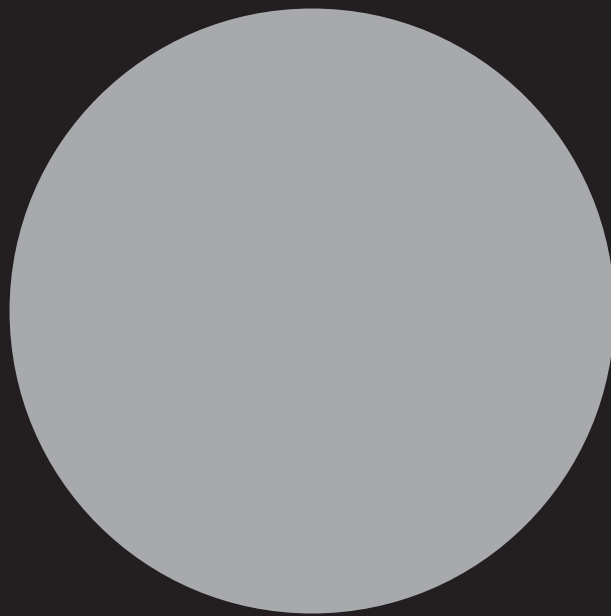


**BANJA LUKA
2024**

CANDIDATE CITY
FOR EUROPEAN CAPITAL
OF CULTURE

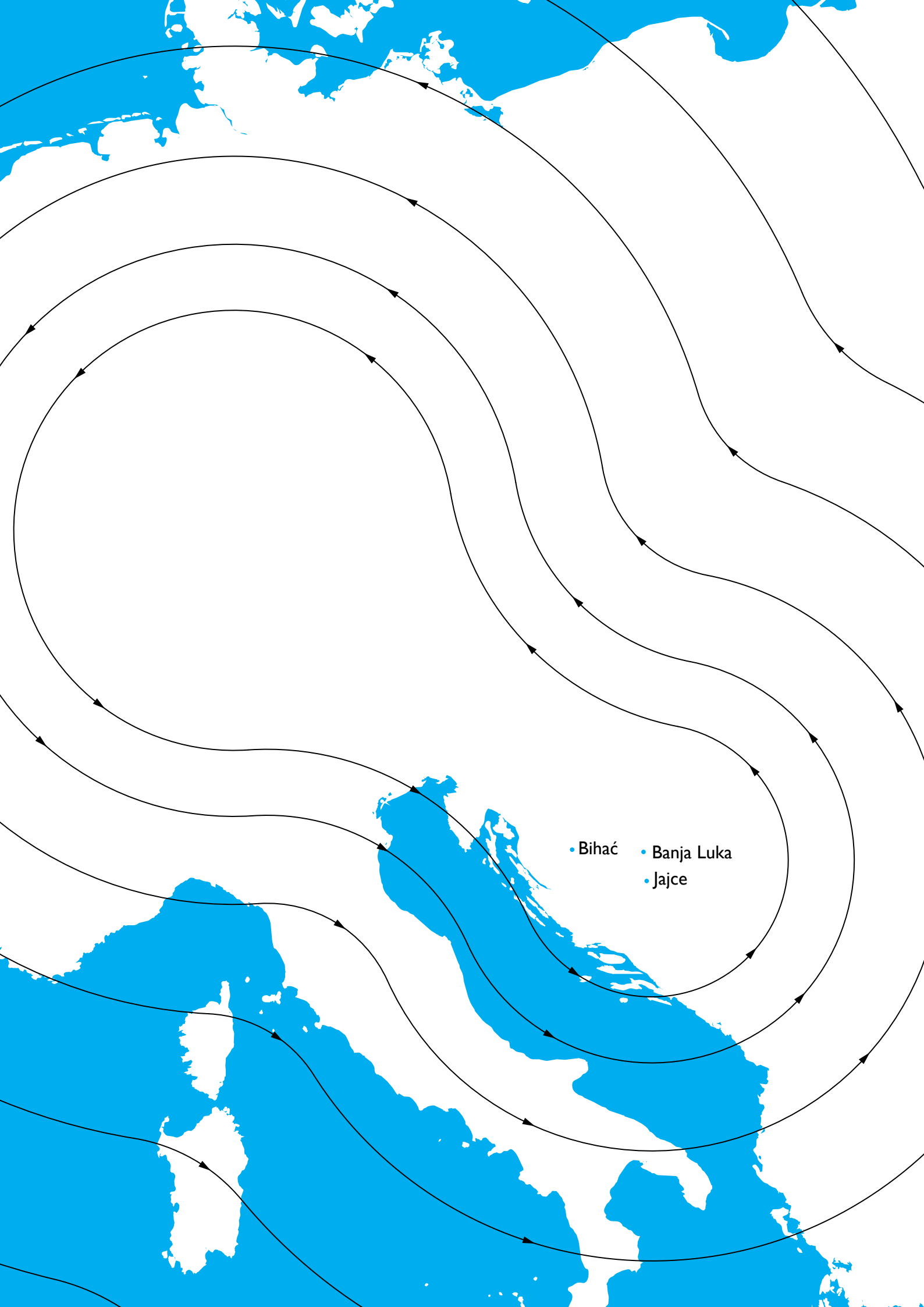


OPPOSITES

**BANJA LUKA
2024**

CANDIDATE CITY
FOR EUROPEAN CAPITAL
OF CULTURE

ATTRACT



- Bihać
- Banja Luka
- Jajce

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you on behalf of the City of Banja Luka and its residents, in the intent to officially announce our candidacy for the European Capital of Culture project, for the year 2024. We see great potential in the opportunity to become part of the ECoC family, one that can launch an era of major cultural development and prosperity.

To this end, the City Council has unanimously reached a decision for the candidacy in March 2017, and has formed a team for the development of the „Banja Luka 2024“ project. The team has undertaken a comprehensive research and collaboration with the city’s cultural scene, encompassing all cultural actors, institutions, organizations, individual artists and public. This has laid foundations for the first step in our preparation for the ECoC candidacy, the drafting and the adoption of the document Strategy of Cultural Development of the City of Banja Luka 2018-2028, first document of its kind, not only in the city’s history, but in the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well.

We have seen the decision to allow the cities from candidate and potential candidate countries participating in Creative Europe to run for the ECoC title as a chance to prove our value and a motivation to infuse our city with new energy. What’s more, through our communication with other European Capitals of Culture we are assured by their experiences that the activities of the ECoC project have the capacity to produce significant changes, improve city’s reputation, raise citizen’s self-esteem, and, most of all, to transform the cultural scene and build a need for culture in general.

Our ECoC team, now organized as the “Banja Luka 2024 Foundation”, acts as a bridge between all the departments of the city and its institutions on one side, and the independent scene and public on the other. It ensures that everyone has a say in this process, and that everyone can contribute with projects, ideas and opinions. This kind of cooperation has been established through many open events, discussions, and panels whose purpose was to prepare the professionals, as well as citizens in general, for the open call for project ideas which constitutes the cultural and artistic program of the application.

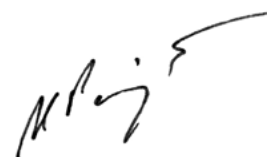
We have also established and reinforced connections and partnerships with Banja Luka’s neighboring areas, most prominently with Bihać and Jajce, two cultural centers that add to our diversity and yet fall seamlessly into the artistic vision of our bid. This is an example of good practice that can open other doors, expressing the potential of the whole region to advance and transform through collaborative processes, thus building long-lasting legacies for the generations to come.

Preparatory activities for the European Capital of Culture bid have also resulted in the city’s decision to increase funding for culture on an annual basis. Determination to follow through on this decision is already visible in the fact that an increase has been introduced this year, and it is the first of this magnitude in years. All of the above testifies to the cultural changes ECoC project has already initiated, and to the spirit the city has ushered in, demonstrating the changes this title can potentially set in motion.

The response from the citizens of Banja Luka has been very positive and continues to be so with every new activity we undertake in the preparation process. With the same enthusiasm, we wish to officially declare our intent to enter the competition for the 2024 European Capital of Culture, in hope that we will have the opportunity to present a year of unforgettable experiences and insight into all the natural and cultural wealth our city and region have to offer, all the hidden and overlooked treasures just waiting to be discovered.

Banja Luka
27. 06. 2018

MAYOR OF BANJA LUKA
Igor Radojičić, MSc



IMPRESSUM

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And to our friends from:

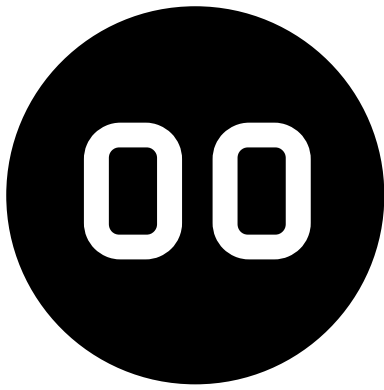
Novi Sad 2021, Eleusis 2021, Plovdiv 2019, Debrecen 2023 (candidate city), Matera 2019, Timisoara 2021, Wrocław 2016, Rijeka 2020, Leeuwarden 2018,

Design by:

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INTRODUCTION – GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

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

Nothing in Banja Luka is simple. Starting with our very name. Banja means *a spa* and Luka *a port*, yet we are neither. It is a continental city, at the North-West of our country, built initially on hot springs, yet to enjoy such tourism we must travel for miles. Banja Luka is the second largest city in Bosnia and Herzegovina, an administrative center, situated on the crossroads between Zagreb, Belgrade and Sarajevo, but almost no one comes here. We take pride in our culture and we call it a green beauty, yet we neglect our heritage, out of shame and lack of knowledge, we ignore the independent scene, out of fear and rootedness in the socialist regime, and we cut our trees in order to make room for new people who are leaving. It is a divided city, yet we have no physical barriers to separate us, no borders, artificial walls. In truth, it is the stories and personal histories that divide us, giving our city, in its physical structure, three parts for three constituent people. Three religions. Three vastly different, unexplained realities. It has lived in this unexplained reality because it never, not even for a second, lived in freedom. And without freedom, there is no truth. No growing up.

Several historical events, such as 2 occupations, 1 annexation, 2 Balkan wars, 2 world wars, 1 great earthquake and 1, most recent, civil war, have generated conditions that prevented Banja Luka from growing and developing, leaving it in a perpetual limbo of induced childhood. We are like a teenager, undergoing constant transformations. Rebellious, but within our four little walls, aware of our surroundings, old enough to perceive and understand the context, but like a child not really able to do something about it. This child, this teenager, lacks emotional intelligence, yet somehow everything in Banja Luka is rooted in strong, raw, sincere emotion. Hence the duality. Hence the lack of simplicity. Because, although everything is opposite, it is somehow exactly the same. Such is the nature of persisting in an unexplained reality.

This paradox and tragedy are best reflected in our motto and vision “Opposites Attract,” which is our wish to paint the spirit of our small community that here in Banja Luka we are united in diversity. We are European. Balkan. Mediterranean. Continental. We are perceived as East although we are leaning towards the South. We are high above, on a plateau, yet we are a valley. We have an excess of legends and a lack of history. And we take pride in our city, whatever the circumstances may be. The obstinacy of our spirit, although we all love and enjoy it, as any teenager would, doesn’t give us much room to admit it. That although we are rich in history and cultural diversity, we are not rich in our ability to stop sweeping problems under the rug and open a dialogue, to talk our problems through, to face ourselves.

Why Banja Luka? Because due to the lack of finances and caring, our culture is dying. And without culture, people cannot survive either. Real people, of flesh and blood, who, despite everything, and in spite of all, live their daily lives with their neighbours, fellow citizens, in unity but in conflict with

their national legends and myths since every part has its own personal history, a narrative to follow through. And all of them, although they would never say it nor would they ever admit it, love Banja Luka, not just the one they imagine in their heads, but also the one imagined in the heads of their neighbours, their fellow citizens and countrymen, people with whom they argue, mourn, make jokes, suffer, live. And are unable to grow into adulthood. We want to break that narrative. We want to help people recover, heal, help them to fully and permanently embrace, that here, in this place, regardless of our diversity, difference in opinion, our stories and histories, our past and all the constructs we were born into, we are much more alike. A teenager will never understand this. A teenager, who is under constant supervision

Such is the power of culture. It can divide, but also unite. Often at the same time. A paradox, we experience first hand. Because here, opposites attract.

and is repeatedly being told what to do and how to do it, who lacks emotional intelligence and stability, and is unaware just who he really is, cannot think rationally and form into a stable human being. A happy one. A being that embraces its identity and knows exactly who he is. Because without identity, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Banja Luka, have nothing to offer to Europe, to the entire world, to themselves. Yet somehow in the midst of this tragedy and in the lack of simplicity one thing *is* simple. The fact that culture can help us heal, grow and reverse the increase in migrations, particularly among the young, as well as forced alienations, which have been, over time, rooted in our cultural differences, is why, in the lack of simplicity, we stand united in our wish to bid for the title of European Capital of Culture.

People of Banja Luka may not understand the context they live in, they may not be the most informed people either, they may not even understand what the ECoC project exactly is, but they do understand that culture, as such, is a catalyst for a positive change. That, through culture, they can reverse the situation, rediscover their identity and embrace it proudly, that they can boost their spirits and talents, reconnect with Europe, and learn more about the world and themselves, which in turn will give them a sense of belonging, releasing them from the constant feeling of shame. Such is the power of culture. It can divide, but also unite. Often at the same time. A

paradox, we experience first hand. Because here, opposites do attract.

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

Our city historically belonged to the region called Bosanska Krajina (Frontier), which included bordering areas of the Ottoman Empire, Austro-Hungarian empire, and Yugoslavia. This position resulted in the creation of a specific supra-national identity of the people of Krajina, encompassing Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks populating the area. In this sense, our project aims to treat the whole region as a specific multinational entity with all its cultural characteristics derived from the tumultuous past, transitional present, and the future which we see as a potential benchmark of reconciliation, collaboration and unity of diverse cultures. Cities, towns and villages in this area have a strong connection to their environment, especially being so colourful and rich in different types of landscape, as well as in the tradition of living with nature, be it through agriculture, livestock farming or through extreme and adventure sports, leisure and ecological activities. Apart from the environment, the area of Krajina was also an important industrial zone in the former Yugoslavia, most notably in the field of high technology and military industry, and electronics in general.

The two largest cities in this region, apart from Banja Luka, Jajce and Bihać, with their dominant Croat and Bosniak population, have specific contextual bonds with our city, that can reinforce the concept of forming this nucleus of combined supra-national identity with the three religions and nations. Jajce, a city with strong history and heritage, is connected with Banja Luka along the river Vrbas and through the Tjjesno canyon, providing a significant range of activities in the field of ecology, adventure and extreme sports. Bihać shares a similar demilitarization process to Banja Luka's Manjača plateau base through its Željava underground airbase, and also extending this connection to the industrial heritage of high military technology. This is only the first step in building a coalition of cities across Bosnia and Herzegovina, of building a long-lasting unity between three constituent people, with the intent of encouraging intercultural cooperation, that will serve as an example of the real change the ECoC project is capable of, using culture to connect and unify above the level of politics and directly between people, providing a model for the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina, while at the same time strengthening cooperation and the cities' institutions.

Explain briefly the overall cultural profile of your city.

Banja Luka is a political, industrial, technological, university and cultural center. However, almost all cultural institutions are on the level of the Republic, save for the

cultural centre Banski Dvor together with the city's medieval fortress Kastel. This disproportion of institutions creates a specific structure in which the City Council has a very limited influence on the cultural production of most of the institutions. This balance should change in the future with the division of Banski Dvor and Kastel into separate institutions. The Youth Cultural Centre of Banja Luka, currently loosely organized as a spatial unit of the Department of Youth, Sport and Medical Care, has great potential to become the third institution on the city level. By 2024, there will be a fourth institution added in the form of a new Centre for Performing Arts.

Our art scene is predominantly theatrical, with two professional theatres (National Theatre and Children's Theatre), a boulevard-type theatre Jazavac and several other. For a city of this modest size, our theatre productions are quite popular, usually sold out, and, in recent years, increasingly travelling abroad. Apart from many music festivals held on a yearly basis, the two biggest ones in the genres of popular and rock and roll music, and classical music are Demo Fest and Days of Vlado Milošević. Besides attracting the widest, as well as international audience, making Banja Luka visible both regionally and internationally, they illustrate the cultural climate of the city in which both the new and the classical forms of art, the popular and the avant-garde, have their principles expressed and both have their public, local and international. Visual artists from Banja Luka have represented Bosnia and Herzegovina on the Venice Biennale of Art twice so far, and have gained international recognition for their work, continuing to work locally, both in the field of art and in the field of education, working with university students. These artists represent the independent scene of Banja Luka, which is rich in potential, in sync with the global tendencies, but is lacking in the managerial aspect of art production. The least developed is dance, which is considered as sports, more than as culture.

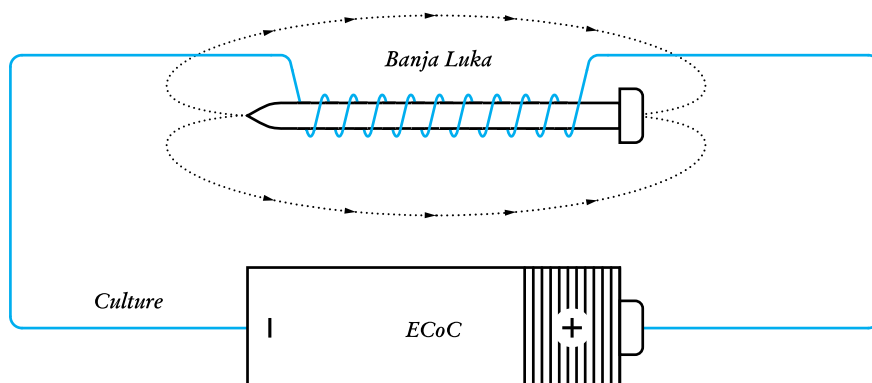
Audience research of 2017 has shown that even though cultural life in Banja Luka is deemed acceptable, most respondents would like to see cultural content more in tune with the current state of art and culture production

in Europe and the world. General opinion is, that the most developed area of culture lies in theatrical arts, music festivals and librarianship. The most lacking in the city's cultural repertoire are festivals of visual arts and film, architecture and design, and creative work with children.

A city that constantly rises from the ashes (the city was left in ruins during the WWII and the great earthquake of 1969), Banja Luka has over time lost its identity, its cultural and architectural heritage thus being forced to reinvent itself on more than one occasion. Time for the final reinvention is now, and the ECoC project is the best catalyst for such endeavour.

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

“Opposites attract” does not refer to Paula Abdul’s famous song but rather to the phenomenon of electro-magnetism, which turns an inanimate metal object into a magnet at the moment electric current passes through its opposites poles. Following this analogy, we see Banja Luka as an inanimate object, or a plain nail, culture as the (coiled) wire that conducts the energy necessary for the new identity, and the ECoC project as the battery that ignites the first spark and serves as the driving force of the entire transformation process. The concept of our artistic program relies on this metaphor. In the spirit of physics and fun, we have divided it into two programme poles. The first one refers to the areas we deem problematic, something we used to have and want to bring back, to reanimate, whereas the other one relates to the resources we have but often neglect, resources we need to energize. Each pole is divided into two clusters summing up to four programme streams in total - **Alternating Currents, Charge the Battery, Spark of the Future and New Energy**. The themes we address through them are: *Unity in Diversity, Returning to Europe, Discovering New Narrative, and City as a Workshop*. We use these themes to explore cultures in dialogue, people and places, innovative heritage and extreme culture in order to increase our ability to communicate, foster healthy relations, gather new experiences and build knowledge.



01

CONTRIBUTION TO THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY

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

The 2018-2028 Strategy of Cultural Development of the City of Banja Luka, preceded by in-depth research conducted with the cultural scene and the audience, and followed by a broad public debate, was adopted by the City in June of 2018. This was a historic day not only because our Strategy became the very first strategy of cultural development of our city, but of any city in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

#01 Transparent and participative cultural policy

Provide firm ground for transparent and participative cultural policy to thrive, a ground in which all the matters regarding culture in the city are being handled openly, strategically and methodically, and is rooted in equality and fairness, mid- and long-term planning of the cultural sector, with a specific focus on the local and regional administration and authorities.

#02 Developed infrastructural network for culture and arts

Make a sustainable system for the city's infrastructure intended for cultural activities. Assess the current infrastructure and exploit it optimally, restructuring the system of assigning spaces in the city's property to cultural operators, making new management models for current cultural institutions, and building new infrastructure that follows a realistic and thoroughly planned development strategy.

#03 Strong, authentic and professional art scene

Restore Banja Luka as a city whose cultural and artistic content is based on high quality, innovation, participation, collaboration and interdisciplinary practice. Fashion Banja Luka as a city where the number one priority is to make cultural and artistic content available to the general public.

#04 Defined cultural policy and strategy in the areas of cultural and natural heritage

Envision Banja Luka as a city that tailors its cultural and artistic content to suit its citizens' needs, is in line with the environment that surrounds it, while encouraging and promoting a healthy lifestyle in the process.

#05 Developed cultural and creative industries

Map the creative potentials in Banja Luka, find what we are best at, encourage and develop. Position it as a city of vast creativity and unforgettable experiences, at national and international levels.

#06 Cultures in dialogue

Bring Banja Luka out of seclusion through internationalization and the presence of our artists and cultural workers on the European and international scene, but also through creating a fertile ground for our institutions and our cultural organizations to collaborate and create with European partners.

Considering Banja Luka has survived all these years drifting without any plan for cultural development, it makes sense that once the primary objectives set in the Strategy are met, everything else will fall into place. As they say, the first step is the hardest but once you achieve it the rest follows. That step has been made, resulting in the historical momentum where culture and arts finally come first. This means that our Strategy, as well as our candidacy, aim not only for the year 2024 but well beyond, continuing firmly in the future in accordance with the principle of sustainability. Our Strategy is understood as a path toward the titular year, where knowledge, communication and stronger connections are built, while the year itself is viewed as a coronation of all our efforts leading up to this point. With this in mind, the City has already adopted new models of support for cultural activities, proposed by this Strategy. Furthermore, the Strategy aims at a significant increase of funds allocated for culture, from current 1.35% to 4% by 2024 and 6% by 2028, with the first increase in years, in the amount of 0.35%, already happening in 2018, which was a direct result of the intent to place our bid for ECOC 2024 and put culture first.

