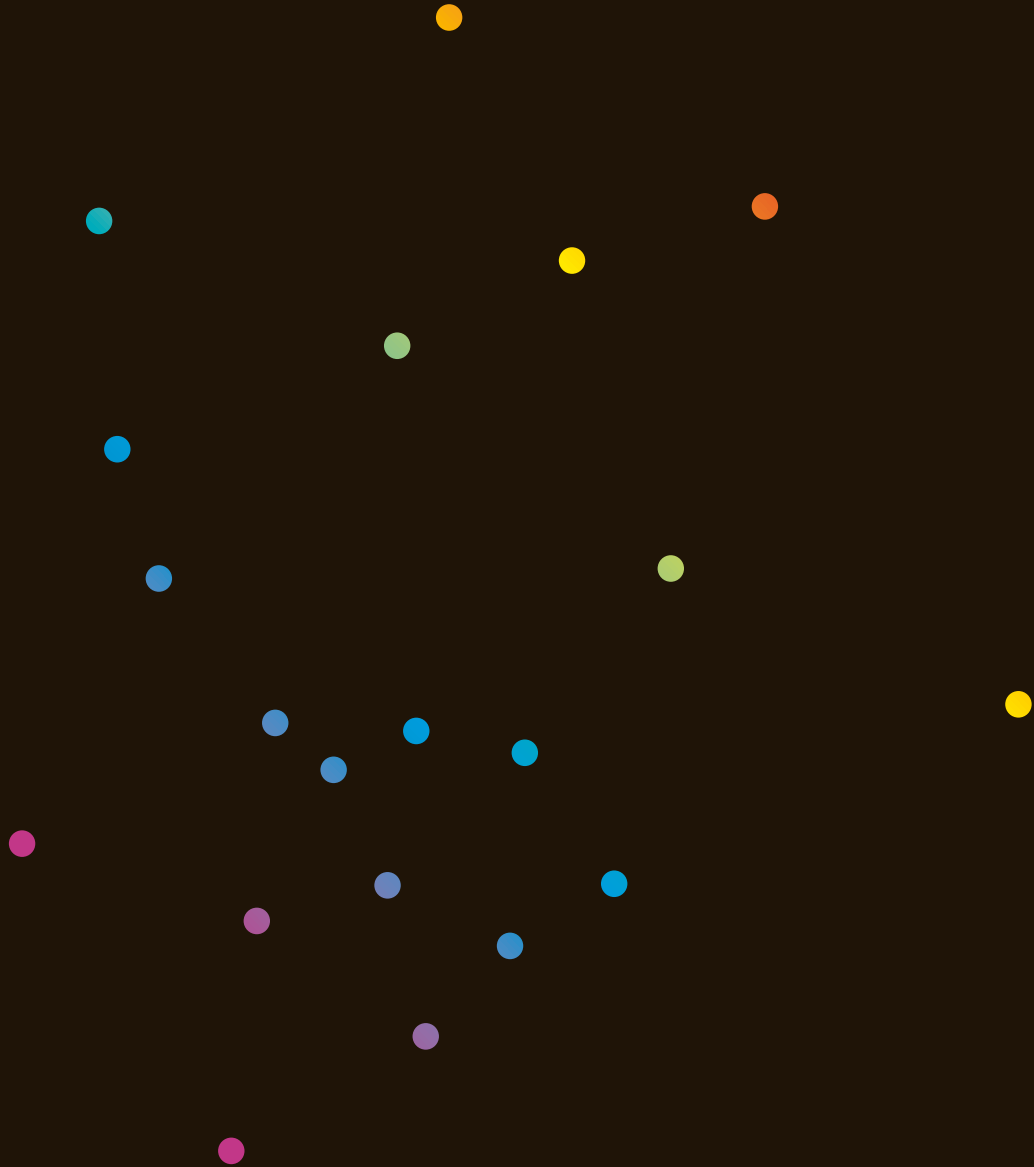


# Equally European





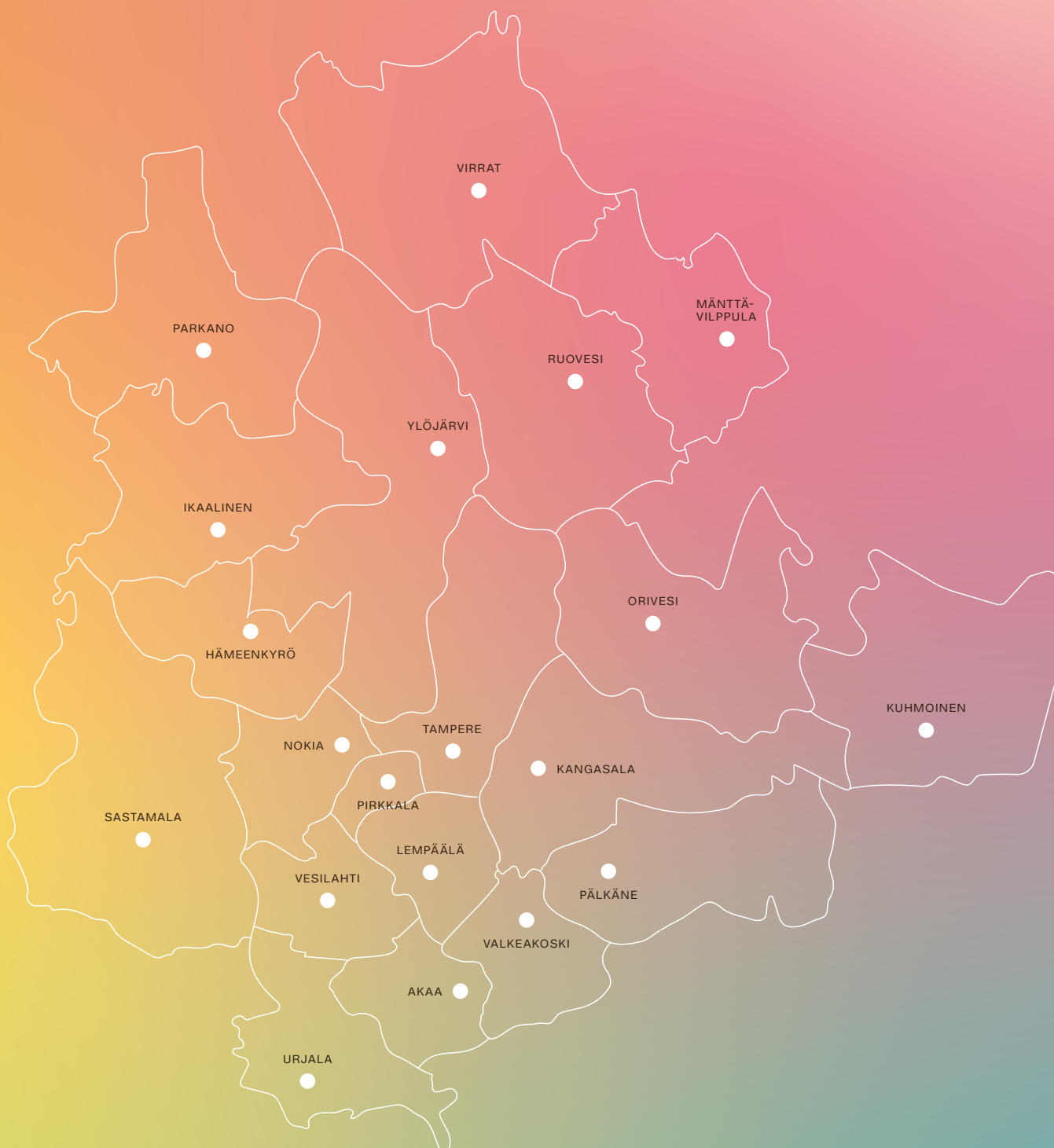
# Equally European

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# Tampere26\*



\* including the region of Pirkanmaa with 23 municipalities (20 of which are part of our bid)



# Q1

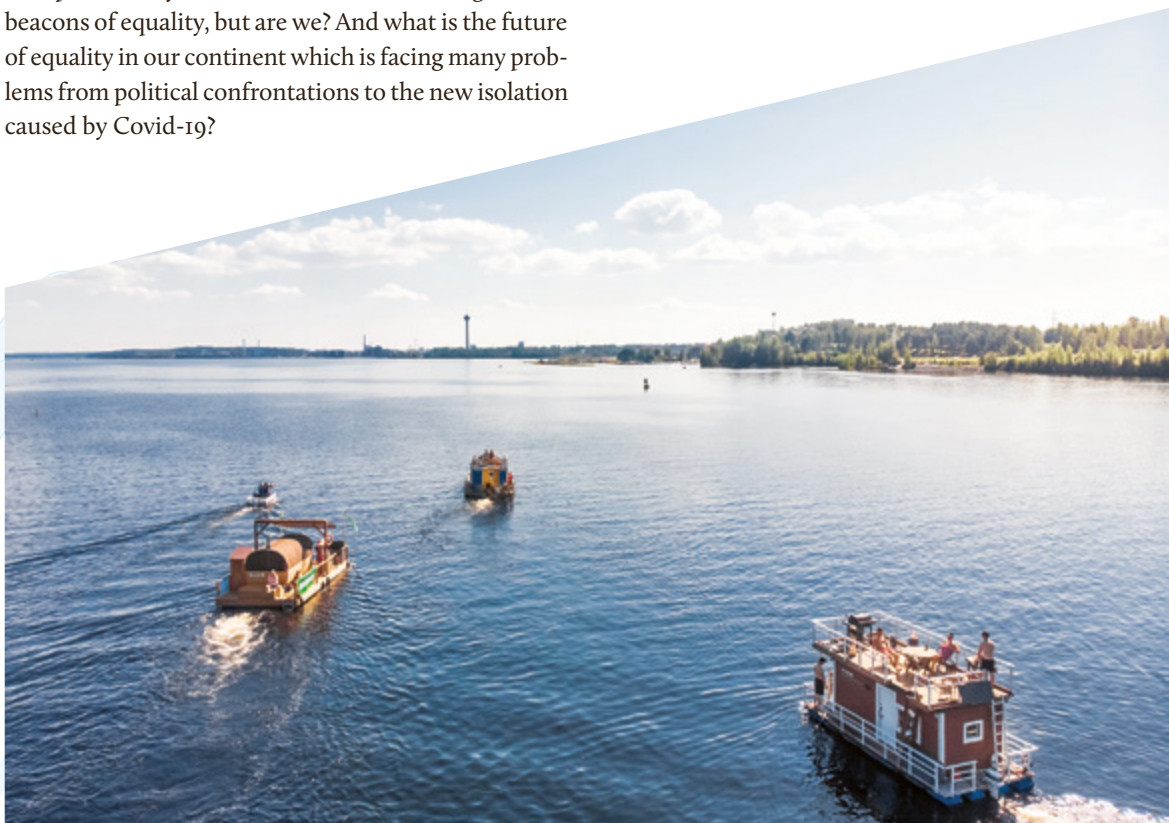
## Equally European – how has our concept evolved since the first round?

Since the pre-selection round, we've worked hard with our international partners to transform our understanding of culture in Tampere and Pirkanmaa. We've carefully analysed our local identity, paying attention to the needs of the creative sector as well as broader society. Stimulated by these challenges, we've realised that a more inclusive perspective is required at the regional as well as at pan-European level. Our Equally European endeavour will create new levels of social equality, diversity and accessibility – starting with the cultural and artistic tools we have at hand.

Our concept Equally European reaches out beyond our borders to engage all Europeans to discuss equality with us. What does equality mean for us, and for all Europeans today? The Nordic countries are regarded as beacons of equality, but are we? And what is the future of equality in our continent which is facing many problems from political confrontations to the new isolation caused by Covid-19?

Equality persists as the key value of our ECoC endeavour, yet we've made a vital change in the concept – from **Quality by Equality** to **Equally European**. Broad brush strokes of the first round have been replaced by a deeper understanding of equality – which means asking also where and how equality is under threat. What can we do, in particular, to use equality as a transformative power in culture and the arts?

We want to use equality to direct our attention to the cultural and artistic issues that need fixing, and we believe we may thus promote social change. We want to move from complacency to collaboration, from egoism to equality.





In order to make our communication more accessible, we've also clarified our other terms and tools. Our concept Equally European operates on three levels – closely interlinked with one another:

- **CULTURAL LEVEL:** equality is a transformative tool for arts and culture when used to tackle issues of accessibility and inclusion
- **REGIONAL LEVEL:** our local problems are global in their nature – and post-Covid, we're Equally European in searching for solutions together
- **EUROPEAN LEVEL:** equality is a unifying value between diverse Europeans – even when we disagree over its meaning and challenges

Working for equality through the arts sounds like a big task, so how are we going to pull it off? We've realised, to begin with, that Tampere and Pirkanmaa have got the natural grit and courage in the face of global challenges. Now we want to tap into our toolkit of equality and work not only on local but also global concerns – and on how the two are interlinked. It's time to reach out and renew faith in the social power of arts not just here but in all Europe.

For this, we've sat down to get clear about **our needs** – studying the present obstacles of equality around us. In a world thoroughly shaken by a year-long pandemic (which is still going on), social inequality and gender inequality have increased. More and more people are struggling to be active members of society. We've also noticed that our central city of Tampere grows at the expense of the broader region – increasing regional inequality not just further away but also in the city. Adding to this bundle of problems the on-going ecological crisis, it becomes apparent that we need international solutions to move forward.

In our **Cultural Programme**, we pay special attention to how we translate equality into cultural projects. Post-Covid, online contacts are not enough for international cooperation – we need to intensify real human ties and reconnect to European friends by tackling common issues such as social inequality and the regional downsides of rapid urbanisation. Our four programme lines address equality in different contexts:

**(R)EVOLUTIONS** tackles questions of equality in relationship with social and political issues in current societies. Our basic European values of democracy, human rights and equality are under threat, and we need arts to keep them alive.



**EQUALLY YOURS** addresses equality in the field of culture. Equality is not about blending differences but celebrating them. Our diverse range of culture includes remakes of traditions and heritage, and open-ended platforms for recreation and co-creation.

**VILLAGE HOPPING** views equality through regional lenses, promoting access to high-quality culture in the regions. We celebrate the regional aspects of European identity, studying microidentities and challenging also our personal comfort zones.

**WILD CARD** places human culture inside nature, not above it. Grassroots activities as well as professional environmental art will help us develop sustainable solutions with Europe.

In sum, *Equally European* is our ambitious attempt to reach out to Europe, using equality and culture to bind us together as Europeans. The power of European Capitals of Culture, in our view, is not only that they solve local problems, but that they **sharpen our European values**. We're eagerly waiting to continue this work with all Europeans.



# Long-Term Strategy





## Q2

### Current status of the cultural strategy, and the relationship between the strategy and ECoC

**Our Equally European process is causing unique cultural change in Tampere and Pirkanmaa, yet we have only just begun. Our strategic thinking now in the final round involves thorough revisions whereby we understand our ECoC endeavour as the vital unifying thread between various cultural developments. The Cultural Strategy is the bedrock of our work, yet the ECoC pushes it wider. Pulling different projects and initiatives together, we seek to bring about a profound transformation of our culture and the arts scene under the umbrella of equality.**

The Cultural Strategy of Tampere, *A City of Sustainable Growth Through Culture*, was unanimously approved by the city council on 16 December 2019. Since then, the Cultural Strategy (CS) as such has not yet been revised, largely because the Covid-19 cultural consequences call for deeper reflection – and also a more integrated role for culture in overall city development. The implementation of the CS, however, is in full swing. To understand the current situation, we find it useful to analyse the CS in the light of equality – which has been our common denominator from the start. Let's begin with examples of projects which have been set in motion in Tampere and Pirkanmaa by the CS, under three thematic headings:

**CULTURAL WELL-BEING:** in Pirkanmaa, a model for integrating cultural services into the social and health sectors has been launched, funded by the *Finnish institute for health and welfare*. In Tampere, the initiatives for greater accessibility of culture include, for example, the *Echo Card* enabling cultural participation for persons with low income, and *Tampere Junior* reducing the inequalities in well-being of children, youth, and families (CS Objective 1: Culture is for everyone).

**WORKING CONDITIONS OF ARTISTS AND CREATIVE OPERATORS:** the cultural and creative operators in Tampere lack appropriate working spaces, so the city is responding to this need. A survey on the status quo of the working spaces has been conducted, and

by now the survey is starting to result in decisions by the city to start developing premises for such spaces (CS Objective 2: Home of creative people).

**ART IN PUBLIC SPACE:** the CS fosters meaningful experiences in the city, and Tampere has been improving on the visibility of art in public spaces. *Tramway Art*, for instance, is a large-scale project to curate and permanently display artworks along the newly built tramline, with works ranging from visual arts to comics and literature (CS Objective 3: A city of meaningfulness).

This list is a good start – but we must push further. The CS strengthens the role of culture in Tampere, but our Equally European action improves on *Tampere's and Pirkanmaa's ties with Europe and the world*. Our overall aim is to **promote equality through culture**. We use arts and culture as tools for greater equality, social cohesion and sustainable development – and thus for more wellbeing and happiness.

To achieve this, we must work across sectors – which requires us to have a clear grasp of those sectors. For this, we've first conducted a **need analysis of the creative sector** – looking closely at why our city and region need to become a European Capital of Culture. Second, we've looked at the **big picture** of urban and regional development in Tampere and Pirkanmaa – to see how we should reach across the various policy sectors to drive our high-reaching aims. Third, we've conducted a **need analysis of our communities**, focusing on the social conditions of our diverse communities. Our overall ECoC goals have been re-formulated as a result of this work.

#### WHY ECOC – NEEDS OF THE CREATIVE SECTOR

To work for equality through arts and culture, we need to be clear not only about the broader concerns of our



diverse communities, but also the needs of the creative sector at large. In exchanges with our creative sector, including artists, cultural and creative operators and institutions, we've identified the following four needs to be pursued by European Capital of Culture:

- **CULTURE-LED URBAN DEVELOPMENT:** make culture integral part of our overall urban development; link our CS and ECoC strategies with other development projects in the region
- **STRONGER REGIONAL COOPERATION** – regional operators need more cultural resources, and the need for cooperation is heightened by the existing inequalities in the region
- **BROADER EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION** – to improve by learning and connect further with international partners
- **BUILDING CAPACITIES FOR THE ARTS,** in particular, for cross-sectoral cooperation between institutions, independent scene and communities, thus developing artistic excellence

These needs underlie our strategic emphases. We don't respond to each need with only one initiative but supply them across sectors. ECoC is a catalyst and an experiment for this – and transforming our regional culture is part of the experiment. If culture is seen sometimes as an extra layer of entertainment on top of the more essential sectors of society, we want to make it the heart and soul of urban and regional development – not just by flashy talk but by concrete action.

## CULTURAL STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION ACROSS SECTORS

The broad aims of the CS cannot be fully realised without substantial measures by other development programmes. Tampere has currently six development programmes running in the fields of sustainability, digitalisation, creative industries, and urban development. The city has also published a *Roadmap for International Activities in 2021–2022* stressing not only cultural well-being and equality but also sustainability, knowledge and innovation. Factoring these into our work, here's the **big picture** of those programmes and projects especially crucial for the implementation of the CS:

- **SUSTAINABILITY:** Sustainable Tampere programme under Smart Tampere; Carbon-neutral Tampere 2030 roadmap; Hiedanranta – a large-scale city district development project aiming at culture-led urban planning and carbon negativity

- **DIGITALISATION:** Digi Programme improving the accessibility of public services through digitalisation, Digital City of Events
- **CREATIVE ECONOMY:** Ecosystem programme boosting businesses e.g. in education and research and artificial intelligence; creative industry initiatives, e.g. a new start-up house Platform6 at city centre
- **URBAN DEVELOPMENT:** altogether eight sub-projects improving on the city centre, including UROS LIVE, a new venue for sports and culture with 13000 seats, and a remade Särkänniemi Event Park (cf. CS Objective 4: Bigger than our size)

These programmes have a large scope – which underlines the need for an ECoC title rather than undermining it. The ECoC is the vital link and umbrella for integrating culture into all of these policies. Rapid urban development and big-money investments need culture and the arts – and equality – to foster ownership and belonging.

## WHY ECOC – THE SOCIAL ISSUES

The third step of our strategic thinking behind ECoC goals involves a need analysis of our communities. Through conversations with various stakeholders, we've redefined the general challenges in our city and the region – all of these with global underpinnings – as follows:

1. **INEQUALITY IS GROWING:** people with special needs or barriers lack full access to culture, and social bubbles online and offline heighten the inequalities.
2. **URBAN INSECURITY IS INCREASING:** the statistics say the rate of crimes in Tampere grew by about 35 % last year. We also have a drug-problem with increasing rates of drug-related crimes.
3. **AGE PYRAMID ON ITS HEAD:** we need workforce to maintain our social services, yet we receive insufficient immigration. Tampere's unemployment rate 14 % is Pirkanmaa's highest, and we rate badly in work-based immigration.
4. **TAMPERE GROWS AT THE EXPENSE OF SURROUNDING NON-URBAN AREAS:** we're not responding to the downsides of rapid growth of Tampere, and we're not doing enough to help the broader region suffering from negative migration.
5. **CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE ECOLOGICAL CRISIS RESHAPE THE WORLD:** future cities and city districts must be planned sustainably, and citizens must adapt to the changes.
6. **COVID-19 CAUSES FURTHER SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONCERNS:** social gaps between people are widening, causing increased loneliness, poverty and mental health issues.

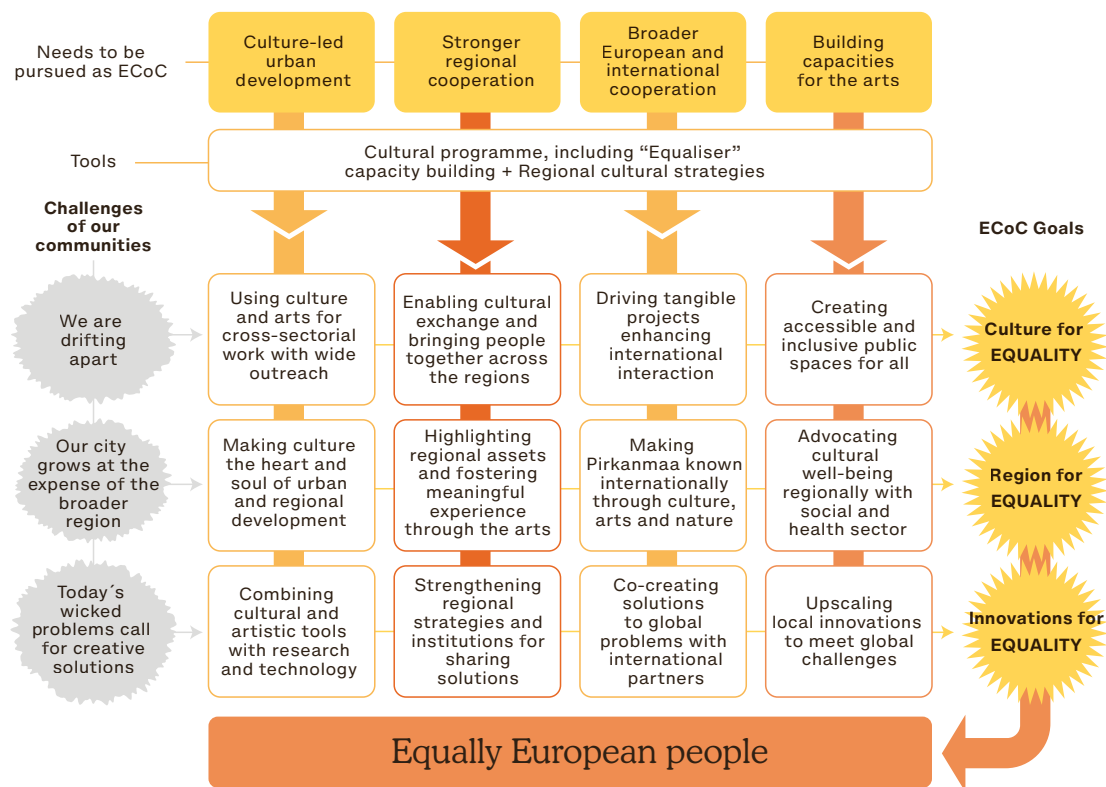




If we zoom out, we notice that the concerns may be divided into three overall headings. First, we have a social challenge: **we are drifting apart** (items 1–2, and 6). Second, there is a challenge that's both urban and regional: **our central city grows at the expense of the broader region**, and we're not responding to the downsides of rapid growth either in Tampere or in Pirkanmaa (items 3–4 ). Third, **today's wicked problems call for creative solutions** (items 5–6).

## STRATEGIC ECoC GOALS

How to respond to the challenges? We've operated at three levels – local, regional and European – defining our three ECoC goals on the basis of our need analyses and earlier preselection work in the background of the CS. The following strategic map sums up how our ECoC goals relate both to the challenges of our communities and the needs of the creative sector:



### 1) CULTURE FOR EQUALITY

*In culture and the arts, equality may be a transformative force – and through culture we can promote social equality and sustainable societies.*

Equality is a useful principle in arts and culture because it helps us see structural and context-specific problems. Imagine a world where everyone would be able to express themselves without political or personal barriers – this sounds like a dream but it's a dream worth fighting for! We want to join the creative mission of building new cultural inclusion standards for Europe. We want to use arts and culture to help

everyone in Pirkanmaa to participate in communal cultural activities and artistically express themselves from their own starting points – consolidating belonging and togetherness, promoting health and wellbeing.

We will tear down barriers to equal access to arts and culture, concerning **accessibility** both physical and mental, embracing **social inclusion** and **diversity** of different cultures. Cultural inequality manifests itself also in the unequal working conditions for artists doing their work in diverse art genres – and Tampere needs to continue improving on the availability of



cultural spaces. We create innovative action via arts, culture, and creativity, tackling loneliness and introversion. While Finland and Tampere are fairly advanced as welfare societies founded on social justice, we still need much progress for a better understanding of cultural diversity. We need a more diverse range of artists on stage and backstage – and more diversity also in cultural production. By making our events and programme more accessible and inclusive, our audiences will grow to be more diverse, which will transform also our ways of thinking.

#### TOOL FOR CHANGE: CAPACITY BUILDING

Our Cultural Programme, all in all, drives greater equality through the arts, and we've revised our **capacity building** plans. Cross-sectoral projects are needed to ensure we have all the tools for greater equality. Tools are needed also against global megatrends and for artistic excellence and internationalisation of our cultural field.

Tampere is a dynamic start-up city in the field of technology, but we still need more cooperation between start-ups and the cultural operators. Creative operators may have much to contribute to social innovations, but they lack the connections. We use capacity building thus to **enhance cooperation between our cultural institutions and independent operators**, and also to continue providing working spaces for

the creative professionals. Artistic inequalities may arise, for instance, from different working conditions for institutional and non-institutional artists. Our capacity building programme "Equaliser" for greater equality will work closely with cities, municipalities, and cultural institutions.

## 2) REGION FOR EQUALITY

*Regional inequality is an urgent topic in Europe and in our cities – involving issues such as public services, prices of housing, and cultural dynamics.*

As the rents for office space and apartments at city centres rise, everyone may not be able to reside in – or enjoy the services of – all our city districts. In Tampere, we hear at worst the disconcerting echoes by right-wing populists of increasing segregation in our city – and we'll use culture and the arts to tackle such prejudice. To counteract **regional inequality**, we promote curiosity and dialogue – openness of our city districts to inclusive citizen participation and cultural activities for diverse people.

People are also worried about the availability of **recreational and cultural spaces**, and our Equally European action – together with the implementation of the CS – will be at the forefront of providing them. We need more public, safe spaces, and the cultural institutions





must do their part. The cultural operators and citizens of Tampere and Pirkanmaa should have entry not only to their own places but to *all places* – in the more remote city districts, if they like, or at the city centre, if that's what they prefer. Art and culture will not only reimagine public space, but they will make practical interventions to change the status quo. Too often, independent artists in the non-institutional scene work in the margins – somewhat removed from the daylight of urban debates – and they should have more visibility. Cultural operators belong not only to their studios but to the decision-making tables – for how else might we change the role of culture in cities in the first place?

