

# **WEAVING WELLBEING**

This green has the hue of beech leaves, the most common tree species found in the forests surrounding Bielsko-Biała. There is a natural calmness to it, but also a sense of vitality. We combined it with a delicate silvery grey, which refers to the tonality of its bark. The linen binding, on the other hand, is a nod to the textile traditions of our city as well as a tactile element, adding a natural dimension to this publication. During the creation of this book, we took care to select types of paper that meet the highest ecological standards.



**BB**  
2029

ISBN 978-83-972556-0-9

Like Melina Mercouri, I believe that culture has great power and is the key to positive change in our hearts and minds. The recent European Parliament elections show the scale of the work ahead of us and the important role that culture has to play in supporting European values such as freedom, human rights and democracy.

Competing for the title of European Capital of Culture is a force for change. This happens just once in a generation. It is a huge undertaking involving the whole city, including the cultural and planning sector, artists, residents, carers, the young and the elderly, business people and newcomers. It is an incredible opportunity to discover new talent and hidden gems. We are convinced that culture and the creative industries will shape the future of our city, just as our historic textile and automotive industries did in bygone years.

We realise that 2029 will be a key year, not only because of the next European Parliament elections, but also because of the implementation of Agenda 2030, essential for building a sustainable future for us all. Therefore, the years of preparation by the Polish and Swedish capitals will be crucial, serving as a contribution through the medium of culture to drive action and assume responsibility for current global issues.

In the course of the preparations for the final round of the ECoC competition, Bielsko-Biała has once again demonstrated that there is room for dialogue among different social groups and sectors in our city. As a community, we share a common goal: to build wellbeing.

Having just renewed a five-year mayoral tenure, I can assure you that this candidacy is the most important element of my mandate, and has the full support of Dorota Piegzik-Izydorczyk, Leader of the City Council and all the members of the Council.

Jarosław Klimaszewski  
The Mayor of Bielsko-Biała

<b>3</b>	<b>CONCEPT OF THE PROGRAMME</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>CONTRIBUTION TO THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT</b>
<b>56</b>	<b>EUROPEAN DIMENSION</b>
<b>66</b>	<b>OUTREACH</b>
<b>74</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT</b>
<b>94</b>	<b>CAPACITY TO DELIVER</b>
<b>98</b>	<b>CLOSING CONSIDERATIONS</b>

## CONCEPT OF THE PROGRAMME

The fundamental concept of our European Capital of Culture programme, at the core of which is the metaphor of weaving, has remained the same. It has, however, matured over the past year and become significantly stronger and clearer.

**Weaving wellbeing** is our key concept, where weaving symbolises the collaborative methods that we use and wellbeing constitutes both our ultimate objective and desired outcome. The most significant challenge that we faced was a precise definition of 'well-being'. We recognise that wellbeing is an ever-changing state, different from one person to the next, dependent on various factors of time and space. As a result, we needed to develop a model that, when applied, would help us to expand our understanding of what wellbeing means.

## DEFINING WELLBEING

We exist within complex structures with complicated and often misunderstood cause-and-effect relationships. Passive attitudes are common in this stressful world, which we continuously impact, often in a negative way. This passivity comes from a perceived lack of agency, a sense of isolation and loneliness. To break this vicious cycle, we aim to cultivate **agency** through a process of **creative co-creation** between artists and communities, encouraging collective effort and action. Change requires time, so we are prepared for a long journey. However, many of the most urgent issues demand immediate and often drastic action to awaken people from their complacency.

Our programme for 2029 will strike a balance. We are identifying areas that require bold, provocative actions and also those that are suited to more accessible initiatives. We aim to balance intellectually stimulating projects with crowd-pleasers, thus creating a diverse and engaging programme. This intricate weaving of our programme will ultimately create a fabric that represents our collective wellbeing.

For us, wellbeing is a state in which we are in harmony with ourselves, cultivating awareness and empowering us to take the lead and enact change when we encounter injustice. It thrives in a society that embraces respect for diverse identities and fosters communities in which freedom and safety become paramount. We actively care for our surroundings, ensuring the wellbeing of nature and all its living creatures. We aspire to live in an accessible urban space where we feel a sense of belonging. And additionally, we aim to create safe digital spaces and build resilience against their potential harmful effects. These principles form the backbone of our vision and programme, as you will see in the following pages.

This is no easy task, but we firmly believe that, with the support of our European and global friends, it is achievable. We are committed to this vision, no matter what obstacles we may face, and we remain humble and prepared to learn from our environment. We embrace perseverance in the knowledge that this journey is a marathon likely to be full of ups and downs. Some solutions may fail, but we will rise again, learn from our experiences and emerge stronger. Belief in ourselves and our dreams strengthens our resolve to honour the promises made to those who have placed their trust in us. Taking the easy way out will not be an option. Openness is the cornerstone of our success.

We welcome everyone to join our **Community of Weavers**.

# CONTRIBUTION TO LONG-TERM STRATEGY



## CULTURAL STRATEGY

Strategy for the 'Development of Culture up to 2030 in Bielsko-Biała, City of Weaves' was the first to be approved by the City Council for this sector and voted in on 27 June 2024. The cultural strategy is being implemented in the preparation of this bidbook and incorporates observations made by the ECoC Panel of Experts on our first bidbook.

We were unable to extend it beyond 2030 as the Polish legal system has limitations preventing any sector strategies from superposing general strategies. However, we have taken action to extend its influence and ensure we protect the legacy of our ECoC project. This includes having the person responsible for preparing the next (beyond 2030) cultural strategy inside the ECoC delivery team. This measure will ensure that the next iteration of our city's cultural strategy will conform with our proposed monitoring and evaluation (M & E) framework (see p. 7) and will be ready for approval by the City Council in late 2030. It will be aligned with both new culture and general strategy for the city.

## LONG-TERM IMPACT

During last year the Urban Culture Institute – City of Weaves (hereafter referred to as The Institute) has tested our vision in order to build a sustainable ecosystem for all our actions under the BB2029 – **Weaving Wellbeing** motto. This has resulted in the identification of seven main areas of value (artistic, European, social, urban, economic, policy and symbolic) and seven associated BB2029 goals. These aspirations, combined, will contribute to our main vision which is to spread **wellbeing** for our communities and for Europe.

**Correlation between our BB2029 ECoC goals, their expected long-term impacts and the Cultural Strategy Goals of Bielsko-Biała.**

The BB2029 European Capital of Culture initiative will significantly advance our City Cultural Strategy, producing medium to long-term benefits. Our project goals align with and expand upon ECoC objectives, addressing five key European themes and supporting the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Below, we detail how our goals, expected impacts, and city strategy are interconnected, showcasing BB2029 projects that best illustrate these relationships and their impacts.

### 1. ARTISTIC VALUE

**BB 2029 ECoC Goal 1:** Strengthen Bielsko-Biała's high artistic quality by delivering an impactful ECoC cultural programme.

**City Cultural Strategy Goal:** 'Culture as a meeting space for dialogue and growth of creative communities and cultural institutions with high competence, creativity, and rich professional networks domestically and internationally'.

**BB 2029 Long-term Impact:** Bielsko-Biała will be a culturally enriched city with an international, diverse, and high-quality cultural programme. It will ensure economic and social benefits while maintaining budgetary integrity, fostering a vibrant and sustainable community deeply rooted in European values and artistic excellence.

**Achieved by following projects e.g.:** *100×100 Tapestry, Crafting and Upcrafting.*

**Contributing to:**

**European theme:** Democracy and Human Rights

**SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities**

**ECoC Action (SO1) - Enhance the range, diversity and European dimension of the cultural offering in cities, including through transnational co-operation**

### 2. EUROPEAN VALUE

**BB 2029 Goal 2:** Fostering international cooperation between Bielsko-Biała and Europe.

**City Cultural Strategy Goal:** Activities functionally integrating emigrants and immigrants into development processes, expanding international cooperation through artistic interventions, mapping international functional ties, and organising cultural events for high school and university graduates.

**BB 2029 Long-term Impact:** BB will have a strong European identity. International collaborations and initiatives like the Street Art Academy will attract global artistic talent, enriching local neighbourhoods and the broader cultural landscape of Poland and Europe.

**Projects e.g.:** *Flavour of Europe, Crafting & Upcrafting, Narrative Laundry, Street Art Academy.*

**Contributing to:**

**European theme:** Democracy and Human Rights

**SDG 14 – Partnerships for the Goals**

**ECoC Action (SO1) - Enhance the range, diversity and European dimension of the cultural offering in cities, including through transnational co-operation**

### 3. SOCIAL VALUE

**BB 2029 Goal 3:** Improve BB's citizens' wellbeing, agency, and capacity to cope with complexity by broadening the opportunities for cultural participation and co-creation.

**City Cultural Strategy Goal:** Culture is the cornerstone of residents' wellbeing and civilisational – spelling competence development.

Culture enhances security, promotes social integration and inclusion, fosters positive interpersonal relationships, and supports mental health.

**BB 2029 Long-term Impact:** Bielsko-Biała's citizens will be healthier, happier, and strongly connected. All communities, school-age residents, migrants, and previously disengaged residents will be culturally active. A permanent media literacy education centre with *Narrative Laundry* as a flagship project will empower residents, fostering self-organising communities that lead to societal cohesion and resilience.

**Projects e.g.:** *A Time for Mindfulness, Unplug Festival, 100x100 Tapestry, AI&Me, Narrative Laundry, Flavour of Europe, Food Recreated, Let's Play!*

**Contributing to:**

**European theme:** Democracy and Human Rights; Mental Health and Wellbeing

**SDG 3** – Good Health and Wellbeing, **10** – Reduce Inequalities

**ECOC Action** - Widen access to and participation in culture (SO2)

---

#### 4. URBAN VALUE

**BB 2029 Goal 4:** Develop and regenerate accessible cultural infrastructure and public spaces to support a vibrant and sustainable cultural sector, and individual agency.

**City Cultural Strategy Goal:** A source of openness and the city's ability to absorb innovative potentials and activities from the environment.

**BB 2029 Long-term Impact:** Bielsko-Biała will have new and renovated cultural venues, enhanced public art, accessible green spaces, and unique recreational areas, fostering a strong sense of community and cultural identity.

**Projects e.g.:** Infrastructures: Square of Weaves (new building for Baniałuka and Green Library), Bassecamp Szyndzielnia now *Magical Mountains, European Plinth, Pedanteria Projects, That's Another Story*

**Contributing to:**

**European theme:** Climate Change and Sustainability  
**SDG 11:** Sustainable cities and communities; **9:** Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure; **8:** Decent Work and Economic Growth.

**ECOC Action** - Strengthen the capacity of the cultural sector and its links with other sectors (SO3)

---

#### 5. ECONOMIC VALUE

**BB 2029 Goal 5:** Grow creative innovation, enhance the skills and capabilities of cultural sector professionals through training programmes and professional development initiatives.

**City Cultural Strategy Goal:** Culture is a driving force enriching and propelling social and economic development, fostering innovative activities based on commercialising cultural value.

**BB 2029 Long-term Impact:** BB is evolving into a dynamic, innovative, and globally connected city with robust economic development, cultural enrichment, empowered workforce, and inclusive growth, and sustainable practices.

**Projects e.g.:** *Weaves of Emotions, Journey into the Inner Depths*

**Contributing to:**

**European theme:** Technological Innovation and Digital Transformation

**SDG:** 4 Quality Education; 8 – Decent work and Economic Growth; 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure.

**ECOC Action** - Strengthen the capacity of the cultural sector and its links with other sectors (SO3)

---

#### 6. POLICY VALUE

**BB 2029 Goal 6:** Establish and strengthen partnerships between the cultural sector and other sectors, promoting collaborative governance models to support cultural development.

**City Cultural Strategy Goal:** Culture is a value that enhances the city's resilience to various risks, including climate change adaptation processes.

**BB 2029 Long-term Impact:** Bielsko-Biała will thrive with increased cultural funding and governance, supporting the city's new cultural strategy. Sustainable integration of heritage with innovation will preserve culture and drive growth.

**Projects e.g.:** *AI&Me, Beyond Tomorrow*

**Contributing to:**

**European theme:** Technological Innovation and Digital Transformation

**SDG 17:** Partnerships for the Goals; **11:** Sustainable Cities and Communities

**ECOC Action** - Strengthen the capacity of the cultural sector and its links with other sectors (SO3)

---

#### 7. SYMBOLIC VALUE

**BB 2029 Goal 7:** Develop and showcase a diverse and innovative cultural programme that highlights Bielsko-Biała's unique cultural offerings and attracts international attention.

**City Cultural Strategy Goal:** Culture is a unique asset, combined with natural scenic beauty, making Bielsko-Biała a prime location for living and leisure.

**BB 2029 Long-term Impact:** Establishing Bielsko-Biała as a cultural and wellbeing hub that attracts international recognition and collaborations.



This will create a vibrant, resilient, and culturally rich city that will appeal to both residents and visitors.

**Projects e.g.:** *Street Art Alive, That's Another Story, Crafting and Upcrafting, T-shirt Story, River Reclaimed.*; Legacy projects: *A Time for Mindfulness; Weaving Mill of Creativity, Woven by Art.*

**Contributing to:**

**European theme:** Democracy and Human Rights; Climate Change and Sustainability

**SDG:** 11 Sustainable cities and communities (safe space); 12: Responsible Production and Consumption; 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth; 17: Partnerships for the Goals.

**ECoC Action** – Raise the international profile of cities through culture (SO4)

## MONITORING & EVALUATION

### WHO WILL CARRY OUT THE EVALUATION?

The Institute will appoint one dedicated member of staff to oversee and liaise with a dedicated Evaluation Consortium that will be governed by four seconded staff - one from each university and one from the city. The Consortium will elect a chair and will ensure the monitoring and evaluation is conducted with full independence. The Evaluation Consortium will involve academics, local government, and business:

**Academia:** Bielsko-Biała University, Silesian Medical University and Liverpool John Moores University.

**Role:** To conduct the research, develop methodologies, create research tools, and perform clinical studies. Engaged disciplines: psychology, sociology, medicine, computer science, and ecology.

**Additional data contributors from:** Oulu University of Applied Sciences, Uppsala University, Thetova University of North Macedonia, Vilnius University, Jagiellonian University, SWPS and Wrocław University.

**Local government:** Departments of Strategy and Economic Development, Culture and Promotion, Urban Planning and Architecture, Social Policy, and the Bielsko-Biała Culture Observatory. **Role:** To contribute with data and experienced staff to systematically collect and synthesise data.

**Business:** Policy Platforms Ltd. uses 'Polyloop', a software-as-a-service (SaaS) platform. **Role:** To provide a centralised hub for data collection, analysis, visualisation, and reporting. It will enable the digitisation of resources, dissemination and comparison of results with other European cities.

### OBJECTIVES AND MILESTONES

The main question we intend to address is 'What has changed in Bielsko-Biała because of the Euro-

pean Capital of Culture?' In order to do this, our main M&E Aims are to evidence the short, mid and longer-term impacts of BB2029 by:

- **Assesing the role of cultural participation as a source of wellbeing**, personal growth and empowerment;
- **Tracking BB2029's impact on the Bielsko-Biała Development Strategy 2030** to shape future cultural planning efforts.
- **Developing skills, international connections and a foundation for future studies** in cultural policy and major cultural events at European and global levels.
- **Conducting follow-up research in 2034/35** to see generational changes and the long-term impact of ECoC 2029. This will be used for evidence-based governance and policy building.

**We will achieve this by being:**

**Open and process-focused:** we will use indicators for inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes.

**Place-based and European:** our research, centred on Bielsko-Biała, will engage local groups and align with international standards for comparability with other ECoCs.

**Digitally and data-driven:** we will capture intangible experiences artistically, use quantitative analysis for trends and qualitative research to highlight broader benefits.

Our approach to M & E will involve regular data triangulation – combining multiple sources. For instance:

- We will harvest real-world data from box offices, personal smartwatches or City Council reports;
- We will aggregate secondary data from existing databases and national statistics (cf. baseline data) to track economic indicators such as tourism revenue, employment or business growth;
- We will gather primary data through surveys, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups & ethnography. Case studies on priority areas will help us identify best practices;
- We will develop and promote the **BB2029 App** to disseminate the programme and collect data. This app will track cultural engagement, foster social connections, and include research tools like surveys.

Examples of data collection methods:

**Art-based:** walking interviews, social photography, visual ethnography, mind maps.

**Qualitative:** Biographies/Sociological portraits, interviews, focus groups, netnography, ethnography.

**Quantitative:** surveys, data science, prospective study (biomarkers), observational study (pre-post), BB2029's App usability.

### WHAT BASELINE STUDIES OR SURVEYS DO YOU INTEND TO USE?

Poland ranks second in the Open Data Inventory for its focus on open data practices and sustainable development. The 2022 Open Data Maturity Report credits Poland's strategic policy and leadership.

Capitalising on Poland's strong open data culture, we drew on baseline data from primary and secondary sources regarding life in Bielsko-Biała and the Beskid Agglomeration to define the expected BB2029 outcomes and 'success factors'. We have assessed our quality of life, cultural, sporting, environmental and city services through the Bielsko-Biała Barometer, youth council research and cyclical surveys with residents, and uniformed services, including the police, soldiers, and mountain rescuers in the Beskid Agglomeration Area.

### WHAT SORT OF INFORMATION WILL YOU TRACK AND MONITOR?

BB2029 aligns its objectives and impact indicators with metrics from the European Commission Guidelines for Cities' Evaluation (European Commission, 2018) and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Further, as one of 17 cities from 12 European countries in the Culture Next Network, BB2029 works to standardise approaches to measuring cultural impacts across Europe. The initiative connects cultural activities to social, economic, and environmental outcomes, monitors contributions to the UN SDGs, and explores the potential for an 18th SDG dedicated to culture.

Find below how we plan to assess the delivery of our proposed BB2029 ECoC goals, which are organised in four specific objectives (SOs), and nine operational objectives (OOs). We outline specific indicators below. In p.5-6 we related our goals to our expected long term impacts and provided project examples.

## Artistic & European Value

**Specific Objective:** Enhance Bielsko-Biała high-quality, diverse and international cultural offer

**Operational Objective 1: (Artistic quality)** Strengthen Bielsko-Biała artistic quality by delivering an impactful Bielsko-Biała 2029 cultural programme

BB29 outcomes	Indicators of Impact
BB2029 will deliver an international, diverse and high artistic quality cultural programme	Number of events Number and quality of multicultural projects Number of events in every category of events
BB2029 will be implemented in compliance with the budget	Total budget of BB2029 cultural programmes Increased financial contributions obtained from public, private and third-sector partners
BB2029 will generate wellbeing, social and economic value	Wellbeing, social and economic impact of BB2029 No. of activities that incorporate wellbeing outcomes No. of projects that track the relationship between culture, <b>co-creation</b> , and wellbeing

**Operational Objective 2: (European dimension)** Fostering international cooperation between Bielsko-Biała and Europe

Increase in participation in European Networks that city and cultural stakeholders are active	Geographical area covered in the artistic programme Diversity of European themes (in the programme) No. of activities highlighting European diversity, based on European themes or transnational cooperation No. of new cross-border collaborations, co-productions and exchanges involving local and international operators
---	--

More Bielsko-Biała citizens will identify as being European and belonging to a European cultural space	<p>Increased citizens' awareness and appreciation of the diversity of European cultures</p> <p>Increased citizens' sense of belonging to a common cultural space</p> <p>Increased citizens' perceptions of being European</p> <p>Increased knowledge about European cultures</p>
Establish an international residency programme that leverages street art as a revitalising force for neglected areas of the city, fostering cultural exchange and urban renewal	<p>Number of practitioners involved in international cooperation</p> <p>Number of practitioners involved in international projects abroad</p> <p>Number of new and sustainable international partnerships</p> <p>Increase the success rate of international funding</p> <p>Increased international grant applications</p>

## Social Value

**Specific Objective:** Improve Bielsko-Biała's citizens' wellbeing, **agency**, and capacity to cope with complexity by broadening the opportunities for cultural participation.

**Operational Objective 3: (Active participation)** Empower residents to actively engage in the city's culture, and lead and enact change through intellectually stimulating and **co-creation** projects

BB29 Outcomes	Indicators of Impact
Bielska-Biała's citizens and residents will be healthier/happier due to active cultural participation, <b>agency</b> , and <b>co-creation</b>	<p>Increased citizens' participation in BB2029 programme</p> <p>Increased levels of wellbeing</p> <p>Increased depth of cultural participation</p> <p>Number of events encouraging active engagement</p> <p>Number and percentage of residents co-creating or actively participating in BB2029 programme</p>
Bielska-Biała's school-age population will participate in the BB2029 programme through cultural education projects	<p>Increased participation of schools in cultural programmes</p> <p>Number and percentage of young people actively participating in BB2029</p> <p>Number and percentage of young people engaged in European activities</p>
At least 50% of not-engaged will participate and co-create BB2029 programme, strengthening Bielsko-Biała's social fabric	<p>Increased participation of local community groups in cultural programmes</p> <p>Increased support for projects co-produced by minorities</p> <p>Increased citizens' participation in multicultural projects</p> <p>Number and profile of active volunteers and depth of commitment</p> <p>Number and quality of events involving hard to reach people</p> <p>Increased motivation for participation in culture</p> <p>Number of new long-term grassroots activities in neighbourhoods</p>

Operational Objective 4 (**Passive participation**) Increase the availability and accessibility of cultural offer to encourage greater participation from diverse identities and foster communities where freedom and safety are paramount

Increased access to information and opportunities to participate in BB2029 for all citizens, visitors, and migrants/refugees

Increased level of awareness of the cultural offer (generally and by youth, schools, minorities or the disadvantaged)

Percentage of residents attending events (including the above)

Increased attendance at ECoC events compared to the regular cultural audience of the city

Geographical spread of audiences

Number and quality of schemes encouraging wider engagement

### Urban, Economic & Policy Value

Specific Objective: Enhance Bielsko-Biała’s cultural sector’s capacity and foster its integration with other economic and social sectors

Operational Objective 5: (**Infrastructure**) Develop and regenerate accessible cultural infrastructure and public spaces to support a vibrant and sustainable cultural sector, and individual agency.

#### BB29 Outcomes

#### Indicators of Impact

Bielsko-Biała is transformed into a culturally vibrant city with new and renovated cultural venues, enhanced public art, accessible green spaces, and unique recreational areas, fostering a strong sense of community and cultural identity.

New use of unused spaces, new public spaces  
Value of investment in cultural infrastructures  
Environmental impact of BB2029 infrastructures  
Improved cultural infrastructure capacity

Bielska-Biała boasts expanded and inclusive cultural infrastructure, providing affordable and accessible spaces for cultural production, resulting in increased investment in the city’s cultural facilities.

Increase the availability of affordable space for cultural production (studios, etc.)  
Increase in the availability of accessible space for cultural production (inclusive and accessible – physically, mentally, socially and financially)  
Value of investment in cultural infrastructures

Bielsko-Biała becomes a vibrant, accessible, and sustainable city with enhanced public spaces, efficient transportation, and a rich cultural landscape inspired by art and European values

Increase urban and rural residents’ quality of life  
Environmental impact of BB2029 public spaces developments

Operational Objective 6: (**Capacity Building CCS**) Grow creative innovation, enhance the skills and capabilities of cultural sector professionals through training programmes and professional development initiatives.

Strengthen and diversify the artistic and creative production capacity in Bielsko-Biała, contributing to economic development

Increased number and percentage of CCS graduates working in the city  
Increase in GDP and employment in cultural sector  
Quality & quantity of post-ECoC and long-term strategic documents and policies prepared  
Number of European and international cooperation projects

The city will implement a framework that boosts high-quality professional development programmes, addressing workforce diversity, audience development and internationalisation	<p>Number and profile of organisations participating in capacity-building programmes</p> <p>Increased gender balance &amp; diversity in the cultural workforce</p> <p>Quantity, quality and sustainability of schemes supporting professional development</p> <p>Number of cultural professionals using audience engagement methods in everyday work</p> <p>Raised cultural management standards</p>
---	--

Operational Objective 7: **(Partnerships & Cultural Governance)** Establish and strengthen partnerships between the cultural sector and other sectors, promoting collaborative governance models to support cultural development

BB29 Outcomes	Indicators of Impact
The City of Bielsko-Biała will increase the cultural budget by 4.5% by 2030, alongside additional public policies and instruments to improve cultural governance	<p>Increase City of Bielsko-Biała expenditure on culture</p> <p>Development of the city's cultural strategy and implementation plans (2030)</p> <p>Strategy for the long-term cultural development of the city, initial and post-ECOC</p>
50% more local private sector will develop a social responsibility strategy, including sponsorship of arts and culture, social, urban, and environmental impact offset	<p>Value of investment in culture by the private sector</p> <p>Cross-sectoral collaborations, incl. the cultural sector</p> <p>Value of investment in cultural programmes by NGO sector and CCS</p> <p>Conditions and programmes for the development of NGOs, cultural and creative industries</p>
Foster heritage, culture, and nature, by increasing cultural initiatives that link heritage and innovation, building resilience	<p>Increased cultural initiatives linking heritage and innovation</p> <p>Tangible cultural heritage infrastructure investment, heritage re-purposed or reinterpreted</p> <p>Increased visits to heritage sites</p>

## Symbolic Value

**Specific Objective:** Raise Bielsko-Biała's international profile through culture as a city of wellbeing

Operational Objective 8: **(Promote cultural programme)** Develop and showcase a diverse and innovative cultural programme that highlights Bielsko-Biała's unique cultural offerings and attracts international attention

BB29 Outcomes	Indicators of Impact
Increased awareness of BB2029 among residents, culture professionals, and international culture representatives will enhance the city's reputation, fostering a sense of pride that prevents brain drain and attracts newcomers to settle in Bielsko-Biała	<p>Awareness of the ECoC among residents</p> <p>Awareness of the ECoC among cultural and creative sector professionals</p> <p>Awareness of BB2029 among cultural sector representatives abroad</p> <p>Awareness of the ECoC as a city accolade/ contributor to the city's reputation among residents</p>

Increasing overnight tourists will drive economic growth, supported by enhanced visitor wellbeing and expanded initiatives promoting the connection between BB2029 and sustainable tourism.	<p>Increase in tourist visits (overnight stays, both at domestic and international levels)</p> <p>Increased visitors' wellbeing</p> <p>Number of programmes that foster the relationship between BB2029 and sustainable tourism</p>
---	---

**Operational Objective 9: (International outlook)** Foster global cultural connections by engaging in international collaborations, exchanges, and partnerships to position Bielsko-Biała as a vibrant and culturally rich city on the world stage.

Establishing Bielsko-Biała as a prominent European cultural and wellbeing hub, recognised nationally and internationally for its vibrant cultural scene and for being a wellbeing destination	<p>National/international recognition of BB as being culturally vibrant and having improved image</p> <p>Number and profile of people reached via media coverage</p> <p>Geographical scope of media coverage</p> <p>Volume and percentage of positive media coverage of city</p> <p>Volume and percentage of Bielsko-Biała coverage about BB2029</p>
---	--

## HOW WILL YOU DEFINE 'SUCCESS'?

Success for BB2029 is to improve our citizens' sense of wellbeing and agency, through arts co-creation, and ensuring the cultural sector's sustainability beyond 2030. By 2030 Bielsko-Biała will be a city where wellbeing is weaved from arts, sustainability and nature.

## OVER WHAT TIME FRAME AND HOW REGULARLY WILL THE EVALUATION BE CARRIED OUT?

The strategy for monitoring and evaluating BB2029 spans from January 2025 to December 2035, aligning with and contributing to the Bielsko-Biała Cultural Strategy for 2030.

### 1<sup>st</sup> WEAVE (ex-ante evaluation)

2025	2026	2027	2028
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
App BB2029 (design) Ethics & data sharing agreements Anticipate Ex ante evaluation challenges Quality control & contingency plans	App BB2029 (development) Ex ante evaluation protocols Harvesting regional & national culture datasets Systematic literature reviews	App BB2029 (launch) Curating real-world data from partner organisations Funding application Data collection & analysis Ex ante dissemination	Create aggregated baseline data sets Data collection and analysis In itinere evaluation protocol design Funding application Ex ante dissemination
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Monitoring report</b>	Funding application Data collection & analysis Ex ante dissemination	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Monitoring report</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Monitoring report</b>

2 <sup>ND</sup> WEAVE (in itinere evaluation)	3 <sup>rd</sup> WEAVE (ex-post evaluation)	
2029	2030	2031
Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
Year event data sets (continuous)	Post-event data sets	Funding application
Data collection & analysis	Data collection & analysis	Data collection and analysis
Ex-post evaluation protocol design	Open-access data infrastructure	Ex post (long-term) evaluation protocol design
Anticipate the Ex-post evaluation challenges	Final BB2029 conference	Bielsko-Biała Cultural Strategy 2030
Evaluation short-term impacts	Evaluation mid-term impacts	Ex post dissemination
In itinere dissemination	<b>Final BB2029 Monitoring and Evaluation Report, Fact Sheet &amp; Policy Recommendations</b>	

## HOW WILL THE RESULTS BE DISSEMINATED?

Our dissemination strategy will integrate academic outlets with BB2029's promotional activities to ensure our research reaches and resonates with a broad audience.

**Social media, website and BB2029's App:** We will use social media, the official website, and the BB2029 App to share early findings.

**Reports:** Starting in 2025, we will issue annual reports outlining our progress and outcomes. These publications will coincide with the European Commission's monitoring panel meetings.

**Policy recommendations:** Policy insights will be disseminated through factsheets alongside the BB2029 final report as well as dedicated Policy Workshops. We will leverage a network ranging from local entities to national organisations.

**Journal articles, Academic Conferences & Books:** We will disseminate our research through publications in prominent academic journals. We will present our research results at the Polish Sociological Congress and the European Sociological Association. Additionally, the Institute will organise a final international conference in December 2030 to outline our methodologies and the impacts of BB2029.

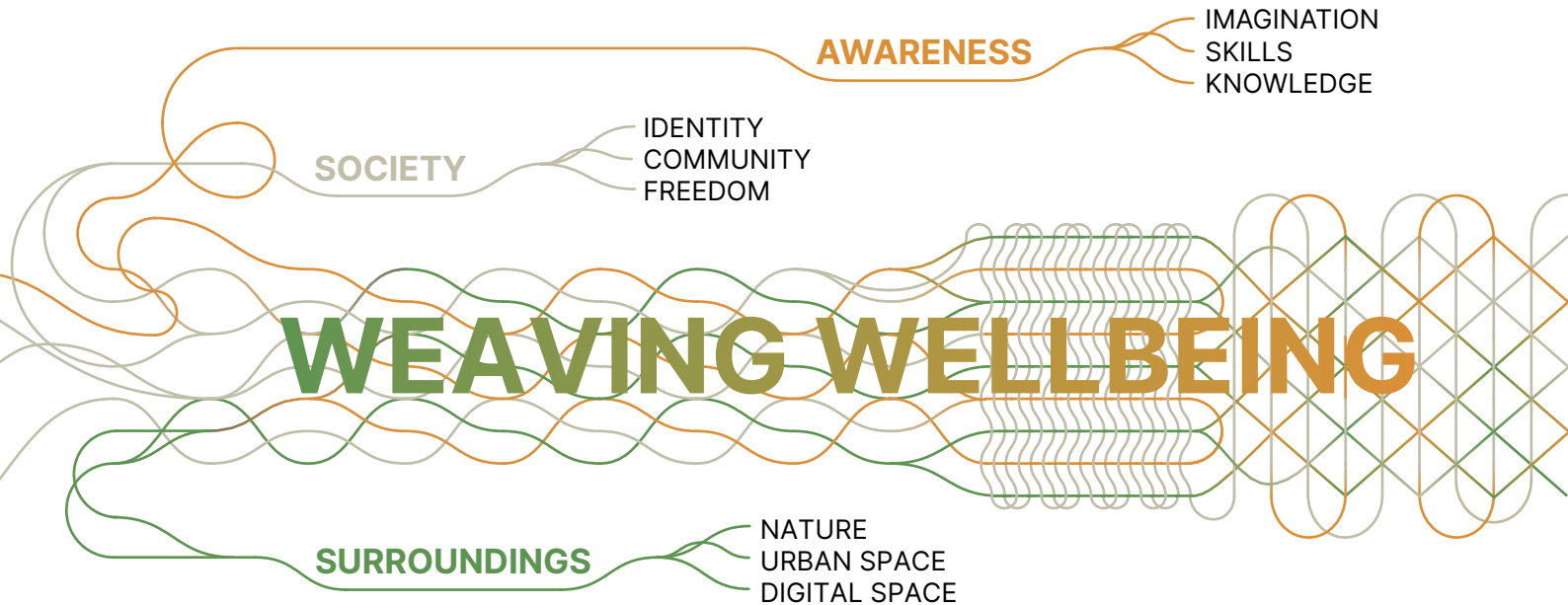
## Masters & PhD theses, Associate Researchers:

We will engage with graduate programmes to enhance our cultural policy and large-scale event research expertise across Europe.

