The development of sustainable culture is ensured by the clever programming and interlinking of content, the annual distribution of events, and the multi-year process of building programs.

Culture Climate Change priorities:

1. Revitalizing dilapidated or lost heritage with new content and infrastructure development
2. Increasing the Creative and cultural industries (CCI) capacities along with those of existing cultural models through education, cultural tourism, and prototyping new content
3. Living in harmony with the environment, while balancing the fruits of creation (art and innovation) with visitor flows (residents and visitors)

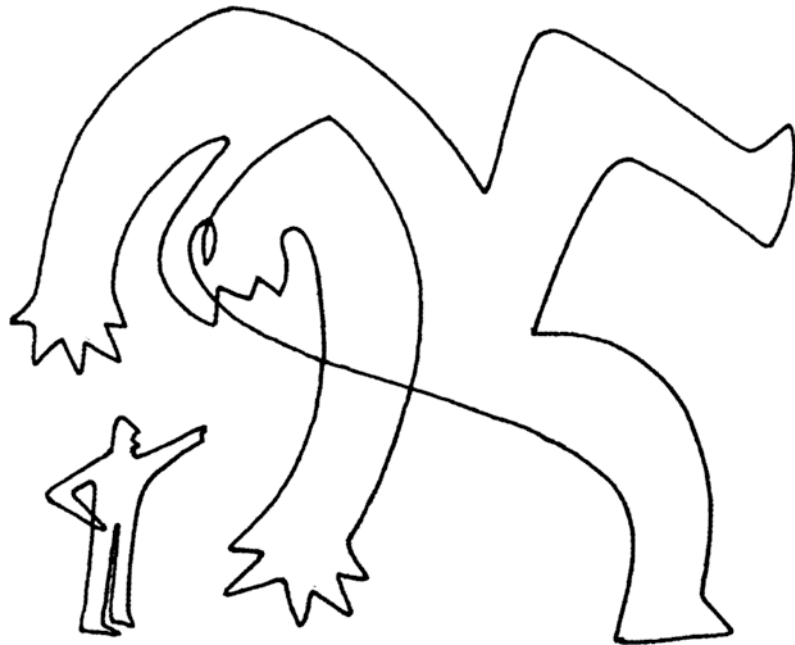
Additionally, to improve on our idea of cultural development, we have developed a participative strategy involving communication with residents, visitors, producers, and decision-makers. This would be run in conjunction with our new model which increases cultural management capacities.

Walk the Talk - How to Excite the Public

To achieve the program's objective, we will call out communities with a broad reach following the four foundations of development - culture, society, economy, and ecology. Calls to action are formed around the ideas with which communities can identify, internalize and make their own, include in their initiatives, and spread further. Four principles are used to increase community participation: Claim/Play/Think/Sustain. We alert on the realities of how we treat our environment and common assets, a playful way of joining fun and knowledge, deep thought about how we work and eat, and a blueprint for preserving acquired rights. Successfully addressing all four of these domains will allow us to share this model of calling to action to other European cities facing similar challenges as ours.

All of these calls to action have two places in our program design, both in support roles and content roles. The defined requirements for common urban renewal are manifested in the TAKT action points. We have applied thoughts about food and sources at the Centre of Innovation to the broadly designated content of BIEN. When playing with forms of artistic residences in the Prešeren Residences, we draw our knowledge from the START program. Continuing to maintain our new understanding of the public good in the Cultu:re regional integrative support program touches on a key segment in the international Trilogy program, namely rights. Our messages transcend programs and are by cross-referencing consolidated throughout the program so that they function coherently and thoughtfully. The programs are not meant to end, but they reappear continuously to encourage the public to return time and time again.

The model of increasing the capacities of cultural management is outlined under the next question, where our plans for boosting the reach of culture and cultural production are described in detail.



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.

1.2

The capacities of the cultural and creative sector are increasing in partnership with regional development agencies and the mentorship unit of the operative model for preparations ahead of 2025. Remapping human resources is one of the most important targets in cultural politics to the end that more people seek public and private funds, along with new sources of cultural production. Creativity and cultural development will flower in earnest when both facilities dedicated to creation through public-private partnerships and resource sharing is increased.

INCLUSION

Strengthening the capacity and expertise in the cultural and creative sector

Systematically, full advantage must be taken of existing knowledge, experience, and results born from previous subsidized projects. Support programs will be launched to understand the investments in collaboration and human connections, including

members of creative industries in the process. We will carve out roles for facilitators mediating between the cultural programs and experts in communication, audience building, and internationalization. Jointly, these programs aim to realise possibilities for expanding spontaneous networking and project creation.

A fresh yet critical look at the European dimension is necessary. Our programs will encourage regional and

European collaboration on culture and the environment between cities, artistic communities, and producers of cultural content. The messages will reflect current European topics, the foundations of our common culture, and our wealth of diversity.

The imperative of culture, which spreads the reach of cultural and creative content, is "culture for everyone". The buildings left to crumble over the past two centuries need be

renovated with modern production requirements while ensuring access and infrastructure for marginalized groups. Handicapped citizens, cyclists, and young mothers are just three of the groups that the extant infrastructure fails to accommodate, despite the endless European narrative and funding beseeching countries to correct the shortcomings of buildings constructed in days of old.

The active participation of communities in creating and developing cultural content will be expanded through new methods of financing and building capacity. New producers of cultural content and underexposed culture will be endowed with new opportunities. Interest in culture and cultural happenings will be sparked in untraditional groups. As a destination seeking to provide boutique cultural tourism, we will introduce new types of innovative products and services, bringing together small enterprises focused on tourism and a cultural range of artistic residences for the collaboration and creative education of European citizens.

PROTOTYPING

The concept's innovative, transectoral character: economic, environmental, and social innovations

The successful candidacy of Kranj and the Gorenjska region for 2025 will be catalyst for the region's transformation over the next 5 years, with cultural and creative sectors driving social innovation and economic progress with content at the crux.

—> Imagine a textile biennale where new solutions lead the battle against microplastics and fast fashion, transforming clothes designers to research new materials and curators to reconsider exhibition spaces. Meanwhile, like-minded startups, investors, accelerators, and design students, all of whom are well poised to launch these ideas into practice.

—> Imagine a German company developing a beehive monitoring sys-

tem that also discerns climate changes in nearby fields and forests based on the sound of the bees' activity. Imagine a company from Gorenjska that is developing a methodology to introduce AI into cultural, energetic, and industrial processes. Both companies will be invited to collaboration at the Innovation Centre with the aim of fortifying the importance of the cultural capital in social and entrepreneurial characters.

—> Imagine a program serving inspiration for spontaneous cultural and social projects launched by citizens, who, under the umbrella of the ECC, will more easily turn their ideas into tangible results that reach audiences. Our dream is a symphony of civil will that builds true, and programs, going so far to revolutionize the municipal budget.

—> Can you imagine an urban choreographer? An urban choreographer is someone who understands her city, feels its vibrations, hears its untold and ignored stories, and who knows how to weave a web of the urban comings and goings. The choreographer records these stories, often tied to a certain location (factories, forests, markets, cultural heritage sites, etc.) and creates a dynamic route through them (a walk, a dance), letting groups listen to the fascinating tapestry of tales as they progress through the city. Such a format does wonders for the communicative reach of any given message, as both residents and tourists alike can experience a subjective side or take on a certain place's history. The city belongs to its residents again.

CEO ACADEMY FOR CULTURAL MANAGERS

Main instrument for the capacity building

The creative and cultural sector suffers sorely from a dearth of "directorial" skills, including team management, strategic positioning, ambitious visioning and implementation, networking, linking creative

content to modern trends, and marketing culture, etc.

We will thus use a prototyping method to educate and equip our staff and network of cultural managers working on ECC. These efforts in 2020-21 and 2023-24 will mean drafting a curriculum for participants from public and private cultural organizations who will turn their acquired knowledge into concrete projects. From 2024-2026, these participants will realize these projects.

This CEO academy will function as a cultural accelerator with the purpose of cultivating a new generation of cultural workers and managers. They will contribute their new expertise to content developed for the ECC year and in addition, include sustainable concepts for the legacy years. The CEO Academy will combine currently fragmented and segmented knowledge from the IEDC International Business School Bled, Kranj's IT development centre, mentors from the Creativity Centre at the Museum of Architecture and Design, and successful creative cultural managers at home and abroad. The curriculum will take the form of 20-30 educational modules in the form of regular short workshops and multi-day intensive seminars with foreign guests and facilitators. It will also include two to three residencies abroad per participant. These residencies will help cultural managers forge lasting personal bonds and networks, build new partnerships and ideas, earn experience in new projects, and use their newfound knowledge, skills, and capacities to lead cultural institutions to promote newly-created content.

Our objectives translate into well-crafted action categories, all interlinked within the strategy of the city, region, and candidacy. These categories were designed in accordance with the European Agenda for Culture 2019-2022. Existing initiatives seeking new European partnerships within the newly established regional network are included in designing the support environment to boost infrastructure capacities, management, and audiences. The residence program, the innovation centre, and the platform for urban renewal all form foundations for the continued development of cultural content.

The ECC as springboard and catalyst

The privilege to be European Capital of Culture is but a means to an end: an encouragement and catalyst for the sustainable cultural and urban development of the city and region. We began in 2017 to prepare for this candidacy with collaboration programs and the expansion of capacities along with European artists, curators, and plans to further the reach of available cultural and creative production funds. In 2018, 2019, and further into 2020, we directed efforts towards developing programs and strengthening partnerships. At the same time, should our candidacy prove successful, we will publish a new bid, with ancillary preparations for further action.

2020 is crucial in preparing programs and support environments, serving as a crash course for content creation. It serves as a trial run where European topics can be complemented by contemporary models of European cultural politics, as Kranj will serve as Slovenia's seat as President of the Council of Europe in year 2021. By then, we will have already recorded the first success indicators, analysed the data, concluded our serious evaluations,

and set plans in motion to continue qualitative and quantitative metrics beyond 2025.

Development continues from 2021 through to 2024 with upgrades to the aforementioned objectives with a view to the awarded title; regardless of the bid's outcome, we endeavour to implement our proposal to appropriate scale, focusing on one of our proposed programs for each of the eight program categories and on a diverse accompanying program that aims to be publically far-reaching. The title year will make it possible for all Slovenian bid cities to present the best segments from their proposals, along with opportunities for collaboration. After a Slovenian host city is chosen, we will draft a program in advance to implement a strong management structure to deal with the title's legacy and momentum in the country. 2025 must become a milestone in Slovenian cultural policy, as well as a trigger for the country's decentralization of regional cultural connections, no matter the city chosen.

The ECC as a Focuser of Development Processes.

ECC and 2025 are the most important drivers of the programs mentioned

above. The cultural strategy for 2021-2026, an upgrade to the existing one, has 2025 in mind as its central pivot point. Mid-term goals will have been finalized and will be aligned with the Bid Book's content in the first and final round of selection; their principle mechanisms will centre on the inclusion of the public, as well as prototyping, which assumes new projects and the upgrade of existing ones, from a small, manageable extent of change through iterations to ambitious projects, and from the validation of local needs and desires to true European dimensions. Such research on prototyping began in 2019 to find which types had the greatest potential, and in accordance with findings, more detailed guidelines for cultural strategies after 2025 will be constructed. Looking to 2030 and beyond, we would like to have finalized, preserved, and furthered the legacy left behind by the ECC title. Although we expect a modest dip in enthusiasm and financing in 2026, the key result left in the wake of a successful ECC year is a regional cultural picture in which ECC plans have blossomed into prototypes, upgrades, and innovations.

Table 2: **Timeline of Activities**

| | | 2016-2019: preparation, pilot projects | | | | 2020-2024: prototyping of the program, public engagement | | | | | ECC | 2026-2030: endure, sustain and further develop | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|------|------|------|--|------|------|------|------|------|--|------|------|------|------|
| | | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 |
| SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL REGION | Forming of the Team Kranj25 | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | | | | | | |
| | Concept Preparation | | x | x | x | x | x | | | | | | | | | |
| | TOOL: CULTU:RE | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| | Academy for Cultural Managers | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| | 1. URBAN RENEWAL | | | | | | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | |
| | Sounds of You | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | | | |
| | Change of Perspective | | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | | | | | |
| | Texture of Patterns | | | | | | | x | x | x | x | | | | | |
| | Mini Kranj | | | | | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| | 2. INNOVATION CENTRE | | | | | | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | |
| | Tactile Sensations | | | | | | | | x | x | x | x | | | | |
| | Off-Grid | | | | | | | | | x | x | x | | | | |
| | MaterialLab | | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | x | |
| | 3. PREŠEREN RESIDENCES | | | | | | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | |
| | Laureates | | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | | | | | |
| | Wordsmiths | | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | | | |
| Naturelovers | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | |
| Buy Less Other Than Art | | | | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | |
| TRILOGY | TOOL: SOCIAL CHOREOGRAPHY | | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| | 1. TAKT | | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| | Museum of Modern Agriculture | | | | | | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | |
| | Ambiences | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | | | |
| | Ceramics and Food Festival | | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | | | | |
| | Map Invasion | | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | | | | | |
| | 2. BIEN | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| | Biennale of Textile Art | | | | | | x | | x | | x | | x | | | |
| | Experiment | | | | | x | x | x | x | | x | | x | | x | |
| | Mill25 | | | | | | | x | x | | x | | x | | x | |
| | Armour of the Future | | | | | | | | x | x | x | | | | | |
| | 3. START | | | | | | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | |
| | Park of Lights and Shadows | | | | | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| | The Pioneer Awards | | | | | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| | Photographic Festival Kranj | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| The Veka Kokalj Experience Museum | | | | | | | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | |
| Digitalized Stories | | | | | | | | x | x | x | | | | | | |

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)?

1.4

Due to its operational smart, green, sustainable concepts, our candidacy strongly guides the discourse between culture, nature, tourism, and agriculture. Kranj and the Gorenjska region's sustainable development strategy is built on four pillars: culture, economy, society, and ecology. Our fundamental values, which weave the fabric of long-term effects, are based on open, connected, inclusive communities.

The Region's Transformation

Culture is what we call conceptual thinking that transcends art, language, and societal well-being. Sustainability itself is not just the measure of the survival of society or the planet, but of true preservation. Sustainability is a set of possibilities that decision-makers in a wealthy and ecologically-aware country improve on. The program's concept aims to foster connections between a community's high quality of life and sustainable culture by planning long-term effects for the people and economy in this region. Our programs and actions will contribute physically (with events, festivals, etc.), financially (with funds for projects and programs), and digitally (with knowledge, dialogue, and inspiration).

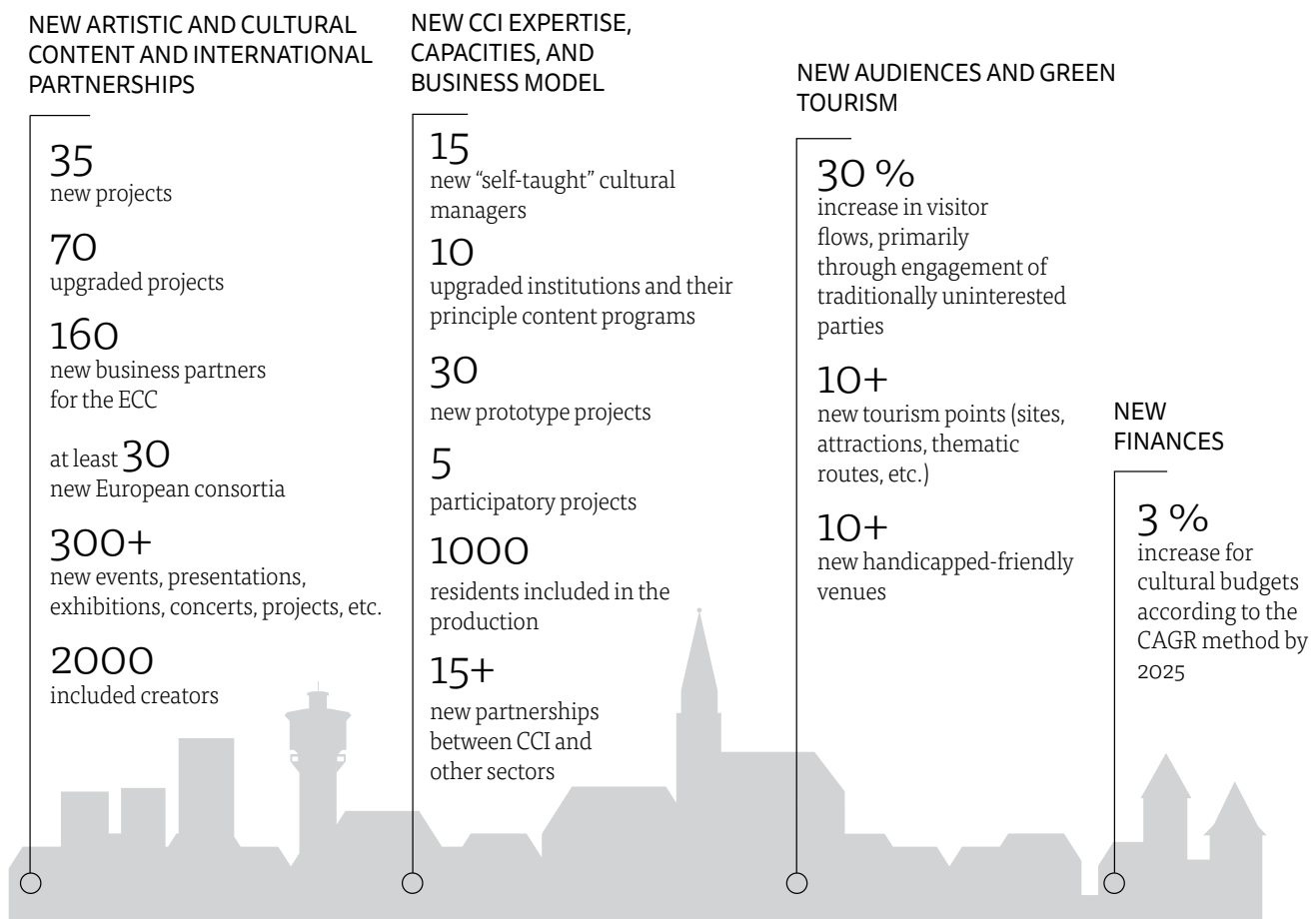
Tabela 2: **Effects and Consequences**

| | CULTURAL EFFECTS | SOCIETAL EFFECTS | ECONOMIC EFFECTS | ECOLOGICAL EFFECTS |
|---------------|---|--|--|---|
| PRECONDITIONS | contribution to the transformative power in shaping a region's cultural identity and appearance | objectives facilitating citizens' well-being and quality of life are followed | understanding of the new cultural and creative hubs, and opportunities to invest in cultural models | properly directed communication, connected to cultural, social, and economic aspects |
| ACTIONS | facilitated operative support groups for more sustainable, authentic production, promotion, and distribution of cultural content are introduced | inclusion of female creators and producers, along with volunteers and representatives of unseen groups, with an increase in the amount of content addressing equity and equality | new cultural, economic models, and heritage and facilities management models are introduced | innovative communication practices among the interconnected stakeholders representing environmental, urban, communal, and cultural interests are introduced |
| OUTPUTS | platforms, networks, and hubs, ensuring continued cultural content financing are established | exchange of expertise between regional and international partners, who use the jointly designed models of common management of content and facilities, are established | connections between the creative and cultural worlds, along with connections to small-scale enterprises and the city's and region's private sectors are solidified | new food policy at the State level, with care to education and civil jobs is recommended |
| OUTCOMES | European cohesiveness topics are broached through joint and disparate identity and heritage | European inclusion topics, along with diversity and social cohesion whereby citizens are included in the production of program content | rejuvenation of dilapidated spaces through public-private partnerships, | increase of community initiatives along with events and successful environmental campaigns, while mitigating rising temperatures which allows native flora to make a comeback |

European cultural capitals can become drivers of action against climate change, by focusing on residents' daily life choice in the areas of food, clothing, energy consumption, single-use plastic, and more.