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

Three out of six general strategic objectives deal exclusively with our plans to strengthen the capacity of the cultural and creative sectors. As of recently, the cultural sector is often defined in such a way that it includes art, heritage and cultural and creative industries. With these strategic objectives, all three of the important aspects of culture are here represented. The remaining three are there to further strengthen and provide a healthy environment for culture and arts to grow and thrive. They include changes in the City management, legislation, tax policy, education, audience development, new models of participation, development of creativity, particu-

larly in children, infrastructure, cultural and creative industries, cultural diversity, inclusion, cooperation (locally and internationally) and the international presence of our artists, experts and cultural content. Besides the increase in funds, the City plans to do a complete restructuring of its previous model of working with regards to managing culture and arts. Up until recently, less than 10% of the overall budget for culture was being distributed publicly and in a transparent manner. The rest was distributed by decree. The jury deciding on the projects that would receive grants was comprised mostly of councillors and politicians sitting in the City Assembly. Only one out of five jury members was from the cultural and creative sector. With this Strategy and our Candidacy, all of this is changing. Together we have developed new models of funding, reflected in our seven lines of co-financing, and we have planned the cross-sector cooperation (technology, culture, arts, science, education, environment...), which was until 2018 almost non-existent. However, other essential aspects of our Strategy could depend on the ECoC title that can bring us necessary changes.

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

The strategy defines six strategic objectives and thirteen strategic priorities. Project Banja Luka 2024 addresses four strategic goals – Strong, authentic and professional art scene, Cultures in dialogue, Developed Creative industries and Developed infrastructural network for culture and arts – whereas the candidacy of our city for the European Capital of Culture is defined as the 5th most important of the 13 strategic priorities. Furthermore, Foundation Banja Luka 2024 is closely associated with the Strategy given that the City not only adopted both decisions – to nominate the City of Banja Luka for the ECoC 2024 title and to work on developing a cultural strategy – at the same City Assembly session held on 16 March 2017, but also gave the task of managing both documents to the same people, which are at the very core of the Foundation Banja Luka 2024. During this extensive process, we took the role of facilitators who hosted more than 80 organizations and institutions, 300 artists and cultural workers and organized 12 focus groups that led the year-long dialogue about the challenges the culture in Banja Luka faces today and in the future if we are elected. During this time, extensive audi-

ence research was conducted giving us a closer look at their cultural needs. All of the data and inputs collected were used in the creation of this bid.

Using the Strategy as our starting point in constructing the artistic programme, we defined two poles and within each, two programme clusters. One is rooted in the key problems and challenges our research has brought forth, most prominently the lack of communication and collaboration on the local, national and international level, as well as the apparent weaknesses in both human and the infrastructure capacities. The lack of communication and cooperation is a direct result of the civil war, migration, transition and fear that was born out of these hard processes we have

Using the Strategy as our starting point in constructing the artistic programme, we defined two poles and within each, two programme clusters.

been put through in the last decade of the 20th century. Due the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina, Banja Luka including, was organized almost as a ghetto in the heart of Southern Europe, with borders opening only 8 years ago, it comes as no surprise that our people, who are currently at the peak of their creative strengths and productivity, born during the 1980s, were, up to their late 20s, completely sheltered away from all the influences and movements of the modern world. The experiences of other cultures, of mutual collaboration, travelling or welcoming are lacking and are therefore being put forth as the key processes on our path of once more becoming Europe and European, which we all are. **Alternating Currents** are closely related to the cultures in dialogue objective and the projects that address the internationalization and the presence of our artists on the European scene and vice versa are: *I for Identity, Building Empathy, Mariastern Abbey, Why on Earth Wouldn't You Wear a Hat and Unlisted*. **Charge the Battery** is dedicated to building capacities and finding new spaces for art. Projects here are: *Bad Art, Acupuncture, Film at Every Corner, Boom and Markets*.

The other pole is looking more closely into our potentials that are being unused and unrecognized in the City. They are, first and foremost, our cultural and our natural heritage, and then creative and cultural industries as well as technology, which together make our past and the path towards our future. Changing its identity from a Slavic settlement, rooted in livestock breeding and agriculture, Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian colony occupied by the Nazi forces during the World War II, to the important industrial and military city within the borders of SFR Yugoslavia, Banja Luka today is the second largest city in Bosnia and Herzegovina that almost no one visits. Rich in cultural heritage, with over 146 sites, among them one of the oldest houses in Bosnia and Herzegovina, that is patiently waiting for its reconstruction, and many other hidden gems, out of which one was rediscovered recently and included on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, Banja Luka is waiting to be seen. Surrounded by the extreme nature that, in less than 20 kilometres of and around the city, can offer a variety of activities, from free climbing, hiking, speleology, rope abseil, kayaking, dajaking, rafting, caving, canoeing, trekking, paragliding, parachuting, biking and sport fishing, Banja Luka is a home to Vrbas, a deep green fresh mountain river of untouched morphological structures and several endangered species. All of these potentials that have been neglected for so long have found their way into the Strategy, within the fourth objective, and our bid book, where they make up the large part of our programme and the core of the second pole and two programme clusters: **Spark of the Future** and **New Energy**. Together they will build a path that will help us transit into the future. Projects are: *Faceprints, Listen to the River, Put Your Foot Down, Hanging Gardens, Sheep Aboy, Zero/Nula, Illuminate*, etc.

Only put together, like two opposite poles on the same battery, and connected with one string we call culture, these problems and challenges we face today can conduct and in turn create new energy that will reimagine Banja Luka as a city, which in its innovation, strength and boldness can once again become

attractive. Only then and not before.

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

The candidacy of Banja Luka for ECoc 2024 is, as we see it, a vessel for all the necessary changes. In that regard, through this process, Banja Luka is in search of a new model of cultural development, the one that is not reserved for culture alone but is all-inclusive.

Cultural development and impact

Cooperation – The aim is to increase the number of interdisciplinary artistic and cultural cooperations, growth in local, regional and European audiences, and to increase the number of artistic and cultural partnerships between our city and other cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Europe, which we expect to rise to 300% until 2024. We have initiated the collaboration with Jajce and Bihać and organized the first meetings of the cultural operators from both cities. This will be a model to follow in the future, as we believe that culture can bring new energy to the country that lacks communication skills, and has weak and poorly linked institutions.

Participation - In these parts, and we are referring to the Western Balkans, whose future is European, participation, as a concept, is a foreign idea. So, what we proposed in the Strategy and what we aim to recommend in our bid is to – *involve citizens*, by asking them about their cultural needs and creating places/content of importance for them; *develop new audiences*, by devising and promoting new models of participation and communication of the cultural content; *involve cultural stakeholders* in the decision-making processes; *formulate and encourage new ways of informal education*; and overall *increase the number of people who actively*

participate in the creation, production and management of cultural activities. In the Western Balkans, and especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina, this is a revolution. This said, our paramount aim is to make Banja Luka a place of relevance for people highly versed in culture and creativity. We want to create a desirable place, the one where young professionals, artists and cultural workers will choose to live and work in, a decision which will affect the diversification of work opportunities, contributing to a more sustainable local economy.

Economic and social impact

Social impact is an important and integral part of our vision. It imagines a city as a space of community, participation and shared experiences where social inequality is reduced and social cohesion is established. Our projects are aimed at **forging empathy** in our fellow citizens and **trauma relief**, at **rebuilding trust, freedom of speech** and **artistic expressions**, at *othering* and being *the other*, **examining** and **discussing labels** (i.e. national, religious, cultural, gender...) with the aim of **improving the impact of minority groups, integration** and **reconciliation**, as well as providing audiences, tourists and our citizens with another, valuable, perspective and finally, **social inclusion**. This means **the inclusion of all people** in artistic and cultural processes, such as creation, production, curation and management, including the young, which is now not the case given that most of the decisions in and for the city are being made by cultural workers who are in their sixties, the legacy of Socialism. In that regard, it is worth mentioning that

FIELDS	INDICATORS
Creative industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research carried out into the status, capacities and potentials of creative industries Number of start-up projects and number of projects based on intersector cooperation Number of annual exchanges between Banja Luka and other ECoc cities Number of employees Number of new affirmative measures by the city and the country administration (legislation, micro-granting, workspace,
Cultural capacities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of allocations for the culture from the city budget Number of new or revitalized spaces for culture (production and events) Number of cultural spaces in local communities for their residents Number of young people working Number of trained cultural operators and producers Number of successfully implemented projects Number of achieved partnerships with the international scene
Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in share revenue in the budgets of cultural institutions and organizations Number of trained workers in the tourism and services sectors Average annual increase in the total number of tourists Average annual increase in overnight stays Average annual increase in the length of stay Average amount spent per tourist Number of people working in the sector Creation of new content and perception of local brands

the BL2024 team consists of artists and cultural workers who are 95% of them in their 30s. This is a precedent. By 2024, they, and hopefully many others, will be the driving professional force of the local cultural sector.

Outline briefly the plans for monitoring and evaluation.

Given that Banja Luka has not yet had the opportunity to hold events of the ECoC magnitude, one of our primary goals is to set a clear evaluation and monitoring framework so as to ensure that the implementation is proceeding as planned and everyone has a clear set of objectives, success indicators and markers, and evaluation tools. Also, one of the key purposes of the evaluation and monitoring system will be to make sure that the implementation of the ECoC project stays in line with the programme’s vision, themes and objectives, with the cultural strategy of the city and that it contributes to the envisioned development of the cultural sector. To ensure objectivity and pooling of expertise and resources, the evaluation will be implemented through different operators.

Evaluation and monitoring of the ECoC project will be conducted in three stages:

Stage 1 (2018 – 2020): Developing the right methodology and evaluation and monitoring plan. So far we have performed some baseline studies in the framework of research for the Strategy of Cultural Development of the City of Banja Luka 2018 – 2028 and the Strategy for the City of Banja Luka and more are planned in 2019. Parallel to this, we will develop an online platform that will be the database and archive of all the projects, their general and specific goals, expected results and outputs, and success indicators. This database will be shared by all departments and it will be an excellent tool to keep everyone informed on the progress of the implementation.

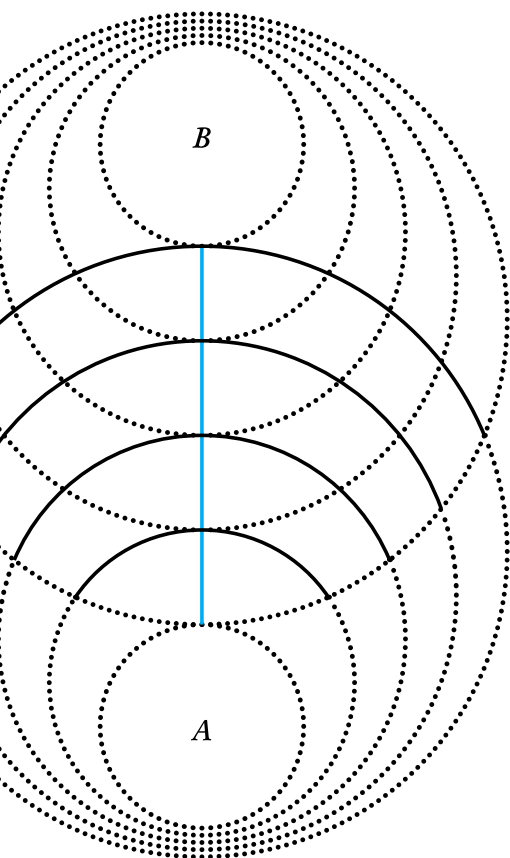
Stage 2 (2020 – 2024): Evaluation and Risk Management team will oversee the overall and individual project implementation. It will compile summary and interim reports for the CEO, as well as midterm and final reports on the implementation of all the projects. Following the data on the online platform, they will

produce questionnaires, surveys and checklists for individual projects. Event coordinators will submit their reports on project implementation together with attendance lists, press clippings, photos and any other relevant material. The team will monitor the impact on project beneficiaries through surveys, interviews, questionnaires, and comments left on social media sites. European Commission and EACEA will be regularly updated on the progress of the implementation, conclusions and recommendations of the external evaluators or the Steering Committee.

Stage 3 (2024 -): Foundation Banja Luka 2024 will continue to operate after the year 2024. Many of our projects leave sustainable results and the Foundation will continue to monitor and evaluate the success of these legacies. In addition to this, the Foundation will keep track of the implementation of the Cultural Strategy of Banja Luka and will contribute to the continued development of the cultural scene.

Internal evaluation will be conducted by Foundation Banja Luka 2024, in cooperation with the University of Banja Luka (Faculty of Economics and Faculty of Architecture and Engineering) and Association of Accountants and Auditors of Republic of Srpska. Within the Foundation Banja Luka 2024, there will be an Evaluation and Risk Management team who will keep track of the implementation process, collect information from other departments and prepare reports for the CEO, who will present them to the Steering Committee. The purpose of this multi-layered approach is to keep the key staff informed, so as to be able to intervene with any amendments to the course of action if and when necessary.

External evaluators will be selected through a public tender and they will measure the impact of the title year with reference to the previously set goals, expected results and baseline studies. External evaluators will suggest corrective measures if/when they estimate that goals are not being met. Project implementation will be evaluated on the basis of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

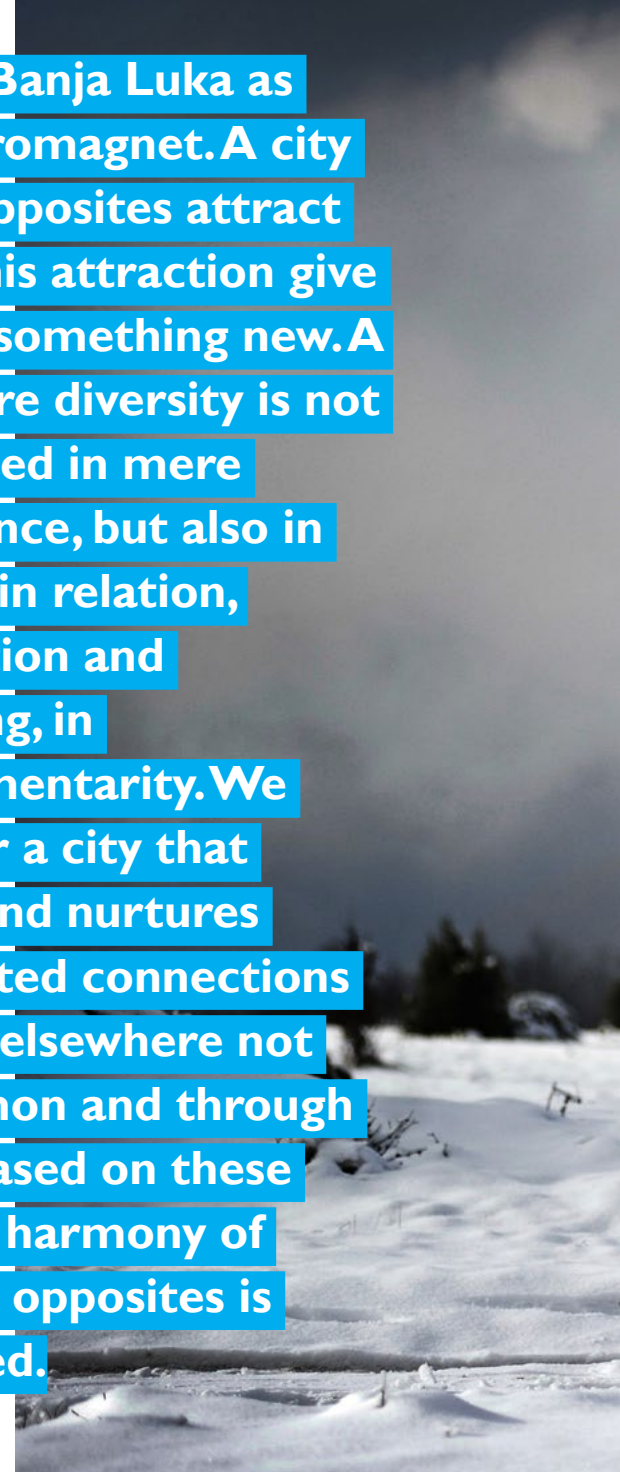




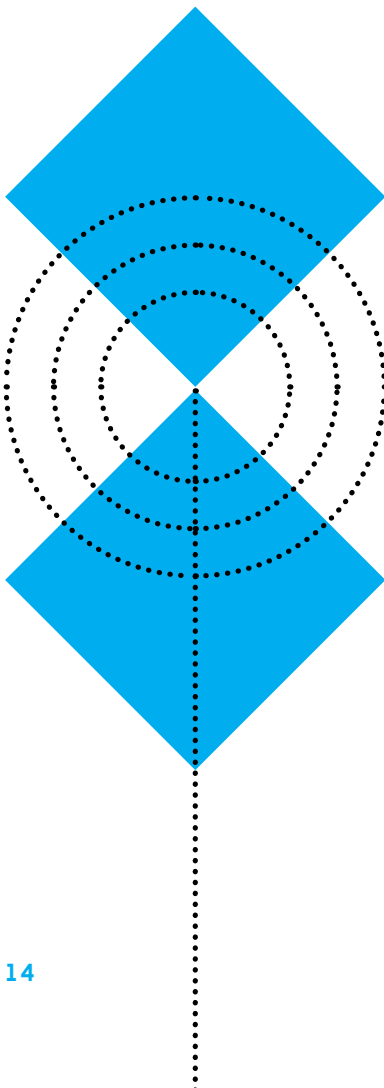
CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CONTENT

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

We see Banja Luka as an electromagnet. A city where opposites attract and in this attraction give birth to something new. A city where diversity is not manifested in mere coexistence, but also in contact, in relation, permeation and upgrading, in complementarity. We strive for a city that fosters and nurtures unexpected connections that are elsewhere not as common and through which, based on these values, a harmony of extreme opposites is generated.



This artistic vision and the programme we devised reflects our intent to give Banja Luka a new dynamic identity based primarily on inventive and *interdisciplinary* practices, on *living* and *innovative* heritage, guided by the basic principle of sustainable development. We want





“Little Heroes”, Manjača, Aleksandar Čavić, 2015, photo: Aleksandar Čavić

a city of rich artistic content *accessible* to all citizens. A place that welcomes its guests with open hands, a lovely city of hospitable people that takes you in, appeals, *communicates* and awards you with fresh and unforgettable *experiences*. A hidden gem where healthy relations are nurtured, between people, towards nature and life in general. An unexpected place you will always remember and cherish. Because underneath, such is Banja Luka

and such is Bosnia and Herzegovina. Undiscovered, sometimes rough and at times wild yet always timid, often at the very same moment. Thus, our vision is to reflect the nature of our country and city throughout the artistic programme that works under the slogan “Opposites Attract”.

The strategy of our artistic programme is based on three key points:

Unity in diversity

The first key point is to reconnect and strengthen our relationships (between different cultures, between people and nature, culture and other fields) by bringing together opposites, within each of our programme streams and the projects themselves, by merging past, present and future, by experimenting and **using our weaknesses as sources for new opportunities and a future built on diversity.**

Returning to Europe, discovering a new narrative

Banja Luka is a city that needs to open towards Europe, to return to the fold. **Everybody loves a good comeback.** Unlike other cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Banja Luka has been in seclusion, on the margins of Europe, for the past three decades. Our cultural scene, unknown. Our artists, unknown. Our potentials, unknown. Our identity, unknown. To you. To us. To the entire world. We are using our artistic and cultural programme as a means of discovering a new narrative and a new identity of our city, the one that is authentic to Banja Luka, to Bosnia and Herzegovina, to the Western Balkans, but presented through the European lens and supported by our European partners.

City as a workshop

In our effort to distance ourselves from the socialist regime, whose legacy is felt even today, especially in the way culture and art are experienced and perceived, we are taking them outside the institutions, from seclusion, and bringing them back to the people. **We look at the city as a canvas, as a stage, a classroom, but also as a work in progress.** Majority of our programme and project ideas are devised as outdoor activities that are happening across the city and its surrounding area for this very reason. To foster new cultural habits. To learn. To engage. To create new meeting spaces. To participate. To open up.

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

The BL2024 cultural programme is divided into **four streams** (Alternating Currents, Charge the Battery, Spark of the Future and New Energy), which comprise 43 project ideas. The programme streams are lead by **four flagships**, one for each stream, that in the spirit of our concept and slogan, we call **motherboards**. Together they sum up to a total of 62 projects.

02.0. THREE OPENING CEREMONIES

In the spirit of equality, dialogue and participation, we centre our titular year (opening and closing ceremonies) on three traditional events, inherently bound to these lands and rooted in our culture, tradition and the three dominant religions of our city: Orthodoxy, Islam and Catholicism. Although the artistic programme for the three opening ceremonies is still being developed, we have adopted the following concept.

1st Opening Ceremony - 6th January 2024, centres on the traditions surrounding the Orthodox Christmas Eve. They are a vital part of our heritage that have their roots in the Slavic pagan culture, and have found their expression in many European traditions as well. The custom of burning *badnjak*, an Oak tree branches, leaves and twigs, signifies a preparation for the coming year and is often accompanied with prayers and songs that the year brings happiness, love, luck and fruitfulness, everything that will hopefully come with the ECoC title.

2nd Opening Ceremony - the last day of Ramadan, which will take place sometime in June since Ramadan moves depending on the visual sightings of the crescent moon, is a celebration of the midpoint of our programme. It coincides with the project *Spreading Wings*, and symbolically all of the activities will take place at night. The ceremony will consist of a communal dinner organized in the city centre to celebrate the successful first part of the year. Invitations will be sent to all the citizens of Banja Luka, including our European friends and guests. The main street will be closed, and a table 2.2 kilometres long, will be set, hosting 7000 people at a turn. Apart from the food the citizens will bring for sharing, we will have a debut demonstration of food produced within the following projects: *Can't Say No to Grandma*, *Hanging Gardens* and *JR*.

3rd Opening Ceremony - 26th December, a day after the Catholic Christmas, will serve as the date for our closing ceremony and reflection on where we were before the title and where we are now, after the programme has been successfully implemented. A specially designed Christmas tree made of recycling materials and decorated with the success stories of our artistic programme will be placed at the main city square. As before, during the 1st and the 2nd **Opening Ceremonies**, invitations will be sent to all the citizens of Banja Luka, our European friends and guests. This time, the invitations will include a letter and a postcard depicting the cultural and artistic works, productions and performances implemented during the titular year. Among other things, the letter will explain the concept of the **3rd Opening Ceremony** asking citizens to become Secret Santas for just one day. In that sense, every citizen will get a chance to participate as long as they are willing to make someone they don't know happy by giving them a gift for Christmas and New Year's Eve.