**International networks:** We will exchange insights on BB2029 M&E processes and results with cultural and academic entities like Culture Next, the University Network of ECoCs (UNeECC), the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, and the growing network of ECoC evaluation teams, such as Monitor 2024.



# CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT





## ARTISTIC VISION & STRATEGY

### VISION – THE CITY AS A LOOM

The city is an extraordinary loom for creators and provides an unparalleled source of inspiration. Taking the city, or even the region, into consideration allows art to be taken out of its usual context and lets it be shared with everyone and not just with those who attend the usual cultural venues.

All are invited and all can become involved, from individuals to collective groups. Together, with care and respect, we will build a European Capital of Culture as a form of symbolic tapestry – a warm, shared fabric that will give everyone a feeling of softness and belonging.

If art can change a city, then a city can change art. By rediscovering its secret places, its tensions, its flows and its challenges, artists are provided with inspiration, enabling them to move beyond ‘art for art’s sake’ and create works that are rooted in the legacies of the past, in the chaos of our contemporary lives or amidst the immense challenges that lie ahead.

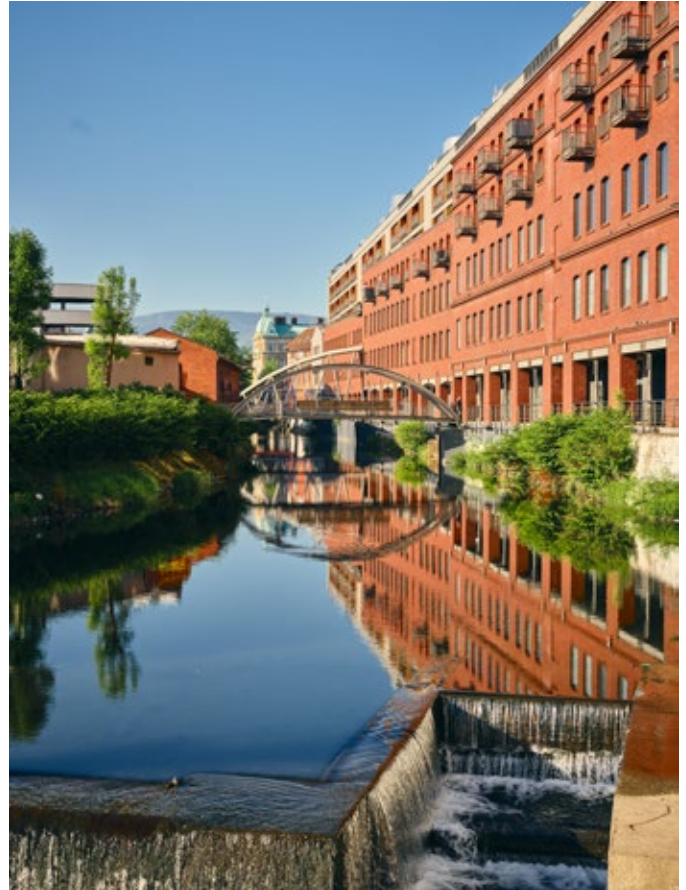
For this reason the complementarity between **creation** and **co-creation** is fundamental so that our residents, too, can play an active role in their ECoC. Combining creation and co-creation produces fertile ground for inspiration, whereby the singularity of the artists, their power of imagination and even their provocative views are confronted by the collective wisdom and sensibility of diverse communities.

### STRATEGY – WEAVING WELLBEING

**Method.** Our approach is to honour the past, to learn from others and to take risks. We preserve and build on the work of previous generations and use it to strengthen our fabric. Our objective is to discover new weaves suited to our times, thereby creating a heritage for future generations. We are learning about and adopting patterns and threads from across Europe, perfecting them for our own use. We are innovating new patterns of our own and sharing them globally.

**Tools.** Our desired impact of creativity is based on the positive habit of experimentation, driven by curiosity and reflection on today’s needs. We embrace this process without fear of failure, as history shows that this is how innovation is born. Co-creation is the dialogue between artists and communities. We believe this is the foundation upon which we build deeper social resilience, better health and greater social cohesion and solidarity.

**Material.** Our material is made up of metaphorical threads. These threads are awareness, society and surroundings. Each thread is formed of three fibres. Awareness is built from imagination, skills and knowledge. Society from identity, community and freedom. Surroundings from nature, urban space and digital space.



## CHANGES SINCE THE PRE-SELECTION PHASE

The Institute was founded at the beginning of 2024 and it is responsible for the preparation of our bid-book and the artistic and cultural programmes presented in it.

Since the pre-selection stage we have already set the machinery of change in motion. Culture has

been at the centre of various dialogues, appearing in election campaigns and in the context of social, economic and infrastructural change in the city. The ECoC is no longer commonly perceived as a large festival but rather as an important movement transforming the city, and also in terms of co-creating a sustainable future.

PROJECT	CHANGE	WHY
<i>A Time for Mindfulness</i>	Now elevated to the prime flagship project in our whole programme	The process of learning and experiencing mindfulness transcends the personal dimension, takes place and resonates within the whole of society and its surroundings.
<i>100×100 Tapestry</i>	New flagship project in the 'Awareness' thread	A massive textile art project that will embody 3 fibres of the 'Awareness' thread and has a great symbolic legacy dimension and strong European theme.
<i>Narrative Laundry</i>	Elevated to flagship project in the 'Society' thread.	In the current European and global situation and in the light of cognitive wars we have decided to put this project in a more prominent place.
<i>Refuge</i>	New flagship project in the 'Surroundings' thread	Bielsko-Biała residents suffer from high sound pollution. We dedicate this project as a solution proposal.
<i>A Second Wind for Cemeteries</i>	Opening in the summer season of the title year	As summer will be the busiest period in the ECoC programme we will start off with unusual venues – the green areas of old Bielsko-Biała cemeteries.
G29	Moved to Outreach	The project, first and foremost, is about building a community of young changemakers who will help us shape our programme line for young people.
<b>The Weaving Mill of Creativity</b>	Moved to Outreach	We have established an operational system based on the idea of creating opportunities, and of engaging and developing skills.



# CULTURAL PROGRAMME

## OPENING CEREMONY

Our opening ceremony will be held in January, following the handover celebration in Athens. There will be a strong presence of the Swedish city in Bielsko-Biała and our city will also be represented during their opening. We will also invite the ECoCs of 2028 (Bourges, České Budějovice and Skopje) to present their legacy in our Cultural Embassy Village (a village constructed during implementation of the Beyond Tomorrow project where artists and invited residents will live).

The opening ceremony will take place over the weekend in three dimensions: official, unifying and a multi-faceted event for the general public, and an official launch of some of the projects. We will use an app to facilitate live language interpreting.

**Official Ceremony.** All the officials will be invited, along with members of the press. The Juhung Lee project *Tangled Threads* will be presented to immerse our guests in our Weaving Wellbeing process. The ceremony will be broadcast both on television and large screens across the city and on hotel televisions. We will hold this ceremony indoors in case of bad weather.

**Main Public Event.** The event will be opened by the Mayor and ECoC team, with the participation of the EU Commission who will award the Melina Mercouri prize. We will then break a Guinness World Record for the *Polonaise* - an easy-to-engage-with dance that regularly marks important Polish celebrations - by inviting 10,000 participants to form a chain of dancers linking the market squares of Bielsko and Biała. The city centre will be closed to traffic. We will designate 9 official spots to represent the 9 fibres of our programme: Imagination, Skills, Knowledge, Identity, Community, Freedom, Nature, Urban Space and Digital Space. They will be inter-connected and highlighted with ceiling clouds created by Swiss artist Dan Acher. Many smaller events will take place between these locations, both inside and outside. A flagship project and main exhibition under the working title of *Fabrics of Modern Times* will open.

## SUMMER SEASON

Where time flows differently. Cemeteries are places where the present mixes with the past, often embracing important parts of history and local stories. For a moment we experience the lives of those who are buried, imagining their fates and life episodes thanks to the dates, photos and inscriptions we read on the epitaphs. Time flows differently, slower, calmer.

There will be a series of initiatives called 'A Second Wind for Cemeteries' about death and commemoration which will bring these forgotten spaces back into our lives. The events will be structured in a humble and respectful way in close collaboration with the Bielsko-Biała Jewish and Protestant communities and others. Today the two-hectare Jewish Cemetery performs three functions: to continue to commemorate those buried, to act as a cultural space for a wide variety of artistic activities and to promote ecology and environmental education.

'Circles of Life' is a large-scale midsummer night performance at the Bielsko-Biała Jewish cemetery for an audience of 3000 every evening. The Cemetery will have four dedicated spaces: the large reception garden, the funeral hall, the cemetery and the one-hectare wilderness space. Audiences will be invited to walk around the spaces, each with its own live music, projection and lighting highlighting walls, buildings and natural elements such as trees and paths. They will encounter four different series of stories designed especially for the evening. After a period of an hour the four spaces will merge into one for a spectacular culmination of music and design features, uniting the four elements into one circle of life. A shortened version of the event will be made into a legacy project to be used at the site in years to come.

## CLOSING CEREMONY

Our closing ceremony will be held in mid-December and will open the Christmas celebrations in our city. Like the opening ceremony, it will be coordinated with our Swedish counterparts. Just as Christmas symbolises something new, the end of the ECoC year will symbolise a new phase - legacy.

During the closing ceremony we will have the opportunity to watch the last of the *Gigapuppets* shows in which our travellers will now go out into the world. The last weave of the *100x100 Tapestry* will be completed and we will be able to show it to everyone in its entirety. Our *Crafting and Upcrafting* exhibition will open with over 1000 artifacts on show, all made in the title year. We will hold public pitches in the **Weaving Mill of Creativity** for a project that will be undertaken in 2030 beginning a new cycle of our activities.

We will collaborate with the 2030 ECoC cities, from Belgium, Cyprus and a third from outside the EU, to showcase the transition of the title to continue our European stories. We will open an exhibition in the Cultural Embassy Village showcasing their main themes and we will invite everyone to visit these cities and take part in their title year.

**EVENTS DURING 2029**

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

Opening & Closing Ceremony, Summer Season  
A Time for Mindfulness

**AWARENESS**

100x100 Tapestry  
T-Shirt Story  
Journey into the Inner Depths  
Unplug Festival  
Weaves of Emotions  
Gigapuppets  
Sub-Truth  
Crafting & Upcrafting  
Beyond Tomorrow  
Pan-European Herstories

**SOCIETY**

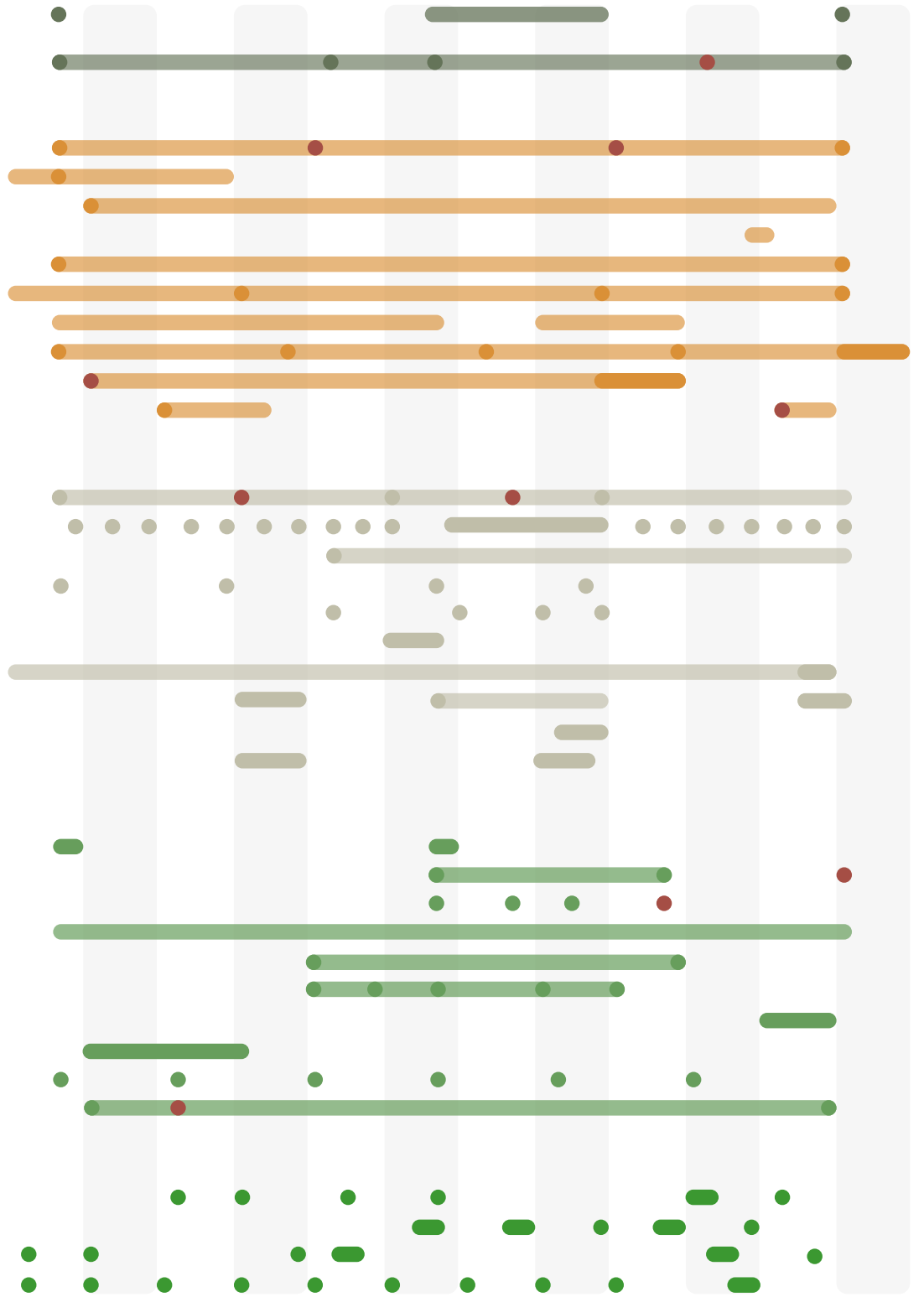
Narrative Laundry  
A Flavour of Europe  
Abandoned Town  
Food Recreated  
Charting Freedoms  
No Comment  
Seeking out the Rebels  
Move Forward  
Let's Play!  
Snippets of Memory

**SURROUNDINGS**

Refuge  
Magical Mountains  
Rivers Reclaimed  
Shapes of Nature  
Street Art Alive  
That's Another Story  
Health Architecture  
AI&Me  
Invisible Surroundings  
Laboratory of Humour

**REGULAR YEAR**

Music festivals  
Other festivals  
Theatre events  
Visual art events



● Significant European Anniversaries

## ENHANCING REGULAR ANNUAL EVENTS

Municipal cultural institutions will prepare special events in the year of the title:

The 'Strefa Odlotu' Festival staged by the Bielskie Cultural Centre promotes hip-hop and street arts as pillars of urban culture. It features dance, music, and graffiti, aiming to inspire creativity and participation through workshops, creator meetings and lectures. The festival is inseparably linked to the element of air and raises ecological awareness.

Music Project for the 25th Anniversary of Poland's Accession to the EU by the Bielsko-Biała Cultural Centre. This special event, in collaboration with Cavatina Hall and the Cavatina Philharmonic Orchestra, unites musicians from EU countries, showcasing winners of the ECoC title and fostering European integration.

'Open by Definition' by the Polish Theatre. Expanding accessibility, the Polish Theatre aims to make itself more accessible to people with disabilities, national minorities, immigrants and the socially excluded. Plans based on strong demand, as indicated by sociological studies, include a fully accessible open-air spectacle involving artists, educators and dancers to be held cyclically in the summer.

The Polish Theatre, in collaboration with prominent textile centres of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, will produce a captivating show about the textile industry's impact on cities. This performance will delve into critical discussions on human rights, drawing powerful connections to contemporary issues.

The Puppet Theatre will also put on an open-air performance based on the works of Hans Christian Andersen which form part of the heritage of European literature for children and adults. The performance will be directed by Noriyuki Sawa, with a script by Jacek Popławski and music by Ari Dvorak.

### Two major international exhibitions in 2029:

'Fabric of Modern Times' about contemporary textiles, curated by Marta Kowalewska, Chief Curator of the Central Textile Museum in Łódź. The exhibition will be located in the Old Factory museum. It will address extensive, multi-interpretive contexts of the fabric, divided into three basic topics: personal - the medium of fabric close to the body to address topics related to identity, illness or mental health; social - fabric is a perfect metaphor for interpersonal relationships - an image of building relationships, communities and the role of the individual in participatory processes; universal - communities create a complex network of human histories, connections and interdependencies.

'The Fabric of Life', brings together the achievements of internationally recognised Małgorzata Mirga-Tas, curated by Ada Piekarska, Chief Curator of BWA Art Gallery in Bielsko-Biała. Her contemporary textile work establishes an immediate link with our familiar world - making it a natural vehicle for storytelling, often implicitly political, through which she challenges racist depictions of the Roma people. By stitching together fabrics from her surroundings, Mirga-Tas rejects existing stereotypes and imagines a new world from the perspective of the marginalised.

## PROJECTS

In the projects listed below we have used symbols to indicate the budget and the nature of each project, e.g. audience type or European-related themes.

### Budget legend:

€ <250 000   €€ 250 000 – 500 000   €€€ 500 000 – 750 000   €€€€ > 750 000

### Pictograms:

#### Our European Themes:



#### Type of projects:



#### Audience:



#### Other characteristics:



# A TIME FOR MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness means being fully present and aware of yourself: your body, mind, feelings, not only your strengths, but also weaknesses; the ability to build relationships and develop a conscious approach towards nature and your surroundings. Today, in our fast-paced world, with over-stimulated minds and constant distractions, this is very difficult to achieve. When we are aware and focused, mindfulness becomes the key to making important decisions in our lives and taking action instead of being passive.

Through art and cultural experiences, mindfulness will help us to be in the here and now and achieve greater mental tranquillity. Mindfulness reduces stress, improves mood, boosts immunity and influences positive self-perception - a direct link to taking care of our mental and physical health. The Time for Mindfulness programme will be created in close cooperation and co-creation with social groups not usually visible in our society or those who do not have a decisive voice. We want to strengthen their position, work with them to restore their agency and encourage them to be ever more active in the life of the city.

The programme will be built around the power of five commonly recognised elements, closing with five large-scale public experiences throughout 2029:

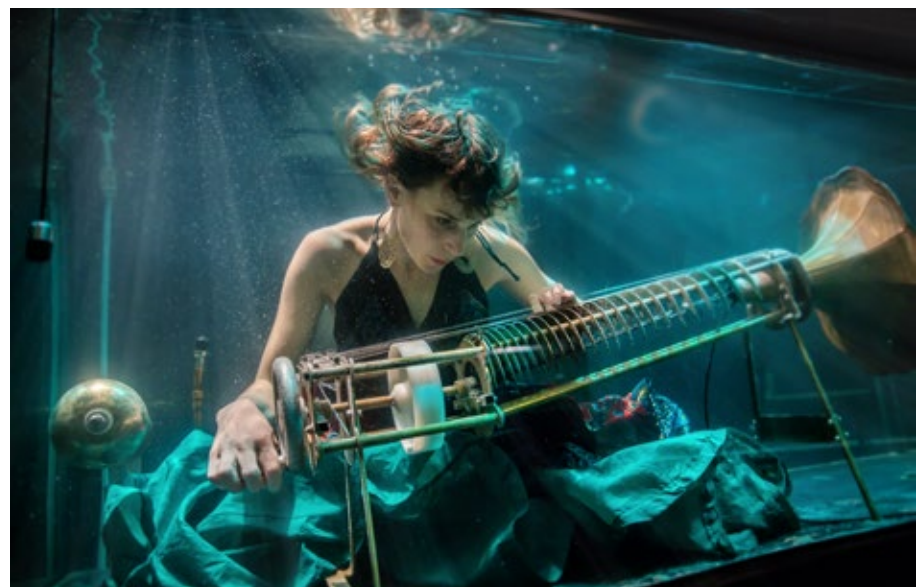
## EXPERIENCE 1 – SPACE

Since the ether is considered to be a space between realms, we will ask installation artist Luke Jerram, known for his 'Moon' and 'Gaia' projects, to interpret the first element in the context of outer space. The tall sculpture installation, constructed by him, will be visible from other parts of the city.

We will organise events under this space installation centred around mindfulness, focusing on the mental and physical. It will be inaugurated with a Bed Orchestra concert performed by the local Cavatina Philharmonic Orchestra - a relaxation event for 1,000 people lying on beds.

## EXPERIENCE 2 – FIRE

There are many people in our society who are invisible because they have no voice. In our world the strongest person is the one who shouts loudest. Artists will work to engage in a dialogue with people whose relationship to sound is different from that commonly experienced. Fire is the driving force for change. It is confidence, discipline, courage, but it is also responsible for feelings of anger. Artists, together with local deaf communities, will present collective experiences through drawing, performance and video as a response to oppression and systemic inequality.





### EXPERIENCE 3 – EARTH

We will create a major installation about bacteria and fungi, about the changing rhythm of natural processes. It will be sited in the former heating plant in the Bielsko-Biała where the process of heating water for the city by burning coal has now been halted. The project explores the life that goes on around us unnoticed - a whole universe of events that reflect upon physics, chemistry, biology, nutrition, lessons about life and death, and lessons in survival.

### EXPERIENCE 4 – AIR

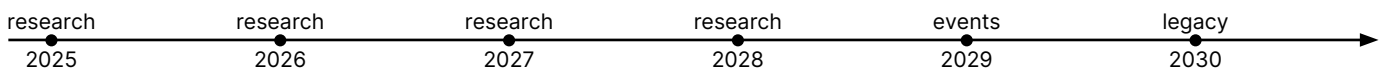
The New Harmonic Fields, a wind music installation created by composer Pierre Sauvageot, will be located in an open space, close to nature. In this experience the audience, led by visually impaired guides following sound, will be invited to wander from one instrument to another and create their own emotional journey that will draw visual images even with closed, unseeing eyes.

In the Breathing Symphony installation, sited in a public space in the city, to be made in cooperation with the elderly and people with mental disabilities, visual and breath artist Dobrawa Borkała will invite us to consider the subtle interdependence of ecosystems - the constant exchange of gases between oxygen-producing plants and people, shaping our common living environment.

### EXPERIENCE 5 – WATER

Led by Between Music this project will explore the notion of blue space and healing. Most of the urban research connected with wellbeing has concentrated on the impact of green spaces. However, in recent years it has emerged that blue spaces such as seas, lakes, rivers and canals can bring similar benefits to our mental health. In our region we cannot complain about the lack of rainfall, so we want to focus on capturing and storing it, preserving wetlands, as, within the city, apart from the river, we do not have many larger stretches of water. This digital art project will explore the importance of blue space in our lives and environment.

**Leader:** Urban Culture Institute – City of Weaves **in collaboration with:** Luke Jerram (UK), Pierre Sauvageot (France), Between Music (Denmark), Liverpool John Moores University represented by Dr Rafaela Neiva Ganga (UK), Jagiellonian University represented by Dr Krzysztof Ostafin and Dr Łukasz Musielok (Poland), Kortrijk 2030 (Belgium), Leuven 2030 (Belgium), Namur 2030 (Belgium), Nikšić (Montenegro), Senior Citizens Centre (Poland) Beskidy Local Tourist Organisation (Poland), Deaf Persons Group at the Polish Red Cross Regional Branch in Bielsko-Biała (Poland), Polish Association of the Blind Grodzkie Branch Bielsko-Biała (Poland)



Budget: €€€€



# 100×100 TAPESTRY

## CLOSING YOUR EYES DOES NOT BRING DARKNESS

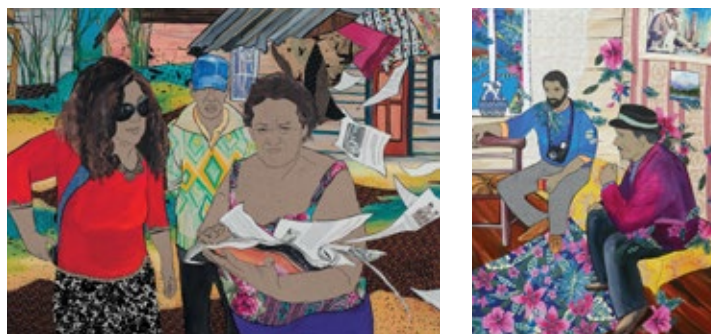
Closing your eyes simply brings to your imagination those images which live in your memory. And should we do the same thing as a city, as Europeans, all of us to close our eyes and collect the images we see, we would tell ourselves a particular story of who we were, who we are, and who we want to be.

100×100 Tapestry is one of four flagship projects that will conjure up the images and moments which define our Europe. It will collect images of both personal and social events as experienced by our families, and also the images of those who helped build this city and are no longer here, as well as those who disappeared or left. These images will be woven into a giant, ever expanding tapestry of ideas and key moments. By 2029 it will have reached a length of 100 metres and be 3 metres high. It will cover a period of 100 years, from 1939 when Poland was invaded and occupied by both Nazi and Soviet armies, to 2039, ten years after our title year. We want to imagine our future too!

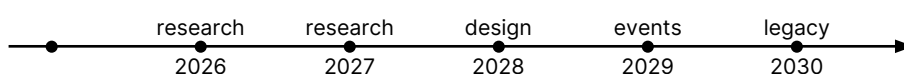
The images chosen for inclusion in this project will be selected and agreed upon through a two-part process. Firstly, we will invite an internationally renowned historian to work with us to define the key moments in the history of Europe for possible inclusion. Secondly, a team of international artists and cultural amateurs under the guiding eye of internationally renowned Polish textile artist, Małgorzata Mirga-Tas, will work with various groups of community members, members of the Senior Citizens Centre, students, churches, memorial organisations, prisoners, minority groups, and collect stories and images for inclusion as thematic elements.

Everyone who will be in Bielsko-Biała in 2029 will have the opportunity to actively contribute to the developing narrative line and the creative process.

Now open your eyes. 100×100 Tapestry is here. And it's online too.



**Leader:** BWA Art Gallery **in collaboration with:** Małgorzata Mirga-Tas (Poland), Rachel Rouzard (France), Evora 2027 (Portugal), Eleusis 2023 (Greece), Uppsala Art Museum (Sweden), Central Textile Museum in Łódź (Poland) The Socio-Cultural Society of Germans in the Silesian Voivodeship (Poland), University of the Third Age (Poland), Integration Centre for Foreigners MyBB (Poland), Senior Citizens Academy Association (Poland)



**Budget:** €€€





# UNPLUG FESTIVAL

(formerly known as Bbook  
Festival)

## WHERE WORDS WEAVE WORLDS

Reading, particularly as an 'unplugged' leisure activity, has been proven to support and improve our mental health and wellbeing. Mindful, deep reading, which focuses on being present and attentive while reading, helps to regulate emotions and enhance cognitive functions. Studies suggest that regular readers of fiction are better at understanding and empathising with others.

There are shared etymological roots in the words 'textiles' and 'texts' from the Latin *texere* to weave. They are both interwoven and yet remain forever unfinished. The Word Menu we have produced illustrates how we use words to weave ourselves together repeatedly:

**The 2-B City:** Collective novel writing about Bielsko-Biała will display texts around the city in public spaces, residential quarters, riverbanks.

**Write-Up:** Therapeutic writing sessions with multiple groups, from prisoners to café goers, will provide workshops or seminars exploring the therapeutic benefits of writing, such as journaling, poetry therapy or narrative therapy. These initiatives will help participants explore their emotions, process difficult experiences and foster personal growth through creative expression.

**You Say – We Say:** Debates on the changing nature of storytelling in modern society and the role of books in shaping identity, fostering empathy and preserving cultural heritage in an increasingly fragmented and technologically driven world.

**Word Power:** Hip-hop/Rap festival celebrating the subversive power of speech and word.

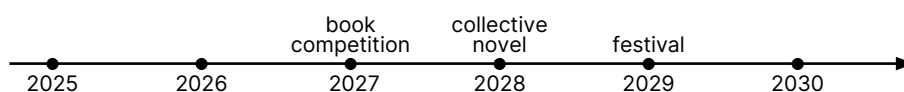
**Words in Motion:** Game workshops with game board designers will lead to the creation of a new game: ECoC cityscapes in contemporary literature.

**Silent Word:** Silent film festival with live commentaries written specially for the event.

**Book Wells:** Book Sculptures exhibition by English artist Su Blackwell and Column of Knowledge by Slovak artist Matej Kren.

**Words-of-Mouth:** Two years prior to this event we will announce an international competition for a book about Bielsko-Biała in any genre – romance, LGBT+, crime, horror, fantasy etc. – incorporating an opportunity for a writer in residence.

**Leader:** Beskid Library in Bielsko-Biała **in collaboration with:** Sue Blackwell (UK), Katie Holten (Ireland), Kiruna Library (Sweden), Kortrijk 2030 (Belgium), Frydek-Mistek City Library (Czechia), Nikšić (Montenegro), 4South Foundation (Poland), Vertical Slice (Poland)



**Budget:** €



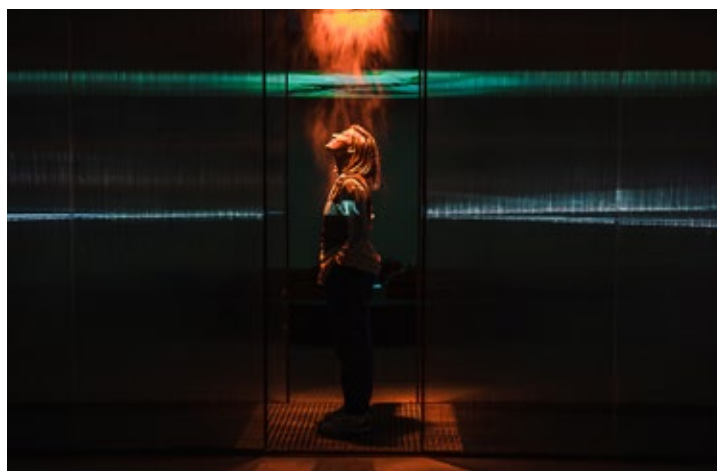
# JOURNEY INTO THE INNER DEPTHS

## WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOUR BACK WAS AGAINST THE WALL?

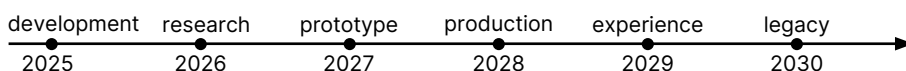
The set of buildings and the courtyard, known as Pedanteria, located in the very centre of our city, was once a laundry used to wash the clothes of those interned at Auschwitz-Birkenau Former German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-1945), situated 34 kilometres from Bielsko-Biała. Our infrastructure plans envisage turning this location into a contemporary centre for cultural practices and cultural industry.