Figure 3:

THE EFFECTS OF THE KEY STRATEGY ELEMENTS



Outline briefly the plans for monitoring and evaluation. 1.5

Our efforts to implement a new cultural strategy for the city and region will be monitored and evaluated using qualitative and quantitative indicators. Merely comparing the values of indicators before and after the ECC will prove insufficient, as we must achieve more than simple statistical analysis.

Slovenia needs a capital in 2025 that can communicate strong messages. How is reach measured? How is content measured? If our overarching theme is sustainable culture for a just society and a thorough understanding of space and the environment, then "flowering" must be our primary indicator. Working together with international partners, we will establish an analytical framework to monitor the reception and reach of our content as part of being awarded the title and launching the Cultu:re conference. This will be our contribution to marking the 40th anniversary of the

European Capital of Culture initiative, set to be celebrated in 2025.

The ECC project is solely an endeavour that will end December 2025, but a decade of transformation, where the period leading up to 2025 is set for the region's substantive preparation, and 2026-2030 serving as a period of reflection and data analysis as we convert our experience into new, lasting opportunities. We will earmark funds for managing the title's legacy and install procedures for monitoring the effects of our work through 2030.

But how to measure "flowering"? The

Cultu:re platform features a built-in plan for measuring the indicators achieved up to 2025, during the title year, and in the period after the title through 2030. Our scheme also includes participative evaluation methods, along with recommendations on how to measure cultural effects in light of changes in cultural policy and production. We will also use a methodological framework to quantify work within individual projects, e.g. in-depth interviews, interactive artwork, mobile and online measures, etc. Focus groups will also be used.

Table 4: **Analytical scheme**

| HAPPINESS INDEX | LEVEL OF AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local participation • Participation of cultural tourists • Women’s representation • Volunteer representation • Senior citizens’ representation • Self-evaluation about the possibility of influencing life in the city/region • Self-evaluation of identification with the city’s/region’s cultural identity • Self-evaluation of the sense of prospects in the city/region | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of program visitors • Number of active residents in programs • Number of programs that unite invisible groups • The amount of time that tourists spend in Kranj/Gorenjska • Number of repeat visits (Welcome Back program) • Level of tourist flow dissemination through the region |
| LEVEL OF PROGRAM ENGAGEMENT | LEVEL OF ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of international projects spearheaded by city or regional institutions • Number of international partners • Number of projects conducted in collaboration with a national artistic institution • Number of international artists • Number of newly activated domestic and foreign curators • Number of programs linking heritage with modern approaches • A world-class mini-art festival • Develop new creative models of management and education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permeation of zero waste principle • Projects that address sustainable topics • Environmental projects including public institutions • Number of international initiatives and collaborative projects between the cultural and environmental sectors • Level of recyclability of promotional material and merchandise • Level of permeation of “more culture, less consumption” principle • Amount of municipal natural habitats and efforts to help plants and animals • Number of newly planted conifers |
| LEVEL OF CAPACITY AND APPROPRIATE CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE | LEVEL OF FINANCIAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of infrastructure renovated for cultural purposes (directly and indirectly connected to increasing cultural capacities) • Amount of new public green spaces • Amount of newly marked bike paths • Level of cultural management’s international profile • Number of workers created • Index of highly trained human resources in the city/region | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of new financial resources for culture • The amount of private, marketing, and sponsor funds for culture • Level of dissemination of financial resources • Number of long-term projects in the region (financial plans for more than 2 years) • Number of events aimed at international networking and tying together the cultural sector • Index of the effect of the NGO sector on long-term policy and strategy • Number of self-maintaining cultural projects and companies |

Experienced experts in public opinion and social dynamics will help us apply this analytical framework.

2. CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT



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

2.1

VISION

Our bid uses a playful bit of wordplay* to herald the moment that Kranj and Gorenjska finally get their moment within the tenuous cycle of infinite iteration. The overwhelming beauty of our city and region takes centre stage in a harmonious, choreographed dance of the infinity of messages, harmonised with its heritage and promising future. This promising future will not speak just to our region but will be translated into European parlance and the language of our surroundings.

* “Neskončno” means Infinity, “Končno” Finally.



The highlights of our vision:

[IMAGE] Our profile is built on the interlinkage of heritage and modern cultural and creative undertakings. Cultural, industrial, and natural heritage are combined with contemporary urban, artistic, and creative expressions of Gorenjska's towns, comprising a unified vision. The development of urban infrastructure is underway alongside the shaping of cultural programs in urban and urbanized natural environs.

[ART] We are on the lookout for new, innovative curatory practices, ones that think outside the traditional box of Western canon. We promote dialogue between critical and aesthetic art, not allowing our messages to become dry and lukewarm. Art is presented in our program as a force that shakes up intellectual boundaries, bringing complex content to the everyday.

[CONTENT] Our conceptual framework is drawn from the significance of the Sava River in shaping natural, social, industrial, and cultural spaces in our region, and its impact on the identity of Kranj and the Gorenjska region's character; this character is bold, courageous, and joyous. It is

hard-working and attentive. It keenly understands the importance of the natural environment.

[COMMUNITY] We propose a jointly-managed content model where each member and link in the chain actively contributes. We bring together resident communities, NGOs, public institutions, companies, creative and cultural industries, institutes of education, development agencies, and municipalities. Actively managing human capital, content, and funds facilitates social innovations, and encourages permanent solutions that speak to the vast potential of the city and region.

[INFRASTRUCTURE] We would like to revitalize existing buildings that represent our cultural and industrial heritage. Our measures will focus on mobility and functionality for those with motor or sensory handicaps. We are revitalizing relationships and traditions, while bringing isolated and invisible audiences to the fold.

[NETWORKS] We create sustainable cultural networks among the towns in Gorenjska, as well as their institutions with national and international dimensions. We provide the necessary expertise and support for

excellent services, project and communication. We understand that in order to achieve sustainability in the texture of communication, we need to foster dialogue among the differing commercial and economical effects the increased number of visitors in the region has.

[SCOPE] Gorenjska will relate to the broader region, including the geographically close Austria, Italy, and Croatia, as well as historically-affiliated cities, with a special emphasis on Germany. We are becoming part of ambitious, sustainably designed EU projects underway that target the Balkan/Central Europe/Baltic corridors, the Alpine/Pannonian corridor, and Slovenia with the Balkans.

[EUROPEAN DIMENSION] We provide space and empower voices that recognize the important influence each European citizen has on the workings of the European Union. Non dominant groups and wide communicativeness are at the heart of our endeavors. We connect local, regional and European stories in to narratives of global dimentions the generate new meaning.

STRATEGY

The structure of the artistic and cultural concept pursues two objectives, namely the support program, which builds the Sustainable Cultural Region, and the content program, which comprises our efforts at transforming cultural development into reality. The structure develops eight content categories focusing on public spaces, urban architecture, rejuvenating heritage, mobility, social and material innovation, inventive pedagogical approaches, and effective, sustainable solutions for urban and cultural development. Inspiration is drawn from the local potential that has so

far slipped under that radar in terms of its complete realization. We would like to create inspirational stories and spread them among residents, cultural professionals, and the region's visitors. The artistic and cultural concept proposes that the ECC title serves as a catalyst for change throughout the region and that it rises to fill a missing link in the choreographed dance of urban residents, planners, investors, and communities. Realizing the potentials interlinked by the program's fibres will become possible only through collaboration and ambitious undertakings.

How will we achieve this?

- To become a Sustainable Cultural Region, we will carve out 3 fundamental support programs: Urban Renewal, the Innovation Centre, and the Prešeren Residences.
- To become a locally and internationally cultural destination with a cohesive, one-year artistic program in 2025 through the development of three content programs: TAKT, BIEN, and START.



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

2.2

The proposed programs are not events in and of themselves, those that last an evening and lose their significance immediately afterwards. They are a cohesive, stable program outline that communicates powerful messages, strong respect for heritage, and optimism for our future and coming generations. Their content will be in development up until 2025 in partnership with communities, international connections, and current issues. This year, we planned content that rests on sound foundations and they are poised to transform into strong program categories by 2025.

Important features that will be developed in the European spirit which will spread from Kranj throughout the Gorenjska region include the 50th anniversary of Slovenian Drama Week in 2020, the 10th anniversary of the International Festival of Fine Arts in 2021, the 70th anniversary of the Gorenjska Museum in 2023, and the 240th anniversary of the Botanical Garden at the Brdo Estate in 2025, etc. United, participative program design will facilitate broader contexts helping us reach a broader swath of the public.

A CALENDAR OF MAIN EVENTS IN 2025

Highlight project of the region - EU26+

One year has 52 weeks to be flavoured with fine dining, music, and social projects. We will link 26 towns, squares, and tourist attractions in the Gorenjska region with 26 other EU Member States. Each site will work with its European partner to produce both a winter and summer event or project. The public will be educated on issues pertaining to the environment in the countryside, dietary changes, and other ecological initiatives. The pilot project starts in 2021 to coincide with Slovenia chairing the Council of the Europe Union's presidency for half a year, or 26 weeks. This pilot will help us stage activities and projects to support Slovenia as the 2021 European Region of Gastronomy.

Each EU member or candidate country will enter into a project with its partner town in Gorenjska. We will connect Kranj and Kaunas, Bohinj and Balaton, Jesenice and Plzen, Jezersko and Narva, Petrovo Brdo and Rijeka, Kranjska Gora and Matera, as well as symbolically include Serbia into the EU in 2021 by connecting Novi Sad to one of the regional centres in Gorenjska.

SUSTAINABLE
CULTURAL
REGION

Understanding space

The initiative for the city's bid brought together stakeholders with whom we will work next year to reopen a bridge and reconnect the city with Sava Island, which in days of yore drastically influenced the city's urban development. Together we begin to work on cultural and recreational activities. Once a forest, then a botanical garden, then an area nostalgically linked to the Gorenjska fair, Sava Island has become a shopping centre in an era of irresponsible urban decision-making.

For more than 50 years, Sava Island has been the subject of court procedures aimed at finally determining its owners and finding those guilty for the damage caused by nationalization in former Yugoslavia. These topics suffocate the Slovenian architectural landscape, and must be discussed in earnest. The ECC project is a fantastic reason to address these burning issues of the heritage of our cities, region, and country. If we don't engage them now with the help lent by the title and by international communities, then we never will.

What does it mean to make a space your own? When does a space become public domain? How can we understand these spaces in the light of political changes that affect our country, its architecture, and urbanism per se?

2025 will begin where Kranj started developing as an urban centre, right along the Sava River. Augmented reality will transform Sava Island back to the botanical garden it once was, hiding the changes wrought by the rise of the shopping centre. Simultaneously, its parking lot will transform into a platform for the city's biggest dance event. Futurism and heritage, hand in hand. The generations united under the roof of this ad-hoc event venue are overjoyed, enjoying with pride: we did it! That catharsis of energy will feed the new momentum toward the Capital of Culture's activities.

We will celebrate culture on 8th February, along with the rest of Slovenia, with all the Prešeren award recipients, and the production of the multi-year resident programs. As the cultural new year rings in, we will direct key messages and present the result of the support programs from the Cul-

URBAN
RENEWAL

INNOVATION
CENTER

ture conference. Along with our Gorenjska partners, February will be the month of culture with a rich program throughout the region. Defining the needs and requirements that civil groups and creative communities have within the constructs of a regional model of program development (up to, during, and after ECC) coincides with large-scale cultural events throughout the region, where Slovenian cultural communities and selected Slovenian artists, the Prešeren laureates, play the principle role. The opening ceremonies are defined with a strong local scene and through the joy derived its reach and influence.

The national day of theatre at the end of March traditionally opens the region's biggest theatre festival, set to celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2020. By 2025, it will have evolved into the Festival of the European Month of Slovenian Drama. This most anticipated event is the first part of the trilogy set to unfold in Kranj, nearby towns, using the natural environment as the staging of a community-based participative choreography. More than 300 artists will help stage it, along with local communities, international curators, and choreographers under the baton of internationally renowned directors. Gorenjska's citizens will contribute their unique, specific knowledge to the scenography, costume design, and content itself of the staged works. This multi-year project will lead to new narrative mechanisms for local stories, forging outstanding, extraordinary achievements. The trilogy will continue on 1st June, the International Sava River Day, ending in mid-October.

As warmer months approach, we will invite people to uncover their natural surroundings, the water, the soil, the clay, and other natural materials. Tactile sensations and sensory sensitivity awaken as the plant and animal world come alive. The ambiances and atmospheres that we create are dependent upon the weather, some of which ebb even as others flow, illustrating our point that change is the only constant. Others tell stories from the local environment yet with international reach, stories that stem from the harmony of natural and constructed worlds. The TAKT program will use stories about cliffs, trees, rivers, and other natural processes to focus on: language and its source, cultural diversity, migratory patterns and mobility, understanding the ageing process and long lifespans.

Trash has also become a constant in the modern European life. Our relationship with trash finds a place in the BIEN program, a biennale of well-being, which targets three priorities of the EU cultural policy, namely (i) sustainability in cultural heritage, (ii) cohesion and well-being, and (iii) gender equality. The biennale's program, in development since the start of the ECC campaign, sees us creating options for endless European connections. We also work simultaneously on concepts that mitigate rampant consumerism. The textile and clothing industry, fashion, fast food, the quick growth of the creative sector, and energy production are all topics tackled by the program, using the intimate, personal stories of those who manage our industrial heritage and those who drive today's blistering technological progress.

START opens the winter season with new creations to complement our acquired experience, and we will celebrate our progress with our communities. It means time for games with a purpose and for inventions and other extraordinary progress introduced by the tech sector. Kids, young people, adults, and seniors play together as one, enthralled by potential. The park of light and shadow will form part of our network of luminal points throughout the cultural region, providing residents with the opportunity and necessary imagination to continue after the ECC year closes. The legacy of the new programs will serve as a new start to which we will heartily toast in December 2025 surrounded by an atmosphere of green changes.

The Legacy

In December, alongside our German co-capital passing the ECC baton to the Slovaks and Finns leading European culture forward in 2026, we will celebrate with great pomp in newly-renovated buildings from the region's legacy, toasting new successes and joint creation stories, to which the very same walls will bear witness. With the title year at an end, the platforms and networks of sister cultural regions maintain their financing structure and capacities, giving Gorenjska the space it needs to grow, the funds it needs to be creative, and the chance for new momentum and opportunities.

The support structure was built to ensure that the content programs become permanent.

- as part of TAKT, the Museum of Modern Agriculture will be built
- while BIEN will help us launch the Biennale of Well-Being
- and through START, we will unveil The Pioneer Awards.



SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL REGION

Tool:
CULTU:RE
Platform

↓
URBAN
RENEWAL

↓
INNOVATION
CENTRE

↓
PRESERVEN
RESIDENCES

OBJECTIVE
A

Gorenjska is almost entirely an Alpine region, crisscrossed with streams and rivers flowing from the snowmelt of countless jutting peaks. Soaring above them all is the mighty Mount Triglav, our highest mountain and the very symbol of Slovenia. Notably, Triglav is eponymous with Slovenia's only National Park, a protected Alpine zone proudly housed in its entirety within the Gorenjska region. Protecting Kranj, Gorenjska's main urban centre, is the impressive Storžič, a centrepiece in the city's magnificent view of the towering Kamnik-Savinja Alps to the northeast and the Karawanks along the border with Austria to the northwest. The Sava River is born of three different springs in the foothills under Triglav. First, it trickles out as a miniature lake in an estuary as the Sava Dolinka, then picks up speed south to where the Sava Radovna flows through the Bohinj Vintgar canyon. Soon, the Sava Bohinjka also merges, after rushing forth in

the form of the beautiful Savica Falls. The united streams make their way through Slovenia all the way down to Belgrade, where the Sava meets the Danube. The image and archetype of Triglav's trinity, so important for Slovenian identity, is reflected in the Sava's triple headwaters. As a young, meandering river, the Sava reaches Kranj, where it is converted into a vital force and form of creative power.

Since time immemorial, cities have been founded and grown based on natural characteristics, which in return flavour the character of those cities' inhabitants. Having the mountains and the Sava at our front door has shaped the very fibre of Gorenjska's residents, making them brave, hardworking, and always up for a bit of fun. The people here are quick thinking and entrepreneurial, as they learned quickly how to use the Sava's flow to power factories along its banks. That same human ingenuity has brought about those factories'

collapse, as globalization has made it easier to take advantage of cheap workforces in the global south. Tourists are enamoured of the region's character and natural wonders, and their ever-growing numbers account for almost a quarter of all overnight stays in Slovenia. Gorenjska accordingly has the most accommodation capacities of any Slovenian region. This region is at the top of the country in residents with higher education degrees, and also holds among the highest ranking in the life satisfaction index. We are the very best region in responsible communal waste separation, recycling, and disposal³. On our way, we inch closer to being a sustainably green region. An area of improvement is the mitigation of touristification's effects on the natural environment by way of re-allocating the distribution of visitors throughout the region. Fair working conditions in the food and tourism sectors may also be addressed.

Regional Development

A cultural region has much to teach about the diversity of different places, their myths and legends, and their historical narratives. Such a project links examples of good practice in this and other regions through culture, urbanism, geoculture, geotourism, cultural tourism, and cultural industry. It gives birth to creation centres and connects them with large-scale events based

in the hub of Kranj. New methods are sought for collaboratively using abandoned spaces for cultural purposes. These projects encourage the establishment of a Gorenjska-wide fund for subsidizing young people who create regionally-related content. Poetry collections will be written, documentaries filmed, artistic exhibitions will be staged, and performances will rebound. Traditional

elements will serve to inspire new artistic directions that actively engage senior citizens. Sports events of all seasons will double as cultural attractions, where visitors will interact with art and technology. Bike paths will crisscross the region, forming arteries between green e-bike stations. Finally, engagement metrics from Gorenjska will be publicly available to residents and creators as insight.

³ <https://tinyurl.com/qlj2mp3>

CULTU:RE Platform

We are building the region's sustainable development strategy on four pillars: ecology, society, economy, and culture. The strategy and the action plan for developing a model cultural region interpret culture as a driving force in transforming the towns and the region itself into a modern environment full of potential. It offers the chance to professionalize the NGO sector, which, together with municipal services, development agencies, spatial developers, and cultural actors, can influence public policy, even taking on some relevant tasks under its own auspices.

The Cultu:re platform and conference will be a crucial tool in managing the regional cultural model. We will launch this platform and conference together with regional and international partners in the years leading up to ECC. In 2025, it will successfully serve as information transfer through various production environments. The platform's most important projects include

the EU26+ Project and the Academy of Cultural Management.

Education modules and networks, and collaboration with regional agencies will help us bring in new regional and international connections, increase our understanding of available public and private funds for making sustainable cultural programs. We will maintain existing initiatives and form new programs that see Gorenjska linked with other regions, elevated to the broader macro-region, and placed side by side with areas with which it shares no immediate border, in the hopes of ensuring that corridors become less centralized. Capacities will be expanded with our network of cultural houses fully furnished and equipped both with infrastructure, content, and staff to adopt fully developed management models

.The platform takes advantage of the timeline sketched out by the EU26+ plan and the ECC launch of program plan, which makes it possible

to adopt a professionalization structure and inclusion model, building upon our familiarity with communities, content, infrastructure, and the problems faced by small urban centres. The coordination body is comprised of local individuals as well as foreign experts and facilitators, who can make things happen both in an office and on location. Our education modules, lectures, presentations, and events will also see the platform and conference tailored to the requirements of knowledge transfer.

Main objective: Upon receiving the ECC title, Gorenjska will become an example of good practice in 2025, and these examples will be made transferable and applicable for other regions and networks of sister regions

The support environment for anything cultural is presently a starved and lifeless shell anywhere but in the Slovenian capital, which is why we are resolute in our effort to weave connections outside of the strict centre, to find common problems plaguing the cultural sector, and to solve them together. In the spirit of Slovenia's stunted regionalization and the necessary dialogue between cultural actors and regional development, we propose the adoption of three core support pillars that emphasize urban renewal, innovation, and mobility.