In the region of Pirkanmaa, we want to infuse our living environments with meaning, promoting pride about our cultural heritage, past and present creative practices. We often walk by neighbourhoods unaware of their historical layers of meaning, or even their everyday beauty – and we want to change this. We want to encourage ownership of the residents to their neighbourhood, affective bonds to both cities and villages, across Pirkanmaa and beyond.

### TOOL FOR CHANGE: CULTURAL STRATEGIES IN THE REGION

With our revised ECoC plans, we've sharpened the role of the region strategically. Note that there are stark and surprising differences between the different corners of our region. Among the 23 municipalities of Pirkanmaa, **Tampere**, and **Mänttä-Vilppula** stand out culturally. A pioneering case in art-led town planning, Mänttä-Vilppula made a solid ECoC bid of their own for 2011 – and now they're joining us as our main municipal partner. While Mänttä-Vilppula is thus advanced in culture, its migration statistics have been bleak: the city that gained most inhabitants in Finland in 2020 was Tampere, while the city losing the most inhabitants was Mänttä-Vilppula!

On the regional level, Equally European action has three aims. First, we cast out a challenge for **all of the municipalities of Pirkanmaa to have a Cultural Strategy in place by 2026**. Second, we utilise the existing regional resources in **cultural well-being**. In 2017, the Arts Promotion Centre Finland produced a *Plan for Cultural Well-being* in Pirkanmaa, and now in 2020, Pirkanmaa has received more than half a million euros to continue with the implementation of these plans.

Here the regional aspect of our application is a true asset, since the work on cultural well-being is coordinated by the Pirkanmaa Hospital District. Third, project-wise, the **public libraries** of Pirkanmaa are of particular importance for regional capacity building.

### 3) INNOVATIONS FOR EQUALITY

*Climate change and the eco-crisis are the major challenges of today – and yet they need to be tackled in conjunction with other global concerns, both economic and social.*

Faced with the bundle of global problems, where to begin? On climate change, cities, while being major contributors to it, are also the most affected. The Covid-19 related economic and social disruptions affect the next years of urban and regional development, as well as cultural rights and lives all around Europe. Future societies – and certainly, the Nordic societies – will need transformations ensuring not just social welfare for all, but doing this sustainably. Amidst these challenges, we also hear talk about the challenges and possibilities of digitalisation – which do not always translate to practical and fair solutions.

To tackle such complex challenges, we advocate a **new social role for culture** together with our European partners. Post-Covid, as Professor Pier Luigi Sacco has argued, the ECoCs can function as urban laboratories for culture-driven social change, and this is our aim. The wicked problems of today and tomorrow require that we use culture to forge links between different disciplines – and to drive social change across sectors. Skills for **creative thinking** will be trained by fusing art and science – and our cultural projects will be on the vanguard in this. Responding to the **environmental crisis**, we use culture to create change not just by abstract measures but in people's behaviour and attitudes. We will also use equality in arts and culture to lower the threshold for digital participation – adding not just to the skills for the future but also the audience-base of our artworks.

*Our three ECoC goals contribute to our overall aim of becoming Equally European. We bring the best tools and ideas in accessible and inclusive culture to be shared through international mutual learning. Europe is not finished, it's very much in the making – and we will create a living laboratory, a European case study for how arts and culture can contribute to equality.*



# Q3/4

## Intended long-term impacts of Equally European with monitoring and evaluation plans

**The long-term impacts of our Equally European action have been revised in light of our renewed overall goals. Developing a European case study for how arts and culture can contribute to equality will be our legacy, and we've carefully mapped the long-term impacts of how to get there.**

Working closely with the ongoing implementation of the Cultural Strategy, the long-term impacts of our ECoC year have been closely integrated with the CS aims. Success, in a word, means realising our **legacy: to improve equality through arts and culture** – using our European cultural programme as a tool, with its diverse projects from top-notch inclusive art to public education, capacity building and outreach.

### HOW DO WE DEFINE “SUCCESS”?

Our chief aim is to create a laboratory, a European **case study for how arts and culture can contribute to equality** – which will be our **legacy** as a European Capital of Culture. More specifically, our region will be Equally European if and when by 2032 we'll reach the following long-term impacts – synthesising the three ECoC goals explained earlier:

**MORE EQUALITY THROUGH CULTURE:** culture is an integral part of city development in Tampere and regional development in Pirkanmaa. The cultural sector works closely together with other sectors of society, promoting health and wellbeing, forging links between culture and the economy – and doing this sustainably. Culture and the arts are more accessible and inclusive, and both artists and their audiences are more diverse. Art has a visible role in public space, and cultural operators take part in decision-making relevant to their work and to the city. In these diverse

ways, greater equality in culture creates more equality in societies and more equality in communities.

**MORE EQUALITY IN THE REGION:** people recognise the cultural assets of Tampere and Pirkanmaa, and the region is an attractive place to live. Tampere is a cultural city with various layers of meaning, with accessible cultural contents on a regular basis in both local cultural heritage and contemporary productions. The region of Pirkanmaa operates on a more equal footing with Tampere – and the inequalities in cultural offer have been reduced across the region. The 23 municipalities of Pirkanmaa have consolidated the role of culture in their overall municipal development, and they have a Cultural Strategy in place. The cultural sites in the region are more accessible, and the nature sites in Pirkanmaa are part of our cultural offer.

**EQUALITY ACROSS DISCIPLINES AND GENERATIONS:** our activities in Tampere and Pirkanmaa are entwined with global challenges, thanks to broader cooperation with partners all across Europe and the world. We learn regularly from cooperating and exchanging with others – and keep these relations as a legacy. Higher education institutions, R&D in technological industries and crossover projects by cultural and creative operators add to the creativity and critical thinking skills at home and abroad. In Tampere and Pirkanmaa, there's increased awareness of and interest in how art is practiced elsewhere in transversal work with other sectors of society – and both internal and external cultural diversity are better acknowledged. Pirkanmaa is a pioneer not only in inclusive and accessible culture but also in sustainable development – with culture as a tool for changing people's attitudes and behaviour.

The following table lists the intended long-term impacts under three headings:



## LONG-TERM CULTURAL/SOCIAL IMPACTS

IMPACT	INDICATORS	SOURCE
Culture in Pirkanmaa is accessible, inclusive and equal	Number and quality of the schemes encouraging wider engagement, % of cultural organisations using new ways to reach audiences	EDAS statistics (EDAS Tool explained on p. 20)
	Overall level of equality, accessibility and diversity of cultural organisations in Pirkanmaa in EDAS Tool (equality, diversity, accessibility and sustainability) statistics	EDAS statistics (2022–2032)
	Me / We meter (Community indicator)	Cooperation with HappyOrNot Ltd
Cultural offer is more diverse in terms of performers and audiences	Diversity in ECoC programmes (themes, artists, etc.)	EDAS statistics
	People's experience of the area's openness to embracing diversity	Surveys (2022, 2027, 2032)
Cultural operators and artists collaborate internationally	Number of new cross-border collaborations, co-productions and exchanges involving local and international operators	ECoC micro statistics
People's attendance at cultural events has increased, with lower barriers to participation	Number of free ECoC events, number of free cultural events in Tampere	ECoC micro statistics, Pirkanmaa Events Database 2022–2032
	Number of participants at ECoC programmes and events, ECoC website statistics	ECoC micro statistics
	Number of event participants in Tampere, Attendance at ECoC events and evolution compared to regular cultural audience of the City	Tampere event impact evaluation data (2022–2032)
People's activity in cultural organisations and as volunteers has increased	Number and profile of volunteers involved in ECoC programmes and level (depth) of their commitment, availability of volunteer work force	ECoC micro statistics
	Number of people involved in cultural organizations, associations and sports clubs	Well-being in Tampere survey, % of people who actively participate in clubs, associations etc.
The creative sector is skilful in diversity issues and the special needs of audiences, using relevant tools for this	Number of EDAS Tool users, percentage of ECoC programmes using the EDAS Tool	EDAS statistics
Culture adds to the wellbeing of people in Pirkanmaa	Rate of satisfaction/happiness for cultural offer	ECoC micro statistics
	People's motivation for participation in culture	Survey
Culture works more closely with social and health sectors	Culture's impact on health and wellbeing in the region	TEA-meter (National meter for cities measuring cultural wellbeing actions)
	Number of ECoC projects done in co-operation with social and healthcare organizations	ECoC micro statistics



## LONG-TERM REGIONAL/IDENTITY IMPACTS

IMPACT	INDICATORS	SOURCE
We are proud of our culture and heritage, and we share our region with people from other countries and cultures	Awareness of the ECoC as a city accolade / contributor to city reputation among residents	Survey
	Do you love Tampere / Pirkanmaa (Community indicator)	Cooperation with HappyOrNot Ltd
	People's interest in diverse forms of cultural heritage	Surveys (2022, 2027, 2032)
Tampere and Pirkanmaa are better known nationally and internationally	Geographical scope of media coverage	ECoC statistics, media stats
	National / international recognition of cities as being culturally vibrant and having improved image	Taloustutkimus market research company
Tampere and Pirkanmaa have an international cultural identity	Number of activities highlighting European diversity, based on European themes or based on transnational cooperation	ECoC micro statistics
	Citizens' awareness and appreciation of the diversity of European cultures	Surveys (2022, 2027, 2032)
	Number of local artists involved in international projects abroad has increased	Surveys (2022, 2027, 2032)
Cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, is repurposed in innovative ways	Number of ECoC cultural initiatives linking heritage and innovation	ECoC micro statistics
Citizens and cultural operators are actively involved in the processes of municipal development and decision-making	Level of citizens' involvement in city development	Surveys (2022, 2027, 2032), city statistics
	Level of cultural operators' involvement in city development	Surveys (2022, 2027, 2032), city statistics
Art has helped to transform unpleasant places to safer spaces	Number of ECoC projects linking culture and city development	ECoC micro statistics
	People's experience of safety in chosen areas	Well-being in Tampere survey
Affordable and accessible spaces are available for arts and culture, sports and communal activities	Levels of accessibility of public spaces	EDAS statistics (2022–2032)
	Creative use of urban space / Number of ECoC productions taking place in non-cultural venues	ECoC statistics
	Availability of spaces for cultural and communal activities	Surveys (2022, 2027, 2032)
Old industrial premises and vacant sites in Tampere and Pirkanmaa are repurposed for culture	Creative use of urban space / Number of ECoC productions taking place in non-cultural venues	ECoC statistics
Pirkanmaa is a collaboratively developed region	Percentage of municipalities of Pirkanmaa that have a Cultural Strategy in place	ECoC meso statistics, Surveys (2022, 2027, 2032)
	Number of collaborative projects between municipalities	ECoC micro statistics
	Number of region-wide event concepts	Event statistics
People are eager to stay in Pirkanmaa, and depopulation from rural areas has decreased	Number of people moving to Pirkanmaa and moving away from Pirkanmaa	Migration statistics
	Number of people emigrating from negative net migration areas in Pirkanmaa	Migration statistics



## LONG-TERM ECOLOGICAL/ECONOMIC IMPACTS

IMPACT	INDICATORS	SOURCE
Tampere and Pirkanmaa co-operate with international partners through strong networks and connections	Number of local artists involved in international projects abroad	ECoC micro statistics
	Number of international networks in creative sector in Pirkanmaa	Survey
Pirkanmaa is an international frontrunner in sustainable development, using culture as a tool for it	Number of ECoC events that have environmental programmes	ECoC micro statistics
	Number of ECoC programmes highlighting environmental issues	ECoC micro statistics
	Culture's role in sustainable development of the region	Data from the region's plans relating to sustainability
Creativity, imagination and curiosity are valued as important skills for future-savvy people	Citizens' level of creativity (Community indicator)	Cooperation with HappyOrNot Ltd, Surveys (2022, 2027, 2032)
	Number of productions encouraging active audience participation	ECoC micro statistics
	Number of start-ups in the creative industries	Pirkanmaa Growth Monitor, Snapshot of Innovation Activity, Platform6 Startup House, Startup-alliance
Experience economy has recovered post Covid-19, and creative tourism and new cultural phenomena contribute to our economy	Tourist visits in the area	Data from visitors
	Number of visitors in selected non-typical cultural venues (smaller venues, artist houses etc.)	Data collected by ECoC
	Number of people employed in the cultural sector	ECoC micro/meso statistics
	Number of events in every category of ECoC events	ECoC micro statistics
Tampere and Pirkanmaa thrive economically, and cultural sector is a lively part of this	ECoC's economic impact on Pirkanmaa	Statistics Finland
	Increase in GDP and employment in cities' cultural and creative sectors	Statistics Finland
Technology is a natural part of people's lives, with the arts inspiring new technology and businesses and cultural operators cooperating closely	Number and quality of programmes combining culture and technology	ECoC micro statistics
	Number of start-ups in tech industries	Pirkanmaa Growth Monitor, Snapshot of Innovation Activity, Platform6 Startup House, Startup-alliance
	Satisfaction on digital services	Surveys (2022, 2027, 2032)
	Cultural operators' use of technology	Surveys (2022, 2027, 2032)
Culture has an integral role in city development at large	Number of ECoC projects done in co-operation with city/region development programmes in Pirkanmaa	ECoC micro statistics
	Culture's role in city development programmes	Data from the region's plans



## EQUALLY EUROPEAN EVALUATION

Our project evaluation will examine the value of ECoC for Tampere and Pirkanmaa and for European cultural heritage and contemporary arts. A formative and co-constructive process seeks to create common ownership of the cultural capital of Pirkanmaa and identifying and nourishing the full potential of the region's cultural activities. Based on the idea of a continuous and systematic assessment, the evaluation is an integral part of the implementation of the ECoC in Tampere and Pirkanmaa.

The process has started with baseline studies in 2019 and will end with an evaluation of the attained legacy in 2032. The three levels of assessment are micro (artistic projects), meso (monitoring of ECoC organisation) and macro (impacts of the title year).

1. **ON MICRO LEVEL**, artistic quality and primary outcomes, such as participation and participants' satisfaction, are assessed. Units of evaluation are key projects in the Cultural Programme, and the main evaluation tools are programme information collection form, self-assessment, and impact stories.
2. **ON MESO (MONITORING) LEVEL**, the overall functions, support services, and management are assessed. The main evaluation unit is the internal ECoC organisation, its governance and management, and its relations to regional stakeholders. The main evaluation tools are self-assessments, impact stories, and external evaluations and follow-ups by regional shareholders.
3. **ON MACRO LEVEL**, the focus is on the regional and European impacts of the project. The impacts are assessed against ECoC's objectives by using the cultural value scoreboard measuring the three goals of Tampere26 – developed to inform the success of ECoC in light of European objectives (GO 1–2, SO 1–4). Legacy level evaluation aims to understand as to what extent ECoC contributes to regional development and to a sense of belonging to a diverse, shared European Cultural Space.

## WHO WILL CARRY OUT THE EVALUATION?

Tampere26 Foundation will establish a department responsible for outreach, capacity building, continuous learning, and also monitoring and evaluation. Our key partners are Tampere University, Faculty of Management and Business, and local technology companies specialising in digital evaluation tools. An international reference group of international experts

(e.g. professor Giovanni Schiuma) supports the evaluation planning and implementation. Tampere26 Foundation will also prepare its evaluation strategy for the scenario in which a pandemic or other global crises impact the implementation of the cultural year or the baseline studies to be done.

## OBJECTIVES AND MILESTONES

From 2022 to 2032 we aim to increase our understanding of cultural learning capabilities and acquire detailed knowledge of the current state of the matters covered by the three ECoC goals. Thus we establish a solid basis and a clear starting point for evaluation of the impacts of the ECoC year.

## BASELINE STUDIES

Most of the baseline work started in 2019. A municipal strategy mapping was conducted, studying what role culture had in the established municipal strategies in the region. It also compared the municipal objectives to the general and specific objectives of ECoC. Stakeholder interviews were conducted in 2019 to collect qualitative data about cultural life in Tampere and Pirkanmaa.

New baseline studies focusing particularly on our three ECoC goals will be done after the ECoC title is granted in 2022. The function of these studies is to gain more detailed knowledge of the status of the three ECoC goals as well as an in-depth understanding of cultural learning capabilities. The baseline studies are:

- The citizens' survey on the level of motivation for participating in culture and understanding different cultures as well as perception of city image and interest in cultural offer in general, including cultural heritage, profiling residents in Pirkanmaa in relation to ecological sustainability as well
- The stakeholders' survey on the level of cooperation between local technology companies and cultural organizations, local artists' involvement in international projects and the role of digitalisation as a form of culture
- EDAS Tool (Equality, Diversity, Accessibility and Sustainability, see p. 20) baseline study includes information on levels of equality, diversity, accessibility and sustainability in culture
- Quantitative baseline information on all the indicators (if not done already) that are not directly linked to ECoC implementation



## INFORMATION FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Both quantitative and qualitative data will be collected to ensure the political, managerial and accountability-related need for information on the success of the ECoC in Tampere region. The evaluation is done continuously and supported by as well as informing the project organisation.

**Qualitative data** is gathered by utilising surveys and formative self-evaluation. The ECoC projects will self-evaluate the success of their cultural performance against the ECoC goals. In addition, the project will (re-) evaluate:

- The project's aims – why the project is needed for Tampere26
- Change mechanisms explaining what is done to reach the aims of Tampere26
- Strategy for change concentrating on how the project makes the change

In this self-assessment, the projects first assess how they expect to contribute to the change, and second, after the project implementation, how they've participated and succeeded in their aims. Non-intended outcomes are also assessed in this qualitative assessment. This will open the "black box" of ECoC and answer "why and how culture has an impact on the overall objectives of the project". Selected key projects will also write impact narratives. This is how the continuous evaluation will work:

- The assessment form triggers the project owners to analyse the assumptions they have about their project and its intended impacts on regional and European levels (done in the beginning, during and after the project)
- Impact narrative provides a platform to reflect the impacts, to analyse which practises were useful, to describe aimed and unforeseen impacts and to provide learning points for others
- Citizens' and stakeholders' surveys will be done as a baseline and to monitor legacy

**Quantitative information** is collected by using project assessment forms, existing indicators measuring the implementation of the City's cultural strategy, indicators used by stakeholders to measure regional development, and ECoC-specific impact-assessment indicators measuring regional and European impacts. Furthermore, the data gathered via EDAS Tool will be utilised.

A supportive **Cultural Value Dashboard** is developed to collect in a visual format the qualitative and quantitative information collected from the sources described above. The dashboard provides answers to the question "to what extent does it work", in other words, what the measurable outcomes of ECoC are in light of European and regional objectives. The Dashboard will also be used to communicate to decision makers, wider public and media on the on-going activities – increasing the understanding of the impact of cultural activities for equality, development of city region, well-being and public services.

## THE TIMELINE OF EVALUATION

The evaluation is a continuous process on all levels. On micro level, the projects will fill in the evaluation form three times and continually assess their behaviour in relation to Equally European objectives. On meso/monitoring level, the ECoC Foundation will have its own evaluation plan – implemented four times a year throughout its existence. The legacy level evaluation is done three times in 2022 (baseline), 2026/27 (title year) and 2032 (legacy).

## DISSEMINATING THE RESULTS

All results will be analysed in light of capacity building and continuous learning. We aim to develop and implement new practices as we learn from the results. Not only will we disseminate the results transparently via Tampere26 websites and the Cultural Value Dashboard, but we will also transform ourselves and our practices based on the results. Even more importantly, since we seek to become a European case study for greater equality via the arts, we'll organise publicity events to disseminate the results to European stakeholders in research, policy making, and in the cultural sector.

To add to the accessibility of our continuous assessment, we will launch three communal indicators designed to assess the success of our three ECoC goals in real time. The three indicators are the Me/We meter focusing on the impact ECoC has on equality and communality, the local identity and appreciation meter asking how much people love Pirkanmaa, and the creativity meter that, instead of customer satisfaction, asks for your level of creativity. The function of the communal indicators is to make the evaluation process more visible, understandable and relatable.





# Cultural and Artistic Content



## Q5

### Artistic vision and the strategy for the cultural programme

**Equality as the core of our bid means that we want not only to discuss equality but also to embody equality through the arts. We embrace diversity of cultures, waiting to hear diverse artistic voices in our programme – and we want to make culture and arts more equal. To deepen our understanding of equality, we also need projects addressing global threats to equality. We are curious, asking questions, exploring and experimenting together, and we also want to problematise equality through the arts.**

Our concept Equally European is not an abstract ideal but a driver of change. In culture-led urban planning, as we've noted, Tampere and Pirkanmaa have European tools in the making, yet from the viewpoint of the arts the situation needs improvement. Our need analysis of the creative sector indicates that we need to work on broader cooperation between the cultural institutions and independent scene, and we need to build capacities for international cooperation and also artistic excellence. Thus we set up an Equally European co-creative experiment for our cultural sector and international partners.

Our Cultural Programme is based on a broad notion of culture. Usually Tampere is considered as a city of theatres and museums, but during this process we've understood that our culture ranges from fine arts to sports and underground, from science to social work and well-being, and from wild displays of eccentricity to educational projects. Our programme embraces diversity deliberately as we think that the very broadness of our culture is a way to promote social cohesion and equality. If we want to transform our understanding of culture and the arts, we cannot orchestrate this process in an ivory tower of only one art genre, but rather, must take in also those aspects of culture which the citizens living in Tampere and Pirkanmaa can easily identify with.

Thus – as the three core ideas of our artistic vision – we want to be:

**EXPANSIVE!** Can we really be equal – let alone Equally European – if we don't break free from our comfort zones, exposing ourselves to Europe? We are curious to face our fears and overcome them, learning new things. Equality means thus expansion, moving from excessive introversion to encounter and dialogue. How can we expand our audience base, for example, through shared values, building a more sustainable world together, or through artistic co-creation? Sometimes we need to reach out to a broad public, while at other times we should focus on high-level artistic expressions and how they reach the relevant target groups.

**ECLECTIC!** Crossing over means breaking the boundaries, and it means reaching out. We don't promote one kind of culture at the expense of others. We celebrate cultural diversity, we encourage crossovers and dialogue, such that artistic excellence may flourish through inclusive culture, and inclusive culture through artistic excellence. We promote a better understanding and a broader, more inclusive experience of the arts by fusing them with science, beauty with knowledge, aesthetic enjoyment with public education. Many of our projects promote thus awareness of European cultural topics – concerning, say, human rights or freedom of speech – and the role of arts in raising awareness and sparking action on these.

**EDGY!** If any sector of society has the power to shake prevailing structures, to talk about the taboos and darker corners of the human mind, it is the arts. If we really want to be Equally European, we must challenge prevailing power structures – to rediscover the natural grit and edge we're known for. On a personal level, being edgy means that we touch the full scale of human emotions, from joy and laughter to fear and prejudice. On a global level, darker questions may arise from current issues – anxiety amidst climate change, xenophobia amidst populism – so shouldn't we use the arts to work also with these? Impressive art need not be beautiful and solemn, but it can also be a bit crazy – and certainly rough around the edges.



## Q6

### The structure of the cultural programme, the range and diversity of the projects

Our cultural programme is made of six different elements. In addition to the four programme lines, we have two other programme entities. Among these we have, first, our capacity building programme “Equaliser” preparing us for a successful implementation of our artistic projects. Second, we provide seasonal flagship weekends under the label “Party Time” – not intended as an entity separate from our programme but as a reader-friendly way to point out some of our international flagships.

Planning towards our ECoC year, we’ve made concentrated efforts in **capacity building** and **seasonal flagships** as we believe these are the important amendments we need, among other things, since the first round. To make our culture more expansive, we need extended resources and networks, but we also need to carry out major productions which are not just one-off shows. To ensure we’re eclectic, our programme should be equally accessible for the cultural tourists as well as for those loving more communal activities – and edgy projects must be provided for both.

**Our four programme lines are structured around the following thematic cores:**

**(R)evolutions** uses arts and culture to probe historical developments and the present situation of equality in Tampere and Europe. What are our pressing social concerns, and how can we interpret Tampere’s evolution to a modern democratic city in relation with various transformations in Europe?

**Equally Yours** celebrates the diversity of culture and arts. Fine arts, cultural heritage, popular culture, grassroots culture, and counterculture are equally appreciated realms of artistic expression. How will culture look like if we collect projects from diverse walks of life, advocating cultural equality?

**Village Hopping** views equality through regional lenses, promoting access to high-quality culture in the regions – which is a big European theme. We send artists and their audiences hopping from one village to another, developing our region through territorial approaches. What will we experience if we study European identities together with local micro-identities?

In **Wild Card**, we give nature an equal standing. Equality is not only a political issue – in times of many ecological crises we have to challenge our very understanding of culture as only a human phenomenon. Promoting ecological awareness, teaching environmental skills, and translating ecological thinking to everyday practices constitute the actual challenges of culture in the 2020’s.

Among the projects to be presented under each programme line, taking place between 2021 and 2027, we will address a selection. We’ve decided to concentrate on a fewer projects in order to go deeper into them. Some projects are presented with a **long description**, others are mentioned as **further highlights** in the making (see the programme chart on the right). Please do not consider the latter as footnotes – they are just as important as those described in more detail!