During the building's transformation process we will create a multidisciplinary experience for visitors based on the creation of a labyrinth. Inspired by The Trial by Franz Kafka, a path through the story will put the visitor at the centre of the tale. Internationally recognised artists will collaborate to bring the labyrinth to life enabling audiences to control the critical dramaturgical choices faced during their visit and subsequently learn more about the world of the event through digital and online resources. During the experience visitors body reactions will be monitored with biometric technology so later on they will be able to analyse how the story was impacting upon them.

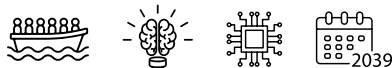
To many The Trial is a prophetic warning of the psychological weaponry used by the sinister totalitarian regimes which were to come after Kafka's death - the legally authorised death machines he never lived to see. Today the trauma experienced by many immigrants arriving in the EU is often equated to a psychologically disturbing Kafkaesque scenario. And so, while primarily associated with Prague (which, like Bielsko and Biała was within the then Austro-Hungarian Empire during Kafka's lifetime), Kafka's work remains a powerful narrative for many living in today's European Union.



**Leader:** Urban Culture Institute – City of Weaves **in collaboration with:** Markus Schubert and Georg Werner (Germany), Paweł Romańczuk (Poland), Petko Tanchev (Bulgaria), Oulu University of Applied Sciences (Finland), Marko Bratuš – Slovene National Theatre Nova Gorica (Slovenia), Regional Development Agency S.A. in Bielsko-Biała (Poland).



**Budget:** €€



# WEAVES OF EMOTIONS

## CAN A PERCEPTUAL FABRIC IMPROVE YOUR EMOTIONAL WELLBEING?

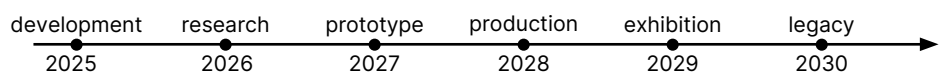
Imagine stepping into a space that senses your feelings and responds to your emotions, aiming to comfort you, elevate your mood or simply help you relax. This innovative environment can feel as soft as cashmere or as textured as linen, adapting to your preferences and needs. Whether you choose to be alone or share the experience with a small group of friends, you will feel cocooned in a comforting embrace, much like being wrapped in a blanket or having a personal sanctuary within a larger space.

This cocoon-like environment will be crafted using advanced fibre optics, lighting solutions, haptic sensors, immersive soundscapes and adjustable heaters and coolers, all integrated into textile structures. The space will be equipped with numerous sensors able to read your biometric data. These will be in the form of wrist monitors or touchpads embedded within the installation itself, allowing it to evaluate and intuitively react to your physical and emotional state.

As a research project this initiative represents a significant leap forward in the design of new comfort spaces. Before creating the final installation we will develop and test smaller prototypes of different sizes and shapes with our experienced research partners. This repeating process will ensure that the final product is both innovative and highly effective in enhancing emotional wellbeing.



**Leader:** Urban Culture Institute – City of Weaves **in collaboration with:** Frame Rate Ltd (Finland): Mika Johnson (USA), Eli Stine (USA), Yukka Karhula (Finland), Genelec (Finland), Olle Bergdahl – Region Uppsala Innovation, Uppsala University Hospital (Sweden), Anne Louise Bang (Denmark), Phillip Studio (Netherlands), National Autism Society, Regional Branch in Bielsko-Biala (Poland), Off School Foundation (Poland), Electronic, Electrical and Mechanical Technical College (Poland)



**Budget:** €€€



# GIGAPUPPETS

## A TALE OF MIGRATION ACROSS THE CITY AND ACROSS THE SPACE OF A YEAR

Poland is deeply divided by contradictory feelings about migration. It brings to mind memories of Polish workers leaving their homes to find work abroad. We think of the generous welcome we have given to millions of Ukrainians. Fears about immigration of people from Africa or the Middle East - many of them stuck at the newly-built border wall between Belarus and Poland, and being used by Russia as a hybrid war tactic. Waves of migrants from the south are bound to increase as a result of global warming, and conflicts are tearing apart more and more regions, forcing everyone to address the question of migration.



Who are the migrants? A person who has arrived from somewhere else, a stranger, trying to survive in a country whose language and culture they know nothing about? Or is it going to be me who has to leave behind my lifestyle and certainties to find another country in which I know neither the language nor the culture?

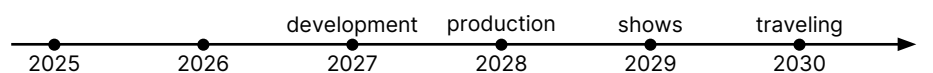


Bielsko-Biala is the Polish city of puppets. Our puppets will emerge from the theatre, grow in number, and they will take over the streets and squares as the year goes on. The project will involve several hundred children and adults in imagining 'those who might come', drawing and making the puppets, and learning how to manipulate them. They will immerse themselves not only in our puppetry traditions but also in our animated film traditions, using this tool too in the creation process. Throughout the year, around a hundred of these 4-metre-high 'giants' will represent an unlikely-looking crowd. They will be joined by giants from Burkina Faso and Latin America. These imaginary people will be in attendance of another unique character, a 9-metre-high wicker puppet that will take its first steps and grow throughout the year, until it is ready to embark on a journey around the rest of the world. It is going to be a shared adventure.



The Gigapuppets drama will unfold in 4 acts: making an appearance in early spring, blossoming in the summer, maturing in autumn, and departing during the closing ceremony. The complete scenario will not be set in stone, but each new episode will evolve as it goes along, based on reactions to it. Each episode will take place in a different location such as the border between the city and the forest; 'giants' will set off from different parts of the city to converge on the centre; there will be attempts to cross the river, symbolically taking on the role of a border – as it was in centuries past.

**Leader:** Banieluka Puppet Theatre in Bielsko-Biała **in collaboration with:** Les Grandes Personnes (France), L'Homme debout (France), Evora 2027 (Portugal), Namur 2030 (Belgium), Animated Film Studio in Bielsko-Biała (Poland), Integration Centre for Foreigners MyBB (Poland), 'Elf' Therapeutic Kindergarten in Bielsko-Biała (Poland)



**Budget:** €€€€

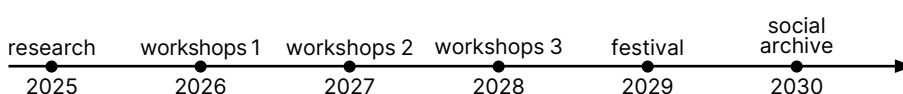


## EACH CITY HAS ITS SECRETS

Stories can be forgotten. They are like memories – vivid, yet sometimes vague - things are not always as we remember them. Challenges facing Europe relating to wellbeing, democracy, digitisation, climate change and migration are like monuments on high pillars. On their own they are not accessible stories, but what if we look at them at a human level. Sharing stories of individuals speaks directly to us of both love and tragedy, such as those about the people who moved to Bielsko-Biała looking for a job in the automotive industry and finding the love of their life or the local story of the man who won a public tender for construction only to discover it was for crematoria in Auschwitz-Birkenau.

All of these stories are an embodiment of the massive changes faced by Europe in the past and even the present. The Sub-Truth project will engage young, aspiring film makers to learn the craft of film making and storytelling. Constructed as a series of workshops, the project will establish a new social archive and multimedia library in our city. Project participants will witness the complexity of reality and find common ground through stories, in contrast with the polarising tendencies and overflow of internet content in contemporary discourses. We also aim to bring different generations together to connect with one another based on the stories they share. Not only will a new generation of young film makers be supported, but also those whose stories are shared will gain a voice by becoming central to the project. As a result of this legacy project stories from our shared past will communicate in new ways and converge with youthful energy.

**Leader:** Community Cultural Centres in Bielsko-Biała **in collaboration with:** Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF (Germany), Eleusis 2023 (Greece), Skopje 2028 (North Macedonia), Molenbeek for Brussels 2030 (Belgium), Nikšić 2030 (Montenegro), Kogucik Film Discussion Club in Bielsko-Biała (Poland), Datura Film Studio (Poland), the Jewish Community in Bielsko-Biała (Poland), Support Centres for the Elderly (Poland)



**Budget:** €



# CRAFTING & UPCRAFTING

(formerly known as Master Craftsmen)

## DO YOU REMEMBER THE FEELING OF MAKING SOMETHING BY YOURSELF, WITH YOUR OWN HANDS?

An Artistic Ambassadors Village will be constructed in 2029 where craftspeople from Poland, Europe and other continents will stay for three months. They will be working with textiles, ceramics, wood, and also displaying national crafts such as lacemaking, glassmaking and carpetmaking. We will invite four artists from each EU member state and five more from each continent beyond Europe. They will be ambassadors of their home countries but after they leave, they will be 'Ambassadors of remaking'.

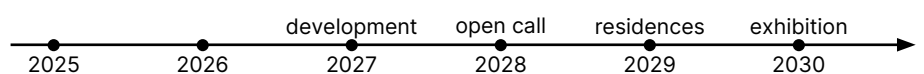
During their stay they will work on sustainable ways of making and remaking things. Ambassadors will work with apprentices on the art of repair and re-use. For example, the art of Kintsugi in ceramics will show that a repaired item can be made even more valuable than it was before. Each ambassador will be responsible for leading two workshop groups – one at entry level and one at advanced level. Ambassadors and their apprentices will also produce art works presented in joint exhibitions.

We want to make people appreciate the feeling of creating something meaningful for themselves. Things that are created with the wellbeing of our planet in mind. We know, for instance, that crafting works like meditation - you are in the moment focusing on one thing that makes you feel better.

This experience will contribute towards the expansion of the Artistic Craft School.



**Leader:** Serfenta Association **in collaboration with:** World Craft Council Europe (Belgium), Liepaja 2027 (Latvia), Skopje 2028 (North Macedonia), Nikšić 2030 (Montenegro), Beskidy Chamber of Crafts and Entrepreneurship (Poland), Być Razem Mutual Aid Association (Poland), Teraz Ulica Foundation in BB (Poland), Bielsko-Biała Industrial College (Poland), Regional Cultural Centre in BB (Poland)



**Budget: €€**



Throughout the EU only 1% of used clothes are recycled into new clothes. On average, Europeans purchase roughly 26 kg of textiles each year and dispose of 11 kg of clothing. Used clothes can be exported, but are primarily (87%) incinerated or placed in landfills. Textile production is also estimated to be responsible for 20% of global water pollution from dyeing and finishing products. As a city with a textile past, our heritage is today's European issue.

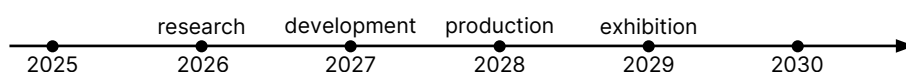
T-Shirt Story will be a mobile site-specific performance designed for railway stations located in various EU countries. Performances will commence at the railway station of Bourges during the closing ceremony of the ECoC 2028. A circuitous route will link the two cities via 20 European train stations and arrive in BB in time for the opening events in 2029.

The show will chart the entire production cycle of fast fashion with young people from both cities designing and making sustainable costumes in collaboration with professional artists and designers. Performers will showcase the products and the stage sets will be made from recycled materials.



The final performance in 2029 will take place in the BB Old Factory museum. In solidarity with today's fast fashion Asian and African textile workers, we will link our Old Factory performance with a working textile factory and guest Asian performers. This final performance as a tangle between pre-designed elements and real-time performance will be led by Dutch theatre director and visual artist Dries Verhoeven, whose previous works play on the *mise en abyme* between places and contexts. Similar to his work on the performance 'Dear Beloved Friends' in collaboration with Nigerian artists, Verhoeven will explore the boundary between performance and art installations on location and in public spaces of the city. Ultimately, T-shirt Story will critically evaluate the relationships between spectators, performers, everyday reality and art. In this way, the spectator will be given the opportunity to steer his or her own experiences.

**Leader:** Punkt 11 **in collaboration with:** Dries Verhoeven (Netherlands), Icelandic Textile Centre (Iceland), Trenčín 2026 (Slovakia), Bourges 2028 (France), Natasha Pavluchenko (Poland), Małgorzata Jankowska (Poland), Paulina Poczęta (Poland), Fashion Revolution (Poland), Martyna Dziańach (Poland), Bielsko Industrial School (Poland), Zróbmy To Foundation (Poland), Świat w Naszych Rękach Foundation (Poland), Pajak Company (Poland), Mateusz Wojtasiński Association  
**Kierunek:** Sztuka – Instytut Twórczości Scenicznej (Poland)



**Budget: €€**



# PAN-EUROPEAN HERSTORIES

## A TALE OF WOMEN AND TEXTILES

The experiences of women in shaping the social fabric of urban areas is at the heart of this project. We are creating an interwoven catalogue of life practices and survival strategies from various periods of historical turmoil, social and economic crises, wars and holocaust through an artistic lens.

In her mobile art exhibition, Joanna Chudy, a Bielsko-Biała photographer, will raise awareness of socially underestimated professional roles undertaken by women related to the capital of the heart: building social bonds, organizing self-help, raising children. The project will highlight women`s profiles based on documentary and archival materials combining two artistic media - photography with fabric. A Women`s Trail will be one legacy commemorating figures associated with the city`s industrial heritage.

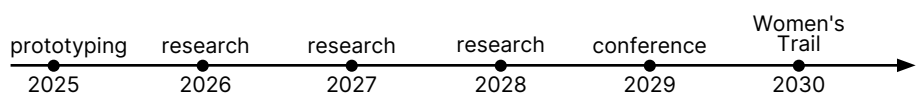
Artist Jenny Kagan (UK) will collaborate with a team to create a localised echo of the work in Bielsko-Biała, using collected stories and artefacts to shape a site-specific sound and visual arts feature. Working alongside creative consultant Helen Palmer (UK), Kagan will establish artistic cooperation with an artist selected and supported through the Memorial Gestures residency programme, curated by Holocaust Centre North (Huddersfield) focusing on amplifying the unheard female voices within West Yorkshire`s industrial landscape, an area, like Bielsko Biała, deeply rooted in the textile industry and migration. By uncovering these narratives, the project will explore the archives of Holocaust Centre North, which document the lives of Holocaust survivors and refugees who resettled in Northern England, often using textiles to rebuild their lives, and the archives of Sunny Bank Mills, a unique resource representing over 180 years of cloth production.



2025-2029

From the outset of the project regions will work together to build a common research approach. Work from the artists in Bielsko-Biała and West Yorkshire will be jointly shown and joint websites, catalogue and conference organised in 2029.

**Leader:** CityLaBB in Bielsko-Biała **in collaboration with:** Joanna Chudy, exhibition curator, (Poland), Women`s Path Association (Poland), Ca` Foscari University of Venice Department of Philosophy and Cultural Heritage (DFBC) (Italy), Science and Industry Museum Manchester (UK), Kaunas Faculty, Vilnius University, (Lithuania), European Association of History Educators (Netherlands, Bosnia and Herzegovina), Holocaust Centre North, University of Huddersfield (UK), České Budějovice 2028 (Czechia), BWA Art Gallery (Poland), Polish Sociological Association – Łódź and Katowice branches (Poland), Topographies, Łódź Association of Urban Initiatives (Poland), Bielsko-Biała Historical Society (Poland), Aleksandra Banot, University of Bielsko-Biała (Poland)



**Budget: €**





# BEYOND TOMORROW

(formerly known as City Matrix)

## THE POWER OF BUILDING THE WORLD IN OUR HANDS

In 2020 the global community could have gathered and worked together to find a way to deal with the pandemic. There was political and social pressure to do so. But what about problems that are equally important, but which we ignore in our busy lives because they don't touch us personally?

Now imagine gathering brilliant scientists, researchers, artists and practitioners in one place to solve these pressing issues we face: temporary and emergency housing, the consequences of our consumer decisions on the future health of our planet, the nature of the city of the future. We will bring together a truly diverse group of people, both in terms of disciplines and perspectives.

Leading up to 2029 we will face three challenges:

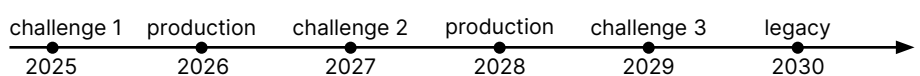
**First Challenge (2025):** Emergency and Temporary Housing Problems. Millions of people around the world are stuck in tents for months or even years, as in Lampedusa or Lesbos. With the increasing frequency of conflicts and extreme weather events, we need to find sustainable solutions that ensure safety and human dignity. Our gathering will design these solutions, and the following year we will test and implement them in a real-life setting, creating what we call our 'Embassy Village'.

**Second Challenge (2027):** Designing Homes for the Future. The second challenge will be to task participants to design two types of home: one that represents a sustainable future and another that reflects a business-as-usual scenario. These homes will be built in 2028 and artists and designers will create interactive games for the title year – a sort of escape room to help people immerse themselves in these conceivable worlds.

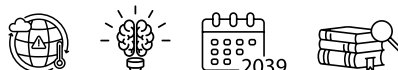
**Third Challenge (2029):** Envisaging the City of the Future. The third and most ambitious challenge will involve designing a future city or settlement. This month-long gathering will include open lectures for the local population, culminating in a comprehensive virtual design and simulation of the city. This design will serve as a blueprint to encourage investors to bring this vision to life as soon as possible.

By looking beyond tomorrow to solve today's issues, we aim to build a sustainable future. Our biennial conventions will be a part of our legacy, continuously pushing the boundaries of innovation and creativity.

**Leader:** Urban Culture Institute – City of Weaves **in collaboration with:** Rita Orlando (Italy), Jianlei Niu, Editor in Chief of 'Energy and Buildings' magazine, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (China), Richard Lorch, Editor in Chief of 'Buildings&Cities' Journal, Politecnico di Milano (Italy), Ana Pego, Plasticus Maritimus (Portugal), Veronika Richterova (Czechia), Pure Gold ifa (Germany), Uppsala University (Sweden), Larnaca 2030 (Cyprus), Areta Szpura (Poland), Paulina Górka (Poland), Szymon Bujalski, climate journalist (Poland), Student Scientific Circle of Materials Engineers 'pol-IM-er' (Poland), Collegium XR (Poland)



**Budget: €€€**



# NARRATIVE LAUNDRY

## RAGE AND REASON: DEMOCRACY UNDER THE TYRANNY OF SOCIAL MEDIA

There was a time when people in our city walked past the Pedanteria laundry unaware of its grim truth. Today, we have more information than ever, but do we know what is true and how we are being manipulated?

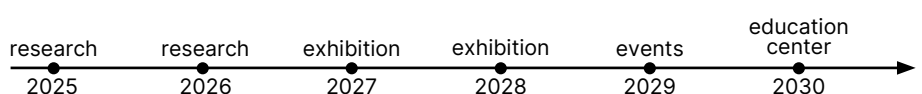
Narrative Laundry looks at contemporary cognitive wars, the 'washing' of information to shape a desired narrative and the increasing role played by artists and cultural practitioners in this process. We will be working on the theme of social doubt, preparing young people and adults for the challenges of finding reliable information in the contemporary world, social media and looking at online threats.

**The Narration of Democracy - Poland and Europe Artifake** - an exhibition of visual, auditory and performative artworks by artists from around Europe, will explore the manipulation of public opinion and democratic values. **Artikrate** - a series of public discussions about democratic political systems and new media. **Demofake** - street performance, examining how information noise challenges and confuses the foundations of our model of democracy.

**Narrative of Freedom of Speech Mediakreator** - digital artist-led projects examining the role of digital art in the creation of political (false and other) narratives. **Mediakrate** - discussions and projects on cultural freedom of speech in the digital era and also arts education in the fight against disinformation. **Media On Stage** - a photography exhibition in an urban space and online curated by Julian Stallabrass, featuring the work of photographers from around the EU in response to an open call entitled Narratives of Freedom.

**Social Narrative Laundry** - an international conference on cognitive wars led by the University of Bielsko-Biała and partner universities, accompanied by the International Biennale of Socio-Political Poster, entitled Creatively for Human Rights. New media artists from across the EU will conduct workshops with young people. Their work will be exhibited in public spaces in Oświęcim, Bielsko-Biała and other European cities from which young people have collaborated in the initiative.

**Leader:** Community Cultural Centres **in collaboration with:** Julian Stallabrass (UK), Dr Agon Memeti from University of Tetova (North Macedonia), Association for Culture and Education PiNA (Slovenia), International Youth Meeting House in Oświęcim (Poland), Local Democracy Agency LDA Subotica (Serbia), Trenčín 2026 (Slovakia), Liepaja 2027 (Latvia), Leuven 2030 (Belgium), Molenbeek for Brussels 2030 (Belgium), Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF (Germany), Fundacja OffSchool (Poland), Senior Citizens Centre (Poland), Jewish Socio-Cultural Association - Bielsko-Biała Branch (Poland), Akcja Demokracja (Poland)



**Budget: €€€**



# ABANDONED TOWN

## GLOBAL TALES OF REBIRTH

What does medieval Bielsko have in common with the contemporary city of Kiruna, a Swedish ECoC candidate for 2029?

How can one city talk with another across time? This is a multidisciplinary project led by city archaeologists and city artists, aiming to reveal a conversation between two European cities about the nature of movement, abandonment, re-founding and hope. It is a project about the interdependence between humans and the environment.

The Old Bielsko settlement probably dates back to the 13th century. Now just an open field full of trees and grass, the site still awaits major archaeological research. According to some researchers the site was destroyed during foreign invasion. As a result, Bielsko was founded again but on a different site, now the centre of the city as we know it today. The very hypothesis of the historical destruction of the city by invaders is gaining currency, especially in view of the war in Ukraine and accounts of refugees who have come to Bielsko-Biała as a result.

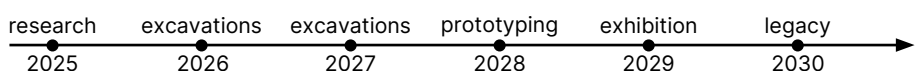
Kiruna is in the very midst of changing its location. This movement, this 're-birth', is being initiated as a result of local underground iron ore mining. The town centre is being relocated. The inhabitants have had to abandon their homes many times against their will and are offered new homes or financial compensation when this occurs.

We will carry out excavations in Bielsko-Biała as part of the International Summer Archaeology School. Later we will create a small hands-on exhibition of the students' achievements and findings on this site. This will be an important place for writing the missing page of our identity and creating space for dialogue about this subject.

To comply with conservation regulations we will not reconstruct the site, but we want to recreate it in a Mixed Reality experience.

Working with Dutch artist Hein de Graaf we will create a twin Bielsko-Biała / Kiruna installation built of artefacts from abandoned towns across the world connected to personal stories hidden within objects sent to us by their owners. There will be a portal inside the installation to have a glimpse at the other city.

**Leader:** Urban Culture Institute – City of Weaves **in collaboration with:** Hein de Graaf (Netherlands), Kiruna 2029 (Sweden), University of Wrocław, Faculty of Archaeology (Poland), National Institute of Cultural Heritage (Poland), Dr Łukasz Musielok and Dr Krzysztof Ostafin Jagiellonian University (Poland), Historical Museum in Bielsko-Biała (Poland), Polish Evangelical Society - Bielsko-Biała Branch (Poland), Eleusis 2023 (Greece), Skopje 2028 (North Macedonia), Molenbeek for Brussels 2030 (Belgium), Leuven 2030 (Belgium)



**Budget: €€€**



# FOOD RECREATED

## UNLOCKING THE PAST THROUGH TASTE

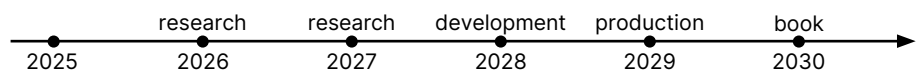
Bielsko-Biała does not have its own original and characteristic cuisine. It was lost, along with the population, as a result of the Holocaust and the expelling of Germans, after the Second World War. As one way of unlocking a conversation about our city, we would like to get back in touch with our past multicultural cuisine. We want to find forgotten recipes and recreate them with the help of invited master chefs and to work with local restaurants and catering schools to add a contemporary touch. We know that we are not the only ones to have lost recipes. That is why, together with our partners, we want to find more 'lost tastes' elsewhere.

But there is more. We would literally like to recreate flavours lost hundreds of years ago, and also rediscover vegetables that have been replaced by others. For example, parsnips were supplanted by potatoes, and the original red or yellow carrots were replaced over time by orange ones.

In collaboration with our Bielsko-Biała perma-farms and community gardens, we want to ignite an interest in rediscovering the culture of horticulture in our city. The research approach will be tackled on two levels. The first is to search for our lost recipes, and this is a matter of social action. The second is the rediscovery of plants in their traditional forms and nurture them back to the present, through permaculture, soil health and the establishment of seed banks. This project might also offer us hope with regard to the adaptation of edible plants to climate change. Wine, for instance, was produced in Poland in the 17th century, and it can be produced again today after a break of several hundred years. Dishes will be introduced, drawing attention to what and when we eat. We will avoid long distance food supplies and promote more sustainable and healthy ways to eat.

Our legacy aim is to rebuild a missing part of the city's identity and perhaps create our own showcase dish. Food is the glue that holds a community and the body together - be it through consuming, creating or nurturing. Eating good food is essential for maintaining good health and our wellbeing.

**Leader:** Senior Citizens Academy Association **in collaboration with:** QRER (Portugal), Food Council Uppsala (Sweden), Rouen UNESCO City of Gastronomy (France), Arctic Food Lab (Finland), Marije Vogelzang - Design Academy Eindhoven (Netherlands), Kiruna 2029 (Sweden), Namur 2030 (Belgium), Regional Union of Farmers and Agricultural Organisations (Poland), FruitPrint.pl (Poland), Socio-Cultural Association of Jews - Bielsko-Biała Branch (Poland)



**Budget: €**



# A FLAVOUR OF EUROPE

## UNITED THROUGH DIVERSITY

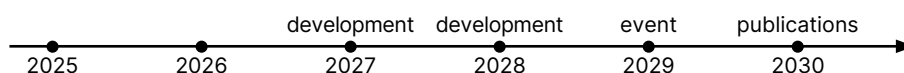
Imagine getting a flavour of each EU country without actually leaving Bielsko-Biała. Every second week of 2029 will feel like a holiday as we taste, see and hear examples of the sensory landscapes of European cultural heritage and spend time together creating memories. We will organise 26 one-week workshops with a fiesta at the end of each one.

Workshops will include exchange of knowledge in the fields of culinary art, dance, music. We will invite international specialists in these fields to run week-long workshops for 30 Polish students (10 dance, 10 culinary, 10 music) while Polish specialists in their respective fields will teach 30 students from abroad. Each week will end with a big fiesta which will include food, dance and music from one country (e.g. Greece, Finland and so on) for participants and the wider public.

We will create a huge European Fiesta Book (online and printed versions) where you will be able to find all the recipes, dance descriptions and music sheets featured in the project.



**Leader:** Community Cultural Centres in BB **in collaboration with:** Baia Mare (Romania), Besançon (France), Frydek-Mistek (Czechia), Nyíregyháza (Hungary), Wolfsburg (Germany), Vienna-Donaustadt (Austria), Žilina (Slovakia), Plungė (Lithuania), Liepaja 2027 (Latvia), Uppsala 2029 (Sweden), Regional Union of Farmers and Agricultural Organisations in Bielsko-Biała (Poland)



**Budget: €€€€**



# MOVE FORWARD

## DANCING WITH YOUR NEIGHBOURS

Our bodies in motion, in movements of all kinds - how can we be more affective in the way our communities see dance as a path to greater wellbeing? We are all living together longer on this planet, and with that comes a desire to live longer in good health. This initiative explores six interrelated themes – belonging, self-perception, creativity, embodiment, affective response and aesthetics – through a participatory approach to dance for health and wellbeing. Dance, and especially dancing together, contributes in a positive way to mental health.

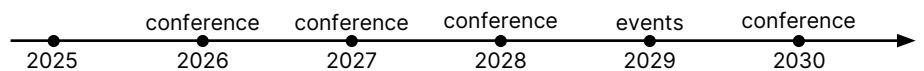
The Move Forward dance initiative will work with four target groups: older and retired people, young people, women’s health projects and newcomers/immigrants. Participants will initially experience dance as a social activity. Through working with Dansnest and in close collaboration with local and international partners, all elements – research, interventions, workshops, rehearsals, performances – will be brought together. An eclectic range of dance, from Swing and Lindyhop to K-pop, will add to the joyful conversation. Les Remarquables and Jany Jérémie will bring a team of disabled professional performers and work with local artists, while Lennart Westerlund will bring Lindyhop and Swing to life.

Activities will take place close by to where residents live: community centres, residential complexes, streets and squares. Dance will be visible and accessible to all – with the neighbourhood and in the neighbourhood!

Accompanying these initiatives will be a series of conferences between 2026 and 2029 called Move Forward – Common Ground. Together with professionals and academia, aestheticians and choreographers, mental health specialists and mobility specialists in attendance from across Europe, these meetings will ask the question how dance and wellbeing are interconnected and how contemporary practices can be applied to our complex communities and cities.



**Leader:** Aleksandra Jurczak – Ballet Art Foundation **in collaboration with:** Jany Jérémie – Les Remarquables (France), Lennart Westerlund (Sweden), Dansnest (Netherlands), Evora 2027 (Portugal), České Budějovice 2028 (Czechia), Bourges 2028, Namur 2030 (Belgium), 4South Foundation (Poland)



**Budget: €€**



# SNIPPETS OF MEMORY

(formerly known as Mosaicon)

## FAMILIES THROUGH THE LENS

Bielsko-Biała lost most of its pre-war population as a result of the Holocaust and the forcing out of its German population after the end of the Second World War. This was followed by Polish people arriving from every corner of Poland and today's Ukraine to settle and populate the city, work in its factories, and build it into the city it is now – a process which continued up until the 1990s when resident numbers tripled. As a consequence, it is often said that Bielsko-Biała is still searching for its identity. We will start this five-year photography project by asking residents what influenced their decision to live in Bielsko-Biała, focusing on their emotional attachment to this city as their home. Memories sometimes become 'fixed' in our minds like photographic negatives, yet their power to influence our opinions of the past and decisions about the future can be profound.

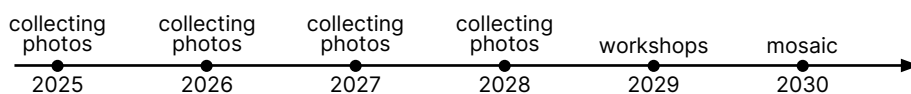
In 2025 we will collect pre-war and post-war photographs, up to the 1960s, of people and communities no longer with us, along with the stories related to them. Over the following four years we will focus on gathering photographs and their stories from the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s and 2000s.

The manner in which we collect and store photos has radically changed over the last 20 years. Social media and phone culture means that photos are no longer printed. The project will engage with young people to explore how today's technologies will impact upon the way their memories will be stored and passed onto the next generation.

Traditionally printed photographs will be digitised and catalogued each year. Cultural events, discussions and exhibitions will be organised to celebrate these achievements. During meetings with residents we will collect family stories centred around when the photographs were taken. In each year, project participants will take part in three subsequent workshops comprising family group meetings, meetings to create digital negatives (inkjet prints on transparent foil), and practical workshops in which participants will use ready-made ceramic tiles to create cyanotype prints.

The end product of these workshops will be a ceramic tiled mosaic mounted in a central part of the city in 2029.

**Leader:** Community Cultural Centres **in collaboration with:** Opava School of Photography (Czechia), Eleusis 2023 (Greece), Liepaja 2027 (Latvia), Molenbeek 2030 (Belgium), Beskid Library in Bielsko-Biała (Poland), Jewish Socio-Cultural Association, Bielsko-Biała branch (Poland), University of the Third Age (Poland), Centrum Fotografii Foundation (Poland)



**Budget: €**



# LET'S PLAY!

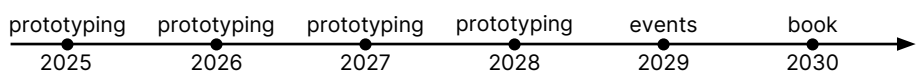
## WHAT IS THE CRAZIEST SPORT YOU HAVE EVER PLAYED?