Thematic Context:
—> DEVELOPMENT

Call to Action
—> SUSTAIN

Partners and Contributors:

Council of Gorenjska Region, Regional Development Agency of Gorenjska, Development agency for Upper Gorenjska, Sora Development Agency, Centre for Sustainable Rural Development Kranj, Local Energy Agency of Gorenjska, Eurocircle (France), Grozd (NGO), Regional Hub of NGOs, Gorenjski Glas, Loški Glas, Jeseniške Novice, Gorenjske Elektrarne, Humanitarian Charity Society UP Jesenice, Aktivat Kranj, Associations and public institutes for tourism of the Gorenjska region, Regional Destination Organisation of Gorenjska, Student Club Kranj/Škofja Loka/Jesenice/Radovljica, Intergenerational Centers of Gorenjska region, Gorenjska Museum, Prešeren Theater, Zavod O, Cultural Society Kultura-Natura of Slovenia, Cultural associations of Carinthian Slovenes, Union of Cultural Societies of Slovenia, Public Fund for Cultural Activities of the Republic of Slovenia, Kranj Student Club, Association of Paraplegics of Gorenjska, Intermunicipal Society of the Blind and Visually Impaired Kranj, Intermunicipal Association of Deaf and Hard of Hearing from the Gorenjska Region, Slovenian Association for Mental Health, The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, Gorenjska Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Bled Culture Institute

1. URBAN RENEWAL

Resetting the relationships among people connected to a certain space is crucial in renovating space. Soft content and well-conceived community campaigns aimed at the environment, art, and European connectedness address both the lay public and topical experts. European connectedness helps us develop ways of transferring content from the drawing board to the public and helps us develop concepts of community participation. Our messaging is subtle but effective as we seek to tear down borders and build bridges in an organic, almost unnoticeable, everyday manner. We are pursuing this in humans' relationship with the public, urban environment.

There are no borders among the great states of Europe, and we are thus plagued by the same common ills and find joy and solace in similar sources. Values in residential communities and urban districts are tied to a feeling of safety and pleasant living, familial and familiar bonds, all of which we cultivate in well-maintained public spaces. What if that isn't the case? Namely, we as a continent are falling short of these values; we would like to shed new light on them with our program, and change perspectives toward them.

Local expertise and international partners will help us construct new approaches to the joint use of cultural heritage in public European spaces and to establish public services, thereby increase the public's access to and understanding of space. We will develop models of renewal, spur the progress of theory and its transformation into sound practice, strategically anchor content into revitalization projects, and empower residents and creators to join cultural and societal initiatives. We will internalize good, transferrable practices that revitalize material and immaterial heritage, neighbourhoods, and natural wonders.

Thematic Context:
→ COMMON

Call to Action
→ CLAIM

Partners and Contributors:

Citizens and visitors of region, local and international artists and curators (invited and selected from open calls), public institutions and administrative units of Kranj and Gorenjska, SubArt Association, Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Nature Conservation, Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, Biotechnical Centre, Public Utility Company of Kranj, Waste Recycling Centre Zarica, Architectural association KRARH, TAM-TAM Institute, Carnica Institute for Culture and Tourism, elementary and secondary schools of Gorenjska

PROPOSED EVENTS:

Sounds of You

What do parks sound like? What about a grassy meadow under an Alpine peak? What are the sounds of a bike path and a waste treatment centre? Projects designed to take the form of one-time events are founded in participative music-making among local communities, with guest artists invited from around the world. The Symphony Orchestra will stage a concert on the balconies of the Planina residential neighbourhood to mark the end of a 3-week camp for Kranj's music school students. A conductor will wave her baton in a spatial concert in an abandoned textile factory to lead an orchestra of local and international musicians. Choral singing, testimonials, recordings on location, the sounds of industrialization, and the related sounds of moribund insect species will become a constant on the bike paths streaming across the Gorenjska region, while musical compositions created in conjunction with guest artists will also be played. The familiar sound of cowbells in the mountain pastures, coupled with hints of the shepherds' shamanistic practices, will form the inspiration for vocal artists.

The community will be invited to be connected by this project, which will help us develop audiences and move art a bit closer to everyday life. We began developing these projects early enough that their content was formed authentically and as a result of dialogue with our surroundings. Some events planned with the utmost care will even step within the intimate, private spaces of residents' daily lives. By 2025, some small-scope ideas will have leapt into action, including musical underpasses, open street

hours, and a mobile ethnobotanical cafe, parking on the city's squares in the summer will create impromptu, ad-hoc public spaces.

Change of perspective

Buildings of cultural and industrial heritage in Gorenjska's towns and countryside will begin to be linked at the beginning of autumn during European Heritage Days into a program of new stories. Identifying pain points in our past and creating mechanisms for dealing with the more morbid aspects of our heritage will help reverse negative perceptions about individual places, architecture, and methods of urbanization. Artists and curators from all over Europe, along with heritage interpretation experts and local communities, will join forces in a multi-year artistic program of specific practices, with relevant and tangible activities, manifesting in 2025 as a series of small events.

The logic of the status quo is dissolved by participative projects that cast light on new perspectives, ones that are far from narrowly defined, unilaterally managed challenges. Architecture becomes performance as choreographers and architects are joined, as stories of denationalized buildings are told, becoming a new database for visualizing their facades. Museum collections are digitalised, illustrated, and converted into educational materials. Archive collections are handed over to mathematicians and designers. Audio guides tell the stories of ruin, dammed river forks and fallen industry through residents' eyes. Old cemeteries become a new home for beehives and unshorn flowers.

Texture of Patterns

Behavioural patterns with respect to public property reflect our general relationship with society. How do we perceive and understand the collective challenges our society has with alcohol? Addressing the way institutions exchange knowledge and addressing our inherited traditions will lead to new discourse in researching social problems and their interdisciplinary resolution. Public systems in Slovenia are plagued by overworked labour forces, understaffed institutions, and long waiting lines. Where shall we seek new human capital, how shall we craft new alternatives, ones that will provide help to those who need it, and, even more importantly, ones that are created by those who need help in the first place, not on the desk of a disconnected worker at the Ministry of Labour, Health, or Social Work. Is it possible to develop new forms of public systems?

Through a series of conversations, educational modules, meetings, designathons, affiliated exhibitions and public installations, all supported by the experience of disadvantaged demographics, the program addresses and includes invisible groups (victims of child abuse, senior citizens, young mothers, groups most at risk of suicide such as middle-aged men, second-generation immigrants, the depressed, the lonely, the handicapped, the mentally ill, etc.). Working in parallel, a program for invisible groups supplements other programs. Shaping long-term relationships founded in care and trust will lead to new feelings of belonging. Developing empathy and compassion for others and otherness, even if beyond our comprehension, will bring us closer to pure and honest relationships

even with animals and the environment. Certainly, a society is a successful one, when even its weakest, most disadvantaged members are content.

Mini Kranj

The 3-week festival Mini Kranj draws inspiration from our neighbours (Linz, Muenchen), giving elementary school children of the region the opportunity to run a miniature city with the help of public servants who act as project mentors. Among other things, Mini Kranj has its own currency, communal services, and even public transport. It also has a museum, a gallery, a library, a cultural centre, an artistic laboratory, a puppet theatre, and a language school. Older children teach cooking classes, urban gardening, and the use of modern media technology for senior citizens. They create programs on civics and social studies for adults and offer short education sessions aimed at understanding their world view, the animal and plant kingdoms, math and physics, and other fanciful academic subjects.

This carefully planned summer school and premeditated objectives will enhance our perception of public services, giving access and confidence to social groups and the public good, with a special emphasis on cultural services. It will be put on by civil servants, whose inclusive efforts will give even adults a chance at human contact in an environment typically marked by bureaucracy. At the same time, revitalizing relationships with public services will further increase children's sense of obligation to engage in public tasks. Adults are actively encouraged to reconsider their approach to public services in the real world.

2. INNOVATION CENTRE

The Innovation Centre becomes the hub of Kranj and Gorenjska for leading breakthroughs driven by art, creativity, and science. The program's emphases pursue a sustainable and cyclical understanding of resources. Smart materials, textiles, wood, food, and waste become the subject of a research laboratory. The Centre brainstorms more effective, sustainable, and equitable solutions to social problems. Social geography, mobility, demographics, and heritage all become sources of information, raw data for research and concept development, where smart city tech and civil initiatives meet.

The EU can be divided in a number of ways, including by the so-called Innovation Divide, even though innovativeness is a key pillar of modernization in the new 2021-27 EU financial forecast. Visualizations of the Innovation Divide place Slovenia right in the middle⁴, lagging behind Western and Northern Europe, while leading the East and South. Kranj and Gorenjska can use the ECC title to follow innovative trends and contribute to Slovenia's overall innovation index. The support program will, in company with other European networks, with industrial enterprises and small startups in Gorenjska, and with actors driving innovative practices, complement the content programs and react to their measures accordingly. It is responsible for creating new models for public tools that will lead to new meaning and importance.

Thematic Context:

→ SOURCES

Call to Action

→ THINK

Partners and Contributors:

non-governmental cultural and environmental organizations, elementary and secondary schools, educational institutions, volunteers, Pametno steklo, Invida, Medianteractive, Borza terjatev, Štular Plus, IDL, Dodona Analytics, Planetcare, NT Electric, AirPod, ZNS (Pametna smučka), Styleshark, aPronex, Odvetništvo Novak, Littery, Zana, Vibe.it

⁴ <https://tinyurl.com/tpmewee>

The trends and fashions that shook the world in the 20th century is already passé. We recognize the modern vintage and second-hand movements, but have in mind the principles that ran the fashion industry of the previous century. Trends dictate our living arrangements, as once extended families lived in giant, multi-family complexes, and today we rather build tiny houses. We used to hoard every minor item for hard times; today we go through cycles of consuming and discarding.

PROPOSED EVENTS:

MateriaLab

Traditional textile materials like cotton and polyester are set to become a thing of the past. New fibres and fabrics that are much kinder to the environment are born. Once considered superfluous, today we are attracted to them as renewable sources. New materials are being harnessed as textiles that would otherwise end up in landfills. Such materials and those designers working with things like recycled plastic, corn, and wood pulp will be promoted. Development must be based on awareness of how invasive textile processes were given excessive water and other natural resource consumption, and labour exploitation.

Fashion sets trends and we can use link innovative textile, architectural, and design practices throughout the region. This helps us show the galaxy of local opportunities that arise when we work with communities. Invasive plant species, the dregs that remain after winemaking, and bacteria and minerals from the local environment will acquire new experimental roles in the form of clothes, jewellery, and furniture, even as useful elements of industrial design. The program will develop fashion-based entrepreneurship through new materials and trade revitalisation. Components of the public MateriaLab project will be centred around BIEN, the biennale of well-being, presenting textile art alongside the development of renewable resources.

Centre for Interpreting Heritage

Situated in Kranj's old mill centre and its first factory along the Sava River, will be Mill25, Gorenjska's central creative centre which will tackle intersectoral connections, educate on interpreting textiles, and present technical, archaeological, and geological heritage. Mill25 will also serve as the main exhibition space and a place for support programs, from studies and workshops to coworking spaces and the MateriaLab. It will facilitate research, exploration, experimentation, and prototyping of ideas, services, and products aimed at explaining the heritage of the Gorenjska region.

Tactile Sensations

A research centre for food and culture methodically deconstructs systems like food policy, agricultural co-ops and communes, and the concept of what "homemade" means. By linking innovative artistic and creative practices, we will produce playful tactile tools which participants will use in laying the very foundation for change. Interdisciplinary artists use a wide range of mediums to pose questions such as what colour is the sound of the

countryside? What does food sound like? How do demographic changes feel in your hands?

Concepts like happiness, well-being, family, and motherhood will be included in our exhaustive research categories. The projects in this program target tactile sensations and enhance our sensory faculties to convey the lifestyles of those with sensory disabilities. New methods of experiencing the world around us will be explored. These objectives can be reached in food-centred gatherings. Food slowly acquires a new sense, as we begin viewing it as a key to reversing poor health, intolerance, gluttony, or addiction to consumerism, all of which can turn us into unhappy, unsociable creatures.

Off-Grid

Is pure self-sufficiency a utopian fantasy or a reality of the near future? Are off-grid, self-sufficient spaces, in which all contact with societal systems has been severed an apocalyptic legend, or can we explore how their elements can be used by us to become more responsible consumers of existing infrastructure? The concepts include open spaces, environmentally friendly construction, sustainable architecture and materials, evolving houses. Modern concepts of smart spaces can range from small-scale projects to massive upgrades, ones that combine technology and sustainable use.

The program will be comprised of exhibitions, conversations, and performances ranging over the most diverse possible forms of artistic expression, which will provide information on DIY projects and solutions. Visitors will be awed by a life-size "earthship" of alternative living spaces, and a series of workshops and residences will help narrow down feasible ideas for beta testing. The new spaces will be open platforms for the continued development of self-sufficient programs. We will join forces with agricultural and horticultural institutions, academic institutions, and other partners to hold competitions, youth camps, and focus groups.

BIEN bistro

Mill25 will also feature a plant-based bistro, which, in addition to serving delicious meals prepared with locally and organically-produced ingredients, will be a place of socialisation. Its spaces will host conversations on food policy, strengthen the city's appetite for plant-based foods, and encourage the development of a new food pyramid for the current millennium.

3. PREŠEREN RESIDENCES

Thematic Context:
→ CHANGES

Call to Action
→ PLAY

Slovenia's greatest poet France Prešeren takes his rightful role as a subject of the highest arts. The support program named in his honour sets up a system of artistic and investigative residences. These will serve as a link between existing and new residence programs, as well as among Gorenjska's existing Prešeren institutions: The Prešeren Laureates Gallery, the Prešeren Theatre, the Prešeren House, and Prešeren Grove. This support program will serve as a contact point with international networks, while for Slovenia it will provide a long-awaited network of residence facilities and programs.

Having active and mobile creators sparks new connections and breathes life into the production. These residences are one of the more Slovene-centric programs, as our goals include the establishment of a network of Slovenian residences to increase our country's level of awareness and understanding for artistic concepts. They will simultaneously hold international support functions within our program structure, as the residences contribute to the infrastructure and mobility conditions needed for artist exchanges within the TAKT, BIEN, and START programs.

We would like to tie premium, renowned fine art to hobby artists, upcoming young stars, and alternative cultural workers, while setting conditions for longer-term production process and tangible results. The objective is to improve and maintain relationships between communities and artists, while helping the artistic transfer their knowledge forward in the form of mentoring, curating, and collaboration.

Partners and Contributors:

Odličan hrčak (Serbia), Sarajevo Disk/OK Fest (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ravno Do Dna (Croatia), Password Production (Macedonia), MKC Skopje (Macedonia), SeaRock Kotor (Montenegro), Docu Fest (Kosovo), Collagistas Festival (Greece), KC Grad (Serbia), Kulturalnova (Serbia), Kasarna Fažana (Croatia), SKC Reka (Croatia), Distuned Promotion (Croatia), K.V.A.R.K. (Croatia), Seaspash (Croatia), SubArt Association, Fine Art Association Kranj, Carnica Institute for Culture and Tourism, Prešeren Award Winners of Fine Arts Gallery Kranj, Gorenjska Museum, Hestija Publishing, Kranj City Library, Tourism and Culture Board Kranj, Prešeren Theater, Kasarna Fažana (Croatia) Prešeren Award Winners of Fine Arts Gallery Kranj,

PROPOSED EVENTS:

Laureates

Kranj's Gallery of Prešeren Laureates is the region's most important gallery, where renowned artists can display their work. Laureates and Prešeren Fund recipients are an unconnected artistic community, as they come from various disciplines and target different audiences. We confer awards for all forms of art, from literature and translation, fine art and photography, to architecture, and music, just to name a few. Together, they have immense potential to create a one-of-a-kind artistic process. Starting in 2023, the annual program will bring together a select group of laureates along with winners of other international artistic awards to create a unique group exhibition. They will debut their work in the days leading up to Kranj's cultural new year, namely on 8th February when we will confer the new year's awards. The exhibition will then move on to be hosted in other partner cities and spread Kranj's name as 2025's ECC.

Another domestic production will feature collaboration between one laureate and amateur communities working in the same genre. The residences and their activities will roam from region to region, as communities study comparatives in our diverse country. Exquisite expressions of sculpture and music come together with folk tra-

dition, folklore, and customs preserved by hobby organizations. Artists working with language will collaborate in a summer camp project on visual street interpretations. Puppet masters and other actors flock to natural settings and stage ad-hoc shows with volunteers. Acoustic concepts take over the newly-created mini stages popping up in unusual locations.

Buy Less Other Than Art

Slovenia does not even know its art. There is a big lacuna in communication between those with purchasing power, who have no idea where or how to buy Slovenian art, and artists, who have no idea how to sell it. Initiatives exist but they are disarrayed and in need of systemic support. The ECC title should help bring this dilemma to an end. Furthermore, we must address the critical issue of the ECC title's legacy in Slovenia, as it should serve to popularize awareness about the Slovenian art market. Prešeren laureates become ambassadors for this joint platform, which we will develop with experts on marketing art, as well as with Slovenian and foreign galleries. The campaign should reach its peak every year on Black Friday. #lessisthenewblack

Wordsmiths

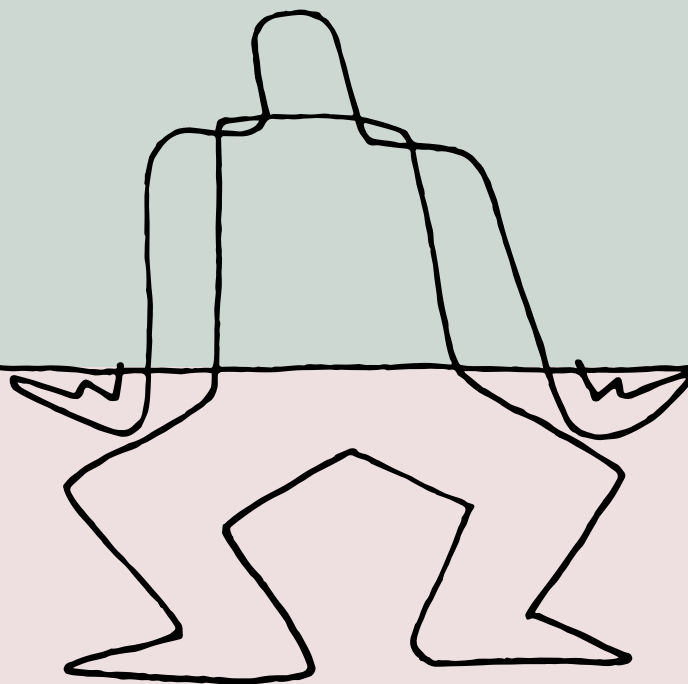
Pop-up poetry stands, a literary hackathon, residences of translators and playwrights, and communal fantasy writing are just some of the literary program's activities. Residential programs address young people interested in a wide variety of things and directions to present their realisations to their peers, as well as to the public and expert communities. Linguistic challenges, grammar, and dialect become part of an entertaining program that excites youth and encourages them to explore their own language. They are connected to other European languages that, like Slovenian, enjoy very small speech communities; similarities and differences are highlighted. Content is digitalized; sounds and sights are spread online.

The theatrical residence has taken shape in Kranj since March 2019. Slovenian Drama week, which will be a pioneer project in 2020, will be followed by a translators' residence, in which the winning youth dramas will be translated into four languages. The Slovenian expatriate poetry residence, the residence of fantasy prose, and the literary hackathon residence follow. Residencies last from one to three weeks, with lively programs staged in public places, markets, focused literary festivals on topics like Balkan and Scandinavian humour, Italian romance, local fairy tales, etc. This will make them part of the larger-scale literary creation unfolding all over the Gorenjska region attracting all audiences. Experts will look at the reading culture exhibited by school-children. Critics and literary bloggers will create a literary calendar, help audiences delve into the subject and facilitate debate.