Below you may find our summary of the programme line **budgets**, listing the ECoC share / the total budget for each programme element. The individual projects will be funded with a share of 20–80%:

- (R)evolutions: 2,9 / 9,6 M€ (30,6 %)
- Equally Yours: 3,2 / 11,1 M€ (28,9 %)
- Village Hopping: 3,0 / 6,4 M€ (45,9 %)
- Wild Card: 1,9 / 4,8 M€ (40,5 %)
- Party Time: 2,3 / 8,3 M€ (27,7 %)
- Equaliser + outreach + EU projects: 2,7 / 12,7 M€ (21,9 %)



# CULTURAL PROGRAMME



## CAPACITY BUILDING: "EQUALISER"

an umbrella programme of versatile capacity building projects

## FLAGSHIP WEEKENDS: "PARTY TIME"

the opening and closing festivities and three special weekends in between

### PROGRAMME LINES

	(R)evolutions	Equally Yours	Village Hopping	Wild Card
Projects with a long description	Rebel in Me	In the Air, on the Rapids	Self-Made Life: Art on the Outside	Memory of Water
	Rights at Stake	365 Windows to Europe	Laterna Roma: Animation Train to Viiala	Forgotten Giants
	Sámi People and Indigenous Arts	Skate-Friendly Cities	Freak Festivals World Championship	Reflection on a Forest
	Carmina Jerosolymitana	Kalevala X	Muralismo!	Natural Horrors
	University as a Living Work of Art	Art in Strange Places	Totems of Equality	The Word for World is Forest
	Two Cities	Mussorgsky Revisited	Underground Hopping	Hiedanranta Green Deal
	EU Challenge	Europe Comes in for Sauna!	Dark November	The Insect Symphony
	Pub(lic) Science	Demoscene Lives!	The Grand Carnival	Plastic Rapids
	Cultural Well-being	Invisible Tampere	By Nightfall	Wild Folk
	Dance @Station 4.0	Occupy the City!		Edible City
	Art Castle	Your Echo in Me		
	Kirsi – Woman with Disabilities			
	Freedom of Speech			
Further highlights	Cities at Rapids	Improvisation Brings Together	Word Bridges	Illuminated Land
	City of Women	Capital of Literacy	Quilt of Europe	Honeybee's Highway
	Resonance 2026	100 Community Choirs	Fauns of Pirkanmaa	Sensitivity, Creativity and Flowers!
	Other City – Forgotten Spaces	Maker Library	Black! Schwartz! Noir!	Sustainable Cuisine
	Gender Balance in Jazz	My Spot	Folk Art Tampere	Colouring Hay Bales
		Tampere Urban Performing Game Event	Art Town Choir Festival	
		Homeless Football World Cup	Circus Hopping	
		Shit is Equal	Glass is Born in 1000 Degrees	
		Culture to the Streets	Birgitta	
		Hands On Music	Nordlek / Barnlek 2026	
		The Art of Being a Baby		



# EQUALISER

Since capacity building is one of our strategic priorities, we prepare the ground for our Cultural Programme with it. Diverse branches of work – projects in progress as well as those in the making – come together under the umbrella “Equaliser”. This new structure is an integral part of our ECoC action, open to local cultural operators as well as international players. How to make all the voices of our culture sing in balance? To make sure our capacity building is cross-sectoral – and Equally European – we’ve begun with two mappings of the different aspects of capacity building:

## FOR THE CULTURAL PROGRAMME

- 1 **ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE:** sparking professionalism and improving the working conditions of artists
- 2 **INTERNATIONAL SCOPE:** networking with international partners, co-curating and co-producing major international productions
- 3 **REGIONAL COOPERATION:** integrating cultural resources and energies in Pirkanmaa
- 4 **CROSSEOVERS:** encouraging cooperation between cultural institutions, the independent scene, and our communities
- 5 **CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE:** developing existing spaces; learning to use new, even surprising venues
- 6 **OUTREACH AND AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT:** learning to work dialogically with our communities, finding and engaging new audiences

## FOR MANAGEMENT & CAPACITY TO DELIVER

- 7 **MANAGEMENT:** know-how for our management structure and the stakeholders’ organisations and the professional sector in general
- 8 **BUSINESS:** understanding economical processes of culture, and fundraising strategies
- 9 **COMMUNICATIONS:** learning new ways and finding abilities and means to communicate our projects
- 10 **TOURISM:** developing resources and hospitality skills to receive more cultural visitors

After the mapping, we’ve identified four thematic points of emphasis under which we structure our capacity building projects:

- **DIGITALISATION, ACCESSIBILITY, AND EQUALITY:** post-Covid, technology links with equality and accessibility even more than before
- **INTERNATIONALISATION AND ARTISTIC PROFESSIONALISM:** to be Equally European and to foster audience expansion of our arts and culture
- **WORKING SPACES FOR THE ARTISTS:** since this is one of the weak points in our cultural sector, our capacity building must respond to it
- **REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING:** strengthening tools for cross-sectoral cultural and artistic work in Tampere and Pirkanmaa

## DIGITALISATION, ACCESSIBILITY, AND EQUALITY

**THE EDAS TOOL:** standing for equality, diversity, accessibility and sustainability of culture, our capacity building flagship’s creation is in full swing – and to be upscaled from 2021 to 2026. An agile user-friendly digital platform will be provided for the free use of cultural and art institutions and festivals across the region and Europe. The platform compiles up-to-date information on equality, breaking it down to easy-to-learn sections including theory, tests, video courses, and assignments for the leadership and employees of cultural organisations. The equality of organisations is thus assessed internally (by employees) and externally (participants and parties), and all the parties will commit themselves to basic principles for greater equality. (See [www.edastool.eu](http://www.edastool.eu).)

4 6 7 10 **LEAD:** Tampere26 & ACCAC Finland, in 2021–  
**INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Kaunas 2022

**DIGITAL CAPACITY BUILDING** is necessary because of the increasing need for access to culture through technology. Under this cluster, we have several digital projects such as **Artest**, **Augmented TREquality**, and **Maker Library** – creating digital services for hybrid digital accessibility, either local or global, for all different cultural events of Tampere26. The services will rely on existing and emerging technologies and media such as VR, AR, MR, XR, telepresence, and omnidirectional video. We also aim to increase the digital competences in creative and heritage industries outside big cities.



**1 2 4 6 9 10 LEAD:** Tampere University / Sustainable Digital Life (SDL) and Human-Technology Interaction (HTI) programmes, Tampere University of Applied Sciences' international Emerging Media Master's programme, Artest, Arts and Crafts Association Modus, 2021–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Tampere Artists' Association, Tampere Art Museum, Pirkanmaa design, Ylä-Karjalan taideyhdistys Association **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Magnetic Professional (LV), Sápmi Næringshage AS (NO), European Laboratory on Training, Education and Citizenship (IT), Muzej grada Pregrade Zlatko Dragutin Tudjina (HR), Tampere Maja (EE)

## INTERNATIONALISATION AND ARTISTIC PROFESSIONALISM

**TAMPERE INTERNATIONAL HUB** reinforces and accelerates integration of international arts and culture professionals into local communities and art institutions by working together with professionals with international backgrounds already living in Tampere or willing to move here. **Bloom Tampere** will extend the work by building a community space for all internationally minded people living in Tampere.

**2 4 7 8 LEAD:** International Hub Tampere (City of Tampere), Bloom Tampere ry, in 2021–2030 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Global Art Point, Taku ry **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** We Make Change, International House Lund (SE)

**A STAGE FOR FUTURE LEADERS IN PERFORMING ARTS** is an international mentorship programme for young curators and artists, bringing diversity into leadership positions. By 2026, the stage will be set for the future leaders in Tampere, where at the same time *Tampere Theatre Festival* hosts Possible Futures Forum, an international gathering of emerging artists and producers. In the project, young curators articulate their world views through selected stage creations. The project also provides more employment possibilities for the young professionals through international networks – thus raising the level of quality and diversity in artistic programming.

**1 2 6 7 LEAD:** Tampere Theatre Festival in 2024–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** NÄTY – Tampere University Degree Programme in Theatre Arts, Centre for Practice as Research in Theatre T7 of Tampere University **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Tartu 2024 (EE), International Possible Futures Network, Arctic Art Festival (NO), Theatre Grob (DE), New Theatre Institute of Latvia & International Festival of Contemporary Theatre Homo Novus (LV), Tartu Centre for Creative Industries

**EUROPEAN TOURING CIRCUS ARTIST RESIDENCY PROJECT** connects Finnish and European circus art professionals with local youth and special groups resulting in unique performances in each of

the six participating countries. The project promotes innovative art forms and mixes different genres of art. Scientific research will be conducted on internationalisation of circus artists and their professional identity. The project also supports professionalisation and financial equality of young artists by improving their working conditions.

**1 2 3 4 6 LEAD:** Sorin Sirkus Circus Art Centre, in 2023–2027 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** University of Tampere **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Galway Community Circus (IE), Cirqueon (CZ), Ecole de Cirque de Bruxelles (BE), Circus Cirkör (SE), AltroCirco (IT)

**FEST AFRIKA** will arrange a series of conferences during 2022–2026 in Tampere, Aarhus and Bagamoyo (Tanzania), developing equality and diversity beyond the EU through music and arts and ensuring the continuity of traditional art forms.

**2 4 6 LEAD:** Fest Afrika Association, in 2022–2026 **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Royal Academy of Music Aarhus (DK), Bagamoyo Arts College (TZ), Footprint Green Festival & Cape Coast University Ghana (GH), Royal Academy of Music / Keld Hosbond (DK), Far Fest Afrika Festival / Check Bangoura (IS), Bagamoyo Festival Herbat Makoye (TZ), Spot on Mali Music Festival (ML), Moussa Diallo (DK), ACCAC Global Network

## WORKING SPACES FOR THE ARTISTS

**THE FUTURE OF WORKING SPACES** is a cross-sectoral development project providing solutions to the lack of cultural spaces. Set in motion by the Equally European action, cultural operators and real estate professionals have gathered for the first time together to tackle the issue. In 2021–2026, we open newly refurbished working spaces for the artists, develop and test operating models for permanent and temporary cultural spaces around the city, working closely with stakeholders to fuse interests and resources. The work has started from Tampere but it will expand across Pirkanmaa, and the project will also look into the possibility of providing residencies for international artists.

**1 2 3 4 5 LEAD:** City of Tampere, in 2021– **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Arts Promotion Center of Finland, Tampere Real Estate services

**NEKALA CAMPUS OF ART AND CULTURE** is an on-going process launched by The City Board of Tampere in March 2021 to convert the beautiful old Nekala school for cultural use under the working name Nekala Campus of Art and Culture. The campus will create a base for a variety of activities,



and a new kind of cultural hub. The building requires renovation for an estimated budget of 6–8 M€. The Nekala renovation process alone will not solve all the challenges with working spaces, but it will take the issue significantly forward.

**1 2 4 5 LEAD:** City of Tampere in 2021– **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Tampere Real Estate services, Startup House Platform6, Nekala resident association

**INDEPENDENT CULTURAL CENTRES:** in March 2021, City Board also decided to start preparations for transferring the financial maintenance costs of the independent and active cultural centres under the budgeting of the city cultural services. These centres include four important counter-cultural hubs in Pispala (Hirvitalo, Kurpitsatalo, Tahmela Villa, and Rajaportin Sauna), and they also include two residency and working space compartments for artists, the Hatanpää Laundry and Takahuhti Artist's House. From 2022 onwards, the responsibility for maintenance of these facilities will be incorporated into the budget expenditure of the Board of Education and Culture.

**1 4 5 6 LEAD:** City of Tampere, in 2021– **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Cultural houses Hirvitalo and Kurpitsatalo, Tahmela Villa, Rajaportin Sauna, Tampere Artists' Association, the Hatanpää Laundry Ateljé House, Takahuhti Arts Centre

## REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING

**TAILORING ART AND CULTURE** builds regional structures that support cultural stakeholders, art institutions and artists to offer and develop services to municipalities, social and health sector, employment services and other operators. A groundbreaking on-line tool and platform will enable cultural organisations and artists to offer cultural services to be purchased by operators in social and health services – thus carrying out cultural rights for all individuals (including people with disabilities in supported living).

**2 4 6 LEAD:** PiiPoo – accessible centre for art and culture, in 2021–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** The Pirkanmaa Hospital District, The Council of Tampere Region, Vincit Ltd., Taikusydän – Arts & Health Coordination Centre Finland, Pirkanmaa Taikusydän – regional network

**ARTIST AND PRODUCER BANK** creates in 2021–2026 a permanent operating structure to strengthen producer and artist networks in Tampere

and Pirkanmaa through development, networking, employment, and sharing of expertise. The project begins with meetings in which the basic needs of artists, producers and stakeholders of Tampere26 as well as the representatives of other local cultural events and organisations are clarified. Then a training calendar for 2022–2025 and an online platform for employing artists and producers will be built.

**1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 LEAD:** Tampere University of Applied Sciences, in 2021– **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Municipalities of Pirkanmaa, regional development programs in Finland funded by the Ministry of Culture and Education, Arts Promotion Centre Finland, Tampere University of Applied Sciences

**LIBRARY OF CREATIVITY:** libraries represent equal access to information, learning and democracy, and all the municipalities in Pirkanmaa have at least one library. ECoC-related discussions and webinars will grow the libraries into active platforms for dialogue, storytelling, networking and active citizenship. Cooperating with European cultural networks and libraries such as IFLA public libraries network, we concentrate on three themes: Connections, Skills, and Future. *Connections* focuses on dialogue between artists, cultural institutions, business and social and health care sectors. *Skills* involves training sessions about cultural topics such as marketing, producing, safety, digital tools, funding, etc. *Future* sharpens the role of culture in global megatrends and crisis management. Themes like racism, polarisation, climate change and social recovery post-Covid will be covered.

**2 3 4 5 6 9 LEAD:** City of Tampere, in 2022–2027 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Tampere Region Public Libraries **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Bergen Public Library (NO), Birstonas City Library (LT), Venlo City Library (NL), Ikast-Brande Bibliotek (DK), Håssleholm Public Library (SE)

**SPECIS** (Sport, Events and Cultural Sustainability in European Second Cities) strengthens capabilities, practices, tools and models of managing voluntary work in sport events. Stressing cultural sustainability, SPECIS consolidates connections, synergies and co-operation opportunities between sports and culture.

**4 7 10 LEAD:** City of Tampere, in 2024–2026 **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Other European sport event host cities (especially, so called second cities) e.g. under International Association of Event Hosts (IAEH) (e.g. Gothenburg, Rotterdam, Innsbruck, Düsseldorf, Brno); Sport and event sector stakeholders from partner cities; International sport federations



## PARTY TIME

### 24 DEC, 2025: THE PREPARTY: WINTER MIRACLE

Although Finland appears to Europe as a leading country in social well-being, there are many people living in poverty and social isolation in our region. We start celebrating Tampere26 by making all feel Equally European. A festive season party will be held at UROS LIVE arena for economically and socially disadvantaged people and families. There will be a world class show, free meal as well as environment-friendly gifts that come from the heart and really matter.

**LEAD:** City of Tampere & UROS LIVE, in 2021- **LOCAL PARTNERS:** The Nauha Association, The Salvation Army

### 1.-4.1.2026: THE WINTER PARTY: GRAND OPENING

#### MOOMIN ON ICE

In the famous Moomin stories by **Tove Jansson**, equality and tolerance go hand in hand – such was the lived vision of their author. Moomins bring thousands of international culture tourists to Tampere every year, loved across cultures and generations. This ice ballet produced by Tampere Hall opens Tampere26 festive year by blending top sport with performing arts to celebrate the Moomins' 80th anniversary. The Finnish/international production team will cooperate strongly with the Russian ice ballet tradition, and the project partakes in the pan-European research & development project *Quality through Equality* studying the effect of culture in fostering equality.

**LEAD:** Tampere Hall, Kantelinen Company Ltd, in 2025–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Moomin Characters Oy Ltd, Finnish Figure Skating Association, UROS LIVE arena **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Rights & Brands Licensing (SE), Melissa Thompson (CA), The ILMC (UK)



### OLAFUR ELIASSON WITH NORDIC CONTEMPORARIES

Danish-Icelandic **Olafur Eliasson** is one of the highest rated and versatile European visual artists. His large-scale sculptures and installations spark from vital global issues like climate change, using natural elements such as earth, air, fog and light. The sensitive spaces and surprising experiences created present a great entry point for diverse audiences into contemporary art and reflecting on the greater scheme of things. As Tampere Art Museum opens its new extension, it presents the work of Olafur Eliasson and other important Nordic contemporary artists in a carefully curated opening show, also containing new works from the artists. The vernissage will take place at the Winter Party weekend but the exhibition lasts well into the ECoC year.

**LEAD:** Tampere Art Museum, in 2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Antti Laitinen, Charles Sandison (FI/UK), Grönlund & Nisunen, Heli Ryhänen, Anssi Kasitonni, Viljami Heinonen, Petri Alamaunus, IC-98, Terike Haapoja **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Olafur Eliasson (IS), Elmgreen & Dragset (DK/NO), Jesper Just (DK), Emil Holmer (SE), Pia Myrvold (NO), Shoplifter (IS)

### SPECIAL ESPORTS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

One of our success stories in equality is Special eSports, born at Pakkahuone culture centre in Tampere. Fans and followers will converge in 2026 with a Special eSports Five Years Anniversary with World Championships. Gamers with special needs from all around the world compete for medals in games and gaming models intended for people with different disabilities. Generally non-violent games are played with diverse accessible game controllers and virtual reality devices. The heat of the action in finals for live audiences is streamed to large screens and online services. The opening ceremony with disabled performers is produced with support from the Korean King Sejong Institute. The project also features Special eSports Five Years Gala & Awards, Accessible Gaming Conference for professionals and social and cultural events for gamers.

**LEAD:** Special eSports Federation, in 2021–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** ACCAC Finland, Service Foundation for People with Intellectual Disability KVPS, Wärjäämö **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** International eSports Federation IESF, SeS Nepal (NP), SeS Belgium (BE), Daglig Versamhet (SE), SeS France (FR), ACCAC Global network



## 30.4.–3.5.2026 THE SPRING PARTY

### ACCAC EQUALITY FEST

ACCAC™ (Accessible Arts and Culture) Global is a growing international network and community, initiated 2011 in Tampere. To raise awareness and promote a more equal and accessible world for all, it arranges events, seminars and festivals around the world. Tampere26 ACCAC Equality Fest gathers participants from over 50 countries to celebrate **equality** and **inclusion** by artistic excellence and multicultural co-creation. The programme of music, dance, visual arts and theatre features artists such as producer, innovator and performer **Tim Palm** aka **DJ Arthro** with his “Space Ship” (an impressive array of equipment consisting of not only synths, tablets, FX modules and drum machines, but also stage lighting and visuals rig); sound-artist, musician and instrument builder **Tim Yates**; **Sophie Bulbulyan**, French-Greek choreographer who works with disabled dancers; and **Kim Yongwoo** K-Wheel Dance Project, led by 8-time Asian master in wheelchair dance. The international arts and culture professionals, innovators, policymakers and tech specialists share their best practices. Equality Lab, especially designed for Tampere26 joins IT specialists, innovators and artists for creating sustainable cultural accessibility solutions. As a result of the festival, **Tampere Equality Manifesto** will also be published, combining research, evaluation, artistic interventions and further recommendations for all European stakeholders.

**LEAD:** ACCAC Finland, in 2024–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Vim-mart – Inclusive Art School, KVPS, King Sejong Institute Tampere **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Dk-Bel (FR), ACCAC France (FR), ACCAC Belgium (BE), ACCAC Cameroon (CM), ACCAC Korea (KR), Music Tech Fest (SWE), Drake Music (UK), Human Instruments (UK), ACCAC Greece (GR), King Sejong Institute (KR), Share Music (SWE), Samdong International (KR), State Budgetary Institution for Professional Continuing Education “Institute for Cultural Programs (RU), Athens (GR), Tim Palm aka DJ Arthro (SE), Tim Yates (UK), Sophie Bulbulyan (FR), Tchina Ndjidda (Cameroon), Kim Yongwoo (KR), Dahlia Pessiers-Benamar (BE/MO)



### FINNISH MAIDEN

Sci-fi fantasies of robots growing closer to humans are getting real. What does it mean for arts, ethics and equality? Can we humanise the machines by teaching them empathy? How do we react when they respond to moves in a dance? Will audiences learn to regard robotic performers as equal to humans? Finnish Maiden is an immersive audio-visual production designed by the choreographer **Jouni Prittinen** together with Tampere University researchers and a cross-sectoral production team. Six professional dancers and six industrial robots will take audiences on a journey probing emotions, empathy and perception while exploring themes such as forest and climate, love, tradition, work and hi-tech, children and education – valued in Finland as well as across Europe. The live production will also be streamed online and further complemented by hybrid variations exploring future technologies: Virtual Reality, Mixed Reality, Motion Mapping, Holographic Visual Immersion and Volumetric Video Capture. Those live/augmented hybrids will be presented across Pirkanmaa as well as in European cities.

**LEAD:** Jouni Prittinen, in 2021–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Kinetic Orchestra, CIVIT – Centre for Immersive Visual Technologies at Tampere University, The orchestra of University of Applied Sciences, Tampere Conservatoire, The Robotics Society in Finland, Rajaton – a cappella band, Jukka Linkola **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Timișoara 2023 (RO)

### THE STORY OF TAMPERE

What will be the grit and grain of the 2026 European Capital of Culture, the character it's been waiting to share once you're friends? The trip from the last century to this one and beyond is brought to you by **our world-class Sorin Sirkus**, enhancing and developing circus studies for children and young people – to be joined by the iconic Manse Rock band **Eppu Normaali** – the best-selling music artist in Finland based in Ylöjärvi, Pirkanmaa and turning 50 in 2026. The live orchestra will be led by **Santtu-Matias Rouvali**, the chief conductor of the Philharmonia (London), Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, and Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra.

**LEAD:** Sorin Sirkus Centre for Circus Arts, in 2023–2027 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Akun Tehdas Ltd, UROS LIVE arena, Eppu Normaali, Santtu-Matias Rouvali, Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra



## 6.–9.8.2026 THE SUMMER PARTY

### ROMEO & JULIET RE-CITIED

Romeo and Juliet: one of the grand European stories, a perennially up-to-date tale of young lovers forcibly separated, turf feud, past tensions overshadowing future lives. The definite drama for a cityscape – yet rarely theatrically cast in and for the streets. We bring Shakespeare's classical drama straight in the middle of our time, from Verona to Tampere, urging us to rethink the growing gap between social classes and the rise of populist ideologies in Finland and Europe. Staged across the central urban space of Tampere and making use of cutting-edge digital technology, our remake of Romeo and Juliet engages the audience outdoors live on the main location at Pakkahuone square while also projecting scenes happening elsewhere in the city – on a bus driving by, at a shopping centre 500 meters away or in a car nearing the location. Flashmob performances will extend further across the city centre to be experienced on the spot; the different strands of the performance will also be streamed together for online viewers. For an extra East-West interaction to the project, an Ukrainian choreographer and professionals from Slovakia will join the production, and we're casting for Eastern European stage director to lead the staging process.

**LEAD:** Theatre Siperia, in 2024–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Webaula Ltd, Tuukka Huttunen, Pekka Laasonen, Richard Katajisto **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Gergely Csanád Kováts (HU, tbc)

### VOICES OF WOMEN

Tampere Theatre Festival and Tampere Hall will host the premiere of the choreographer **Tero Saarinen** – a leading figure in Finnish contemporary dance. Tero Saarinen Company will produce a commissioned full length dance piece of international calibre with European artistic team. Strong and passionate female pioneers of the Finnish art world will come to life through dramatised sound installations across the city, and the lives of our most significant influencers – such as architect **Wivi Lönn**, teacher **Rosa Lemberg** and equality pioneer **Minna Canth** – will be featured.

**LEAD:** Tero Saarinen Company, in 2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Tero Saarinen, Tampere Hall, Tampere Theatre Festival, Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra, Dance House Helsinki **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Tallinn Music Week (EE), Shaksfin (DE/SG), Ater Fondazione (IT), Skånes Dansteater (SE), Malmö Opera (SE), Tartu 2024 - Theater Vanemuine (EE), National Theatre Brno (CZ)



### CHOOSE YOUR STAR!

Imagine if young people craving to catch their favourite artists live would get to decide what they want to see and hear. They would get to decide their own music festival line-up! A cooperation with Youth Council of Tampere and the New Tampere Festival would allow them to do this – no more unfair age limits, rather an age limit for adults over 27! This will become reality if we become European Capital of Culture – and professional festival organisers will translate the visions to practice.

**LEAD:** Tampere26, Youth Council Tampere, in 2023–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** New Tampere Festival, Tampereen Kulttuurikamari Ltd

### KURU MUSICAL

In the face of death, we are all equal. SS Kuru was a steamship which sank on 7th September 1929 in the lake Näsijärvi. This is still the most severe maritime disaster in Finnish inland waters. The musical will take place in the port of Mustalahti in Tampere, from where the Kuru left for her last journey towards the towns of Pirkanmaa. The project is, in fact, especially important for the whole region – many municipalities lost their citizens in the tragedy. As the show starts, there will be 162 people on the scene, representing the crew and passengers. At the end, we only see the 22 survivors. The main roles are in the hands of Tampere-based professionals, and many of the performers will be casted from the professional as well as amateur theatres of the whole region.

**LEAD:** Tampere Comedy Theater, Eeva Kontu, Panu Raipia, in 2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** La Strada Theatre for persons with disabilities, The Finnish Blind Theatre Sokkelo, The Finnish Theatre Institute



## 6.–8.11.2026 AUTUMN PARTY

### THE LOUHI MUSICAL

The national epic Kalevala remains one of the basic texts for which Finland is known in Europe, with a long heritage of artistic reinterpretations. 21st century, however, calls for radical reinterpretations of those harsh tales. The character of Louhi has so far been mainly construed as the antagonistic witch queen; we recast her as the heroine representing Kalevala's strong female characters. And what better medium for retelling the story than contemporary heavy metal rock from the land with more heavy metal bands per capita than any other country? The Louhi metal musical will hail the epic ladies from the fates, intuitions and daring adventures of our ancestors to affirming female empowerment now and in future. Furthermore, the Louhi musical is also a reminder that nature will always prevail, with or without us.

**LEAD:** Tampere26, in 2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Anna-Mari Kähärä, Tuuletar, Marika Vapaavuori, Reidar Palmgren, Maria Ylipää, Olavi Uusivirta, Jarmo Saari

### GUERRILLA LIGHTS

It's dark up north in November and that "kaamos" feeling's getting everyone down – we'll fight back with Guerrilla Lights! At participatory series of events and competitions in Pirkanmaa, people bring light into their everyday environment to survive darkest days and nights. **Martin Lupton** and **Sharon Stammers** from Light Collective (UK), original creators of the Social light movement Guerrilla Lighting, curate the programme alongside Finnish light designer **Annukka Larsen**. Speed Lighting Challenge engages local and international designers, manufacturers and students of lighting and design in two-day team race to choose a site and design their installations, judged by professional jury, peers and broader audiences. Events will also spread around Pirkanmaa with four sites to be chosen for illuminations with Larsen, and one will be chosen by an international jury in 2026 to be installed permanently and revealed in the closing ceremony of ECoC year 2026.

**LEAD:** Tampere26 & Guerrilla Lighting Finland, Annukka Larsen, in 2022–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** WSP Finland, Pop Business Markku Makkonen, The Marthas of Pirkanmaa, Pirkanmaa Scouts **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Light Collective / Martin Lupton and Sharon Stammers (UK)

## 28.–31.12.2026 CLOSING PARTY

### COMEDY GAMES EUROPE

"Finland? If a three legged polar bear and a grumpy heavy metal singer are gonna get a child, that's Finland. The kid is so ugly it has to live on its own at the world's end!" – that's how we roast our own country – wait till we do yours... You'll find out when we will send ten top European comedians to roast European countries. In ramp-up years to 2026, they tour the continent and tell it loud and clear. In 2026, this stand-up comedy tour comes home to roost and roast in Tampere. Watch out!

**LEAD:** Standup etcetera Ltd, in 2025–2026 **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Kaunas 2022 (LT), Bad Ischl-Salzkammergut 2024 (AT), Trenčín 2026 (SK)

### WELCOME 2027!

In 2027, the European Capitals of Culture will be chosen from Latvia, Portugal and EU candidate countries. Our Equally European ECoC year is completed by inviting 2027 ECoCs to Tampere for presenting teasers of their programme at our grand New Year welcoming event.

**LEAD:** Tampere26 **INTERNATIONAL PARTNER:** Slovakian ECoC 2026, future ECoCs from Latvia, Portugal and EU candidate countries



## (R)EVOLUTIONS

Tampere is a city of equality that has faced various dramatic revolutions – and a constant smooth evolution. The year 1918 and the civil war are still remembered in the city as a symbol for the long struggle towards equality. Like many other European cities, Tampere also went through an industrial revolution that in many ways made possible the evolution from a class society to modern democracy, embracing human rights and equality. The city has used water-power of the rapids to recover not only from the war

but also the economic depression of the 1920s – and by the 2020s our industrial revolutions are mostly technological. In arts and culture, a most important (r)evolution in Tampere and Europe is democratising our cultural life. Culture should be accessible for all, regardless of our age, gender or identities. The diverse (r)evolutions are extremely important as the current political antagonisms and the ongoing crises of the EU are endangering our European values.





## REBEL IN ME

*An artistic research project on civil wars, probing painful parts of our history to better prepare for the future.*

Our edgy culture means that we don't shy away from one of the roughest themes of our history: civil wars. A **virtual co-creative makerspace** will be created whereby the citizens and communities in Finland, Ireland, Spain, Serbia, Latvia and Slovakia reflect their experiences concerning demobilisation, reconstruction and post-war recovery.

Tampere as the main stage of the Finnish Civil War in 1918 has a lot to offer for a co-creation project in which recovering processes are discussed. How to differentiate between dangerous social antagonism and necessary political debate, and how to prevent social and political confrontations of our own time from culminating in violence?

The project involves three phases. First, the university partners co-create with students an international online course tentatively titled "European Survivors", discussing recovery from civil wars – available for the general public in cooperation with museum partners. An **international conference** bringing together the latest research will be organised. Second, **participatory art and community workshops** are used to prevent social and political confrontations of our own time, targeting vocational students, unemployed, immigrants and neighbourhoods with social problems in Tampere and partner cities.