Since the principal themes, or key points, of our artistic and cultural programme are *Unity in diversity*, *Returning to Europe (by discovering a new narrative)* and *City as a workshop*, it is our wish to use these three open-

ing ceremonies as turning points in the much needed process of transformation, one that is at the core of our decision to apply for the ECoC project and our wish to become the city Europe would gladly call its own, a city that would make us proud. Our opening ceremonies are celebrations of cultural diversity happening outdoors. They aim to contribute to better *communication* and open dialogue because these are prerequisites of *healthy* relations that lead to new *experiences*, and ultimately new *knowledge*.

Orthodox
Christmas

January
2024

Ramadan

June
2024

Catholic
Christmas

Decemeber
2024

Janus — A hole in the wall

My garden is your garden is your garden — Day Centre — Experimental Noise Park

I am an emotional creature — I for Identity + Labels — Two Birds. One Stone.

BORDERING IDENTITY

Unlisted — Dajak

Sing-off

Building Empathy

Why on Earth wouldn't you wear a hat?!

Mariastern Abbey, from Melanesia to Algeria — No!mad

ALTERNATING CURRENTS



CHARGE THE BATTERY

Gradigranje

Boom

Markets

Hajduci i Jataci

Robo Kids/3D Culture

Multicultivator

Bad Art

Guide through Banja Luka Galaxy

JUMP START

Spring Cleaning

Perspectives

Cultural Playground on the Move

Ugly Duckling

Banja Luka Starter Kit

Game Play

Hedgehogs home in the Enchanted forest

Old-New Heritage

Film at every corner

Artist in residence programme

Picnic

KA 2024



SPARK OF THE FUTURE

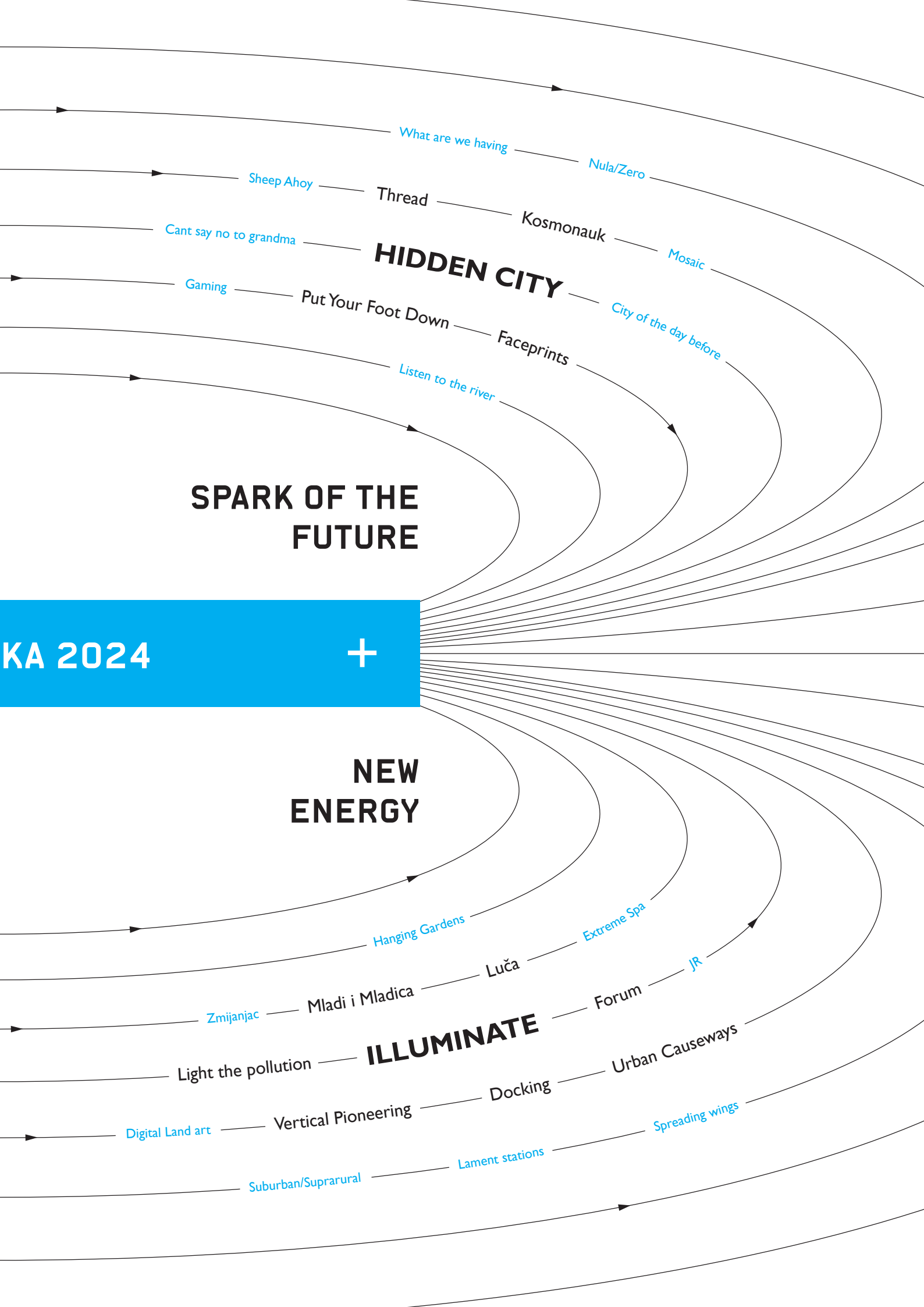
NEW ENERGY

HIDDEN CITY

What are we having — Nula/Zero —
 Sheep Ahoy — Thread — Kosmonauk — Mosaic —
 Cant say no to grandma — Put Your Foot Down — Faceprints — City of the day before —
 Gaming — Listen to the river —

ILLUMINATE

Hanging Gardens — Extreme Spa —
 Zmijanac — Mladi i Mladica — Luča — Forum — JR —
 Light the pollution — Docking — Urban Causeways —
 Digital Land art — Vertical Pioneering — Spreading wings —
 Suburban/Suprarural — Lament stations —



02.1. ALTERNATING CURRENTS



Who Would God in Bosnia Be?, performance design, 2018, photo: Marko Bilbija

Alternating Currents addresses the problem of *communication* which is probably one of the key problems of our cultural scene. Lack of communication between the artists, the institutions and the independent scene, between the public and the private sector, within the public sector itself, with the regional and international scene and across different cultures, identities, accepting diversity. Lack of communication and exchange of knowledge that helps us learn from our mistakes and enables us to find a stronghold, to grow and become tolerant, leads to isolation, helplessness and ultimately narcissism. The projects in this particular stream are looking for possible ways to address this issue, create a dialogue, preventing us from slipping into complacency and ignorance.

BORDERING IDENTITY

With our inability to tell you who we are, the problem we discussed and addressed on the very first page of this bid, it stands to reason that the first motherboard, *Bordering Identities*, is dedicated to exploring that question a bit further. Brought together in one cluster, these four projects that make up *Bordering Identities* aim at examining one's identity, in the broadest sense of the word, while simultaneously encouraging and urging for understanding, acceptance and increase in the ability to communicate and advocate heterogeneity. Envisioned as a cluster that harbours, feeds and encourages a much-needed dialogue between different cultures for the sake of further nourishing our unity in diversity, this motherboard asks us to learn from one another, to learn from our mistakes in order to facilitate active collaboration and cooperation.

I FOR IDENTITY

[#PerformanceDesign](#) [#InternationalExhibition](#)
[#Theatre](#) [#Diversity](#)

Serb. Croat. Bosniak. Muslim. Orthodox. Catholic. Gay. Straight. Bisexual. Intellectual. Old. Young. Who are we? What has made this way? How do others perceive us? *I for Identity* is a *performance as research* project in the field of performance design that examines the close relationship between identity (of a body) and its surroundings (of a space) that influenced such construction. The principal theme is to re-examine the role of performance design as an artistic practice, which, by using the question of

personal and collective identity, deals with the classification of stereotypes. The project also aims at positioning performance design as the creative basis of an artwork, with the intention of changing the on-going paradigm while experimenting with the traditional methodology of creating a theatre play. *I for Identity* is a collaboration between at least fifty artists that come from countries where the construction of a national identity is of great importance in terms of the political and social flux. Besides Bosnia & Herzegovina, artists from Ireland, Spain, Czech Republic and Latvia will be invited. All of the chosen artists will be given the same methodology and will be asked to come up with a narrative for a series of artworks on the topic of identity, designed for an exhibition (a white cube), but in such a way that they can change their nature once placed on a theatre stage (the black box). The concept, guided by international curators, will come out of the identities of the chosen artists and their relation to the collective, national identity. In a sense, it will be a personal story told through art. Furthermore, one part

of the exhibition space will be specially designed for the visiting audience to share how the exhibition has influenced the perception of their identities. The key question in this voluntary experiment titled *Labels* is how to find common ground between people who have no common ground? How to break through the barriers of a constructed identity, national and otherwise, history, culture, gender, religion or sexual orientation. Participants will be asked to put labels on their bodies, those they think define them, and discuss them. Why did they choose them, how do they identify with them, what does that say about their identity, etc. The participation will be recorded and all the materials will be used for a documentary about labels and their influence. The outcome of *I for Identity* will be close to 50 different art pieces (dance, installation, photography, music, video art, text, scenography, costume), 6 exhibitions, 5 theatre plays (originating from the chosen countries, showcased in Banja Luka and travelling around Europe) and 1 documentary film.

By: Foundation BL 2024, public sector

BUILDING EMPATHY

#Installation #InternationalExhibition #Diversity #Impairment #Mentallness

Building Empathy starts with an in-depth research into how people with disabilities and mental health problems experience the world around them. Experts in the field of medicine, psychotherapy and art therapy will work closely with artists in search of these experiences and possible ways of interpreting and showing them to the audiences. The primary goal of the project is to create an exhibition, a series of spatial installations, that tell the story of how the world is perceived from another point of view. By providing our audiences with the distinct experiences of being blind, deaf or distraught in one's thoughts, we hope to evoke deeper understanding and empathy that naturally follow from walking in another's shoes.

By: Foundation BL 2024 and "Zdravo", public sector

BORDERING IDENTITY

Partners we contacted:

Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space (CZ), SCEN (SRB), Sodiya Lotker (CZ), Miha Horvat (CRO), Tatjana Dadić-Dinulović (SRB), Dorita Hannah (FI/NZ), Joslin Mckinney (UK), Cultural Center Banski dvor (BH), Center for Documentation of Art Cricoteka (PL), Center for Performing Arts (BH), National Theater (BH), Play Time Laboratory (BH), Tiflološki muzej Zagreb (CRO), Mladen Miljanović (BH), Nada Ivanović, European Foundation for Art Therapy, TOBL (BH), Youth Center Banja Luka (BH), Museum of Contemporary Art of Republika Srpska (BH), Embassy of the USA, Embassy of Switzerland, Embassy of Japan, Embassy of Norway, Embassy of Sweden, Association of National Minorities (BH), Krafter (BH), Academy of Arts Banja Luka (BH), Academy of Arts Novi Sad (SRB), Art studio "Zaklan" (BH), Kazamat (BH), Terminal Music and Arts Festival Sombor (SRB), Namanja Čado (BH/NO)

Partners we plan to contact:

University College London (UK), Platform Scenography (NL), Sounds of minorities (ITA), Tolerance Foundation (BG), Soft Touch Arts (UK), Vladislav Nastaševs (LV), casaBranca (PT)

WHY ON EARTH WOULDN'T YOU WEAR A HAT?!

#FashionDesign #CostumeDesign #Heritage #Festival #Diversity

There is a famous saying "Kapa glavu čuva," which can be translated as "It is the hat that protects the head, keeping it from harm." *Why on Earth Wouldn't You Wear a Hat?!* is a festival of identities, a place of freedom, of expression, of communication and being true to oneself, a place of cultural diversity and fun. Promoting different forms of expressing personal attitudes and cultural preferences that manifest in the act of wearing hats characteristic of different beliefs, demeanour, mindset, stance, nation or religion, it offers its participants a choice and an arena for expression in the cultural, ethnic and aesthetic sense. Along these lines, this project, which seeks to explore the history of hats and their cultural significance in the context of art, and in general, is open to all. In the course of the festival, participants will be invited to produce their hats and stations throughout the city will be organized specifically for this occasion. Together with designers, ethnologists and art historians, the citizens will learn about different cultures, fashion, its importance, meaning and the contexts that influenced the development of this particular piece of clothing throughout time.

By: Kapa za sve, independent scene



My Garden Is Your Garden Is Your Garden

#Sculpture #Gardening #Demilitarization #Reconciliation

My Garden Is Your Garden Is Your Garden is a project, interdisciplinary and participatory in nature that builds on the City's annual tradition of awarding the best-kept garden in Banja Luka. Exploring our collective past, process and the path of reconciliation, this project will go into the most beautiful gardens and choose their best pieces, which will be planted into the sculpture "(reverse) Helmet" by artist Mladen Miljanović, the first artist to represent Bosnia and Herzegovina at the Venice Biennale after the war in 2013. These helmet-sculptures will then be given away to other cities, states, nations of the European Capital of Culture family. The donated sculptures and parts of gardens that were grown with love by our citizens will act as symbols of establishing new connections, confronting the past, and spreading a European garden of friendship and mended relationships.

By: Mladen Miljanović, artist/independent scene

Day Centre

#Design #CreativeIndustries
#MentalConstraintsInDevelopment

Day Centre is meant to be a sustainable space intended for intellectually challenged people that contributes to their better integration into the quotidian life and development of practical skills. *Day Centre* is a project that, in collaboration with local, regional and European experts, develops several programmes of skills training and content production (namely in the area of design and creative industries). Everything produced in the Centre will, with the special insignia, be presented and offered for sale in local restaurants, galleries, tourist offices, markets and showrooms.

By: Zaštiti me, public sector

OTHER PROJECTS

Partners we contacted:

Bluespots Production (DE), Yinzerspielen (USA), Ana Letunić (CRO), Christina Kruiše (USA), Colin Lalonde (CAD), Studio Porte Blue (CAD)

Partners we plan to contact:

Jean Michel Bruyere (FR), 80|10 (SRB), Balkan Beyond Borders (GR), Sculpture Network (DE), European Houses of Debate Network (AT), Soft Touch Arts (UK) Signa (DK), War Childhood Museum (BH), Tanja Šljivar (BH)

Sing-Off

#Singing #Music #Heritage #Cultural-Diversity #SymphonyOfTheMountain

Ojkača is a two-verse decasyllabic dashed song, originating from the area called Bosanska Krajina (Frontier), which ends with a long cry "oj." This song is usually performed by 3 singers in a semitone, while the overture is sung by one voice, the leader. Yodelling is a distinct way of singing with fast changes in pitch between the so-called chest register and falsetto. The name of this type of singing comes from the German word jodeln, which means to pronounce the syllable "jo." Parallels in ojkača and yodelling are surprisingly ample, most prominent being that they are types of mountain singing. This said, *Sing-Off* is a competition of an extreme duet, between ojkača and yodelling, on the peaks of the Tjjesno canyon. Accompanied by various instruments, like trembita, fujara, lur, alphorn, *Sing-Off* will become a symphony of the European mountains.

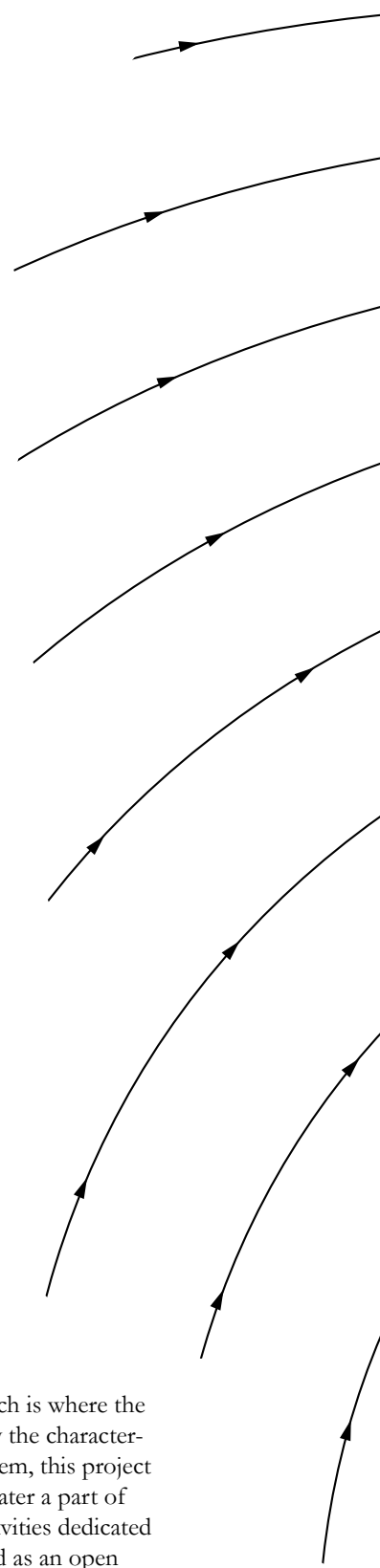
By: Balkan Colours/Extreme, independent scene

A Hole in the Wall

#VisualArts #Heritage #Exhibition
#Gallery #GenderStudies

Šeranić House, built in 1580 during the rule of the Ottoman Empire, is the oldest residential building of family housing in Banja Luka. The house was divided into two parts called "avlija" (sections). One "avlija" was male and the other female. Between them was a wall and in the middle a "musandra" (window), which is where the uniqueness of this house lies. Guided by the characteristics of the house and building upon them, this project turns Šeranić House into a gallery (and later a part of the Museum of Banja Luka) with its activities dedicated to male and female take on art. Imagined as an open space and a scene, this house will also serve as a place for dialogue, exchange, reflection and communication on the subjects of men, women, their position and role in art, gender discrimination (both sexes), feminism, chauvinism and misogyny.

By: Alen Šeranić and Foundation BL 2024, citizen/public sector



Mariastern Abbey, from Melanesia to Algeria

#VisualArts #Heritage #Exhibition #ReligiousDialogue

Drawing from the stories of the Trappist monks (Order of Cistercians) and their experiences in the New Pomerania in Oceania and Algeria, which are related to the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina, *Mariastern Abbey, from Melanesia to Algeria*, is an exhibition that explores the history not only of the Trappist order, but also of religious conflicts in Europe. The exhibition, whose goal is to open a dialogue on religion, will be mobile and large scale and we intend to showcase it outside Bosnia and Herzegovina.

By: Imprimatur, independent scene

NO!MAD

#VisualArts #Heritage #Mobility #Demilitarization #BuildingCapacities

As the name itself suggests, *No!mad* is a mobile space, a structure. During the preparatory phase, leading towards our titular year, *No!mad* will serve primarily as a marketing tool. In the second phase and during the title year, it will transform into a mobile culture and educational station that will transfer artistic content from one location to another, within a city, between cities, from urban to rural and vice versa. *No!mad* will explore the idea of ownership (engaged infrastructure), demilitarization (it uses military vehicles as the basis for its construction) and changes in the mental image of the city and its landscape brought on by culture.

By: Petar Bilbija, artist/independent scene

Janus

#SlamPoetry #BipolarDisorder #MentalDisorder

A two-faced God in Roman and Pagan culture, God of duality and transition, is a fitting title for the project that deals with bipolar and mental disorders. Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac and other major figures of the beat movement and slam poetry, advocated a kind of free spirit, an unconstructed composition in which the writer or a performer puts down his thoughts and feelings without a plan or revision – to convey the immediacy of experience. Understanding and seeing this form of artistic expression as the best one for narrating such complex emotions, *Janus* is a participatory project that uses poetry to give people with mental health problems a much-needed voice that can reach out to people. Poetry will be written and performed by artists who will work in close cooperation with psychotherapists, art therapists and people with mental health problems.

By: Foundation 2024, public sector

Projects under development:

Experimental Noise Park, I Am an Emotional Creature/ Boys Don't Cry, Unlisted, Two birds. One Stone, Dajak

02.2. CHARGE THE BATTERY



Mladen Miljanović, *To Take the Bull by the Horns*, performance, 2018, photo: Piter Wohne

Unclear ownership relations and treatment of public space, a legacy of the socialist system, still produce vague and non-free matrices and patterns. Lack of clear, separated and precise spatial communications result in weaker, slower and fewer interactions. Neglected public spaces have left the city with non-places, spaces without *experience*, belonging, without meaning. **Charge the Battery** is a group of projects that aim at activating and unravelling the meaning of public space as a multi-layered, multifaceted social phenomena, treating it as medium, theme and a place of interdisciplinary collaboration between people. **Charge the Battery** is divided into two subgroups that, on the one hand, focus on the space, and on the other, the people who inhabit it. It aims to build capacities on both sides because, according to our research, this is where we are vulnerable the most. Consequently, this programme stream has the most projects. We call these subgroups *acupuncture*: of the city and the people. They tackle the issues related to public space as an inherent human, civil and cultural right, as a basis for any urban and social development, and they strive toward generating new *experiences* and in return familiarity.

JUMP START

This motherboard opens the doors of Banja Luka's homes, art and public spaces to European artists. With the help of hosts and their stories, the artists will create and present their works to the general audiences that explore the question of relationships between people. Thus, a window will be formed that will enable those living in Banja Luka to walk in the shoes of their fellow citizens for a little while in the hope that they will understand each other better and that art will be a catalyst for positive change and necessary transformation. It also seeks ways to explore different perspectives and interpretations of mythological and historical stories that will, in turn, challenge our reality. What is a figment of our imagination and perception, and what is a fact? How do we interpret the same events, and how do we know that what *they* tell us is what we should believe? Furthermore, this cluster



of projects will build local capacities through workshops, educational programmes, exchange of know-how and experiences between local, regional and European artists. Last but not least, it will give us a fresh perspective on the space around us, and offer us different and unorthodox opportunities how to approach art that will make us question our beliefs.

