

Partner search

Culture sub-Program

Strand/category	Cooperation project
Deadline	7 th October 2015

Cultural operator(s)

Name	Province of Liege – Culture Department
Short description	<p>Local intermediate public authority active in developing local and transnational cultural projects. Thanks to its knowledge of the situation on the cultural ground and its network of local and international stakeholders, the Culture Department has a useful expertise and hands-on experience and is in a position to develop cultural transnational projects, involved for many years in crossborder cultural collaborations.</p> <p>As a tool of growth and individual development, Liege Province's Culture Department takes account of changes in society by integrating them in a process of analysis and reflection and pursues an active proximity policy, characterized by its openness towards others and its flexibility in its interventions. That's why the Province of Liege acts as a mediator by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- investing itself in specific areas of cultural activities : culture is a powerful driver for development, with community-wide social, economic and environmental impacts, such the valorisation of the industrial heritage through cultural actions ;- supporting the creative activity in all its forms and promoting interdisciplinary : a wide range of cultural sectors are supported by the Department of Culture, from comics to music of any kind, from contemporary art to design ;- by bringing together all the local and European key stakeholders on creative and innovative cultural projects. <p>Its main priorities are mainly :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- to encourage the audience development and to promote wider access to culture through cultural mediation and information work ;- to provide financial and technical support to cultural operators, local and international cultural events organization ;- to promote the transnational circulation of cultural and creative works and to encourage the mobility of the cultural players, in particular artists ;

- to foster the collaboration between the various cultural disciplines and between the cultural sector and others (e.g. the industrial sector) at a local and European level.

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Project

Field(s)

- Creative writing, particularly poetry
- Performing arts (Music)
- Visual arts (sculpture and engraving)
- Intangible cultural heritage linked to the industrial environment

Context

Many member states of the European Union share a common industrial history, first in a state of growth and then gradually decreasing with a number of examples of industrial production areas definitively closed in some industrial European regions. These tragic events led to a major economic, identity and social crisis.

Description

In Belgium, the province of Liege was a major industrial region during the industrial revolution, in particular with the strong presence of the steel industry. This industrial region has entered in a long and structural crisis since the fifties. Today, Liege basin is still suffering from the decline of the steel industry. Indeed, the recent closure of the last blast furnace in the Liege steel producing area has illustrated the vulnerability of the Belgian steel industry. This situation has led to a serious economic and social crisis, with the loss of thousands of jobs.

This context raises the question of the safeguarding, the renovation or the transformation of the intangible cultural heritage linked to the industrial heritage. This question is at the heart of the cultural and social concerns for the cultural and creative sector.

The industrial heritage with its intangible aspects is both local and European. It has been forged over time, but also across borders and communities. The intangible cultural heritage linked to this industrial heritage is made up of local stories that together make the history of Europe. As the industry sector has always required a large workforce, it has always resorted to foreign workers. Many of their descendants always live in host countries and participate in the economical, social, cultural or political life of the community.

The intangible cultural heritage linked to the industrial heritage is highly vulnerable, most often because of a lack of awareness, recognition or valorization, but also because of changing economic trends and negative perceptions.

Summary

Thanks to the Europe Creative Programme, the cultural operators taking part in the project wish to pool their resources and their skills :

- to contribute to the safeguarding of the intangible cultural expressions associated to the industrial heritage through a research approach and an artistic and pedagogical approach
- to provide various audiences with detailed information to understand the importance of preserving this heritage
- to encourage the transnational circulation of cultural and creative works and the mobility of artists and cultural players through an interdisciplinary approach
- to support the capacity of the European cultural and creative sectors to operate transnationally by encouraging the networking of the European cultural players and a process of reflecting on the consequences of the industrial changes with its major socio-economic effects in the cultural field and the challenges facing the cultural and creative sector.

Through the project, the partner operators use the artistic creation to foster greater awareness, thanks to the professional and amateur artists.

For the professional artists - Sculpture

The industrial heritage includes intangible dimensions such as technical know-how and the organization of work and workers. The industry sector has always stimulated the artists' imagination and creativity. Moreover, metal represents an artistic material able to create some special aesthetics, a proof of an ancient know-how and reflects the social tensions due to the industrial crisis.

The project will bring together European professional artists from the countries participating at the project and encourage them to produce some contemporary metal sculptures. The project will also contribute to their mobility and the circulation of their works.

Through the sculpture, the project enables the artists to express themselves and sets them the challenge of adapting their work to the material. Through his/her work, the artist plays a role as a witness of his/her age, represents a culture and a story.

For the amateur and professional artists – Engraving, Performing Arts and Creative writing

The industrial heritage includes also intangible dimensions such as the complex social and cultural legacy (e.g. the songs of fight and social resistance) that shaped the life of communities and brought major organizational changes to entire societies and the world in general.

The project aims also to highlight this intangible cultural heritage and shows how the contemporary artistic creation could help at the valorization of this heritage, such as :

- **Engraving** and **Creative writing** (e.g. poetry) bringing together young artists to push the limits of artistic experimentation
- **Music** as a way to remind people that music has always been a global form of social resistance. Music allows workers both to fulfil their social roles to express a sense of resistance.

In general, the project shows how the amateur and professional artists deal with the local and European intangible cultural heritage related to the industrial heritage. Through European workshops, the project encourages artists' mobility to acquire new skills, facilitates peer-to-peer learning that contribute to strengthening the cultural and creative sectors and preserving and interpreting this heritage.

This project organizes also an interdisciplinary exhibition dedicated to the valorization of the intangible cultural heritage related to the industrial heritage: presentation of the works produced within the EU project, concerts with European songs of social resistance performed by groups from European partner countries involved in the project.

This project makes sense as it reflects the vision of a past and current reality, both local and European, filtered through the artists and their work. Considering the artistic expression as a means of stimulating interest in intangible cultural heritage, the project contributes to the promotion of the cultural and linguistic diversity in the EU and the strengthening of the competitiveness of the cultural and creative sectors by opening up new opportunities and audiences by improving access to the industrial heritage and its intangible aspects.

Activities

- Exchange of cultural players and artists enabling the cultural players to acquire new skills and know-how through workshops organized for European amateur and professional artists.
- Exchange of cultural players and artists between the partner countries, including an artist residency enabling the European artists to produce some metal sculptures and to help them with the development of their career.
- Cultural event, such as a concert with music groups (in the field of songs of social resistance) from different countries

- Transnational circulation of works of art (those produced in the frame of the project, through the artist residency and the workshops), which will be exhibited.
- Networking, promotion, research and audience development activities are also included, such as a collective memory work on the valorization of the intangible cultural heritage related to the industrial heritage and a conference on the challenge of the transformation of industrial sites into cultural places.

Targeted publics

- Amateur and professional artists
- Cultural and creative operators
- European citizens, particularly the migrants
- Key stakeholders active at local, national and European level, including political representatives and the unions.

Partners already involved

- Moselle Arts Vivants (France)

Partners searched

Countries

Any other EU countries interested in this project and/or sharing a common industrial and cultural heritage.

Profile

Any museum, cultural operators or public authority active in the valorization of the intangible cultural heritage linked to the environmental industrial, in particular the steel industry, and working directly in the abovementioned artistic fields or one of them.

Other

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Partners searched should have a relevant expertise and experience in the implementation of European projects.