The third phase of the project involves the creation of an **arts programme**. Audiences across Europe are engaged with partnering museums to create artworks from different genres – using participatory workshops and the co-creative tools described above.

In addition to the works to be created through the arts programme, our treatment of the theme of civil wars includes **three artistic sub-projects**:

**LITERARY:** a classic Finnish author, Väinö Linna, made his name with books on the Continuation War (*The Unknown Soldier*) and another one on the Finnish Civil War (*Under the North Star*), an epic history of the events that culminated in the war. In the project, performance artists read selected cut-ups of texts (transformed into poetry) from Linna's *Under the North Star*, in public spaces in Tampere and Pirkanmaa in 2026.

**MOVIES:** As a weekly sub-programme under **365 Windows to Europe** (under the next programme line), a week of European films is dedicated to the theme of

the Civil Wars. In addition to European classics such as *The Wind that Shakes the Barley* (**Ken Loach**) and *The Siege of the Alcazar* (**Augusto Genina**), there will be newer films featured such as *In the Land of Blood and Honey* (**Angelina Jolie**).

**RESIDENCY:** A leading Tampere-based company Gofore Plc will soon move their office premises to the newly refurbished quarter around the locally famous Freight Station – once, a site for brutalities of the Civil War. Gofore will provide their company's lobby – easily accessible for all visitors of Tampere – to be used as temporary working space for visual artists, whereby their work becomes more visible to the general public as well. Thus in a solemn way, the residency celebrates reconciliation and reaching across social boundaries rather than building antagonisms.

**LEAD:** Anne Koski, in 2021–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Sisunartut, Legioonateatteri, Degree Programme of History and the Centre of Excellence in History of Experiences HEX, Tampere University, Tampere Peace Research Institute TAPRI, Finnish Labour Museum Werstas, Gofore Plc **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Universidad Complutense Madrid (ES), School of History in University College Dublin (IE), TEH (Trans Europe Halles) East Hub, Rosenfeld Palace (SK), Novi Sad 2022 (SR), Žilina 2026 (SK), Liepāja 2027 (LV)

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## RIGHTS AT STAKE

*Human rights are among those things you hardly ever notice – until they're taken away.*

Some of the most important wordings of the value of equality stem from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Entitlement to human rights is declared without distinction of any kind – which amounts to a prohibition of any discrimination.

The project creates an **interactive exhibition** whereby the contents of human rights are translated to tangible experiences. It begins by mapping the expectations, attitudes and knowledge-base of the audiences, building the contents of the exhibition on the basis of this mental landscape. The exhibition technology immerses its visitors in diverse human realities portraying situations where human rights are at stake.

The topic of human rights is dead serious, yet the exhibition is suitable for all audiences. Some contents are presented in a more light-hearted way, even humorously, for instance, the topic of citizenship: who has the right to get a passport? Some European countries have introduced written citizenship tests for applicants while others have an oral test. Try out if you could pass the citizenship test of various countries!



The exhibition will be part of a wider **Impact Programme**, which includes educational learning tools, marketing, communications and events. After 2026, the project will **tour in Europe and beyond**.

**LEAD:** Heureka, The Finnish Science Center, in 2023–2027 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Juha Hurme **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Council of Europe, Timișoara 2023 (RO), Museon (NL), The Mind Museum (PH)

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## SÁMI PEOPLE AND INDIGENOUS ARTS

*The Sami people are the “original Finns” and the only indigenous group in the EU. Our crossover arts project brings them to the fore.*

Finland wrote the official status of Sámi into the constitution in 1995, but we still have not ratified the ILO convention 169 on the rights of indigenous people, and the long-planned truth and reconciliation process concerning this historically oppressed group is yet to come. We trust that this will eventually proceed, and want to accelerate the change by bringing up the themes of Sámi people throughout 2026 with a variety of events and Sámi-led art projects:

**AN AUDIOVISUAL OPEN-AIR CONCERT:** at *Museum Milavida* palace, the visual artist **Marja Helander**, pioneering Sámi yoikers **Wimme Saari**, **Hilda Länsman** and electro-jazz pioneer **RinneRadio**, create a highlight of our ECoC year with a free-entrance concert blending jazz, fusion and traditional yoiks (a distinctive Sámi singing style). The concert includes **a video mapping and soundscape** whereby the facade of the Museum comes alive through Helander’s soundscape and visuals. Imagery of water, forests, fells, rapids, and lakes is fused with Sámi nomenclature from Pirkanmaa, bringing the traditional Sámi themes of nature up-to-date. From the Museum site, a beautiful view opens not just to the city of Tampere but also lake Näsijärvi.

**ARTS EXHIBITION:** *The International Finlayson Art Area* hosts in 2026 a multiart exhibition by Sámi and other indigenous artists of the Arctic area. Many indigenous artists break the canonised rules of the Western art world, highlighting crafts and artisan work, and they often also re-write the official history of the colonisers.

**MOVIE WEEK ON SÁMI FILMS:** Sámi people’s culture comes to the fore also on the Sámi National Day, 6th of February with a movie week dedicated to Sámi films in the **365 Windows to Europe** and attached to talks and information about Sámi culture.

**LEAD:** Tampere26, in 2025–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Marja Helander, RinneRadio, Wimme Saari, Ailu Valle, Mikkal “Amoc” Morottaja, Hilda Länsman, Ulla Pirttijärvi-Länsman, Bármbu – Sami Association for Center Finland, Skabmagovat – Indigenous Film Festival, PEK – Pirkanmaa Movie Centre, International Tampere Film Festival, Art House Cinema Niagara, Rockadillo Ltd, Museum Milavida, Finlayson Art Area, Galleria Himmelblau **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Mari Boine (NO), Sámi Dáiddaguovddá – Sami Center for Contemporary Art (NO), Sami Film Institute (NO), ImagineNative Film + Media Arts (CAN), Anchorage Museum (US), Bodø 2024 (NO), Nova Gorica 2025 (SI), Umeå 2014 (SE)

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## CARMINA JEROSOLYMITANA

*A newly commissioned oratorio on the delicate theme of interreligious conflict and crusades of Medieval times.*

Composed by **Olli Kortekangas** with a librettist specialising in Medieval studies, **Samu Niskanen**, the secular oratorio sets in the context of the Medieval crusades and its main goal – the occupation of Jerusalem by Christians, at the time held by Muslims. Jerusalem as the site of the oratorio enables re-examination of Christian but also Islamic and Jewish experience.

Although Medieval ethics of violence differs from ours, many of its features remain relevant. For an authentic pastiche, the libretto uses contemporaneous texts and languages. Latin, Middle Upper German, Medieval French, Hebrew, and Arabic bring the sounds of antiquity in a multilingual form to international audiences.

The text by librettist Niskanen, professor of Medieval studies, is based on his recent discovery of the earliest eyewitness accounts of the first crusade. While treating such a violent theme, the oratorio draws from church music, resonating with the theme of martyrdom. The project also involves the formation of a **new orchestra**, with Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra sending their musicians to orchestras of other ECoC’s – whose musicians, in turn, will come to play in Tampere in 2026. A new European Orchestra of these musicians will perform the premiere of *Carmina Jerosolymitana*.

**LEAD:** Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra, in 2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Olli Kortekangas, Samu Niskanen

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## UNIVERSITY AS A LIVING WORK OF ART

*Exploring the frontiers of art and science, bringing back joy and astonishment – and serious food for thought!*

Peek inside a virtual word cloud of a public sauna to see what words were uttered in such a place. Or witness the strange glitters in the dark visualising the data of homeless people wandering the streets.





In this project, **results of scientific research are transformed into works of art** in public spaces in Tampere and Pirkanmaa in 2022–2026 via the latest innovations in technology. Researchers in photonics, for instance, help an artist create a light installation. Students from relevant degree programmes play an important role in a process whereby we see a glimpse of the future in the form of art and science.

Collaboration culminates on a **campus festival open for public**: art and science, their crossovers and the collaborative performances are presented and celebrated. Visitors can visit these venues across Europe to see their artworks using the *Living Lab of Play* space which combines gaming culture and academia: Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality will enable our guests to experience art and science fusing together and complementing each other in different cultures.

**LEAD:** Tampere University / Event Services, Communications and Marketing Unit, Doctoral School, Living Lab of Play, Future Finders Network, and Tampere University of Applied Science's Media and Arts Degree Programme, Tampere University's Theatre Arts Degree Programme, Tampere University's Art Education Study Module, in 2022–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** The Centre for Finnish Media Art AV-arkki, Tampere Art Museum, City of Tampere, TREY – Student Union of Tampere University, Art Orienteering, Students' Union of Tampere University of Applied Sciences, Modus – Design and Craft Association **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Brunel University London (UK), Technische Universität Braunschweig (DE)

## TWO CITIES

*We examine internal conflicts by a huge immersive art project, live action role-playing game, digital platform and a mobile game – all in one.*

Two Cities is an allegory of the conflicts and divides in the history of Tampere, ranging from the Civil War to more playful battles between, say, two elite ice hockey clubs – and these antitheses still shape who we are. Similar divisions may be found in all Europe: we're united in our divisions; and through this idea we reach out across Europe.

Forging links between traditional theatre, experience based arts and digital AR platforms, the story-telling focal point of the project will be **immersive theatre performances** co-created with established theatres. Alongside immersive performances, there will be LARP (Live Action Role Playing) events, workshops, digital gaming experiences, and a mobile game application. Two Cities can be affected, played or spectated: come create the contents, participate in live events, play the mobile game, follow the feed on a digital platform or spectate the performances!

The ultimate grand finale will be a mystic NEXUS, a huge multi-day LARP event, which reveals the final mystery behind the Two Cities in the end of 2026. As legacy, created platforms and communities in Tampere



and other cities keep on growing and evolving as active users will create contents for communities to explore – developing a new sense of togetherness. Digital platforms with live events and happenings streamed from Tampere to Europe – and back – create truly continental interchange.

**LEAD:** Beyond Play, 00100 Ensemble, in 2022–2027 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Tampere Theatre, Tampere University **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Participation Design Agency (SE), NotOnlyLarp (ES)

## EU CHALLENGE

*A literary project of transnational scope creating vanguard prose about a theme as unlikely for creative inspiration as the EU.*

Complex systems and processes are notoriously difficult to narrate. The EU is precisely such a system and process. The “story” of the EU lacks individual experiences. How to storify the EU in ways that make the union relatable to its citizens?

The project challenges professional and amateur writers to crowdsource new, innovative forms of addressing the EU. How to write about the EU such that the reader would feel touched – emotionally or aesthetically – and has the EU promoted equality among us? We launch **ten writing competitions** with open series in ten EU countries, which will be collectively read by specialist native speakers in each country. Selected texts from each country will be translated into English and made available all across Europe. An **Anthology of Stories of the EU** will involve various publicity events and workshops for writers, and the collected material will be studied by researchers.

One strand of the EU Challenge is a year-round **writing workshop with asylum-seekers** residing in Finland, working together on their perspectives into Europe and the EU. While the EU may be difficult to storify for Europeans, for many asylum-seekers it contains narrative elements. In the workshop, professional writers work together with asylum-seekers using both English and rudimentary Finnish – thus facilitating also language learning and integration.

**LEAD:** NARRARE: Centre for Interdisciplinary Narrative Studies, in 2025–2026 **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Institut français de Finlande, Angoulême International Comics Festival (FR), Hungarian Writers In Residence – Pécs 2010 (HU), Timișoara 2023 (RO), Cēsis 2027 (LV), Nova Gorica 2025 (SI), Trenčín Literature Fair – Trenčín 2026 (SK), Centre for Fictionality Studies – Aarhus University (DK), University of Tartu (EE), Justus Liebig University Giessen (DE), University of Warsaw (PL), Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem (ELTE), Budapest (HU)

## PUB(LIC) SCIENCE

*In Finland, we sometimes refer to an evening spent at a pub or bar as “oltiin parantamassa maailmaa”, making the world better. Care to join?*

For more than a century, Tampere has been a hotbed for social struggle and debate. Even today, Tampere University boasts some pre-eminent social scientists in Finland, yet their work is largely invisible in the city’s everyday life. To bring Tampere (back) at the forefront of contemporary discussions, the project initiates a format of Pub(lic) Science. Meeting once per month, vanguard scientists from Finland and Europe are invited to give a **public lecture** on a theme of current relevance, **followed by informal conversations** over drinks or cup of coffee.

The sessions are not organised at the university campus but rather at social spaces such as pubs, broadening the range of cultural encounters and science outreach. Diverse groups of people – experts, activists, or citizens passing by – are brought together under one roof with researchers. The audience is encouraged to debate the pressing issues as equal participants, facilitating respectful and critical discussions.

The format will be piloted in the fall of 2025. In 2026, Pub(lic) Science will look specifically into the theme of the EU. Tentatively curated themes of the lectures include, for instance, the following: **Identity & the EU** (do we identify ourselves with cities, nations or regions; what is European identity based on, if it exists?), **The EU & its borders** (open or closed borders, more or less immigration – is it so simple?), **Attitudes towards the EU** (are Europeans turning their backs to the EU; how to reclaim Europe for all of us?), **Equality & the EU** (EU citizens have equal rights, but how to fight economic, regional, educational and gender inequality?) and **The idea of Europe** (are there clear visions for the EU; what would a European utopia look like?). Selected lectures and conversations will later be edited and published in various media, and events will be live-streamed to reach wider audiences.

**LEAD:** Tampere University & Society for European Philosophy (EFS), in 2025–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Professor Risto Heiskala & research group on the EU and professor Arto Laitinen & research consortium on “Robotics and The Future of Welfare Services”, the philosophical journal niin & näin **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** ECIU – The European Consortium of Innovative Universities, European Researchers Night, European Students’ Future Forum – Tartu 2024 (EE)



## CULTURAL WELL-BEING

*While cultural well-being pervades various different projects, under this cluster we have three projects targeted across generations and for different people.*

**REREADING GENDER:** Gender equality is a pressing concern – and even more so post-Covid. While the EU works hard to reduce gender inequalities, the cities must do their part as well. Towards 2026, we offer a programme combining public events, deeds for greater equality – and a weekend celebrating gender diversity in 2026. Paving the way for 2026, in 2021–2025 we start by upscaling the *International Gender Equality Prize*, granted by the state of Finland and governed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, awarded biennially by the host city Tampere since 2017 (an on-going process of applying funding from 2023 onwards). Co-produced by Tampere26 and Tampere Hall, the special programme for 2026 will combine public education events with music, performing arts and literature with the overall theme of rereading the artworks of our women. **Minna Canth** and **Eeva-Liisa Manner** will come to life through contemporary productions, and **Sirkku Peltola** and the science fiction novelist **Johanna Sinisalo** will feature in interactive performances. In our dream of Europe 2026, we don't want to fetishise gender; rather, we want to reimagine a world filled with hope and the joy of imaginative rereadings.

**SENIOR POWER:** Finland ages, with a growing number of persons to have left working life yet active and willing to benefit the society even though their physical state does not allow full-time working anymore. Older persons in good condition are very active, while others live alone in their homes, perhaps lacking contacts. How to tap the full potential of these people through the arts? In various sub-projects, we enable senior citizens to widen their cultural activities, bringing joy for all and the seniors themselves. In a **Graffiti Workshop for Elderly**, artists lead senior citizens into creating street art and small murals; in **music projects**, musicians and students of music help senior citizens to revive old music hobbies or start new ones; in **workout and nature recreation projects**, students and senior citizens develop safe and motivating ways of increasing daily physical activities; in **gardening projects** senior citizens in their city block or housing association are assisted by the city's and municipality's landscaping department and gardeners – and **theatre and story projects** will share the fruits of all the aforementioned activities with audiences.

**I AM HOPE:** Young people need to be seen and heard on their own terms – and their stories on hope and despair must be expressed through art. Increasing their inclusion and equality, professional artists will enable young people to plan and implement **art projects**. The projects are open to all youth while also attending to people at risk of social exclusion. Researchers and cultural operators will work together with young people on their thoughts about the future. Scientific research and two international seminars in Tampere in 2024 and 2026 pave the way for a **Tampere Paper of Hope** to be handed to the European Commission in 2026. Themes of hope, equality and solidarity – our common values in the EU – come to daylight.

**LEAD:** Tampere26 and Tampere Hall; Cultural Centre PiiPoo & The National Centre for Health and Welfare; Tampere University of Applied Sciences & SirkusrakkausPumPum, in 2021–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** City of Tampere, IGEP International Gender Equality Prize, Sointu Senior Service, Pispala residents' association, MonaKomedija, Tampere Region municipalities, Tampere University / Department of Information Technology and Communications, The employment and cultural services of the City of Tampere, Youth guidance centre "Ohjaamo" and various municipalities of Pirkanmaa **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Essen (DE), Chemnitz 2025 (DE), Umeå (SE), Tampere University, various women's associations, Ghent University (BE), Laguna University (ES), HN München University of Applied Sciences (DE), HAN University of Applied Sciences (NL), Malý Berlin Cultural Center (SK), Galway 2020 (IE), Kaunas 2022 (LT), Bodø 2024 (NO), Tartu 2024 (EE), Timisoara 2023 (RO), Kulturni Centar LAB – Novi Sad 2021/22 (SR), Trenčín 2026 (SK), Cēsis 2027 (LV)

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## DANCE @STATION 4.0

*If you've ever done an interrail trip, you'll know: it's a mixture of sweat, fatigue and your mind expanding.*

A process-based and interactive performance involves dance artists making an interrail trip, to be replicated later in other public transport systems and spaces related to them. It consists of an interrail trip, a welcome performance and a legacy project.

Five European cities – pulsating centres during the Industrial Revolution – will be connected: Tampere, Umeå, Ljubljana, Chemnitz and Manchester. Larger events will be organised on the arrival of the trains, prepared with volunteers across generations, dance enthusiasts and professionals. On the waiting hall benches, dancers break life routines through their art. The shows are documented, distributed online and streamed to partner cities. In the legacy project, young dance enthusiasts or students interview seniors about their memories of public transport, preparing a performance and an exhibition of them.



**LEAD:** Dance Theater MD, in 2022–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Pirfest – Tampere Region Festivals, Tampere Dance Current Festival, Fest Afrika, Pispala Schottische International Folklore Festival, Workers' Music Festival, Sata-Häme Soi Festival, Puistofilosofia **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Chemnitz 2025 (DE), Ballet Chemnitz (DE), Anthony Missen – Company Chameleon (UK), Plesni Teater Ljubljana (SI), Norrlandsoperan Umeå (SE), Ex Nihilo (FR), Nitra 2026 (SK)

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## ART CASTLE

*In the future, art and creativity will be a major driving force in Finland, as well as in all of Europe. By teaching our young the basics, they will – in due time – do their share.*

We invite European artists and curators to **residencies** in Mänttä-Vilppula to work with the town's school children and their teachers. With the guests and local cultural professionals, school children carry out **art exhibitions** in local galleries. The festival's **supplementary programme** focuses on cross-cultural events.

School children not only create art but also participate in the entire exhibition process with adults. The project supports art, culture, equality, tolerance and international education of children and young people. For international education and language learning, the European artists visit **schools in other Pirkanmaa municipalities** to talk about their work and culture, and the children visit the artists at their residency.

Launched in 2020, the project pilots in 2022 and 2024 also engaging young people. In 2026, the pupils and artists of the previous events meet for the **main event**. From 2028, the event is established as a **biennial**, with a steering group of international artists and curators coordinating and evaluating the project.

**LEAD:** Serlachius Residency, in 2022, 2024, 2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Art Town Mänttä-Vilppula, City of Tampere and municipalities in Pirkanmaa **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Valeria Bertesina (IT), Sigbjørn Bratlie (NO/PL), Maria Fonzi (IT), Pancho López (MX), Takeshi Moro (JP/US), Nana & Felix – Kim Hwanhee & Felix Nyberg (KR & FI), Antje Pehle (DE), Miya Sukune (US), Christopher Kane Taylor (US), Masha Korosteleva (RU), Kaori Yamashita (JP/US)

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## KIRSI – WOMAN WITH DISABILITIES

*Inclusive culture will improve the lives of not just one group of people – but all of us.*

Kirsi is a **performance project** on the history of a woman with a developmental disability. The project combines performing arts, scientific research and social work. Theatre groups from the municipalities of Pirkanmaa with members with disabilities will work

with internationally networked theatre professionals in 2021–2026. The project also organises **workshops** and **summer camps** to practice, experiment and explore diversity, accessibility and equality in theatre. Kirsi culminates in a premiere of the performance in the autumn of 2026. The project will also organise an **inclusive international theatre festival**.

**LEAD:** Theatre Telakka, in 2022–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Inclusion Finland KVTI, various municipalities and their inclusive theatre groups **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Riksteatern (SE), The Finnish Institute in Stockholm (SE), Lung Ha Theatre (GB), Galway Social Circus (IE), Blue Teapot Theater (IE), Moomsteatern (SE), Compagnie de L'Oiseau-Mouche (FR), Hijiinx (GB), Mind the Gap (GB), Theater Babel (NL), Teatr 21 (PL), Viljandi Cultural Academy (EE)

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## FREEDOM OF SPEECH

*Equality and freedom of speech go hand in hand; they're worth a celebration, and a declaration all of their own.*

To wrap up our first programme line, we return to equality, now with regard to freedom of speech. We establish an **international conference** in Tampere with an EU cooperation network, and a **biennale** will be launched in 2022. The project will cooperate with the Russian NGO *Open Space* supporting civic activists and sharing their stories of engagement in Russia.

The highlight of the conference will be the **Tampere Declaration of Freedom of Speech**. The Declaration will be given by an internationally pioneering speaker whose actions and words play a significant role in promoting media freedom, freedom of science and social freedom. Thus the aim is to create a well-known freedom of speech arena in Europe, where the issues announced are important both in Finland and internationally.

The event is both local and virtual. Discussions will be created around the Tampere Declaration, in which it is possible to look at the issues addressed from many different perspectives. The programme aims to bring together speakers from different perspectives. It offers both speakers and the general public the opportunity to participate both locally and via on-line streaming.

**LEAD:** Pirkanmaa Regional Fund of the Finnish Cultural Foundation / Matti Posio, in 2022, 2024, 2026 and onwards biennially **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Joint National Newsroom Lännen Media Ltd and its regional newspapers in Finland, Reporters Without Borders Finland **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Institut Français de Finlande, Open Spaces (RU), European Alliance of Academies, A Soul for Europe



## FURTHER HIGHLIGHTS IN THE MAKING:

### CITIES AT RAPIDS

The historical museums of Tampere and Pirkanmaa join forces in telling the story of industrial revolution in Pirkanmaa and Europe and inviting European scholars to discuss the subject.

### CITY OF WOMEN

Women's voices in industrial cities Chemnitz, Lodz and Tampere are presented by connecting visual arts and social sciences.

### RESONANCE 2026

Multidisciplinary art festival with digital platforms for children and young people in Tampere, Pirkanmaa and different European countries.

### OTHER CITY – FORGOTTEN SPACES

A collaborative project between Tampere, Tartu and Liepāja aims to shed some light on the other city – the one that is somehow forgotten yet holding a significant role.

### GENDER BALANCE IN JAZZ

Tampere Jazz Happening and local music institutions with their European partners will work for better gender balance in jazz and improvised music.





## EQUALLY YOURS

European culture should be equal. It opens doors, builds bridges and breaks barriers. At the same time, cultural life is extremely diverse. Equally Yours celebrates the multifaceted role of culture by collecting together projects from many different walks of life. The projects show how culture takes place both in traditional cultural institutions and surprising places. It celebrates heritage, fine arts and underground

movements. It is analogue, it is digital. It can be conventional and comfortable, or it can surprise or even agitate us. It is local, regional, national and global. It is most interesting when it combines and merges things. You're entitled to find your own approach – and decide what is good or fitting for you. We facilitate access to European culture and arts in all of their forms and manifestations – thus promoting equality.





## IN THE AIR, ON THE RAPIDS

*Acrobats dance in the air on top of water, while women at their sewing machines do their daily work – ordinary life of Tampere seen through artistic eyes...*

Imagine walking a few hundred meters from the busy railway station to a rapids of clear blue water cutting through the city centre of Tampere – this is the *Tammerkoski* rapids. Sights of both refurbished and still functioning redbrick factories circumvent the *Koskipuisto*, a park at the rapids, a beloved public space where we now invite all visitors across Europe.

Along the rapids – and in the air on top of it – we provide a multimodal performance accessible and free of entry for all our visitors. We see on the shores of the rapids dozens of women crouched at their sewing machines – paying tribute to the girls to have worked at the cotton factories in Tampere – and we witness other short passages touching on the global turmoil in our city, both historical and present.

In the performance, selected prose cut-ups and poems by Tampere-based authors are recited in English by performance artists. You may hear our Nobel-laureate author **F. E. Sillanpää** together with a most influential modernist poet, **Eeva-Liisa Manner**, and there will be **Kirsi Kunnas's** rhymes for children and youth alongside **Lauri Viita**. The second basic element of the performance will be fountains of water dancing to the rhythms of the words – combined with lighting effects synchronised with the spoken words.

The project consists of two versions, adding to its accessibility. In an **automated version**, the cited literature is combined with classic rock pieces from Tampere and Pirkanmaa while the fountains of water dance to the words every evening of the week – for one month. The **live-version of the show** contains additional artistic elements, and it will be viewable online as well:

**AN ARTISTIC FLASHMOB:** composed of the choir of Tampere Opera and a children's choir, the mob symbolises the people of Tampere, performing moments of our industrial history and migration movements. The choir sings an aria titled "Black, Black" from the Tampere-based opera *My Brother's Keeper*, relating incidents and the theme of migration, in particular, during the Civil War.

**HUGO SIMBERG'S WINGS:** Two classical Finnish paintings, *The Wounded Angel* and *The Garland Bearers*, by **Hugo Simberg** are in the Tampere Cathedral. In a piece of performing arts at the rapids, we treat the

themes of the paintings – the first of which has been voted repeatedly the most beloved Finnish painting.

**AERIAL ACROBATS:** Circus artists and aerial acrobats perform choreographies using wire ropes stretched across the rapids. Hanging lightly in the air on top of the rapids, the acrobats infuse the elegiac elements of the show with a sense of lightness.

**LEAD:** Marika Vapaavuori, in 2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Grus Grus Theatre, Tampere Comedy Theatre, Tampere Opera Choir and Children's Choir, Olli Kortekangas, Panu Rajala, Panu Raipia, Tuomas Parkkinen, Tuukka Huttunen, Petra Karjalainen, Pia Piltz, Lari Halme, Saska Pulkkinen, Ville Kurki, Ville Majamaa

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## 365 WINDOWS TO EUROPE

*European cinema finds equal footing and unsuspecting audiences via a project presenting a film every day in 2026.*

Since the 20th century – and especially so in the 21st – movies have shaped our collective imagination. Various delicate issues, say, the illegality of abortion or religious controversies, have been treated through versatile European films, and we'll continue this work by bringing such films to international audiences.

Enhancing audience engagement, the project consists of **52 thematic weeks of films**, with some dedicated to geographical areas, others to historical or current themes. All European countries will have their own week, and there will be one film for each day of 2026. *The Arthouse Cinema Niagara* will be the main venue – a unique site where one can see European art films on a daily basis – while movies will also be screened in open-air events and at surprising venues. Master classes and Q&A sessions will deepen the films to be shown, bringing real-time equal exchanges into the mix.