Naturelovers

This program unites the countryside with towns and urban centres. The residential programs provide opportunities for mentorship, meetings with artists, and joint creation along with the local community. The ideas developed are applied towards new forms of comprehensive tourist services. Content designated for thematic paths is in constant flux, changing every time visitors come, encouraging them to come again. Various target groups help shape joint projects and collaborative artistic exhibitions in time and space. Investigative artistic projects based on environmental sustainability, demographic change, and topics of futurism including bioeconomy and sustainable chemistry all take shape. Productions that encroach on everyday life and support the projects in other program categories build the foundation of residential life even after the title year, when the exploration, and curation of cultural models becomes common.

Fine art and acoustic art, cuisine, dance, architecture, land art, and upcycling projects turn into channels for expressing the complex production of numerous creators. The entire Gorenjska region becomes an exhibition space, as temporary and permanent events carve out a lively network for exploring. Production will primarily be targeted at local, non-urban communities, which, together with their mentors, will produce interactive projects working inside a natural space. Individuals strive towards creation at workshops and creative camps with target audiences. The actual housing units for residents are offered by locals, who symbolically surrender their homes to strangers, inevitably becoming friends. The program revitalizes the relationship between city and countryside, urban and rural.



4. TAKT

A WORLD THAT CLEANS UP AFTER ITSELF

Our modern era brings many changes, some more radical. There are new dilemmas and questions, some of which must be approached by artists, designers, trade professionals, and scientists. Reflection upon societal changes is a necessary part of our daily routine, given that not only are social fabrics being changed at a lightning pace, but also natural environments around them. Climate change has become a household word among the world's youth, as they lead the charge and movement towards climate justice and towards taking full responsibility for pollution wrought by the prior generations that pillaged the earth's resources.

Interactions with the environment become captivating again, like touching the soil, the roots, the plants, and observing and smelling the natural world. We need to return to being grounded, finding a connection with nature, the need for fresh air, clean water, and healthful food, and to our obligation to treat other animals with respect. In a sea of messages, these ones must take the foreground. We had all of this as a society but ended up forgetting and now in a phase of rediscovery. Time has become our currency and a luxury, when we can devote it to ourselves, our fellow humans, to time spent outdoors, and to time spent idly. In a post-fossil fuel society people treat others and the environment more respectfully. Awareness that these are the sine qua non of a peaceful future is on the rise.

The TAKT program pillar is our attempt at using design to seek inspiration in the natural world, and restore the respect that it deserves. The invention of forgotten knowledge leads us to discoveries about the relentless inventive spirit that the human mind yearns for, and requires for its own survival. The sustainability of constant care for the earth, our primal and intuitive impulses in addressing omnipresent topics that are political in their non-political nature, that are based on primitive emotions, that arise from folk, traditional, archaic, ritualistic, new animism, and matriarchal patterns. Our own and European folklore motifs signify the earth and those plants that are both representative of fertility and of women. A cyclical world, one that takes and gives back to nature in equal measure. A world that cleans up after itself.

Thematic Context:
→ ENVIRONMENT

Call to Action
→ CLAIM

Partners and Contributors:

Citizens and visitors of the region, local and international artists and curators, Eco-Schools, students of the landscape architecture program, students of Academy of Fine Arts and Design, Trajna, Center for Rural Development, ArtMap (Czech Republic), Marko Pogačnik - UNESCO's Artists for Peace, NGOs for protection of rivers, birds and nature, Intermunicipal Society of the Blind and Visually Impaired Kranj, Intermunicipal Association of Deaf and Hard of Hearing from the Gorenjska Region, Zavod TRI, Zavod O, Flamma Art, Tabor Cultural Association Podbrezje

PROPOSED EVENTS:

Ambiances

This program establishes relationships with natural heritage, where the spotlight is taken by natural ecosystems, Gorenjska's rivers, Alpine peaks and valleys, and local flora and fauna. Its technique is designing ambient spatial sensations throughout the Gorenjska region with a common thread that will allow us to unite visions on its sustainable development through artwork, performances, and accompanying projects. We will accomplish this by awakening the Slovenian and European ethnological memory and encouraging ecological awareness. Natural ecosystems regulate and heal themselves, and are capable of regeneration after failures, so we would like to transfer these natural characteristics to cities, making it possible to return to the wild that our technology tamed.

Land and sound art projects will take form in natural and quasi-natural surroundings, where the presence of artistic approaches will not bother ecosystems; these approaches will even help protect the environment from the negative effects of touristification, invasive species, and light pollution. Cultural microprojects in public and private gardens will tie together intimate musical, poetic, and narrative evenings, along with culinary evenings dedicated to food foraged in nearby forests and riverbanks. The international Silent Canyon project studies the flora and fauna in Europe's

canyons, offering the fact that the Sava canyon below Kranj is the lowest-lying habitat of the Alpine edelweiss. Additionally, The Green Myth Europe project reexplores mythologies surrounding the plants and animals in the Alps and other regions, and its woven and wooden structures throughout Gorenjska provide opportunity for contemplation, and entertainment. Finally, we will reopen the botanic gardens at Brdo Castle, with 2025 marking the 240th anniversary from the beginning of the Zois brothers' Alpine botanical garden.

Ceramics and Food Festival

Clay and flour. Pottery and food usually meet one another in a Bundt pan, the cookware used to make the famous Slovenian potica, which the Pope accepted in 2019 from the hands of the First Lady of the USA. All of Europe will be stuffing itself with walnut, poppy seed, and tarragon poticas in 2021, when our country becomes European Region of Gastronomy and assumes Presidency of the Council of the EU. Some will be lucky to try one made in Podbrezje, under Gorenjska's mountains, filled with dried fruit, apples, and pears. All EU States will plant a fruit tree whose flavour in 4 years will lend themselves to this special potica.

Thousands of years ago, as finds from mounds around Kranj attest, ceramic bobs were used to weigh down looms. The imagery used on these weights speaks to the important role

played by women in the society of that era – our mothers, grandmothers and great-grandmothers. The very same who kneaded dough for potica, bread, plum dumplings, and other leavened treats. Pottery was ubiquitous, and today it is still warm and rustic. Water poured from a clay pitcher, or dried pears in a clay bowl. Today, steaming coffee in a clay mug. We will turn back time every spring and indulge our senses at the Pottery and Food Festival, where we knead both dough and clay, enjoying our results. We started our programme in 2019 by organizing the Kroginkrog festival, which centred upon an art exhibition of kinetic ceramics and sensorial workshops in accompaniment with culinary experiences. We plan to stress the regional importance of ceramics and bolster its production by local artists, artisans, entrepreneurs and creative communities through an extensive programme of events in the pottery-making centres of Gorenjska.

Map invasion

Migration is a constant. Flipping the script helps us see that it is not the people who migrate, but the ground under our feet. Global warming is causing vertical migrations, as species seek cooler climates in the mountains; what does this tell us about our actions? How do birds migrate through the Sava and Danube basins? Along with preservation organiza-

tions in the region we call attention to bird poaching throughout the Balkan peninsula. Partners from Central Europe join us to map the region's oldest trees and forests, its moribund woods and meadows, and the results of unregulated agriculture. Sorting through the layers, we look back thousands of years, comparing the conifers and the towering kings of Central European forests, namely the beech, hornbeam, and oak. The project offers an alternative to the tourist map and invites visitors to bask in the natural environment.

Along with our sister regions, we will give a voice to Europe's smaller languages and construct linguistic challenges, draw comparisons, and identify the sources and myths that form our collective consciousness and memory. Using invasive species, a threat to indigenous plants, as an analogy, we provocatively spur debate about the invasiveness of human beings. Working with etymologist and ethnobotanists, we are developing a program of names and surnames that first came to inhabit our natural environment. What would it look like to have an interactive map of personal names in Europe, why are Gorjanci (the Mountaineers) are found in the plains while Nižinski (the Flatlanders) are in the hills? How is it possible that in the 21st century feminine-form surnames exist, marking women as proprietary members of the family? Can artists propose some new methods by which women might find surnames that suit them?

MUSEUM OF MODERN AGRICULTURE

Researchers at England's Art Council determined that art and culture contribute more to Britain's annual economy than agriculture does⁵. Therefore, agriculture deserves a museum of its own.

The Museum becomes a tool for provoking conversations about agriculture and space to show the consequences of farming and animal husbandry through a variety of artistic mediums. Agriculture is extremely important for survival; nonetheless, it is usually a matter of politics and not the subject of artistic expression. It is an unavoidably pressing issue concerning the production of food as related to poverty, climate change, the countryside, sustainable food management and farming, and the use of chemicals in agricultural processes. For culture and nature to truly become sustainable, we need to understand the chemistry behind sustainability.

A modern museum is one in constant interaction with human beings and one of perpetual curiosity. The food pyramid, which changes along with fluctuations in human needs, is becoming the subject of designers and artists in addition to nutritionists. Permanent collections display species that perished through human activity and lifestyles, while multimedia approaches show poisoning and exploitation. These collections are supported by youth projects that question our carbon-based societies. Curating gallery shows with various commonalities strengthens our message and highlights the risks of unsustainable policy. The room devoted to utopian farming will ensure that visitors are forced to think critically. Physical elements are tied to digital campaigns, which spread ideas about modern dilemmas. Artists and researchers ask questions about which social systems steer us closer to the right direction.

5. BIEN

THE BIENNALE OF WELL-BEING

BIEN is a biennale of well-being, simplicity, and sustainability. Composed of thread and fabric, ream and loom, it is the natural fibres of living organisms, and their transformations. The fibres of smart materials, their tactile sensations. BIEN is taking shape in a city where urban development rests on the heels of industrial development previously driven in large part by a textile industry. Today the world is plagued by a lack of resources, an unstable climate, inefficient food distribution, and a shortage of solutions to our growing waste. Fertile and inhabitable zones are dwindling. We remain on this side, trash right on the other.

Our program will remind citizens about our technical and textile industrial heritage by linking education, industry, and creative communities, the region's residents, the interstate region, and networks along the Balkan-Baltic corridor. This objective will be achieved in the form of a two-year event with strong content that continues on after the event's end. We portray textile art with niche content that pursues trends like slow fashion, and shapes narratives about waste, food, the circular economy, and environmental problems.

⁵ <https://tinyurl.com/y68kbpypa>

Beyond the petroleum industry, fashion causes the most pollution on earth. 20% of the world's water pollution comes from the textile industry neglecting chemical treatment processes, waste management, and biodiversity. Our insatiable hunger for the latest fads led natural environments to their breaking point. Sustainability must become the new fashion trend. Today's fashion and interior designers and manufacturers seek out ethical methods of production, using new materials and processes in their efforts. Until 2025 we wish to take part in these changes.

The Biennale was woven together from the fabric of biological, geological, and archaeological knowledge about our land, and its encompassing environment, identity, industrial heritage, and tradition. Working with designers and weavers, we plan temporary public spaces, new interpretations of our traditional national dress, and the promotion of forward-thinking expressions in global and local communities. Especially those who have textiles woven through their DNA, understanding resources, and simplicity, as a political choice.

Partners and Contributors:

Creative local community, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Engineering - Textile and fashion design, Faculty of Design, Slovenian National Building and Civil Engineering Institute, Gorenjske elektrarne, PlanetCare, Štular Plus, aPronex, Carnica Institute for Culture and Tourism, Gorenjska Museum, Kreativnice, Regional Development Agency of Gorenjska, O-CITY project partners

PROPOSED EVENTS:

MILL25

In 2025, the exhibition moves to the revitalized mill by the Sava, which launched Kranj's urbanization 150 years ago and later powered its factories. We call it Mill25 and, far more than just a space for an exhibition to support the biennale, it will run several programs during the title year, host the Innovation Centre, serve as a multi-purpose hall for events, studies, and workshops, and also house a plant-based bistro. The program's space, its biennale, and its very texture send a unified message that we must preserve for the program concept itself to be truly sustainable. Regional initiatives will launch a series of regular workshops for residents of all ages. It will not be difficult to relate to our textile heritage, as a survey in 2019 showed that the residents strongly identified with the desire to revitalize this history. The artistic program will be interwoven with other crafts and businesses in the region. International partners will also be included, along with organizations and artistic communities already interpreting textile, technical, and natural heritage.

Experiment

The biennale will also be accompanied by an educational and experimental segment, delving into categories such as Slow Fashion, Anti-Fashion, and No Fashion; it will include workshops on understanding Textile Language and geometrical patterns; grasping how to reuse waste materials; geology and use of natural resources; and creative challenges for industrial textile design. It is of utmost importance to teach principles drawn from nature: Nature doesn't waste resources, instead relying on reusing its building blocks over millions of years to form shapes of an economic character.

Textile pavilions constructed with smart textiles engage with visitors interactively. Their architectural and technological features will ensure that a new artistic group is formed for each biennale, recording visitor data. The surface of each pavilion will be a 3-D screen, changing in re-

al-time with new information. Visitors will thus become active content producers. As a further bonus, the pilot pavilion, set to open in May 2020, will also have an outreach function, including residents and visitors in the design process through their suggestions for developing new content for the second phase of the bid book.

Armour of the Future

Notwithstanding "The Era of Equality" label when everyone became woke and attuned to the effects of femininity and masculinity on society, this program will focus on the barriers put up by the years of male domination in research, art, architecture, trade, industry, and daily life. We will also explore the effects of new women's emancipation movements. Keenly aware that modern women's movements lead to new expressions for men as the "new man", a light is shone on non-binary genders and perspectives. The impact of gender on an individual's experience will be investigated through historical and future-embracing stories.

A diverse range of methods on heritage and inheritance of social patterns will be developed. Motifs will be sought in archaeology, in the slatted armour of soldiers uncovered in Kranj attesting to its key importance as a centre for the Franks and Alemanns at the height of their power in the 6th century. Armour will be stripped of its military connotation and converted into new costumes. Jewellery found in the German and Slavic graves, which already serve as a source of inspiration will also receive interpretation by international artists, adapting its significance to the present day. What does our choice in jewellery signify? How do we perceive our bodies and what do we use to accentuate them? Trendsetters will reinterpret wearables in a new light. There will have a strong connection with the product marketing of the ECC brand.

BIENNALE OF TEXTILE ART

The Biennale's exhibition of modern textile art will take place in 2021, and by 2025 will have grown into an artistic display of textile art relating to sustainability, and well-being. This is one of our strongest programs in terms of content with the potential to become traditional, lending both the city and the broader region an artistic profile. All three support programs determine the biennale staging, as only with the community's effort can it become a regionally leading event. We understand textile art as the art of fabrics and new flexible materials, and it must be connected to natural fibres and biodegradable materials. Further, plants and flowers are presented as dynamic elements as we bring the public the fruits of progress after years.

Not only is the content the result of artistic approaches and massive creativity, the "less is more" concept is key both in terms of materials and production. To prevent message dilution, the Biennale will be hosted in many stages with placed on return visits which give visitors the opportunity to reflect. We would like to develop opportunities for representing new curatorial practices, and link textile arts with technological approaches that nonetheless stray from factories back to traditions.

BIEN 2021: Work and memory: addressing the meaning of identity, and of familial and other emotional bonds on the city's development. Industrial heritage is linked to concepts of inheritance, the formation of women's (labour) rights, and other intimate memories.

BIEN 2023: Patterns: focusing on folklore, fashion, and the women of the Balkan Peninsula. In the year marking the 70th anniversary of the Gorenjska Museum, we revisit Slavic jewellery and revitalize craft trades.

BIEN 2025: Ethnic migrations: the textile industry in Europe collapsed due to the emergence of cheaper production in Asia. This year's focus is on textile and industrial designers from China, Bangladesh and India, and Central Asia, as well as Eastern Europe and the Baltic States. A survey exhibition of textile arts from the eastern hemisphere featuring contemporary forms of expression and progressive names.

6. START

THE PIONEERING CITY OF PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILM

This inventive educational program invites residents and visitors to help create the representative image of the city and the region. Kranj was a pioneering city for photography and film, while Gorenjska has home to many an inventor. Working with creative communities already engaged in these fields, we encourage new inventions and innovation through the lens of this media heritage, taking advantage of digital archaeology and the technology surrounding us. We will present these new works on digital platforms, physical canvases, and community campaigns. The plan is to convert our rampant obsession with the internet and mobile technologies into productivity and new applications. The new-age mirror, that piece of ever-present technology that sucks up the attention of all generations but especially of the generations that grew up with it, will now become their playground.

Our program brings science, art, and entertainment to the production of photography, video, animation, video games, and other multimedia content. We create both familiar and imaginary worlds and experience throughout the city, countryside, and beyond. Libraries, schools, museums, and other facilities that encourage creativity will all help us design this multi-year program, which will build in momentum through 2025, when it will take the form of an optical urban park and a network of other artworks through the region. Together with up-and-coming names from intermedia art, photography, and film, young people will have the chance to display their creations, projects, event, and campaigns.

Our efforts will lead to new public spaces by combining green surfaces and experiential stations, which are set to come to fruition even before the title year, gradually increasing and building upon the presence of multimedia and illuminative interaction in the city and elsewhere in Gorenjska. Developers of urban content will be invited to collaborate with artistic groups from all over Europe. The curatorship program ensures that the park and the network's various points and stations become a place for visualizing the digital transformation and urban development.

Thematic Context:
→ KNOWLEDGE

Call to Action
→ PLAY

Partners and Contributors:

International and domestic community of curators, photographers and visual artists, Cultural Association Puhart, Nova Iskra (Serbia), Slovenian Film Centre, Slovenian Cinematheque, Kranj City Library, Carnus Institute, Kranj Student Club, Union of Cultural Societies of Slovenia, elementary and secondary schools of Gorenjska, museums of the region, Kovačnica, Open Lab

THE PIONEER AWARD - The Pajer Award for Crisis Zone Photography

Our development of a program for documenting crisis zones turns attention to the climate crisis and ties it to other political crises, where brave and intrepid photography has always played a crucial role in understanding the state of affairs in areas of activism, protest, or combat. The program is being designed as a response to the work of the internationally renowned local photographer Matic Zorman, whose lens has captured riveting scenes from the consequences of crises in the Middle East and elsewhere.

Kristjan Pajer, a Kranj resident who made revolutionary photographic documentation of Palestine and Egypt from 1860 to 1864, is the pioneer of global travel photography whose name is being honored in this award. 185 years after his death, we want this award to bring attention to the consequences of unchecked globalization for the very image of this world. What's the world like in Palestine's cities, on Greenland's ice sheet, and in the forests of Central Europe? How should we understand the world as a whole and show the consequences of social processes as inextricably linked? The Pajer award will be conferred on Earth Day, namely 22 April. The accompanying program will use the years up to 2025 to objectify the results of travel's development from its beginnings to today's mass production of touristic messages, products, services, and spaces. This award will help us qualify and quantify the crises that threaten human life and society as we know it. Part of the fee for entering a photograph will be devoted to a fund set up to help and conserve species that are threatened by human activity.

PROPOSED EVENTS:

The Kranj Photography Festival

The technique of printing photographs on glass, called the hyalotype process, was the invention of Kranj citizen Janez Puhar, who published a description in the journal *Carniola* back in 1843. Puhar will also serve as inspiration for this contemporary festival, which will investigate the significance and meaning of photography in the modern era, in the absolute flood of Instagrammified images inundating our screens. The festival brings international photography communities together with local ones, but amateur and professional. It emphasizes experimental photography and analogous genres, returning to the mediums fundamental communication premises. We form networks with the home towns of pioneers and inventors, address innovation of the 19th century in Europe, look out for forgotten individuals from peripheral European cities and organise a imposing interactive exhibition, which will travel across partnering cities and cement Kranj in the minds of visitors as the European capital of photography.

The importance of Kranj's history as a photography pioneer will be taken to new levels as we communicate messages using the techniques of analog photography, visualization, and music with no computer interface. Long-term workshops will lead to support for analog creators, as they learn skills in analytic design, gamification, and modeling. At all times the program presents, support, and includes various publics and devotes special attention to education, experiencing new mediums, and socialization. In 2018, 2019 and 2020 we have been ensuring this happens by hosting international photography exhibitions, organising workshop and providing master classes with world-renowned photographers who join forces with our local community of photographers.