We will chase wheels of cheese down the lower slopes of Mount Dębowiec and toss eggs in races – both of which are original lesser known English games. We will hold Finnish Eukonkanto races – running whilst carrying a loved one! We will toss the caber – a long, heavy log – Scottish style, and have great fun taking part in French La Soule, an early form of rugby or football, usually played between neighbouring villages moving a large, heavy ball to the opposite goal, and often leading to hilarious and chaotic physical contests. We will play Hornussen, a Swiss game, played between two 16-20 member teams, taking turns in hitting a 78g 'nouss' travelling at great speed across a playing field. Also Fierljeppan, from the Netherlands, where competitors sprint to a long pole and climb it as it tips over a stream, trying to land as far as possible on the other side of the water. This is a game combining technique, strength and daring. Or we will hold a small tournament of Brännboll, a popular Swedish bat-and-ball game, similar to longball.

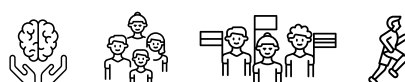
Competing and training together will not only give us an opportunity to bond but also indulge in some of the more bizarre features of European culture, spend time in the fresh air and have a good laugh. We will invite trad game nerds, our residents and anyone who is visiting Bielsko-Biała to participate in these games in the spirit of friendly competition. Artists will collaborate with us to create a colourful handbook explaining these peculiar games.

Sports or games will not involve animals because we care for their wellbeing. Health and safety will also be uppermost in our minds.

**Leader:** Bielsko-Biała Sports and Recreation Centre **In collaboration with:** European Traditional Sports and Games Association ETSGA (Poland), Sonkajärven Eukonkanto Oy (Finland), Evora 2027 (Portugal), Kiruna 2029 (Sweden), Namur 2030 (Belgium), Polish Scouting Association, Bielsko-Biała branch (Poland)



**Budget: €**





# NO COMMENT

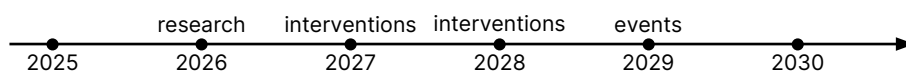
## IT'S ABOUT DIVERSITY. IT'S ABOUT YOU, ME, US.

Through this project we will create the idea that our diverse identities have intrinsic value. Understanding diversity is the true source of knowledge. Creating relationships between people, focusing on individual characteristics and not on group identity are key skills and can be powerful tools for building bridges and broadening horizons. We will invite artists from all over Europe to create works with shock value in public spaces that provoke and extract the most painful and stigmatising stereotypes.

Various artistic techniques will be employed during each of the two years of the project. Different aspects of our lives such as nationality, gender, religion sexuality or disability are affected by stereotypes. This project is designed to help us address these themes through street art provocations, surprise events and unannounced graphic art interventions. The works of the artists involved will be printed or presented in large format and placed in urban areas without captions, without explanations – with No Comment. We aim to provoke social discussion. Each campaign will be contextualised by a series of debates after the events involving experts from various fields - doctors, scientists and specialists. In 2029 the project will conclude with an academic and artistic conference under the title of 'A Comment on No Comment', featuring a large-scale intervention by Rimini Protokoll, implemented collaboratively with academic centres and non-governmental organisations.



**Leader:** Zróbmy To! Foundation **in collaboration with:** Rimini Protokoll (Germany), Artivist network (Belgium), IN SITU Platform (France), Molenbeek for Brussels 2030 (Belgium), Off School Foundation (Poland), Tęczowe Podbeskidzie – local LGBT+ initiative (Bielsko-Biała, Poland)



**Budget: €€**



# CHARTING FREEDOMS

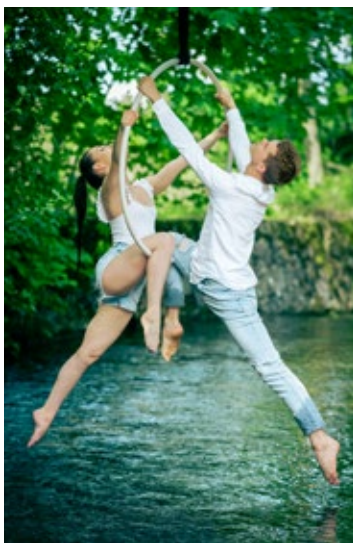
## WHERE IS YOUR BORDER?

This project explores social changes in the attitudes of Generation Z and Alpha. There are six subjects to explore based on conversations with young people: the right to experience childhood, drugs, cyber-pornography and self-prostitution, WOKE, mental health, and LGBT+ rights.

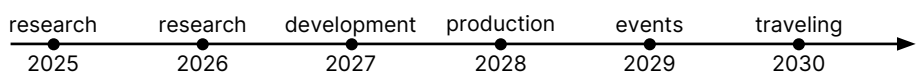
The project aims to encourage society, especially young people, to talk, to open up, ask questions and look for answers. The Internet, the pandemic and mass media have contributed to locking ourselves away in virtual space, destroying the ability to talk about important issues. Talking and sharing our stories in safe environments has a positive impact on our mental health, builds our self-acceptance and contributes to building a tolerant society. It can have a therapeutic and awareness-raising function.

Each topic will be examined using social, environmental and data indicators providing information for debates and discussions being led by young people themselves. Bespoke performances emerging from this process will be developed by teams of professionals: Les Farfadias, The Cirk, aerial artists, and others by young people working with theatre creators and directors.

Specialist community facilitators will lead public debates on the nature of freedom in a given topic under close scrutiny. All our work, research, performances and debates will be part of a legacy project shared online.



**Leader:** Urban Culture Institute – City of Weaves **in collaboration with:** Les Farfadias (France), The Cirk (South Africa), Circulum (Czechia), XY Foundation (USA), Bourges 2028 (France), Kinga Niszwic – APPA Aerials (Polska), Igor Gajewski (Poland), Kasia Zielonka (Poland), Agata Jakubowska (Poland), Magdalena Smaś-Myszczyszyn (Poland), Marta Gajerska & Mariola Dyńdo (Poland), Silesian Blue Cross (Poland), Bliżej Family Support Foundation (Poland)



**Budget: €€**





## PORTALS TO OTHER DIMENSIONS

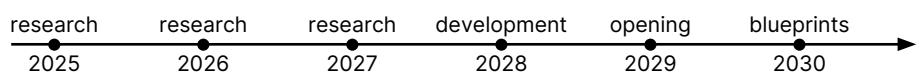
We struggle with pollution in many cities across Europe: air, light and noise to name but three. Even our green spaces are not free from it. This project, using the principles and values of the New European Bauhaus as our design compass, will create five spaces where people will be able to rest and disconnect even while inside the busy city. We will use the BB municipal sound-pollution map and other publicly available research on light and smell pollution to focus on the city's pollution hotspots.

We know that such a project can only act as a portal for momentary relief; it does not solve the problem of pollution. Rather, the project aims to be a place of temporary refuge - transporting the visitor to a realm of tranquillity. An international open call will invite teams (e.g. designers, engineers, sustainability experts, biologists) to enter the Weaving Mill of Creativity system, designing and submitting their proposals informed by the principles of participatory decision-making processes, multi-level engagement, and a transdisciplinary approach. The New European Bauhaus values of sustainability, aesthetics and inclusion will be critical in all processes and outcomes.

The urban refuges will seamlessly integrate urban design with natural elements and digital technology. Plants and natural materials will be used strategically to mitigate pollution. For instance, green walls and urban forests might filter air and absorb sound, while carefully chosen flora might be used to combat smell pollution.

Digital enhancements will play a crucial role in monitoring environmental conditions and adapting the space in real-time to ensure optimal comfort. Interactive installations will provide educational insights into pollution and its effects, fostering greater public awareness and understanding. These spaces will serve as portals to tranquillity and nature, offering temporary refuge and a much-needed break from the city's chaos. Whether stationary installations in high-need areas or mobile units that can be relocated as needed, each refuge will be designed to provide a sense of peace and rejuvenation. Visitors will be able to disconnect from the urban environment and reconnect with nature, even just for a moment - experiencing a reprieve from constant sensory overload.

**Leader:** Urban Culture Institute – City of Weaves **In collaboration with:** Colectivo Warehouse (Portugal), inkl. Design (Germany), raumlaborberlin (Germany), Kortrijk 2030 (Belgium), Molenbeek for Brussels 2030 (Belgium), Klub Gaja (Poland), Association of Polish Architects, Bielsko-Biała branch (Poland), Żywa Pracownia Kraków (Poland)



**Budget:** €€€€



# MAGICAL MOUNTAINS

(formerly known as Basecamp Szyndzielnia)

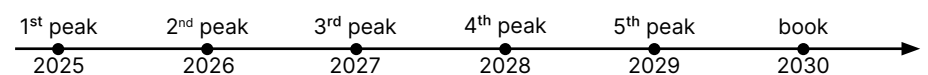
## WILL YOU DARE TO UNRAVEL THEIR SECRETS?

Bielsko-Biała is a city in the mountains with 18 peaks within its borders. Magical Mountains focuses on five of these peaks, all part of the Silesian Beskid range. The project will intertwine the past with the present and offer us an opportunity to learn about the people who lived on these slopes hundreds of years ago. Just as weaving involves the intertwining of threads to create fabric, Magical Mountains will highlight the complex and intricate relationships within mountain ecosystems and human communities. With the help of artists and scientists we will write a biographical account of the relationship between us and these mountains.

Between 2025 and 2029 we will prepare five chapters of our 'biography of the mountains'. Each year one theme and one peak will be examined through the prisms of natural sciences and ethnography, unravelling secrets and mysteries, always in close collaboration with a prominent artist. Our journey through these locations will be from east to west – the daily path of the sun. From Mount Kozia Góra (2025), on the slope of which stands Kamień Jana, a round table marking the spot of a former forest church, to Mount Trzy Kopce (2026) upon which stands Kamień Jacek with its rock carvings and altars aligning with the sun. On to Mount Wysokie (2027) with its stair-shaped forest chapel, and then to Mount Palenica (2028), an ancient, fortified site. We finish at Mount Szyndzielnia, a peak that connects us all in 2029 in the grand finale event.

The project begins and ends with a festival of light, developed in collaboration with Sun-plugged Festival. In 2026, 2027 and 2028 each peak will be host to different artistic interventions inspired by that particular mountain. Artists will be chosen in collaboration with the Sustainable Mountain Art Organisation. In 2029 the work of all the artists and research from previous years will be presented in one large-scale curated exhibition in the newly opened Mountain Enthusiasts Centre on Mount Szyndzielnia.

**Leader:** Beskidy Local Tourist Organisation **In collaboration with:** Sun-plugged Festival (Portugal), Kiruna 2029 (Sweden), Walk the Plank (UK), Mountain Volunteer Search and Rescue (Beskid Group – Poland), Dr Łukasz Musielok and Dr Krzysztof Ostafin Jagiellonian University (Poland), Polish Tourist and Sightseeing Society (Poland), KTJ Speleoclub in Bielsko-Biała (Poland), High Mountain Club in Bielsko-Biała (Poland), Pajak Company (Poland)



**Budget: €€**



# RIVERS RECLAIMED

## ON HOW MANY RIVERS WAS THIS CITY BUILT?

We have activists, politicians and urban planners, but hearts and minds still remain detached from reality. We need storytellers.

Our city grew on the banks of the Biała, our largest river. The soft water required for the textile industry was drawn from it and provided power for the first mills and machines. Rivers became canals. The canals became hidden sewage channels. Our waterways disappeared beneath roads and the growing city. Flooding increasingly occurs after heavy rainfall and in summer the river dries up when there is a drought. The river Biała is a tributary of the Vistula, so responsible actions in Bielsko-Biała will have an impact on it and the Baltic Sea into which it flows. We need to increase rainfall retention by protecting our forests from being cut down, to stop concreting and straightening riverbeds for them to return to their social and therapeutic role, and to increase biodiversity. We must also unblock access to rivers. But we need to change hearts and minds first. We need to talk. And artists can help us find the way.

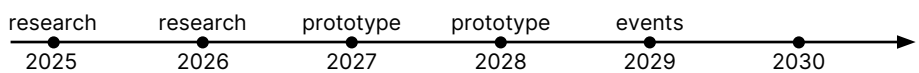
The Jean Jacques Collective was one of the winners of BB2029 Land Art open call 2024. Their winning project *Ianos* invites people to take part to develop a major sculptural installation on the river Biała for 2029 to become a living, breathing testament to the city's vibrant natural environment.

Microbial Futures Lab, facilitated by artist and activist Eva Bubla, is a travelling laboratory, a constantly expanding collection of future medicines, treatments, rites and narratives. The River Biała Clinic will become a local branch of the Lab by looking at health in a holistic way, understanding it as mutual well-being and co-existence of human and more-than-human lifeforms, human bodies and bodies of water.



Cecylia Malik's River Sisters initiative, water instruments powered by the river made by Pawel Romańczuk and river performances by *Ilotopie* will all enrich the programme. Bielsko-Biała BWA Art Gallery's visual arts initiative *Flowing Bodies* will explore how water shapes what is human and non-human, how it affects mineral, geological, plant and digital elements. This science/arts research collaboration will result in an interactive online publication and exhibition at the BWA Art Gallery.

**Leader:** BWA Art Gallery **in collaboration with:** Eva Bubla (Hungary), Jean Jacques Collective (Belgium), *ilotopie* (France), Cecylia Malik, River Sisters (Poland), Paweł Romańczuk (Poland) World Rivers Day (Canada), Trenčín 2026 (Slovakia), Plóvdiv (Bulgaria), Klub Gaja (Poland)



**Budget: €€**



# SHAPES OF NATURE

## BLURRING THE LINES BETWEEN LAND AND ART

The progressive climate change crisis obliges us to take all measures to eliminate, or at least significantly slow down, this process. A series of land art explorations are underway and are to be significantly expanded between now and 2029. Due to its location, being surrounded by mountains, forests, hiking trails, parks, rivers and streams, the city of Bielsko-Biała is an ideal place to implement the project objectives.

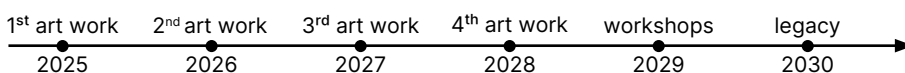
TerraNova, led by artists Juan Estaban Sandoval, Zoe Drakopoulou and Nomades Artcore, was one of the winners of BB2029 Land Art open call 2024. A participatory work specially created for Bielsko-Biała, TerraNova comprises a giant ceramic terracotta puzzle-like composition made from tiles, taking inspiration from patterns used in traditional costumes and textiles of the region and is mixed with contemporary elements. The final outdoor mountain installation, a new common ground in the forest up to 50 m<sup>2</sup> in size, will emerge following workshops with local residents as part of an extended collaborative design process.

Artist Juan Estaban Sandoval will be invited to lead a jury in the selection of three additional land art installations by Polish and non-Polish artists through international open calls in 2026 and 2027, all to be sited along the international long distance Czech, Slovakian and Polish bicycle routes.

Shapes of Nature will also bring together professional and non-professional artists for a series of open-air art workshops: Art by Nature - wicker handicrafts and ceramics workshops ending with an exhibition; Naturally Music - musical instruments of natural origin such as flutes, pipes, drums, ocarinas etc; Shapes of Nature through the Lens - photography.



**Leader:** Community Cultural Centre **in collaboration with:** Nomades Artcore (Greece), Juan Estaban Sandoval (Columbia) and Zoe Drakopoulou (Greece), European Land Art Festival (Scotland), Leuven 2030 (Belgium), Transversal (Sweden), Broumov Foundation – City of Culture (Czechia), Nikšić 2030 (Montenegro), Land Art Festival (Zawoja, Poland), Beskidy Local Tourist Organisation (Poland)



**Budget: €€**



# HEALTH ARCHITECTURE

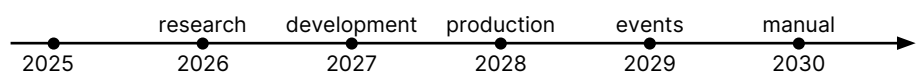
## WE KNOW HOW TO HEAL WITH WATER, WE STILL HAVE TO LEARN HOW TO HEAL WITH ARCHITECTURE

Polish people today spend over 90% of time indoors, and it is becoming increasingly evident that architecture has a profound influence on our minds and bodies. If we think how Poland survived the two World wars resulting in an urgent need to build hospitals, sanatoria, health spas and facilities deigned to heal, then this project looks at architectural design associated with the prevention of illness. Moving beyond the last century's Modernist designs in Bielsko-Biała, we are searching for design solutions friendly to people and their wellbeing. This is an essential topic as the planned Faculty of Medicine in the centre of Bielsko-Biała takes shape.

Health Architecture will examine Polish well-being architecture and recent advances in neuro-aesthetics, spatial therapy and enhanced constructed environments through the hosting of a series of international symposia and research outputs. The project will produce a practical manual on architecture and health care for urban planners, architects and those interested in future-scoping the architecture of health and healthy architecture. Public exhibitions and meetings will take place at Pasmateria, the old sewing shop in Aleje Sułkowskiego, situated in the historic modernist housing estate in the centre of the city. A major outreach initiative across the city will be held for young people to engage with architecture design, health and well-being through professional/student think-tanks leading to co-created digital design future-scoping. By doing this, we aim to humanise health care facilities and make our everyday spaces healthier and friendly. A series of short documentary films will be commissioned to document and disseminate results of the project.



**Leader:** Zielone Konie Foundation **in collaboration with:** Dr Viltė Migonytė-Petrulienė – Vytautas Kavolis Transdisciplinary Research Institute of Vytautas Magnus University (Lithuania), Municipality of Faro (Portugal), Impronta (Italy), Natalia Olszewska (Poland), Przemysław Czernek (Poland), SARP Association of Polish Architects (Poland), CENTRALA – Małgorzata Kuciewicz & Simone De Iacobi (Poland), Fundacja Laboratorium Architektury 60+ (Poland), Dr Dorota Winnicka-Jarosławska, (Poland), Agnieszka Labus, The Silesian Technical University (Poland)



**Budget: €**





# THAT'S ANOTHER STORY

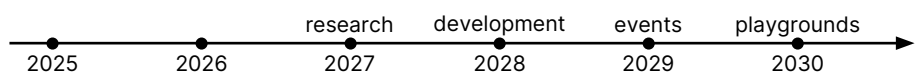
## BUILDING OUR FUTURE THROUGH PLAYGROUNDS

Unstructured play in playgrounds is important for children's physical development, helping their movement abilities of balance, agility, coordination and spatial awareness. The World Health Organization suggests that active play and opportunities for unstructured physical activity can contribute to the development of motor skills in children under five. However, playgrounds can be designed very differently. They can vary in size and features, and be built with conventional or natural materials. While protecting a child's need for unstructured physical activity, some can even be designed to embody elements of story, narrative or quests which we hope will engage children in 'non-screen' activity.

We will create five children's outdoor playgrounds, based on five stories from north, south, east, west and central Europe to be sited correspondingly in north, south, east, west and central Bielsko-Biała locations. Each playground will also be designed as a set for an open-air show. The design process will be co-managed between the Bielsko-Biała municipality and children from different corners of our continent. Once the playgrounds have opened we will create two workshops, one to develop an audio show and another to create short cartoons developing the playground stories and narratives and their settings, to be made available online and for download.

The legacy of this project will be five permanent playgrounds showcasing legends from different parts of Europe; we can provide approved blueprints for the five playgrounds to all our partners to make their own such playgrounds.

**Leader:** Urban Culture Institute – City of Weaves **in collaboration with:** Cal y Canto Teatro (Spain), Branar (Ireland), The Collective Foundation (Bulgaria), Växtvärket (Sweden), Animated Film Studio (Poland), Zakład Doskonalenia Zawodowego (Poland), IGNIS Association (Poland), Hajstra Association (Poland), National Autism Society, Bielsko-Biała branch (Poland), Banialuka Puppet Theatre (Poland)



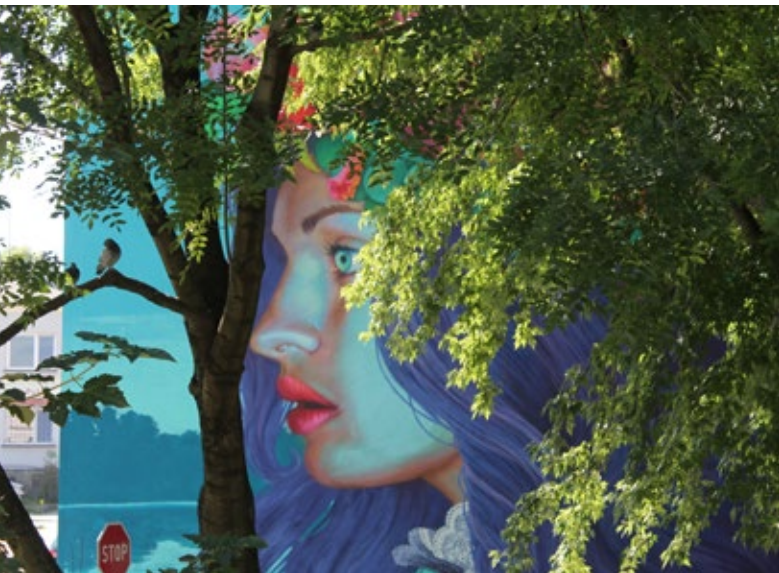
**Budget: €€**



# STREET ART ALIVE

## WHAT'S THAT TATTOO-LIKE THING AROUND THE CORNER?

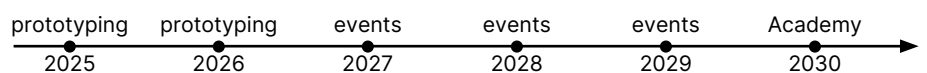
Street Art Alive revitalises streets and city districts that have been neglected, transforming them into vibrant, artistic hubs, that counter urban decay. Through the use of murals, graffiti, posters, art installations, video mapping and new media art, the project involves both a street artist-in-residency programme and a Street Art Academy, providing a platform for street and new media artists to share expertise with young enthusiasts. It will also establish an international network for researchers and organisers to exchange best practices and promote street art's democratic worth through conferences and publications. Targeting both our residents and visitors, the initiative aims to draw attention to forgotten areas and enhance their aesthetic appeal. By engaging communities and sparking creativity, Street Art Alive will leave a lasting impact, integrating into the city's fabric like a public tattoo. The project reaffirms street art as a public, democratic voice, interweaving with the reality of the city's stories and memories. It reminds people that their mental map of the city is both communal and individual, symbolising the fact that the city and its streets truly belong to them. Research will gather feedback from residents in areas with new street art to gain an understanding of their perceptions and feelings about their surroundings.



2024 Research relating to Bielsko-Biala street art perceptions and current needs. Stop the art - activities at bus stops around the city. Startup of the Street Art Academy.

2025-2029 Annually: Awake the City international conference; Graffiti Jam City Game – a Bielsko-Biala collaborative mural; Off-Road and Beyond Time artist in residence; site-specific installations; Delight Festival of Light installation in the city forest; sustainable art; video mapping installation; Festival of Forgotten Backyards - art installations, public film screenings and music in the backyards of 11 Listopada Street; Crossover Canvases - an art gallery exhibition; Urban Odyssey – video mapping projections on selected historical buildings in the city, showing their actual, probable and hidden histories.

**Leader:** Street Art Academy **in collaboration with:** Upeart (Finland), IFUK (Denmark), Seedhead Arts (Northern Ireland), Street Art Communication (Slovakia), Pärta Von Andreasson (Sweden), Street Art Festival (Czechia); Spanish artists: Contorno Urbano Foundation, Escif; French artists: Julien de Casablanca, Yann Nguema, Rencontres Audiovisuelles; Polish artists: Turbos, Projekt Etnograff, Dariusz Paczkowski, Izabela Ołdak, Ryszard Paurowski, Tomasz Strojecki, Tomasz Gawroński, Mona Tusz, Lump, Malik, NeSpoon, Piotr Graff, Agata Oleksiak



**Budget: €€**



## BREAKING BARRIERS, BUILDING ART

The rapid advancement of AI technology has opened new avenues for creativity and innovation. While there is an ongoing debate about AI's potential to replace human creativity, we see a unique opportunity to harness AI for empowering those with physical limitations. Using AI tools to enable creativity through voice, eye movements or brain waves, we aim to provide an inclusive platform for it.

Imagine creating art without using your hands. AI is revolutionising the way we interact with technology, making it possible for individuals with physical disabilities, injuries or illnesses to express their creativity in ways they never thought possible.

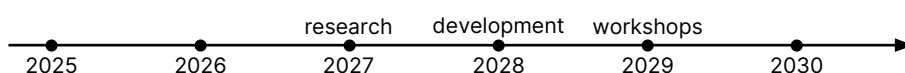
Our project focuses on developing AI-enhanced workstations tailored for creators across various disciplines, including sculpture (3D printers), music composition, writing and visual arts. These workstations will be customised to accommodate different levels of physical abilities, using advanced control techniques such as voice commands, eye-tracking and brain-computer interfaces.

We will design and build these innovative workstations in collaboration with a dedicated team of researchers. Once completed, we will host workshops led by AI specialists and professional artists, providing hands-on training and support for participants.

By 2029 we plan to showcase the work created during these workshops in interactive exhibitions. These exhibitions will not only display the art produced by our participants but also offer visitors the opportunity to create their own pieces with the guidance of AI and our fellow workshop participants – now in the role of experts.

Join us on this journey to make creativity accessible to everyone, regardless of physical limitations, and witness the transformative power of AI in the arts.

**Leader:** Urban Culture Institute – City of Weaves **in collaboration with:** Centre for Arts Innovation (Finland), Michael Culture Association (Belgium), Stowarzyszenie “ADA” (Poland), Electronics, Electrical Engineering and Mechanics Technical College (Poland), Regional Development Agency S.A. in Bielsko-Biała (Poland), Psychiatry Centre - Olszówka in Bielsko-Biała (Poland)



**Budget: €€€**



# INVISIBLE SURROUNDINGS

## SEE THE CITY AS YOU'VE NEVER HEARD IT, OR HEAR THE CITY AS YOU'VE NEVER SEEN IT!

To make heritage of the past tangible without betraying it, we are calling on sound art and the most advanced technologies. Throughout 2029 Dutch composers Rob van Rijswijk and Jeroen Strijbos will take us on a journey of sound and music, an invisible and sensitive cartography of the city, a symphony buried in memory.

Using a simple smartphone and headphones each resident or visitor will be able to plan their own itinerary. The sound composition is also spatial, with each step modifying what the listener hears and allowing them to compose their own score. As you walk, you'll be immersed in Klezmer sounds or contemporary electroacoustic effects, hearing evidence of the past or the stories of children who have made the city their playground. You will be immersed in the sounds of the river as if you were underwater, or you will come across urban sounds. You are the composer of your journey.

This map will be constructed throughout the year. From the beginning of 2029 the Jewish cemetery will be the first place to listen to and feel. This seemingly ordinary cemetery contains the bodies of people who died at the beginning of the 20th century. But its empty sections illustrate the absence of all those who should have lived longer lives and then joined their ancestors in this cemetery. It is the absence that creates the emotion. There is also a quarter where the bodies of Bosnian soldiers are buried, so obvious was it at the time to bring Jews and Muslims together.

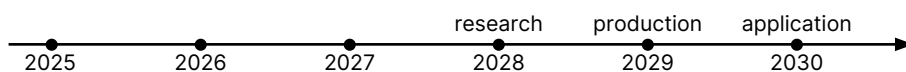
In the spring of 2029 a second site will be set to music, followed by a third in the summer. Throughout the year the installation will grow to cover a large part of the city: the Protestant cemetery, the site of the abandoned town, the riverside, a forest church, Pederterria, possibly a Nazi weekend villa, the toboggan run, as well as all the roads linking these different areas.

The project will be developed with the help of a large number of local residents and professionals: traditional and symphonic music orchestras, historians, representatives of the communities mentioned, testimonies from the elderly, the involvement of many children to help them imagine the future of these places, etc. Everyone will be invited to contribute a sound, a noise, the sound of an instrument, a melody, all signals that will serve as an acoustic basis for the composers.

Invisible surroundings will be an important part of the Bielsko-Biała 2029 legacy. As the system is based on an application downloaded onto smartphones, the map and sound trail of Bielsko-Biała will be operational for many years to come, and the content will be updated every year.



**Leader:** Bielsko Culture Centre **in collaboration with:** Strijbos & Van Rijswijk (Netherlands), Eleusis 2023 (Greece), Polish Evangelical Society, Bielsko-Biała branch and the Jewish Community in Bielsko-Biała (Poland), Zakład Doskonalenia Zawodowego in Bielsko-Biała (Poland), School of Music in Bielsko-Biała (Poland)



**Budget: €€**



# LABORATORY OF HUMOUR

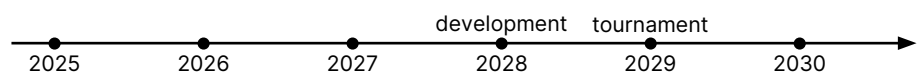
## DOES YOUR JOKE MAKE SOMEONE IN EUROPE LAUGH MORE THAN YOUR NEIGHBOUR?

We are living in a world where the internet is overflowing with brutal videos or humour at the expense of others. Self-mockery is seldom used to make others laugh. Not all jokes travel well across cultural lines, yet we do have some timeless examples which go beyond the limitations of time and space. We will create a series of humour-related challenges in the form of a European tournament. People will be invited to create visual (film or graphic) art that is designed to make us laugh and show us the reaction of audiences to their content. We will investigate how jokes spread across the internet and where in the world the people who engage with them are.

We will create a virtual manual for best practice in visual humour focusing on self-deprecation courses and online workshops where participants learn to laugh at themselves in a constructive way. We will initiate seminars on Humour and Society, discussions on the historical and contemporary role of humour in community building and crisis management. A Europe-wide invitation will lead to a series of teams being created. Once formed we will start assigning challenges to them. The best one, chosen by an international panel of visual-humour experts, will spend several days of training with internet influencers creating humorous content before they progress to the next stage. Challenges will be set to enhance mutual understanding, ease tensions and promote a culture of resilience and caring. Research will be conducted to examine whether humour travels across cultural borders, what makes people laugh and what we find funny. We will see if tools like AI can make us better at delivering funny material.

Joke written by Chat GPT, well accustomed to our themes in the bid-book: "Why did the yarn refuse to compete in the talent show? Because it didn't want to get tangled up in any drama - it preferred weaving wellbeing into everyone's lives!". There is obviously lots of scope for improvement!

**Leader:** Ferment Creative Group **in collaboration with:** Kiruna Art School (Sweden), České Budějovice 2028 (Czechia), Kragujevac (Serbia), Vertical Slice Foundation (Poland), Bielsko-Biała Cabaret Scene (Poland), Cluje Culture Centre (Romania), Broumov Foundation – City of Culture (Czechia)



**Budget: €€**



## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES FOR THE TITLE YEAR

In the previous pages we have described projects of varying size and impact. They are the result of the team's collective work, with input from the Bielsko-Biala cultural scene. These projects set the stage and are fundamental to the programme. Most of these projects are not closed and will be enhanced by further input from artists, local and European partners, or local people involved in the process.

Between 2025 and 2027 we will be adding further projects to develop the ones already described and will explore new themes. As of now, we will be actively supported by the Programming Panel. This is especially important in respect of projects dedicated to teenagers, as their needs and interests could be very different from what they are at present.