**LEAD:** PEK – Pirkanmaa Movie Centre, in 2025–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** International Tampere Film Festival, Arthouse Cinema Niagara, Skabmagovat Festival, Film Centres in Finland, KAVI – Finnish National Audiovisual Institute, Finnish-Polish-association, Institut Français de Finlande, Embassy of Lithuania in Finland (LT), Walhalla **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** European Film Academy, Europa Cinemas, Baltic & Nordic Short Film Festivals, Sami Film Institute (NO), ImagineNative Film + Media Arts (CA), Producer Stanislav Yershov / Foundation Kino&Teatr (RU), Baikal International Festival People and Environment (RU), Arctic International Film Festival Golden Raven (RU), Barents Ecology Film Festival (RU), Film7Days (RU)



## SKATE-FRIENDLY CITIES

*Skateboarding is not just kids being a nuisance. It's an opportunity to ponder what public realm is all about.*

While skateboarding is a globally growing sport and a significant part of youth and street culture, in Tampere it is also altering our public space. In various centrally located sites previously considered insecure, skateboarders have made their successful interventions – and you're welcome to walk on the streets more safely!

A **skateboarding ecosystem** will be developed in Tampere, growing Tampere into an internationally interesting model city for skate urbanism. Besides top-notch skateboarding, the project promotes close cooperation between skaters, the city of Tampere, and cultural institutions, helping the latter to invest in skateboarding and advance youth participation – in line with equality. The project includes the following branches of artistic work and public education:

**CREATE AND SKATE! – SKATEABLE INSTALLATIONS** in Tampere and Pirkanmaa made by cutting-edge artists **Anssi Kasitonni, Teemu Mäenpää, Jan Anderzén, Tommi Musturi, Arsi Keva** and **Ella Salminen** together with skaters with architectural or artistic backgrounds across Europe. The artworks will find new audiences – and offer something to skate upon!

**THE YOUTH GUARANTEE:** a Finnish government initiative means that every young person should have something to do within three months of starting to look for work. With constant need for construction and maintenance of skateboarding sites, we do our part with employment services to implement this.

**RENNO SKATE FILM NIGHT – MOVIE FESTIVAL:** one place the skaters have taken over with a bang is around the *Culture House Laikku* – right at the Central Square of Tampere. On this spot titled “Renno”, the skaters set up their own skate film festival, growing towards 2026 into an international open-air film event for skate films and documentaries.

**KAARIKOIRAT X UULU TOUR ACROSS PIRKANMAA:** pack band gear, musicians, skaters, and DJ's into a bus – or maybe a boat? – and go on tour around Pirkanmaa, organising skateboarding demos, ad hoc learning sessions and music events for people in the region.

**LAUNCHING OF SKATEBOARDING PROGRAMME IN 2021:** at *Sampo Centre High School*, one of the few skateboarding education programmes in the world starts in 2021. And we don't leave it there, but the programme will cooperate with Tampere University to educate students in sustainable development and urban research on site-specific interventions and citizen participation.

**LEAD:** Pirkanmaa Ramp Dogs, in 2021–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** City of Tampere / General upper secondary education, Pirkanmaa Employment office, Tampere University, Tampere Film Festival, Finlayson Art Area, Pirkanmaa Movie Centre, G Livelab, Federation of Tampere Ev. Luth. Parishes, City of Tampere, Pro Orivesi, Culture cooperative Uulu, Nokia Factory 108, Kuopio Skateboarders association, Visit Tampere, Walklandia Association, HELride Collective Helsinki **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Gatuplan (SE), Monsters on Wheels (BE), Novi Sad 2022 (RS), Mons 2015 (BE), Košice 2013 (SK), Trenčín 2026 (SK), Nitra 2026 (SK), Skate Nottingham (UK), Board-sport-Union Pusher (AT), City of Malmö (SE), White Arkitekter (SE), Mareld Landskapsarkitekter (SE), Stockholm Skate Collective (SE), David Gough (SE), Gustav Eden (SE), Fredrik Angner (SE), Leo Valls (FR), Erik-Hugo Pajos (SE/EST), Chris Lawton (UK), Embassy of Lithuania in Finland





## KALEVALA X

*The Finnish collection of ancient folklore sagas and poems is far from dead. It's alive and kicking, and finding a new springboard via contemporary art!*

A new **folkloristic short film series** and a **music album** introduces ancient musical soils and singing heritages, diving deep into our collective subconsciousness. Based on ancient Finnish mythology and poems of the Kalevala, the series includes thirty short film episodes, fusing silent film, music video, folk music, folk & street dance, and electronic beats. The project creates a cinematic sequel, a modern multi-art project seeking inspiration from our national epic, freely associating it with global concerns of today. It offers a symbolic interpretation of modern life, with a carnivalistic, even anarchistic spirit. Ancient myths and characters meet Covid-19 and climate anxiety!

**LEAD:** Folk Extreme, in 2021–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Anne-Mari Kivimäki (FI), Tommi Kainulainen (FI), Silja Palomäki (FI), Riikka Papunen – NEO-OmaPolku (FI), Karoliina Blackburn (FI), Suistamon Sähkö (FI), Modomo Films (FI) **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Nordic Notes (DE), Daga Gregorowicz (PL), Vassvik (NO), Puuluup (EE), Jackie Oates (UK), Coig (CA), Sergei Stastin (RU)

## ART IN STRANGE PLACES

*Art cannot be contained by institutions, not restricted by walls, but it pops up its head right around the corner.*

Creative operators have long wanted to stretch the boundaries of traditional art temples. To break free from galleries and concert halls into streets, squares, hospitals, service homes, playgrounds, libraries, schools, restaurants, cafes, business premises, shopping malls and parks – places where culture becomes accessible for all.

Having received about 50 of such projects via our pre-selection Open Call, we've developed these into an **open-ended platform** of collaboration between independent operators and our institutions. The first phase takes place in 2022–2024. We bring diverse displays of artistry into unexpected places. We encourage creative use of public space and get to know the neighbouring region. **Pirkanmaa's festivals** add their flair by sending their artists to perform in unusual venues.

In 2025, the residents of Pirkanmaa are challenged to participate during a specific day: everyone is invited to create art on their balconies, in their gardens or in their backyards. A video compilation celebrating the event will be produced. In 2026, Tampere and Pirkanmaa invite other Europeans to organise similar

artistic events. In its choice of venues, the project also promotes cultural well-being and intercultural dialogue – taking over, among other venues, the gardens and balconies of nursing homes and reception centres for asylum-seekers.

**LEAD:** Tampere26, in 2022–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Tampere Region Festivals, Worker's Music Festival, Tampere Theatre Festival, Fest Afrika, Pispala Folk, Tampere Guitar Festival, Annikki Poetry Festival, Puumaja Association, local inhabitants

## MUSSORGSKY REVISITED

*Art is eternal, but so is man's desire to construct new works from already existing pieces. And then to break them apart, and do it all over again...*

Inspired by **Modest Mussorgsky's** piano cycle *Pictures at an Exhibition* (1874), ten works of art will be commissioned from Finnish visual artists in 2024, after which ten Russian composers will create their own musical visions of the paintings.

The project fuses not only music, visuals and more music, but it also bridges a cultural gap of 150 years. It crosses borders from classic Czarist Russia to modern Finland, and then back to the Russian Federation of today. Thus the project conducts a study of progress. It explores – and shows first-hand – how creativity is an ever-turning cycle, and how differences and similarities of artistic minds shine through time and space, with results no one can predict. The **premiere** of the compositions takes place at Mänttä Music Festival 2025, including Mussorgsky's original piano work. In 2026, an **exhibition** will be organised in Mänttä-Vilppula, with both the visual and musical works to be presented for the public at the same time.

**LEAD:** Mänttä Music Festival, in 2024–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Serlachius Museums **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Tartu 2024 (EE), MCME – Moscow Contemporary Music Ensemble (RU)

## EUROPE COMES IN FOR SAUNA!

*There is no Sauna Museum in Finland, just as there is no Pizza Museum in Italy. Sauna means living tradition and intangible heritage – practiced and enjoyed in everyday life. And yes, traditionally we are all naked. And no, you don't have to.*

Pirkanmaa has an internationally unique network of public saunas with the chance for outdoor swimming 365 days a year. Counting all of our saunas, we



have more of them per capita than anywhere in the world, so it's high time we provide a **multifaceted programme for diverse audiences**. First, we have initiatives making our saunas more accessible for international visitors:

**DIGITAL PLATFORMS:** we provide a mobile app pointing out saunas in many sizes, forms and tastes, and answering Frequently Asked Questions in multiple languages. To encourage first-timers, a digital guide to *My First Sauna* will be published. For more advanced connoisseurs both local and international, there will be another app providing occasional entry to curiosities – special saunas seldom if ever open to the public.

**GUIDED SAUNA WALKS AND BIKE TOURS:** for those preferring analogue tools to digital, we'll provide nature-friendly ways of enjoying our saunas on bikes or by walking. Take a day off from hectic city life – only a few kilometres from the city – and you'll get a glimpse of the history and diversity of saunas: saunas in cellars, in the attics, in museums, in theatres or onboard boats and rafts.

The second stream of events consists in linking sauna to other realms of culture:

**SAUNA DIPLOMACY:** The legendary president **Urho Kekkonen** kept the Soviet politicians at bay by negotiating in the sauna. We practice sauna diplomacy by inviting foreign cultural centres to be part of this special sauna year with their own cultural contents.

**SCIENCE OF SAUNA:** diverse events present interdisciplinary approaches to sauna through not only physics, chemistry, and health sciences but also history and anthropology – in theory and practice. We'll learn about ancient Roman baths, Turkish hammams and the steam huts of Native Americans or Siberians.

Finally, the artistic aspect of our sauna programme will be covered by an accessible, down-to-earth piece of opera music to be commissioned – and there will be another sub-project to wash away our fears:

**THE SAUNA OPERA:** Tampere-born baritone **Waltteri Torikka** sings the leading role in a work telling the story of Finnish sauna and its role in promoting equality and inclusion. The opera will be staged in Hämeenkyrö, based on information to be gathered through a local oral history project *Häkälöylyt* – a series of audience engagement activities on a digital

platform and in live interviews during 2024–2025. An open-air theatre stage will be converted into a public sauna; the audience will get a full sauna experience while following the show!

**PHOBIA SAUNA:** Washing someone's back has traditionally been an area of consensual touching within one's personal space in Finnish sauna culture. Now we'll get our fears washed away by people against whom we may have prejudices: immigrants, sexual minorities, people with physical or mental disabilities, prisoners etc. The bather and washer will get closer together, and after a while they change roles.

**LEAD:** Tampere26, and Hämeenkyrö FESTiwaalit (Sauna Opera), in 2021–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Oulu 2026, Savonlinna 2026, Public and private sauna-owners of Tampere Region (Rajaportti, Rauhaniemi, Kaupinoja, Veittijärvi Smoke Sauna in Ylöjärvi, Urkin Piilopirtti, Vihta-sauna), Culture Co-operative Uulu / Petra Käppi, Tampere Art Education association, Tampere Flamenco Festival, Heureka, the Finnish Science Centre, Tampere University students, Sauna Museum Network, The Finnish Sauna Day Network, Finnish Sauna Association, Finnish Smoke Sauna Association, International Sauna Association, Serlachius Museums, Museum Centre Vapriikki, The Finnish Red Cross, Pirkanmaa Seta – LGBTI Rights in Finland, Vammaisfoorumi ry and other organisations working for human rights and with various minorities, HSP – Association for highly sensitive persons, MIELI Suomen Mielenterveys ry, Pirkanpojat Boys' Choir, City of Hämeenkyrö, Waltteri Torikka **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Amnesty International, Nitra 2026 (SK), Trenčín 2026 (SK), Foreign institutes and Embassies in Europe, Marxiano Melotti (IT)

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## DEMOSCENE LIVES!

*There is a constantly evolving subculture, practiced all around the world, by the computer-savvy generation. It's called Demoscene, and it follows no-one's rules.*

The transnational computer art subculture produces demos – small computer programmes with audiovisual contents. We will create a large-scale **living museum exhibition** and a series of **crowdsourced workshops**. The project exposes, explores, maintains and sustains the demoscene and its contacts with the game industry, for new audiences and future generations to enjoy. Finland has already included demoscene on its national UNESCO list of intangible cultural heritage of humanity – so the time is ripe for doing this. The demoscene practitioners form a natural audience for the exhibition, but via ECoC it also connects to European values and pan-European mobility.

**LEAD:** Finnish Museum of Games, in 2025–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Museum of Communication and Digital Age, Vapriikki **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** The European Federation of Game Archives Museums and Preservation Projects, Demoscene – The Art of Coding



## INVISIBLE TAMPERE

*How would a song from a random pedestrian walking down the street sound like? What would be a cartoon made by a school dropout – or a painting by a merchant behind her market stall?*

Fusing intimate artistic expression with top-notch art education, the project listens to everyday people in Tampere and the nearby municipalities with attentive ears – focusing our attention on people and things we tend to overlook. Searching the invisible, we bring together artists, experts and common citizens to create **artworks and performances** in workshops. The project is based on the successful art educational method Song of Your Life® by the singer-songwriter **Tuija Rantalainen** and **Heikki Salo** of the rock band *Miljoonasade*. The method helps people with little or no experience in songwriting to write and compose their own song, and through the process find resources of their own to keep going amidst life's turmoil. Songwriting becomes thus a source for personal empowerment for each participant.

We extend the results of this already tested music project into other fields of culture, and invite our international friends to partake in the experiment as well. Artists from different fields are detached from their everyday lives to join a **camp in Crete** to learn about the method, to develop their tools and to cooperate with the local Cretan artists. With help from professional artists and coaches, ordinary people are encouraged to dare something they've never tried – and

to succeed! In 2026, Invisible Tampere culminates in a great art event gathering together and presenting all the artwork – concerts, exhibitions, theatre and dance shows – created by the folk become visible.

**LEAD:** Heikki Salo & Tuija Rantalainen, in 2024–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Kertsis Association, Miljoonasade **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Gevsi kai Filoxenia Kritis Association / Merja Tuominen-Gialitaki (GR), Vamos Ensemble Orchestra (GR), Nikos Frantzeskakis (GR), Agroxenia Association (GR), Municipality of Apokoronas (GR), City of Hania (GR), Crete Periferia (GR), Embassy of Finland in Greece

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## OCCUPY THE CITY!

*One day our public spaces will be open for all citizens – and THEN they'll be hijacked by kids running and fooling around!*

Children and young people hijack the city – not only performing but planning and producing the project. Adults will serve as mere facilitators in this process which is based on children's creative thinking. The city's main square, the editorial office of the area's main newspaper or, say, the City Hall and Tampere Art Museum could be occupied – who knows what the children and teenagers will come up with! We encourage a shift in social thinking and creating equality for children and youth as active citizens of the society.

**LEAD:** Tampere City Youth Services, in 2023–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Institute for Children's Literature, Yöstäjä Association for Creative Writing **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** City of Reykjavik (IS), Children's Ombudsman of Iceland (IS)





## YOUR ECHO IN ME

*Music reaches beyond concert halls, and it's quite common to sing in nature. Singing offers contemplation, inspiration and comfort for all – and it's good for health.*

A series of choral events will bring music and performance art into unexpected rural and urban places in 2022–2026 – transforming our experience of music making and public space. Here folklore meets the future as we bring the electro-traditional sounds of our vanguard musicians such as **Anne-Mari Kivimäki**, **Pekko Käppi**, and **Faarao Pirttikangas** to our audiences in intimate settings.

The first way in which we break the boundaries of concert halls is that we take music to the woods. A choir of over hundred people sings ancient Finnish stories in the three **national parks of Pirkanmaa** – second to none in Finnish nature tourism – breaking down the clumsy formalities of conventional concert settings and creating an intimate and equal encounter between musicians and audiences.

Another way of deconstructing the ritual of the concert is to bring the music to **unexpected urban spaces**, such as shopping malls or parking halls. Such places, after all, produce cathedral echoes, so they're not inappropriate for choral music. The project performers embody a diverse range of people, working together for social equality. Choirs of immigrant and Finnish women as well as youngsters at the risk of social exclusion will be set up. When these people meet Finnish folklore, we're expecting new cultural voices to emerge.

**LEAD:** Cultural organisation Sisunartut / Petra Poutanen & Anne Koski, in 2022–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Women Choir Tel-lus, Mixed Choir Tampereen ihankaikkinen kuninkaallinen tuomiokuoro, Mixed Choir Sekasunnuntai, Ahjola Settlement, Cultural Cooperative Uulu, Forest Administration Metsähal-litus, Tampere Vocal Music Festival, Juha Hurme, Kata Lind-berg, Anne-Mari Kivimäki, Pekko Käppi, Faarao Pirttikangas **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Katarina Henryson (SE), Nova Gorica 2025 (SL), Grete Skarpeid / Ole Bull Akademiet (NO), Frederico Trindade / Feevale University (BR), Europa Cantat – European Choral Association

## FURTHER HIGHLIGHTS IN THE MAKING:

### IMPROVISATION BRINGS TOGETHER

A multi-year project discussing improvisation in music, co-operating with Russian, Estonian, German and Spanish festivals and including concerts, pedagogy and research.

### CAPITAL OF LITERACY

A widely networked project for younger people in Pirkanmaa encouraging them to read not only books but also other forms of media with critical interest.

### 100 COMMUNITY CHOIRS

The project aims to create well-being via singing in the choir for people living in Pirkanmaa by creating 100 new community choirs in nursing homes, companies and rental-house units.

### MAKER LIBRARY

A free library service that lends not only books but also design, crafts and media.

### MY SPOT

The photographic centre Nykyaika gathers and exhibits personal and ordinary photos from Finnish and European photographers, both amateurs and professionals.

### TAMPERE URBAN PERFORMING GAME EVENT

A three-year cross-generational project culminating into six performing art treasure hunts for children, based on the stories of six different neighbourhoods of Tampere.

### HOMELESS FOOTBALL WORLD CUP

Together with Homeless World Cup Foundation we bring their main event to Tampere in 2026 to inspire everyone to understand problems related to homelessness.

### SHIT IS EQUAL

A large site-specific performance discussing death and circulation at an old wastewater treatment plant – the most equal public service we could imagine!

### CULTURE TO THE STREETS

A Finnish-Slovakian street art co-production based on folklore from the Finnish national epic Kalevala and combining different art forms.

### HANDS ON MUSIC

A Finnish-Russian-Swedish project for young people with and without disabilities emphasizing diversity and equality through music.

### THE ART OF BEING A BABY

An international Baby Art Festival promotes coordination and brain development of babies and helps to build stronger parent-child relationships, as recent studies demonstrate.



## VILLAGE HOPPING

Hop on a bus across the region of Pirkanmaa, and you'll be surprised to find some of the most beautiful nature in Finland – pure waters surrounded by sharp-rising ridges – and our region hoards artistic treasures as well. Promoting regional equality, we invite all our international visitors to share our ECoC year with this region yet to be fully discovered – sparking dialogue across rural regions in Europe. Artists and audiences from Pirkanmaa, Finland and Europe will engage in artistic experiments, replacing geography of fear with geography of joy. Village Hopping is

also a metaphor for people and their know-how set in motion beyond their comfort zone. We celebrate the distinctive aspects of various towns, municipalities and their neighbourhoods through the dynamics of interaction and European cooperation. Mixing and enhancing local micro-identities into Equally European can help find solutions for nation-states struggling to find non-polarizing ways to build identities. Thus we rethink and reaffirm Europe-wide equal opportunities in culture through regionally spread artistic quest and community action.





## SELF-MADE LIFE: ART ON THE OUTSIDE

*Maverick, outsider folk art in an official context? Sounds like a paradox. And all the more reason to do it.*

“Itse tehty elämä” (ITE), “self-made life” is how we call the contemporary visual folk art by self-taught artists. A maverick Finland which is also a rich segment of a maverick Europe – a vivid streak in the international field of outsider art / art brut.

We address this theme of artistic equality by bringing together European Outsider art and Finnish ITE art in Mänttä-Vilppula and Pirkanmaa, to peak with the themed **exhibition and event series** in the autumn of 2026. For preparing them, we engage the most experienced European art brut museums, cultural stakeholders and curators in Europe, inviting them to Finland for **seminars, workshops and networking events** in 2022–2025.

We organise and market tours (in various languages) introducing a “different Finland”, getting to know the work of ITE artists in Pirkanmaa in their hometowns and municipalities. European artists take up **residencies** in Mänttä-Vilppula to cooperate and network with Finnish ITE artists, just as we will organise **study visits** for Pirkanmaa ITE artists to Europe. With schoolchildren and local villagers, Finnish and European ITE artists will improve public spaces by painting hay bales, village benches, saunas, building snow playgrounds, etc.

The exhibition, events and materials produced can also be shared with partners in Finland, Europe and Russia. As a legacy, we aim to establish a permanent ITE art center in Mänttä-Vilppula, which would collect and present international and Finnish ITE and outsider art. The core of the collection would be the present ITE art collection owned by the Finnish Association for Rural Culture and Education.

**LEAD:** Finnish Association for Rural Culture and Education, in 2021–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Serlachius Museums, Serlachius Residency, Mänttä Art Festival, Mänttä-Vilppula, Parkano, Kuhmoinen, Lempäälä, Pirkkala, Kangasala, Sastamala **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** LaM – Lille Métropole Musée d'art moderne, d'art contemporain et d'art brut (FR), Prinzhorn Collection (DE), Halle Saint Pierre (FR), Museum Dr. Guislain (BE), Museum im Lagerhaus, (CH), Outsiderville (RU), Galerie Atelier Herenplaats (NL), INUTI-studios (SE), Kondase Centre / Kondase keskus (EE), Outsider Art Museum Amsterdam (NL), Gugging, House of Artists (AT), Gaia Outsider Art Museum and Gaia Academy (DK)

## LATERNA ROMA: ANIMATION

### TRAIN TO VIIALA

*The varied, neglected and often frowned-upon Roma culture has earned its place. Not just in the name of equality, but also for its sheer quality.*

Board a train from Tampere to Viiala, an old factory town and you'll be in Roma world. In Viiala, the vibrant Laterna Roma animation museum presents its permanent exhibition produced by the Cagliostro Film Cooperative and the Museum of Romani Culture, with the Roma ensemble guiding you through animations, music and workshops – and giving a peek behind the scenes of the animation studio.

Based on the classic Czech puppet animation technique, the films based on Roma stories tell about the life of our long-time minority in Finland from the mid-16th century to the present day. The animations have their roots in Pirkanmaa's lush film culture: the internationally renowned Finnish animation director **Katariina Lillqvist** was raised at the Tampere Film Festival, and her productions include the region's key audiovisual partners. The exhibition, in turn will be curated by **Hilja Grönfors**, the chairwoman of the Museum of Romani Culture, a legend of Finnish Roma music whose skilfully interpreted old roma songs can be heard not only in the background of animations, but also in chamber concerts and multicultural events at the nearby Viiala Leather Factory.

During the train journey, you can tune in to the Roma atmosphere: the animations are shown every hour on the local trains from Tampere railway station to Viiala, and the museum's own musicians may also board the trains. Thus the project also revives the cultural tradition of the Viiala trains, as documented by various working class authors in their memoirs: a journey to Tampere factories enlivened by songs, political speeches and books lent between the travellers.

**LEAD:** Laterna Roma, in 2021–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Film Cooperative Cagliostro, Museum of Roma Culture, TAIKE, Finnish Film Foundation, YLE/TV2, Film Tampere, Pirkanmaa Film center, Tampere Film Festival, Promotion Center of Audiovisual Arts in Finland, Finnish Cultural Foundation, Finnish Roma Forum, Center of World Music, Kone Foundation and Church Media Foundation, Aalto University, VR – Finnish State Railways **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** RoMedia Foundation (HU), RomArchive (DE), Brno Museum of Roma Culture (CZ), Czech-Centrum (SE), Czech Television (CZ), Swedish Television (SE), Hiroshiman animation festival (JP), Zlin Festival of Children's Films (CZ), ASIFA International, MEDIA-program/ EU and the coproducers of the animations: Studio Mamiwata (CZ), Foto-siFilms (ES), Zigedaire Animation (SE), Kreus Film (CZ)



## FREAK FESTIVALS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

*Weird sports, useless talents and competing in meaningless things? Bring 'em on.*

Oddball fun and seemingly senseless pastime are as universal to cultures as deep artistic meaning-making. The former rarely, if ever, make it to cultural programmes aiming at high quality – still, they can be fabulously creative in escaping the daily grind and celebrating the joy of being where everyone is welcome.

Finns love to compete in the most peculiar things. We compete in wife carrying, scything, nail hitting, swamp wrestling and swamp soccer, resin and roller rallies, herdsman skills, weather prophesying, punching, sitting on an anthill, kissing, saw playing, squatting, squirming, playing the air guitar, heavy metal knitting, killing mosquitoes, bucket scraping and throwing a mobile phone, a plane, a cap, a milking stool, a cloak, a clown shoe, or a crank.

And that's only Finland – in the UK, people compete in toe wrestling, eating uncooked nettles, Stilton cheese rolling, and carrying wooden barrels of burning tar – and in Japan people are known to compete in drunken staring! All of this is not merely crazy. Most festivals like this are held in rural communities, which, through their events, attract tourists while creating community experiences and social wellbeing for the locals in most equal and popular ways.

We invite the organisers of many other freak festivals to the villages of Mänttä-Vilppula to study how much creative madness can fit in Finland and the world. In 2022–2023, the history of freak festivals and their current performances in Finland, Europe and around the world will be mapped and documented in a publication. In 2024–2025, an imaginative range of them will be invited to the centre and small villages of Mänttä-Vilppula to showcase their own festivals. In 2026, the city will host the **Freak Festivals World Championship**, where selected festivals will compete for the title of the craziest event. The strangest oddities will join for a grand show in Tampere.

**LEAD:** Fun For Ltd, in 2022–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Mänttä-Vilppula municipality, local village associations, Youth Circus of Mänttä, Stunt Freaks Team, Häme Medieval Festival, Lylly Rooster Crowing Championships, Haapamäki Steam Locomotive Park **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Vagues du Nord (FR), Corvette Club of Estonia (EE)



## MURALISMO!

*Buildings, walls and local landmarks spring to life with contemporary street art, stemming from the depths of the underground scene.*

We've got cutting-edge counter-cultural artists doing their daily work in Pirkanmaa – yet their work is not fully recognised. Graffiti and street projects will meet across the region, giving these works the public attention they deserve, driving cultural equality. Inventive street art is not just a facelift of public spaces – it revives the spirit of belonging, especially for youth often drifting away to more vibrant cultural hubs.

The platform includes sub-projects bringing street art to Pirkanmaa as well as producing a novel festival:

**10 X STREET ART:** Kontrol Urban Art Festival, organised by the internationally networked art association Spraycankontrol, will produce in Pirkanmaa ten works of cutting-edge street art. Based on an open call, murals and installations will be fused with ad



hoc video and light installations by top-notch international artists. The event will be accessible for all and offer a variety of supplementary events, such as concerts and street art workshops.

**INCLUSIVE URBAN ART:** SirkusRakkausPumPum is our pioneer in inclusive co-creative artistic expression. In inclusive workshops people suggest places and themes for urban art in their neighbourhood, which will then be created in close cooperation with professional artists both local and international. Inclusive urban art will also be rooted into the local sites via freely available graffiti walls and training of youth workers in each municipality.

**PUMPUM URBAN ART FESTIVAL:** Co-creating with professional artists recruited via the international urban art festival “Meeting of Styles”, SirkusRakkausPumPum also produces a large-scale urban art festival bringing to light the inclusive artworks produced across Pirkanmaa. The festival engages children and youth – and why not our elderlies as well? – from all walks of life.

**FRIENDSHIP TATTOOS OF PIRKANMAA:** “If your village was a person, how would s/he be?” This will be asked by the vanguard community artist **Meri-Maija Näykki** across the towns of Pirkanmaa, gathering material on their identities-in-the-making. We’ll search for a common denominator between the places – creating two pieces of street art, “tattoos” of their own, for each place. Our audiences will then get a feeling of déjà-vu, binding the places into a common art continuum of Village Hopping. Street artist **Tuomo Rosenlund** and animator **Janne Roivainen** will also produce a GIF animation on the basis of those forty pieces of public art on display.