The Veka Kokalj Experience Museum

This new-age museum takes its residence next to the Kranj city library, which is not only one of the country's most advanced libraries, but is also one of the most open spaces in Kranj. The museum draws its name from the first female Carniolan, Slovenian, and Yugoslavian cameraperson, Veka Kokalj. She was the primary cameraper-

son throughout Yugoslavia from 1978 to 1985 for the popular cartoon Bojan the Bear. Bojan is a creative painter, who uses 3 colors to paint his world. We convert this cartoon's basic premise into the context of a museum, and with technical and manual effects we make an animation portraying the heritage of film-making, along with the animated protagonists and their tricks from movies, videos, and video games; in short any medium where that ominous black screen has followed us from the invention of the TV to today's ubiquitous screen obsession.

Digitalized Stories

The region has incredible stories, like the mentioned one about Pajer, who shipped himself in a suitcase for his second, two-week trip to Egypt since he was denied entry in port. There is also Legatov Tonček, who posed in Bohinj for the Abyssinian Emperor Haile Selasie and Leopold Layer, who forged Austrian money in his basement during the 18th century. These stories and more all get a platform and a microphone in a digital format. There is a marked need for us to spotlight the absence of women from historical memory. We will weave our tales around a laughing peasant woman, whose likeness Duerer might have captured on his canvas in our parts of the world in 1505 as she made her way to Trieste. We will familiarize ourselves with personal histories of the everywoman, but our research will take us all across Europe, as we seek out women, who have left their mark in European cities like Ivana Kobilica, the painter and Zofka Kveder, writer and editor.

The project unites historical memory with testimonies from the region, as a program of meetings, narrative events, and written records brings together interpreters of heritage and links them with digital storytellers. Digitalized heritage makes it possible for us to reimagine how we tell playful, clever, and ironic stories, which are always interlinked with the emotions of the narrator. Not technologically boring, but intriguing and engaging. We categorize stories by location and target group, and then disseminate them through appropriate channels.

TRILOGY

Tool:
SOCIAL
CHOREOGRAPHY



OBJECTIVE
B

The convention on conserving biodiversity recognizes the importance of protecting immaterial cultural heritage (expertise, skills, practice, and faith). Immaterial cultural heritage, especially myths and legends, has a tremendous role to play in shaping people's relationship with the natural environment. Our reality is present in the material world, so we often overdepend on the data and information conveyed by our physical senses, overlooking the information provided by our emotions and our intuitions. Modern culture is subordinate to the demands of reason, and other aspects and dimensions are shunned in favor of realism. The trilogy attempts to find those aspects and explore them through a multi-year program of artistic exploration. Without a doubt the exciting final result will be the product of a group of artistic researchers, choreo-

graphers, and curators in collaboration with local residents and the international artistic community.

Leading European climatologist Lučka Kajfež Bogataj, a Kranj resident, predicts that in coming years our part of the world will have 2 seasons, just summer and winter. Are we set to lose the year's most colorful periods, namely spring and autumn? We will launch the trilogy when spring awakens and the first cherries come into bloom, continuing in June for the Sava River holiday when nature is in full bloom, and we will end at the end of October, when the trees are cloaked in reds and yellows. These are the stories of rivers, a flock of knowing rivers. Old rivers, which know everything about life. Which have been flowing forth from their source to their discharge for millennia. Of old crags and trees, whose age was never the object of our inquiry. In fact we

never even noticed. These are the stories of experienced women.

As residents of the northernmost part of our microregion, we sought inspiration in the north of Europe. We found it in the philosophy of the Norwegian Guttorm Fløistad, who is convinced that we can always find true renewal in slowness, reflection, togetherness. As a species we will await our renewal, as long as it is designed premeditatedly and it is embedded in all facets of our life. Fast food, fast fashion, fast media production and consumption, and fast travel all require a paradigm shift. These changes will not be brought about by a revolution, but by steady evolution, namely the evolution of sustainable cultural development, with the result that art displays its meanings in all their complexity.

»With scientific progress myths become unnecessary.«

James George Frazer

The Trilogy comes to life on Sava Island, linking the city with rural venues, and ends in a forest of young beech trees and old stones; a monument, a permanent structure, becomes a venue at the confluence of rivers and on their banks. The messages and performances will be diverse and personal, so in the future we will simply provide starting points for the flowering of performative language. We will encourage more in-depth understanding of space and thus of the changes taking place on earth. Interpretations and modes of expression will be strongly localized but broadly applicable. Methods of including the public for creating kinesthetic experiences of space that facilitate the production of cognitive maps, the establishment of personal relations, and an increase in understanding community values. Interpreting heritage will help us construct awareness about limitless diversity.

Thematic Context:
→ RIGHTS

Call to Action
→ SUSTAIN

Partnerji in sodelujoči:

prebivalci in obiskovalci regije, mednarodni in domači umetniki in kuratorji, Prešernovo gledališče Kranj, Galerija Prešernovih nagajencev Kranj, Društvo Odprti predali, Društvo Qulenium, Kulturno društvo KIKS, gledališka društva Gorenjske

2025

OCTOBER
2025

JUNE
2025

MARCH
2025

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Ethnological Memory</p> <p>Goldhorn Myth</p> <p>Eden under Triglav</p> <p>Alpine Flowers</p> <p>Wild Animals</p> <p>White Brides</p> <p>Godmothers and Fates</p> | <p>Roman girl Aurelia</p> <p>Slavic and Germanic Women</p> <p>Jewelry and Wereable</p> <p>Beehive Paintings</p> <p>Laughing Peasant Woman</p> <p>Agata and other Witches</p> <p>Humiliated Women</p> <p>Feminine Grammatical Gender</p> <p>Misogyny</p> | <p>Thousands of years of Warring Men</p> <p>80 years since the end of WWII</p> <p>30 years since the end of War in BiH</p> <p>Mass Rape</p> <p>The Industry of War and Speed</p> <p>Lost Roots</p> <p>Inheritance</p> <p>A Mother, a Nature, a Goddess</p> <p>A Farmer, a Mother, a Textile Factory Worker, a Retiree</p> <p>Natural Gender</p> <p>Rights</p> <p>Myth</p> |
|---|---|---|

MYTH

The main role in the first part of the Trilogy is played by the natural world and the myths surrounding it.

MEMORY

The Trilogy's second part transcends from cyclical time into the linear, as it seeks to portray archaichness and enigmaticness.

HISTORY

The Trilogy's second part ends right before the war breaks out. We will wait until October to see the results of thousands of years of warring men.

Figure 4: Trilogy

TOOL: SOCIAL CHOREOGRAPHY

Choreography functions like a model, like a method of uniting the mass amounts of messages into a single form. It explores the body and its relationships with space, the movements an individual makes, and the motions made by groups, and further makes for a truly unique social experience.

The exchange of opinions and ideas and the construction of a long-term model of participative performance within the program are targeted at construction a cohesive artistic vision, where a range of production teams work on respective parts, col-

laborating on the design of program categories and projects for cultural development to achieve the objectives of our bid. Several stages in a variety of facilities, natural venues, their surroundings, costumes, story, and production all unfold in a space or piece of infrastructure specifically chosen to meet the needs of the Trilogy.

Objectives: This program allows us to achieve 3 objectives: (1) the active participation and engagement of many communities throughout Gorenjska in designing the program, (2) the international recognition

of the city and region as drivers of concepts related to slow culture, long-term and slowly unfolding artistic work that turns the audience into artists and leads them to thoughts about the spaces they live in and ideas that have significance for those spaces, and (3) the establishment of relationships with audiences that are always welcome and invited to come back.

Connecting and unifying local cultural heritage with innovative and experimental forms of expression is a core tenet of our strategy to empower the creative and cultural sectors to operate fully. This will be reflected in our approach to staging traditional pre-existing programs and events and will play an important part in designing a cultural program for the bid. Our capacity will be extended through education modules on securing tenders for culture and entrepreneurship innovations, as well as in the public, administrative sector.

Kranj is a city of technological inventions, as our factories gleamed in the 20th century as essential to the region's telecommunication and electronic development (e.g. the legendary Iskra factory, survived by several entities today). Visitors to Kranj's old town centre can already learn about the city's neighbourhoods and history through AR technology, while the whole region is one of the strongest international players in IT services and hardware. Kranj's environment is conducive to fledgling startups and can even boast being the only city on earth with a monument to blockchain.

Gorenjska is a leader in e-mobility tech, especially in bike-sharing. The region's bike network and its companion app that optimizes short trips to the region's attractions normally unreachable by public transport will soon be interpreted by artists, UI experts, and resource consumption specialists, becoming an innovative mobility model.

We will show the bid program's intersectoral and innovative character, and link culture with entrepreneurial, environmental, and social innovations. Prototyping will involve all, and together with the public administrations around Gorenjska, make it possible for towns to become incubators for new methodologies. Two pilot projects called *The Flock* by Ajda Tomazin (*Trilogy*) and the *Smart Pavilion* (BIEN) began in 2019.

The Flock is brilliant social choreography for the third stage of life, a project that encouraged participants to tell their stories to an audience while walking through the city, getting a unique, personal look into urban development. The fear of public performance is replaced by an eagerness to explore the new, audio media en-

vironment. *The Flock* has plans for a new series of workshops on choreography, as well as for inclusion in the broader region's network of interpretation.

Presently, the first *Smart Pavilion* is still under construction with its public unveiling scheduled for May 2020. This is a prototype that will serve as a blueprint for other pavilions in the region, uniting knowledge about smart e-textiles, architecture, and electronics. It will engage the public with tactile and acoustic interactions, packaged as a whole new sensory dimension. In 2021, another pavilion is planned for the seat of Slovenia's EU Council Presidency, displaying Gorenjska's electric energy consumption in real-time.

Two further projects started in 2019 target invisible groups, communicating that culture must be accessible to everyone. The *Radovljica Museum of Apiculture* became the first museum in the world on this year's *White Cane Safety Day* (honouring the hard of sight) to unveil a beehive panel that the blind and sight-impaired could feel. An NGO project from *Škofja Loka* and Kranj further announced a program for underprivileged groups and held a theatrical production of deaf actors, as well as all-day creative workshops and visits to sites of good practice around the country.

Our cultural programs will not be designed as perfect, cutting-edge facilities, stuffed with expensive devices and otherworldly VR machines. Rather, they must be experimental and support our efforts to engage audiences. By addressing certain target groups and ensuring that the public understands the technology we're using, our programs will seek a balance between technological and

social innovation. We would like to make our heritage accessible to the sight-impaired, the hard of hearing, those suffering from mental illness, and other socially disenfranchised groups. We will take advantage of the high rate of European access to the internet, taking our message digital. Well-crafted messages with a big digital impact can be converted into multiple visits to the region per person in 2025.

A special focus will centre on digitally archiving and communicating content related to the title, region, and Europe as a whole. Using good marketing strategies to reach our target audiences, they will be interested in the questions we're asking, and not by the fact that such ideas are part of an ECC program. This is not at all meant to slight the significance of the ECC or our plans to spread European values under the vigil of the ECC, but to reach new publics and onboard them to the ideas communicated. The *Innovation Centre*, with its *Centre for Heritage Interpretation*, will function as a hub for new models of co-management and reinterpretation of material and immaterial heritage. These Centres will be supported by excellent, unified communication.

Kranj's blockchain community, bolstered by the residency of two founders of one of the world's biggest cryptocurrency exchanges, will help us produce cultural heritage projects and modern creative endeavours supported by cutting-edge economic models. Tourism representatives and providers will work with us to identify stories from our heritage. The region's various experiences will be consolidated into a one-stop-shop for all users. To that end, the plan to develop new, innovative approaches

to annual events and traditional festivals will come to fruition at the year's very first such traditional event. On Prešeren Day, the 20,000 visitors that flock to Kranj will see the results of our efforts at developing new models and forms of production powered by

technological and social innovation. In partnership with other European cities, we will launch projects that include, inter alia, an AR application that will show visitors the network of the continent's Gothic churches, showing their entrances in real size.

Natural heritage also gets its place in the spotlight with changes to the natural environment shown in interactive maps and map routes.

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

2.4

Gorenjska's network of cultural products and services is comprised of individuals and institutions with wildly varying levels of formal or political support, and with different degrees of national and international reach. We were not united in our approach before announcing our candidacy, and even today, as we submit our bid, work remains to be done. The strategic objectives of the Sustainable Cultural Region will guide our efforts in adapting sustainability to cultural products and services while becoming a close-knit community.

Our bid's proposed programs are inspired by projects already launched by the local artistic community, which have huge developmental potential, and which are already planting seeds in the minds of our residents. The group drafting this bid recognized the idea of a civil society that as amateurs and professionals alike, artistic, urban, and environmental initiatives are spread. We will continue identifying and mapping cultural actors and local stories that need the help of support pillars to put their ideas in action, including consulting for local calls to tender and including publics, innovating new programs, etc.

Open communication and regular meetings with local artists and creative communities helped us find information on needs and expectations during the title year and the time leading up to it. Meanwhile, we work macroscopically, at the country level, activating national cultural organizations, artists, and creative communities from other Slovenian cities. Key activities in such preparations include collaboration on broad projects, where each partner contributes their own unique share.

Several products were formed to serve as a starting point for collaboration models with local artists and cultural organizations. In spring, we held a pottery festival, joining together cultural and social NGOs with public services, galleries, Kranj's public institutions, and the local artistic com-

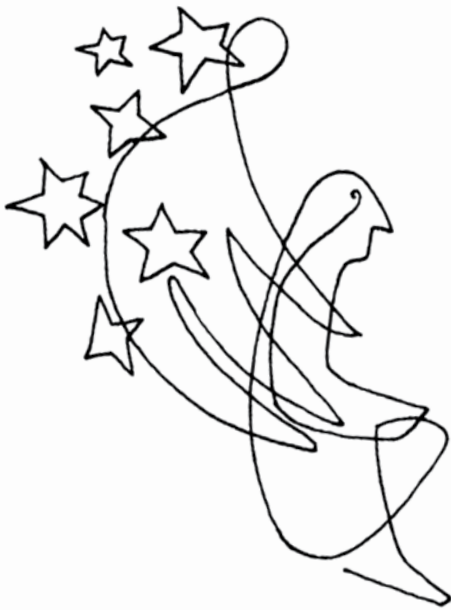
munity. We moved on to a textile art exhibition, fleshed out with a symposium on creating a biennale of textile art. The exhibition brought together those working with textile heritage, communities of textile artists, and regional cultural organizations. Summer was devoted to developing the idea of the Pioneer City of Film and Photography, and together with a network of local libraries, national film organizations, and the art film community we held events marking the 100th anniversary of the birth of France Štiglic, a director from Kranj. Continuing on the promotion of a photography festival, in autumn we brought all organizations working with photograph and local photographers under the leadership of one Portuguese and grupe of local curators. Simultaneously, we held professional congresses outlining what regional artists need in drafting a photography program. We collaborated with young literary enthusiasts in the region in designing reading and writing rooms, which will function as a hub for our authors and a literary artist residency program. Over 200 artists and creators were included in our bid efforts in 2019, a quarter of those active locally.

Our actions will be taken to the next level in 2020, launching a school of cultural management, which will grow our physical and human capacities. Support programs will be put in place to empower regional artists, ar-

tistic communities, and NGOs, while participative work will feature strongly to attract cultural operators.

Our current low level of connection among cultural providers is a worthy challenge for the bid. The beginnings of the region's cultural and urban development will thus become the basis for connected, well-synchronized working methods, as well as a key element of the legacy of the title year. Our candidacy has, above all else, substance. We will build a sense of identity and loyalty through substantive connections among the projects unfolding throughout the city and region. The wide range of cultural products and services on offer in the region, along with the limited power of cultural providers to reach local and international audiences (a reminder that a majority of the region's capacities are devoted to tourism), means we must unite cities in the operative model of the Sustainable Cultural Region, where all communities will be able to equally contribute ideas. Without doing so, the region and its cultural organizations would remain segmented. It is imperative that organizations see themselves and their visions in the program categories, and that visitors are so attracted by the content of one project that they continue on to another one. This will give us a broader picture of the outreach achieved by individual program parts.

3. EUROPEAN DIMENSION



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

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

3.1

To prepare for this bid we met high school students and asked them their associations on Europe as a topic. We heard almost exclusively negative associations, namely: a lack of direct democracy, egocentrism, selfishness, livestock farming, health, the plight of small countries, and a lack of political empathy.

European Dimension

Europe and the European illusion. We think it is time for a critical reevaluation of Europe and its meaning, as merely naively flouting our supposed common values during the far-reaching geopolitical crisis is not productive discourse. Introspective reflection is a value that Europeans hold in high regard, though we struggle to apply that to ourselves. When we become the European Capital of Culture, we will become a loud voice, a catalyst for multiculturalism, integration, and demographic

change. Uncomfortable questions plague the continent where its political leaders have no answers, let alone will to collaborate with all social groups. The mutual understanding among European citizens is virtually non-existent. Polarization is enormous. How then, can we approach cultural groups who a priori view the ECC as an inherently leftist project?

The challenge is complex. Liberalization and globalization have led to a collapse of traditional values, which has fanned the flames of populist politics in Europe, promoted by those who

seek to preserve said values. Cultural diversity on one hand and common cultural perspectives on the other require balanced political correctness in our ECC project. Such communication is plagued by contradictions; whether we only include women or don't include enough women. We quite consciously used the word "women" in the previous sentence, but they may be substituted for the social group of choice. We must be very careful in how we address European concerns, keeping all target groups in mind. The "Preserving" project

will help us reach both political sides, especially those who do not conform to traditional political identities and understand the need to preserve both the environment and our traditions.

In the Centre, in the Middle of Nowhere

Kranj is unknown to most of Europe. However, Kranj is an archetypical medieval European city with a rich history sitting at the intersection of European ideas, in the centre of everything, but the middle of nowhere. We are in the heart of Europe, between Central Europe and the Mediterranean. Dissatisfaction with European political structures abound in such countries on the continent's periphery. Our bid aims to speak up on the problems facing other European countries, regions, and cities, translating their content into the language of culture. We would like to use the title to extend the reach of the East and the South. We strive to become a space where one can relish the best of contemporary Western and Eastern art. We want to gaze at Europe through the perspective of its continent Eurasia. We endeavour to become a space for displaying the very best of modern Western art, but at the same time to transcend that artistic canon. New curation practices will be included, breathing fresh air into current exhibition and production practices. Another goal is opening new routes of connection in Europe.

As one of Europe's youngest countries, gaining independence only in 1991, our history is marked by occupation under one nation or another, and thus also by instances of rebellion. Culture always played an important role in shaping national identity and was used (and just as often subdued) as a tool of national emancipation. Our rich and diverse history gives us a unique place amongst four linguistic groups, the Slavic, Germanic, Romance, and Hungarian. Being ECC will help better understand our multicultural nature.

The Central Role of Culture in the Process of European Collaboration

The 2019-22 EU Work Plan for Culture adopted on 27 November 2018 sets out five main priorities for European

cooperation in cultural policy-making:

- Sustainability in cultural heritage
- Cohesion and well-being
- An ecosystem supporting artists, cultural and creative professionals and European content
- Gender equality
- International cultural relations

All five of these priorities have their place in our proposed strategy for securing the title of European Capital of Culture. We will achieve sustainability in cultural heritage with our prototype Sustainable Cultural Region, well-being will be developed at an eponymous Biennale, which we will design artistically in critical collaboration with textile industry representatives. Furthermore, we are developing a support ecosystem for artists in the form of residencies, gender equality in the BIEN, TAKT, and START programs and especially in the final segment of our Trilogy, and international relations with new partnerships.