The projects submitted/considered must meet the following criteria:

- Relevance to the development of wellbeing
- Space for co-creation and creativity
- A European dimension in terms of content or cooperation
- Integration within existing projects or new elements in the structure of our programme
- Possibility of establishing agency

In addition to these criteria, there are also technical conditions:

- Compliance with our sustainability guidelines (available on our website)
- Transparency in monitoring and evaluation

- Room for volunteers
- Well-constructed budgets and justified costs.

In terms of overall cohesion in this vast programme, the role of the Storyteller (p. 81) will be predominant but will not have unlimited decision-making powers. There will be several further pathways that we will build into our programme:

- Contracting specific artists for the projects
- Open and closed calls, with independent juries representing major national institutions, European partners and civic society with the Storyteller as a chair
- Emerging Producers Platform – the most talented cultural curators and producers to be found using our **Woven by Culture** operational system (p. 68)
- **Weaving Mill of Creativity.** There will be at least one call dedicated to finding high risk and pushing-the-boundaries projects.
- Our regular annual artistic events will also be enhanced by European themes (p. 58-59), with international cooperation.

Finally, there is the possibility of gaining approval for the inclusion of 'associated events' with less strict criteria to pass and also with a low financial input from the ECoC programme.





## LOCAL HERITAGE AND NEW CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS

When weaving tomorrow into our activities, we want to respect the past, but also with each day, new layers and possibilities will emerge. We must be open but also considerate not to sever the threads from our past. Weaving itself was born out of necessity but soon turned into an art form. It combines the practical with the beautiful. The next step now is to add structure to sustainability. This means different stakeholders and different worlds together. We believe that by bringing together two or more polarised sides, we will awaken creativity, allowing us to create a strong and truly innovative social fabric.

Here are some examples from our programme of how we want to achieve this:

*Weaves of Emotion* – will merge textile art with new technologies to make a fabric that reacts to us and our emotions. In the process, we will weave together artists, scientists and technicians.

*Gigapuppets* – will not only combine both our traditions of animation and puppetry but will also use new screen technology to make them unique.

*T-shirt Story* – will use traditional art forms in the expression but highlight more innovative and sustainable ways of production, placing this at the heart of the creative process.

*Abandoned Town* – in rediscovering our past, we will, even during the research process, combine old and new by using both classic archaeological processes and the newest methodologies and technologies. The same goes for displaying results, using mixed reality techniques and encouraging user-generated content.

*Invisible Surroundings* – we will merge traditional music or sound design with modern technology such as geolocation or spatial audio.

*AI&Me* – is based on collaboration between humans and algorithms, i.e., computing power. Using these methods we will find new creative possibilities for disabled people.

Innovations and technology will not only feature just in the project design but will also appear in other aspects of ECoC such as monitoring and evaluation, accessibility and inclusivity, and sustainability.

## INVOLVEMENT OF LOCAL ARTISTS AND CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS

From the very beginning, the appointed ECoC delivery team has prioritised the inclusion of local artists and cultural organisations in the conception and implementation of its cultural programme. This collaborative approach began during the bidding process, where artists and stakeholders actively participated in the preparations of the bidbook.

Our Programming Panel included experienced prominent cultural figures such as Natasha Pavluchenko (fashion designer), Aleksandra Jurczak (dancer), Inez Baturo (photographer), Jacek Graś (graphic designer), Jacek Popławski (director of the Puppet Theatre), and Witold Mazurkiewicz (director of the Polish Theatre). Additionally, the Tasking Team was formed of members of the city's institutions and departments to ensure a broad range of perspective.

We collaborated with various city institutions such as the Bielsko-Biała Culture Centre, the Polish Theatre, Baniałuka Puppet Theatre, the BWA Art Gallery, the network of Community Cultural Centres, and the branches within the city Beskid Library network. Regional institutions such as the Historical Museum in Bielsko-Biała and the Regional Culture Centre, as well as the state-owned Animated Film Studio were also integral to our efforts. Together, we developed strategic ideas, projects and outreach initiatives for the ECoC bid.

We designed frameworks such as open calls for projects and project clinics to engage artists and independent cultural stakeholders. The clinics, led by our experts, helped artists develop their ideas to their fullest potential. Networking events such as the Artistic Breakfasts fostered connections among artists and stakeholders. Many artists took part, such as Piotr Skucha representing cabaret, Katarzyna Zielonka dance, Sebastian Litner street art and Dominika Wysogład ceramics.

We also launched prototyping projects and solutions for capacity building to enhance the quality of local artists' work. For example, photographic workshops with Marek Ogień led to valuable feedback and improved models for similar future initiatives. Art branding artists and stakeholders discussed their needs and aspirations in a series of workshops organised as part of the bidding process in the areas of risk management, storytelling, design thinking, fundraising.

The Community Cultural Centres and Baniałuka Puppet Theatre organised a competition for the city official mascots (the 'Weavelings') while the Library and Polish Theatre will launch a writing workshop/competition aimed at teenagers as part of the Weaving Mill of Creativity model. The BWA

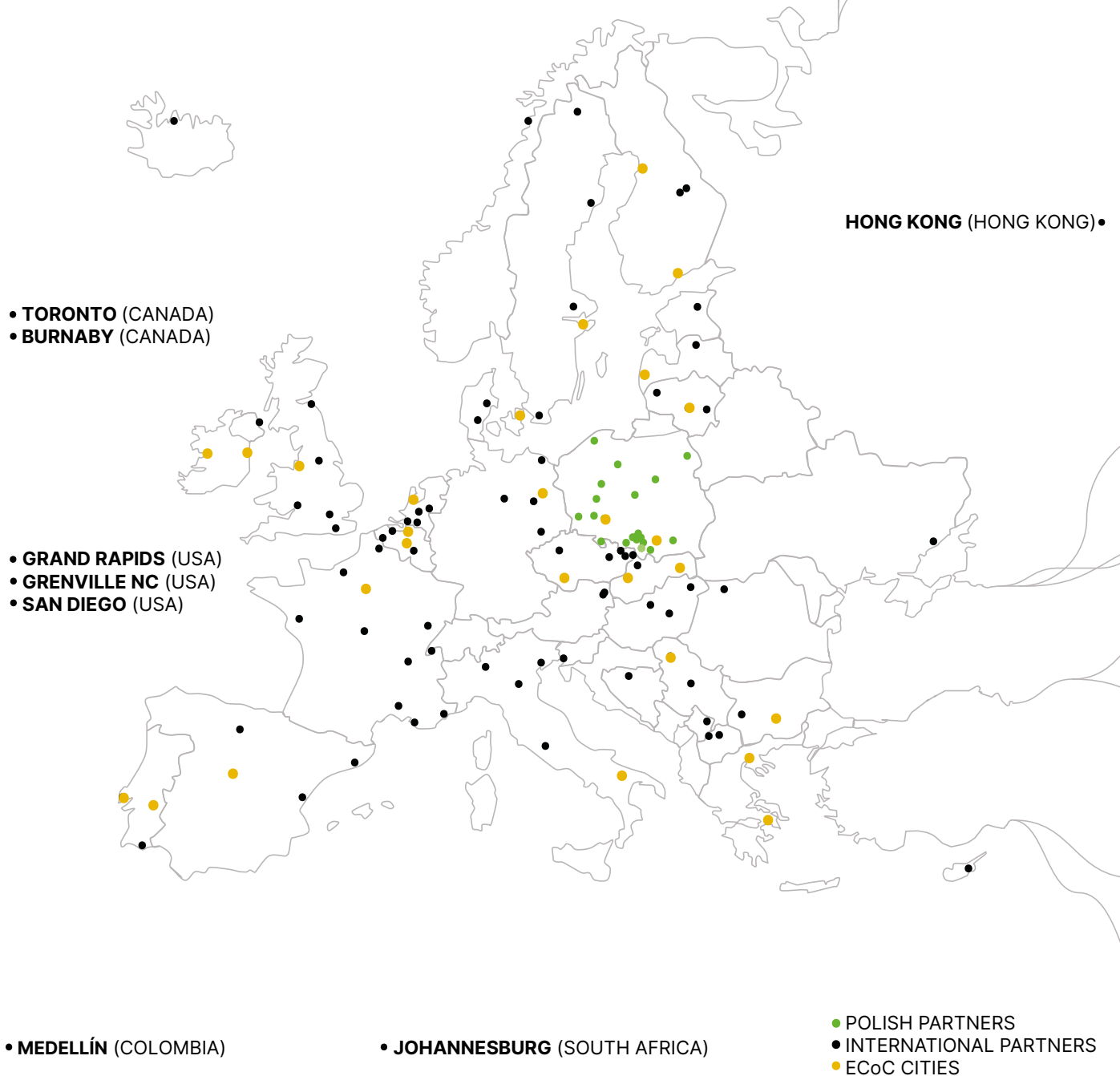
Art Gallery hosted a conference on Wellbeing and the role of art in fostering it, directed specifically at artists.

To prepare for the programme's implementation we will develop an audience development strategy and enhance capacity building, particularly in areas of technical support. Local artists and stakeholders are actively involved in numerous bidbook projects, with additional plans to make their usual annual programmes even more exceptional for 2029 (p. 19). Most of the programme will be produced away from the Institute. For instance, we are collaborating with artist and producer Justyna Łabędź on the establishment of the Street Art Academy, and with actress and director Katarzyna Michna on an incubator for street theatre and new circus arts.





# EUROPEAN DIMENSION



## CULTURAL DIVERSITY, INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE AND GREATER MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

Our identities are intricately woven through our birthplaces, communities, schools, workplaces and living conditions. These factors contribute to our diverse perspectives and experiences. **We celebrate this diversity through various projects** such as *A Time for Mindfulness*, *100×100 Tapestry*, *Sub-Truth*, *A Flavour of Europe*, *Let's Play!*, *Snippets of Memory*, *That's Another Story* and *Laboratory of Humour*. However, with the richness of diversity come challenges. How can individuals from seemingly incompatible worlds understand each other? How do we peel away stereotypes and prejudices perpetuated by the media? And how do we peacefully coexist with neighbours whose political views differ vastly from our own?

Acknowledging that we may not have all the answers to today's complexities, **we turn to culture as a tool for fostering mutual understanding**. Projects like *Gigapuppets*, *T-shirt Story*, *Pan-European Herstories*, *Charting Freedoms*, *No Comment* and *Narrative Laundry* serve as platforms for weaving stories together. We exchange perspectives through collaborations with our European partners, aiming to bridge divides and highlight the intricacies of our shared world.

This is the first time that a cultural initiative, accompanied by ambitious plans and great hopes, has attained such high and strategic status in our city. Not because culture is a panacea for all problems, but because we are doing things that are truly important for us, the residents of Bielsko-Biała, and also for the rest of Europe. Is there anything more unifying than the need to strive for wellbeing and a good life? And this is why, when preparing the final bidbook, we kept asking ourselves: is this issue also important for other Europeans? Can our ideas have a positive impact on other people and places in the world? Is the European dimension at the heart of this project? Our efforts have been focused for over a year now on ensuring that the actions we are taking and planning for the future are not a monologue about Bielsko-Biała, but **a lively dialogue with other European cities nurturing cultural diversity**.

We are accompanied by international partners in every aspect of building our ECoC programme in terms of outreach, management and long-term impact. We have actively engaged in European networks, invited experts from abroad to collaborate, involved artists from many countries, and will use the experiences and solutions developed by former and current European Capitals of Culture. We will also develop new sustainable ideas with the appointed 2029 ECoC city in Sweden.

We believe that through our connections in Europe we can become stronger and not even unexpected events or political change will be able to break them.



## COMMON ASPECTS

Our **Weaving Wellbeing** programme is built around five important and pressing European themes. We will also be able to showcase common elements of culture, heritage, history and European integration by celebrating significant anniversaries linked to each of these themes (highlighted in calendar, p. 18).

### DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

are crucial today in Europe as they empower individuals to actively participate in shaping their societies, fostering a sense of agency and responsibility among citizens. By ensuring these rights are upheld, Europe promotes the co-creation of policies and initiatives that reflect the diverse needs and aspirations of its populace, enhancing social cohesion and inclusivity. Highlighting democracy and human rights enables Europe to cultivate a collaborative environment where dialogue thrives, contributing to sustainable development.

#### Anniversaries in 2029:

**90 years since the beginning of the Second World War**, Europe and the world find themselves divided once more. This echoes the complex history of our city, which once had a large population of Germans, Jews and Poles. High-level political decisions fractured our community back then, leading to polarisation and disintegration. Today, Europe grapples with the parallel challenges of division and discord. The resurgence of populist and far-right movements increasingly fuels nationalism, exacerbating societal fractures. **Celebration: September 1.** Connected projects: *100×100 Tapestry* (p. 22), *Narrative Laundry* (p. 32), *Sub-Truth* (p. 27).

**40 years since the collapse of the Iron Curtain**, marked by the fall of the Berlin Wall and Poland's first semi-free elections. We reflect on the role of women, often overlooked in history. Grażyna Staniszevska, the only woman at the Round Table negotiations in early 1989, a Solidarity member, former EU parliamentarian, and advocate for the freedom of Ukraine, is a resident of our city. **Celebration: November 9.** Connected project: *Pan-European Herstories* (p. 30).

**25 years since the largest extension of the EU**, when Poland and nine other countries joined, ending the post-war division of Europe. To celebrate, we plan nine days of festivities from 1 May, the anniversary of joining the EU, to 9 May, Europe Day. During this time, with the help of young leaders from G29 and volunteers involved with our ECoC, we will also run a campaign encouraging people to vote in the 2029 European Parliament elections. We are collaborating with the Larnaca project Generation EU to celebrate this milestone. **Celebration: May 1.** Connected projects: *100×100 Tapestry* (p. 22), *A Flavour of Europe* (p. 35).

## MIGRATION AND REFUGEE CRISIS

With war on the Polish border and a large number of Ukrainian citizens in our city, combined with advancing climate change rendering more areas of the planet uninhabitable, we must raise awareness and prepare our society for a different future.

#### Anniversary in 2029:

**5 years since the New Pact on Migration and Asylum**, which addressed the multifaceted root causes of migration such as conflict, poverty and climate change, necessitating long-term strategies and substantial investment. In 2024 the document faces significant challenges. This includes achieving consensus among EU member states with diverse perspectives on migration policies. **Celebration: April 10.** Key projects: *Narrative Laundry* (p. 32), *Abandoned Town* (p. 33), *Journey into the Inner Depths* (p. 24).

### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Without addressing these topics, discussing city development and its potential for thriving or even surviving becomes impossible. Some efforts towards this have already been made in our city, e.g., thanks to the formal restrictions on tree felling, we have increased water retention in the mountains.

Through the Culture Next network, Bielsko-Biała is participating in an international pilot programme to assess the impact of culture on the UN SDGs, aiming to produce a manual for cultural stakeholders and future ECoC candidates.

Conversations with Kiruna have highlighted shared concerns about the disappearing seasons, to be addressed in the *Food Recreated* project (p. 34). Collaborative efforts with Julie's Bicycle will start in 2025, focusing on training sustainability managers and developing an environmental policy and action plan. By 2026, under Julie's Bicycle's mentorship, local institutions and communities will create best practices for sustainable cultural events (p. 81).

#### Anniversaries in 2029:

**10 years since 16 year old Greta Thunberg led the biggest climate protest in history**, serving as a poignant reminder of the power of youth activism in galvanising global climate action. This milestone highlights the ongoing impact of grassroots movements in driving environmental awareness and policy change. **Celebration: September 20.** Key projects: G29 as a long-term outreach programme supporting leaders of change (p. 72), *T-shirt Story* (p. 29).

**50 years since the first World Climate Conference** marks a significant milestone in international efforts to address climate change. It underscores

the historical progression of global climate discussions and the evolution of scientific understanding, crucial for shaping future climate policies and agreements. **Celebration: February 12.** Key project: *Beyond Tomorrow* (p. 31).

**70 years since the Antarctic Treaty** emphasises the importance of international cooperation in preserving fragile ecosystems and mitigating the impact of climate change. It showcases successful diplomatic efforts in safeguarding Antarctica as a scientific preserve and underscores the need for continued collaboration in tackling global environmental challenges, such as lack of snow impacting the skiing industry. **Celebration: December 1.** Key projects: *Magical Mountains* (p. 43), *Rivers Reclaimed* (p. 44).



## TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

By using new technologies, we aim to enhance event accessibility and develop creative opportunities for people with disabilities, fostering their creativity and empowerment. Envisioning our lives, city, and surrounding nature in 50 years' time, we will leverage technological advancements to pioneer sustainable solutions. Our vision includes crafting innovative experiences and parallel realities where hidden places and events unfold, with materials mirroring our emotions and interactions with art. Additionally, we are prioritising the mitigation of risks such as cyberbullying by raising awareness and promoting media literacy across generations.

### Anniversaries in 2029:

**60 years since the Moon Landing**, a monumental technological achievement, showcasing human ingenuity and the ability to overcome significant challenges through innovation. This event symbolises the potential of human creativity, engineering prowess and the foundational aspects of technological innovation. Such events inspire generations of scientists, engineers and innovators. It serves as a reminder of what can be achieved through ambitious goals and collaborative effort, encouraging continued investment in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) education and research, crucial for ongoing digital transformation. **Celebration: July 16.** Key projects: *Sub-Truth* (p. 27), *Narrative Laundry* (p. 32), *Invisible Surroundings* (p. 50).

**40 years since the world wide web proposal** by Sir Tim Berners-Lee, submitted in March 1989. This is one of the most significant technological innovations of the 20th century. Its creation laid the foundation for the modern internet, transforming how information is shared and accessed globally. The Web has profoundly impacted daily life, enabling instant communication, remote work, online learn-

ing and access to a wealth of information. It exemplifies how technological innovation can transform societal norms and practices. **Celebration: March 12.** Key projects: *Laboratory of Humour* (p. 51), *AI&Me* (p. 49).



## MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Our ultimate goal, upon which we intend to build, is wellbeing. We see this as the most immediate subject to be addressed, but we are also aware that without all the previous values, we cannot talk about wellbeing. In a national survey (Instytut Pokolenia, 2022) it was confirmed that loneliness is one of the most significant problems faced by teenagers and young adults. Additionally, society suffers from an epidemic of depression and work burnout. Owing to the demographic situation, our population is ageing each year and we believe that culture can mitigate many of the negative effects.

### Anniversary in 2029:

**80 years since the foundation of the World Federation for Mental Health**, the initiator of World Mental Health Day, celebrated annually on 10 October under different themes, aims to raise awareness of mental health issues around the world and mobilise efforts in support of mental health. Key projects: *A Time for Mindfulness* (p. 20), *Move Forward* (p. 36), *Unplug Festival* (p. 23), *That's Another Story* (p. 47) *Shapes of Nature* (p. 45), *Laboratory of Humour* (p.51).

## ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL COOPERATION

We have several dimensions of cooperation and collaboration:

1. All the names of artists cooperating and collaborating in the title year's artistic programme are listed alongside the corresponding projects in the chapter CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT (p. 14-55).
2. Enhanced cooperation in our regular annual artistic events will include inviting such artists as Noriyuki Sawa, Ari Dvorak and Zoltan Kiss in 2029, just to name a few. We would also like to invite Nobel or Pulitzer Prize winners and winners of prestigious festivals such as the Queen Elisabeth Competition, Leeds Piano Competition, Ars Electronics and the Rudolf Nureyev International Ballet Competition.
3. We plan to open a residency programme from next year onwards, with an open call promoted by us and by networks we belong to or will belong to.
4. Cooperation on long term frameworks such as Guidelines for Sustainable Production, Street Art Academy and other capacity building actions such as peer-to-peer learning and mobility programmes for the cultural sector.
5. Research programmes on future solutions, well-being and culture for health, etc., involving cultural and creative industries and universities.
6. We see the ECoC as an opportunity for closer cooperation with our twin cities, elevating them from city status to mutual operational status (institutions, NGOs, etc.)

The decision to enter the ECoC competition has become a positive incentive for our city and provides motivation to join international European collaborative networks. We consider this to be one of the most important impacts and legacies of our programme or agenda. Developing these partnerships and relationships, but also nurturing them with our input, is our long term strategy.

### CURRENT COLLABORATIONS

As you can see from our map (p. 56) and alongside the projects in the previous chapter, we have covered almost all EU countries, and also some from beyond Europe, in terms of collaboration in our ECoC programme.

Urban Culture Institute - City of Weaves (The Institute) belongs to the **Culture Next** network, **Culture Action Europe** and **Culture for Health** (we will host the international conference on 14 and 15 November this year). Bielsko-Biała City Library has joined the IFLA network and our Puppet Theatre belongs

to UNIMA Poland, part of the main UNIMA organisation.

We belong to the **URBACT** network and are currently active in two projects within its framework: 'Prioritising social impact in urban regeneration' with Italian lead city Cinisello Belsamo and 'Cultural Urban Platform to nurture creativity and fight digital loneliness' with Budapest (Újbuda). We are also participating in two city-to-city exchanges under the **European Urban Initiative**, working with the city of Plovdiv on our *Rivers Reclaimed* project (p. 44) and Tartu on STE(A)M education.

### FURTHER PLANNED ACTIONS

At the end of September 2024 the Institute plans to become a member of the **On The Move** network to support artist mobility. In December 2024 we will join **Trans Europe Halles** to help transform our urban spaces into vibrant, cultural and caring social hubs. In 2025 we will become a member of the **IN SITU** Platform. We were present this year at their annual meeting in Pelt. We are initiating **Street Art Academy** as a platform to work on the future of street art in various areas and our partners will be Upeart (Helsinki), Seedhead Arts (Belfast), Street Art Communication (Košice), Contorno Urbano Foundation (Barcelona), and Rencontres Audio-visuelles (Lille). We are also in the process of establishing collaboration with the African Capital of Culture (developed with the help of UCLG, whom we follow very closely) and the American Capital of Culture.

Bielsko-Biała is engaging in international initiatives for children. We are hoping to attain the title of UNICEF Child Friendly City and we will join the newly established European Mayors Alliance for Children. We will also be opening a children's press centre in Bielsko-Biała as part of the Children's International Press Association.

The Institute is to be a guarantor of the ECoC title legacy and will continue developing projects and establishing international collaborations.



## EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC

Our strategy involves a focus on common European themes, a clear emphasis on 'weaving wellbeing' as a communication and PR motto that is relevant and enticing to all, an exploration of sustainable inter-sectoral solutions, building on well-known, iconic tourism sites and reaching out to other existing ECoC publics.

### CELEBRATING EUROPEAN THEMES

In recognising our city's heritage, challenges and needs, we have compared them to national and global lifestyles and cultural trends. From this, we have developed a programme that combines the city's unique character with important European themes, using a universal language to create original cultural experiences. Our approach is inclusive enough to build a common experience, engage and integrate audiences, regardless of their origin or culture. Building on Bielsko-Biała's textile industry heritage, we have created a comprehensive programme focused on artistic textiles, a popular medium for addressing **human rights, political, social and gender issues** (*T-shirt Story, Pan-European Herstories, 100x100 Tapestry* and main exhibitions). We have also combined textiles with **the latest technologies** to enhance wellbeing (*Weaves of Emotion*). In 2029, our city's Puppet Theatre and Animated Film Studio will create large puppets to address the global challenges of **climate change and war migration** (*Gigapuppets*). This will lead to new animations becoming available post 2029. Bielsko-Biała's unique mountain-surrounded location stresses a global need to **care for our environment** and its forgotten rivers (*Magical Mountains, Rivers Reclaimed*). We are examining the unique history of the first abandoned settlement of Bielsko-Biała and seeking the causes of its relocation. This is also a pretext to talk about the global issue of **migration**, referencing cities frequently deserted in these times because of war or climate change (*Abandoned Town*).

### WEAVING WELLBEING AS A COMMUNICATION MOTTO

Our strategy for reaching a broad audience relies on building wellbeing as a topic close to everyone's heart, which can also be woven into different individual and social patterns.

Through the undertaking of PR activities, we will ensure that our programme and ideas appear in the national and European media. We will create the **Weaving Wellbeing Lab** and invite brands, well-known personalities, cultural institutions and those working in the area of healthy/mindful lifestyles, including practitioners from abroad, to help us promote our activities internationally. One of

the initiatives will be sharing best practices in culture on prescription impacts.

We will prepare a special English-language web portal dedicated to the culture of a good life, filled with interviews, articles and short films showing how one can build a good life through culture, nature, a pro-ecological approach, or through sport, e.g., [www.goodlifeculture.org](http://www.goodlifeculture.org). We will establish an award or scholarship to be awarded for the best ideas from Europe. We will launch a digital campaign on Instagram, targeting European countries under the hashtag **#goodlifeculture**.

Polish Institutes around the world will be used as venues for the travelling 'Weaving Wellbeing' exhibition before the title year. We will also dedicate a campaign to Polish diasporas around the world.

### SUSTAINABLE INTER-SECTORAL SOLUTIONS TO MAKE THE MOST OF OTHER EXISTING INTERNATIONAL ATTRACTORS

There is a contradiction between wanting to attract international visitors and being concerned about the climate. That is why, in cooperation with Beskidy Local Tourist Organisation, Regional Tourist Organisation and Polish Tourist Organisation, our strategic response will be to limit travel by making the most of other existing international attractors that already bring visitors to our region: downhill bike trails and big sport events/infrastructure, health tourism and niche events.

Adventure tourism is the fastest-growing tourism industry worldwide. In Bielsko-Biała we have top-class downhill and enduro trails in this part of Europe. Cross-promoting with these venues already began this year during the Mountain Biking World Cup, successfully testing this framework. Another significant sports connection was the Spartan Race, which drew over 1300 participants from around the globe during its first Polish edition in years. Next year, Bielsko-Biała will host the European Karate Championships. We also attract fans of trekking with our long-distance mountain route, The Loop, which starts and finishes in our city. Being located in close proximity to European cycling routes: EuroVelo 4 (France-Ukraine); EuroVelo 9 (Poland-Croatia) and EuroVelo11 (Norway-Greece) we attract long distance cyclists.

Health tourism has grown substantially as EU citizens from countries like the UK, Sweden, Germany, Netherlands, and Ireland seek affordable health-care in Eastern Europe. It has been growing at 12-15 % annually, according to PwC. Countries such as Hungary, the Czech Republic, Romania, Poland and Latvia have become popular destinations. Health



tourism now makes up about 5 % of the EU tourism industry and contributes approximately 0.3 % to the EU economy.

Niche audiences: fans of old cars (Fiat 126p and long-standing traditions such as the Vintage Car Race); gliding (Sebastian Kawa, world champion and Ambassador for BB2029) and traditional culture (the Highlander Week of Culture, one of the oldest folklore festivals in Poland).

### **BUILDING ON WELL-KNOWN / ICONIC TOURISM SITES**

#### **Bielsko-Biała – Auschwitz-Birkenau (40 km) – Kraków (100 km) Triangle**

Auschwitz-Birkenau was visited by over 2 million people a year before the pandemic. By 2029 this figure will probably reach 2.5 million visitors, especially since 2030 marks the 85th anniversary of the camp's liberation. Most of those visitors spend time in Krakow. We aim to attract them through the BB2029 programme and extend their visit. Highlighting Bielsko-Biała's proximity to Auschwitz-Birkenau with its sombre history pro-

vides visitors with a poignant contrast to the city's picturesque landscapes and vibrant cultural scene. Promoting guided tours that connect these sites through thematic narratives can enrich visitors' understanding of the region's history and resilience. We will offer packages including accommodation, transportation and a guide to the main thematic events relating to the region. Finally, showcasing local cuisine and traditional crafts can immerse visitors in the authentic cultural fabric of the region, encouraging longer and more absorbing stays.

### **REACHING OUT TO AUDIENCES FROM OTHER EUROPEAN CAPITALS OF CULTURE**

through referencing their main themes (p. 64-65). Regardless of the competition result, our primary focus in 2029 will be on collaboration with Kiruna and Uppsala, as well as with the ECoC 2028 cities in France and Czechia. Through collaboration with Bourges 2028, *T-Shirt Story* will become a mobile site-specific performance at railway stations across EU countries. Starting at Bourges station during ECoC 2028's closing ceremony, it will travel through 20 European stations, reaching Bielsko-Biała for the 2029 opening events.



## LINKS BETWEEN BB2029 AND OTHER ECoCs

Recent European Capitals of Culture have set remarkable precedents in their spheres of creativity. As our strategy for creating cities of wellbeing is weaving, we are integrating proven ideas and innovating them further, fostering a sustainable European ecosystem and maximising our network resources efficiently.

We will create an ECoC Centre in our city to strengthen the brand of the European Capitals of Culture. Sited next to the main city square, it will be a dedicated venue for ECoC heritage with information, exhibitions, a cafe, performances and a digital area in which to connect with the second capital in Sweden. We will incorporate insights from the international symposium on strengthening the ECoC brand that we hosted in June 2024 as part of the Culture Next mission. We will continue to use the Culture Next network and establish new collaborations with potential new Capitals of Culture. Through our biannual meetings, we are connecting with other cities in the competition. We are leading a working group on financing within this network. Once appointed ECoC 2029, and as an ECoC family member, we will have an even closer relationship with other title holders.

Most important for us in 2029 will be our collaboration with the winning Swedish city. We have visited both Kiruna and Uppsala to establish good personal relations and learn about what is important for them and to find common ground. We have agreed to develop several projects together, as well as collaborate on joint promotion, evaluation and the opening, closing and EU Day ceremonies and celebrations.

**Kiruna:** We both have ski slopes, although they have a bit more snow... We both remember with affection the trams that used to run through our towns... and both cities have built new city centres. We did this more than 700 years ago, Kiruna is in the process of doing it now. We have decided to work together on the following projects: *Abandoned Town, Food Recreated, Let's Play!, Laboratory of Humour, Magical Mountains, Unplug Festival*.

**Uppsala:** In 2029 textile art will be showcased in Bielsko-Biała (featuring Małgorzata Mirga-Tas) and Uppsala (Magdalena Abakanowicz), symbolising a cultural dialogue between our cities. Both cities prioritise access to healthy food - we will collaborate with the Food Council on sustainable solutions. We are launching a new public art model via the Street Art Academy. Anna Ehn, Head of Public Art in the Uppsala Municipality, will share funding best practices during our online event in October, under the Culture Next network's Thematic Group. We have decided to work together on the following projects: *100×100 Tapestry, A Flavour of Europe,*

*Food Recreated, Beyond Tomorrow, Charting Freedoms, Weaves of Emotions.*

We are establishing collaborative relationships with other ECoCs, such as:

**Chemnitz 2025:** whose team influenced our decision to go out into the streets and ask young people how they understand our candidature and what they think about it. We also have the opportunity to attend their monthly monitoring and evaluation meetings, during which other ECoC cities share their successes and challenges.

**Oulu 2026:** We have already established some cooperation with Oulu since our involvement in the Žilina Beskidy 2026 bid. As we are located close to the E75 route, we agreed to be one of the pit stops on their art adventure journey. However, our focus now is on working together with Oulu in the spirit of Art Loves Tech. Cooperation on projects: *Beyond Tomorrow, Journey into the Inner Depths, Food Recreated.*

**Trencin 2026:** is the closest ECoC to us at only 180 km away. We will therefore be working closely together over the coming years, and also supporting them as volunteers in the title year. Cooperation on projects: *Rivers Reclaimed, T-shirt Story, Narrative Laundry*, and also the **Woven by Culture and Culture Volunteering & Travel** operational systems.

**Evora 2027:** cooperation on projects: *100×100 Tapestry, Gigapuppets, Let's Play!, Move Forward.*

**Liepaja 2027:** cooperation on projects: *Snippets of Memory, Narrative Laundry, A Flavour of Europe, Crafting and Upcrafting.*

**Budweis 2028:** We have used a permaculture concept as the basis of a cognitive process to establish our definition of wellbeing, to sync all the elements and to build on this. We will also work together to continue Budweis' goal of being the most accessible capital of culture. Cooperation on projects: *Food Recreated, A Flavour of Europe, Narrative Laundry, Pan-European Herstories, Move Forward*, and the **Culture Volunteering & Travel** operational system.