**LEAD:** Tampere26, Spraycankontrol, SirkusRakkausPumPum, Meri-Maija Näykki, in 2024–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** K-NO, UNI, EH47, Tampere Region municipalities, Theatre Tasmä, Tuomo Rosendahl, Janne Roivainen, Embassy of Lithuania in Finland **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Stencilability Festival – Tartu 2024 (EE), Meeting of Styles – International Touring Festival, Angoulême International Comics Festival (FR), Kolossal (DK), Nitra 2026 (SK)

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## TOTEMS OF EQUALITY

*Municipalities get active and adopt, raise and nurture a foster child – a permanent piece of public art.*

Equality in culture is founded on serving everyone’s right to experience top level art close to home. Small

towns and rural areas can become players of European scale by daring to stand out and make statements through striking artworks redefining public space.

Totems of Equality is a series of **twenty high-quality public art projects**, one in each Pirkanmaa municipality partaking in Tampere26. First-hand advice from the curator of the project helps each municipality to employ an artist or artist group for creating their own Totem to signify local identity in ways that highlight European values of equality, democracy, regional upheaval as well as the rights and voices of minorities. International cooperations is strongly encouraged in the selection process.

A Totem of Equality can be a sculpture, environmental artwork, sound or light installation, or any other kind of permanent artistic feature on the local landscape. Supplying a diverse, attractive and widely accessible art route through the entire region, the totems boost municipalities’ motivation and know-how in defining themselves, connecting to European themes through public art acquisition.

The project will start in 2021 and will progress gradually until the European Capital of Culture year 2026, with the process carefully documented to ensure its legacy.

**LEAD:** Tampere26, in 2022–2027 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Tampere Region municipalities

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## UNDERGROUND HOPPING

*Tampere has always been an underground city, with diverse folks making cutting-edge art. Indie visual artists, cartoonists, musicians, DJ’s, graffiti artists, dancers, publishers, performance artists, activists, and anarchists have been doing their thing for decades – and we’ll try to join their diverse audiences!*

The “official” Tampere likes to speak about the UG field by way of cultural strategies and keynote speeches, but the speeches and actions do not always meet. The UG stakeholders, on the other hand, may seem to oppose everything that is “official” – which means they have a point!

This cross-over platform takes up an initiative by one of our leading UG artists, **Maria Mattila**. She’s provided public spaces for artistic expression for years, and now we’ll do our part by enabling new **community art spaces** for counter-cultural initiatives to grow from within – providing focal points for local communities in the spirit of village hopping. An open recruitment process will hire **community artists** to keep community



spaces open and accessible for all – whether they be meeting spaces, galleries, communal gardens, recycling centres, or art studios. The city of Tampere will help with the maintenance of the spaces, in conjunction with the on-going work on providing cultural spaces.

The UG crossover platform also involves two other sub-projects fostering dialogue and cooperation between “the official Tampere” and the UG Tampere – exploring the frontiers of artistic expression:

**SUBCULTURE CLUB FESTIVAL IN TAMPERE:** one of our frantic gig venues in Tampere is the *Vastavirta-klubi* – *Counter-Current Club* – in Pispala. Punk / ska / psychobilly bands from Vastavirta-klubi will hit the city centre, performing at the centrally located *Tullikamari* for two evenings together with 2–3 international acts. The club will be organised by the Mavericks Association, a Tampere-based non-profit association bringing international artists to Finland since 1997.

**INSIDE & OUTSIDE:** for Meri-Maija Näykki, art always needs “instructions for viewing it”, yet conventional art venues pretend as if such instructions are not needed. We’ll have diverse cultural operators and creatives, especially critical thinkers and underground artists offering their public “instructions” and thus increasing the accessibility of artworks. For example, an anarchism researcher gives a talk on social utopias before a movie to be screened, or an underground artist – such as Meri-Maija – does a little interactive performance before a concert.

**LEAD:** Tampere26, in 2022–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Maria Mattila, Meri-Maija Näykki, Mika Pettissalo / Pyynikki Time Travel Agency, Mavericks Association, Vastavirta-klubi, Tampere Underground.NYT! Association

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## DARK NOVEMBER

*Wild projections bounce around the the region, from factory to another; you’re on a mission to chase them!*

The **media art event** will spread to various mill towns and factory environments in Pirkanmaa in the autumn of 2026. The event is implemented at the darkest time of the year at the same time in Mänttä-Vilppula, Valkeakoski, Nokia, Virrat and Tampere.

Dark November presents alluring industrial milieus to the public in a new way through media art and joint, simultaneous free events. Video projections, lighting and media works of art will be tested for the first time in 2024. A satellite media art exhibition will

then be created in different parts of Pirkanmaa – with the same video pieces, for example, shown in all satellite sites but in completely different environments. Spreading to a wider geographical area will also require more effective digital guidance. A **map-based navigation application** will provide motivation to visit all the venues, and it allows visitors to provide feedback immediately after the event.

Örebro in Sweden hosts the biennial Open Art event, partnering with Dark November through simultaneous inter-connected video art performances in Örebro and Pirkanmaa. Some artworks created will also be presented in Simmern, Germany.

**LEAD:** Mänttä Art Festival, in 2024–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Valkeakoski, Virrat, Nokia **INTERNATIONAL PARTNER:** Örebro Open Art Festival (SE), City of Simmern (DE)

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## THE GRAND CARNIVAL

*Sometimes big things grow out of little things, such as grown-ups out of children. Or... wait a minute... great art out of children’s art!*

The project begins with a touring festival, **Children’s Village Carnival**, travelling to different neighbourhoods across Pirkanmaa. Including popular children’s music ensembles, performances and high-quality food services, as well as yard plays, fairy tale characters and activities to promote encounters between people, we bring high quality children’s culture for all to enjoy. The programme includes artistic play-workshops and game-like activities. The tour culminates in the **Grand Carnival** to be held in the city centre of Tampere. An exciting, amusement park-like experience where families can walk amidst different kinds of stages, workshops and surprisingly staged venues.

**LEAD:** This is Going to Be Such Incredible World Organization, in 2021–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Factory 108, Kangasala House of Culture, Cultural services of Tampere, Hämeenkyrö, Sastamala, Lempäälä, Ikaalinen; The Shadow Theatre Association of Finland, Building Tradition Centre Piiru, Puro Media and Art cooperative **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Bal Folk Nuevo (CZ), Hippo Theatre Group (GR), European folk dance association (CZ), Silver Sepp (EE), Toihaus Theater (AT), Figurentheater Lilarum (AT), Mala ulica Public Institute – Center for children and families in Ljubljana (SI), In-visible Playground Group (DE), Kreativni pogon – Novi Sad 2022 (SE)

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## BY NIGHTFALL

*We bridge the gap between seniors and children – and everybody in-between – by letting them dance and debate like in the good old days.*



When the sun sets in the Finnish summer – if it ever sets – the moment is apt to get together in the spirit of Village Hopping. We revive here two different traditions: one about the communal dancing tradition and the other about *iltamat* – traditional soirées of communal socio-political get-together events often organised at community houses.

**ENCHANTING DANCE** introduces the unique Finnish dance pavilion culture to Europe. Tampere and Pirkanmaa have several dance pavilions in use, often built on the shores of fields and lakes. In 2021, *Tietola Primary School* with special-needs classes in Valkeakoski will participate in a pilot project where children can spend a dance day on the Kirjaslampi dance pavilion and at the same time get to know the history and culture of the venue. The second phase (fall 2022/spring 2023) involves service home seniors to revive their dancing skills at the dance days to be held with local councils for the elderly. The third phase in 2024–2025 exports Finnish dance pavilion culture to activity centers in Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Germany, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, in co-operation with expatriate Finns and Finnish communities – and eventually, all participants and the general public will meet in Tampere in 2026.

**ILTAMAT** will take place around Pirkanmaa – at village halls, clubhouses, association buildings and various cultural spaces in the suburbs of Tampere and the villages of the region. Some fetes will also be held in Estonia, in cooperation with internationally known folk singer **Mari Kalkun** (Estonian Musician of the Year 2020). By involving traditional music acts also from other countries, we join European cultures with ours, bringing new life to village halls and a new sense of togetherness between the young and the old.

**LEAD:** Workers' Music Festival, Kirjaslampi Dance Pavilion, Culture Cooperative Uulu, 2021–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Dance pavilions in Valkeakoski, Akaa, Pälkäne, Urjala, Folk Extreme, Actors in Tampere association, Tanja-Lotta Räikkä, Pekko Käppi **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** City of Eskilstuna (SE), Tampere-maja (ES), FINtango (GE), Mari Kalkun (EE), Tartu 2024 (EE)

## FURTHER HIGHLIGHTS IN THE MAKING:

### WORD BRIDGES

The children from Pirkanmaa and Tartumaa, Estonia, write and illustrate stories in workshops led by

professionals, and exhibitions and a book published in both countries will collect the stories.

### QUILT OF EUROPE

Crocheted blankets will be created simultaneously in towns and villages of Pirkanmaa and Europe, thus connecting our continent symbolically; later the blankets will be sent to refugee camps.

### FAUNS OF PIRKANMAA

Top-notch chamber music played by members of the Tampere Philharmonic orchestra go on tour across Pirkanmaa, engaging local children and youth – and diverse audiences

### BLACK! SCHWARTZ! NOIR!

A touring exhibition and a food festival inviting European chefs and discussing the blood sausage traditions and heritage in Tampere, Pirkanmaa, Europe and the world.

### FOLK ART TAMPERE

A new international event combining folk tradition and experimental arts.

### ART TOWN CHOIR FESTIVAL

A joint festival of choirs from Pirkanmaa, Finland and Europe; including close cooperation with Estonian choral institutions.

### CIRCUS HOPPING

Sorin Sirkus tours participative circus, multi-artistic workshops, and community art processes in Pirkanmaa towns and villages.

### GLASS IS BORN IN 1000 DEGREES

A glass design competition in Nuutajärvi Glass Village, culminating in a concrete and virtual exhibition, for youth and children from different municipalities of Pirkanmaa and Slovakia.

### BIRGITTA

Finnish and Estonian chamber musicians tour their monologue opera telling about St. Birgitta in various Pirkanmaa municipalities.

### NORDLEK / BARNLEK 2026

Nordic music and dance heritage is celebrated as dozens of Scandinavian villages with thousands of their folk musicians and dancers hop into the Centre of Tampere for six heated days.



## WILD CARD

Our future depends on rethinking all cultural activities ecologically – we're not the crown of creation. Climate change, mass extinction, exploitation of animals and wildlife, the constant increase of the sea level, and related socio-ecological problems call for us to rethink the role and responsibility of human creativity. We need equality in culture to practise arts in and of nature, not over it. Our projects translate ecological thinking into everyday living

by a variety of artistic, educational and research tools. Instead of mega-events with big carbon footprints, we introduce practices promoting ecological awareness as a democratic value, advocating sustainable development and authentic reconnection with our natural environment. We'll also do our part in bringing down the dichotomy between nature and the city – working together with Europe on giving nature an equal standing.





## MEMORY OF WATER

*"... water has a consciousness, that it carries in its memory everything that's ever happened in this world, from the time before humans until this moment, which draws itself in its memory even as it passes."*

A young woman of seventeen finding her way through a dystopian future world where wars are waged over water – **Emmi Itäranta's** award-winning novel comes to life in the specially commissioned opera. Discussing the importance of freshwater resources in current times of global warming, the opera is written by **Cecilia Damström** – a versatile and widely performed composer whose environmental concerns have garnered her the nickname "Greta Thunberg of music".

Renowned soloists, Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra and the Tampere Opera Choir will turn Memory of Water into one of the most memorable experiences of Tampere26 by telling a universal story of existential challenges and survival, highlighting the importance of social and environmental justice in times of crisis and limited perspectives.

**LEAD:** Tampere Hall, in 2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Tampere Opera, Tampere Opera Choir, Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra, Emmi Itäranta, Cecilia Damström

## FORGOTTEN GIANTS

*Gigantic creatures lie waiting by our lakeside routes, in a recycled form. Climb them if you dare!*

An ode to Finnish nature, the Forgotten Giants will tell the stories of giants by Danish recycling artist **Thomas Dambo** along our newly developing lake routes – freely available and accessible for all. The giants will draw people out of their urban environments, to explore wilderness, and to create environmental consciousness.

The artistic nature intervention creates an internationally compelling nature adventure, inviting visitors and residents to explore the stories of the giant universe while at the same time reminding us of the giant mountains of waste each of us produces.

Besides adventure and artistic experience, the giants are also functional: one giant may offer the explorer a shelter for the night, while another might function as a bird watching tower. The giants are built by Dambo and his crew together with local woodworkers and volunteers, using recycled materials donated or found locally. With over 70 Forgotten Giants already

around the world, the sculptures connect Tampere with an international story, offering access for all our visitors to the longest inland fjord in Europe.

**LEAD:** Disa Kamula & Visit Tampere, in 2022–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Council of Tampere Region, Amusement Park Särkänniemi Ltd, Eco Fellows Ltd., City of Tampere / Harbour services, Mustalahti Harbour and other regional municipalities, ship services and culture organisations (Metsähallitus / Järvi-Suomen luontopalvelut, Kaupunkiseutu – seutusatamatyöryhmä, Kokemäenjoen vesistön vesiensuojeluyhdistys ry, Hopealinjat & Runoilijantie Oy, Lake Näsijärvi ship service Ltd, Tampere Navigation Club, local boat clubs) **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Thomas Dambo and the crew (DK)

## REFLECTION ON A FOREST

*The Finnish woodlands are well suited for visits. In the wild, however, you are exactly that: a visitor, subordinate to the forest. An artist's imagination will bring this to concretion.*

The internationally acclaimed contemporary visual artist **Eija-Liisa Ahtila** will produce a new commissioned piece Reflection on a Forest. The multi-channel **video artwork** with large projections addresses the relationship between humanity, animals and the natural world we live in. Breaking the boundaries of film and multi-channel video art, Ahtila strives to create a more balanced view of our place on Earth with other species in the era of climate change and mass extinction – moving away from the anthropocentric reality that we humans have created. Before the piece will be shown in Mänttä-Vilppula in 2026, smaller pre-release versions of it will be toured by Marian Goodman Gallery in European and North American venues, creating environmental consciousness and representing Tampere26 on its way.

**LEAD:** Serlachius Museums, in 2024–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Eija-Liisa Ahtila, Jussi Eerola, Antti Ruusuvaori, Heikki Kotsalo, Jani Hietanen **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Marian Goodman Gallery (FR, GB, US)

## NATURAL HORRORS

*If you head out for the woods today, you're in for a big surprise ... there's no reason to fear the Finnish woodlands. We'll show you why – by bringing your fears to you!*

An experimental and immersive performance combines puppetry, folk sound art, storytelling and unique rituals in the woods of Pirkanmaa. We question the intimate relationship of the Finns with the forest – facing our fears and hopes, and the stories of nature.



The audience will learn about local history, myths and sagas around the wilderness while enjoying a traditional ritualistic forest supper.

The project involves two phases. First, a **horror puppet theatre performance** will hit theatre venues (2021–2022). Second, the performance is adapted to a broader, more comprehensive and experiential form – and taken into the woods (2023–2026). The final performances take place across Pirkanmaa at natural venues – known for being populated by spirits, with rich cultural history and heritage.

**LEAD:** Käppi – Rajala – Räikkä, in 2022–2027 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Aura of Puppets, Finland Naturally Experience, Voipaala art centre, Theatre Telakka, City of Hämeenkyrö, City of Pirkkala, City of Orivesi **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Nova Gorica 2025 (SI), Nadja Räikkä, Pekko Käppi, Heini Maaranen, Jussi Virkkumaa, Liisa Kaski

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## THE WORD FOR WORLD IS FOREST

*Science makes waves the artist rides upon – via an international programme combining arts with interdisciplinary research in the woods.*

Through a summer-long open-air **Climate Whirl** exhibition and events programme, leading artists and scientists guide visitors into the realm of Finnish nature through artistic interpretations of climate research. Sound art, poetry, games and performance meet physical interventions at peatlands, lake and forest.

The project is informed by the research of INAR (Institute for Atmospheric and Earth System Research) at the Hyttiälä Forestry Field Station – located in Juupajoki, Pirkanmaa but owned by the University of Helsinki. Since 2013, the station has welcomed artists in its residence programme to engage in dialogue with scientists and their research.

For Tampere26, Climate Whirl opens its art collection for the general public, inciting audiences to explore the realm of the impressive boreal ecosystems. All of the works are situated outdoors at nearby forests, peatlands and a lake. Several new art commissions will also be inaugurated. The supporting programme will include concerts, performances, talks and film screenings.

**LEAD:** Climate Whirl Arts Programme and curator Ulla Taipale in 2024–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** INAR – Institute for Atmospheric and Earth System Research at the Hyttiälä Forestry Field Station of the University of Helsinki, IC-98, Band of Weeds **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Agnes Meyer-Brandis (DE), Siobhan McDonald (IE) and for 2026 some 3–5 new art commissions to be inaugurated

## HIEDANRANTA GREEN DEAL

*Tampere is taking a giant leap with a new city district by the lakeside – right now, we're mid-air towards a better, more sustainable future.*

Since 2016, the factory area of Hiedanranta has been developing into a sustainable and smart residential area, with broad engagement of grassroots cultural operators. In PR speeches, Hiedanranta is advertised as the beacon of social participation and carbon-negativity, yet there's serious concern that this will eventually be greenwashing and gentrification.

The project invites professionals and cultural operators to conduct a socio-artistic experiment: how might cities carry out a **sustainability transformation** – and can this be done in a fair way? How do we make sure that economic interests don't smother ecological and social interests?

Fusing art and science, urban planning and voluntary work, the project forms a network of **transition agents** to survey the transformation in Hiedanranta and to promote social change towards a sustainable way of life. In 2025–2026, the metaphor of orchestration will be applied in Hiedanranta to probe how the actors and activities in the area play together. Which variants of sustainability (from ecological to cultural) will make the loudest noise? To test the involvement of cultural operators in Hiedanranta, the project involves two phases, beginning with preparatory sub-projects:

**NEIGHBOURING YURT:** a cosy yurt is set up as a shared, equal space and a platform for citizen cooperation. In six workshops, the transition agents apply the methods of participatory democracy, probing the social, economic, and ecological dimensions of the sustainable transformation.

**EKOTHON CHALLENGE:** transition agents and researchers organise an Ekothon bringing together local actors and those developing the area. Here we get small-scale experiments supporting the involvement of actors in the development of Hiedanranta.

**OPEN STREET FESTIVAL:** we apply theatre, comics, music and augmented reality to highlight the features of a fair sustainability transformation. The festival tests how actors should be orchestrated in Hiedanranta to achieve the desired future.

After these, there will be three events combining artistic performance, research, and public education:



**A MULTIDISCIPLINARY ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE:** upscaling an earlier performance of the project “Dwellers in Agile Cities”, an interactive theatre piece is produced on the basis of future scenarios by researchers. Aimed for the general public and professionals, the performance will communicate the findings of the work described above.

**THE HIEDANRANTA PLAYS SYMPOSIUM:** a forum of plenaries, workshops and an exhibition for professionals to disseminate the ideas and best practices of sustainable urban transformation – applicable to other cities globally around the world.

**A FORUM FOR URBAN CULTURE:** open to all residents and visitors of Tampere, synthesising the results of scientific and artistic work in Hiedanranta.

**LEAD:** Liisa Häikiö, Tampere University, in 2025–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** STUE (Sustainable Transformation of Urban Environments profiling area/TAU), TaSSu (Tampere Centre for Societal Sustainability), research projects, TAU, local actors in Hiedanranta, City of Tampere, Pirkanmaa Region **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Researchers in the areas of urban studies, architecture, environmental policy, social policy, sustainability science

## THE INSECT SYMPHONY

*We love our bugs. So do Tampere Philharmonics. And you will love them, too.*

A commissioned work by the Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra – with science and stories taking place in the world of insects. The immersive and playful documentary piece for children and families will premiere in 2022 at Tampere Hall and will be further refined to have its big showcase during 2026.

In cooperation with the *Finnish Association of Nature schools*, the Tampere-based orchestra creates a non-intrusive way of discovering the world of insects combining music, visual art, language and science. The final piece of music will be showcased not only for large audiences but will also include adaptations for smaller ensembles touring through regional schools and kindergartens.

The project also seeks out a couple of European orchestras for collaboration – planning a similar project of music and education for children on communal and nature-friendly themes. The pieces born will go on tour with the collaborating orchestras – culminating in 2026 in Tampere in a joint series of all the works – celebrating biodiversity and our future generations!

**LEAD:** Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra, in 2021–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Roope Mäenpää, Outi Virtanen, Tomi Kumpulainen, Schools and kindergartens in all the municipalities in Pirkanmaa, Tampere Vocational College Tredu Mediapolis, Tampere Hall





## PLASTIC RAPIDS

*In kids' hands, community waste turns into roaring waters and aquatic creatures. Then they "float" to Russia and back.*

We offer children and youth practical advice on how to participate in nature conservation and to think creatively about the avoidance and reuse of everyday materials. Creative workshops on upcycling plastic objects, the recycling event **Plastic Market** and the environmental friendly waste cleaning games with a Russian partner work all spark environmental action – amounting to three strands of the project:

In the first strand, children's art workshops run by *Puppet Theatre Nirunaru* will build puppets resembling water creatures from recycled plastic. These creatures will join for a parade through Tampere city centre, forming a plastic rapid as they move forward. Children from various European countries will join in the parade, enabling environmental awareness and cultural exchange – probably new friendships as well.

In the second strand, Tammerkoski's waters under the plastic rapids roar in the opposing direction. At the Central Square, the children's parade reaches Plastic Market where the materials from the puppets are sorted for recycling. The life cycle of the puppets – created from waste and ending up as source materials – tells an important lesson, to be accompanied by environmental experts working in educational institutions, environmental organisations and recycling businesses.

Thirdly, the project cooperates with the Russian NGO *Clean Games* together with youth organisations in Pirkanmaa, developing environmental-friendly waste cleaning games. The educational exchange between St. Petersburg and Pirkanmaa takes place in 2025, and will fully bloom in 2026, with a similar tournament between Russia and Finland organised simultaneously in both countries.

**LEAD:** Puppet Theatre Nirunaru / Henrika Nieminen, in 2023–2026 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Finnish Plastics Association, Finnish Plastics Industries Federation, Children's cultural center Rulla, Tampere Regional Solid Waste Management Ltd, Theatre Mukamas, Puppet theatre Hupilainen, Haihara Puppet Theatre, City of Tampere / Basic education **INTERNATIONAL PARTNER:** Bodø 2024 (NO), Kaunas 2022 (LT), Liepāja 2027 (LV), Clean Games (RU)

## WILD FOLK

*An old Finnish proverb says: "What you shout at the forest, you'll hear back from the forest." It's time to hear those sounds!*

Linking nature, music, poetry, handicraft, hiking and performing arts, a sustainable and 100 % acoustic concert series will create natural concert halls in the forests of Pirkanmaa. The project enables locals and visitors to experience nights in the forest full of music, campfires and shared stories by international wilderness guides to create first entry points to relevant environmental topics.

Adding to the accessibility of the project, each forest concert will be documented as a short film showcasing the unique nature of the location and the artistic performances. High-quality short films will be available on a public YouTube channel to engage our audiences at home around Europe – inspiring them to start exploring nature themselves.

**LEAD:** Culture Cooperative Uulu / Juhana Nyrhinen / 2025–2027 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Mehiläisstudio, Aerial Photography Ruohonen, Tampere Vocational College TREDU / International Wilderness Guides, Juha Hurme, Kielo Kärkkäinen, Leija Lautamaja, Antti Autio, Petra Poutanen, Pekko Käppi, Njihe, Maria Mattila, Heikki Hautala, Kadonnut Manner, Nicolas Kivlinna, Rauno Nieminen, Tellu Turkka, Emilia Lajunen, Arto Järvelä, Hexvessel, Epic Humble Folk, Tapani Varis, Risto, Ville Leinonen, Stina Saari, Lyyti, Santtu Puukka, Pelle Romantika, Elsa Tölli, J.K. Ihalainen, Dxxxa, Aura Nurmi **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** CPL Music (DE), Nova Gorica 2025 (SI), Žilina 2025 (SK)

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## EDIBLE CITY

*What we stuff our faces with is not sustainable, everyone knows this by now. An engaging platform will enlighten us, help us search for alternatives – and create something to eat for legacy!*

Residents and visitors are encouraged to grow and garden food in marginal spaces and urban parks as well as to pick wild food in the midst of the city – offering new ways to explore the diversity of regional and seasonal edible resources. A **participatory urban gardening policy** will be developed, fostering a multisensory relationship with city nature, ecosystem design and the issue of permanent availability of urban nature sites. We will also map potential gardening sites and residential needs, fostering a feeling of community.

The project also involves public education. A set of lectures, workshops and a free e-book will bring the skills and knowledge of ecological design and urban wild food within everyone's reach. A mobile app and



gamified tools will help people to take care of the path's plants and draw also younger people to green their thumbs. For local gardening enthusiasts as well as for international visitors we offer a master class with the Swedish forest garden guru Philipp Weiss.

The platform includes four sub-projects:

**THE EDIBLE PARK:** open and free of entry for all visitors 24/7, 365 days a year, a new public forest garden in Tampere will be opened, using nature's principles as a foundation for its design. Come and witness the frozen plants (if it's winter), and feel free to have a bite (if it's warm enough)!

**ASSISTED MIGRATION:** an environmental performative art piece in which two artists walk, paddle and ride from Kaunas via Tartu to Tampere, collecting meadow flower seeds, nuts and gardening lore of the Baltic states. This migration sub-project builds on an edible legacy, an enrichment of public space as well as stronger European bonds for cooperation after 2026.

**WILD@CUISINE:** we're not only interested in cultivated gardens, but we want to familiarise our audiences also with urban wild food. We advocate awareness for superfoods that literally grow under our footsteps – but which aren't yet used enough in our kitchens. A new foraging map will invite city dwellers to upgrade their lunches with ultra-local zero-carbon greens.

Finally, when the “green tooth” really starts to ache, it's time to call in New Zealander **Bill Manson** and his international **Local Wild Food Challenge**. In this playful competition the urban weeds meet supermarkets' surplus ingredients in a sustainable international dinner under the sky.

**LEAD:** Tampere26, Villipihlaja / Karoliina Laitinen & Joel Rosenberg, in 2021–2027 **LOCAL PARTNERS:** Krista Willman, City of Tampere / Urban Environment Services, EcoFellows Ltd., The Marthas of Pirkanmaa, Blok garden Ltd., Taina Laaksonen, Rekola Biodynamic Farm, Tampere Hall, Kalevanharju community garden, Hirvitalo – Center of Contemporary Art Pispala, Eero Yli-Vakkuri, Juha Ujula, Finlayson Art Area, Ahlman Institute, Into Publishing, Frantsila Herbfarm, Tampere Garden Association, Beyond Buckthorns Permaculture Homestead, Finnish Permaculture Association, Dodo – Urban Environmental Organisation, Visit Tampere, Visit Pirkanmaa, Tampere City Library, City of Tampere / Well-being services and 'Me-talo' house, Tampere Adult Education Center, SASKY Municipal Education and Training Consortium / Osara Agricultural College, Wild Zone association, Etappi association, Girls' House Tampere **INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS:** Philipp Weiss (SE), Tartu 2024 (EE), Eikellegimaa NGO (EE), Bill Manson / Local Wild Food Challenge (NZ), Trenčín 2026 (SK), Nitra 2026 (SK)

## FURTHER HIGHLIGHTS IN THE MAKING:

### ILLUMINATED LAND

The project will combine Agnes Denes's (HU/USA) *Tree Mountain* and Nancy Holt's (USA) *Up and Under*, two significant pieces of environmental land and conceptual art, with the Luminous Light Festival Loiste Ylöjärvi, also using literature and visual arts.