Transnational Networks

Gorenjska's towns and cities, especially Kranj, are sorely lacking in international partnerships. So far none of the adopted strategies has provided tangible political internationalization. International collaboration has stagnated at the level of twin cities, where municipalities forge a theoretical bond with some European town or city. Combined with low local, municipal political support for concrete cultural project, the results are practically zero. Few residents of Kranj know why the La Ciotat city park bears this name. The park got a new name to mark the 50th anniversary of town twinning with this French commune. Yet one never gets to hear a French chanson while traversing it as municipalities rarely focus on the content development of such partnerships.

The Regional Development Agency of Gorenjska is the only body working to bring people to the table, stimulate new content and substance, and launch initiatives developing the local public and NGO organizations. In

practice, such organizations usually seek themselves out individually, to varying degrees of success. The announcement of our bid helped refresh thinking on setting the cultural sector with a series of tasks and challenges. We are rising to these challenges and slowly but surely building awareness on crucial but substantive programs. United approaches and standards of excellence are a must in our collaborations in order to gain long-term partnerships.

We realize that much hard work and honest effort awaits us in bringing about change, but the opportunities are immense. The ECC title is a key mechanism for weaving new partnership networks. The support environment built will encourage organizations to change their approaches and undertake more ambitious projects. While 2019 is already a turning point in networking with regional and international organizations, by 2025 we endeavour to have launched at least three new international projects. Having a detailed set of programs will help us draw European funds and direct local organizations to the tender calls they need to reach new heights in content development. Collaborative projects will set new conditions for sustainable cultural development and long-term partnerships within artist networks.

Spatial Networks

The increased influx of tourists that will result from the conferral of the ECC title to such a small country as Slovenia ensures obligations to set extremely strategic objectives and markets. We want visitors to return more than once during the title year and to become personally engaged in our programs. Plans are in place to strengthen primarily our Alpine region partnerships, as well as those with former Yugoslav republics, Balkan and Eastern European countries.

Gorenjska borders both the Goriška and Central Slovenian regions and touches the Italian Friuli region and Austrian Koroška across their respective state borders. Nearly the whole region is covered by the continent's southernmost Alps. As the home of the Sava's source, Gorenjska further

shares common identities with peoples all the way down to the confluence with the Danube and the Black Sea. We also share common heritage with Slavs all the way to Macedonia, Poland, and Russia, as the last stand of southern and westward Slavic expansion. As the new home of economic migrants and refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina, other former Yugoslav republics, and Albania, we build upon the diversity of mixed families and cultural expression. We dedicate special attention to Slovene ethnic groups in other countries, building bonds with Slovenians in Koroška and in other European cities.

Western Balkan Regional Cultural Centre (RCC)

The main goal of the network is to form a Regional Cultural Centre, a platform for regional integration and collaboration in the cultural sector, creativity, intercultural dialogue and the development of a regional cultural market. It gives special attention to the mobility of culture by providing opportunities for cultural exchange, fostering intercultural dialogue and understanding of cultural diversity by ensuring social inclusion and collaborative projects.

Program Networks

Our most important transnational project will be the Trilogy, a tool of social choreography designed to form networks of performance and socially-critical art. Kranj is well poised to host art events, as in 2020 the Kranj Prešeren Theater, is hosting a celebration of 50 years of Slovenian drama. We will also hold an international conference in 2020 on dramatic arts, inviting domestic and foreign performers from around the world to seek opportunities for Slovenian theatre to evolve and make its presence known internationally.

The Trilogy will be a strategic step in evolving a network of innovative performance practices and serve as a conduit for transferring knowledge and experience among partner cities. Participative projects will unfold

as social choreography, performative street art, dramatic plays, and hybrid events joining several genres of art and explorative theatre.

The TAKT, BIEN, and START initiatives are all designed as a true network of programs, each led by different organizations. They will help us seek European cities that have similar programs and objectives, engaging with them over creative collaborative projects and networks. Connections will be sought among contemporary museums and research institutions working on environmental sustainability, food, and climate justice. Our programs exploring textile art, new materials, reuse and recycling practices, industrial heritage and its future will work on existing platforms and forge new ones. We will use smart, modern media technology to host and connect the results of congresses, events, and campaigns.

Support Networks

Our residency program has huge potential to become a part of the European network of artistic mobility, which is set to develop as the pilot program EU I-portunus. We will engage with national award funds for artists in other European countries and link them with the laureates of our most prestigious award for artistic creation, the Prešeren Award. Our urban renewal program aims at connecting cities that have achieved excellent results in revitalizing neighbourhoods, building upon our reputation as recipients of the European URBACT award for our efforts in Kranj's Planina district.

Prototype models through the Innovation Centre will link cultural institutions with Slovenian and foreign startups and research centres, outlining and recommending research subjects. It is our intent to show elements of civil society and smart solutions for urban environments as an issue of European significance. New forms of participative decision-making will be developed, along with encouragement for innovative forms of democratic processes and commu-

nal management of small groups like local communities. As mentioned in the strategy of addressing marginalized groups, special emphasis will be devoted to invisible groups, as our efforts will be directed at innovations increasing access to cultural content and other services.

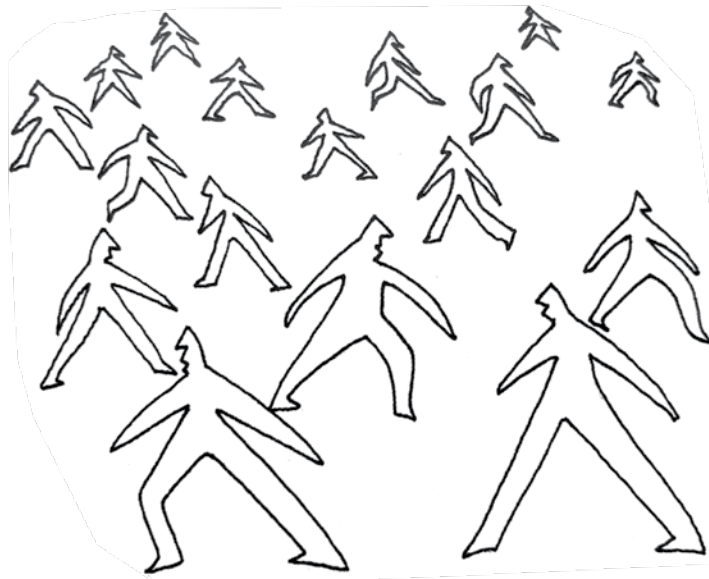
One area of artistic exploration and exhibition will focus on algorithms, data, and surveillance. In a world where Goldman Sachs employs more programmers than Google, where Deutsche Bank has laid off of a fifth of its workers through automation, and where AI-driven, algorithmic shopping has become the norm, the calls for art to be more transparent and inclusive to society go unheard. How can we strengthen art's significance and construct not just as a conceptual alternative to existing systems? These are some issues faced by Europe. We have plans to develop a program with Europe's most technologically advanced country, Germany, which shares with our country the title of European Capital of Culture in 2025.

Additional Connections

We plan to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the first European Capital of Culture with a think tank delineating the common methodologies of cultural projects in the EU. We aim towards the formation of a research body whose objective would be to propose a methodology to assess the effects of culture on the urban development of cities.

We wish to initiate debate on the necessity of a common European media platform, which would highlight the cultural and artistic diversity of every single EU member state, would act inclusively and would champion decentralised voices.

Our desire is to continue with the European volunteers programs and address another target group besides the young, namely senior citizens.



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

3.2

We will activate and engage the public toward our programs in the years leading up to the ECC title in five ways:

- **with regional and national cultural, tourist, and recreational partnerships**
- **with broadly designed digital campaigns tailored to the messages we intend to communicate**
- **with international partnerships, especially with countries in our immediate vicinity**
- **with groups of Gorenjska residents currently living elsewhere in Europe**
- **with the help of political projects, like the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of EU in 2021**

We will forge national partnerships with those who spread the good name of Kranj and Gorenjska as ECC through their networks. There will be ample opportunity for such partnerships, as our cultural workers join national preparations for the Slovenian pavilion at the 2025 Venice Biennale. Another cultural initiative will be linked to Prešeren laureates, who will become ECC ambassadors abroad. Similarly, we will work with the Slovenian Tourist Board to develop a strategy to secure the title of European Capital of Smart Tourism for one of Slovenia's municipalities. We will further work actively to support and promote our athletes under the ECC title, especially winter sports, in which so many of Gorenjska's citizens have won success.

We will launch strong digital campaigns with innovative marketing tech-

niques, reaching publics well outside of Europe. Our intent here is to focus on the crises of food, waste, and climate change.

We will work with partners in Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, Austria, Germany, and Hungarian to launch promotional campaigns. With all stakeholders, we will seek to craft a targeted message, one that lends itself to identification and affinity for our ECC programs.

We will reach out to Gorenjska natives living elsewhere in Europe, working with them and Slovenian embassies to promote Kranj and Gorenjska, and to tell stories about historical figures that left their mark on our cities.

We will use Slovenia's EU Council Presidency in 2021 to launch the pilot project EU26+. We will link 26 towns, squares, and tourist attractions in the Gorenjska region with 26

other EU Member States to help us target networking and capacity building throughout the same. Alongside culture, food and culinary arts will also get special treatment as Slovenia becomes the European Region of Gastronomy in 2021.

V kolikšni meri nameravate razviti povezave med svojim kulturnim programom in kulturnim programom drugih mest, ki nosijo naziv evropska prestolnica kulture?

3.3

Maribor 2012

Slovenia hosted its first European Capital of Culture in 2012. After passing final selection, Maribor formed ties with towns in the broader eastern region of the country. Our domestic cultural circles do not shy away from sharing their opinion that it has been a politically led project, which relied heavily on hiring cadre from Ljubljana for its execution. After its completion in 2012, they all left the city and its capacities were therefore not increased, but diminished.

We plan to offer the program management of the Rudolf Maister square in Kranj to all cultural creators from Maribor, who did not get the chance to collaborate in the project in 2012. Rudolf Maister was a Slovenian poet and military officer who successfully defended Slovenian northern border in 1918 and secured the city for the newly formed State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs. Besides collaborating in Maister's square, people from Maribor will also cooperate in other projects and strengthen decentralized networks of personnel capacities.

Germany 2025

We have established contacts with all five German cities, which earned their entry into the second selection round for the title of the European Capital of Culture 2025 and envisioned collaborations with all of them according to their submitted programs. With Hildesheim, we would like to address the food and agricultural policies, as well as the vanishing forests of Middle Europe through artist exchange programs and art projects. We would join Nuernberg in a common project commemorating the 80th anniversary of the end of WWII, as well as collaborate in the creation of the grand analogue game and Duerer. With Magdeburg, we would tackle biodiversity and collaborate by hosting residency programs for artists who work in pu-

blic spaces. Hannover impressed us with its agora and the possibilities of integrating sustainable uses of public spaces with subsistence housing and urban development policies. We envision Chemnitz as a partner in the network of cities, which underline their connection to the textile industries and its integration into urban renovation.«

Rijeka 2020

At the Festival of Visual Arts in 2019, Kranj has hosted a presentation of the activities undertaken by Rijeka's City Museum in the scope of their preparatory actions leading up to their titular year. Diverse cultural organisations have been active in forming collaborations with cultural institution in Rijeka and its surrounding territory, most notably at the level of capacity building and content collaborations in the network of residential centres.

Novi Sad 2021 and Matera 2019

We have thoroughly defined our cooperation with the Cultural centres of Western Balkans. The O-CITY project, a collaboration between the Regional Agency of Gorenjska and its partners from Novi Sad and Matera focusing on contemporary reinterpretations of cultural heritage, is in its execution phase. The non-governmental cultural organisation Kulturanova from Novi Sad and the Carnica Institute, a non-governmental cultural organisation from Kranj formed a partnership in the scope of their project application to the Creative Europe funding programme, which entails several programme collaborations and artist-in-residency programs.

Kaunas 2022

Kaunas could be considered Lithuania's Kranj. The towns are comparable on many levels and in many things, but the similarities in their proposed programs are almost unbelievable. Like Kranj Kaunas built its vision aro-

und the myth of the city and its region. It has to tackle its negative image among the town's residents, in the region and the state. It also carries out extensive programs of reinterpretation of cultural heritage through contemporary practices. We are eager to collaborate with their biennale, which they used to introduce to the world as a textile biennale. Kaunas will be one of Kranj's and Gorenjska's most important ECC partners and the starting point of all our relations with the Baltic states. We have already made contact and addressed common topics.

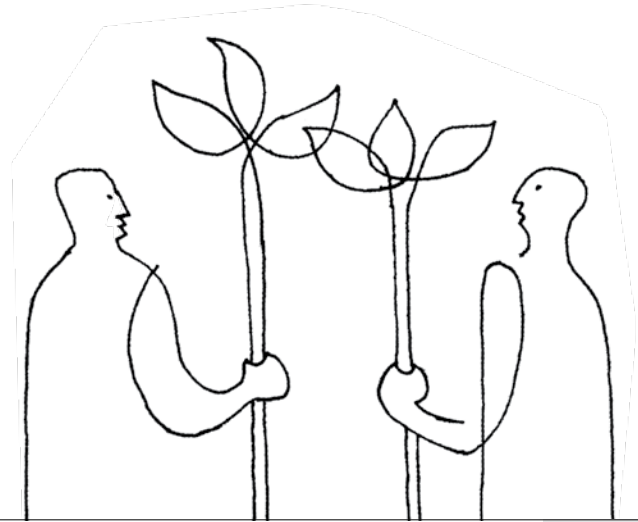
Vežsprem Balaton 2023 and Bad Ischl 2024

Our neighbouring states Hungary and Austria will receive the titles of the European Capital of Culture in two consequential years and right before the title comes to Slovenia. Therefore, they will be crucial for the formation of partnerships. We will collaborate with both cities, which like Kranj with Gorenjska also represent their respective regions, and exchange of good practices and experiences in preparation for the titular year. The attendees of the Academy for Cultural Management will visit both cities, receive training in the form of cultural internships and focus on networking. Both future cultural capitals pay particular attention on issues stemming from hyper-tourism. In our initial contacts, we have therefore addressed those strands of our programme, which would enable the outreach of these topics.

Leeuwarden 2018 and Donostia San Sebastian 2016

Both former capitals have stressed the role of smaller languages in Europe (the Frisian and Basque language). We also plan to address the issue in 2025 in our Beletristi programme. We are in regular contact with both teams.

4. OUTREACH



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.

4.1

Since we know the local cultural community so well at the creative, amateur, and professional levels, we are a part of its fiber and being; the very beginnings of our bid grew from this community's needs. We have also begun project work with cultural institutions and artistic communities, as well as work on large-scale artistic projects and campaigns, both within the city and throughout the region. On 10 February 2019 we posted a call to join Kranj's bid for the 2025 ECC title on our project site www.kranj2025.eu.

WE ARE LOCAL RESIDENTS AND CIVIL SOCIETY OURSELVES

This year, our most active to date, was spent readying the substance our bid. To that end we held a series of meetings with over 250 representatives of organizations, resident communities, and artists and creators. Events and workshops for local residents served to spread our ideas of cultural development and participative mechanisms. Communication campaigns targeted those who are not (yet) interested in culture, urbanism, and the environment, as well as former Kranj and Gorenjska residents now living abroad in Europe.

We are convinced that our efforts at connecting actors through our call to collaboration did a great deal of good for them, as we showed them clearly our intent to increase our human resources and capacities. Our open call for content will be ready to launch

at the end of winter, 2020, when we know the results of the selection process. It will only be possible to make all the projects happen that are envisioned by the beginning of our bid and build our programs and support networks with municipal and national financing, which we will active supplement with private sector partnerships and increased efforts at finding EU and other international funds.

There are two other reasons for delaying the call for conceptual ideas: the first lies in effectively communicating the importance of forging bonds with the international community and calling on citizens to reflect upon how they view and experience the international environment, and how they can contribute to networking themselves. The other is the seriously

undernourished cultural sector. In small countries such as ours, excessive expectations and subsequent empty promises after failure often garner negative reactions. Despite active communication over the past year, we (expectedly) met little national interest in our bid program. Local communities more often than not view the candidacy itself as the result of half-hearted commitments, poor analyses, and incomplete understanding of the project's worth for residents. Sadly there are also quite a lot of negative sentiments about how Maribor handled its tenure as European Capital of Culture in 2012.

In 2012 Maribor shared the title together with Ptuj, Velenje, Murska Sobota, Novo Mesto, and Slovenj Gradec, and is infamous as an example

of poor practice in the world of ECC, primarily due to the influence of politics on how events were carried out. Nonetheless, the Maribor of today is a lively cultural city, developing admirably under the influence of local communities and residents. It still strives to buck its stigma as a dead city, with only a few dive bars keeping the Styrian capital afloat.

The large number of Slovenian towns is great news for everyone. That number is also a boon for the whole of Slovenia and its general public, which is slowly beginning to realize the significance of this event in 2025. Whichever town or city ends up selected for the title, it will have quite a bit of work to do in softening up the resistance of local residents to the bid's initiatives. Neither "culture", nor "Europe", and least of all "publicly financed" are

popular topics in Slovenia. Finding a balance and equally addressing all local residents' concerns and desires for cultural and urban content will prove an extraordinary challenge.

Distances between cities in this country, one of Europe's smallest, somehow seem huge to Slovenians. We factor in a few imaginary kilometers on top of the actual ones. We want to use the ECC title to break down these imaginary borders between our cities. Kranj is the biggest city in any proximity to Ljubljana. If we ever begin to consider Kranj as close, Nova Gorica, Koper, Maribor, Ptuj, and maybe even Črnomelj will become close. When Kranj truly becomes another capital in the eyes of its own residents and residents in other Slovenian towns and cities, we are sure that we will find unique, captivating stories

in every corner of the country, ones that are worth exploring and telling over and over again. We want our bid to empower the concept of sustainable cultural development throughout Slovenia, reaching citizens in even our smallest towns and villages.

We officially launched our campaign in October 2018, publishing a website and communicating with audiences through social and local media. Our local newspaper has featured monthly articles on our progress in our bid, along with news about our efforts at networking and designing program content. We established lines of communication, opening ourselves up to all recommendations and ideas, especially devoting attention to meetings of experts and professionals, where we put our common requirements on the table.

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

4.2

One of our bid's most important objectives is establishing safe, open spaces for working with invisible groups. In addition to understanding the need for culture to be accessible to everyone, inherently implying architectural changes to existing public buildings and sites of natural and cultural heritage, we have and will continue to invite the participation of invisible group in designing our program and production content.

Invisible groups is the name we've given to underprivileged groups, with the aim of lending more cultural orientation to their situations. These are not just people with sensory, physical, or mental handicaps; they also include the elderly, the poor, those with social problems, and anyone else whom society pushes to the edge. The culture of minority and migrant groups is on the rise in Kranj and Gorenjska, thanks to the hard work of several organizations, but it is still confined to limited spaces and is rarely welcomed on public stages, and rarely treated as an equally valid stakeholder in cultural policy.

It is imperative for invisible groups that we make a platform that will not put pressure on them, as their vulnerability is the very reason for their inclusion. Many integration projects, especially those that are subsidized, are incapable of converting their content into long-term success stories. Representatives of invisible groups

will develop a bond and loyalty that we must nurture forever. We need to make it possible for them to progress in their efforts with the help of our recommendations, production approaches, and curation practices. Our programs put invisible groups side by side with more privileged members of society.

Special attention is also given to the biodiversity of the plants and animals that are so crucial for our everyday life, but on whose environments urban development steadily encroaches. Why are these species important? Among other things, our tolerance for all sentient beings leads to fruitful discussions about diversity.

Programs aimed at invisible groups include our Network of Behavior (a support program under Urban Renewal), content under our TAKT and BIEN projects, and the subject matter covered by the Trilogy. There are countless ways to experience invasive

worlds, ones that encroach on our everyday lives; we highlight tactile sensations, acoustics, and taste. Our Trilogy is an experiment in social choreography for the 3rd phase of life, as a part of the performers and production team is led by retired senior citizens. By understanding and portraying diversity we will forge networks of worlds and perspectives that too often slip under the radar, giving them the attention they deserve. We will connect with socially conscious companies and the Innovation Center will use the latest technologies to develop practices aimed at improving invisible groups' quality of life. We will call upon tourist providers to put programs and products in place for such groups, and demand that public services and cultural organizations ensure accessibility to various cultural sites. Our efforts in this regard will also include insistence that cultural workers receive appropriate education in this regard.