**Bourges 2028:** We are in contact with Bourges about co-creating sustainable behaviours in relation to ECoC cities, such as encouraging visitors to use trains by means of artistic interventions and raising awareness of the positive impact. Cooperation on projects: *T-shirt Story, Move Forward, Charting Freedoms.*

**Skopje 2028:** *A Flavour of Europe, Sub-Truth, Abandoned Town, Crafting and Upcrafting.*

**Looking forward to 2030 and new candidate cities in the coming years:**

**Kortrijk 2030:** cooperation on projects: *A Time for Mindfulness, Move Forward, Unplug Festival, Refuge, Shapes of Nature.*

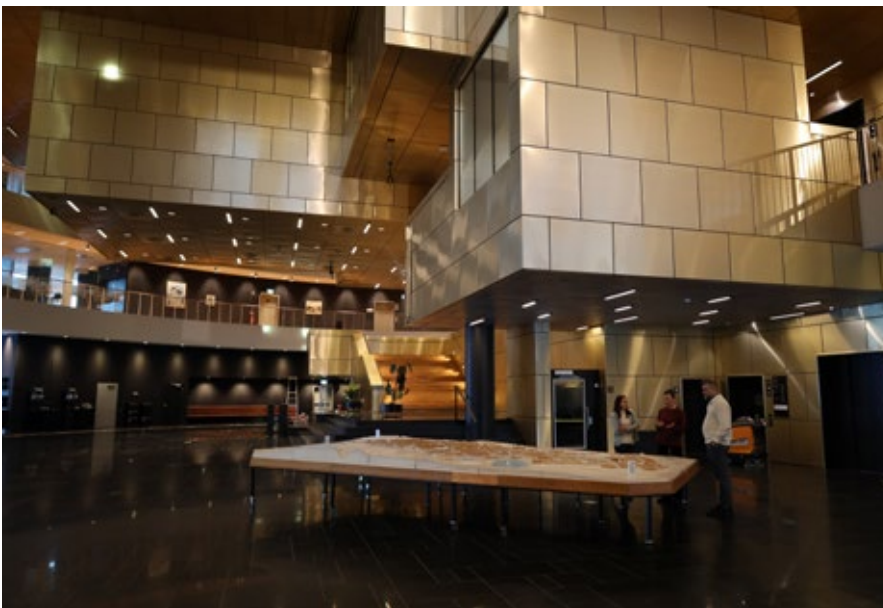
**Leuven 2030:** cooperation on projects: *Abandoned Town, A Time for Mindfulness, Narrative Laundry.*

**Namur 2030:** cooperation on projects: *Gigapuppets, Food Recreated, Move Forward, Let's Play!, A Time for Mindfulness.*

**Molenbeek for Brussels 2030:** cooperation on projects: *Abandoned Town, Seeking out the Rebels, Refuge, Narrative Laundry, Sub-Truth, No Comment, Snippets of Memory.*

**Larnaca 2030:** cooperation on projects: *Beyond Tomorrow, Rivers Reclaimed, G29.*

We have reached an agreement with all the Polish cities that entered the competition. During the pre-selection phase we decided that the winner would invite the other cities to participate in its programme. All the cities supported this initiative. In the final selection phase we collaborated with Lublin to lead negotiations with the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage to establish a Polish Capital of Culture, modelled on the ECoC bidding process. This idea was supported by eleven cities, including the other three finalists. Additionally, we agreed with the competing two Swedish cities to include both in our programme, regardless of the outcome.



The BB2029 team visiting Kiruna and Uppsala



# OUTREACH



# INVOLVEMENT OF LOCAL POPULATION AND CIVIL SOCIETY

## INFORM AND PROMOTE

Before we were able to involve our local population and civil society, we needed to inform a wider range of people, not just their leading representatives. We took several measures to achieve this:

- An information centre was opened on a main city centre pedestrian street where anyone can come in and ask questions. Many of our meetings were held there.
- A press conference was held when the bidbook was published. The BB2029 team was in attendance and ready to answer all questions. We were the first Polish city to do so, less than two weeks after submitting the bidbook.
- Digital means of promotion and information were used, including a bidbook webpage, social media, newsletters and a partnership with local social influencers like @misiiek.na.ulicy, a street artist photographer, in order to spread the news of our activities.
- Ambassadors – **Weavers of Influence** – have spread the message within their communities. These include internationally renowned sports photographer Marek Ogień, multiple winner of world gliding championships Sebastian Kawa, well-known TV star Dominika Kasińska, and Maja Adamczyk, a schoolgirl, ultra marathon runner and published author.
- Advertising campaigns in the form of mass media and outdoor publicity have allowed us to communicate our message to the whole city. Information about our participation in the competition has been broadcast before every theatre performance, concert, or other city cultural event, inviting everyone to join in the programme.
- Cross-sector partnerships, working in conjunction with many sports events such as the Mountain Biking World Cup held in our city, the Spartan Race, and our local professional volleyball team, to name but a few; the business sector, e.g., 'IT in the Mountains' breakfast meetings and an advertising campaign in the largest shopping centre in the city; the health sector; restaurants; landscape companies; university participation involving debates and Juvenalia (annual student cultural events).

## INVOLVE AND ENGAGE

The second stage of our process was to actively involve people in the programme. We know that two key partners for the engagement process are, and will remain, the city library network and the com-

munity cultural centres, as they are the most accessible to people and between them have 29 locations.

To involve people, we have used:

**Themed meetings** – both about the themes in our bidbook in keeping with the main threads and fibres and also other areas of interest such as the food business, ecology, sports, etc. We held almost 50 final stage events. Several people stand out from these meetings as weavers of influence. These include Renata Lejawka (ecological activist in our communal forest), Anna Chęć (community gardens), Ewa Trzcionka (urban development), Claudius Becker (engaged with teenage mental health problems) and Subber Ahmed (restaurant owner and cultural app developer who aims to help temporary visitors to the city).

**Open calls** – we have held four open calls in total. Three of these focused on the local population and one was at international level, with assistance from the Goethe Institute. Through these, we amassed almost 350 projects, both from professional and nonprofessional contributors.

**Discussions and lectures** – the BWA Art Gallery has held a series of talks about city spaces and inclusive language and the city Department for Development held a meeting on the subject of why we need a city, i.e., a debate about city accessibility following last year's survey. These discussions make it possible to build a community that can lead change-making processes in our city.

**'Stan dobra'** – Portraits of the People of Bielsko-Biała. A photographic project documenting the city's greatest asset – its people. Each portrait (and there are over 100 of them) is a testament to a unique story and contribution to shaping the community, as well as to the many emotions accompanying the process of their creation. The project is led by visual artist Tom Swoboda.

## AWAKENING A SENSE OF AGENCY

The final stage is awakening agency. Once we have completed this, we will have a growing team that will not only help us to further develop our ECoC project but also deliver it on different levels – from volunteers to team members, project curators and producers.

To accomplish this, we have implemented the following:

- **Project development** – our team and external experts have established a framework of project clinics to help develop projects.
- **Pilot projects** – live painting with audience engagement during the Mountain Biking World Cup; a competition to design 'Weavelings', the City of Weaves mascots, in which 140 projects were submitted from schools; a project 'Culture Connects Us' between our community cultural centres and Nadační fond Broumov - město Kultury that involves co-creation and an exchange of residents. We will also establish our first community garden in the city centre in the summer.
- **Project ownership** – the most basic principle is that the person who initiates a project owns it, for as long as they want to remain involved.

#### **Actions planned for the future:**

- Thanks to our collaboration with the Artist Network we will bring together **arts activists and facilitators** who support movements strategically engaging creativity and arts-organising to create change.
- **A children and youth press centre** will be established in collaboration with the BB Editorial Office, the University of Bielsko-Biała and Punkt 11. This will also include collaboration with childpress.org., in accordance with their Code of Conduct.
- **Training:** professional organisations such as the regional bar association of lawyers and/or individual experts, will provide training on legal issues for artists and NGOs. Training topics will be determined in the course of our collaboration.
- **Regranting:** Key organisations will handle regranting small community projects during the title year in areas of their expertise, such as ecology, teenage engagement or crafts.

## **NEW AND SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

To make our outreach sustainable, we are focusing on creating several operational systems upon which we can build and expand our community of weavers.

**Volunteering** plays a crucial role in integrating newcomers into our city's social and cultural fabric. It serves as their initial pathway to community engagement and connection. Senior citizens Council members in Bielsko-Biała, acting as cultural ambassadors, exemplify this integration effort. While our city boasts an effective senior citizen support system, we recognise the need for specialised care, especially for those who feel isolated following the loss of a spouse. Through meaningful vol-

unteer opportunities and community engagement, our goal is to provide them with a sense of purpose and belonging.

A prime example of our commitment is **Cultural Volunteering and Travel (CV&T)**, a programme designed to engage young people by offering them enriching local volunteering experiences that can lead to participation in international events abroad. This initiative not only boosts motivation but also fosters a deeper understanding of Europe's diversity and shared community spirit. Collaborations with cities such as České Budějovice, Oulu, Molenbeek, Evora and Trenčín underscore our dedication to securing volunteers for the year ahead.

**Woven by Culture** - in order to discover new generations of cultural producers and curators, we are empowering young people to fully produce their own cultural events with the support of the Institute. As a legal body it will help with administration and provide connections to specialists and city departments. We will set up an **Emerging Producers Platform** for the most talented and proven organisers, which will foster their talent and build their future careers in culture through an internship exchange with well-established events producers. The lead for this programme will be Franciszek Gołębiowski, who first submitted this idea via open call.

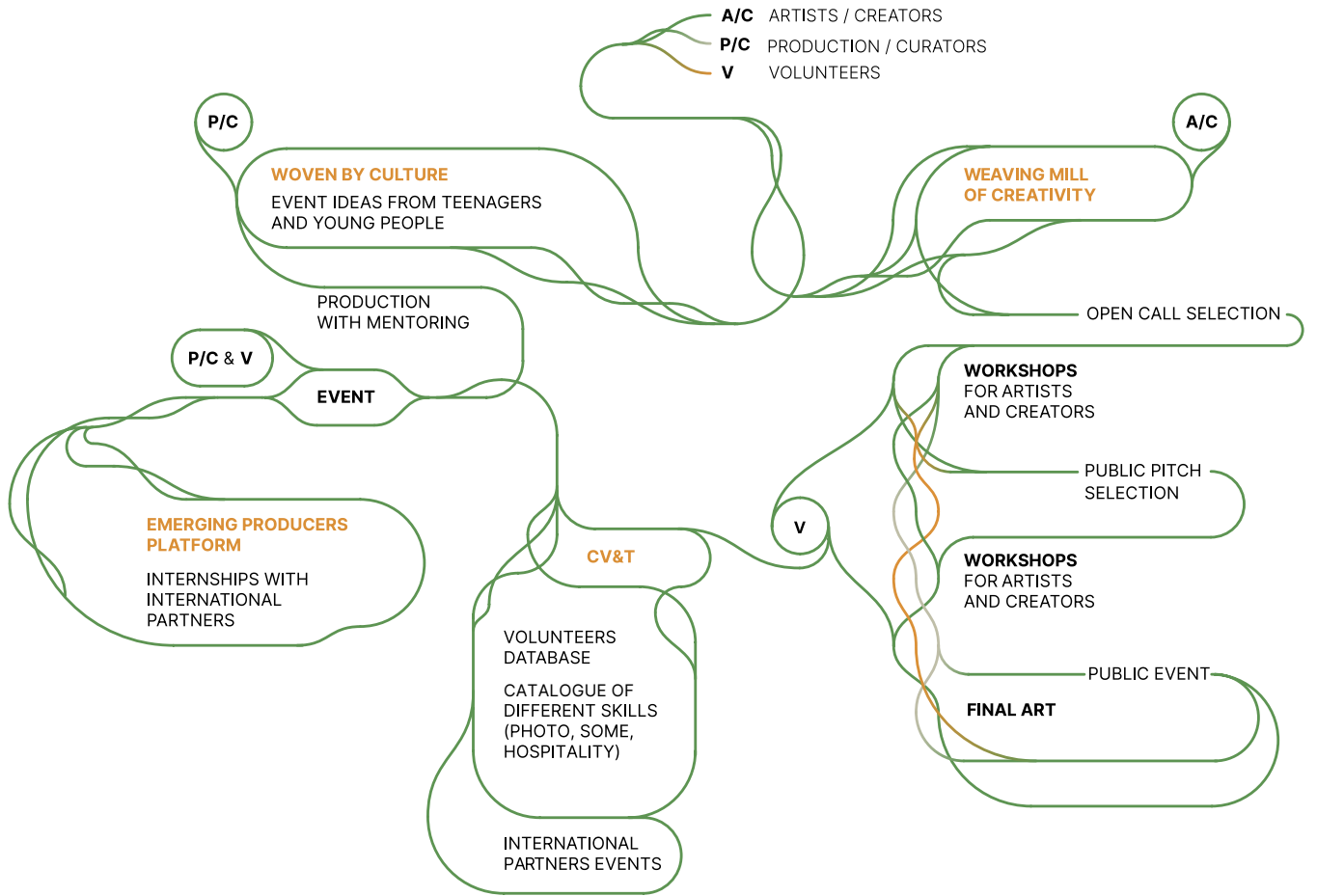
**The Weaving Mill of Creativity** is an operating system monitoring ongoing activities and fostering collaboration. It will comprise three levels – amateur, semi-professional and professional. We will focus on:

- art in public spaces, including land art. As we are surrounded by nature, we aim to bring art to it, enhancing the experience without harm and adhering to sustainability rules;
- literature, including plays that might be produced later as a 'theatrical show,' and comic books in collaboration with graphic artists;
- multidisciplinary and multimedia projects, which would include games.

The structure begins with an open call, followed by selection for the first stage, workshops, public pitching and selection of the best projects by experts and the public for the second stage, followed by a workshop and public event where the winners are chosen.

**Street Art Academy** is an international venture to discuss and develop the future of street art. One of the aims is to include youngsters from underprivileged groups. The academy is being coordinated by Dr Justyna Łabędź.

OUTREACH – SHORT INFORMATION





**Pedanteria**, as a new venue for creative activities, will empower young artists from different disciplines. Through immersive events, it will create new audiences and engage communities who appreciate grassroots and amateur initiatives. Expansion of the Bielsko-Biała Cultural Centre initiative **Base To Do** will weave together local artists and broaden their audiences by opening up to young people interested in developing their artistic skills.

**ReCrafting Toolbox** is an idea dedicated to craftwork and DIY to recycle materials, renew things, or for other projects requiring handyman skills. This is the place to go to build something for your event or art project, or to repair or refurbish your equipment. It will be a place for a community of crafters which will include marginalised and disadvantaged people by ensuring accessibility for all. We are committed to reaching out to and engaging with these communities through collaboration with NGOs. The project is led by Krzysztof Kaczmar.

**The Moodpeer App** designed by Subber Ahmed, helps newcomers and temporary residents settle into our city and become actively involved.

## ACCESSIBILITY

**Economic:** we need to have both low cost and free events across the different areas of art in our programme and city cultural life. We already have discounts for the elderly, teenagers, large families and blood donors.

It is sometimes impossible for young people living in the Beskid Agglomeration to participate in events, because they are unable to return home afterwards

on public transport and hotels are expensive. That is why, in conjunction with hostels, we wish to set up night capsules.

Another form of indirect financial aid would be the provision of childcare (e.g. children with health conditions/impairments) for carers wishing to attend cultural events.

**Physical:** our city's cultural infrastructure is constantly being improved in terms of physical accessibility, but a recent survey highlighted a vast area for improvement in the city centre itself. Together with People - Innovation - Design Foundation and their design festival, Arting, we aim to address some of these issues.

**Inclusivity:** we aim to be inclusive of the diverse needs of people in our city. Alongside the Centre of Integration, dedicated to immigrants and refugees, we are focusing on events for children, with additional levels for their parents to facilitate integration.

The Polish Theatre in our city is a national leader in including audiences with special needs. We aim to adapt their inclusive solutions to our events. Additionally, we plan to develop solutions that improve acoustic comfort at large events. This will benefit not only neurodiverse people but also the elderly, who have raised concerns about excessive noise levels. These enhancements will be integrated into the operational framework of the **Weaving Mill of Creativity**.

Institutions such as the City Library network and BWA Art Gallery have secured funding to train staff





in developing artistic programmes for marginalised groups. By 2029 this training will lead to tailored events integrated into events such as the Unplug Festival and A Time For Mindfulness events. Planned initiatives include bibliotherapy sessions, poetry healing and relaxation concerts for people on the spectrum.

We are also collaborating with NGOs such as Ulica Kreatywna and Teraz Ulica to reach and engage with people beyond regular city life and in alternative subcultures.



# STRATEGY FOR AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

## EDUCATION

We are collaborating with both universities in our city, three national universities, and eight international universities on various projects. Here are some examples:

The Department of Archaeology at the University of Wrocław is working on the Abandoned Town project.

Tetova University from North Macedonia is collaborating on *Narrative Laundry*.

Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF is involved in the *Sub-Truth* project.

Oulu University of Applied Science will participate in *Journey into the Inner Depths*.

Moreover, we will create a Monitoring and Evaluation Consortium for the BB2029 ECoC, conducting research, developing methodologies, creating research tools, and performing clinical studies with institutions such as Bielsko-Biała University and Liverpool John Moores University.

## SCHOOLS PARTICIPATION

We use the **Culture Collective** as representatives of the city cultural institutions to visit schools and engage with teenagers to participate in culture, establish their needs, and inform them about opportunities. The Collective visits schools on a regular basis throughout the year to ignite relationships between schools and cultural institutions with active youth participation.

**The Youth City Council**, chosen through local elections in schools, actively engages young people in cultural initiatives and civic participation. Under the umbrella of the ECoC Committee it promotes awareness and appreciation of cultural heritage and contemporary arts among the young.

**G29 (Generation 29)**, as one of our main actions dedicated to the young, is an informal international platform to build a group of ambassadors for the project and European values, to be initiators for change. Children from Bielsko-Biała, Larnaca, Faro and Namestov, born in 2011, will work on internationally important subjects and create artistic interventions between now and 2029, when they become adults. They will initiate projects and involve their peers through empowerment and international experience.

**Wandering Images** is an international project integrating art into high school students' lives by connecting schools worldwide to exchange street art

photos of their cities. Students join workshops and photo walks and document unique scenes. Selected photos become high-quality canvas prints, serving as contemporary postcards that tell the city's story. Schools then display these artworks and share them globally, creating a cultural exchange network.

Operational systems like **Woven by Culture, Culture Volunteering & Travel** and selected initiatives from the **Weaving Mill of Creativity** will be dedicated to pupils or students. Using this formula we will find projects for the young in the title year.

More than 40 schools have expressed their commitment to our project: School of Gastronomy: *Food Recreated*; Music School: *A Flavour of Europe*; School of Fine Art: *100×100 Tapestry*.

## AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

In 2029 AI and new technologies will allow us to make our bid even more accessible. Events organised by the institutions will be mostly available online. In the autumn of 2024 we will start working on the **City Audience Development Plan** led by Agata Etmanowicz, a specialist in building accessible events (Impact Foundation).

We will conduct research on good practices already developed in cultural institutions and explore how to establish a sustainable model for implementing these practices across diverse cultural contexts, e.g. by other institutions.

During large popular events in our city – Mountain Biking World Cup, Spartan Race, volleyball matches, five-a-side football league events (one of the strongest Polish teams is from Bielsko-Biała) – we will reach fans of sport and the e-sport community (teams and events). We will develop a combined ticketing system for sports and cultural events. Additionally, we will engage ECoC Ambassadors, notable talents from our city who are widely recognised and influential on social media.

We will involve nature lovers in new land art activities in recreational locations – cycle paths, mountain trails, cemeteries and rivers. There are several projects in our programme that will interest this kind of audience: *Magical Mountains, Rivers Reclaimed, Shapes of Nature*.

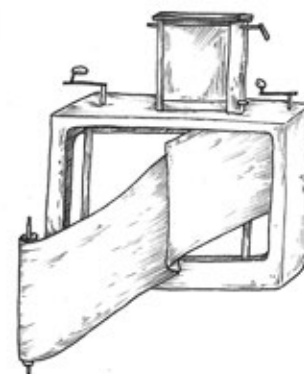


**Culture on prescription:** Incorporating art therapy into programming diversifies what cultural institutions offer and attracts new audiences interested specifically in the therapeutic benefits of these activities. Developing partnerships between cultural institutions and healthcare providers will promote cultural therapy programmes to broader networks and increase awareness of the benefits among potential participants. This year we have conducted a survey among carers to assess demand for art therapy sessions and we will be preparing a special offer for them. Projects: *A Time for Mindfulness*, *Unplug Festival*, *Shapes of Nature*, *Move Forward*, *Health Architecture*.

**Surprised by art:** Our Moveable Panorama will appear in unexpected urban places like sports stadiums, food markets or railway stations. 'Once upon a Telling - A Very Long Story' created by the artist duo Johanna Lohrengel and Gatis Kreicbergs, winners of our 2024 open call, will explore stories through visually stunning, informative and highly interactive art. The Moveable Panorama features a main screen depicting the theme with two smaller screens alongside showing potential future scenarios. Viewers interact by choosing actions, shaping the narrative of the future they wish to support. This off-grid artwork, designed like traditional travellers' carts, immerses audiences in a magical storytelling experience, aiming to educate, inspire action and transport viewers through time and space.

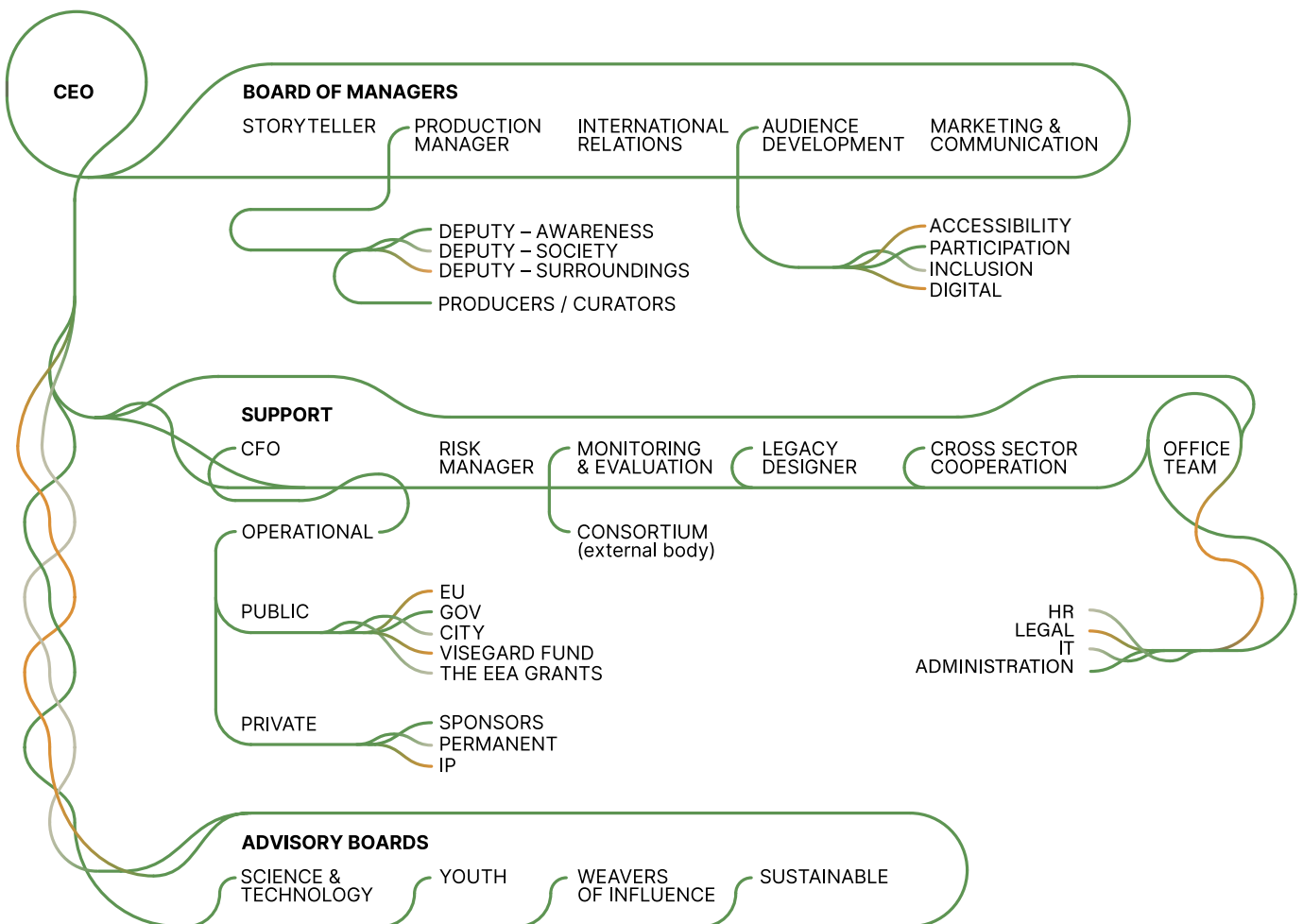
In 2025 we will join the IN SITU platform to improve our skills and capacity for art in public spaces.

We have established the **Street Art Academy** and Street Theatre and the New Circus Incubator to bring more art to the people. We want to continue creating events in unexpected places like 'Wlot na spot' - DJs in a caravan playing music for families in various parks across the city, a project developed from an open call last year.



'Once upon a Telling - A Very Long Story' by Johanna Lohrengel and Gatis Kreicbergs

# MANAGEMENT



# FINANCE

## OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE TITLE YEAR

### INCOME TO COVER OPERATING EXPENDITURE:

Total operating budget (i.e. funds that are specifically set aside to cover operational expenditure)

Total income in euro	Public sector (in €)	Public sector (in %)	Private sector (in €)	Private sector (in %)
€ 56.5 m	€ 49.5 m	87.61%	€ 7.0 m	12.39%

### INCOME FROM THE PUBLIC SECTOR:

Income from the public sector	In €	%
National Government	€ 18 m	36.36%
City	€ 18 m	36.36%
Region (Voivodeship and agglomeration)	€ 8 m	16.16%
EU (not including the Melina Mercouri Prize)	€ 3,250,000	6.57%
Other	€ 2,250,000	4.55%
<b>Total</b>	<b>€ 49,500,000</b>	<b>100%</b>



### HAVE THE PUBLIC FINANCE AUTHORITIES MADE FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS?

The City Council voted on 27 June 2024 and approved the Budget.

The Voivodeship authorities did not vote but provided a Letter of Understanding.

We have spoken to the current Government authorities and they have sent a letter confirming that they will donate € 18,000,000, based on the average exchange rate on the day, as long as this sum is matched by the city.

## TIMETABLE FOR THE INCOME TO COVER OPERATING EXPENDITURE (IN MILLIONS OF EUROS):

Source of income for operating expenditure	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
EU	0	0.25	0.5	0.75	0.5	0.75	0.5
National Government	0	0	1.5	3	5	8	0.5
City	0.5	1	1.5	2	4	8	1
Region	0	0.5	1	1	2	3	0.5
Sponsors	0	0.25	0.5	1.25	1.75	2.75	0.5
Other	0.05	0.20	0.25	0.25	0.5	0.75	0.25

## BREAKDOWN OF THE OPERATING EXPENDITURE (IN MILLIONS OF EUROS):

Planned timetable for spending operating expenditure:

Timetable for spending	Pro-gramme expenditure in €	Pro-gramme expenditure in %	Promo-tion and marketing in €	Promo-tion and marketing in %	Wages, over-heads and administration in €	Wages, over-heads and administration (in %)	Other (M&E, contingency) in €s	Other (M&E, contingency) in %
2024	€ 0.08	15.0%	€ 0.08	15.0%	€ 0.36	65.0%	€ 0.30	5.0%
2025	€ 0.55	25.0%	€ 0.33	15.0%	€ 1.21	55.0%	€ 0.11	5.0%
2026	€ 2.59	45.0%	€ 0.86	15.0%	€ 1.44	25.0%	€ 0.86	15.0%
2027	€ 4.95	60.0%	€ 1.24	15.0%	€ 1.65	20.0%	€ 0.41	5.0%
2028	€ 7.96	65.0%	€ 1.84	15.0%	€ 1.84	15.0%	€ 0.61	5.0%
2029	€ 15.88	65.5%	€ 3.64	15.0%	€ 3.52	14.5%	€ 1.21	5.0%
2030	€ 1.30	40.0%	€ 0.33	10.0%	€ 0.98	30.0%	€ 0.65	20.0%
<b>Total expenditure:</b>	<b>€ 56.50</b>	<b>58.97%</b>	<b>€ 8.31</b>	<b>14.71%</b>	<b>€ 10.98</b>	<b>19.44%</b>	<b>€ 3.89</b>	<b>7%</b>

## FUNDRAISING FROM PRIVATE SECTORS

We advocate that broad perspective, empathy and sensitivity to social, ecological and aesthetic issues are essential for building a complete brand. Future innovative brands will build business, cultural and social capital simultaneously. Art enables multi-dimensional updates and transformations. We value deep-rooted, participatory integration for better, lasting results.

Our primary fundraising strategy leverages art branding as a tool, resonating with commercial partners through our metaphor and objective of **WELLBEING**.

### Permanent Solutions that will last beyond 2029:

**Culture Development Fund:** inspired by Chemnitz 2025, this fund will involve 20 sponsors contributing €30,000 annually, commencing in 2025. This will generate €600,000 per year, totalling €3.6 million by 2030. The focus will be on the projects undertaken in the **Weaving Mill of Creativity** operating system and the fund will continue beyond 2030.

**2029 Club:** Similar to the Leeuwarden 2018 mechanism, this club targets small business owners who see growth opportunities in future projects of the ECoC legacy phase. Each member will donate 202.90 zloty (less than €50) monthly. The club will aim for over 150 members, generating approximately €85,000 annually and €510,000 by 2030. The focus will be on the **Woven by Culture** programme and youth engagement projects.

**Community of weaver's support:** At 2.90 zloty (€ 0.67) per month, we aim to attract 12,000 members (3.6% of the Beskid Agglomeration), generating around €96,500 annually and €579,000 by 2030. In a similar way to fundraising platforms such as Patronite, this mechanism aligns with our focus on co-creation and **agency**, encouraging people to invest in what they value.

### Sponsor Involvement:

To maintain high-quality relationships and satisfaction, we plan to limit the number of sponsors, using the following structure of 13 contributors:

**Main Sponsor:** 1 contributor donating €1 million in cash between 2026 and 2030.

**Thread Sponsors:** 3 contributors, each donating €600,000 in cash between 2027 and 2030 (totaling €1.8 million).

**Fibre Sponsors:** 9 contributors, each donating €100,000 in cash between 2028 and 2029 (totaling €0.9 million).

Sponsors will be visible through their involvement in the co-creation of the event at various levels during the opening and closing ceremonies and at other important moments in the title year, using their capital and expertise, e.g. technology, management systems, security, catering, accommodation, travel and venues.

### Other forms:

We will additionally try to establish some experimental forms of fundraising such as:

- venture capital funding for projects where we can develop IP or products; Projects like *Weaves of Emotions* need to develop innovative solutions that can be protected and commercialised. For example, this could include a blanket that reads and reacts to your mood or an emotional phone booth-like space in offices to help people relax. Another project, *Journey into the Inner Depths*, could travel across Europe if successful and eventually lead to a permanent immersive theatre space in our city. This unique experience could also be sold to other cities;
- limited game items, e.g., micropayment gadgets for massively multiplayer online games (such as a more durable textile that allows players' ships to travel faster or offers other advantages);
- merchandising products; among them special editions of games like Eurobusiness which feature former ECoC cities, Ticket to Ride (with railway connections with cities that have held the title), crafted objects and other artistic content created during the preparation (photos, calendars, t-shirts);
- Art in Public Spaces, inspired by Uppsala's 1% contributions from construction in the city;
- a culture on prescription fund, merging culture with preventative healthcare.