### HONEYBEE'S HIGHWAY

A communal project building a seamless “highway” of beehives throughout Pirkanmaa to raise awareness for the importance of bee pollination and the consequences of bee extinction.

### SENSITIVITY, CREATIVITY AND FLOWERS!

The first international festival for highly sensitive people highlights the calming effects of nature by spreading the famous flower meadows of Sastamala across Pirkanmaa – and also featuring Ania Bird Sanctuary in Pirkkala with locally designed artistic birdhouses.

### SUSTAINABLE CUISINE

International interchange of experience to boost the use of less appreciated fish varieties – a theme among others also in the first ever World Championship of traditional Basque Pintxo food in Tampere in 2026.

### COLOURING HAY BALES

An urban art project to connect rural and urban citizens via environmentally conscious art using hay bales as canvas and plastic wrappings as material to upcycle according to artistic visions of artists, residents as well as European visitors.



## RESIDENCIES

*Since internationalising our cultural scene requires both existing residencies and new ones, we wrap up our cultural programme with a survey of these:*

### CURRENT REGIONAL RESIDENCIES

**ARTELES CREATIVE CENTER:** in the midst of beautiful countryside landscapes in Hämeenkyrö, some 40 kilometres north-west from Tampere, Arteles hosts about 150 artists a year, creating each month a multi-disciplinary art hub for artists across the world.

**SERLACHIUS RESIDENCY:** for creative professionals in the visual arts, the residency employs annually about 20 artists, artist groups or researchers, with regular applications from about 30 countries. In 2021–2026, the residency works more closely with the town of Mänttä-Vilppula, opening galleries to visitors and working with schools (and through Art Castle with children).

**CLIMATE WHIRL:** mixing art and science at the Hyytiälä Forestry Station in Juupajoki, Pirkanmaa, findings in climate science are probed by Finnish and international artists – with artworks varying from sound art, poetry, games and performance to physical interventions at peatlands, lake and forest.

### CURRENT RESIDENCIES IN TAMPERE

**TAMPERE WORKER'S THEATRE:** one of our biggest cultural institutions, Tampereen Työväen Teatteri (TTT) started their residency in 2020, fusing research and arts, providing the theatre's vacant spaces for international performing art professionals especially during the summer. Hence, TTT creates a new production model whereby upcoming TTT performances may be co-created with guest artists.

**CULTURAL CENTRE HAIHARA** (15 min from the city centre) hosts visual artists and authors for example from Düsseldorf and Tartu, and there's also exhibition space.

**TAKAHUHTI ART CENTRE** (10 min from the city) is maintained by the Tampere Artists' Association, regularly used by Finnish and international artists (e.g., from Australia, Japan, England, Sweden, Hong Kong and Bangladesh).

For developing new residencies, we have three strategic points in line with our three ECoC goals:

- Culture for Equality → working spaces through temporary solutions
- Region for Equality → increasing cross-sectoral residency cooperation
- Equally European people → working with creative industries on new residencies

**(CON)TEMPORARY SPACES:** besides permanent working spaces, the City of Tampere will develop temporarily empty spaces for cultural use for a short period, sparking artistic interventions impossible in traditional spaces. Testing the model towards 2026 with an open call for international artists, the residency responds to the needs of freelance artists, making art more accessible. A producer under the Cultural Services of Tampere will map temporarily vacant public spaces (e.g. market hall lodges) or buildings to be demolished – where temporary and site-specific arts make interventions.

**DISRUPTION POINT:** innovations and art emerge from disruption – breaking with tradition and inventing something new. Artists or cultural operators do 2–4 week residency in a company close to their own expertise. In a city of buzzing IT industries, cooperation between them and cultural and creative operators must be improved. Safe spaces with impact for emerging makers will enable them to devote one half of their time to their own artistic work and the other half to co-creative work on the contents of the company (e.g. artistic project on their communications, on their vision or mission, on building team spirit etc.). The companies get to use the artistic contents produced while the artists get a compensation for their work.

**UNIVERSITY AS A LIVING ART RESIDENCY** challenges scientists to pursue artistic ways of demonstrating their research and artists to penetrate scientific processes. We imagine graffiti capturing contemporary philosophy, slam poetry getting inspired from information technology or a dancer interpreting current discussions in medicine. Piloting a possibly permanent model, Tampere University will make an open call and choose 20 artists for two-weeks residency periods in the summer 2026. The results will build up to regularly held university festivals – alluring ways to peek into the future of novel crossovers.



## Q7

## Choosing events and activities towards 2026

**In choosing further projects and fine-tuning our Cultural Programme towards 2026, we rely on our guiding values – trusting that equality and inclusion together with accessibility and diversity will continue to be relevant themes.**

Since our guiding star is equality, we've worked in the second round as democratically as possible with our team. Curatorial and artistic decisions have been made by an artistic board of three persons, supported by a team of producers and writers. In 2021 and 2022, we'll continue to develop our Cultural Programme, and thereafter we implement three open calls.

## OPEN CALLS 2023–2024

To enhance international cooperation, we launch in 2023 a **European wide Open Call** for new projects. Our Equally European action should trigger interest so that the cultural diversity of our projects is enhanced – making ECoC not just us but all the diverse cultures to shine. There will also be a **Finnish Open Call** for new projects. Both open calls will follow these selection criteria in line with our artistic vision:

- Does the project advocate equality – by addressing it thematically or by enhancing accessibility, inclusion, and diversity of culture?
- Does the project encourage breaking discriminative structures rather than buttressing them?
- Does the project engage audience expansion – reaching out to audiences other than the usual suspects – in its audience interactions?
- Does the project involve eclectic crossovers either between sectors of culture and the broader society or between diverse art forms?
- Does the project build new capacities such that it will have a lasting impact on our city, region, and possibly all of Europe?
- Can the project be carried out sustainably?
- Does it enhance European networking?
- Does the project contribute to the aspired legacy of our strategy?

In 2024–2025, there will be a **Community Projects Open Call**. Over 200 sport clubs in Pirkanmaa engage about 60 000 members, and we have 40 000 people involved in cultural organisations. Through the open call, these key actors of our communities may get 2600 € for communal projects using culture and/or sports, and 200 projects will be funded.





## Q8

## Local heritage and arts meeting innovative and experimental cultural expressions

Our artistic vision calls for our culture to be expansive, eclectic, and edgy – so innovative and experimental artistic expressions are second nature for us. Working for greater equality through the arts, we create unlikely combinations, say, between sports and culture, or between community involvement and current socio-political concerns – and accessible culture means innovative arts as well.

**GROUND-BREAKING PLATFORMS:** Our visitors are also co-creators of our contents, so we use co-creative platforms for producing experimental contents. **Rights at Stake** builds an immersive exhibition on human rights through a mapping of people's expectations, and **I am Hope** involves interchanges with younger persons and researchers to develop contents on the delicate theme of the future of hope in Europe. In **EU Challenge**, we curate vanguard prose by European authors by a theme as unlikely as the EU, and **Hiedanranta Green Deal** tests the different sounds of sustainability – social, economic, ecological, but also cultural – through interactive performing arts.

**ACCESSIBILITY REVOLUTIONS:** When we expand the horizons of accessible culture, this leads to novel forms of artistic expression. **ACCAC Equality Fest** introduces an array of world's top artists from wheelchair dancers to musicians with disabilities playing tailor-made instruments. **Special eSports World Championships** invites gamers with special needs to express themselves through gaming gear made suitable for all. In **Resonance 2026**, we enhance accessibility of youth culture through the use of digital platforms, and **Rebel in Me** uses a virtual makerspace for people from six European countries to develop tools on political antagonisms and overcoming them.

**RADICALLY TRANSVERSAL:** The third way in which we fuse innovation and tradition is by creating unlikely combinations of disciplines. If Tampere is a sports city, why not tap the unique athletic talents for artistic

purposes? Tampere Hall fuses world-class ice-skating and ice hockey stars with music to be composed by Tuomas Kantelinen on the beloved Tove Jansson stories via **Moomin on Ice**. Visionary inclusive contemporary circus arts meet the iconic national tradition of rock music along with Tampere Philharmonic in **The Story of Tampere**. Tradition translates to cutting-edge artistic expression also in **In the Air, on the Rapids** where classical Pirkanmaa-based authors are juxtaposed with contemporary lighting technology and fountains of water dancing to the rhythms of the words.

**INNOVATIVE USE OF NATURE:** In the first round, we were criticised for non-innovative projects on nature, so we've made progress in this. Eija-Liisa Ahtila's **Reflection on a Forest** defies the boundaries of different art genres while treating the perennial theme of our relationship with nature, while **The Word for the World is Forest** uses leading climate science to inspire international artists. **Natural Horrors** combines traditional nature-related rituals with contemporary forms of puppetry and sound art, and **Forgotten Giants** invites everyone to nature to become acquainted with giant interactive trolls. **Illuminated Land** combines visual art with lights and literature, and **Memory of Water** imagines a post-climate change world in the language of contemporary opera.

**IMMERSIVE TECHNOLOGY:** With top-level research in robotics, choreographer Jouni Prittinen creates a multi-local dance performance **Finnish Maiden** surveying the relationship between robots and humans and the feelings aroused by these interactions. The immersive art project **Two Cities** spreads across Europe through a digital platform, combining on-line participation and gaming experiences with immersive performances and live action role playing events of different sizes. In **Other City: Forgotten Spaces** Finnish-Estonian artist collaborative uses digital technology to imagine what abandoned places could look like in the future – whereby forgotten places come to light as significant spaces for Tampere's identity.



## Q9/10

### Local artists and cultural organisations as the primus motor of Equally European

**Our projects are based on broad engagement of our cultural operators – more than a thousand projects via Open Call in the first round – and we’ve worked hard to broaden the networks of artists and cultural operators further. We’ve made concentrated efforts also to strengthen the role of existing and planned infrastructure as well as the cultural institutions.**

The involvement of local artists and organisations is strong in all of our projects (also the further highlights in the making). We’ve taken special care to engage the cultural institutions in Tampere and Pirkanmaa – using targeted methods here – and we also have a growing number of Finnish partners beyond the region.

The biggest art and conference centre in Scandinavia, *Tampere Hall*, will be the prime force of **Voices of Women** and **Memory of Water**. *Uros Live* – a digitally advanced indoor stadium for sports and culture with 13000 seats – will host two of our Party Time flagships, **Moomin on Ice** and **The Story of Tampere**. Our regional pride, *Serlachius Museums* in Mänttä-Vilppula, takes the lead in **Reflection on a Forest** and **Art Castle**, and they also play a vital role in **Mussorgsky Revisited** and **Self-Made Life: Art on the Outside**.

The museums in Tampere play an important role in our programme as well. One of our international flagships, **Olafur Eliasson with Nordic Contemporaries** will be hosted by *Tampere Art Museum* who also partner in **University as a Living Work of Art**. Among our cultural history Museums, *Museum Centre Vapriikki* will host **Face-up: Factory Cities in Europe** and **Demoscene Lives!**, while *Workers’ Museum Werstas* is a key player in our **Rebel in Me** platform. *Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra* – the only full-scale symphony orchestra in Finland outside of Helsinki – will bring to life two commissioned pieces of their own, **Carmina Jerosolymitana** and **Insect Symphony**. Among our festivals, *Tampere Theatre Festival* will co-produce **A Stage for Future Leaders in Performing Arts**.

Enhancing eclecticism, we’re engaging also cultural operators beyond the art genres. *Tampere University* and its affiliate *Tampere University of Applied Sciences* are relevant players in our Cultural Programme in broadening the audiences and the interchanges of the arts with broader society. Focusing on society, technology, and health, Tampere University is the prime force behind **Hiedanranta Green Deal** and **Pub(lic) Science**, with both projects using culture to tackle timely issues in sustainability and European integration. **University as a Living Work of Art** and **EU Challenge** will use scientific resources to not only produce but to study novel forms of artistic expression – using technology to produce immersive art and surveying crowdsourced stories of the EU.





We also approached smaller cultural organisations. Our national epic Kalevala and folklore was lacking entirely from our lists – so we curated **Kalevala X** with **Folk Extreme** and metal musical **Louhi**. With *Hämeenkyrö FESTiwaalit*, we asked them to think big around the thematics of the bid, and they ended up with the original idea of creating a **Sauna Opera** with opera singer *Waltteri Torikka*.

Other cultural organisations playing a vital role in our programme include the vanguard skaters' association *Ramp Dogs*, the world-class inclusive cultural associations of *Sorin Sirkus* and *SirkusRakkausPumPum*. We've also engaged specific organisations and individuals with expertise on equality. Experts like *Pilvi Kuitu* from *Accessible Cultural Centre PiiPoo* consulted us and brought along for example the **Tailoring Art** project, which consists of a wide network between 40

PROJECT	PROJECT LEAD	LOCAL PARTNERS AND ARTISTS
<b>REVOLUTIONS</b>		
Cities at Rapids	Serlachius Museum	Mänttä-Vilppula, Valkeakoski, Nokia, Tampere
City of Women	Virgin Castle	Tampere University of Applied Sciences / Media, Music and Art, Deutsche Kulturzentrum Tampere, Women's organisations in collaboration, NYTKIS & The House of Girls in Tampere, Tampere Artists' Association, Kulttuuritoimitus.fi, Marja-Liisa Torniainen, Susanna Myllylä
Resonance 2026	Finnish Youth Association	Pirkanmaa municipalities
Other City: Forgotten Spaces	Teatteri Telakka	
Gender Balance in Jazz	Tampereen Musiikkijuhlat	PMO – Pirkanmaa Music Institute, Jazz Finland, G Livelab Tampere

#### EQUALLY YOURS

Improvisation Brings Together	Mänttä Music Festival	Serlachius Museums, Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts, Nyky Ensemble
Capital of Literacy	The Finnish Institute for Children's Literature	Tampere Region public libraries, Reading Pirkanmaa Network
100 Community Choirs	Pirkanmaan kuorokeskushdistys ry	Tampereen Vuokratulosäätiö (VTS-kodit), Several companies in the Pirkanmaa area
Maker Library	Taina Laaksonen	Tampere Region public libraries
My Spot	Photographic Centre Nykyaika	
Tampere Performing Urban Game Event	Ilaria Tucci	Tampere Intercultural Art collective, Anna Haukka, Alexandra Salmela
Homeless Football World Cup	City of Tampere, Tampere26	Nauha Association, The Salvation Army, Deaconess Foundation
Shit is Equal	Meri-Maija Näykki	Tampere Region Central Wastewater Treatment Plant Ltd.
Culture to the Streets	Puppet Theatre Mukamas	
Hands on music	Vimmart – Inclusive Art School in Tampere	ACCAC Global KVPS (Service Foundation for People with an Intellectual Disability)
The Art of Being a Baby	City of Tampere, Culture Cooperative Uulu	Baby and Toddler Theatre AEIOU, Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra, Sorin Sirkus, Children's Cultural Centre in Pori, Tampere House of Families, parental health care clinics in Tampere



cultural and healthcare organisations (varying from artists and big cultural institutions to Pirkanmaa Hospital District and private health service providers).

Our cross-sectoral work in implementing the Cultural Strategy of Tampere, moreover, adds a great number of organisations to our partner lists. Thanks to the newly funded projects in cultural wellbeing, for example, our ECoC action cooperates with the *Pirkanmaa*

*Hospital District*, as well as all the *public libraries* in Pirkanmaa. Associations for children and youth such as *Lasten Tampere Association* and *Association of Finnish Children's Cultural Centres* are also vital partners for us.

Here are further examples of local artists and organisations involved in the projects, listing **all the currently developing projects** of our Cultural Programme:

## VILLAGE HOPPING

Word Bridges	The Finnish Institute for Children's Literature	Haihara Artists' Residency in Tampere, The Finnish Union of Authors Writing for Children and Youth, Kuvittajat ry, Pirkkalaiskirjailijat ry, Estonian Institute in Finland
Quilt of Europe	Taitoliitto, Taito Pirkanmaa ry	Tampere University of Applied Sciences
Fauns of Pirkanmaa	Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra	Fennica Gehrman
Black! Schwarz! Noir!	Restaurant Gösta	Serlachius Museums
Folk Art Tampere	Folk Extreme	Mäntinranta Artcenter, Kaisla Restaurant, Stable Yards, Mustalahti Harbour, Kihtinäjärvi Records, Justus Kantokoski (FI / FR), Timo Saari, Anne-Mari Kivimäki, Reetta-Kaisa Iles, Silja Palomäki, Antti Paalanen, Pekko Käppi, Suistamon Sähkö, Anne-Mari Kivimäki, Palomylly
Art Town Choir Festival	Town of Mänttä-Vilppula	Serlachius Museums, The Finnish Amateur Musicians' Association, Autere Civic College
Circus Hopping	Sorin Sirkus Circus Art Centre	Various municipalities and their social / health care services
Glass is Born in 1000 Degrees	Urkala municipality	Glass Circus, Nuutajärvi Glass Artists Association, Nuutajärvi Glass Village Cultural Foundation
Birgitta	Pirkanmaan kuorokeskushdistys ry	Photographic Centre Nykyaika, Tampere University of Applied Sciences, Hannu Pohjannoro, Johanna Venho, Tampere Cappella, Markus Yli-Jokipii
Nordlek & Barnlek 2026	Finnish Youth Association	FSF – Finlands Svenska Folkdansring rf, FSSF – Finlands svenska spelmansförbund rf, KN – Karjalainen Nuorisoliitto ry, SKY – Suomalaisen Kansantanssin Ystävät ry, Suomen Kansanmusiikkiliitto ry (SKAL), Folkdansarna på Åland

## WILD CARD

Illuminated Land	City of Ylöjärvi, City of Nokia	Osmo Rauhala, Anni Kytömäki, Viola Räisänen, Stereo ID
Honeybees' Highway	Pirkka-Häme Beekeepers' Association, Tampere26	City of Akaa, PEK – Pirkanmaa Movie Center, The Finnish Beekeepers' Association
Sensitivity, Creativity, and Flowers!	Pirkkala municipality, HSP Suomi ry, Sastamalan kaupunki, City of Ylöjärvi, City of Nokia	Kukunori – Association for Culture And Mental Health, Tampere Mental Health Association, Arva – Association for wellbeing of elderly, Cultural Cooperative Kaje, Municipality of Hämeenkyrö, Wild Zone association, Riistasiemen Ltd, Junttilan tila Ltd, Katariina Pylsy
Sustainable Cuisine	Tampere University, Tampere University of Applied Sciences, Tamperrada Pintxo Festival	Lapland Hotels Ltd, Pintxo Food & Culture Magazine, Txoko Restaurantes Finland Ltd, Hartwall Ltd, Albert Hall Finland Ltd, Olo Group Ltd, local restaurants
Colouring Hay Bales	Spraycankontrol	Pirkanmaa municipalities





# European Dimension



# Q11

## European cooperation on cultural diversity, common cultural aspects and current themes

**Creating a European case study for how arts and culture can contribute to equality provides a unique starting point for international cooperation. European identities are in the making, and we need a clear vision for the future rather than nostalgia for the past. This vision builds on our core values – equality, diversity and accessibility – and finding new ways to live sustainably.**

We understand Europe as a common cultural playground which diverse people may join either virtually or in real life, exploring beauty while having conversations about our future. Amidst increasing polarisation, we create public spaces for common understanding and exchange of ideas. Themes such as human rights, interreligious dialogue and transnational narratives bind diverse European citizens together while making them view their culture from different perspectives – and art and culture translate these complex themes to practice.

Our challenges in Europe are not small, yet we see this as a chance for change. In launching the *New European Bauhaus* initiative, President Ursula van der Leyen stressed how the European Green Deal is big: it is a systemic change, and for this, we need “broad engagement, wide support and lots of innovation and creativity”. Our diverse projects in sustainability and equality conduct grassroots experiments precisely in this. How to live sustainably in cities while still embracing beauty and democratic citizen participation (**Hiedanranta Green Deal**)? How to provide innovative platforms, safe spaces across generations and

nationalities, to talk about our endangered values and a future of hope (**Cultural Well-being**)?

Being European – and Equally European – means that Europe or even the EU are vital contents of our cultural programme. Europe’s concerns are not high politics but daily conversations on a street corner – and our projects will try to prove this. In **Pub(lic) Science**, we create an innovative platform for low-threshold conversations about Europe’s future – debating about our national vs. European identities, allowing different voices to be heard. Our **EU Challenge** probes the horizons of creative writing to see how the EU itself may (or may not) come to flesh through transnational narratives. Through these projects, we return democracy to its roots – to public cultural spaces where diverse citizens have their say.

### ASPECTS OF EQUALITY

*We fuse art and science, history and technology to start discussions and debates about heated European topics, such as freedom of speech and human rights. We want to bring European cultural diversity to our doorstep, confining neither our understanding of Europe’s concerns nor of our own identities within our national borders.*

**HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOM OF SPEECH:** one of Europe’s present challenges is that different countries in the EU are taking different stances on such basic European ideals as rule of law and human rights. As a foundational value, equality ties together with the



idea of justice for all, and it links closely with human rights. Under this thematic umbrella, *Heureka*, *The Finnish Science Centre* will collaborate with the Council of Europe to produce **Rights at Stake** exhibition in Tampere – making equality more tangible through human rights. **Freedom of Speech** establishes an international event in Tampere about this heated theme, and European co-operation around the theme. Russian civic association *Open Space* will join from 2022 onwards the Freedom of Speech biennial in which civic activists will share testimony on the topic of human rights and democracy in Russia and other countries.

**ACCESSIBILITY ACROSS THE BOARD:** Europe needs all of its citizens, and for this accessibility and inclusiveness of culture are crucial. In Tampere, we're proud pioneers of accessible culture with **ACCAC** – a movement for Accessible Arts and Culture born in Tampere and now to be upscaled with our Equally European action. ACCAC is our prime example of how we network globally for social and technological innovations for more equal culture (**EDAS Tool**). We thus advocate a green and socio-culturally sustainable Europe together with international partners (and as we're writing this, ACCAC has an application pending to join the New European Bauhaus initiative). Accessibility-related activities in our programme also include ventures such as **Library of Creativity** and **Senior Power** (under **Cultural Well-being**) – all of these projects broadening the horizons of accessible public spaces.

**EUROPEAN VALUE GAPS AND CULTURE WARS:** while our gaze is on the future, we also understand how history may be used to understand today's social divisions and conflicts. Engaging partners from Ireland, Spain, Latvia, and the Serbian ECoC **Novi Sad 2022** as well as the Slovak candidate city **Žilina 2026 – Rebel in Me** will co-create tools for intercultural discussions on civil wars – broadening the theme into social polarisation and overcoming it. How can Tampere join other cities for learning about social divides and overcoming them, and how can art be used for this?

**ECLECTIC EUROPE:** Experts say the Covid-19 pandemic is a great unequaliser, yet we also believe that cultural and creative sectors may be at the forefront of post-pandemic recovery. Building a sustainable future for all requires us to find synergies between disciplines, fusing art and science, creativity and innovation in new ways. **University as a Living Work of**

**Art** shows how vanguard science may create stunning displays of beauty, finding hope for a better future. **Finnish Maiden** puts high-tech robots to the crucial test of performing perennial themes to their audiences, and **Two Cities** will use immersive technology to study a theme as ubiquitous as that of internal divisions within cities.

## PEOPLE TO PEOPLE

*Tampere's strong minority languages include not only Swedish and Russian, but also Estonian, Arabic, and Persian. In intercultural exchanges, we connect with not only the diverse cultures in our city and region but also beyond Europe's borders with Russia and Ukraine.*

**COOPERATION WITH RUSSIA:** The geographical location of Finland at the edge of Europe – with a long border which is also an external border of the EU – binds us uniquely with Russia, and being on the periphery of Europe is also a common denominator with our sister ECoC country for 2026, Slovakia. During the final phase of our bid, we've forged new cultural links to our neighbour Russia. Instead of high-flying politics and PR speeches, we connect people to people, citizens to citizens – showing how equality and inclusion bind cultures beyond Europe's borders. Working with younger persons and NGO's at grassroots level, *The Clean Games Tournament Series* (2023–2026) joins the global movement of sustainable living, showing how environmental matters concern us all, no matter where we live. Cooperation with Russia also involves artistic exchanges, with **Hands On Music** forging links between Tampere, Jönköping (SE) and St. Petersburg (RU), and **Mussorgsky Revisited** and the **Moomin Ice Ballet** building artistic crossovers between Finnish and Russian artists and athletes.

**INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE:** In addition to the cultures cited above, Tampere also has Sámi and Roma minorities, among others. **Sámi People and Indigenous Arts** presents the work of Sámi people to our European audiences through music, film, and soundscapes – treating the Sámi cultural heritage through contemporary arts. **Laterna Roma** will revive Roma culture through the lively tradition of animation films, bringing the region of Pirkanmaa into the mix. Asylum-seekers and refugees living in Tampere and Pirkanmaa also shape who we are, and our projects **Art in Strange Places** and **EU Challenge**



will enable them to participate both as spectators and co-creators of our cultural contents.

**PUBLIC SPACES:** Europe needs safe public spaces not only for socio-political conversations but also for artistic interchange. In **Romeo & Juliet Re-cited**, we rework a classic piece of European drama for a new social purpose, using urban space for highlighting social inequalities of today – also using urban space and modern digital technology in creative ways. For an extra East-West interaction to the project, an Ukrainian choreographer and professionals from Slovakia join the production, and we're casting for Eastern European stage director to lead the staging process. Accessible urban platforms will also be provided – reaching different target groups – in **Muralismo**, **Skate-Friendly Cities**, and **Europe Comes in for Sauna**.

## YOUNGER GENERATIONS – KEYS TO FEEL EUROPEAN

*Since the future of Europe is in the hands of younger generations, we need to provide them with possibilities to explore the world beyond geographic borders. We need to create new ways of European belonging and friendship – a sense of something greater that they can identify with.*

In **Word Bridges**, a cooperation with Tartu 2024, children literature professionals will guide children to write and illustrate stories together, co-creating a children's book and exhibitions between Finland and Estonia. **Tampere Urban Performing Game Event** brings a broader understanding of common values between generations having a different appreciation of the meaning of Europe, and an understanding of our past and present. To build a future of Europe, **Cultural Well-being** project **I am Hope** will work with our partners to unlock youth civic engagement, inviting them to imagine the future of Europe based on values they can relate to and trust.