JUMP START

Partners we contacted:

Maja Ćirić (SRB), Marina Božić (BiH), Sanela Babić (BH), Bunker (BH), KC Magazin (SRB), ULUPUBIH, Dejan Šijuk (BiH), Aleksandra Nina Knežević (BH), Children's Theatre (BH), Marko Milić (SRB), Andrea Široki (CRO), Mediterranean Institute for Gender Studies, European Anti-violence network, Hotel Pro Forma (DK), Ljubica Milovanović (SRB)

Partners we plan to contact:

David Moreno (SPA), Cecile da Costa (FRA), Vlada Milošević Institute for Psychodrama Beograd (SRB), Psychodrama Association Slovenia (SLO), Tomi Janežič (SLO), Balkan Civil Society Development Network (MK)

HAJDUCI I JATACI

#ArtExchange #Exhibitions #Context #MicroEvents #Stories #PublicSpace #Curation

Hajduci i Jataci is a project rooted in one principle idea: all of the spaces are given away by citizens for the sake of art and creativity. *Hajduci i Jataci* translates to Balkan outlaws who opposed the Turkish rule and hosts who helped them by providing lodging, food and shelter. Hayduks/outlaws met in the spring, on St. George's day (6th of May), and parted in the autumn, on St. Demetrius' day (8th of November). Following this analogy, the project will be implemented between the same dates, and the roles of outlaws and their hosts will be assigned to local and international artists, and citizens of Banja Luka, respectively. Foundation Banja Luka 2024, as the coordinator of this artistic exchange, will create categories with specific themes and topics (for example residential spaces will host micro-exhibitions and explore the lack of mobility, discontinuity, the culture of remembrance and memory). Each category within this project will be lead by a curator. Artists will be chosen by the curators and hosts will be selected through an open call published at the start of the year. The call will be open to all – citizens, cultural organizations, private sector etc. – willing to provide the artists with the space for their work and creation. The aim will be to have a diverse offer of spaces ranging from an art gallery, to a museum, a theatre, a bar, a restaurant, a rooftop, a show-room, a store, an office or a residential space, a house, an apartment or a garden.

By: Foundation BL 2024, public sector

PERSPECTIVES

#Workshop #DocumentaryTheatre #InterpretationsOfMythsAndHistory

Perspectives is a phenomenological research on historical and mythical narratives, their influences on art and interactions between different cultural groups, religions, nations. The idea for the project was started by a popular Banja Luka myth about a young girl, Safikada, her tragic love story and unknown cause of death (killed by Austro-Hungarian soldiers, killed by Turkish soldiers, killed by her own family, took her own life, in front of a cannon, throwing herself from a bridge into the river Vrbas, etc). The project seeks to explore similar myths in other European cities and set up a programme for artistic exchanges with the aim of examining the phe-

nomenon of interpretation of historical and mythical narratives, the construction of myths, their influence on the cultural development of cities and their citizens. A series of public debates and open talks focusing on how European stories are used and misused will be organised. *Perspectives* will result in a documentary theatre play put together through joint international collaboration. By presenting and sharing the myths of our cities and countries and developing a new one jointly, exploring different views on history and historical "facts," art will give us the opportunity to see and experience all the possibilities provided by the multitude of various points of view and cultural contexts.

By: Boris Šavija, artist/independent scene

BAD ART

#Design #VisualArt #InternationalExhibition #ArtisticEgo
#Transcendence

Bad Art is an exhibition that is, simply put, bad. Conventional presentations of artists' works are always affirmative. But what is the fate of those works that an artist, for one reason or another, has rejected as wrong, worthless and insufficiently inspirational? What about the works they are "ashamed" of? The *Bad Art* exhibition aims to show and display discarded art, while simultaneously emphasizing the artistic process itself and the artist as a person, with all his artistic virtues and flaws. It tackles the question of how artists perceive their art and casts a new light on different perspectives of an artistic piece while keeping a strong focus on participation and audience development. By looking at "mistakes," whatever the art form, one can learn a lot about art and design. Sometimes these artistic errors are clear and visible at first sight, and sometimes they require a deeper understanding of the artist and his sensibility. *Bad Art* is here to make that distinction.

By: Saša Đorđević, artist/independent scene

UGLY DUCKLING

#Dance #Theatre #PeerViolence

The dance performance *Ugly Duckling* is an adaptation of the Andersen's fairy tale that examines the topic of peer violence. The play is set in the modern age and follows the growing up of a girl who is, due to being different, rejected by society until she reveals the world of ballet in which she feels at home. Apart from the dance performance, which is the final stage of *Ugly Duckling*, what will precede it will be an in-depth research on the causes of peer violence, implemented by pedagogues, psychologists, teachers and dancers through a series of workshops. Working closely with the bullies and the children that are being bullied, *Ugly Duckling* seeks ways to address and understand the problem better, but also to find potential solutions, whilst hoping the process itself will be a transformative experience, one that, through displacement from a personal and favourable point of view, has the power to alter it.

By: Gemma, independent scene



Multicultivator/Spring Cleaning/Gradigranje/ Playground on the Move/Old-New Heritage

#Architecture #SmallScaleInterventions #PublicSpace
#AudienceDevelopment #AcupunctureOfTheCity

Multicultivator, Spring Cleaning, Gradigranje, Playground on the Move and Old-New Heritage is a group of projects that focus on the development and transformation of public spaces (sidewalks, patios, parks, facades and generally various micro-locations), using them as locations for learning and knowledge consumption. The project seeks new ways of using the advantage of the neglected/abandoned/missing space as *emptiness for new* that skips some (otherwise natural) phases. Ad hoc conquests of parking lots, responses to the lack of systematic solutions regarding creative programmes aimed at children in our educational system, and interactive spatial games that occupy the city, these projects are envisioned as work actions that invite the citizens of Banja Luka and their children to, together with architects, symbolically take over and reclaim their space.

By: UNAING, Marina Radulj, Maja Milić-Aleksić, Diana Stupar, Nevid Theatre, RCS/ICP-Research Centre for Space, private sector/artist/independent scene

Markets

#CreativeIndustries #ArtMarket #PublicSpace
#BuildingCapacities

This project uses open, inactive public markets as spaces designated for showcasing and trading art, promoting young artists, creative industries, new achievements, community work and live performances. During the day, the markets will serve as places of art production, crafts and trade, and in the evening as locations for exhibiting art in public space.

By: Foundation 2024, public sector

Film at Every Corner

#FilmCuration #AVArt #Exhibition #PublicSpace
#OpenGallery #AudienceDevelopment

Film at Every Corner has film curatorial practices, audience development and education at its core. The project includes a mobile station for displaying AV arts in public spaces (open, closed, in nature, on facades, at the bottom of a cave, in the canyon, bars, parks, restaurants, abandoned buildings), which have been previously mapped and 'domesticated.' The exhibitions will be one-day events held once a month at locations selected and designed by a film curator, and will tackle key European themes and hot topics (freedom of speech, human rights, gender issues, migrations, etc.). They will include open discussions with the audiences on how to view, read and understand art, which is one of the main obstacles to cultural participation in Bosnia and Herzegovina today. The idea is to boost the capacities of our audience and in 2024 to open a public call for *film dialogue*. The call will invite all those interested to choose an art piece (video or film) that influenced and changed the world of AV art and use it as an inspiration and a basis for their video work. The results will be exhibited all over the city at previously mapped locations where, during the exhibition itself Banja Luka will, for a month, assume the role of a participatory gallery in the open, and film will be shown literally at every corner.

By: Depo, independent scene

OTHER PROJECTS

Partners we contacted:

Jelena Savić (PT), Academie van Bouwkunst in Amsterdam (NL), Saša Radenović (NL), Elger Blitz (NL), Idis Turato (CRO), Romana Bošković (SRB), Ana Nikezić (SRB), Hrvoje Njirić (CRO), Faculty of Technical Sciences (SRB), ABC.ba Bihać (BH), Revizor (BH)

Partners we plan to contact:

Faculty of Architecture University of Belgrade (SRB), Faculty of architecture and civil engineering University of Split (CRO), European Cultural Foundation (NL), Remont (SRB), Public Art Lab (DE), Internet Memory foundation (FRA), EYE Film Museum (NL), FCS (SRB)

Gameplay

#Museum #VisualArt #Apps
#Children #AudienceDevelopment

In collaboration with the local museums and galleries, project *Gameplay* will create a series of art pieces, interactive installations and apps for children and younger audiences. Adopted for the needs and programmes of museums and galleries, this project will have an educational purpose first and foremost, but it will also point to the fact that our younger audiences are equal participants in the cultural life of Banja Luka.

By: Zvezdana Veselinović and Sandra Dukić, artist/independent scene

Hedgehog's Home in the Enchanted Forest

#Literature #Fairytale #PublicSpace #Installation
#AudienceDevelopment

The idea for this project came from a wonderful children's story "Hedgehog's Home," by a Bosnian writer Branko Ćopić, whose moral is to be modest and love the home you have. Using this as formula, *Hedgehog's Home in the Enchanted Forest* will trace other important European fairy tales and stories that teach our children values about the people and the world we live in through the construction of children's parks. All the parks, one for each story, will be designed as places where children will develop motor skills and a sense of love and understanding. In the *Hedgehog's Home* park they will learn why home, here understood in a wider context, as planet Earth and nature that surrounds us, is important, whereas in *Gulliver's Travels* park they will learn to foster and nurture the acceptance of differences and cultural diversity. *Beauty and the Beast* will teach them that the true value of people lies underneath while *Little Red Riding Hood* will help them understand that in life you need to be brave and caring, sometimes headstrong and that not all strangers are the same.

By: Duško Mazalica, artist/independent scene

Projects under development:

Picnic, Robo Kids, Guide through the Banja Luka Galaxy, Banja Luka Starter Kit, Boom, Artist in Residence programmes (performance, literature, art...)

02.3. SPARK OF THE FUTURE



Marko Feher, Yugoslavia, fashion editorial, 2018, photo: Edvin Kalić

Spark of the Future is dedicated to our cultural and industrial heritage. It focuses on finding new, innovative ways of presenting tangible and intangible heritage now imprinted into a contemporary context. It aims at building *healthy* relations with the past and the future while *discovering a new narrative*. The forgotten, unused and neglected will be integrated into the everyday life for the sole purpose of teaching people how to remember, but also how to use the remembered, put it to good use and, instead of feeling shame, embrace it and cherish.

HIDDEN CITY

Hidden City focuses on *innovative heritage* through searching and developing new ways of presenting and interpreting the local cultural heritage and mixing it with digital tools. It will explore our past and immerse citizens into a new experience of self-reflection and sharing that will provide them with a pair of fresh eyes with which they will look at our world from a whole new and, hopefully, a radically changed perspective. In that sense, *Hidden City* will see citizens working closely with artists, folklore dancers alongside gamers and IT experts, and children and young adults teaching the elder some new digital tricks.

FACEPRINTS

#Film #Documentary #PublicSpace
#Mobility #Communication
#AudienceDevelopment

Faceprints is a participatory video art project/performance about identities, personal stories and space, documenting the transformation (of the city, people and experiences) through time, created by citizens in collaboration with artists (film, music, visual arts). The first phase of the project consists of gathering the material - personal stories, material from the press, local stories and legends. In the second phase, a series of workshops will be organised where participants will be divided into several groups depending on their interests. The goal is to involve the citizens, especially the elderly who did not grow up with technology, in the process of creating cultural content. We want to show them how it is done, how film magic is born, but also to increase the accessibility and openness of



HIDDEN CITY

Partners we contacted:

Novi Sad 2021, Timisoara 2021, Eleusis 2021, Adriana Trujillo (MX), Asia Derova (HU), Nayeem Mahub (SE), Fisksåtra Museum (SE) Universidade de Averoio (PT), Teatro Aeroploio-Ena Teatro Giapaidia (GR), Luznav Manor (LV), Gauss Institute – Foundation for New technologies, Innovation and Knowledge Transfer (MK), Marko Milić (SRB), Sezen Tonguz (PT/TR), Kondenz Festival (SRB), Stanica (SRB), Alexandra Jones (UK), Andrea Široki (CRO), 4Culture (RO), Art Encounters (ROM), Kluturzentrum (AUS), Virus Bihać (BH)

Partners we plan to contact:

ESA, British Council, Balkan Dance Network, Nomad Dance Academy, Circobalkan, EYE Film Museum (NL), Aerowaves, NEUREUS, European Network for Opera and Dance Education, The European Independent Film Festival (FR), Sarajevo Film Festival (BH), Kaunas 2022, Esch-sur-Alzette 2022, FCS (SRB)

culture, to enrich the cultural scene and strengthen the cooperation between authors of various disciplines and genres. Participants will be tasked to capture the “pulse” of the city (morning, busy workers, church bells, public transport, sounds of the imam’s evening prayer or anything that attracts their attention). During the third phase, this footage - short, personal, rich, extremely intimate stories, stories that matter and are worth telling, untold stories, hidden gems, will cover the city, making a symphony of sorts. In the final phase, all of the video works and stories will become a part of a *documentary installation* that will be shown during the **3rd Opening Ceremony**. Also, every year, leading up to 2024, we will present and promote the ECoCs of the year by inviting them to produce the same videos, which will in turn, during the month of the said city, be shown in Banja Luka as well. As for our titular year, 2024, we will connect with the cities in Austria and Estonia using *Faceprints* as our window into their world, sharing stories and the experience of being European together.

By: Marko Šipka and Adriana Trujillo, artists/independent scene

THREAD

#Heritage #Costume #Music #Dance #Tradition #Digitization #Science #Technology #AudienceDevelopment

Thread wishes to explore traditional costume, music and dance of four different countries (BH, Latvia, Greece, Portugal) and present them in an artistic, modern reinterpretation that weaves together creative diversity into a unified whole. It will gather European and local designers, composers and choreographers who will devise new methods of interpreting tradition as part of Europeans’s cultural heritage. The creative thread that produced the cultural heritage at hand originates from *different European nations*, but from the *same European man*. Besides being a work in progress, research and a large/scale exhibition, Thread is an interactive application that enables citizens of Banja Luka to connect with cultural heritage of four European countries via interactive touchscreens where they can design their own clothing pieces, compose new music out of existing or learn how to choreograph, by combining the traditional fashion detail of other Europeans, sounds and their movements.

By: Museum of Republika Srpska, public sector

KOSMONAUK

#StreetArt #Heritage #Science #Technology #SpaceExploration

World secret. Contacts with the universe. Landing on the Moon. Tito’s alleged sale of the secret space program to US President John F. Kennedy, which made Yugoslavia rich. All of these themes are the subject of the mockumentary “Houston We Have a Problem,” which served as the basis for Kosmonauk. As previously said, this region has an excess of legends and a lack of history. However, in every myth, there is a little bit of truth. And the truth is that Banja Luka and Bihać were, during the Yugoslav period, a small epicentre of progressive thought, ideas and new technological advances. Kosmonauk (a play of words Astronaut, Cosmonaut, Cosmos, Education and Knowledge) is an art installation consisting of sculptures, paintings, murals and other forms of street art, all depicting a cosmonaut of different visual style. Cosmonauts will be embedded with specific content, accessible via AR apps and SLAM, scattered in different areas of the city. The project aims to raise awareness and technological literacy among the citizens of Banja Luka, and provide the visitors to our city with fun scientific and technological facts from our history. Wishing to keep the public up to date, in addition to the historical trivia, the cosmonauts will also be a go-to place for the news about the latest achievements in the field of science and technology and will be the sources of SF stories by upcoming young writers.

By: Dejan Mijatović, artist/independent scene

PUT YOUR FOOT DOWN

#Dance #Heritage #Feminism #Equality

Put Your Foot Down celebrates two distinct regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina where strong, proud women took fate into their own hands, creating art out of pure survival. It also implies the merging of opposites into a common whole – on the one hand traditional, original dance, song and embroidery, and on the other contemporary visual art, scene and performance design. The focus is placed on the most characteristic traditional dance from Bosnia Herzegovina, *Silent Dance of Glamoč*, but also on the *Zmijanje Embroidery*, both of which have been on the UNESCO Representative List of the

Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity since 1982 and 2014. Silent Dance of Glamoč is unique because it is a dance performed without music, but not entirely without a sound, and because it is different from any other traditional dance not only in the Balkans, but entire Europe. It aimed at displaying the strength and the endurance of the girls, and it lasted until one, single girl wins over the dance she is performing. Victory brought her a status in the society; she became the most desirable girl with the absolute freedom to choose her life partner. Zmijanje Embroidery, on the other hand, is a specific technique of embroidery practiced by the women living on Manjača, at the outskirts of Banja Luka. They have found a way to dye the thread into a dark blue colour we call “the black with character.” This colour, which came from distinct plants living in this region, is also the colour used for our logo. This project will explore the narrative, the themes and the context of the dance in close collaboration with international choreographers (it is silent because it was created under the occupation of the Ottoman Empire, it was aimed at courting but also testing of women’s strength whilst being at the same time both feminist and chauvinist) and in relation to the themes currently dominant in the European society. This mutual artistic exchange and the various possible interpretations brought on by contemporary dancers and choreographers will result in the creation of a narrative of body movement for the series of new performance pieces complemented with a distinct visual identity of the pixelated, digital Embroidery.

**By: ANIP Veselin Masleša,
independent scene**



Can't Say No to Grandma

**#Gastronomy #Heritage #Education #FoodDesign
#Language**

Can't Say No to Grandma will explore how our ancestors, our grandmothers in particular, nourished their bodies. Borrowing from their wisdom, we will make new, modern dishes that will become an addition to our, very limited, indigenous gastronomic offer. Keeping in mind the longevity of our grandmothers, their health and vitality, this project will explore different ways of preparing and processing food, food combinations and the right daily intake. Strong food in the morning, and lots of it, smaller meals for lunch and something very light for dinner. No overeating. The project will trace old recipes across Europe, learn from our grandmas and imprint their knowledge into new dishes. The focus will be on creating recipes for good health, fostering new eating habits and inviting people from different cities to cook with our organic ingredients. Every new recipe or an old one brought to life and recreated during this project will be published and translated into five European languages. The presentation of new recipes will be held during the 2nd **Opening Ceremony** but also within the *Hanging Gardens* project, where we will cook together with European cities, artists and famous chefs connected by a screen and a live stream.

By: Predrag Tošić, citizen

Sheep Ahoy

#FashionDesign #Heritage #Education

With the intent to popularize our sheep “Pramenka” and revive livestock breeding on the plateau Manjača, which rises on the edge of Banja Luka, *Sheep Ahoy* aims to start a new brand of clothes made of natural wool. Because of the thickness and hardness of the hair, Pramenka’s wool is marked as low quality and thrown away as waste. However, it is these “qualities” that make it valuable because the hardness of the hair improves blood circulation and is an excellent non-conductor. A prototype skirt made for this project has resulted in the healing of an ovary inflammation and the reproductive system diseases in women caused by cold. The new fashion line of *clothes that heal* will have contemporary designs, and will be hand/knitted and trimmed. In the first phase, research on the connection between the textile (textures, shape, stiffness, thickness) and human health will be conducted in collaboration with European experts, technologists, designers and medical workers. Artists and designers will come to Manjača to work closely with the locals and learn about this particular wool - methods of processing, dyeing and the handcraft. The outcome of this collaboration that goes both ways will be a new fashion line of clothes that heal that will be exhibited and sold in a specially designed showroom in the city. This project, and several others, like *JR*, *Suburban/Suprarural* and *Zmijanjac*, aim to help bring life back to Manjača, a place made for enjoying the outdoors, a place of inspiration and livestock breeding.

By: Imaginarium, independent scene

Listen to the River

#SoundDesign #HydroEngineering

All waves are defined by their duration, amplitudes and frequencies. *Listen to the River* is a scientific study of the connection between the sound waves and the alternating wave currents of the water with the aim of transferring the continuous yearly flow of the river Vrbas into music. By using the hydrograph the Vrbas creates in the course of one year as our music sheet, together with the engineers and hydro engineers, we will turn the flow into a piece of music. The monitoring checkpoints for the sounds the river makes, designed by architects, are planned alongside the river-banks. The methodology will then be presented to interested parties, specifically the artists living in the cities of the Danube Basin. Together, we will create a symphony of the Danube river that will be performed in Banja Luka in 2024, during the 3rd **Opening Ceremony**. This could be the launch of a new European Festival of Sounds of Water.

By: Petar and Žana Topalović, artists/ independent scene

Nula/Zero

#FashionDesign #Recycling

Project *Nula/Zero* tackles two important issues – development of creative industries sector in Banja Luka, and the global problem of excess of waste. The name of the project Zero or Nula in Serbian refers to the project's goal of creating a fashion line with 0% waste and 0% pollution. It is an exploration of how the world of fashion can influence positive changes in consumerist behaviour through Re-cycling, -using, -creating. The author of this project, Marko Feher, a fashion designer from Bosnia and Herzegovina with notable international success, wishes to contribute to the development of the local creative industries by establishing a brand Banja Luka will be recognized by. Launching and later production of fashion items under this brand will be the joint work of students of economics, fashion design, art, technology, graphic design, under the guidance of experts at first, and with the aim of making it self-sustainable.

By: Marko Feher, artist/independent scene

What Are We Having?

#Gastronomy #Beer #Design #AudienceDevelopment #BeerStories

What Are We Having? puts together creative industries and the art of craft beer production. Imagined as a hub brewery, it will serve as a platform for knowledge exchange between artists, designers and people owning small businesses. Paired with designers, business owners will learn how the labels are designed, the meaning behind a particular design and how art can help improve the process of product placement. Every year, the hub will host a beer crafting competition where an annual public vote for the next year's exotic flavour of the beer will take place. The chosen craft beer will be produced in this hub/brewery, whose interior will be renewed each time by architects and interior designers, working with recycled materials - bottles, cans, bottle caps, crates, etc.

By: Novak Čičković, citizen

Mosaic

#Mosaic #PublicSpace #Inclusion

The inclusion of elderly regardless of their social background, ethnicity or beliefs, bringing communities together to overcome exclusion and inertia, to help them develop a sense of place and belonging is what *Mosaic* is all about. Aimed at the elderly population, but welcoming all, *Mosaic* seeks ways of integrating them into the creative processes. Every participant will be tasked with bringing a certain object and a story connected to it. In the process of art creation, which implies destroying the material and liberation, the objects and their fragments will become the means for the creation of a completely new artwork – a mosaic in public space. The artwork will, at the end of the process, find its permanent place on the streets of Banja Luka. In this way, the public space of the city will be richer each year for a new artwork created by its inhabitants.