## FUNDRAISING STRATEGY FROM UNION PROGRAMMES

The funding strategy for BB2029 is built on three main complementary pillars: sources, local and international networks, and skills. To ensure the implementation of BB2029 projects, sources of funding have to be diversified and well-integrated. We will formulate a detailed strategic plan, created in accordance with a calendar of open calls relating to the various programmes. The international dimension of projects will allow us to exchange knowledge and build CCI capacity on a European level.

We analysed EU programmes whose priorities, are defined in their **MULTIANNUAL FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK (MFF) 2021-2027**, including those relating to the development of culture and creative sectors, and we identified two main leading sources:

**CREATIVE EUROPE** with its culture, media and cross-sectoral strands and **HORIZON EUROPE** with its culture, creativity and inclusive society cluster.

Capacity building of the cultural and creative sector and considerations pertaining to the development of the city and life quality through **wellbeing**, personal advancement, social inclusion and recognising the potential of youth also puts BB2029 projects at the core of other EU funded programmes such as:

**COHESION POLICY** – ERDF-funded Interregs such as Interreg Central Europe, Interreg Europe and cross border programmes; URBACT IV, European Urban Initiative – sharing experiences, testing actions, international added value;

**ESF+** – social inclusion, upskilling and reskilling;

**ERASMUS+** – key actions focusing on mobility, virtual exchange, intercultural dialogue, vocational and educational excellence;

**EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS** – involvement of young people in volunteering activities to strengthen social cohesion, democracy, EU identity and active citizenship which is especially relevant for diversity and inclusion related projects;

**LIFE** – EU funding instrument for the environment and climate action especially for projects relating to green issues;

**CERV** (Citizens, Equality Rights and Values Programme) – a new initiative which has incorporated the former Europe for Citizens and Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme. Of particular importance is the strand relating to the citizens, their engagement and participation;

**INVESTEU** – an alternative source of funding from grants, in particular the Cultural and Creative Sectors Guarantee Facility directly dedicated to micro-business and SMEs from the CCI sector.

Considering that the current MFF is due to end before the main title year, we are constantly keeping abreast of the consultations process both for the MFF as a whole and individual existing programmes in order to be able to influence and shape future funding schemes. We foresee other forms of support for implementation of BB2029 projects, not just directly from the EU. We have also investigated possible funding sources from the **EEA AND NORWAY GRANTS**, along with the **VISEGRAD FUND**. Considering their current and future priorities, culture entrepreneurship, artistic exchange projects and development of the CCI sector are the main focus of our programmes.

Securing the implementation of BB2029 projects also necessitates having the skills required when applying for funds. Hence, our fundraising strategy includes providing the BB2029 team and CCI professionals with the necessary skills toolkit to innovate and grow under the BB2029 ECoC title.





# ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

## GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY STRUCTURE

As stated in the pre-selection bidbook, after advancing to the second stage, we established a municipal cultural institution. On 22 February 2024 the city council voted to create the Urban Culture Institute – City of Weaves, elsewhere referred to in the bidbook as the Institute, which will be responsible for both the bid and the implementation of the ECoC year. Regardless of the ECoC competition outcome, the Institute will continue its work to address gaps in the cultural scene of BB. The Institute is co-funded by the city, and its CEO, appointed through a competitive process, is approved by the city mayor. The CEO has the autonomy to operate within the bounds of the Institute Statute. This structure ensures consistent city funding without the need for tender offers. Additionally, it is envisaged that the Institute will uphold and carry forward the legacy of the ECoC.

### MANAGEMENT LEVEL

The Polish legal system clearly states that the CEO of a cultural institution has final and global responsibility for all actions. In this case, the Institute, as the body responsible for bidding for and delivering the ECoC title, will bear these responsibilities and the CEO will be fully accountable for all decisions and their consequences.

However, the CEO will not work in isolation. The Institute will be organised as follows:

### BOARD OF MANAGERS

**Chief Executive Officer (CEO):** holds ultimate responsibility for the entire process and operations of the Institute, including approval of all strategies.

**Storyteller:** is in charge of artistic direction, the name having been given to emphasise their role of coordinating and bringing coherence to all the projects throughout the year. Aiding in the development of artistic projects and working closely with the Technology and Science Advisory Board.

**Head of Production Department:** oversees all project production, ensuring financial and organisational duties are met while maintaining artistic freedom and achieving ECoC goals. Works closely with the Storyteller and Technology and Science advisory board. Works with three deputies (for each thread), managing features and producers, both in-house and externally.

**Head of International Relations:** manages international partnerships and artist collaborations, representing the institute in international networks.

**Head of Audience Development and Engagement:** leads efforts to engage and develop audiences, focusing on participation, outreach, accessibility, inclusion, digital engagement and co-creation. Supported by focus groups representing the social structures of our city, to be set up between 2025 and 2029.

**Head of Marketing and Communication:** directs marketing and communication for the ECoC year, managing relations with the community and partners.

### SUPPORT

**Head of Risk Management:** conducts risk assessments, monitors risk management actions and maintains a 'black box' for data collection and knowledge sharing across projects.

**Head of Monitoring and Evaluation:** leads a small in-house team and liaises with outsourced monitoring and evaluation bodies to ensure high standards of data collection and progress tracking.

**Office Manager and Team:** manages the daily operations of the Institute, including accounting, HR and legal departments.

**Chief Financial Officer (CFO):** leads the department responsible for managing financial issues, fundraising and cooperation with brands.

**Legacy Manager:** specialist who works on designing legacy activities beyond 2029 – a renewed bidbook with a plan for 2031-2040 – New Weaves.



## ADVISORY BODIES

**Technology and Science Advisory Board:** composed of five top experts in technology and art, including Dr Blair Stevenson, the lead for Arts Innovation at Oulu University of Applied Sciences and Sarah Cook, WASP-HS Guest Professor in Art and AI at Umeå University. This board, operational from mid-2025 to 2030, will advise on and help curate digital and high-tech projects, ensuring technological benefits are integrated across various initiatives.

**Sustainability Board:** under the guidance and support of the Julie's Bicycle organisation we will create a board on sustainability and green practices. They will create a mandatory manual for each project under the ECoC flag.

**Weavers of Influence Board:** a body comprising the most active residents in different fields such as ecology, sustainability, accessibility, sport, student culture, independent art, youth organisations, culture on prescription, and senior citizens.

**Youth Advisory Board:** a group of Generation 29 members who will also be advising us on the programme for young people.

By establishing this comprehensive governance structure, the Institute ensures robust management and supervision, leveraging expertise from diverse fields to successfully implement and sustain the legacy of the ECoC title. We will guarantee gender equality and secure positions for people from different EU member states.

## SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

The ECoC process is a major capacity-building accelerator for the cultural and creative sector in our city. In BB there are seven cultural institutions managed by the city, two by the region, and one by the state, employing over 600 people. Additionally, there are 490 NGOs working in the city, including two which produce major international cultural festivals (FotoArtFestival and Zadymka Jazzowa) and have well-established volunteering programmes. However, to ensure sustainability and growth of skills and experience, we recognise the need for ongoing development and retention of talent within the city. Capacity building is one of our key goals and legacies of the bid process and ECoC.

### THE INSTITUTE CAPACITY

We are a small and flexible team and we want to keep working as such. However, with a project of this magnitude we will need to expand considerably and we will not lose sight of the capacity building approach.

In 2025 we will hire a Storyteller, all essential heads of department and 10 cultural producers to oversee the projects starting that year. They will be mentored by the Science and Technology Advisory Board and also work with other cultural stakeholders on their projects within our programme. These include NGOs, cultural institutions and city departments. In this way we will ensure operational control along with capacity building and strengthening the capabilities of the sector. The number of producers will gradually grow both in our teams and among our partners and there will be redistribution of budgets.

The Institute will take the following actions to increase its capacity:

**Internships in other ECoCs:** to gain experience our producers will undertake internships as team members of other cities holding the title between 2026-2028.

**Technology and Science Advisory Board:** established to address the skills gap in the integration of technology and art. This board not only advises BB2029 management but also mentors a new generation of art curators/producers. Each board member mentors two trainees over five years, with half of these selected locally and half via open call, ensuring that expertise remains in the region.

**Embracing AI Technology:** to improve the efficiency of everyday tasks and to develop literacy in this field, we are exploring AI technology to prepare us for future changes. We are working closely with the BB Entrepreneurship Centre to secure funding for these developments.

**International collaboration and knowledge exchange:** leveraging the expertise of other cities to

address our areas of vulnerability while sharing our strengths. This includes increasing mobility within the sector and participating in study visits. Active participation in international networks accelerates our progress, e.g. by leading a thematic group in the Culture Next network on cultural financing and from autumn this year we will establish an online group for ECoC Risk Management. Additionally, we participate in monthly monitoring and evaluation meetings led by Chemnitz 2025. We also participate in SDG Pilot Group powered by Polyloop and have joined the CAE network, where we are building a regional polish hub.

**Prototyping and evaluation:** we are gaining experience by prototyping events and evaluating them, creating a large database of best practices to share within the sector. We will use 'black box' thinking and create a record of evaluation of every single event we produce or co-produce.

**Talent retention and attraction:** The Weaving Mill of Creativity and Emerging Producers Platform are being set up to help find new talent at curator and producer level.

**International Volunteering Programme:** we have developed the concept of an international volunteering programme (CV&T) during the ECoC bid. This programme will train individuals aged 16-25 in various positions within cultural event production and facilitate exchanges with our partners in other countries. We are currently working closely with the Youth City Council to implement this idea.

### CULTURE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

We have established a Culture Sector Development Plan that includes a series of workshops open to the cultural sector, NGOs and artists. To date, we have held eight workshops covering topics such as Mega Trends, Fundraising, Design Thinking, Audience Development, Outreach, Sponsorship, Storytelling and Risk Management. We plan to hold at least four two-day training courses annually, with subjects agreed upon within the cultural sector. Additionally, cultural institution staff are continually enhancing their skills through mobility programmes, conferences and workshops outside the city.

### SPECIALISED CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS:

We have several projects aimed at developing capacity in different artistic fields:

**Base To Do:** enhancing skills for music production specialists.

**Street Art Academy:** training artists and producers in street art; an international conference to discuss street art and its future direction.

**Street Theatre and New Circus Incubator:** providing training in these areas both for trainers and artists, working closely with Ostrava Circulum.

**Audience Development and Engagement Programme:** Agata Etmanowicz will start this process by the end of 2024.

**Volunteer Development Programme** – in collaboration with Berenika Baranowska, Director of the Volunteer Division of the 2023 European Games

**Move Forward – Common Ground Dance Conference:** developing skills for dance show productions.

#### COLLABORATION WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR:

We are collaborating with the business sector, utilising private sector resources for skill development. This includes shadowing marketing managers in major shopping centres and working with project managers in the IT and game development sectors.

#### INTERNS AND VOLUNTEERS:

To attract top volunteer candidates with relevant competencies and skills, we will partner with organisations that bring together potential volunteers: NGOs, senior citizens associations, the European Solidarity Corps for international volunteering projects, local government institutions like cultural centres and libraries, universities, student and youth organisations, regional volunteer centres, and business partners involved in CSR and ESG initiatives, including employee and specialised skills volunteering programmes.

#### OUTSOURCING:

For the title year and its preparation, we will need to strengthen our team with external resources. All stakeholders in the city will continuously update and build up the list of potential partners from 2025 to 2028.

### COOPERATION WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The Institute is a legal entity overseen by the Mayor of BB and maintains close links with the city Culture and Promotion Department. We hold regular meetings with the mayor during the bidding process, as well as with heads of various city departments, in particular the Culture and Promotion and City Development Bureau, to keep them updated on progress. To ensure smooth and continuous cooperation we will employ a Cross-Sector Cooperation Specialist who will facilitate the onboarding process for new team members, ensuring they integrate effectively with city operations.

The programme outlined in our bidbook is closely aligned with the city's long-term development goals

and strategic documents, such as the City Culture and City Development Strategies. This alignment allows for joint monitoring and evaluation of certain elements of the programme.

Many projects within our bidbook already demonstrate the involvement of various city departments. For example, *That's Another Story* involves the Property Management Department, and *Abandoned Town* involves the City Development Bureau.

Given that the ECoC budget comprises funds from the City, Region, and State, we will establish an informal group to ensure all stakeholders remain informed throughout the preparation and implementation phases. This group will be consulted on significant risks and will monitor expenditure to ensure they align with the proposed framework in the bidbook.

### THE GENERAL DIRECTOR AND THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

In the pre-selection stage, we declared an open competition for both CEO and Storyteller positions. The core team has and will remain unchanged to ensure continuity in the process. Upon the Institute's establishment, an acting CEO was appointed. A proposal will be submitted for him to remain in position if we win the contest. However, we will open a competition for Storyteller as planned.

#### SELECTION PROCESS:

**Timing:** selection will take place after the final decision of the panel, no later than January 2025.

**Duration:** these positions will be held until the end of 2030, after which time a new competition will be announced.

**Transition Period:** in the event of key personnel changing in the bidding team, a 3-6 month overlapping period will be required to ensure a smooth transition and continuity of the project. This approach addresses challenges already faced by other ECoC teams as a result of changes in leadership positions.

#### CRITERIA FOR THE CEO:

**Responsibilities:** the CEO will oversee the workings of the entire Institute, including the bid process, implementation of the bidbook and the ECoC year. The CEO will hold ultimate decision-making powers and have responsibility for securing the widest possible artistic freedom, managing risk and ensuring transparency. The CEO will handle all financial and legal matters.

**Rafał Sakowski**, our appointed CEO, has a master's degree in law and film production, and has for many years been a board member of Art Centre Contrast, an NGO working in the area of theatre.

He has produced documentary and fiction films and was selected in Locarno in 2019 as an 'Emerging Producer'. He has worked with most of the city cultural institutions over the years and was a member of the Žilina Beskids 2026 team.

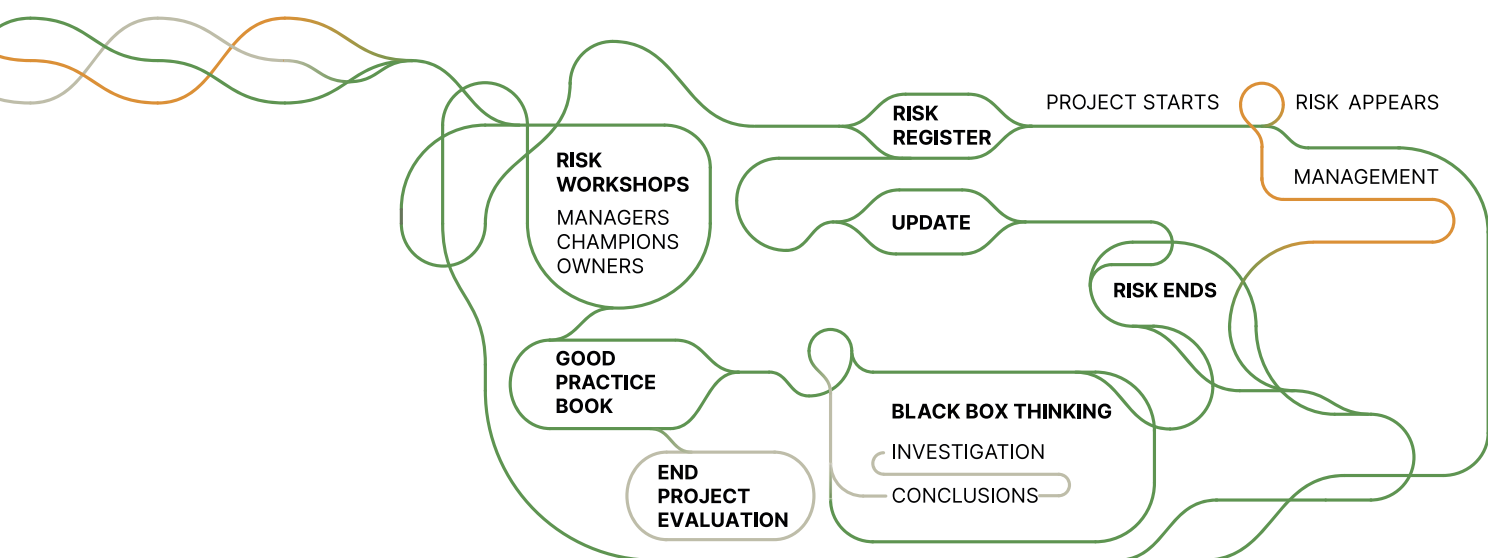
### CRITERIA FOR THE STORYTELLER:

**Responsibilities:** the Storyteller will craft the narrative for the title year, develop projects that align with the overall goals and prepare for the legacy

phase. They will ensure the year remains cohesive with a compelling story arc, select and develop community-run projects, and foster co-creation skills among artists.

**Qualifications:** candidates must have high-level skills in storytelling through artistic events, with documented experience as dramatists, screenwriters or similar. They must demonstrate knowledge of the bidbook and the BB2029 framework.

## CONTINGENCY PLANNING



### RISK ASSESSMENT

We initially conducted a risk assessment exercise for the project as a whole and also for selected elements under the supervision of Peter Simon, co-author of the ATOM concept. After that we conducted more detailed risk assessments for each planned project and framework.

The Risk Management structure in the Institute comprises roles of:

**Risk Managers** - designated individuals responsible for overseeing risk management activities

**Risk Champions** - key personnel tasked with promoting risk awareness and ensuring adherence to risk management protocols.

**Risk Owners** - individuals accountable for specific risks and their mitigation.

### APPROACH TO RISK AND FAILURE:

We acknowledge that unforeseen risks may arise, potentially leading to failures or undesirable outcomes. We view this as part of our commitment to

aiming for perfection. We are adopting an 'airline attitude' known as Black Box thinking. This approach involves rigorous analysis of our mistakes and failures to improve our protocols.

### ONGOING RISK ASSESSMENT:

Given the extensive timeline of the ECoC project, we will conduct risk assessment workshops every six months. These workshops will evaluate current risks and analyse events that have been successful.

By maintaining this proactive and iterative approach to risk assessment, we aim to ensure the successful implementation and legacy of the ECoC project, continuously learning from both our successes and challenges.

## BLACK SWAN RISKS:

exceedingly rare events with severe impacts, difficult to prevent

Risk	Possible Impact	Mitigation Strategies
<b>Long and Extreme Heat Waves</b>	<b>PUBLIC HEALTH:</b> increased risk of heat-related illnesses among the public and participants.	<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF UNCERTAINTY:</b> flexible event schedules that can be adapted to extreme weather conditions.
	<b>EVENT DISRUPTIONS:</b> cancelled or rescheduled outdoor events, leading to financial and logistical challenges.	<b>COMMUNITY TENSIONS:</b> potential for social tensions or conflicts arising from resource competition.
	<b>INFRASTRUCTURE STRESS:</b> strain to public infrastructure, such as water and power supplies.	<b>HEALTH PREPAREDNESS:</b> provision of adequate hydration stations and medical services at all events.
<b>Mass Migration or Refugee Crisis</b>	<b>SOCIAL SERVICES STRAIN:</b> increased demand on local social services and infrastructure.	<b>BUILDING RESILIENCE:</b> collaboration with local and international NGOs to provide support services.
	<b>ECONOMIC IMPACT:</b> additional economic burden on local government and resources.	<b>EARLY DETECTION:</b> monitoring of global geopolitical situations and development of response plans.
	<b>COMMUNITY TENSIONS:</b> social tensions or conflicts arising from resource competition.	<b>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:</b> fostering inclusive community programmes to promote social cohesion.
<b>Global Pandemic or Health Crisis</b>	<b>PUBLIC HEALTH:</b> direct threat to the health of participants and the general public.	<b>BUILDING RESILIENCE:</b> development of hybrid event models that include virtual participation options.
	<b>EVENT DISRUPTIONS:</b> cancellations or postponements of events, leading to significant financial losses.	<b>EARLY DETECTION:</b> implementation of health monitoring systems and staying updated with global health advisories.
	<b>TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS:</b> limited mobility for artists, visitors and stakeholders.	<b>HEALTH PREPAREDNESS:</b> ensuring robust health and safety protocols, including sanitation, PPE and vaccination plans.
<b>Economic Downturn</b>	<b>FUNDING CHALLENGES:</b> reduced funding and sponsorship opportunities.	<b>BUILDING RESILIENCE:</b> diversification of funding sources, including grants, partnerships and crowdfunding.
	<b>AUDIENCE DECLINE:</b> lower disposable income leading to reduced attendance and participation.	<b>ECONOMIC PREPAREDNESS:</b> creation of a financial contingency fund to cushion against economic shocks.
	<b>OPERATIONAL CONSTRAINTS:</b> budget cuts impacting the scale and quality of events.	<b>COMMUNITY SUPPORT:</b> engagement of local communities and businesses to foster mutual support and shared investment in cultural initiatives.
<b>Terrorism or Security Threats</b>	<b>SAFETY RISKS:</b> direct threat to the safety of participants, staff and the public.	<b>BUILDING RESILIENCE:</b> implementation of comprehensive security plans in collaboration with local and national authorities.
	<b>EVENT CANCELLATIONS:</b> cancelled or postponed events owing to security concerns.	<b>EARLY DETECTION:</b> maintenance of robust intelligence and surveillance systems to detect and respond to threats.
	<b>PUBLIC FEAR:</b> increased public fear and reluctance to attend events.	<b>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:</b> fostering strong community relations to enhance public trust and cooperation with security measures.

## EXAMPLES OF RISKS DURING PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME

RISK	Possible Impact:	Mitigation Strategies:
<b>Political Change</b>	<b>POLICY SHIFTS:</b> changes in government policies could affect funding, priorities and support for the project.	<b>STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT:</b> maintenance of strong relationships with political leaders and stakeholders across all parties to ensure continued support.
	<b>INSTABILITY:</b> political instability might lead to disruptions in planning and execution.	<b>ADAPTIVE PLANNING:</b> development of flexible plans that can adjust to changing political landscapes.
		<b>ADVOCACY:</b> continuous advocacy for the importance and benefits of the ECoC project to secure ongoing support.
<b>Team Burnout</b>	<b>DECREASED PRODUCTIVITY:</b> burnout can lead to reduced efficiency and increased errors.	<b>WELLBEING</b> monitoring and plans for ECoC and sector employees' wellbeing regeneration.
	<b>HIGH TURNOVER:</b> increased staff turnover owing to stress and burnout.	<b>WORK-LIFE BALANCE:</b> promotion of a healthy work-life balance with reasonable workloads and regular breaks.
		<b>SUPPORT SYSTEMS:</b> provision of access to mental health resources and support.
<b>Unrealistic Expectations from Citizens and Stakeholders</b>	<b>DISAPPOINTMENT:</b> unrealistic expectations can lead to disappointment and negative perceptions.	<b>CLEAR COMMUNICATION:</b> setting realistic expectations through clear and regular communication.
	<b>INCREASED PRESSURE:</b> additional pressure on the team to deliver beyond feasible limits.	<b>ENGAGEMENT:</b> Engagement of citizens and stakeholders in the planning process to foster understanding and realistic expectations.
		<b>FEEDBACK MECHANISMS:</b> implementation of feedback mechanisms to gauge expectations and address concerns proactively.
<b>Data Management Risk with Cyber Attacks and GDPR Breach</b>	<b>DATA BREACHES:</b> loss of sensitive information and potential legal repercussions.	<b>ENHANCED CYBERSECURITY:</b> implementation of robust cybersecurity measures and regular audits.
	<b>OPERATIONAL DISRUPTION:</b> disruption of digital infrastructure and services.	<b>GDPR COMPLIANCE:</b> ensuring full compliance with GDPR regulations through staff training and strict data management protocols.
		<b>INCIDENT RESPONSE PLAN:</b> development and regular updates of an incident response plan to quickly address breaches.



<b>Artist Cancellation</b>	<b>PROGRAMME DISRUPTION:</b> changes in the programme lineup and potential disappointment among attendees.	<b>CONTRACT FLEXIBILITY:</b> inclusion of flexible clauses in contracts to manage cancellations.
	<b>FINANCIAL LOSS:</b> potential financial loss owing to contract cancellations and rebooking.	<b>BACKUP PLANS:</b> development of backup plans and provision of alternative artists on standby.
		Communication: prompt communication to the public and stakeholders of any changes.
<b>Excessive Noise Complaints</b>	<b>COMMUNITY DISCONTENT:</b> increased complaints and potential conflicts with local residents.	<b>NOISE CONTROL MEASURES:</b> implementation of noise control measures such as soundproofing and limiting event hours.
	<b>EVENT RESTRICTIONS:</b> possible restrictions on event timings and sound levels.	<b>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:</b> engagement with the community to address concerns and to seek compromise solutions.
		<b>MONITORING:</b> regular monitoring of noise levels and adjustment as necessary.
		<b>CAPACITY PLANNING:</b> Strict adherence to capacity limits and plans for crowd control.
<b>Capacity Overloads</b>	<b>SAFETY RISKS:</b> overcrowded venues pose safety risks and decrease attendee experience.	<b>TICKETING SYSTEMS:</b> Use of advanced ticketing systems to manage attendance and avoid overbooking.
	Regulatory Issues: potential violations of safety and capacity regulations.	
		Implementation of robust safety protocols and emergency response plans.



# MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

Our slogan is **WEAVING WELLBEING**

In the first bidbook we introduced weaves as a central strategy to achieve our goal of **WELLBEING**. We see ourselves as a **COMMUNITY OF WEAVERS**, creating together a sustainable future for all.

Bielsko-Biała aspires to be known as the **CITY OF WEAVES**.

## STRATEGY

### WHAT WE SPEAK ABOUT:

We begin to explain **WEAVING WELLBEING** by making this abstract slogan easier for everyone to understand by referring to universal spaces based on our three threads:

**'MY WEAVES'** (Awareness) represents the inherent potential within each of us to express ourselves. This concept encompasses personal experiences and emotions, highlighting the unique threads that each individual contributes to the collective tapestry of our community.

**'WEAVES OF PEOPLE'** (Society) reflects our rich multiculturalism and the dialogue between diverse beliefs and cultures. It emphasises the importance of thought exchange and community building, anchored in fundamental values that unite us and build mutual understanding.

**'WEAVES OF THE WORLD'** (Surroundings) appreciates the tangible beauty around us, from historical buildings to breathtaking landscapes. Additionally, it acknowledges the expansive possibilities offered by digital advancements, which provide unprecedented opportunities for creativity and connection, enabling us to explore and appreciate the world in new and immersive ways.

The second step aims to explain **WELLBEING** through the use of our key values (fibres):

**IMAGINATION:** overcoming limitations without fear

**SKILLS:** developing our potential

**KNOWLEDGE:** understanding the world

**IDENTITY:** drawing from tradition and understanding what shapes us

**COMMUNITY:** creating empathetic social relations

**FREEDOM:** expressing our uniqueness

**NATURE:** respecting the powerful force that nurtures all life

**URBAN SPACE:** living in a city open to everyone

**DIGITAL SPACE:** crossing the boundaries of physical reality

### WHO WE SPEAK TO AND WHEN:

Our growing **COMMUNITY OF WEAVERS** will create content to share with target groups, thus building lasting relationships. Our target groups span local to global:

**2023-2024:** local communities e.g. schools, marginalised groups, artists, the cultural sector, business partners

**2025-2027:** a national audience and the Beskid Euroregion, including Czech and Slovak citizens,

international networks we belong to and also those which we will join

**2028-2029:** a European audience and specific groups e.g. Auschwitz-Birkenau visitors, sports fans and those interested in wellbeing

#### **WHERE AND HOW WE SPEAK:**

We must adapt our communications to meet the demands of personalisation, offering experiences that visitors seek, and which are tailored to their tastes and preferences. Our communication channels will be diversified in accordance with these needs.

#### **DIGITAL COMMUNICATION:**

**WEBSITE:** by continuously improving accessibility and user experience

**MOBILE APPLICATION:** by developing an app providing tangible benefits to users, with AI-enhanced functionality and innovations from hackathons

**SOCIAL MEDIA:** by moving beyond Facebook and Instagram and including LinkedIn, focusing on the intersection between technology and culture; YouTube to showcase our behind-the-scenes vlog, building a close relationship with our audience; podcasts under Weaving Wellbeing Lab for more in-depth content.

**BB2029 YOUTH CHANNELS:** by supporting teenage volunteers in managing social channels, collaborating with Zróbmy To!, a youth NGO which publishes the magazine Redakcja BB.

#### **NON-DIGITAL COMMUNICATION:**

By taking advantage of events held in the city to reach audiences, e.g. the Mountain Bike Enduro World Cup championship and the annual BB Days under the 'City of Weaves' title.

By using traditional media channels to cater to diverse preferences and needs.

#### **STRATEGIC GOALS:**

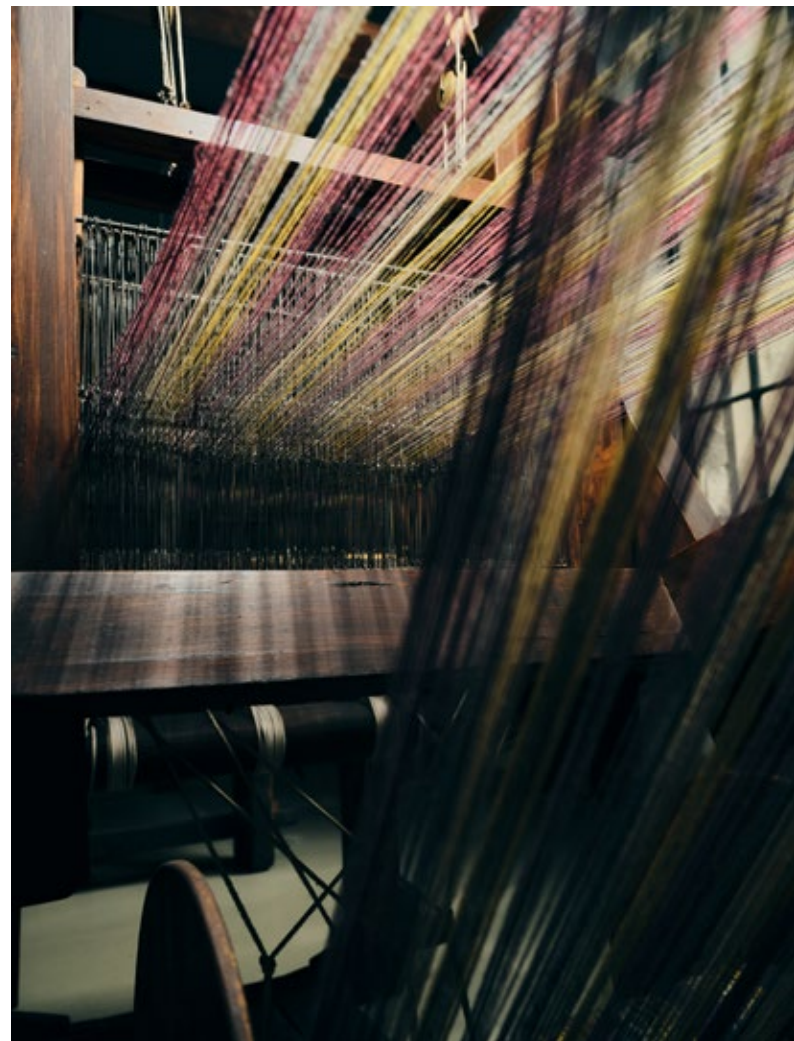
**CUSTOMER VALUE AND BRAND BUILDING:** by differentiating, innovating, adding value and ensuring quality. We will expand and nurture both regular and targeted audiences.

**TO TRANSFORM COMMERCIAL EXPERIENCES:** by delivering real-time, personalised communication based on user location to improve customer participation and gather insights.