We have developed 6 levels of growing audiences:

| | |
|--|---|
| 1. The participative strategy Walk the Talk | 4. Partnerships |
| 2. A program of substantive audience participation | 5. A volunteer program |
| 3. A communication strategy that emphasis social media, digital content marketing, and relationships with traditional forms of media | 6. Employing experts on audiences development |

Our strategy for attracting audiences is embedded in our participative program Walk the Talk (Table 1). It consists of a series of calls to action aimed at our relationships with culture, society, the environment, and the economy. We invite people to thought, reflection, play, and preservation. The meanings gleaned from such calls to action are then embedded in our programs, tying them together like glue. A coherent and unified communication strategy is crucial in achieving the objectives we've set. It must be targeted at local residents, decision-makers, content creators, partners, and visitors at the same time. Specially designed digital campaigns will aid our efforts at reaching audiences that perhaps have no direct contact with our programs, but who are nonetheless interested in some of the core questions and topics raised by their frameworks. We will invite audiences to participate in forming programs, projects, and events. Our communication plan will be well-detailed and precise, as we disseminate our digital messages work-

ing with local and international media. We will unify our communication plan with our partners and call upon volunteers from both near and fall. In terms of our increased personnel, one group will be exclusively employed and tasked with building audiences.

The calls for national and Europe-level change are currently the loudest by far among young people, who pound home their message of climate justice. Momentum is gathering on common understanding, common spaces, and common measures for change, overtaking European politics and the average citizen. A structural dialog must be established within that narrative, ensuring that our program will not just be visible in our city and region, but at the European level, too. This is a crucial indicator that our project must measure and quantify. The more flowering, the more success.

Collaboration with Educational Institutions

Urban Renewal and START will be the ripest programs for connecting

children in our region's schools and preschool facilities. The programs will see us connect with the region's preschools, schools, and music academies.

The BIEN program is already working with several departments from the University of Ljubljana, like the hard sciences departments, Electrical Engineering, and the Design faculty, as well as with Kranj's high school system. We further plan collaboration with the Faculty of Architecture and other of Gorenjska's high schools and institutions of higher education

The TAKT program has us collaborating with the Academy of Fine Arts, and we also plan on working with the landscape architecture department at the Biotechnical Faculty and the Biotech Center.

The Trilogy will include programs for scholastic extracurricular activities aimed at developing knowledge of dance, movement, and theater.

| | AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY | TOOLS |
|----------------------|---|--|
| MISSION | Understand audiences and communities | identification and targeting |
| | Educate | inclusion and learning possibilities |
| | Build capacities | establishment of the audience development team |
| | Maintain sustainable finances | accessibility and the value of culture |
| PROGRAM FOCUS | The Trilogy Program | participation, social choreography |
| | Walk the Talk | non-profit marketing for specific segments of target audiences |
| | Sustainable Cultural Region | local and international integration |
| GOALS | Increased number of participating visitors | consistent execution, documentation |
| | Improved public attitude towards culture, environment, public property and policies | artistic content, content marketing |
| | Increased satisfaction and number of recommendations | high quality, good reputation, hospitality |
| | Measured positive impacts on the environment, economy, society | measuring and analysing public opinion |

Table 5: Audience Development Strategy

5. MANAGEMENT

A. FINANCE

City budget for culture

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).

| Year | Annual budget for culture in the city (in euros) | Annual budget for culture in the city (in % of the total annual budget for the city) |
|---------|--|--|
| n-1 | 5.426.670 | 7,56 % |
| n-2 | 5.050.070 | 8,39 % |
| n-3 | 4.434.733 | 8,33 % |
| n-4 | 4.228.491 | 5,00 % |
| Current | 6.156.689 | 7,76 % |

Kranj's municipal budget for culture for the last 5 years is indicated in the table above. The proposed 2020 cultural budget sits at 7,072,283 EUR or 8.12 % of the total budget.

Over the past 3 years, the total average budget in the region's 5 biggest municipalities (Jesenice, Bled, Škofja Loka, Radovljica, Tržič) amounted to 12.81 million EUR, or between 7 % and even up to 30 % of their budgets. Bled is an outlier as the entrance fees for Bled Castle go directly to its Tourist Board.

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.

The annual budget listed above is intended for regular cultural activities, not for financing ECC projects. The city and the region plan to use their own funds to subsidize ECC efforts. This amount will be subject to individual budget constraints and specific inter-municipal contracts. It is also independent of previously earmarked annual cultural budgets for included municipalities. The expected amount of the Kranj municipality's contribution to the ECC project is 8 million EUR.

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)?

Kranj's average cultural budget for 2015-2020 is more than 5 million EUR (around 7 % of the total budget) per

year, at 5-14% yearly growth. The total budgets for culture in the next five largest Gorenjska municipalities after Kranj (Jesenice, Bled, Radovljica, Škofja Loka, Tržič) marked on average 12.8 million annually (around 12 % of the total budgets), at about 20 %+ average growth (mostly due to investments and entrance fees for Bled Castle).

Given our cultural strategy for the year after the title year, Kranj will use 9 % of its budget to finance cultural activities. From 2026 to 2030, assuming 90 million EUR in the annual budget for Kranj's municipality, 8.1 million EUR will be spent on culture per year. Assuming 110 million EUR in annual budgets among the other municipalities, we can add 9.9 million EUR per year to this sum. The whole annual cultural budget in the immediate period after the title year is thus at least 18 million EUR.

These funds will be dedicated to maintaining and further developing the ECC project, especially in its artistic and production capacities, cultural education, improving our skills at attracting international partners and audiences, and intersectoral collaboration (e.g. the Cultu:re platforme, which will function as the region's body for advanced culture in the ECC legacy years).

In addition, the ECC will give the cultural sector, made up of NGOs and public institutions, the clout and resources it needs to secure additional EU financing in the years before the title. The ECC project will build substantive momentum leading to the title, along with new partnerships and new consortia. Perhaps this will flag in the year after the title, but the knowledge of EU calls to tender, given the status quo, will prove infinitely useful for Kranj and the Gorenjska region.

Operating budget for the title year

Income to cover operating expenditure:

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.

| Total income to cover operating expenditure (in euros) | From the public sector (in euros) | From the public sector (in %) | From the private sector (in euros) | From the private sector (in %) |
|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 31.000.000 | 29.000.000 | 93,5 % | 2.000.000 | 6,5 % |

Income from the public sector:

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

| Income from the public sector to cover operating expenditure | In euros | In % |
|--|-------------------|--------------|
| National government | 10.000.000 | 34,5 % |
| City | 8.000.000 | 27,6 % |
| Region | 6.000.000 | 20,7 % |
| EU (with exception of the Melina Mercouri Prize) | 2.000.000 | 6,9 % |
| Other | 3.000.000 | 10,3 % |
| Total | 29.000.000 | 100 % |

The total operating budget (the whole ECC budget less investments in infrastructure) amounts to 31 million EUR, of which public finances cover 29 million EUR. The budget consists of the country's unofficial commitment to contribute funds to the selected city (10 million EUR for operating expenses), a conservative but sustainable estimate of city revenue in the amount of 8 million EUR over 6 years, other municipalities in the region totaling 6 million over 6 years, EU funds from tenders in the amount of 2 million EUR over 6 years, and other revenues (augmenting existing programs and tenders for the objectives of the ECC through subsidies from NGOs) in the amount of 3 million EUR over 6 years.

Using data from the previous three years, 5.5 million has been spent annually on culture, with the rest of the municipalities together weighing in at 15 million. These sums only include culture in its strict sense: cultural heritage, cultural and artistic programs, music schools and other forms of cultural education, and special public institutions for culture and tourism that municipalities have established. By including transformative programs and intersectoral collaboration (urbanism and environment, cultural heritage and the private sector, digital innovation, mobility and accessibility, education and young people, tourist economy, etc.), this number climbs to more than 50 million euros per year (the budgets of all regional municipalities amounted to over 280 million euros in 2019). The estimate is that together in six years the city and region can contribute 14 million EUR for ECC projects, promoting culture in line with our concept as the driver of transformation.

Almost all public tenders in Slovenia, regardless of whether ECC-related or not, work on the basis of co-financing from the applicant's own or acquired funds as well, and the ECC project is the same. From the 0.8 million EUR split among the region's NGOs in public calls to tender per year, at least 0.4 million EUR will be contributed to culture; this adds up to 2.4 million EUR over 6 years. In the period leading up to 2025, we expect an increase in applications from regional cultural projects to EU calls to

tender, especially from the Creative Europe Fund. If our applications enjoy the same success as to date, we can expect at least 3-4 projects to receive financing from the EU. If the amount of financing for small-scale projects remains at 60% and at a maximum of 50% or 2,000,000 EUR for large-scale projects, that means NGOs will need to contribute 1.5 million EUR of their own funds, of which 0.5 to 0.7 million EUR will come from Gorenjska's applicants.

We thus expect contributions from NGOs in the amount of 3 million EUR. Most of this amount is covered or at least comprised of funds from national or similar public tenders (earmarked to benefit the ECC, thus considered public funds).

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?

The government of the Republic of Slovenia committed to attributing 10 million EUR to the chosen ECC city on December 13, 2019.

Gorenjska's Council also adopted a decision supporting Kranj and the broader region as applicants on December 11, 2019, and even before that, a meeting of Kranj's municipal government council also formalized its candidacy and earmarked budgetary funds for launching the bid. Both decisions herald support for the bid's content and financial support, though the region has still not completely formalized its specific financial plans for the whole ECC project. Calculations were made based on estimates and informal methodology in tolerated amounts and shares. The city and region plan to formalize their financial plans after the end of round 1, when it is clear whether Kranj and Gorenjska have made the shortlist.

Income from the private sector:

What is the fund-raising strategy to seek support from private sponsors? What is the plan for involving sponsors in the event?

Private sponsors usually do not contribute heavily to the cultural sector's cash flows, though our tight ties to the community has translated to wonderful collaboration between private partners as reflected in networking, access to infrastructure (the culturally-specific TAM-TAM billboard in front of the Kranj public library, or Mergentaler's street galley, where TAM-TAM and the Layer House join forces), and material sponsorship (event catering in exchange for advertising space, e.g.). Such partnerships have a ton of potential, though, especially in the context of the cultural sector's expected growth in the run-up to the title year and the increased interest of audiences and businesses whom such growth will benefit (tourism, digital innovation, etc.).

Financing strategies including private sponsors rely on historical tried-and-tested models (e.g. our Prešeren Fair

project), new insights and trends on cultural sponsorships, and intersectoral partnerships on specific projects or measures (e.g. Elektro Gorenjska's sponsorship of electronic vehicles).

We also plan on launching a special Friends of Kranj25 ECC club, figureheaded by Kranj's mayor, which will seek to unite supporters and give them a space to network and find business opportunities. The Sponsors Club will include several sponsorship packages and levels. One part of financing is planned through crowdsourcing, including a campaign calling upon all our 2 million citizens to contribute 1 euro to our project.

We will establish a community of green creativity. Creative startups working on culture, environmental tech, or AI and blockchain and similar branches will be invited to an annual gathering aimed at establishing a community of urban, environmental, and creative thinkers and entrepreneurs. Our vision is to connect them through events such as Norway's Catapult Festival. This niche is set to truly break out in the next five to 10 years, and we believe the Gorenjska region's focus on green development and creative innovation makes it well poised to be a player in this regard; such a conference will give cohesion to content, and in five years become a priceless location of networking, transferring knowledge, making deals, and securing investments, etc. in green and social technologies with relevance to culture and co-creation. This conference will form a platform for lectures from thinkers and trendsetters, for pitches from startups, for sound investments from venture capitalists, for attracting sponsorships, and for opportunities or exclusive deals through the mentioned Friends of Kranj25 club.

All these listed measures will lead to 2 million EUR in secured funding from private sponsors.

Operating expenditure:

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

Budget for capital expenditure:

| | |
|---|------------|
| Program expenditure (in euros) | 21.700.000 |
| Program expenditure (in %) | 70 % |
| Promotion and marketing (in euros) | 4.960.000 |
| Promotion and marketing (in %) | 16 % |
| Wages, overheads, and administration (in euros) | 4.340.000 |
| Wages, overheads, and administration (in %) | 14 % |
| Other (please specify) (in euros) | / |
| Other (please specify) (in %) | / |
| Operating expenditure total | 31.000.000 |

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:

| | | |
|--|------------|--------|
| Income from the public sector to cover capital expenditure | in euros | V % |
| National government | 6.000.000 | 16,7 % |
| City | 10.000.000 | 27,8 % |
| Region | 5.000.000 | 13,9 % |
| EU (with exception of the Melina Mercouri Prize) | 15.000.000 | 41,7 % |
| Other | / | / |
| Total | 36.000.000 | 100 % |

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?

We have it on authority from state information that infrastructure projects related to ECC will be the subject of priority treatment in the programs and tenders of cohesion funds. The amount of co-financing amounts to 50 %, the equivalent of 18 million EUR, of which 15 million EUR comes from the EU and 3 from the state.

The city adopted a selection of ten investment projects for cultural infrastructure, estimated together at 26 million EUR. Infrastructural projects in the region are estimated at costing 10 million EUR.

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

In addition to municipal financial support, most funds for cultural infrastructure is planned based on the decision of the Ministry of Culture to give priority in cohesion programs and funds to projects included in the ECC plans. Based on the estimated share, the sum of co-financing amounts to 15 million EUR from the EU and 21 million EUR from the state, region, and city.

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.

Page 59 features the details of the infrastructure projects. →

B. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

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

Our management philosophy pursues a bottom-up approach. This concept takes more time, but it is more sustainable; namely, it is easier and quicker to pay some PR agents and salespeople, or just high-level politicians, to push program concepts than it is to develop cultural workers, residents, NGO workers who all understand and internalize the ECC and its rules, and on their bases brainstorm, plan, and act, and run activities that they judge to be appropriate for the standard and vision of the ECC. Of utmost importance, they should constantly be increasing their production capacity. The management structure is thus designed alongside the rise of the institutions and bodies they belong to, as befits their purpose and substance, with the purpose of maintaining momentum and expertise during the period after the title.

2019-2020: Kranj's mayor forms group of key public and NGO cultural and tourist organizations whose purpose is to draft a bid concept. This group also includes the vice-mayor, whose responsibilities in Kranj include overseeing the cultural sector, as well as individuals tasked with developing and communicating content. Such a structure facilitates the independent drafting of a great plan, one that can be crosschecked and supplemented by other municipalities. It also helps keep public officials in the loop, as their help will be crucial during the title year.

2020-21: The group is joined by representatives from the broader CCI and other sectors (business, tourism, the environment, mobility, etc.) in the region, as well as from regional agencies, cultural institutions, and programs. This also helps solidify and polish the bid concept and develop a framework for a larger programming committee.

2022-25: The following subgroups are formed:

- oversight committee: evaluation, financial oversight
- programming committee: advisory body
- main director and four area directors: cultural and artistic director, development director (in charge of collaboration with other sectors, partnerships, networking, international presence), director of audience and communication (inclusive participation), and financial director
- production bodies and project leaders for individual projects: together, eight heads of content categories are included in the ECC bid

This hierarchy allows us to focus on prototyping, readying and improving upon projects, building momentum in the period leading up to the title, our production capacities during 2025, and putting together a team to focus on the title legacy period.

2026-2030: based on our evaluation criteria, our financial and sustainable success, and the reactions and impressions shared by visitors, we will be able to put together a management strategy that carefully handles continuing content. No matter what, our regional Cultu:re conference will continue, as it is primed to lead the charge for sweeping future change at the pan-regional level.

C. CONTINGENCY PLANNING

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

Advantages:

- A long-term vision that does not merely address the here and now but puts in place measures for what and how afterwards.
- Transcending the typical principally artistic approach through our insistence on tackling the environment and sustainability.
- A non-institutional, NGO-based core of enthusiastic believers in the project, who see a much broader picture in designing and implementing programs than a representative of the typically bureaucratic public sector.
- Our advantage will be in the conversion of ECC goals and regional strategic objectives into a cohesive whole that truly powers the region's transformation, with culture playing an even more important role than it does today.
- Our prototyping approach and group participation lead to a system in which projects are built from the bottom

up, including audiences that grow along with "their" projects, ensuring that the ECC projects do not merely pass them by.

- Furthermore, our project is free from risky construction work, as our content programs are set to take over existing infrastructure, renovating only when necessary.
- All necessary cultural infrastructure can be found within a radius of 20 km from the primary Kranj-Jesenice transport route, along with the overwhelming majority of the local population, comprising this project's principal target group.
- A focus on substantive revitalization not based on newly poured concrete

Disadvantages:

- A lack of cultural managers in the region: Our plan to fix this situation features the inclusion of producers, organizational teams, and project leaders from several sectors, alongside our own system of teaching and coaching cultural managers (CEO Academy for Cultural Management).
- Overnight capacities in Kranj are quite limited (120,000 in 2019⁶): This will be addressed by relying on other capacities in the region, along the route Kranj-Bled-Kranjska Gora, meaning that tourists will never have to sleep more than 20 km from an event. This gives the

⁶ <https://tinyurl.com/wkebgur>

whole region up to a potential 2.9 million overnight stays per year, along with another 2.1 million upon factoring in the relatively close capital of Ljubljana.⁷

- The poorly developed network of international partnerships among the region's cultural actors. This will be improved by actively seeking new connections and increasing the sector's capacities through our prototyping methods in the period 2020-2024. In this period, we will give existing projects identified as good practice an international aspect, bringing them fresh comparisons and new milestones in efforts to secure European tenders. Prototyping projects to improve upon their every iteration will ensure that actual products are designed with sustainability in mind, as events' international dimensions will grow if nurtured, becoming an integral part of the project itself, not just a statistical fluke.
- Poor communication with target groups: on one hand the general public is a bit timid in its visitation of cultural events, preferring instead more explicit entertainment. On the other, producers and organizers could do a better job of placing their messages and communication campaigns. This lack will be breached on one hand

by bringing events to citizens (e.g. having a concert orchestra come to play at a residential apartment building, not in a hall), and on the other by (i) including audiences in organization and production (the Flock), (ii) audience collaboration with artists (e.g. during artist residencies for the Chaos Festival), (iii) holding events that build communities and foster common experiences (e.g. the Ocarina Festival). All this will provide added value and serve as a way of attracting visitors.

- The centralization of content, workforces, and infrastructure is another shortcoming that plagues our project. There is also a sharp lack of communication between the city and the region (largely a statistical entity), and inter-municipal collaboration is generally weak. We will address these problems in the ECC project's very blueprint geared directly toward such inter-municipal operation and regional harmony (e.g. the CEO Academy for Culture) and with the sustainable regional Culture conference set to decentralize development..

D. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

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

The marketing strategy presupposes a strict cohesion between our media and digital campaign. Our aim is to reach (i) the European publics with specific targeted groups, (ii) the residents of neighbouring regions, who will be addressed with the "Welcome back" call and (iii) local publics through extensive use of differing community participation mechanisms, "bottom-up" communication approaches and resident mobilisation. We will build **strong partnerships** with:

- Tourist organisations (national and local). We wish to create a communication strategy that will resonate with our strategy of audience development. It will be based on building up a sense of belonging and identification with the message and the programs and will aim to convince the visitors not to consider their journey to the region as a short trip, but take an active part in the cultural programme;
- Tourism workers. We will organise educational programs on hospitality and different aspects of the ECC vision. We will build strong relations until 2025 to make sure they feel the project is their own.
- Media. We will create articles and opinion columns in collaboration with local and national media outlets, as well as online platforms, identify international cultural journalists with a broad reach from Western and Eastern Europe, form partnerships with them and build a strong sustainable network of international media connections.