By: Miljka Brdanin, artist/independent scene

Project under development:

Gaming, City of the Day Before

OTHER PROJECTS

Partners we contacted:

PIM University for business studies and management (BH), Banja Luka Collage, (BH), Craft, Banja Luka (BH), Labrewtory, Kišnjevi (MD), Semizburg, Sarajevo (BiH), Crna ovca, Zemun (SRB), Gorštak, Banja Luka (BH), Paradox, Sankt Peterburg (RU), Silvertown, Srebrenica (BH), Beerstorming, Brisel (BE), Višeniška pivovarna, Slovenske Konjice (SLO), Castrum-brewery, Doboj (BiH), Beerokrata's craft brewery, Pale (BH), COBA-Contemporary Balkan Art London (UK), Fashion HR (CRO), Sarajevo Fashion Week (BH), Ljubljana Fashion Week (SLO), Fashionclash Maastricht (NL), Kunster an Die Schulen (DE), Serbia Fashion Week (SRB), Central Saint Martins (UK), London School of Fashion (UK), EFSA-School of Economics and Business (BH), The Academy of Arts Banja Luka (BH), UPS – The University of Business Studies (BH), Faculty of Technology (BH), National and University Library (BH), City Gallery Bihać (BH), Cultural centre Bihać (BH), Archive RS (BH), Museum of contemporary Art RS (BH), DOOB 3D Labs (BH), INOVA (BH), National Theater RS (BH)

Partners we plan to contact:

Cultural Heritage Across Borders Sarajevo (BH), Edinburgh World Heritage (UK), WAG Society (NL), Failed Architecture Amsterdam (NL), Guerrilla Architects Berlin (DE), Faculty of Electrical Engineering (BH)

02.4. NEW ENERGY



Drill and Chill, Climbing and Highlining Festival, 2016, photo: Sebastian Wahlhuetter

New Energy deals primarily with the young and health. Of our youth. And our environment. Following our slogan “Opposites Attract,” **New Energy** is a cluster of projects of extreme culture where art and nature meet in a surprising and original twist. **New Energy** is all about finding a new, lasting, fresh identity of Banja Luka, rooted in its tradition; one that is adorable and lovely but in an extreme kind of way. It focuses on our natural heritage in the attempt to raise awareness of the emerging need to protect and truly see the world we live in. It will ask us to be humble, to help others, human or nonhuman, and to empathise. It will dare us to be braver, more adventurous, to share and be selfless. And to cook. Lots and lots of food.

ILLUMINATE

The fourth motherboard, titled *Illuminate*, is a festival of culture that celebrates light, progressive critical thought, digital technologies and experimental art aimed primarily at young people and towards an imagined new future our city needs. It is an extreme culture festival, which is centred on the fast and beautiful mountain river Vrbas that flows through the city centre, and is one of the most prominent areas of Banja Luka. However, it is polluted, neglected and, at times, it even seems that we have turned our back to it. Because, although historically, the city did develop around it and on the plains through which it cuts, the focus was never really on the riverbanks. The potential these banks have in terms of public space is enormous, especially with all the activities which take place on the river itself - dajak boating, kayaking, rafting, famous annual diving competition and so on. The thing that is missing is a complete ring of public spaces around it - boardwalks, urban mobilier, small performance spaces, etc. - which would enable to bring the river into the city's focus as the main natural artery we are grateful to have. To achieve that, *Illuminate* will address the problem of pollution, but also of privately owned buildings and other structures, which have been, over the time of transition, built on the very bank itself, thus blocking the way for the public space to surround the river.



LIGHT THE POLLUTION

#LightInstallation #Recycling #WaterPollution

Light the Pollution is an action with an artistic outcome that focuses on the problem of water pollution. The idea of the project is to devise several light installations on the bridges across the river Vrbas, which will be activated by sensors that show the level of pollution. In practice, this will mean the less Vrbas is polluted, the more visible these installations become and vice versa. In collaboration with hydro engineers and experts in the IT sector, artists will create visual identities of these installations that will, differently and more directly, address the ongoing problem. The idea is that every bridge has its unique visual style and identity designed by a pair of chosen artists (one local and one international). The plan is to construct a system that will grow and develop until the year 2024. To improve the visibility of the installations described above, the project will simultaneously work on increasing environmental awareness and responsibility of our fellow citizens through various lectures, workshops and work actions with the aim of cleaning the riverbank. All the collected waste will be converted into something new and utilitarian through the process of recycling. This said, we intend to invite numerous experts and artists, such as Dutch artist Jolan van der Weil, working in the field, that can pass on the knowledge and educate not only our citizens but also our artists, enabling them to acquire new skills in the field of recycling and art.

By: Depo, independent scene

ILLUMINATE

Partners we contacted:

Debrecen 2023, Partizan Publik (NL), Arne Hendriks (NL), Jolan van der Weil (NL), TOBL (BH), TORS (BH), OOSR Moravica, Mrestilište Braduljica (SRB), Ribiška družina Novo mesto (SLO), Eco centre Blagaj (BH), Outdoor Collective (SRB), Center for Education and Socialization Jajce (BiH), Vermelho Mostar (BH), Croatian Mountaineering Society Mosor (CRO), Österreichischer Alpenverein (AT), AO Kranj (SLO), Faculty of Civil Engineering, Architecture and Geodesy, University of Banja Luka (BH), Faculty of Technical Sciences, University of Novi Sad (SRB), Faculty of Architecture, University of Belgrade (SRB), Research Centre for Space (BH), Play Time Laboratory (BH)

Partners we plan to contact:

Failed Architecture Amsterdam (NL), Guerrilla Architects Berlin (DE), Society of Art and Technology Montreal (CAD), Light Collective (UK), Verlust der Nacht (DE), Association for building with natural materials (BG), Alternativa Materiality (PL)

MLADI I MLADICA or STAY HERE!

#Recycling #Migration
#DanubeSalmon #Extinction

Mladi i mladica is a project about the preservation of the Danube salmon, a freshwater fish from the Salmonidae family, that targets our youth. In Serbian language, *mladica* translates into a sprout, youth, adolescence. It is the largest trout fish in the Danube basin that can usually be found in the rivers of Austria, Slovenia, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Due to its depopulation because of uncontrolled and often illegal fishing, water pollution and dam constructions, which leads to drainage, the Danube salmon is one the most endangered fish species in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Europe. Mirroring the alarming trend in the emigration of our young people, this project seeks out ways to provide both our young and our fish a reason to stay here. One of the prerequisites for creating such a positive environment is the coming back to our roots, back to

nature. For this purpose, as part of the *Light the Pollution* project one section will be dedicated to organizing open schools in nature for primary and secondary school students. These nature classes will include cleaning sections of the river and its banks, informing students on the importance of biodiversity, protection and preservation of nature and ecology in general. Together with the artists, the students will learn the process of recycling, and all of the artworks they make together will be on display at their schools. During this project, we will connect with the cities that suffer from the same problem of Danube salmon extinction, and exchange the fish in order to enrich our rivers, making them diverse.

By: Mladica, independent scene

VERTICAL PIONEERING

#DanceOnSilk #Performance
#ExtremeCulture

Eroded by the river Vrbas, the Tjiesno canyon is still in its early development stage in terms of sports and culture, and this is why *Vertical Pioneering* is of such importance. It is a project of extreme artistic activities, in a true sense of that word. It will host artists from all over Europe, brave enough to showcase their dance and movement endeavours performed on a rope, strung between the rocky banks of the Vrbas river. *Vertical Pioneering* is an extreme dance on silk and hammock, a performance taking place high above the ground that uses natural setting as its scenography.

By: Balkan Colours/Extreme, independent scene

FORUM

#PanelDiscussions #NewAdvancesInCulture #Dialogues

The *Forum* is not a typical centralized public space of the ancient Greek city-states, but rather a fragmented, decentralized sequence of spaces, scattered around the forest with limited distance between them. Each space is a panel where ideas (new technologies and art, cultural policies) will be shared and discussed on relevant topics of the day. These panel discussions will be led by experts in the field. Participants will apply in advance and some of them will be commissioned and invited to take part. The panel discussions, divided into groups, will all take place simultaneously every evening from 8 to 10 PM, followed by the main art programme.

By: Foundation BL 2024, public sector

LUČA

#Music #Acoustic #Sound #Nature

Luča (Light, Torch, Ray) looks back at the event that occurred in 1961 when Quincy Jones held two concerts at the cultural centre Banski Dvor. The evening concert was hit by a power outage, but was soon after continued under the intimate lights of the petroleum lamps, as if nothing happened. Jones' positive impression of the unfazed crowd resulted in a famous composition "Banja Luka," which was written in the honour of our city. Imagined as an annual gathering in the intimate ambient of a natural setting and illuminated by petroleum lamps, campfires, torches and candles, thus mirroring the program concept of small chambers ensembles, *Luča* will focus on the contemporary acoustic music. Following the tradition of Quincy Jones, but also looking firmly into the future and new forms of expression in music, each year, the invited artist will compose a new piece titled Banja Luka.

By: Rez, independent scene

DOCKING and URBAN CAUSEWAYS

#Architecture #Ownership #RiverBanks

The outcome of this motherboard, in addition to the outlines and general conclusions drawn out here, will be the new docks and private spaces turned back to public use, through the projects *Docking* and *Urban Causeways*. They will be utilitarian and after *Illuminate* is successfully implemented, they will be used as places for enjoying the nature, contemplating and self-reflection, but also for kayaks, dajaks, rafting boats and other activities. *Illuminate* will, during the process of our candidacy, last for several days in the summer and it will change its location each year following the course of the river towards the city and the sites of the release of the Danube salmon into the water. The ultimate goal will be to have, by 2024, the river Vrba clean enough in its urban area for this fish to live in it and for the bridges to light up.

By: Malina Čvoro, Foundation BL 2024, artist/independent scene, public sector

Hanging Gardens

#FoodRecycling #FoodBanks
#Gastronomy #Design
#UrbanRooftops

Inactive infrastructure. Socialist architecture. Neglected spaces. Dormant rooftops. They make up a large portion of the urban spaces in our city, while their energy and ecological potential are ignored, wasted and unused. Green rooftops and food banks are not news, not in Europe at least, but in Bosnia and Herzegovina they sum up to a small revolution. With the project *Hanging Gardens*, rooftops of public and residential buildings alike will become new public spaces. Urban food banks, in the sky. In the period of six months, public buildings will become places of communication and creativity, go-to places for learning new skills, with the emphasis on food recycling, cooking, health and sustainability. Food waste is among top sources of pollution. If we stop wasting food, we will not only help our planet, but also our fellow citizens. *Hanging Gardens* aims at spreading knowledge and fostering new habits of donating and discounting imperfect food, using

leftovers and recycling. Rooftops of private, residential buildings, owned by a community of residents, will, with their consent, serve as places for growing organic food. In these new gardens, a variety of healthy herbs, vegetables and fruit from different parts of Europe will be planted (exchange of seeds), while the garden itself will be maintained and nourished by students of the Faculty of Agriculture (as part of the mandatory practice) and retirees. Everything produced in these gardens will be given to those most in need, such as retirement homes, nursing homes, charities and shelters. In this way, the environmental awareness, energy efficiency of these facilities, quality of life, but also a better understanding among citizens and empathy, which we sorely lack, will be greatly increased. In 2024, we will have mobile stations of recycled food set up across the city, organic food growing in the sky and *Hanging Gardens* will become our window into the European world. We will recycle with well-known chefs, talk to ECoC cities, create with our mothers, grandmothers, friends and share with our citizens. From dormant to communal. From citizen to citizen. From Bosnia to Europe, for Earth. Paying it forward.

By: Boris Šavija, artist/independent scene



Spreading Wings

#SoundInstallation #Education #Youth #Bats
#Demystification

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Banja Luka in particular, is one of the richest countries in Europe when it comes to bats, with 30 species so far recorded. A total of 34 countries, including ours, are signatories to the Agreement on the Protection of European Population of Bats (EUROBATS). To contribute to better cohabitation and to inform the public regarding the role of bats in the ecosystem, *Spreading Wings* will develop and design ambient music installations, adapted from the ultra-sounds bats produce, in their common habitats around the city. Furthermore, a series of art and eco workshops will be implemented in collaboration with students in their senior year of high school. Project activities will be carried out at night, and each morning a new art piece will appear in public space. Time of the project implementation is related to the birth cycle of bats and their transition to adulthood, which lasts for 18 days. 18 days of implementation are mirrored in the 18 years, which in Bosnia and Herzegovina traditionally marks the beginning of adulthood and the official coming of age.

By: Jasmin Pašić, citizen

Digital Land Art

#Light #Installation #DigitalArt

This project combines high technologies and new forms of art with the culture of living in nature. With its approach, consisting of minimally invasive installations (3D mapping on natural structures, rocks, trees, water, on the bottom of a cave), interventions that do not damage or disrupt the ecosystem, nor change the morphology of the terrain or flora, *Digital Land Art* wants to set a new example of artistic expression in the nature.

By: Petar Bilbija, artist/independent scene

Zmijanjac/The Man of the Snake-Shire

#Sculpture #Design #Installation #SolarEnergy #Rural
#Urban

There is a hill and a meadow, pierced by sinkholes, not far from Banja Luka, in a place called Zmijanje, on the Manjača plateau. It is an out of this world, beautiful, nameless home to the proud people of this region who got their name “Zmijanji” from the Turkish word “Zimen,” which, apart from denoting a non-Turk (Ottoman Empire), also refers to the people that protect and keep someone from harm. *Zmijanjac* is an outdoor installation by Thomas Dambo, Danish artist known for oversized, wooden sculptures. We will invite Dambo to create a colossus shepherd sitting on top of this nameless meadow. Besides the aesthetics of this sculpture, which will rise above Zmijanje, like a giant, the nature of *Zmijanjac* will be a utilitarian one since it will provide shelter for the local shepherders and be a source of renewable energy. In that way, *Zmijanjac* will, like our ancestors he was named after, be the protector of this region, looking after the locals, who breathe life into this magical place, guarding them against harm.

By: Foundation BL 2024, public sector

Project under development:

JR, Lament Station, Suburban/Suprarural, Extreme Spa

OTHER PROJECTS

Partners we contacted:

Centre for karts and speleology (BH), Montenegrin society of ecologists (ME), Center za kartografiju favne in flore (SLO), Society for preservation of wild animals Mustela (SRB), Centre for environment (BH), Thomas Dambo (DE), Ridgeale Farm AB (SE), Balkan Ecology Project (BG), University of Banja Luka (BH)

Partners we plan to contact:

Verlust der Nacht (DE), European Sound Art Network (NL), Overtoon (BE), Bread House Network, FEBA – European Federation of Food Banks, FoodWin (BE), RISE Research Institutes of Sweden (SE), The European Consumer Organisation, Stop Wasting Food (DK)

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

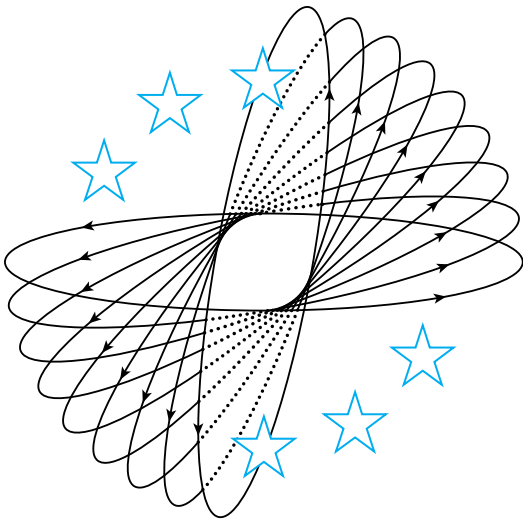
Local cultural and natural heritage is a big part of our bid considering that one entire programme pole is dedicated to its revival. By discovering layers of sediments that over times have grown more colourful, but somehow remained hidden, we treat our heritage with the respect and admiration it sorely needs. Furthermore, both motherboards of the above-mentioned pole, *Hidden City* and *Illuminate*, deal with our heritage, cultural and natural, while each of the streams features at least one project that has something to say on the topic. For example, *Sing-Off* is a project that places ojkaca, traditional mountain singing, in the context of art and extreme sports. It seeks new ways of its reinterpretation and reintroduction into the society that easily shrugs it off as obsolete and perhaps even barbaric. *A Hole in the Wall* turns the second oldest house of family living in Bosnia and Herzegovina into a gallery of contemporary, experimental art. Following the original spatial outline of the house and its division based on gender, the project addresses the problems of modern Europe, primarily regarding the politics of feminism, masculinity, chauvinism, misogyny and forced identity. *Can't Say No to Grandma* traces the origins of our gastronomy with the intent to find "new," healthy eating habits and transform the way we perceive and consume food today. Obesity is the result of a stressful and fast-paced life which must be confronted, and we are turning to our grandmas for answers. *Sheep Aboy* places wool, knitting and weaving firmly within a contemporary context and repositions it back into the heart of our people. It brings together rural women, who spent most of their lives as housewives secluded from the world, with young fashion designers giving each party a window into acquiring new knowledge, rooted in customs and traditions. *Kosmonauk* is dedicated to innovation, street art and digital technologies, celebrating the 20th century, a time when Banja Luka was, paradoxically, more progressive than it is now, with the undying hope it will help spark interest and a thirst for knowledge that in turn might make her progressive once again. *City of the Day Before*, *Old-New Heritage*, *Faceprints* and *Mosaic* use personal, warm stories and memories of the citizens of Banja Luka in order to map and restore that which has been lost and can no longer be touched, viewed, heard or smelled. It uses different techniques and technologies to bring it back to life and imprint it into the city's urban tissue. *Put Your Foot Down* looks closely at a particular and specific folklore dance; it examines its themes, out of which emancipation is probably the most important one, and, at the same time, it seeks new ways of keeping it alive by infusing it with contemporary ballet and digital art.

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

Since the beginning of the application process, we have seen the involvement of the artists and the cultural scene fundamental to the conception of our cultural programme. We have listened to what they have to say and encouraged them by organizing workshops, open dialogues and talks, lectures and focus groups, individual and group meetings thus generating a place for connection and creative exchanges of ideas. Advisory Board set up to assist the complex application process and provide guidance consists of 30 notable representatives of our cultural scene. Inclusivity and transparency have been our goal and are our accomplishment. The effect of all the invested efforts is evident in the output of the open call for project ideas through which we have received over 150 applications. Out of 62 projects in our bid, 48 came through the open call, making up for 80% of our artistic content.

The most important message we strived to get across through all our activities and online channels is that Banja Luka 2024 is a joint endeavour open to all. This was our guiding idea when selecting projects as well, ensuring that they are participatory and inclusive. Banja Luka 2024 was developed with the citizens and for the citizens.

03



EUROPEAN DIMENSION

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

Promoting the cultural diversity of Europe, intercultural dialogue and greater mutual understanding between European citizens;

Bosnia and Herzegovina today is a land of diversity. Three constitutional nations, three dominant religions, divided entities and fragmented space. United under this roof, attracting our opposites, through culture and arts, we wish to create a new wave of energy which will result not only in the reconciliation of the nations, but also serve as a positive model of intercultural cooperation for all other post-conflict areas. This model of new intercultural dialogue, which is being developed through the Banja Luka 2024 application as a pilot project and a work in progress, is based on the following measures:

- Opening a dialogue and public debates among all the Bosnian cities through the cultural network, with the primary aim to jointly develop high quality and community based cultural programmes and give everyone an opportunity to become involved in the Banja Luka 2024 project.
- Joint application for the ECoC title of the three cities, three constitutional nations, as Banja Luka will involve Bihac and Jajce as the surrounding area.
- Discovering new artistic forms of intercultural dialogue in Europe and Banja Luka through the programme *Alternating Currents*.
- Exploring our European and local identities through the *I for Identity* project.
- Offering new solutions for conflicts through theatre in the *Unlisted* project.
- Gathering European artists, cultural operators and experts in Banja Luka to strengthen institutions, develop our cultural scene and (re)build new modern art forms.

We can't promise that we will succeed, but if we do, we will acquire rich know-how we would like to offer to all Europeans in post-conflict areas. If we fail – we will once again learn our lessons and start all over again. Believing in a better future.

Highlighting the common aspects of European cultures, heritage and history, as well as European integration and current European themes;

Before the BL 2024 team even started planning the project, we have identified five values that we perceive all Europeans share and, based on these values, we have developed the concept "Opposites Attract". Mentioned values are integrated in the following measures:

Internationalization// Opening the city to international cooperation. Building sustainable links and connections between local and European cultural operators.

Democratisation// Developing new democratic models, new participatory processes and financing, and involving citizens.

New Dialogue// Opening the society inside (open debates, dialogue groups and platforms) and opening a dialogue between and with the cities in the Union/BH Federation.

Transparency// Advocating for changes which will enable public affairs to be operated in such a way that it is easy for others to see what actions are performed.

Participatory approach// Including citizens in decision making processes and involving them in the implementation of the activities.

At the same time, our team contributes to the pan European cultural heritage initiative following the course outlined in the Berlin Call to Action. Namely, we are developing projects aimed at research, presentation, promotion, preservation and protection of European cultural heritage:

NAME OF THE PROJECT/ PROGRAMME	TANGIBLE	INTANGIBLE	NATURAL	METHODS USED
<i>Charge the Battery</i>	●			Research, preservation and renovation of public places and historical sites in the city.
<i>Perspectives</i>		●		Research and artistic interventions tackling different interpretations of historical events in Europe.
<i>Light the Pollution</i>			●	Artistic installations which draw attention to the pollution of rivers in Europe.
<i>Can't Say No to Grandma</i>		●		Research, collection and reinterpretation of old recipes across Europe.
<i>Sheep Ahoy</i>		●		Presenting traditional ways of wool processing and its positive effects on health.
<i>Markets</i>	●			Mapping and reviving old markets in public spaces to become handicraft and artistic stores.
<i>Mladi i mladica</i>			●	Preserving biodiversity of the Vrbas River by bringing fish Mladica from different European countries.

Our team has also joined the initiative for creating the first regional Cyber Museum of industrial heritage together with Novi Sad, Rijeka and Osijek.