**TO RESPOND TO POLYCRISIS:** by addressing challenges such as climate change, global conflicts, migration crises, mental health conditions, disinformation and rapid digital transformation and inviting audiences to participate in finding solutions.

**TO PROMOTE EUROPEAN VALUES:** by highlighting the role of culture and heritage from a European perspective, promoting openness to diversity, international dialogue, tolerance and freedom.

We will develop a crisis communication plan to handle any negative press or unforeseen events swiftly and effectively.



## PARTNERSHIPS WITH MEDIA

We are planning to work with media on several levels and follow various approaches to ensure extensive coverage of the ECoC programme.

### LOCAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA:

BB has a population of around 170,000. We have already reached more than half a million people through our social media channels with details and information about the ECoC over the past year, succeeding in meeting our local and regional information coverage plan. During the bidding process we have focused on engaging local media, including the press, radio, internet information portals and television. We will continue to maintain and expand these relationships to keep the local community informed and engaged. *Pelna Kultura*, a monthly magazine covering cultural events in our city, has already dedicated a page to our activities.

### NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COVERAGE:

**LIVE BROADCASTS** will be made of our and the Swedish ECoC's opening and closing ceremonies on national television and the internet, with no geographical restrictions. Throughout the year ECoC News will provide information about our programme. **NEWS COVERAGE**, both on a national and international scale, will follow the most important moments and projects during the year. This will include the *Culture.pl* website and podcast, the flagship brand of the Adam Mickiewicz Institute and the ultimate resource for all things relating to Polish culture.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMERGING JOURNALISTS** will arise, creating spaces, residency and scholarship opportunities for up-and-coming journalists from different countries to freelance and cover events throughout the year. **NICHE MEDIA PATRONAGE** means we will tailor media partnerships to specific niche areas that match the target audience of our various projects, ensuring precise and effective outreach. **REACHING OUT TO VISITORS** will include engaging with *PURO* magazine, which covers culture and the arts and is available in hotel chains across Poland in major cities. LOT Polish Airlines will be celebrating its centenary in 2029, so we will be preparing a series of articles on ECoC for their on-board *Kaleidoscope* magazine. We will also provide interesting articles in the year of the title for *W podróży* magazine, available on trains in Poland.

**STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS WITH VOD PLATFORMS** with exclusive access to our events and projects. Many elements of our programme can be adapted into entertainment shows and documentaries. Our culinary projects, for example, are perfect for screen adaptation into cookery shows, and

our high-tech projects such as *Weaves of Emotions* and *Journey into the Inner Depths* could feature in popular science shows or documentaries. Similarly, we intend to collaborate with ARTE.tv and produce material on the dominant themes of our programme: democracy, migration, mental health, propaganda, technological innovation, all interfacing with culture, and thus will be available to European viewers.

### COOPERATION WITH CHILD PRESS:

We are collaborating with Child Press ([childpress.org](http://childpress.org)) to set up a Press Centre for Children in BB. Young reporters will learn the skills of a good journalist, also technical skills such as video recording and editing, sound design, vlogging and much more. They will not only publish on their own channels but also internationally on 'Who Does What for Children?' and in other media to distribute daily news content produced by children as extensively as possible. Working with Child Press we want to make the voice of youth heard in the context of currently important European issues. Young journalists will provide great support in our ECoC title year.

## CITIZENS AS COMMUNICATORS

To mobilise our citizens as communicators for Bielsko-Biała's bid for ECoC 2029, we are focusing on a strategy that integrates deeply into our city's identity and aspirations. Our approach hinges on fostering agency and wellbeing among residents, transforming us all into enthusiastic advocates for BB2029.

Our strategy unfolds in two essential steps:

### STEP ONE: INFORM AND ENGAGE

Initially, our priority is to inform the residents about the significance of ECoC and to integrate it into a supportive community. We have conducted extensive outreach through numerous meetings, tailored both for small groups and larger audiences. We were the first to publish our bidbook early and we will create simplified versions accessible to all, including a child-friendly edition to reach a broader audience. Our informative campaigns make use of diverse channels of communication such as digital platforms, city spaces and collaboration with ambassadors and brands. Collaboration with NGOs has been instrumental in overcoming distrust, as encountered in the past, presenting us as partners rather than as figures of authority.

### STEP TWO: AWAKENING AGENCY

Awakening agency among the local population is central to our strategy. By empowering to initiate and drive projects we foster a sense of ownership and pride in our collective achievements. For instance, responding to ecological concerns we influenced national policy in the protection of local forests. With the collaboration of permaculture experts, we are establishing the city's first community garden in the city centre. Additionally, we have addressed longstanding heritage preservation requests in relation to Grodzisko, our medieval first inhabited settlement, uniting stakeholders for meaningful solutions.

We highlight these stories of local population **AGENCY** to inspire further engagement. Our cultural programme stresses **CO-CREATION**, inviting residents to participate in creating projects like the 'Breathing Symphony' or communal giant puppet-building in the main squares. Through social media, using hashtags like #weavingwellbeing and #cityofweaves, and also through bottom-up sharing content generated by residents, we amplify these efforts globally.

### THE INSTITUTE AS A FACILITATOR

At the heart of our candidacy is a commitment to cultivating **WEAVING WELLBEING**. We will encourage residents to share everyday joys under

#weavingwellbeing, promoting a universal aspiration uniquely manifested in BB. The Institute is a platform for communication and relationship building, combining the roles of cultural lab, creative **AGENCY**, change facilitator and cultural developer. It educates and promotes the ECoC as a transformative tool for improving life in the city. The Institute fosters community through initiatives like the **WEAVING MILL OF CREATIVITY** and **WOVEN BY CULTURE**, spreading its message nationally and internationally. Its goal is to create a strong, integrated community that enhances the sense of belonging.



## AN ACTION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

To highlight that the ECoC is an action of the European Union, the city of BB has implemented several initiatives aimed at celebrating and promoting the EU's role in this prestigious programme.

### EUROPEAN PLINTH – a permanent symbol:

This idea was brought to us from the first open call. To commemorate our participation in the ECoC competition and to build momentum for change within the city and across Europe we have installed a permanent symbol in the city centre in the form of a European Plinth. This place will be used in the coming years to display statues representing European values, also paying tribute to Melina Mercouri.

### OPENING AND CLOSING CEREMONIES:

After participating in the handover ceremony in Athens the opening and closing ceremonies will play a crucial role in highlighting the ECoC as a European Union project. These events will feature the presence of European officials and celebrate the Melina Mercouri Prize. Additionally, we will present a Wall of ECoCs in the main information centre, an indoor mural created by local artists in collaboration with international counterparts, showcasing the legacy of past European Capitals of Culture.

### DEDICATED EU CELEBRATION EVENTS:

Throughout the ECoC year we will celebrate and underscore the importance of the EU in this project. Special events will be designed to take place between May 1st – marking the 25th anniversary of the largest expansion of the EU – and May 9th, Europe Day. These events will highlight the EU's role in fostering cultural unity and cooperation.

### EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS:

In 2029, with the European Parliament elections approaching, we will use our platform as ECoC host to remind everyone that the future of our continent is in their hands. We will emphasise that the EU is a source of strength and unity that it must be preserved and actively supported.

### PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS AND PRESENCE:

We will open an ECoC Center located in the city centre. All promotional materials, publications and our website will prominently feature the EU flag and information about the ECoC program. This branding will ensure constant visibility of the EU's role. Staff uniforms, volunteer equipment and all merchandise will also include this branding, reinforcing the message that this is a European project.

### CULTURE NEXT MISSION – 'FUTURE OF THE ECoC BRAND' SYMPOSIUM:

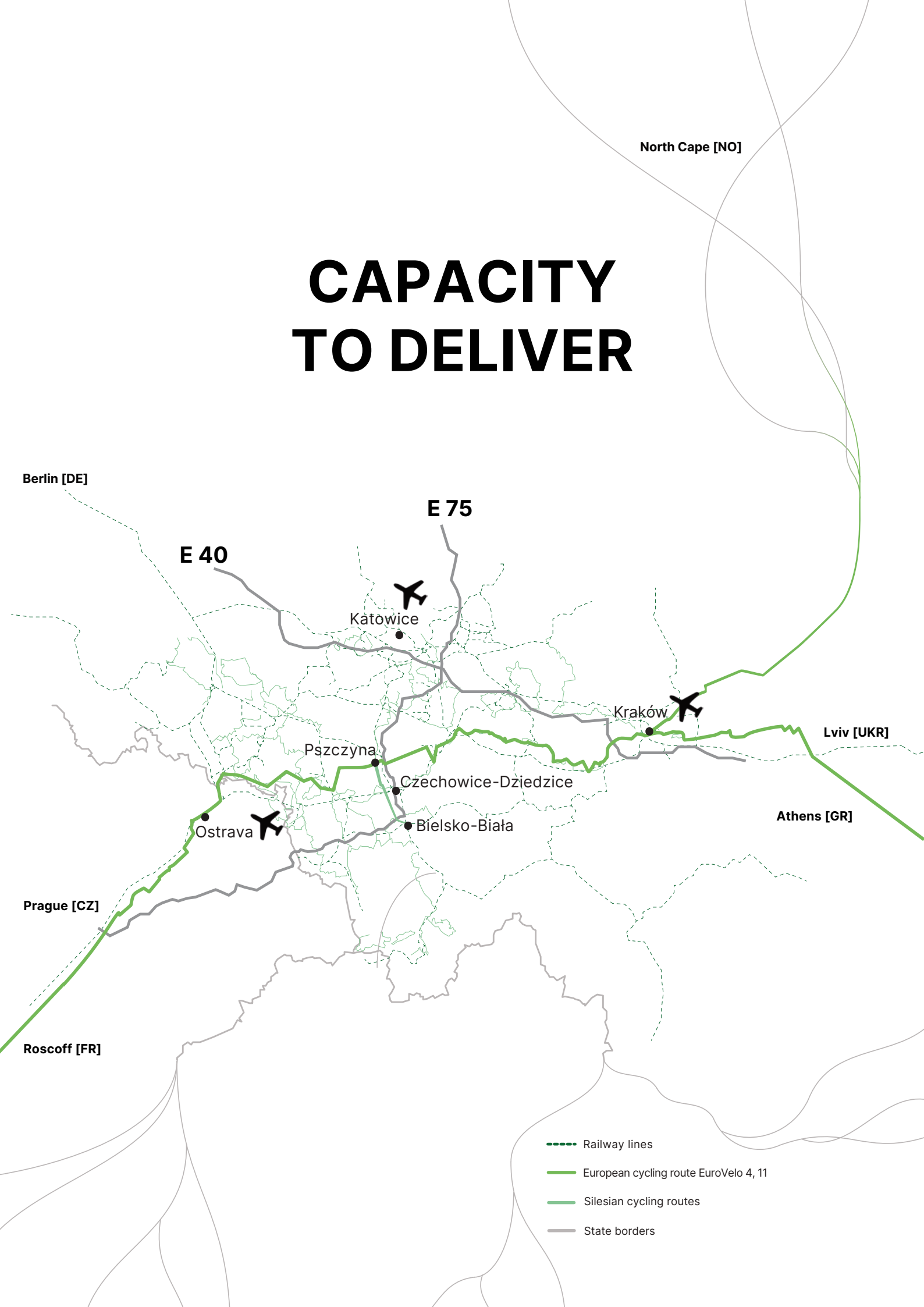
Recognising the importance of the ECoC title we organised a symposium in June 2024. Our guests included Dr Beatriz Garcia, Nancy Braun, Anna Kocegarova-Maj, Kelly Diapouli, Ștefan Teșanu, Stefan Stoyanov, Serafino Paternoster, Maria Teresa Cascino, Sara Vuletić, Pierre Sauvageot, Dr Helen Palmer, Gina Kafedzhian, Krzysztof Maj and Dr Chris Baldwin. This mission aims to foster discussions on enhancing the ECoC brand and its impact.

By implementing these initiatives, we aim to clearly and effectively communicate that the ECoC is an action of the European Union, celebrating our shared values and collective cultural heritage. And in our eyes and those of BB residents it is about our willingness to join the European community of cities, choosing culture as a driving force for its development.





# CAPACITY TO DELIVER





## GENERAL INFO

### TRANSPORT:

**International Airports:** Balice (KRK Kraków) 86.8 km, OSR Ostrava (Czechia) 90.7 km, KAT Pyrzowice (Katowice) 96,6 km

**Railway Connections:** Czechowice-Dziedzice, bordering Bielsko-Biała, easily accessible by train or public transport, is a key railway interchange on the international route between Kraków and cities like Bratislava, Prague, Budapest, Vienna, Munich and Salzburg. Ongoing renovations to the line between Bielsko-Biała and the Czech border will significantly improve our city's railway connections.

**International road links:** E75 (North-South), 60 km from E40 (West-East)

**International cycle routes:** cycle routes in the Beskid Agglomeration connect to both the Czech and Slovak borders, and the Lesser Poland voivodeship is linked to the following European networks: EuroVelo 4 (Roscoff in France to Kyiv in Ukraine), EuroVelo 9 (Gdańsk in Poland to Pula in Croatia), and is close to EuroVelo 11 (North Cape in Norway to Athens in Greece).

### ACCOMODATION:

**Beds in the city:** 4,130 (1,559 rooms) and beds within the Agglomeration: 35,433 (11,653 rooms)

### CULTURAL VENUES:

**2 theatres** with 4 stages – 2 more are being adapted in a former cinema building

**3 cinemas** with 18 screens

**Concert halls** or multi-purpose stages: 4 main (with one private for 1,000 spectators), 10 in community cultural centres and 2 in NGOs (space collectively for 1,650 people)

**Art galleries:** 6

**Library:** a network of 18 branches

**Community and culture centres:** a network of 12 branches and a culture centre

**Amphitheatre:** 1

**7 squares** in the city ready to hold events

**Sports complexes** suitable to hold culture events: 8, including an open-air stadium for 16,000 people and a 36 ha recreational airfield in the city which can be used for the largest events.

## POLITICAL SUPPORT

Strong political support is best evidenced by the voting results of the City Council:

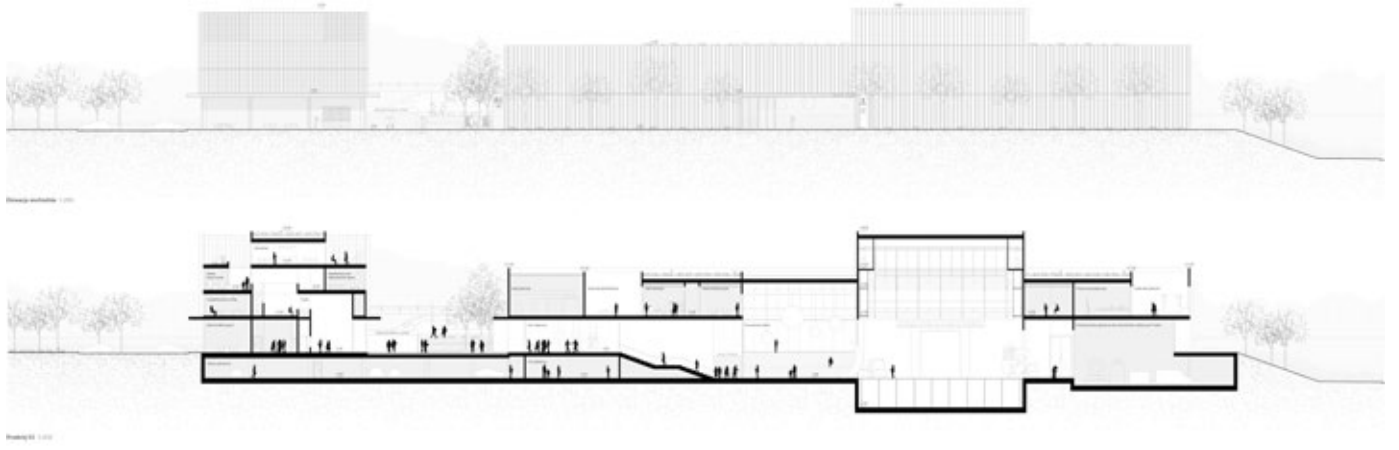
The planned operational budget was adopted and set as a long-term financial plan for the city on 27 June 2024, with no votes against the motion, thus securing the city's portion of the projected budget and setting priorities.

Our candidacy is considered unequivocally essential for the development of the city and the region, and therefore we have received:

- letters of support from the Beskid Euroregion and Cieszyn Silesia Euroregion authorities
- letters of support from newly elected Members of the Polish Parliament representing the following parties: Civic Coalition, Law and Justice, Third Way and Confederation
- a letter of support from the Silesian Voivode
- a letter of understanding from the Marshal's Office of the Silesian Voivodeship
- letters of support from local electoral district Members of the Regional Voivodeship Parliament
- letters of support from local electoral district Members of the European Parliament.

# INVESTMENTS

Name	Finance	Schedule	Connected projects	What if not delivered?
<b>Square of Weaves</b> – Baniałuka Puppet Theatre, Green Library and local market – a brand new cultural space in the city, following an architectural and urban planning competition. Winner chosen in May 2024.	€30 M City – 20% Government – 40% EU – 40%	2024- 2025: project 2025: start of work 2028: construction completed	<i>Gigapuppets; Crafting and Upcrafting, Unplug Festival</i>	We have existing venues that will be operational for 2029
<b>Pedanteria Multipurpose Art Centre</b> – a research centre for creative industries and new technologies; a training base for professionals in the area of culture; a venue for crafters, a venue for artistic studios, a venue for media literacy training, music studios, home to Base To Do.	€20 M City – 20% Government – 30% EU – 50%	2024: planning 2025: project 2026-2028: renovation	<i>Crafting and Upcrafting, Journey into the Inner Depths; Narrative Laundry</i>	Commercial venues and temporary constructions – exhibition marquees
<b>Mountain Enthusiasts Centre</b> – using a part of the space in the historic upper cable car station on Mount Szyndzielnia to feature a pocket exhibition on the history of tourism in the Beskid mountains. Also a venue that can be used for education - mountain-themed training and lectures on mountain safety.	€0.5 M City – 50% Private sector – 50%	2024: planning and documentation 2025: project 2026: renovation documentation 2025: project 2026: renovation	<i>A Time for Mindfulness; Magic Mountains; Shapes of Nature</i>	Using a mountain shelter near this venue
<b>Cemeteries</b> – areas inside the old, historic Evangelical and Jewish cemeteries. Revitalisation efforts will be made to permanently open the cemeteries as Memorial Parks surrounded by calming green spaces.	€2 M City – 20% Government – 30% EU – 30% Private sector – 20%	2024: planning 2025: inventory and project 2026-2028: renovation	<i>A Time for Mindfulness; Unplug Festival; Second Wind for Cemeteries</i> with crowning project Circle of Life	We will use them in their current state, but it will be a one-time event
<b>Folwark ‘Zieleń Miejska’</b> (Urban Green Spaces Manor) – a historic manor estate that will become a complex of multifaceted wellbeing, comprising an arboretum, community and permaculture gardens, glamping, a sauna centre, conference and exhibition centre, workshop space, and a hotel and restaurant featuring local products.	€15 M City – 20% EU – 80%	2024: planning and project 2025 – 2028: implementation	<i>A Time for Mindfulness; Crafting and Upcrafting</i>	Spread across the existing green spaces in and around the city



**Congratulations!** You've just finished reading 100 pages, into which we have put many months of hard work. We were happy to go through this process because we strongly believe in a better future for us and for Europe through culture. It was exceptionally difficult to squeeze it all into these few pages. The programme is a work in progress, still being developed, and not quite perfected, but we are proud to say it is all our own work and this is our gift to everyone. The City of Weaves presents it to you with pride, for the work done to date, and humbly awaits any comments, additions or inspiration that you might wish to further offer.

We believe that wellbeing for individuals, society and our surroundings is a goal worth striving for. This requires action, which in turn necessitates a sense of agency. We understand the importance of interweaving these efforts, one step at a time, with everyone contributing. Thread by thread, weave by weave. All of us together. A sense of belonging unites our community of weavers working towards this goal. There are sixteen of us in our core team, but we have also had huge assistance and support from our families, friends, colleagues, the local population and beyond, from mentors and from our partners all over the world. We are enormously grateful to all the above, and we apologise if these few words do not sufficiently express our gratitude. Without all the people mentioned, we would not have been able to complete this task. Without them we will not be able to move forward and continue weaving.

The last two years will have a lasting influence on us for years to come. We will never abandon the values we are currently building on and we will use them as a compass – or, in textile-speak, as a Jacquard loom punch card! Mechanisms and frameworks have been established to allow everyone to continue weaving wellbeing among themselves – regardless of our differences. We believe that Europe will be richer and better for it if these ideas can be successfully implemented.

If (Perma)culture begins where Vagar ends, then the next natural step is to harvest the crops, collect the fibres, make the threads and start weaving wellbeing.\*

We are ready!

\*This sentence will only be understood by ECoC freaks.



## COMMUNITY OF WEAVERS:

**The bidbook has the full support of Bielsko-Biała Mayor, Jarosław Klimaszewski and the Leader of the City Council, Dorota Piegzik-Izydorczyk and Councillors:**

Nikodem Ankudowicz, Katarzyna Balicka, Janusz Buzek, Małgorzata Chrzęszcz, Renata Gruszka, Michał Guzdek, Krzysztof Jazowy, Piotr Kochowski, Klaudiusz Komor, Paweł Korzondkowski, Rafał Leśków, Karolina Lewkowicz, Konrad Łoś, Karol Markowski, Roman Matyja, Dariusz Michasiów, Agnieszka Nowak, Paweł Pajor, Maksymilian Pryga, Jerzy Sawiński, Urszula Szabla, Anita Szymańska, Józefa Wawak, Aleksandra Woźniak

**PROGRAMMING TEAM:** Inez Baturo, Jerzy Batycki, Jacek Bożek, Maciej Bujakowski, Małgorzata Chełchowska-Rak, Maciej Chmiel, Ewa Chojcka, Barbara Cybulska-Konsek, Marcin Filip, Jacek Graś, Maciej Jeleń, Aleksandra Jurczak, Szymon Kłusek, Marzena Kocurek, Paweł Kotla, Andrzej Kucybała, Marek Matlak, Witold Mazurkiewicz, Zbigniew Michniowski, Mirosław Mikuszewski, Małgorzata Motyka-Madej, Agnieszka Nowak, Jacek Nowakowski, Natasha Pavluchenko, Jacek Popławski, Iwona Purzycka, Łucja Ruchała, Adam Ruśniak, Agata Smalcerz, Lesław Werpachowski, Magdalena Wojtczak, Urszula Szabla

**TASKING TEAM:** Ewa Bątkiewicz, Joanna Bojczuk, Marta Gancarz, Michał Gąsior, Jolanta Gilman-Gatuszka, Ewa Kozak, Beata Kubica, Justyna Kudelska, Ada Piekarska, Danuta Przybyło, Marta Radwaniak, Beata Rozpędek, Przemysław Smyczek, Ewa Swatek, Irena Świtalska, Agata Wolna, Anna Zgierska, Paulina Żmijowska

**BIDBOOK WRITERS:** Dariusz Gajny, Rafaela Neiva Ganga, Dorota Jasek, Jakub Krajewski, Magdalena Marek, Jakub Nowak, Zofia Obstarczyk, Edyta Ruta, Rafał Sakowski, Aleksandra Tarnawa, Katarzyna Wolny, Joanna Wróblewska-Jachna

**EXPERTS:** Chris Baldwin, Beatriz Garcia, Pierre Sauvageot, Blair Stevenson

**TRAINERS & CONSULTANTS:** Joanna Bytnar, Igor Gałązkiewicz, Dagmara Gąsiorek, Marta Kowalewska, Charles Laundry, Valentina Montalto, Peter Simon, Paweł Tkaczyk, Ralf Weiß, Patrycja Węgrzyn

**SPECIAL THANKS TO:** Nancy Braun, Maria Teresa Cascino, Nico Degenkolb, Kelly Diapouli, Cristina Farinha, Jean-Gabriel Guyant, Anna Hořejší, Bruno Inácio, Immie Jonkman, Emma Jonsson, Gina Kafedzhian, Patrick Kiraly Przemysław Kamiński, Kornelia Kiss, Igor Kliś, Ana Kočegarova-Maj, Piotr Kucia, Sofia Lagerlöf Määttä, Krzysztof Maj, Agnieszka Marecka, Mirosława Nykiel, Helen Palmer, Serafino Paternoster, Dominik Pawiński, Karolina Rachacova, Elise Sijthoff, Stefan Stojankov, Wolf Arne Storm, Stefan Teişanu, Henri Turunen, Sara Vuletić, Rarița Zbranca

**ADDITIONAL PROJECT DEVELOPERS:** Bożena Adamczyk, Iwona Baron, Anna Chęć, Michał Czula, Lucyna Dobrzaniecka, Adelina Gołębiowska, Franciszek Gołębiowski, Anna Guzik-Tylka, Agnieszka Jarosz, Aleksandra Jurczak, Krzysztof Kaczmar, Agnieszka Kowieszka, Aleksandra Kozik, Iwona Kusak, Justyna Łabądz, Dagmara Mika, Ada Piekarska, Ewelina Polak, M Potempa, Rafał Sawicki, Ewa Trzcionka, Piotr Wolny

### BIDBOOK DESIGNERS:

design: albo albo

Photos by: Marek Ogień, Patryk Sawicki

Graphics: Jakub Cikała, Aleksandra Kozik

English Editors and Proofreaders: Bogumiła Zdzitowiecka, Vincent Zdzitowiecki

Polish Typesetting: Marek Klimek Studio Corner

Polish Editors: Janusz Legoń, Marcin Czyżewski

Polish Proofreading: Tomasz Giza

Print: Augustana Press

**BB2029 – CITY OF WEAVES TEAM:** Julia Rak, Natalia Tomiczek, Bożena Wiśniewska, Urszula Wawrosz-Oksiędzka

**THANKS ALSO TO THE FOLLOWING:** Katarzyna Adamczyk, Aleksander Adamiec, Klaudia Adamus, Michał Baranowski, Piotr Barski, Claudius Becker, Joanna and Tomasz Bierówka, Marcin Buk, Anna Burda, Robert Bylicki, Paweł Cader, Anna Chęć, Bożena and Bogusław Choraży, Joanna Chudy, ks. Krzysztof Cienciąła, Michał Ciok, Kim Cooper, Lucjusz Cykarski, Marek Czader, Joanna Dadak, Irena Czapla, Estera and Symeon Czepczor, Kinga Czernek, Krystyna Danikowska, Urszula Drozdowska, Anna Dyrda, Paweł Dzierża, Jarosław Faruga, Dorota Fedycka-Brandys, Joanna Feikisz, Tomasz Ficoń, Barbara Filapek, Michał Francuz, Krzysztof Gałuszka, Szymon Gąsowski, Renata Gerlach-Holewka, Małgorzata Gewinner, Piotr Gibiec, Katarzyna Gnacińska, Katarzyna Gluza, Mariusz Godek, Justyna Gołabek, Robert Gołuch, Paweł Gryzełko, Kamila Grzybowska, Monika Hebda, Joanna Herzyk, Maciej Hryculak, Roman Hryciów, Małgorzata Jankowska, Olga Jonkisz, Anna Jończyk,

Jacek Kachel, Anna Kajor, Dominika Kasińska, Sebastian Kawa, Agnieszka Kawecka, Piotr Kenig, Małgorzata Kędzierska, Przemysław Kieda, Emilia Klejmont, Karolina Klimaszewska, Marek Klimek, Anna Kliś, Wojciech Kłapcia, Iwona Kłóska, Michał Kłusak, Dariusz Kocemba, Izolda Konsek, Michał Kopaniszyń, Dorota Koperska, Anna Kroczek, Renata Kudzia, Krzysztof Kwiatkowski, Szymon Kwiecień, Monika Langer, Agnieszka Lamek-Kochanowska, Michał Laszczkowski, Renata Lejawka, Joanna Lisicka-Bogacz, Sebastian Litner, Grzegorz Lulek, Marek Łekawa, Ewa Łowkis, Dawid Łukawski, Grzegorz Madej, Ewa Malik, Robert Marciniak, Marco Marsili, Katarzyna Maśka, Gabriela Michalska, Katarzyna Michna, Nikodem Modrzejewski, Magdalena Molenda, Krzysztof Mrowiec, Elżbieta Nowak, Witold Olszanicki, Piotr Oślak, Patryk Owcarz, Małgorzata Pająk-Borecka, Izabela Pałka, Paweł Piątek, Izabela Pigan, Paulina Pisuk-Czech, Irena Polok, Jacek Proszyk, Marta Przybyło, Katarzyna Pytlarczyk, Nick Rattenbury, Elżbieta Rosińska, Agata Ruman, Joanna Sawicz-Krajewska, Bernadeta Sekuła, Piotr Sokół, Grzegorz Sowa, Paweł Sowa, Anna Stadnik, Maciej Stopka, Mikołaj Strzyż, Jolanta Strzyżkowska, Wioletta Stysińska, Ahmed Subber, Bożena Swakoń, Aleksander Szalajko, ks. Piotr Szarek, Piotr Sczutowski, Tom Swoboda, Michał Sztandera, Maksymilian Tarnawa, Przemysław Targosz, Maria Trzeciak, Iwona Tworzyńska-Naumowicz, Kornel Tyc, Katarzyna and Adam Tyszeccy, Zbigniew Wexsej, Anna Wiewióra, Dorota Wiewióra, Zbigniew Wiewióra, Zbigniew Wilczek, Dorota Witkowska, Katarzyna Wirtek-Fajfur, Paweł Wojciechowski, Oskar Wolny, Dominika Wysogład, Jacek Zachara, Paweł Ząbek, Katarzyna Zielonka, Karolina Zięba, Mateusz Zmyślony, Maciej Zuber, Bartłomiej Żywczak, Marek Żywczak

### PHOTO CREDITS:

Between Music\_AquaSonic\_Nanna Bech\_Photo by Charlotta de Miranda  
Luke Jerram Gaia, by @photographicLeigh  
Pierre Sauvageot, Harmonic Fields by Hand Kraxner  
Małgorzata Mirga-Tas, Roma-news, 2018, acrylic, fabric, canvas, 120x135 cm  
Małgorzata Mirga-Tas, Family-visit, 2018, acrylic, fabric, canvas, 140x105 cm  
Between Music, Breaking the Surface Photo Lia Saile  
Frame Rate LTD  
MC Monin  
Mo PontBrest, Mathieu Le Gall  
PNRLG, Sebastien Carlier  
Guilty Landscapes, Dries Verhoeven by Willem Popelier  
'Niepamięć. Tożsamość ukryta', Joanna Chudy  
Lindy Hop, Fabian Żakowski  
Swing, Kris Kaczmar  
RiminiProtokoll\_Staat4©Benno\_Tobler,  
Igor Gajewski i Klaudia Niszwic  
Les Farfadais  
Eva Bubla Microbial Futures, by Julianna Nyiri  
INSITU\_Open Day 2024 ©Pedro Morato Gabao & Bryan Lassudry  
Justyna Weronika Łabądz  
Rimini Protokoll, Sonja Zugic  
Lucjusz Cykarski, Bielskie Cultural Centre  
Private Ballet School in Bielsko-Biała, by Symeon Czepczor  
Jakub Marcińczyk, by Michał Kopaniszyń  
Natura Sonorum, by Marianna Perun-Filus  
Dariusz Dudziak, Bielskie Cultural Centre  
Museum of the Moon by Luke Jerram. Milanospot, 2019, by Andrea Cherchi  
Patrick Kiraly  
Jakub Krajewski  
Robert Skalski Photography  
Maksymilian Tarnawa, by Symeon Czepczor

### URBAN CULTURE INSTITUTE – CITY OF WEAVES

11 Listopada Street 24  
43-300 Bielsko-Biała, Poland  
on behalf of  
the City of Bielsko-Biała

Bielsko-Biała, 2024