Our place as a small country in the heart of Europe is extremely positive for our marketing potential. A small market at the intersection of important corridors provides a wonderful opportunity to develop strategic advantages. Alongside plenty of traditional communication techniques and channels that cater to targeted audiences with relevant content, we have also developed a set of **innovative approaches**.

- Communities. We have developed an audience development strategy named Walk the Talk. With it, we call upon communities to act, claim, think, play and sustain. With the help of the ECC programs, we will direct the tools of non-profit marketing towards envisioned sustainable effects on culture, society, economy and ecology.
- Our promotional materials will be selected with care, under the clear awareness that branded material objects like cups, mugs, pencils, and umbrellas are sooner useless than practical, not to mention, environmentally unsound. We want every branded product to be exemplary, useful, and substantially relevant. It is impossible, for instance, to take a stance against the environmental crisis, and still offer the public cheap products, produced in massive Chinese factories. We need to walk the talk ourselves.
- Shirts and other textile materials will be produced by fair-trade stores, bearing the logos of the messages we're promoting and standing behind (Claim, Think, Play, Sustain). We will launch a line of useful and decorative objects, like headbands and fruit and vegetable bags, which will be decorated with designs that the public can choose. Special emphasis will fall on collaboration with local designers, tradespeople, and product marketers.
- We will optimize the number of our printed advertisements and will take care to produce printed

⁷ <https://tinyurl.com/uqsbtrtv>

catalogues, publication and archival materials of the highest quality in terms of content and design.

- By 2025, we want to have worked with regional and national tourist organisations to launch a system of reusing the materials used in serving tourists, leading to more sustainable products like maps, brochures, and flyers that visitors can leave behind for reuse at frequently visited sites.
- As a highlight of some of our initial communication techniques, we will work with residents at workshops to carve into stone the symbols that we develop for the title year, placing them strategically throughout Gorenjska. We will also develop dedicated information and signalization units.
- It is our desire to transfer or house most of our content on digital platforms, engaging designers to make use of a single application.
- In the years up to 2025, we and our partners will stage several events and projects to promote the title year. Our PR campaigns will be outlined years in advance, with strong considerations about growth. One such effort includes the immediate planting of a public orchard, which lends itself to continued promotional opportunities over the years.
- Slovenian companies and public personalities will become our partners, defending justice in society, in food and dietary change, in climate matters and in issues of renewable resources. We will also call upon them to reach publics that are disinterested in culture.
- Facilities will be branded. We will carve out new meanings for archaeological sites, industrial zones, literary and theatrical hubs, and centres of Slavic culture, among many more.
- Our communication crew will be specially trained for crisis communication, as we expect national media to seize upon issues of wasting public money, infrastructure projects, and other pitfalls waiting on the horizon.
- One part of financing is planned through crowd-sourcing. We will launch a broad communication campaign focusing on the use of public finances in cultural endeavours, calling upon all our 2 million citizens to contribute 1 euro to our project.

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

We realize that the marketing group's biggest obstacle lies in inviting and attracting European audiences to Kranj and Gorenjska with the explicit purpose of visiting the European Capital of Culture. At the same time, we are keenly aware of the need to limit rampant, uncontrolled tourism in the region; visitors must be aligned with our program content and be made aware that our environment is fragile and transforming rapidly. The marketing group should work hand-in-hand with those in the content group. We are already designing an awareness campaign in which we highlight the importance of distributing tourists throughout the region's attractions, ensuring the sites do

not suffer symptoms of a critical tourism mass and continue to provide authentic experiences. This has been identified as a huge challenge, one we would like to tackle along with private partners and artistic groups. We would like our facilities and structures to take on new meanings, reaching them with new, green means of transport (foot, e-bikes, other e-vehicles). A special emphasis will be devoted to the concept of sustainable European mobility.

Sustainability (in traffic, culture, develop) should be juxtaposed with marketing approaches to coalesce into a concept for potential European organization. Europe is whatever is green and technologically advanced. In communication, we will not embellish the values that the EU symbolizes but as of late, has failed in maintenance. We would like to dispel with the European illusion, upend it and seek a new European values system. That system should be transparent and inclusive, instead of the murky elitism to which we've grown accustomed. Such a system does not seek to extinguish hate speech and populist voices but, by engaging them in fruitful discussion, to transcend them. We want everyone to see themselves in our program, its concept, and the resulting programs. Convincing a core of loyal supporters and launching a snowball effect of interest will help us reach a massive amount of voices, all of whom will be crying out for the same final goal: preservation.

Emphasis that we are the European Capital of Culture will be emblazoned across several traditional channels, including our logos, written communication, speeches, press releases, merchandise, and branded materials. Special attention will be placed on international journalists and publishing houses, as well as digital channels that can aid our launch of content and programs. Our efforts will be joined with larger national PR and event campaigns, and we will continually remind the international public about our ECC programs in the years leading to the title.

- **with regional and national cultural, tourist, and recreational partnerships**
- **with broadly designed digital campaigns tailored to the messages we intend to communicate**
- **with international partnerships, especially with countries in our immediate vicinity**
- **with groups of Gorenjska residents currently living elsewhere in Europe**
- **with the help of political projects, like the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of EU in 2021**

Section 3 features an elaboration of the explanation above.



6. CAPACITY TO DELIVER



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.

On 17th October 2018, Kranj made the decision to campaign for the title of 2025 ECC formally at the highest level of its political structure. The affiliated municipalities joining Kranj's bid adopted the same decision at a meeting of the Council of Gorenjska, a regular session of the region's highest decision-making bodies, confirming their moral, political, and tangible support for Kranj and Gorenjska as ECC applicants.

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:

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

Kranj and Gorenjska's bid depends heavily on existing cultural infrastructure and facilities that can easily be converted to cultural purposes. We do not plan to have any new construction projects, solely the overhaul of existing infrastructure.

Using cultural infrastructure:

On one hand, existing cultural infrastructure in individual municipalities is numerous and includes the Prešeren Theater in Kranj, the Kranj Public Library, Layer House, the Museum of the Upper Sava Region, the Radovljica Apiary Museum, the Festival Hall and Bled Castle, the Tržič Museum, the Eagle's House in Škofja Loka, the Škofja Loka Museum, Sora Theater, etc. and a broad network of cultural houses with small stages and galleries. This public infrastructure (together more than 50 buildings/spaces) is managed for the purpose of developing cultural heritage, venues, art of all genres, and cultural tourism and education. The ECC project will breathe new life and substance into dilapidated cultural houses.

Existing infrastructure will be used for approaching audiences. The cultural strategy of all affiliated municipalities is the same, prioritising issues like increasing visitor flows, making cultural products and services more accessible, making cultural workers more close-knit with educational and tourist sectors, etc. We believe that the regional Cultu:re conference, networking post-production programs, and hyperlocal cultural programs and projects run by all the included institutions and municipalities will be improved upon and upgraded by becoming more accessible to audiences.

Existing cultural infrastructure needs substantive makeovers (e.g. the current main hall at Prešeren Theater is

far too small; there is no dance hall, an oddity given the above-average rise in dance programs; rural cultural houses are woefully inadequate for large-scale events, etc.), regional and international partnerships, and increased attendance to properly take advantage of existing capacities.

The development of cultural infrastructure:

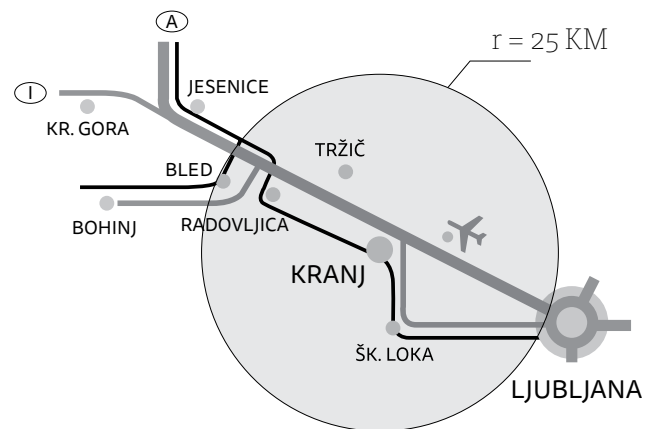
On the other hand, we have existing but abandoned, or dilapidated infrastructure, which does not require massive investments in ostentatious but hollow construction. Mostly, an overhaul or other adaptation for cultural purposes is needed. Majdic’s Mill (the former mill on the island under the city centre), the old Inteks factory, the western part of the old textile giant Globus’s premises, the Kokra Canyon as a tourist point, the Human Fish Centre in Kranj’s tunnels, the City Hall (renewal), the former School of Construction, Bežek’s Mansion, and the Prešeren Institute are our renewal projects set to increase our capacity and develop into the new backbone of Kranj’s transformation.

National policy regarding potential ECC infrastructure projects seeks to prioritise the renewal of cultural infrastructure in cohesion tenders. While this means a longer time period to begin construction and thus a delay in financing, it also speaks perfectly to our intersectoral concept (culture, environment, tourism, innovation), a heavily weighted point or synergy element in public tenders, just as in our bid book.

Kranj and Gorenjska’s bid for the title of ECC is founded on innovative content and infrastructure projects that result in a substantial intersectoral conglomerate, spear-headed and driven by the cultural sector. Given Kranj’s financial power and the might of the other included municipalities, as well as recent investment trends in culture and infrastructure, this conglomerate is realistic within 20 years. The ECC title is immensely important both for existing as well as overhauled cultural infrastructure, as it will make great waves in cultural policy and other political realms, helping decision-makers view culture as a driver of transformation and an agent that empowers the cultural sector to be more creative, more artistic, and more interconnected.

- **What are the city’s assets in terms of accessibility (regional, national and international transport)?**

The region’s urban centres of Kranj, Radovljica, and Jesenice are nicely linked by the core of the Gorenjska highway, which connects Austria at the northern end and Ljubljana to the south. Other regional connections, like Kranj–Škofja Loka to the south, Kranj–Tržič along the highway to the northeast, Jesenice–Kranjska Gora to the north, and Radovljica–Bled–Bohinj to the west, extend this access web to the point that nearly all of Gorenjska’s population lives within 25 km of a cultural centre included in our ECC bid.



These lines are followed by most bus routes, which leave Kranjska Gora (by the Sava Dolinka), Bohinj (by the Sava Bohinjka), and Tržič 2-3 times per hour, linking Kranj and Ljubljana in a regular and efficient system of transport. The railway traces a similar path, connecting Ljubljana, Kranj, Radovljica, and Jesenice on average once per hour, with lines to Bled, Bohinj, and the Soča valley under the Julian Alps as well.

This mobility network is one of the country’s most dynamic, used by commuters daily, with 22,000+ people per day driving in and out of Kranj for work (into Kranj primarily from Gorenjska, from Kranj mostly to Ljubljana). The same transport paths are important for tourism as well, serving as the most traffic-heavy route from Austria, Ljubljana, and Kranj, linking Bled and Kranjska Gora as two of the country’s most important tourist spots.

The country’s flagship airport is just 10 km south of Kranj, with regular shuttles to and from Ljubljana and Kranj. 1.8 million travelers used this airport in 2018.

To summarise, existing transport options in the country are currently used both by tourists and residents (our bid’s two primary target groups) and serve as a regular, reliable, efficient mobility system. The ECC bid will be a great opportunity to integrate and connect all these existing options even further (e.g. as of right now, the train and bus are not quite synchronized in their lines; e-vehicle charging stations aren’t at all transport stops and are not dispersed throughout the whole region; currently there is no unified bus/train fare and passengers make separate purchases). In addition to regular bus and train



transport lines, our plans are to include over 1000 additional e-vehicles (e-vans, e-minibuses, e-bikes) to supplement the existing market (with e-mobility providers like Avant2Go). We will also ensure regular connections between Kranj and Ljubljana, Škofja Loka, Tržič, Radovljica, Bled, Bohinj, Jesenice, and Kranjska Gora with a free shuttle to events.

National connections: Kranj is just 25 kilometres from the country's capital Ljubljana, and a similar distance from Škofja Loka. Slovenians from the furthest eastern corner of Slovenia in Prekmurje, the south in Bela Krajina, and the western coastal regions will be able to drive to Kranj in 2-2.5 hours. Zagreb is closer, at a maximum two hours' drive, Venice is closer to three, while Vienna and Budapest are around five hours away. All these cities are accessible by car, bus, train, and plane.

Within the radius of a one-hour plane ride (500-600 km from Gorenjska) the following locales can be reached: Northern Italy to Milan, Switzerland, Bavaria with Mu-

nich, all of Austria, southern Czech Republic with Prague, western Slovakia with Bratislava, half of Hungary, northern Serbia with Belgrade and Novi Sad, all of Bosnia and Herzegovina with Sarajevo, and Croatia with Rijeka, Dubrovnik, Zagreb. This radius includes 60 million residents, or around 11% of Europe's population. Direct, regular connections to Amsterdam, Brussels, Berlin, Frankfurt, Istanbul, London, Moscow, Podgorica (Montenegro), Warsaw, Paris, Helsinki, and Tel Aviv give at least another 64 million people access to Gorenjska.

- **What is the city's absorption capacity in terms of tourists' accommodation?**

In 2018, the year of the previous survey, there were a total of 128 thousand overnight stays in Kranj, and a total of 333 thousand when its surroundings are included. Bled with its 1.15 million, Kranjska Gora with 0.8 million, and Bohinj with 0.67 million are not just the regional destinations with the most capacities, but they are also by far the country's most popular overnight destinations outside of the capital. In recent years, Radovljica has also beefed up its numbers, recording 280 thousand overnight stays, or 352 thousand together with Jesenice, Tržič, and Žirovnica. Given how close it is (25 km from Kranj), many ECC visitors will nonetheless choose Ljubljana as their overnight destination, no matter what Gorenjska offers in terms of accommodation. After all, Ljubljana records 2.2 million overnight stays, or 5.5 million when considering its broader region⁸.

In 2018, there were a total of 15.7 overnight stays in Slovenia, with Gorenjska in third place, just after Ljubljana and the coast. If we count Ljubljana, given the geographical context, Gorenjska makes up Slovenia's most capable accommodation hub by far. It is important to note that these figures do not suffer from significant seasonal fluctuation.



tuations, as the region's winter, summer, and transitional attractions provide a nice balance; Ljubljana is an exception here, noting a large upswing in visits as spring and summer begin.

The Regional Development Agency has already identified tourism as the Gorenjska region's most important development potential. Our two main advantages are

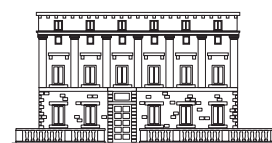
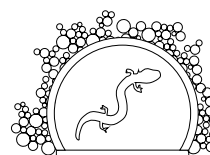
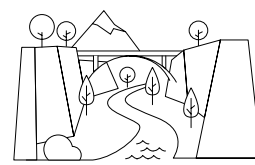
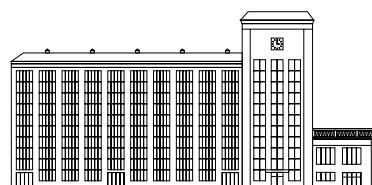
namely our Alpine environments with rich, well-maintained natural features, and our cultural heritage in old town centres and in the countryside. Our favourable geographic position and easy transport access further increase our region's importance as a traditional tourist destination, making up significant portion of Slovenian tourist traffic.⁹

- 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?

The city and region are only undertaking renewal efforts in this bid, no newly planned construction. This serves to optimize existing capacities and importantly refocuses efforts and emphasis away from costly construction investments towards actual program content and the establishment of new jobs.

Renewal projects include:

- Majdic Mill: renewal of production facilities, creative centre, and gallery (7 million EUR)
- The former Inteks factory premises: renewal for galleries and production space (2.25 million EUR)
- Fixing up the Kokra Canyon as a new tourist pro, a green urban oasis: 2.5 million EUR
- Proteus Centre: a tourist research project in Kranj's tunnels: 0.25 million EUR
- The renewal of the historical City Hall: 3 mio EUR
- The Jože Bežek Mansion: renewal of the spaces for the Prešeren Institute: 2.5 million EUR
- A final solution for the renewal of the Globus textile plant for cultural use: 5 million EUR
- The revitalisation of the formal School of Construction: 1 mio EUR
- Kino Centre: transformation into a piece of public infrastructure: 2.5 million EUR
- Cultural houses in the region (+20): substantive and technical overhauls for postproduction and new content produced in local environments: 10 million EUR



⁸ <https://tinyurl.com/vl9l6ak>

⁹ <https://tinyurl.com/qtlf9rn>



Kranj and Gorenjska 2025
Candidate City for the European Capital City of Culture
Pre-selection stage bid book, 2019

Kranj City Municipality
together with the Council of Gorenjska Region

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MESTNA OBČINA
KRANJ

PRAVICA NEODVISNA OD OBSTOJEČIH VERSKIH IN IDEOLOŠKIH
SISTEMOV. MLADIM JE TREBA ŽE MED ŠOLANJEM OMOGOČITI, DA RAZVIJEJO OS
OBCUTLJIVOST ZA VIDNE IN NEVIDNE RAZSEŽNOSTI BIVANJA, DA BI LAHKO OBLIKOVALI
LASTEN PRISTOP K SVETOSTI, ŽIVLJENJA, SPodbujanje O
ČUTKA ZA ŽIVLJENSKO RESNIČNOST RAZVOJ INTUICIJE IN
INTELEGENCA SRCA ZAGOTAVLJAJO, DA SE NE BOMO IZGUBILI MED NEŠTETIMI POJAVI
DEČIMI STRAN OD BISTVA. *5* ŽIVIMO NA PLANETO OBIL
ZEMLJA JE MILIARDE LET RAZVIJALA BIOLOŠKI PROSTOR, K
SVOJO ČUDOVITO VEČPLASTNOSTJO, OMOČA NARAVNO OBILJE IN
NASLEDNJI FAZI NA NARAVNEM OBILJU, TEMELJEČO RAST CIV
ZACIJ. USODNEMU ZLOMU DANE CIVILIZACIJE SE DA IZOGNITI TA
SE ČLOVEK VRNE K SVOJEMU BISTVU. PROCESU SAMOSPOZNA
SLEDI PROCES ODKRIVANJA DOSLEJ NEZNANIH RAZSEŽNOSTI ZE
PROSTORA. TE PA SO DOVOLJ ŠIROKE, DA BODO OMOGOČILE CELOSTE
RAZVOJ BODOČE CIVILIZACIJE VKLJUČNO Z NJENIM GOSPODARSTVOM,
KULTURO, IN DUHOVNOSTJO.

6 NEMUDOMA SE JE POTREBNO UGLASITI S SAMOZDRAVILNI
PROCESI IN PREOBRAZBAMI, KI JIH JE INTELIGENCA ZEML

UVEDLA V ZADNJIH DVEH DESETLETJIH, DA BI
PREPREČILA ZLOM ŽIVLJENJSKIH SISTEMOV » MODRE
PLANETA«, SODELUJMO Z NJENO VIZIJO NOVE DOB
MIRU IN SOZITJA MED VSEMI BITJI ZEMELJSKEGA VESOLJA
NASTAJA NOV VEČRAZSEŽNOSTNI PROSTOR, KI ŽE ZD
OMOGOČA NADALJEVANJE IN BISTVENO POGLOBITEV
ČLOVEKOVEGA RAZVOJA NA ZEMLJI V POGOJIH USTVAR
JALNEGA SOZVOČJA MED NASPROTJI TER PARTNERSTVA Z
DRUGIMI BITJI IN SVETOVÍ S KATERIMI DELIMO RAZSEŽNOS
ŽIVLJENJA NA ZEMLJI.

7 ZAVESTNA ODLOČITEV ZA SPREMEMBE, ODGOVORN
ETIČNA DRŽA IN ODPRTOST SRCA SO TEMEL
USPEŠNE »DRUGE OSAMOSVOJITVE« OB POGOJU DA
SMO ZNOTRAJ TEH VREDNOT NAVZOČI Z VSEM S
OSERNIM IN HKRATI SKUPNOSTNO NARAVNANIM RITJE