If Banja Luka successfully attracts opposites and wins the European Capital of Culture competition, this project will become the largest and most visible European platform in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This will mean a special honour and a responsibility to promote European integrations. Aware of this fact, our team has developed a set of measures aiming to support the EU integration process of our country.

PARTNERSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership building events with EU operators and artists. • Strategic partnerships with EUNIC Cluster in BH in building capacities of the scene. • Joint actions with EU Mission and Creative Europe cluster in BH.
PROMOTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting promotion and communication of EU projects and investments in BH. • Inviting official representatives of the EU, organising EU days and thematic events on EU topics; promoting EU values.
EXPERTISE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing skills among operators in order to successfully implement EU standards. • Organising non-formal types of education in cooperation with EU partners and within the framework of the EU calls. • Encouraging applications for the EU calls.

As we have already explained, European values and topics are woven into all the activities and projects we are developing within the Banja Luka 2024 platform. In the chart below, we are highlighting only the most important ones, equally significant to our city and all the Europeans and providing one project as an illustration of our intentions and methods which will be used:



Featuring European artists, cooperation with operators and cities in different countries, and transnational partnerships.

European partnerships were one of the main goals and necessities for Banja Luka through this demanding ECoC project preparations. Our strategy to connect with European partners is conceived as a capacity building platform, which could enable an on-going gradual development of the local scene and increase its competencies for the successful implementation of the project as demanding as ECoC.

Partnership building will be developed through several phases:

- I Mapping and contacting partners (signing pre-agreements) 2018/19
- II Organising field visits and research trips (introducing the scene) 2019/20
- III Partnership building conferences and capacity building 2020/23
- IV Project development and test projects 2021/22
- V Preparations and implementation 2023/24

EUROPEAN	PROGRAMME	INFRASTRUCTURE	VOLUNTEERS
ARTISTS	<p>Miha Horvat SLO Joslin McKinney UK Soňa Lotker CZ I for Identity</p> <p>Andreja Široki HR Sezen Toonguz TUR Alexandra Jones UK Ugly Duckling</p>	<p>Art in public spaces// <i>Cecile da Costa</i> FRA (dance);</p> <p><i>David Moreno</i> SPA (music);</p> <p>Gianluca Barbadori ITA (theatre).</p>	<p><i>Art Buddies</i> USA – Artists involving and inspiring youth to develop artistic skills.</p> <p>AMATEO EU – developing amateur arts and new forms of volunteering in Arts.</p>
ORGANIZATIONS	<p>*OOSR Moravica SLO Mladi i mladica</p> <p>*Pozitivan ritam CRO *Crna Kuća SRB Dub Lab SLO Boom</p> <p>*Art Encounters ROM *OK Kulturzentrum AUS *Circobalkana CRO Hajduci i jataci</p>	<p>We will develop new cultural places based on successful experiences of the following European partners:</p> <p>*Die Backerei Kulturbakstube AUS *UfaFabrik GER *Layerjeva hiša SLO *Roja Art Lab LA *Armazem 22 POR</p>	<p>Partnerships with different international platforms for volunteering will be significant for developing a sustainable volunteering service in the city.</p> <p>*European Volunteering Service EVS *Volunteer world *Go overseas *Voluntary arts</p>
ECoCS	<p>*Leeuwarden 2018 – revisiting and developing the programme in further phases based on their successful example.</p>	<p>*Wroclaw 2016 – (concert hall)</p> <p>*Košice 2013 – public space interventions</p>	<p>*Aarhus 2017 – Developing efficient and successful volunteering system.</p> <p>*Novi Sad 2021 – learning skills to develop sustainable volunteering service in the city.</p>
NETWORKS	<p>*Triangle Network ENG – working on developing contemporary and experimental art forms.</p> <p>*Union des Théâtres de l'Europe (UTE) FRA – developing Theatre projects.</p> <p>*Circostrada Network FRA - developing new circus scene in the city.</p>	<p>*European Festival Organization EU - working on management and infrastructure of the festivals in the city.</p> <p>*Trans Europe Halls SWE - developing new cultural places under the umbrella of this organization.</p> <p>*European Federation of Art Therapy for developing inclusive projects such as Building Empathy and Janus</p>	<p>Developing first volunteering service platform in the city with EU networks:</p> <p>*European Volunteer Centre EU</p> <p>*European Voluntary Service</p> <p>*Moving people EU</p>

Our main idea is to boost and develop sustainable partnerships and enable vibrant cultural exchanges as the legacy of the project. In the table below, we mapped some of the European partners that we plan to connect with in different fields of the project. Some of them have already been contacted regarding the cooperation (bold) and others will be contacted in the next phase of the partnership development for the final stage of the competition (italic).

PARTNERSHIPS	MARKETING	EVALUATION	AIR
<p><i>ENGAGE EU</i> – connecting with theatre artists around Europe.</p>	<p>Art + Marketing (EU) – developing how to better communicate your art.</p> <p>Peter Gregson Studio SRB – working with local artists and cultural organizations in developing new digital tools and design.</p>	<p>●</p>	<p>Workshops// Personal stories – what we have gained from AiR programme?</p>
<p>*EUNIC Cluster BH - developing partnership building events.</p> <p>*Creative Europe Desk BH – developing partnerships for applying for the EU Calls.</p> <p><i>*Europa Nostra Serbia</i> – developing cultural heritage projects.</p>	<p>*Olivear SWE – capacity building in different fields including marketing.</p> <p><i>*Museomix FRA</i> – developing new methods to present and communicate cultural content.</p>	<p>*Local Operators Platform LOCOP EU – aiming to develop a critical approach to assess the BL 2024 and to develop new evaluation methods.</p>	<p>●</p>
<p>Regional ECoC initiatives –</p> <p>*ECoC Echo in Novi Sad.</p> <p>*UNeECC – Applying BL to become part of this initiative.</p>	<p>Learning how to manage expectations and to communicate the programme successfully:</p> <p><i>*Linz '09</i></p> <p><i>*Marseille-Provence 2013</i></p> <p>*Essen 2010</p>	<p>*Liverpool 2008 – exploring the system and developing new approaches.</p>	<p>*Wroclaw 2016 AirWro</p> <p>*Rijeka 2020 Kamov</p> <p>*Novi Sad 2021 PlantsAir</p> <p><i>*San Sebastian 2016 Tabakalera</i></p>
<p>*On the Move EU – learning how to foster mobility of local cultural workers</p> <p><i>*Banlieues d'Europe FRA</i> – working with partners in finding new ways to include minorities.</p>	<p>Exploring new digital and marketing tools to communicate cultural events in cooperation with:</p> <p><i>*Eurozine</i></p> <p><i>*IMZ Network GER</i></p>	<p><i>*Measure Evaluation USA</i></p> <p>*European Evaluation Society EU</p>	<p>We plan to develop our AiR programme in cooperation with two international AiR platforms:</p> <p>*Res Artis</p> <p><i>*Trans Artists</i></p>

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

There are many areas where we cannot compare with other European cities. However, what we can wholeheartedly say is that we can offer a different kind of experience, adventurous exploits, refreshing blends of culture and outdoor activities, all bound together with a warm welcome we are famous for.

Hospitality// There is a saying in India that a guest is God and, similarly, there is no greater pride in our country than to prove oneself as a good host. Visitors to our city universally leave with stories of people going out of their way to ensure that they have a good time.

Unique Experience// We will offer unique mixtures of extreme sports and arts, opportunities to enjoy arts in nature, new cultural venues and land art projects which will create an entirely new feeling among international audiences coming to our city.

High-Quality Artistic Performances// We plan to go big and organize artistic events never seen in the region and to invite some of the most prominent contemporary artists in order to attract wide international attention.

Language Is a Tool for Peace// Special attention will be drawn to the regional audience from Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro because we use very similar languages. This will also encourage people to meet, talk, introduce each other and (re)develop broken links after the war.

Feel Like Home Strategy// The best of all feelings, far away, but still feel the warmth of home. We will offer homemade gastronomy specialities and drinks well-known in the region, and special hospitality programmes by involving the inhabitants of Banja Luka.

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

We perceive our cooperation with other European Capitals of Culture as an enormous opportunity to: a. boost international cooperation and build long-lasting links between cultural operators; b. develop the skills of our team and managers who will be in charge of the BL 2024 project implementation c. jointly develop and produce high quality and contemporary artistic events.

Our primary goals regarding the ECoC cooperation are:

To learn

In the first phase of the ECoC application process, the Banja Luka 2024 team has been dedicated to reaching out to other ECoC cities (past, present, future, as well as candidates). Our initial goal was to learn from their experience and benefit from the examples of good

practices, as well as to accumulate information on what challenges we might expect. To this end, we visited Novi Sad, Rijeka, Wroclaw, Pecs, Debrecen and Leeuwarden. In this process, we have started developing some parts of the project based on the positive and negative experiences of our partners. From **Novi Sad 2021** team we have learned about their efforts to create a volunteering service in the city. **Rijeka 2020** taught us about the methods of mapping and renovating public spaces in the city in cooperation with the citizens. From **Wroclaw 2016** we learned more about the challenges and best practices in the process of building a concert hall and music centre which is one of our most significant infrastructure projects. We have discussed capital investments in old industrial heritage with our colleagues from **Pecs 2010**. **Leeuwarden 2018** team has introduced their successful method of developing and revisiting the ECoC programme.

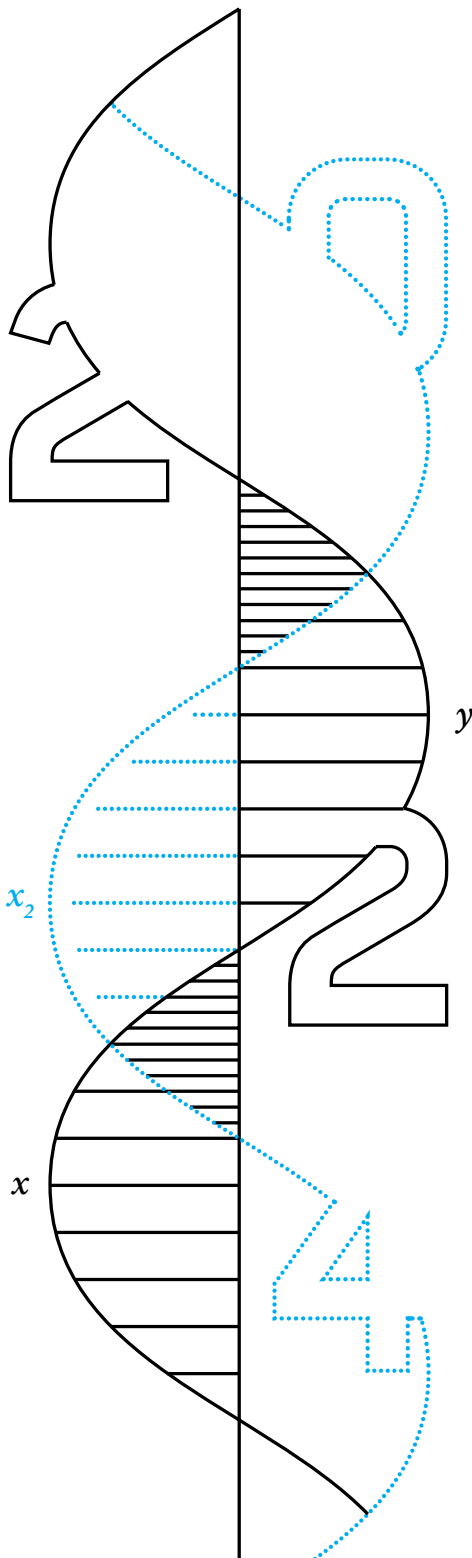
To develop high-quality artistic projects

With **Timisoara 2021** we have connected on the *Mega Bega* project, as it is closely linked to our *Vertical Pioneering*, with the idea to organise a mobile scene on the river accompanied by international events. Project *Borders* has also been left open for us as borders are still an enormous obstacle for developing links with other parts of Europe. We have accepted the invitation from **Eleusis 2021** to join the project *Balkan Agora* dedicated to developing links in the Balkans through visual arts mobile troupe. **Matera 2019** shares programme links with us with their gastronomy projects and is interested in participating in our *Can't Say No to Grandma* project. Beside us, **Plovdiv 2019** is one of the few European countries that uses Cyrillic script and we have expressed interest in participating in their project *Cyrillization*. In addition to this, Plovdiv is organizing trainings for their journalism students in the field of contemporary art and have invited us to take part. We have identified close links with **Debrecen 2023's** key programme area *Landscape*, and their capacity building programme *Soul of Europe* consisting of a series of workshops and a final forum, which has led to our signing a cooperation agreement. We will join **Rijeka 2020**, **Eleusis 2021** and **Novi Sad 2021** for the capacity building project – European Lab for project making. Novi Sad and Banja Luka will also closely cooperate on the project *Cyber Museum*, educational programmes intended for capacity building, and Banja Luka will participate in their project *Europe-made Bread* (Europe for Citizens call) that will include five countries – Austria, Germany, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia.

To secure sustainable partnerships between operators

Encouraging joint projects that will leave behind lasting alliances between ECoC cities beyond 2024.

04



OUTREACH

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

Banja Luka's cultural scene was leading a run of the mill existence for many years. The talk of our high potentials was put to use only rarely and in very focused interventions. So, the decision to become a candidate city has been viewed as an excellent opportunity to unite around a common goal and finally move from words to action.

At Mayor of Banja Luka's initiative, potential candidacy was first publicly discussed in February 2017, at a meeting that gathered **40 representatives of the cultural sector** and the Decision was unanimously adopted only a month later. The management of the application process and the writing of the first ever cultural strategy of a city in Bosnia and Herzegovina was entrusted to a team of seven young, politically independent professionals. To provide quality feedback and help with the steering of this complex process, Advisory Council was appointed that consists of the most prominent cultural operators - representatives of Ministry of Culture and Education of Republic of Srpska, public institutions, academic staff, independent and private sector and artists. The first task of the team was to monitor and organize the drafting of **the cultural development strategy** for Banja Luka. The task was a challenging one. It involved public surveys, working groups, questionnaires, discussions, and group and individual meetings that encompassed around **800 citizens** (random sample), **300 professionals**, and **80 institutions and organizations** in private, public and civil sectors.

The BL2024 team held four **open dialogues** that put the application process, potential benefits and structure of the programme up for a debate (over **800 participants** (public and private sector, independent scene and artists)). Invitations to these events were extended to other cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and former and future ECoC cities (to name a few Novi Sad, Maribor, Wrocław, Rijeka, Mostar, Mons).

The team organised several **open discussions** with professors and students at the **Art Academy and Faculty of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy** in Banja Luka, which resulted in adding another course, Regenerative Design (in architecture), to the Master's Degree programme for Integral Design, dedicated especially to the Banja Luka 2024 project.

Citizen participation was invited through several tools. We designed ballot boxes in the shape of our logo and placed them at every major cultural event in the city, as well as those organised by the BL2024 team. Visitors had the opportunity to give their votes on what they would like to see revitalized or introduced into the cultural offer of our city. We held several public presentations and open discussions for citizens, group

and individual interviews, set up an email for citizens' suggestions and team members were available for face to face communication during open-door office hours.

A **call** for projects was officially open from 23 April to 9 May. During the entire time of the call, we invested great efforts to further motivate our community to contribute with their ideas. We held **preparatory meetings and consultations** with over **a hundred** professionals and citizens going into details of the call's requirements and giving feedback to their proposals. The outcome was over **150 applications** (10.2% from the public sector, 5.7% from the private, 28.6% from the independent, 36.3% from individual artists and 19.1% from citizens).

In the period to come, we will implement several strategies to further increase civil society's participation. We will work on **strengthening the ties between the public and independent sector** and their **capacities** by organising joint educational programmes, open dialogues and brainstorming sessions. The independent scene has a better understanding of EU funds and project writing, while the public sector has resources in terms of stable budgets, staff and space. Joining forces could produce very positive results.

Another goal is to create **a culture of volunteerism** in our city. There are three categories of citizens that could benefit the most from a strong volunteer centre: students (University of Banja Luka enrolls around **6500 students**), unemployed people (there are approximately **30 000 registered unemployed** people in Banja Luka alone and 24% percent are under 30 years of age) and elderly (around **600 000 people** in Bosnia and Herzegovina are **over 65 years old** and **2.1 million** are **over 35**). Our plan for the next year is to establish a volunteer centre in cooperation with our Youth Centre, devise a model that works best for us, form a management team and a strategy of reaching out to potential

volunteers.

As stated in the programme, we have important potential in empty public spaces that we will turn into **cultural centres**, meeting points for the neighbourhoods they are located in. The strategy is to refurbish the spaces and give them to selected civil society organisations, start-ups or individual artists, bloggers, etc. In return, they will be obligated to work with the local neighbours and help them implement locally relevant projects. To facilitate this process, the neighbourhoods will elect their **Community Cultural Managers** who will be the mediators between the locals, cultural centres and the Foundation Banja Luka 2024. The goal is to include the citizens in redesigning their local environments and enriching them with the artistic content of their choice and production. This will be a powerful communication and audience development tool.

There are four inactive markets in different locations in the city. We plan to renovate them and turn them into four key cultural points for community meetings, programmes, exchanges, performances, presentations, art sales. Places of vibrant energy and inspiration.

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

The research of the needs and potentials of the cultural scene conducted for the cultural strategy and this bid also encompassed institutions and organisations representing different marginalised and disadvantaged groups. This has given us an opportunity to map them and get a better insight into their activities, numbers and goals.

In this first bid, we have focused on five dialogue groups and we have developed several approaches on how to increase their opportunities for participation and address their problems.

Our programme structure includes projects that specifically tackle the issues of the identified dialogue groups. **Mental health** is a hot topic for us because of the traumatic events that took place in the early 1990s, because there is a strong social stigma attached to mental disorders, and psychiatric institutions across the country face many challenges. People with **visual, auditory and motor impairments** need better access to cultural content

and are often left on the margins. Our projects *Building Empathy* and *Janus* use art to address these issues and inspire compassion and better understanding. **Intellectually challenged** groups and their families need a better support system, especially when these children become adults. For this reason, our educational institution for intellectually challenged children “Zaštiti me” has submitted a project that will launch a *Day Centre* for children and adults where they can further develop practical skills and be productive members of the society. Banja Luka and its surroundings count 14 national **minority groups**. In 2003, the City of Banja Luka established the Association of National Minorities of the Republic of Srpska Banja Luka that serves as a meeting point for all them. From the very beginning, we have been in touch with the Association, encouraging them to develop projects and participate in the open call. Unfortunately, they have failed to send any, probably due to lack of capacities to develop and implement projects. However, our plan in the following period is to continue working with the Association and help them generate development projects that will contribute to their better integration and greater visibility. Senior citizens are especially vulnerable in our country primarily because many of them face social isolation due to economic circumstances and migrations. This September, in the framework of preparations for the candidacy, the City of Banja Luka has launched an initiative “Healthy Ageing” with the goal to improve the quality of life of senior citizens. It includes different non-formal types of education which will further encourage them to get involved in our project (workshops on how to use new technologies, fitness classes, language courses, etc.). At the same time, seniors and topics related to them are already tackled through several projects in our bid. In *Mosaic* senior citizens are invited to give up something from the past so as to transform it into a new whole. *Sheep Ahoy* explores with rural senior women methods of

traditional wool processing and how this can be given a modern form. *Can't Say No to Grandma* researches old family recipes and the use of healing herbs in cooking.

We will work on strengthening the ties between the public and independent sector and their capacities by organising joint educational programmes, open dialogues and brainstorming sessions.

Until the next phase of the candidacy process, we will continue to work closely with our civil society to strengthen the position of vulnerable groups. This will be divided into four stages:

- I Mapping their needs
 - II Developing strategies to meet those needs
 - III Developing financing strategies
 - IV Implementation of projects
- One team member will be appointed to monitor the implementation of these measures.

With cultural institutions and organisations, we will work on several goals: a. develop strategies and measures for sensibilisation of cultural offer and development of inclusive events; b. implement measures for increasing their digital and communication accessibility; c. create a platform to improve physical accessibility to cultural content. All our public cultural institutions are already wheelchair accessible and this is a positive foundation on which we will continue to build by developing a strategy for greater accessibility for and with them. This will be implemented through several stages – mapping current accessibility, developing strategic measures to enhance accessibility, publishing open calls for projects that will increase the accessibility of public institutions, implementing the projects in close cooperation with accessibility specialists.

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

The 1990s war and its aftermath left a profound impact on audience behaviour and cultural offer today. On the one hand, people now in their 50s and 60s have grown unaccustomed to visit cultural events, and on the other young people find most of the cultural offer old-fashioned and unappealing. This means that regular cultural consumers are usually people in their 30s and 40s. Majority of public institutions do not have clear audience development strategies and mostly rely on their scarce regular visitors.

Therefore, the first step for us was to get the local civil society excited about culture again and to rebuild the trust in its transformative potential. Four goals have been accomplished so far. First, a strong foundation for the implementation of core changes necessary for our culture to flourish is laid in the form of a **clear cultural development strategy**. As part of the research for this document, the

first and most extensive analysis of the cultural habits of our citizens was conducted. Second, a change in attitude – from complaining bystanders to active participants and influencers - was initiated among our cultural operators through the use of a very **collaborative approach**. Third, **local population's interest** in the benefits and positive changes the ECoC title could bring was sparked through our teaser campaign, radio and TV talks, ballot boxes at different cultural events, public discussions, interviews, open invite parties, public performances, etc. Aware that our rural communities are left on the cultural margins, steps to create conditions for easier access to cultural content are already under way. The City of Banja Luka has refurbished six Community Centres (during the socialist regime it was common for every village to have one) and there are plans to restore six more. Also, bus transportation will be organised for rural communities to attend cultural events. Lastly, we ensured that our **programme structure** is participatory and engages our citizens in the implementation of the projects. For example, in the project *Hanging Gardens*, citizens will recycle and produce food for other citizens, in our **opening ceremonies** 7000 people will sit for a joint meal at tables that will spread through the city centre, and will take the role of Secret Santas. In *Light the Pollution* we will join efforts (children, teenagers, adults and elderly) in cleaning our river and riverside so as to enjoy many planned cultural events there together. **Also, we have designed most of our programme to take outside cultural institutions.** We will bring culture to our nature sites (frequently visited and enjoyed), and into the streets and forgotten nooks and crannies of our city. For example, the *Vertical Pioneering* project will turn the canyon of the river Vrbas into a hanging stage, *Acupuncture* will feature joint work actions that will reclaim parts of the city now lost.

As said above, in times of war culture becomes secondary to other more urgent needs. This has led to

the progressive marginalization of art classes and cultural studies in our primary and secondary schools. University students lack international networking, exchange of know-how with their peers, and curriculums that are in step with contemporary trends. Through the ECoC candidacy and our cultural strategy, we wish to initiate actions that will lead to a much needed reform of the education system. They will consist of introducing new methods of promoting and presenting art and culture in schools, implementing projects in cooperation with schools and universities and generating projects with the aim of developing cultural habits among students. Although, for the most part, this will be our future work, there are already projects in our bid book that tackle these issues. *Gameplay* is a project that aims to adapt

Through the ECoC candidacy and our cultural strategy, we wish to initiate actions that will lead to a much needed reform of the education system.

cultural offer of museums and galleries for children and younger audiences. *Cultural Playground on the Move* is a project for kindergartens and elementary schools that develops creative and critical thinking. *Spreading Wings* targets high-school graduates and their before long entrance into adulthood. We plan to work closely with the Art Academy in Banja Luka in engaging students to actively participate in the *Jump Start* motherboard so they can fully benefit from its networking and learning opportunities. Concrete steps how to include students will be developed in the following period. *Film at Every Corner* is an audience building and educational tool that will bring film outside the cinema.

Our entire cultural sector suffers from a lack of experience in and knowledge of audience development strategies. Therefore, our primary goal in the second phase of the candidacy will be to select key staff in public institutions and independent sector who will undergo effective vocational training for audience developers. This core team of experts will then transfer the newly acquired knowledge to our cultural operators through a series of workshops. A foundation for the drafting of a clear audience development strategy for our key dialogue groups: **seniors, youth, rural communities and vulnerable groups**, as well as how to expand from our local context to regional and international, will thus be laid.

05

MANAGEMENT

A. FINANCE

City budget for culture:

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

YEAR	ANNUAL BUDGET FOR CULTURE IN THE CITY (IN EUROS)	ANNUAL BUDGET FOR CULTURE IN THE CITY (IN % OF THE TOTAL ANNUAL BUDGET OF THE CITY)
2014	703 283.71	1,14
2015	712 360.46	1,28
2016	781 861.89	1,27
2017	821 390.37	1,25
CURRENT	949 980.28	1,38

The table above shows that the annual budget for culture in the City of Banja Luka marks a steady increase over the period from 2014 to 2018. The average annual allocation amounts to 793 775.34 euros, which makes up an average of 1.26% of the total budget. Our central cultural institution, Banski Dvor, is financed through this budget, as well as grants for the independent sector and certain manifestations that have secured the City's support.

YEAR	TOTAL BUDGET FOR CULTURE (REPUBLIKA SRPSKA)	BUDGET FOR CULTURE – FOR THE CITY OF BANJA LUKA	PERCENTAGE
2014	7 510 060	3 114 578	41.47%
2015	7 715 434	3 210 063	41.60%
2016	7 333 091	3 111 523	42.43%
2017	7 733 180	3 214 767	41.57%

All the other public institutions in the field of culture are financed through the budget of the Ministry of Culture and Education of Republic of Srpska. The ministry also opens public calls for projects, through which the independent sector is supported. This also includes the minimal funds for the maintenance of cultural infrastructure which houses the cultural institutions on the level of the Republic of Srpska, namely National Theatre, Children's Theatre, National and University Library, Museum of Contemporary Art and Museum of Republic of Srpska. Average annual amount invested in culture through the Ministry of Culture and Education of Republic of Srpska is 3 million euros, while the annual grants from the Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina amount to 330 000 euros on average.

Culture in Bosnia and Herzegovina is funded from three main sources: 1) on the state level (or national level) of BH from the Ministry of Civil Affairs, and then 2) on the level of two constituent entities – Republic of Srpska and Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (this counts as a regional level, but the specificity is that both entities have separate laws for culture), where Republic of Srpska has the Ministry of Education and Culture, and lastly 3) the City level.

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

Funding for the Banja Luka 2024 project will be provided over and above the city's budget for culture. The Cultural Strategy for the City of Banja Luka envisages a continued increase in the city's allocations for culture resulting in an increase of up to 4% by the year 2024. Therefore, the funds earmarked for the ECoC project will also steadily increase.

The funding that the city allocates for the Banja Luka 2024 Foundation is intended for the operating costs and these funds constitute a separate budget item from the budget for the Department of culture. The funds for capital expenditure, however, is collected from the corresponding departments.

YEAR	ANNUAL BUDGET OF THE CITY (IN EUROS) FOR THE ECoC
2018	60 000
2019	110 000
2020	700 000
2021	800 000
2022	805 000
2023	1 000 000
2024	2 030 000
TOTAL	5 500 000

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

Our Cultural Strategy for the City of Banja Luka covers the period of time until 2028 and each year an increase in budget allocations for culture is planned. Between the years 2024 and 2028, additional raise of another 2% is foreseen, which is a total of 1 492 000 euros. In addition to this, the total average amount allocated in this four-year period by the Ministry of Culture and Education of Republic of Srpska for the cultural sector will be decided upon the shortlisting of Banja Luka in

the pre-selection stage of the ECoC competition.

Operating budget for the title year

Income to cover operating expenditure:

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

TOTAL INCOME TO COVER OPERATING EXPENDITURE (IN EUROS)	17 550 000
FROM THE PUBLIC SECTOR (IN EUROS)	16 550 000
FROM PUBLIC SECTOR (IN %)	94.30
FROM PRIVATE SECTOR (IN EUROS)	1 000 000
FROM PRIVATE SECTOR (IN %)	5.70

	PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE		PROMOTION AND MARKETING		WAGES OVERHEADS AND ADMIN.		OTHER		TOTAL OF THE OPERATING EXP.
	(in euros)	(in %)	(in euros)	(in %)	(in euros)	(in %)	(in euros)	(in %)	
2020	280 800	2.00%	110 565	7.00%	94 770	6.00%	0	0.00%	486 135
2021	842 400	6.00%	173 745	11.00%	189 540	12.00%	70 200	20.00%	1 275 885
2022	1 825 200	13.00%	252 720	16.00%	268 515	17.00%	52 650	15.00%	2 399 085
2023	4 071 600	29.00%	505 440	32.00%	379 080	24.00%	87 750	25.00%	5 043 870
2024	4 773 600	34.00%	426 465	27.00%	473 850	30.00%	105 300	30.00%	5 779 215
2025	2 246 400	16.00%	110 565	7.00%	173 745	11.00%	35 100	10.00%	2 565 810

The budget projected for the period from the year 2020 up to the title year of 2024 may seem smaller than typical ECoC budgets, but there is a number of reasons for this, especially in the starting phase – the first round of ECoC competition. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the expenses and especially the taxes are generally significantly lower than in the rest of Europe, and having that in mind, we also wanted to make a realistic proposition,

based on the specific context of our region, mostly in terms of its economic status. Also, a characteristic of our state hierarchy – majority of the budget comes from the level of RS Government (regional level in this context), and not from the city, mainly because all the cultural institutions on the RS level that are located in the city itself.

Income from the public sector:

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

INCOME FROM THE PUBLIC SECTOR TO COVER OPERATING EXPENDITURES	IN EUROS	%
National Government (BH Government level)	3 050 000	18.43
City	5 500 000	33.23
Region (RS Government level)	7 000 000	42.30
EU (with exception of the Melina Mercouri Prize)	500 000	3.02
Other	500 000	3.02
TOTAL	16 550 000	100

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

After the pre-selection process, when we have a more clearly defined and detailed financial plan in place, BL 2024 will be considered as a project of national significance. Decision on this is brought by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Government of Republic of Srpska. Based on this decision, and on the structure of the budget, the support for the project will be voted on, stating concrete amounts. So far, the ministries on both levels (BH and RS) have expressed significant interest for the support of the Banja Luka 2024 project. Once we pass the pre-selection

stage, both ministries will define their involvement with a clearer financial plan, and given the national importance of the project, we expect a significant enlargement to the current projected funding.

Income from the private sector:

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

One of the main long term changes we wish to accomplish with this bid and potential ECoC title is to significantly increase the level of involvement in and contribution to the cultural scene of our city coming from the private sector. The first step has already been taken. Namely, the Cultural Strategy of Banja Luka envisages tax reliefs for those companies who invest in cultural events. This and the visibility prestigious events such as European Capital of Culture offer certainly provide for excellent dialogue points with the private sector. Our Fundraising Manager and his/her team will be in charge of compiling a promotional package that will include a variety of funding options and corresponding promotional benefits, so as to make the engagement with the ECoC project available to large, medium and small enterprises. Our plan is to have the fundraising team present the ECoC project and the promotional package

at individual and group meetings with the representatives of the private sector.

In addition to this, we will invest great energy into equipping our cultural sector with the skills to fundraise independently. This is a know-how lacking in majority of our cultural organizations and absolutely vital if the independent sector is to flourish and the public one to transition to becoming more and more self-sustaining. Therefore, to this end, we plan to hold a series of workshops, master classes, individual and group meetings on the topic of fundraising, and have our fundraising team at the disposal of cultural organizations to assist with their individual projects. This is one of the key capacity building areas that will strengthen our cultural scene and will have a lasting impact in the long run.

Our Marketing Department will also devise a promotional strategy that will aim to attract the private sector and our citizens (especially diaspora) into becoming directly involved with the ECoC project and contributing to our fundraising campaign.

Operating expenditure:

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

PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE		PROMOTION AND MARKETING		WAGES OVERHEADS AND ADMIN.		OTHER		TOTAL OF THE OPERATING EXP.
(in euros)	(in %)	(in euros)	(in %)	(in euros)	(in %)	(in euros)	(in %)	
14 040 000	80	1 579 500	9	1 579 500	9	351 000	2	17 550 000

Budget for capital expenditure:

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

INCOME FROM THE PUBLIC SECTOR TO COVER OPERATING EXPENDITURES	IN EUROS	%
National Government (BH Government level)	3 050 000	18.43
City	5 500 000	33.23
Region (RS Government level)	7 000 000	42.30
EU (with exception of the Melina Mercouri Prize)	500 000	3.02
Other	500 000	3.02
TOTAL	16 550 000	100

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

The City Council has so far adopted the plan of capital expenditures for the period 2018-2020, and, considering that the City votes on these kinds of plans on a biennial basis, the next plan of capital expenditures is expected in the year 2020. However, having in mind that the Banja Luka 2024 project has largely influenced this year's plan, it is to be expected that the next one will be in accordance both with the document Strategy of Cultural Development of the City of Banja Luka, and the Banja Luka 2024 project guidelines. Apart from the city's financing, the Government of the Republic of Srpska has appointed funding for some of the cultural infrastructure projects tied to the Banja Luka 2024 project by a special decree in August of 2018.

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

Having the status of a potential candidate for the European Union membership, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and consequently the city of Banja Luka, have very limited access to the EU funds for capital investments. Our city has benefited from IPA funding, especially IPA I in the reconstruction of the Kastel Fortress, and we see IPA II as a potential framework which can assist our capital funding in the future, as it covers the period up to the year 2020. This said, we strongly believe that other EU funds will become available to us in the coming years and when they do we will be prepared to apply.

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

CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE	TYPE OF WORKS	PREDICTED TIME-FRAME FOR WORKS	SOURCES OF FINANCING	INVESTMENT AMOUNT
1. Kastel fortress (section 4 – towers)	Reconstruction and revitalization	2018-2020	City Budget	150 000
2. Banski Dvor Cultural Centre (roof and facade)	Reconstruction and revitalization	2018-2020	RS Government	1 257 372
3. Dajak boat marina	Construction	2018-2020	City budget	75 000
4. Terzić gallery	Adaptation	2018-2020	City budget Other sources	87 500
5. Multifunctional concert hall and conference centre	Construction	2018-2020	City budget Private funds	24 263 000
6. Safikada park	Construction	2018-2020	City budget	60 000
7. Vlado Milosević memorial house	Adaptation	2018-2020	Other sources Private funds	100 000
8. Tourist road Ponir hill- Banj brdo hill	Construction	2018-2020	Other sources	250 000
9. Skate park	Construction	2019-2020	City budget Private funds	60 000

CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE	TYPE OF WORKS	PREDICTED TIME-FRAME FOR WORKS	SOURCES OF FINANCING	INVESTMENT AMOUNT
10. 4 community homes	Reconstruction and adaptation	2018-2020	City budget	310 000
11. Centre for performing arts	Reconstruction and adaptation	2019-2022	City budget Other sources	250 000
12. Šeranić house	Reconstruction	2019-2022	National government – BH level Other sources	100 000
13. Inactive spaces in the city's ownership – new allocation by open calls	Reconstruction and adaptation	2019-2024	City budget	60 000
14. Museum of Contemporary Art of Republic of Srpska	Reconstruction and adaptation	2019	RS Government	243 000
15. National and University Library of Republic of Srpska	Reconstruction and adaptation	2019	RS Government	124 000
16. Museum of Republic of Srpska	Reconstruction and adaptation	2019	RS Government	170 000
17. The Archive of Republic of Srpska	Digitalization	2019	RS Government	270 000
18. National Theatre of Republic of Srpska	Reconstruction and adaptation	2019	RS Government	176 500
19. City digital infrastructure	Adaptation and installation	2019-2020	City budget Other sources	500 000
TOTAL				28 506 372

B. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

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

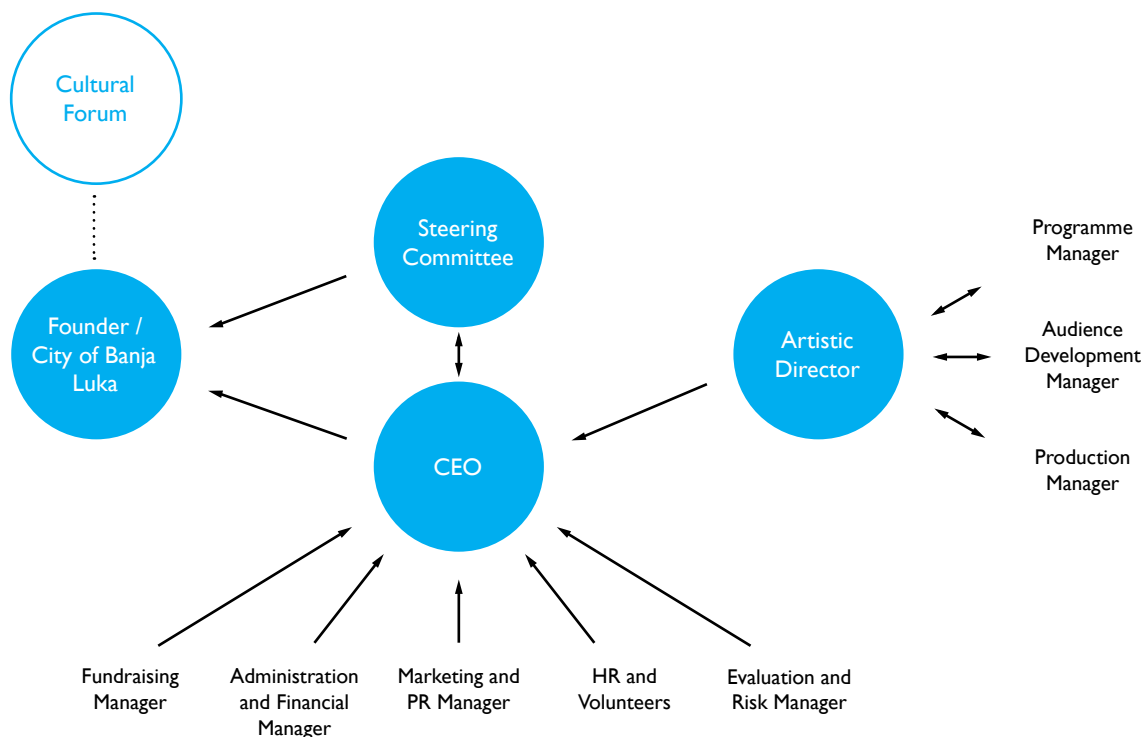
The City of Banja Luka established the **Banja Luka 2024 Foundation** in June 2018. It is an independent, not-for-profit body in charge of submitting the city's application for the European Capital of Culture, and for the implementation of the project should Banja Luka be selected. Even though it was established by the City, the structure of the Foundation ensures that it operates in a transparent and independent manner. It is the responsibility of the Foundation that the programme structure, as well as financial and marketing strategies envisaged in the bid book, are followed through and that the artistic vision of Banja Luka 2024 is duly honoured. The infrastructural investments and implementation will be left in charge of the City of Banja Luka and respective partners. As said previously, the Foundation will operate

independently and this will be ensured by selecting the key leadership staff (members of the Steering Committee, CEO and Artistic Director) through Open Calls. The Steering Committee will consist of 5 members and will meet four times a year to receive regular updates on the project implementation from the CEO and Artistic Director, and to decide if any amendments to the set course for the period to come are needed. The CEO will be in charge of the following departments – Fundraising, Administra-

tion and Finances, Marketing and PR, HR and Volunteers, and Evaluation and Risk Management. The Artistic Director will work closely with the heads of three departments – Programme, Audience Development and Production. The CEO and the Artistic director will appoint the managers of their respective

departments with the approval of the Steering Committee. To make sure that the cultural community and general public stay involved in the project and that their voices are heard, an advisory body Cultural Forum will be established. Its role will be to provide the Steering Committee and the City with a broader picture and citizens wishes, but will not have decision making powers. Given that the Foundation will be responsible for the implementa-

tion and management of the entire programme for the title year, it naturally follows that it will also be in charge of writing the final report. Evaluation and monitoring will be conducted throughout the entire implementation process (2020-2024) both internally and externally (by an independent company), which will provide critical data necessary for an objective report. The Foundation will continue to operate after 2024.



C. CONTINGENCY PLANNING

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

- STRENGTHS**
- First ever cultural strategy for the city, with clearly set goals and strategies that will bring immense positive changes by 2024 and beyond by 2028.
 - Full city and government support for the ECoC run
 - Very high participation of the cultural community in the process of compiling this bid and the cultural strategy, and high level of support for both
 - Banja Luka is the cultural, administrative and university centre of the Republic of Srpska entity with museums, libraries, galleries, an art academy, etc.
 - Infrastructure planning that envisages a much needed multifunctional concert hall
 - Fantastic nature potential in immediate surroundings that can be given an entirely new dimension by adding cultural content to it, which would in turn provide a unique cultural experience.
 - A very diverse cultural heritage that can be seen in the city's infrastructure, monuments, religious buildings, industrial complexes, medieval fortress.

WEAKNESSES**SOLUTIONS**

Finances:

- Insufficient involvement of private sector in cultural funding
- Lack of transparency when distributing public funds for culture
- Insufficient number of artists, institutions and organizations applying for EU funds
- Lack of inter-sector cooperation within the city government
- Reduced funding for the independent scene

All of these issues are being tackled in the first cultural strategy of our city that has been developed and adopted directly due to the decision to run for the ECoC title. It proposes a set of measures that counter these problems such as, a transparent system of fund distribution in the field of culture which will ensure better financing of the independent sector; tax reductions for cultural investments from the private sector, establishment of managerial bodies within the city government that will provide better inter-sector cooperation. As for the EU funds, two important measures will be applied in order to increase the number of applications. One is that the Ministry of Culture and Education of Republic of Srpska has decided to co-finance projects that secure EU funding (match funding was listed as one of the major deterrents). The other is that we will set up a special team that will be in charge of applications to EU funds (ensuring that the cultural community is aware of the calls, informative sessions about the application processes, partner search, work on individual applications, etc.)

Audience:

- Limited offer of contemporary cultural content
- Poor marketing strategies of cultural events
- Outdated methods of presenting cultural content
- Lack of additional content after cultural events that would serve as educational tools for audience development
- Lack of audience development strategies in cultural institutions

Our independent scene is contemporary and audience oriented, but it has not been adequately supported by lack of transparent funding. As a result, it is not very strong. On the other hand, large public institutions are still operating on outdated, socialist models of being funded by the state and not sufficiently involved in audience development strategies. The cultural strategy of our city and this bid contain tools and projects that offer creative solutions to these problems (bringing cultural events into public spaces, audience education, clear audience targeting, greater use of technology, change in the distribution of funds, increase in EU funding, etc.). The aim is to introduce a shift where the independent sector will flourish from more significant support, and public institutions will be motivated to transition to be more independent, self-supporting and project oriented.

Capacities:

- Underdeveloped creative industries sector
- Insufficiently exploited nature potential in Banja Luka's surroundings
- Insufficiently exploited potential in terms of city's infrastructure and public spaces
- Insufficiently exploited abandoned industrial complexes
- Insufficient number of quality accommodation facilities and conference rooms
- Insufficient use of the existing airport that would facilitate quicker access to the city

The programme structure of this bid directly addresses the issues of inadequate exploitation of resources at our disposal. In the process of preparing this bid, the key points we wished to accomplish were to give public spaces a new use and purpose, to look back on our heritage and draw power from it and especially to push forth the great natural richness we have in our immediate surroundings. It is envisaged that two hotels will be completed in 2019 and there are plans for the construction of another luxury hotel. We started off with only having flights to and from Belgrade, now Ryanair flies to three European destinations and discussions are underway to introduce new connections with other European cities. We firmly believe that the lack of a developed creative industries sector is due to the long war and post-war isolation of our country, insufficient funding and lack of quality learning opportunities. However, the cultural strategy and the ECoC programme are the first key steps to powering our cultural community to become more proactive and bold, which will be the foundation for a growing creative industries sector.

Skills:

- Lack of experienced cultural managers
- Absence of a creative hub
- Lack of knowledge of technological advances
- Insufficient national, regional and international networking of artists

Our programme structure lays emphasis on networking opportunities and skills enhancement, as well as greater use of technologies in culture. Two of our motherboards *Jump Start* and *Hidden City* have at their core artist exchanges, learning and networking opportunities. Also, the city government is committed to supporting further education of key cultural professionals at different EU workshops and educational programmes, so as to increase the number of cultural managers necessary for the implementation of large cultural projects such as ECoC.

D. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

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

Banja Luka 2024 marketing and communication will be implemented through several stages building them up to their peak in the year 2024, and continuing beyond this year, into the evaluation phase and legacy of the project.

PHASE 1 – Preparation/building a plan (2018 – 2020)	Focusing on getting the local population on board and excited about the title; audience research; developing a communication and marketing strategy for the region.
PHASE 2 – We have the title, what are we going to do with it (2020 – 2021)	Focus on explaining and promoting the programme; promoting individual projects; developing a communication and marketing strategy for international audience.
PHASE 3 – How are we doing so far / Let's invite far and wide (2022 – 2023)	Focus on promoting the results achieved so far and announcing what lies ahead; motivating our citizens in the country and abroad to be ambassadors of Banja Luka; implementing the communication and marketing strategy for international audience.
PHASE 4 – Title year is here! (2024)	All communication and marketing channels are running full steam!
PHASE 5 – Taking a look back / How can we make this last (2025 -)	Promoting the achieved results and putting forward a sustainability plan; remaining in the public eye to keep the momentum going and making BL2024 a lasting legacy.

As we move through the phases, we will extend our communication from local to national, then regional (ex-Yugoslavia countries) and international. Of course, there will be overlaps, but our first goal is to get the local cultural community and citizens behind this project. A positive shift in energy is already felt and we want to build on the growing support for this application because the power generated through our joint effort will give Banja Luka the magnetic quality that will attract beyond the borders of our country. Next, we wish to focus on the region because Rijeka being the capital of culture in 2020 and Novi Sad in 2021 are great opportunities to further mend the broken bonds between the ex-Yugoslavia countries and promote the concept of being good neighbours to each other. In addition to this, all of the countries in the region use, more or less, the same language and are linked in different ways to one another. This is a vast pool of audience that must not be ignored. In our international communication, we plan to target audiences according to our programme structure offer. For this, we will use specific tools following naturally out of the programme categories and selected dialogue groups. The key message we will convey is that Banja Luka offers a unique cultural experience that blends (extreme) sports, gastronomy and culture in breath-taking natural surroundings.

Main opportunities/challenges are:

- Development of a project communications plan which aligns with the regional and international communications strategy and ultimately with the European Capital of Culture concept.
- Leadership and management of project crisis communications and media relations working closely with the CEO of the Foundation.
- Strategic oversight of the communication to internal and external stakeholders.

Communication channels we plan to use are:

Personal touch – We will use the individual connections our citizens, professionals, organizations, institutions, artists and widespread diaspora have to extend a warm welcome and invitation to Banja Luka, as well as to promote our programme. This will include sending Banja Luka 2024 promotional material and souvenirs to citizens in the region and Europe as part of our Secret

Santa initiative. More similar activities that show personal approach will be planned if we are shortlisted. Our embassies and consulates will use their presence around Europe to contribute to our promotional campaign at the institutional level.

Events and activities – To further spark the interest and support of a wider community for our project, we will continue to hold regular cultural events in public spaces, invite citizens to give their suggestions for our programme, hold public debates, info, promotional and educational events that will have media coverage and online/social media promotion.

Media and online channels – We have already established excellent relations with our local media and the next step will be to widen this network to the rest of the country and region. We will reach out to the European and global televisions that have their offices in the country or the region, such as Radio Free Europe, Deutsche Welle, N1, Al-Jazeera, Voice of America. Given that a significant portion of our programme takes place in nature and involves sports, we will use media channels specialising in adventure tourism, extreme sports and environment to promote Banja Luka 2024. A set of promotional videos and materials will be dispersed through online channels and the network of our tourism organizations. Our social networks and webpage will also be used for the most widespread and intense communication and promotion of all our activities and events. Another useful activity will be organising journalists' meet-ups, press trips and arrangements with bloggers and social media influencers.

European cities and capitals of culture – Early in the application process, we started connecting with other European Capitals of Culture to learn from their experience and find connecting threads between our cities. We found links between programme structures with Plovdiv, Matera, Eleusis, Timisoara, Rijeka, Novi Sad, Leeuwarden and candidate cities Mostar and Debreceen. We will continue this good practice in the time ahead as well. Through our projects and marketing activities, we will promote their programmes, and joint events will provide us with a wider audience reach in their countries. Banja Luka has signed cooperation agreements with 15 regional and European cities and Banja Luka 2024 is a great occasion to extend this further. The City of Banja Luka is a member of international associations such as BALCINET (Balkan Cities Network), EUROCI-TIES (network of major European cities), PHILIA (Association of Multi-ethnic Cities of Southeast Europe), NALAS (Network of Associations of Local Authorities of Southeast Europe). Connecting the projects with the cities from these associations can also be a useful platform for spreading our message.

For a long time Bosnia and Herzegovina has been in the spotlight, but a negative one, famous for the 1990s war, refugees, isolation, sanctions and blood spilling. People visiting our country usually report coming here with slight apprehension and low expectations, but time and again they leave overwhelmed with beautiful experiences

and friendliness with which they were welcomed. All of the above activities will aim to convey this message, that Bosnia and Herzegovina is an unforgettable place worth visiting.

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

BL 2024 will become the biggest EU project in the region if we win the title and therefore a great instrument to promote EU and European values. Our team will secure this using several methods:

Leaving marks

- We will include the EU Logo and Flag in all the stamped materials within the BL 2024 project including books, brochures, tourist guides, programme booklets, posters, flyers, etc.
- We will use the Logo and Flag in online materials, websites, in social networks visuals and all other digital tools for communication.
- All the infrastructural objects built or renovated during the process will be clearly marked with the ECoC logo and EU flags.
- We will put EU flags on the major squares and cultural venues in the city.
- We will include a sentence while communicating cultural programmes indicating that those projects are part of the ECoC programme of the European Union.

Marking dates

- Celebrating European days in the city;
- Organising International cultural events every year to mark Europe's Day on May 9;
- Hosting EU representatives in the city of Banja Luka for the festivities and ceremonies including the Day of the City.
- Organising thematic debates on the topics of European Arts and Culture.
- Organising info sessions regarding EU integration in cooperation with the EU Delegation in BH.
- Developing a special programme for promoting EU values and EU identity.



06

CAPACITY TO DELIVER

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

The initiative for the city of Banja Luka to take part in the European Capital of Culture programme first originated from the current mayor, and the decision to enter the competition was the first unanimous vote in the City Council in years. This shows the favourable political climate towards the ECoC project, and the understanding how this programme can deliver significant changes in the development of city's culture, but also in all areas in which culture can engage as a catalyst of change. The fact that it is a development project, and not a programme focused on tourism and entertainment, has also resonated in the Government of Republic of Srpska, in the Ministry of Education and Culture, which has expressed great interest and intention to support the Banja Luka 2024 project. Especially after positively reviewing the results our team has delivered so far – the Strategy of Cultural Development of the City of Banja Luka, open and participatory work on the preparation of this document, as well as the ECoC application, a broad and thorough development plan, to name a few. The Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina has also stated their interest and wish to assist, completing our chain of political support on all levels, starting from the city management through the regional level and the level of the Republic of Srpska, up to the state level – of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are supplying you with the letters of support from all these instances, which explain in more detail their intent to participate and take part in the financing and other means of support for the Banja Luka 2024 project.

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

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

Being the second largest city in Bosnia and Herzegovina and a political and cultural centre, Banja Luka has considerable infrastructure adequate and intended for cultural activities – cultural centres, theatres, libraries, museums, galleries, venues for open-air events. However, most of them are lacking in one area or another (insufficient seating capacities, absence of contemporary content, very limited offer for children and

adolescents, poor marketing strategies, in need of refurbishment and all of them lack audience development strategies). The outcome being that their vast potential is insufficiently used.

This issue of cultural infrastructure, its management and use has been explored in detail in the first Strategy of Cultural Development for the City of Banja Luka, resulting in a comprehensive development plan for the city until the titular year and beyond, encompassing the legacy of BL 2024. The work was done in close cooperation and a sort of two-way communication between the Strategy and the concept guidelines of the Banja Luka 2024 project. The plan envisions a systematic pipeline of changes and improvements of the infrastructural system. These include modifications, reconstructions, adaptations and other enhancements of the existing infrastructure, all the capacity and programme needs for new infrastructure, as well as the revitalization, conversion and other interventions on the spaces not originally built for culture, but with great potential for this change of use.

BL 2024 project certainly plans to contribute to the bringing out of all the potentials of the existing cultural infrastructure. However, this is an on-going process and many activities are still ahead. In the next phase of the candidacy process, we will work on: a. raising capacities of cultural institutions in terms of project writing and project development skills; b. better public – independent sector communication and cooperation (the former are mostly lacking projects and the latter operational capacities); c. motivating and engaging cultural institutions to take a more active participation in the BL2024 project by including them as partners on existing and future projects and providing assistance in developing their own.

Concerning the planned future infrastructure projects, the BL2024 programme is linked to the following ones:

Multifunctional concert hall and conference centre

One of the most important infrastructure projects because Banja Luka does not have a suitable venue for larger productions, concerts and other performing events. The City Council has already started preparatory works. A call for architectural solutions will be published at an international level. Projects we will host here are: *Put Your Foot Down, I for Identity, Perspectives, Listen to the River*

New spaces for art production

Lack of strategic planning in the field of managing infrastructural

property of the city has led to non-use or misuse of a great many public spaces. Banja Luka 2024 team has started an initiative to map all the city's vacant property and make a ranking system for the artists, organizations and others from the independent sector to apply for the apportionment of these spaces for cultural activities. This initiative includes rural Community Centres too, which will be turned into small cultural units, community hubs they used to be.

The reorganization of Kastel fortress into Banja Luka City Museum

A much-needed separation of the Kastel fortress from the cultural centre Banski Dvor is a step towards a fully functional new institution on the city level. Envisioned as a Banja Luka City Museum, it will bring a new programme, one that focuses less on popular culture, with larger events chosen more carefully. All the open-air events will be subject to the new "cultural monument tax" intended for the budget of the fortress, its preservation and maintenance. This newly formed Museum will have exhibition and education spaces, as well as several departments throughout the city. This type of organization will open the Museum to the public in an interesting way, making the visit a colourful journey through the whole city. Some of these departments, which will constitute the city-as-a-museum approach are:

The house of Vlado Milošević, a famous composer of 20th-century classical music.

Projects: *Hajduci i Jataci, Luča, Janus*

Terzić art gallery, a legacy of the Terzić family.

Projects: *Hajduci i Jataci, Faceprints*

Šeranić house, a 16th-century house of a famous merchant family, one of the oldest preserved houses in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Projects: *A Hole in the Wall, I Am an Emotional Creature*

Art Districts

The plan is to divide the central part of the city into Art Districts – defined by different types and genres of art in public space. The districts will encourage and create thematic environments with a close relation to the identity context of each zone.

Smart City

The standardization and improvement of public infrastructure in coordination with modern requirements of cultural activities, sports and recreation and sustainable development through establishing a modern system of infrastructural networks. Synchronized with planning documents it will serve as a platform for development. This includes making the central area of the city a car-free zone, more bicycle paths, smart systems, a network of playgrounds for children and open sports fields, green zones, parks, etc.

Markets

Our city has several inactive markets which are ideal for the strategy of cultural decentralization and encourage-

ment of art in public spaces. With slight renovation and adaptation, they will be transformed into art markets with crafts production by day, and into a place for performing arts and other cultural activities during the evening. This type of facility will connect artisans, organic farmers, artists and the general public into a new kind of culture/creative industry/art hubs.

Urban Causeways

This project involves building a much needed infrastructure to provide pedestrian access to the river Vrbas in the centre of the city, and more public spaces for art. The methodology of the project involves architects working closely with the private landowners in the closest vicinity to the river to find viable solutions that will suit all.

Manjača Sheep Ahoy hub

A hub on the Manjača plateau required for the *Sheep Ahoy* project, which will house the production of wool, and wool based materials and a workshop for the fashion designers involved in the project. A small factory with mixed use according to the project guidelines.

NO!MAD mobile cultural centre

Demilitarization of a part of the Manjača plateau base includes the refurbishment of three military transport vehicles for the *NO!Mad* project, which, in its first phase, serves as the mobile communication unit of the Banja Luka 2024 project, and in the second as a mobile cultural centre.

Roofs - Hanging Gardens

For the *Hanging Gardens* project, the roofs of a number of public and privately owned buildings get a new refurbishment, creating spaces for urban agriculture, community activities and workshops.

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

Banja Luka lies at the most important highway in the region that connects Central and East Europe with the Adriatic shore. It is at the crossroads of many regional routes that link the east and the west. Therefore, strategically it is very well positioned, having Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Hungary, Austria, Romania, Montenegro and Italy all within 500 km. It lies almost in the middle between three capitals in the region, Belgrade (350 km), Zagreb (187 km) and Sarajevo (250 km). By 2021, the E-661 expressway from Banja Luka will be linked with the E-70 motorway via a new bridge and border crossing, which will speed up travelling to Zagreb and Belgrade significantly.

The construction of C5 motorway that connects Banja Luka and Sarajevo is scheduled to start in 2019 and will also contribute to better connections with the Herzegovina region.

When it comes to bus transportation, Banja Luka has very frequent bus lines to the rest of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, and Europe. Due to our widespread diaspora, there are regular bus lines to another nine European countries (Austria, Belgium, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovakia).

Banja Luka has an international airport only 23 km from the city centre. At the moment there are daily flights to and from Belgrade, and Ryanair flies to Memmingen (Germany), Brussels (Belgium) and Stockholm (Sweden). Negotiations are under way with two other low-cost airlines, with the intention of increasing the number of flights and destinations in the near future. Until that time, the international airports in Zagreb and Belgrade bring you into a well-connected vicinity of Banja Luka.

Unfortunately, Bosnia and Herzegovina's railways are mostly outdated and in need of repair, making this form of travel quite slow.

However, this is also something that is being looked into and some improvements have already been made. There is a new train connecting Sarajevo and Banja Luka, and another one is to be operational between Bihać and Banja Luka (it's a revival of a well-known route from Banja Luka, to Bihać, then Zagreb and Ljubljana). There are plans to reintroduce a railway line Banja Luka – Zagreb – Ploče, which will connect Banja Luka with the Adriatic shore by train.

Once you get to Banja Luka you will have no problem getting around. There are approximately 30 public bus lines that take you all around the city and its surroundings. Taxi service is excellent and cheap and since recently there are city bikes available at different locations. In the past year, Banja Luka has invested considerable efforts in increasing urban mobility. The success of the implemented measures is reflected in this year's award for significant transformation and progress towards liveable and smarter city - CIVITAS "Transformations Award."

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

At the moment, Banja Luka has the accommodation capacity of 2000 beds. In addition to this, during school breaks and weekends, there are around 770 additional beds in high school dorms, the school for children with intellectual disabilities 'Zaštiti me', special library and retirement homes. There are 18 hotels, 8 motels, 15 hostels, 17 B&Bs, 64 apartments, rooms and holiday homes, which makes a total of 121 accommodation facility. However, it needs to be said that there are also Airbnb types of accommodation, but not all of them are registered. It is estimated that they make up for additional 800 beds.

By the end of 2019, Banja Luka should get two more hotels – Slavija (120 beds) and Courtyard by Marriott (250 beds). There are also plans for the construction of one 5 and one 3 star hotel (total of around 500 beds) in the next five years, which will all increase Banja Luka's accommodation capacity significantly. Having in mind that the ECoC title would have a very direct positive impact on the accommodation providers, Banja Luka 2024 team will explore with them the possibilities of increasing their capacities and raising the quality of services.

We are currently developing a strategy on how to increase the number and quality of equipped camping sites situated around Banja Luka. At the moment, there are four in Banja Luka's immediate vicinity, on the left bank of the Vrbas river. Having in mind that our programme structure includes nature sites and riverside in the city's surroundings, we have plans to involve local partners in increasing their accommodation capacities and making them an interesting alternative for staying in our city.

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

The City Council has so far voted a plan of capital expenditure for the period of 2018-2020, and the planned budget covers these projects in the field of culture, urban and tourism infrastructure:

1. Reconstruction and revitalization of the Kastel fortress

This project is the final stage of the reconstruction of the city fortress, a project which began with the initial donation from the European Union.

2. Renovation works on the Banski Dvor palace

This includes the renovation work on the roof, facades, and the carpentry and joinery work on the Banski Dvor palace.

3. Dajak boat marina

The construction of the new marina for the Dajak type of boats, unique to Banja Luka and Vrbas river.

4. Terzić gallery

The renovation and adaptation of the art gallery which is a legacy of the Terzić family.

5. Multifunctional concert hall and conference center

By far the largest and most important infrastructure project for Banja Luka, aiming to provide a venue of the appropriate capacities to house larger productions, congresses and conferences. An essential part of the future image and identity of the city.

6. "Safikada" park

A park with the theme of the local legend of Safikada, a tragic love story between a Turkish girl and an Austrian soldier.

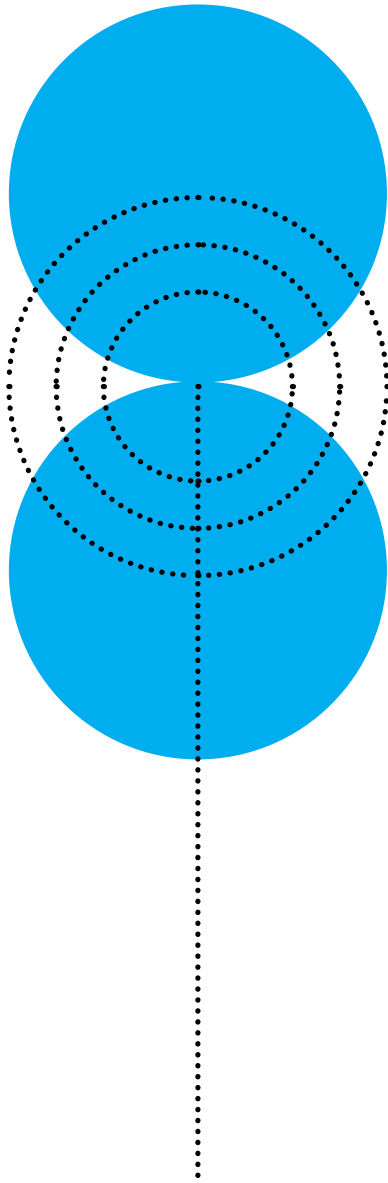
7. Vlado Milošević house

Renovation and adaptation of the house/museum of our famous classical music composer from the 20th century.

8. Ponir – Banj Brdo tourist road

A road that connects the two hills above the city, Ponir and Banj Brdo. This road will connect the two very popular areas for sports, recreation and tourism.

07



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

We have written this bid out of pure need for the survival of our cultural scene, which is, due to the absence of funding and careful planning, slowly dying. Our cultural scene could be the cork that will stop the drainage of our population across the borders. We have written this bid as the first step into adulthood where we take responsibility for the progress and well being of our community. And yes, we seek help in this process, from our international partners and community, but this time as a mature request and after a careful analysis of what aid we need that will contribute to our further growth.

Our determination to move forward is best reflected in the first ever cultural development strategy for Banja Luka, and first ever in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It came to life and saw the light through tremendous engagement and participation of the entire cultural sector and therefore it is a document that addresses real problems, proposes concrete measures and thus lays groundwork for the cultural healing of our community.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country with probably the largest number of visible and invisible borders in Europe and they are preventing all and any progress. Because everyone is pulling in different, opposite directions. In the long run, such segmentation is not sustainable without the grassroots unity and culture can be the fertile ground to grow it. Our coalition of cities initiative, that starts with the partnership with the City of Bihać and independent scene of Jajce, can be the right step towards the unification of our country despite the borders. So that we finally stand “United in Diversity”, positive about our future. After the long years of isolation, it can be our link back into the European community. Like the electromagnet we aim to become, we will broaden the attraction field with each city, with each partner and community, leaving an important legacy that borders, invisible and visible ones, can be traversed through culture.

BID BOOK BY

Monika Ponjavić (1982) is a performance designer, researcher and a film critic. She holds three master degrees: in architecture, theatre and film studies from the Universities of Banja Luka, Amsterdam and Belgrade. She is a PhD candidate in Performance design at the University of Novi Sad and currently works as a Senior associate for Strategic planning and EU funds at the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Mirjana Galić (1982) is a film producer, project manager, English language translator and interpreter, and TA practitioner. She received a master's degree in English Language and Literature after attending the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb. She holds the title of a Scientific, Technical and Legal Translator, and is a certified Practitioner of Transactional Analysis. She currently runs an independent film production.

Dijana Grbić (1977) is an actress and a cultural manager. She holds a bachelor's degree in acting from the University of Banja Luka and a master's degree in performance research from the Goldsmiths University in London. After years of working in the independent scene she joined the team at the City of Banja Luka where she worked in the Department for Culture. She currently works in the Cabinet of the mayor where she manages the international cooperation.

Marko Bilbija (1984) is an architect, scenographer and an illustrator. He holds a master's degree in architecture from the University of Belgrade and is specialized in sacral architecture. He is a PhD student at the University of Belgrade in the field of History and Philosophy of Science and Technology. For the past two years he is managing the project "Banja Luka 2024" and is currently the CEO of the Foundation "Banja Luka 2024".

Vuk Radulović (1988) is a PhD Candidate in Law and EU Integrations. He has been working for European Capital of Culture project for the past six years. He is currently Head of Development projects of the Foundation Novi Sad 2021. He took a part in a dozen of international and European cultural and artistic projects. He has conducted several researches in the field of democracy, EU integration, reconciliation and international cultural cooperation. His expertise is international cultural projects.

Nemanja Milenković (1977) is an expert for brand development: of products, events and destinations. For the past 25 years he creates, manages and advises some of the most important regional and European brands in the field of creative industries. He is a professor of history and a media manager who became one of the first brand coaches in Southeast Europe using innovative development methodology.

Saša Đorđević (1973) is a graphic designer and DJ. He has been active in the field of graphic design for the past eighteen years. He is a member of ULUPUBIH and has received numerous awards for his work both locally and regionally. In 2000 he moved from Belgrade to Banja Luka where he currently lives and works as part of the Design Studio Bunker.

Bojan Galić (1981) is an architect and a graphic designer. He graduated from the University of Banja Luka. In the past ten years of his professional career he has received multiple awards in the field of both graphic design and architecture. He lives in Banja Luka and is a part of the creative team Design Studio Bunker.



Banja Luka
2024
European
capital
of culture
Candidate city