## FURTHER HIGHLIGHTS OF INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS AND PARTNERS

### ARTISTS

**OLAFUR ELIASSON WITH NORDIC CONTEMPORARIES:** Olafur Eliasson (IS), Elmgreen & Dragset (DK/NO), Jesper Just (DK), Emil Holmer (SE), Pia Myrvold (NO), Shoplifter (IS)

**ACCAC EQUALITY FEST:** Tim Palm aka DJ Arthro (SE), Tim Yates (UK), Sophie Bulbulyan (FR), Tchina Ndjidda (Cameroon), Kim Yongwoo (KR), Dahlia Pessemiers-Benamar (BE/MO)

**KALEVALA X:** Daga Gregorowicz (PL), Vassvik (NO), Puuluup (EE), Jackie Oates (UK), Coig (CA), Sergei Starostin (RU)

**SKATE-FRIENDLY CITIES:** David Gough (SE), Gustav Eden (SE), Fredrik Angner (SE), Leo Valls (FR), Erik-Hugo Pajos (SE/EST), Chris Lawton (UK)

**FEST AFRIKA CONFERENCE SERIES:** Royal Academy of Music Aarhus (DK), Bagamoyo Arts College (TZ), Footprint Green festival & Cape Coast University Ghana (GH), Royal Music Academy / Keld Hosbond (DK), FAR Fest Africa Festival / Check Bangoura (IS), Bagamoyo Festival Herbat Makoye (TZ), Spot on Mali Music Festival (ML), Moussa Diallo (DK), ACCAC Global Network

**CULTURE TO THE STREETS:** Nova Gorica 2025 (SI), Mojca Redjko (SI), Maribor Theatre festival (SI), International Maribor Puppet Pier (SI), International Festival Lutke (SI), Žilina 2026 (SK), Dalibor Bača / School of Design in Bratislava (SK), Wrocław Puppet Theatre (PL), Jana Bačová-Kroftová (CZ), Union Internationale de la Marionnette

**TAMPERE PERFORMING URBAN GAME EVENT:** If Human (BE), Locomotavia (DEU/IT), Muvet (IT), Spazio-T (IT), Bizarra Produksjoner (NO), Valoonkalo (UK), G!RL BE HEARD (US), Silver Sepp (EE), Manca Ursic (SLO), Les Dudes (CAN/CHE)

### ORGANISATIONS AND NETWORKS

**ACCAC EQUALITY FEST:** Dk-Bel (FR), ACCAC France (FR), ACCAC Belgium (BE), ACCAC Cameroon (CM), ACCAC Korea (KR), Music Tech Fest (SWE), Drake Music (UK), Human Instruments (UK), ACCAC Greece (GR), Tim Palm (UK), King Sejong Institute (KR), Share Music (SWE), Samdong International (KR), State Budgetary Institution for Professional Continuing Education "Institute for Cultural Programs (RU), Athens (GR)

**VOICES OF WOMEN:** Tallinn Music Week (EE), Shaksfin (DE/SG), Ater Fondazione (IT), Skånes Dansteater (SE), Malmö Opera (SE), Tartu 2024 – Theater Vanemuine (EE), National Theatre Brno (CZ)

**365 WINDOWS TO EUROPE:** European Film Academy, Europa Cinemas, Baltic & Nordic Short Film Festivals, Sami Film Institute (NO), ImagineNative Film + Media Arts (CA), Embassy of Lithuania in Finland (LT), Producer Stanislav Yershov / Foundation Kino&Teatr (RU), Baikal International Festival People and Environment (RU), Arctic International Film Festival Golden Raven (RU), Barents Ecology Film Festival (RU), Film7Days (RU)

**FOLK ART TAMPERE:** Oopus (EE), WOMEX, Tallinn Music Week, Ella Sokolova (RU), Chudja Zheni (RU), Sergei Starostin (RU), Cesis 2027 (LV), Nova Gorica 2025 (SI)

**SORIN SIRKUS:** Galway Community Circus (IE), Cirqueon (CZ), Ecole de Cirque de Bruxelles (BE), Circus Cirkör (SE), AltroCirco (IT), Networks: Caravan Circus Network, EYCO – European Youth Circus Organization, Stockholm University of the Arts (SE), The Club Pro, FEDEC – European Federation of Professional Circus Schools, Ludvika Young Star Circus (SE), Circus Mini (DE)

**KIRSI – WOMAN WITH DISABILITIES:** Riksteatern (SE), The Finnish Institute in Stockholm (SE), Lung Ha Theatre (GB), Galway Social Circus (IE), Hijiinx (GB), Viljandi Cultural Academy (EE), Crossing the Line – European theatre network for learning disabled artists, including: Blue Teapot Theater (IE), Moomsteatern (SE), Theater Babel (NL), Mind the Gap (GB), Compagnie de L'Oiseau-Mouche (FR) and Teatr 21 (PL)



## TAMPERE26 INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

### Nordics & Baltics

Aarhus, Bergen, Birštonas, Bodø, Cēsis, Copenhagen, Eskilstuna, Faroe Islands, Gothenburg, Gränna, Harstad, Helsinki, Ikast-Brande, Jūrmala, Karasjok, Kaunas, Kuopio, Liepāja, Malmö, Mölndal, Norsborg, Norrköping, Oslo, Oulu, Reykjavik, Riga, Savonlinna, Skellefteå, Stockholm, Tana, Tartu, Tallinn, Turku, Umeå, Viljandi, Vilnius, Vossevangen, Örebro

### Central and Eastern Europe

Bad Ischl, Bratislava, Brno, Budapest, Cracow, Innsbruck, Košice, Łódź, Moscow, Nitra, Pilsen, Prague, Saint Petersburg, Sakha Republic, Salzburg, Udmurt Republic, Timișoara, Trnava, Trenčín, Vienna, Veszprém, Warsaw, Wrocław, Žilina

### Western Europe

Angoulême, Amsterdam, Belfast, Berlin, Bordeaux, Bradford, Bruges, Brunswick, Cardiff, Chemnitz, Dublin, Düsseldorf, Edinburgh, Galway, Ghent, Haarlem, Heidelberg, Essen, Lille, London, Manchester, Marseille, Mons, Munich, Nottingham, Nuremberg, Paris, Rhein-Hunsrück, Rotterdam, Roubaix, Simmern, St. Gallen, Venlo

### Southern Europe & Balkans

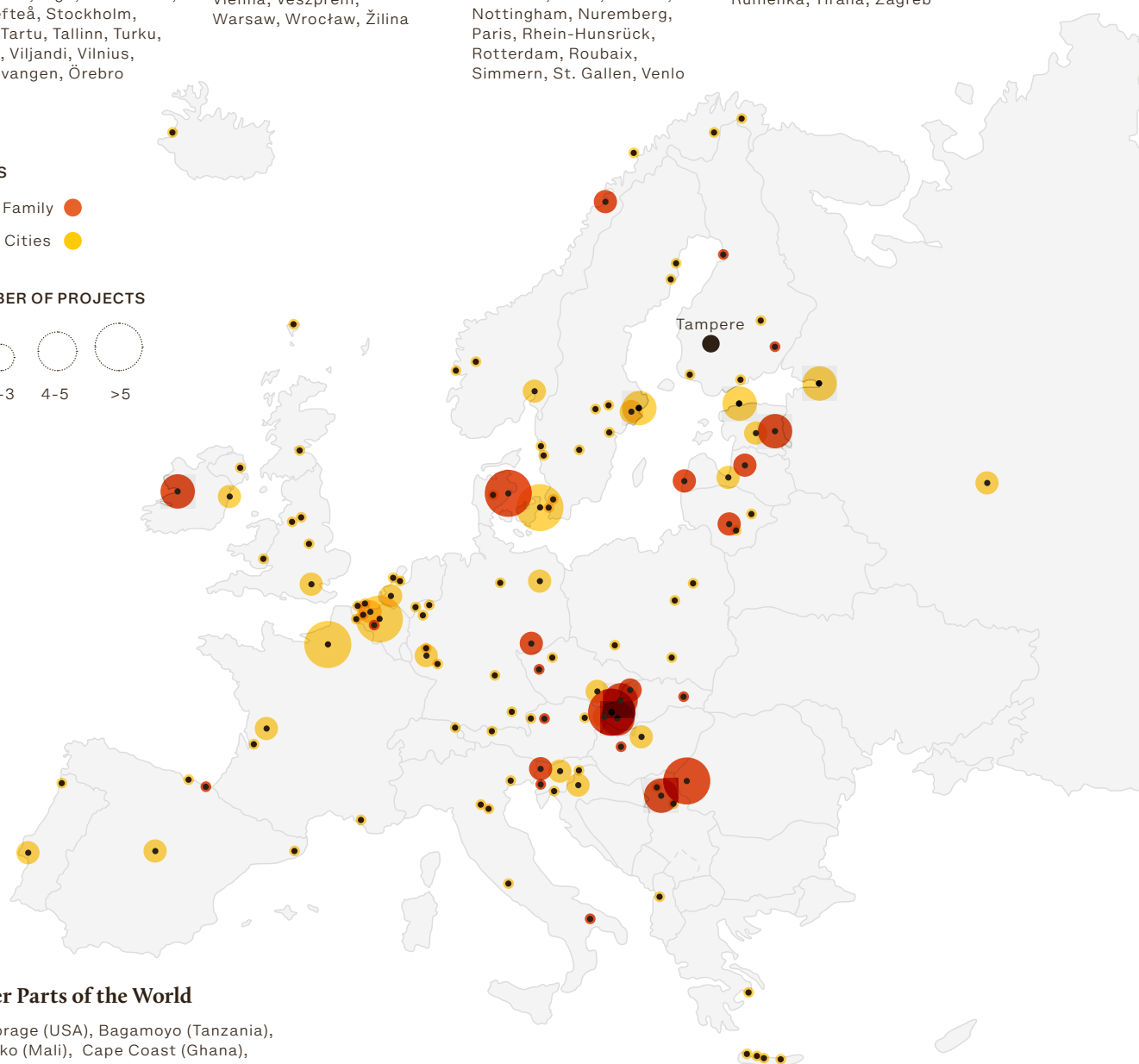
Athens, Apokoronas, Barcelona, Bilbao, Belgrade, Bologna, Donostia-San Sebastián, Hania, Lisbon, Ljubljana, Madrid, Maribor, Matera, Nova Gorica, Novi Sad, Piran, Platanias, Porto, Pregrada, Rome, Rumenka, Tirana, Zagreb

#### CITIES

ECoC Family ●

Other Cities ●

#### NUMBER OF PROJECTS



### Other Parts of the World

Anchorage (USA), Bagamoyo (Tanzania), Bamako (Mali), Cape Coast (Ghana), Dar Es Salaam (Tanzania), Iksan (South Korea), Kathmandu (Nepal), Mexico (Mexico), Montreal (Canada), New York (USA), Novo Hamburgo (Brasil), Oran (Algeria), Quebec (Quebec), San Francisco (USA), Seoul (South Korea), Toronto (Canada), Yaounde (Cameroon)



## Q12

Strategy to attract the interest of broad  
European and international audiences

**Why does Europe need Tampere to become an ECoC in 2026 – what can international audiences gain from Equally European? Thoroughly shaken by an abiding pandemic, basic human closeness has been put on hold, as is bonding through artistic events. Future ECoCs should be ventures of regeneration – finding ways back to each other, back to cultural life. Arts need to be more than mere entertainment, industry or decadent escape: they need to help recreate the ruptured social fabric.**

Tampere has got the tools in the making; the ECoC year is a major chance for testing them together with international artists and audiences. The social fabric of Europe was already torn in several places before the pandemic. Cultural communities long allied to European values have had their flows of cross-border artistic freedom blocked by politics of censorship and exclusion. However, these hard times have also reaffirmed the need for trust, empathy and our dependence on each other. Societies across Europe as well as European unity on the whole can only recover through rebuilding culture based on the values of equality, accessibility, diversity and sustainability.

This is where Tampere comes in. Our Cultural Strategy and ACCAC-related projects show that we're working hard to make culture more inclusive, growing it into a movement on a global scale. With events as diverse as **ACCAC Equality Fest** and **Special eSports World Championships** for some of our flagships, the ECoC year would become our greatest manifestation of this endeavour across Europe – and we welcome large international audiences to help making it happen. We open up the variety of Tampere26 artistic events and practices in Tampere and Pirkanmaa and virtual realms for everyone to join in, engaging in culture with a conscience.

There's still a lot to learn and a lot to relearn – in reaching out beyond the comfort zone to other artists, other audiences, other co-creators. An artistic scene can't regenerate into a new era all on its own. We need responsive people from a diversity of cultures and a unity in human values to teach us and learn with us – this is how we see our guests from near and far. We're partners in opening up perennial and sometimes painful issues; we're cohabitants of our public spaces in the city and beyond, fellow carers of the waters and woodlands of Pirkanmaa. And we're temporary or long-term citizens of Tampere and Pirkanmaa – and lifelong friends.

We build our strategy for attracting broad international audiences around four tenets:

**1) PAN-EUROPEAN RELEVANCE OF OUR CONCEPT:** Equally European appeals to anyone wanting to have their say in bringing European diversity of cultures back from the Covid crisis with more voices heard, more lives engaged, more places won for artistic activities – and more artistic joint efforts creating social change. Accessible and inclusive culture are not just catchwords for us. Our projects are based on ideas we want to share with diverse international audiences for greater mutual understanding, inclusion and respect:

- **ACCAC EQUALITY FEST:** presenting artistic excellence from the best international special-needs performers in music, dance, visual arts and theatre
- **ROMEO & JULIET RE-CITIED:** East-West update of Shakespeare's play addresses current social tensions and enmities via staging which blends live performance, cityscape and digital technology
- **THE LOUHI MUSICAL:** metal musical rewrite of the Finnish epic Kalevala, celebrating its strong female characters to boost gender equality



**2) AN EXPANSIVE, ECLECTIC AND EDGY ARTISTIC PROGRAMME:** urban subcultures and environmental art, humour and science, serious discussions and children's programmes, digital realms and open-air dances – all in the spirit of equality, diversity, accessibility and sustainability where uniquely Tamperean and guest entries from across the globe become Equally European:

- **FINNISH MAIDEN:** immersive audio-visual production with six professional dancers and six industrial robots, expanding our horizons of empathy
- **IN THE AIR, ON THE RAPIDS:** an open-air primer on Tamperean arts, workers' culture and natural surroundings, showing who we are in and for Europe
- **BY NIGHTFALL:** Europeans of all ages are welcome to our pavilion dances and village fêtes for reconnecting to the music across borders

**3) CULTURE AND NATURE, LOCAL AND GLOBAL:** ECoCs of the future need to bring culture back into natural environments, and Tampere is a case in point. The pandemic has intensified the already widespread yearning for natural sites to escape the hectic city life. Expansion of cities is causing increasing burdens on nature; we must use arts to make nature heard. Our internationally known artists address general environmental issues through diverse arts:

- **OLAFUR ELIASSON WITH NORDIC CONTEMPORARIES:** extensive exhibition of top European artist whose large-scale sculptures and installations often spark from climate change and natural elements
- **MEMORY OF WATER:** Cecilia Damström's opera based on Emmi Itäranta's award-winning sci-fi novel of an environmental dystopia
- **NATURAL HORRORS:** an experimental and immersive performance combines puppetry, folk sound art, storytelling and unique rituals in the woods of Pirkanmaa

**4) ENCOUNTERS AND EXPERIENCES OF HUMAN DIVERSITY:** far too often, the cultural experiences of old took place in the comfort zone, by and for the like-minded people with similar tastes and habits. We bring down the borders between real and digital, established and subcultural, edgy and popular for blending and bonding with people and practices beyond the usual:

- **EUROPE COMES IN FOR SAUNA!:** a string of events and initiatives in and around saunas – the most equalising place, a proven cure against prejudice
- **SELF-MADE LIFE: ART ON THE OUTSIDE:** Finnish and European outsider artists bringing together international audiences and hands-on community action
- **FREAK FESTIVALS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP:** the weirdest competitions in Europe and the world brought together for fun learning about the crazy antics of cultures

Tampere looks forward to sharing Equally European with everyone who's been longing for the European unity revival through culture with a conscience, open to all.





## Q13

### Links between our cultural programme and that of other European Capitals of Culture

**If our cooperation with other cities in the preselection stage was based on strategic learning and developing their legacies, in the final round we work with ECoCs and candidate cities on making culture the engine of social and ecological change post-Covid.**

To start our strategic collaboration with other ECoCs in the final round, we organised a “2nd round kick-off webinar”. Friends from **Linz 2009**, **Marseille 2013**, **Pilsen 2015**, **Aarhus 2017**, **Matera 2019** and **Tartu 2024** shared their experience and expertise of different ECoCs with more than 300 stakeholders from Tampere and Pirkanmaa. Team members and our stakeholders have also attended online international conferences, workshops and webinars on the role of artists and cultural institutions during and after the pandemic. Among others, a very interesting discussion “Culture and Space during and after the crisis” was organised by *Creative Europe Desk* Slovenia, with inspiring contributions from **Rijeka 2020/21** and **Kaunas 2022**.

#### HELSINKI 2000 AND TURKU 2011

With the previous Finnish ECoCs, **Helsinki 2000** and **Turku 2011**, we’ll develop their legacies in awareness of larger Finnish and European themes. With Turku, we’ll look for practical solutions to the problem of working spaces for the artists, which during their ECoC year was addressed through the ECoC-related but privately funded infrastructure project Logomo. Cultural wellbeing is something that Turku is known to have brought to the fore with their *Prescriptions for Culture* – recommendations for time to be spent with culture, prescribed by medical doctors. Our capital city Helsinki totally lifted its face with ECoC, strategically broadening the concept of “culture” and

making itself the internationally pulsating “city that functions”, and we’ll follow the path to attract many more independent actors and freelancers.

#### OTHER PREVIOUS ECOCS

On top of the above mentioned cooperation with ECoCs, we have also found project partners in **Lille 2004** (Art on the Outside), **Linz 2009** (Pub(lic) Science), **Pécs 2010** (EU Challenge), **Aarhus 2017** (Art on the Outside, Fest Africa, Kontrol Urban Art Festival, Culture Up), **Leeuwarden 2018** (Culture Up), **Galway 2020** (Kirsi – Woman with disabilities, Sorin Sirkus Circus Art Centre: European Touring Circus Art Residence & Performances, Culture Up), and **Umeå 2014** (Sámi People and Indigenous Arts). Also, in 2026, we will celebrate “10 years after” **Donostia-San Sebastián 2016** and **Wrocław 2016**.

#### TWIN CITIES: KAUNAS 2022, TARTU 2024 AND CHEMNITZ 2025

We’re excited to be one of the first European partners to join **Kaunas 2022’s Kaunas Challenge**, a programme for youth – much because we’ve been searching for innovative ways to empower European youth. Together we’ll create bonds between younger Europeans, adults, and cultural organisations, hoping to promote social change in Tampere and Pirkanmaa. Lithuanian journalist and activist *Andrius Tapinas* – creator of the *Laisves* (Freedom) TV and the *Baltic Way 2020* in support of Belarus – will give a keynote at the first **Freedom of Speech** biennale in 2022. Kaunas’ puppet theatre professionals and schools will also participate in **Plastic Rapids**, and a delegation from Kaunas will participate in **Comedy Games Europe**.



Tartu and Tampere have been working hand in hand, as Twin Cities, on the development of smart-cities and the integration of cultural heritage into the construction of a sustainable future. **Word Bridges**, in cooperation with Tartu City Library, is one of our cooperation projects. **Other City – Forgotten Spaces** by Theater Telakka (FI), Theatre Must Kast (EE), and NGO Recycling Spaces (EE) explores abandoned spaces in both cities – extending the project partnership also to Estonia's neighbour Latvia (with **Liepāja 2027**). The folk musician *Mari Kalkun* will feature in **Iltaamat**, and *Silver Sepp* in **Tampere Urban Performing Game Event**. Tartu's *Stencibility Festival* will collaborate with our **Muralismo** and our **Edible City** will connect with their *Curated Biodiversity*. We also have a tentative agreement on a close collaboration for Tartu's second *Performa Borealis* biennale.

With **Chemnitz 2025**, we've prepared joint projects not only for 2025 and 2026, but also for 2021–2024. **Dance @Station 4.0** involves cooperation between MD Theater Tampere, Theater Chemnitz and Ballet Chemnitz (DE), Company Chameleon (UK), Plesni Teater Ljubljana (SI) and Norrlandsoperan Umeå

(SE). The largest music festival in the world, *Fête de la Musique* Chemnitz plans a student exchange in cooperation with the Uulu Music School in Tampere from 2022 onwards, focusing on the history of the bandoneon instrument from Chemnitz in relation to the tango tradition in Finland.

### NOVA GORICA 2025

Tampere26 has been invited to partake in a project consortium *Ecothreads and BIEN*, run by Zala Orel (originally representing Kranj 2025 candidacy). The project focuses on innovation with ecological materials, workshops for sustainability mind-set, exhibitions, community art, and fashion shows with sustainable contents. Nova Gorica's *Story Picking Season* will connect with our **EU Challenge** and Sámi photographer, video artist and film-maker *Marja Helander* will participate in their *Down by the River*. Finnish folk band *Tuuletar* will also perform at the *Conference on Indigenous heritage* in Nova Gorica in 2025, and our **Natural Horrors** will perform at their *Puppet Theater Festival*.







## NOVI SAD 2021/22

The Serbian ECoC of **Novi Sad** will celebrate its year in 2022 – which has left us room for more intensive dialogues between cultural actors from Vojvodina and Pirkanmaa. **Rebel in Me** has found partners in the *Shock Cooperative* (Šok Zadruga) as both explore the theme of civil wars and recovery, seeking to overcome wars and their consequences for society. The female skateboarding community of Tampere will be included in the *Edšeg* project – a cultural station in Novi Sad focusing on street art. *Heini Luotola* and *Susanna Suomi*, Finnish (and Tamperean) female skaters and Finnish champions will keep skateboard workshops for children in Novi Sad in 2022, and the Tamperean skate community has also agreed on participating in skate battles with skaters from **Košice 2013**, **Mons 2015** and **Trenčín 2026**.

## BODØ 2024

As a kick-off to improve the mobility and capacity building of cultural workers around Europe, **Bodø 2024** will host the puppet theatre artists from **Plastic Rapids** as part of their Connecting Waste project in 2024, so that they can learn the best practices. Our project **I Am Hope** (under the cluster Cultural Well-being) will connect with their *My Life is Somewhere Else* project. Finally, we will collaborate on the theme of Sami people through our **Sámi People and Indigenous Arts** exhibition.



## VESZPRÉM-BALATON 2023, TIMIȘOARA 2021/23, CĒSIS 2027

With **Veszprém-Balaton 2023**, we have environmental links as both regions are connected to lakes. We will collaborate through **Sustainable Cuisine**, and we've also agreed on participating in the *Ecological festival* in Veszprém. With **Timișoara 2023**, we'll focus our partnership on unlocking civic engagement of youth, art and technology. Timișoara will join our **EU Challenge** with a focus on elderly stories, and they also partake in our **I Am Hope**, pairing well with their *CiviCultura*. Both EU Challenge and I am Hope will also cooperate with the Latvian candidate **Cēsis 2027**.

## FELLOW CANDIDATES FROM SLOVAKIA 2026

Since the first round, we've deepened our ties with all the three shortlisted cities from Slovakia. On the edge of European Union, both ECoCs are surrounded by strong neighbours which do not really share the European values of democracy, human rights or equality. A strong collaboration with the Slovak ECoC candidates is a unique chance for Europe to spread its values beyond borders – while also keeping in mind that neither Slovakia nor Finnish citizens are the most European-minded.

**Nitra 2026** will involve senior houses and crisis centres organising crocheting workshops with children and teenagers for our **Quilt of Europe**. We will also co-design a sauna, connecting with Nitra's *Sauna on Wheels*. **Black! Schwarz! Noir!** will get its vegan version through the *Self-preservation society*. We will extend our **EU Challenge** to alternative history through Nitra's *What If approach* and *(Me)dentistry Residency*. **Art in Strange Places** will connect with their *View From The Cheap Seats* by exchanging artworks created for the same spaces. Tampere Theatre Festival will curate a Finnish programme for International *Theatre Festival Divadelná* Nitra. We will tackle gender equality issues in Eastern Europe and Finland by telling stories of the 19th century suffragist heroine *Minna Canth* and the creator of the Moomins, *Tove Jansson*. Other collaborations include **Skate-Friendly Cities** and exchange of artists.

With **Trenčín 2026**, our cooperation focuses on citizens' ownership of the cities, especially giving a voice to underground communities and children. SirkusRakkausPumPum's team will co-produce a version of our **Graffiti Workshop for Elderly**, and through **Skate-Friendly Cities** and together with Boardsport-Union PUSHER (AT) we will invite underground cultural actors and skaters to co-design skate installations in Tampere area. Trenčín will also join the European-wide youth project **I Am Hope**. On the topics of crafts and cultural heritage, **Glass is Born in 1000 Degrees** will work with Trenčín University around the glass production topic, combining research and crafts. We will also participate in Trenčín's *Degustories* festival.

With the team of **Žilina 2026**, we've agreed to join forces on the topic of humans, art and nature. We connect our **Wild Folk** concert series in nature with their *Art in Nature*, and the Fujara players of Čičmany will join **Folk Art Tampere** event. We will also bring puppet performances in the streets (**Culture to the Streets**, a co-production between Tampere's Mukamas Puppet Theatre – Design School Bratislava – Puppet Theatre Žilina). Cooperation between the cities and their universities – Tampere University and UNIZA – has resulted in a pre-agreement involving the topic of SMART cities.





# Outreach





## Q14

## Involvement of local population and the civil society in our Equally European action

We believe public enthusiasm is the driving force to develop our region sustainably. Through excitement of citizens and their creative talents, 2026 can create genuine long-term social impacts. Our bottom-up approach develops platforms for local, European and international creative thinkers and makers – co-working on a more equal future.

## WHAT HAS HAPPENED SO FAR?

**PREPARATORY MEETINGS AND OPEN CALLS:** In the first round, we held meetings with cultural operators both face-to-face and virtually. We reached more than 7000 people through the preparatory meetings, and we got more than 1000 proposals of projects through Open Call and other channels. We also organised meetings with our diverse minorities, thus reaching more than 1500 active members of our communities.

**HALOO PIRKANMAA!** In the final round, we've received many queries from sport clubs, diverse communities, cultural operators, artists and individual citizens asking how to get involved. To respond to this need for participation, we created the platform Haloo Pirkanmaa! On the platform, we've invited people to tell stories of their good deeds for the communities – fostering a sense of belonging in the time of crisis.

**PARTICIPATORY PARLIAMENTS:** To strengthen cooperation with regional operators, we've invested workforce and financial resources into active communication and cultural development in every participating municipality. Cultural Parliaments increase the involvement of citizens in the planning process of the ECoC year, promoting the democratic value of active citizenship. We've also engaged members of already existing civic groups such as the Immigrant council, local Roma working group, Children's Parliament, Youth Council, Older people's Council, and Council on disability.

CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT  
IN THE ECOC YEAR

We believe the people engaged in our projects should be not just spectators but active co-creators of our contents. The projects dealing with current socio-political issues such as **Rights at Stake** and **Rebel in Me** involve interactive methods whereby the contents of the projects are developed together with citizens. In **Europe Comes in for Sauna** and **Pub(lic) Science**, our audiences will venture into accessible and open-ended public spaces to fill those in with their own contents – thoughts and ideas, emotions and experiences. In **Circus Hopping**, produced by the local **Sorin Sirkus**, participative circus art goes on tour across the region to enhance engagement and confidence in the various abilities of our diverse communities.

For artistic co-creation, **Sauna Opera** involves citizens as active partakers in preparations towards 2026, using a digital platform and social gatherings to collect contents for the piece. The participants are encouraged to share their everyday sauna memories and special experiences, lowering the barriers between the opera tradition and audience members. **Art in Strange Places** will offer art in diverse public and private venues as well as community cultural activities in residents' gardens. Through puppetry, visual art, music and dance it brings the diverse communities of our region together.

Active engagement of younger people takes place in **Choose your Star!**, with young people curating their own music festival line-up. International youth participation comes to the fore via **Kaunas Challenge** where our younger people will implement their own youth project. European cooperation will create a safe environment encouraging the youth to speak their mind, to influence our city and society and to shape cultural organisations from within.



We have also taken special care to advocate citizen involvement in the broader regions. In **Iltaamat**, the activities are targeted for older persons and children to create music and art together. The inclusive events will be localised for each venue with the aim to help

strengthen the cultural life, communal spirit and identity in each community. **Muralismo** will provide equal and inclusive opportunities for local inhabitants making and experiencing street art while introducing international professional urban artists to Pirkanmaa.

## Q15



### Social inclusion and accessibility to attend or participate in cultural activities

**Finland is doing relatively well in gender equality, taking mental health seriously and respecting alterity. However, we need improvements in opening up to the unknown, outside of our bubble – working against the barriers and hidden fears in our heads.**

Instead of waiting for people to join our cultural offerings, we will bring the arts and culture to the people. We will help to transform people's daily ways, and those spaces in the region and city which we pass by without noticing. Tampere's great diversity is not yet visible and we want to change that. We want to create equal opportunities for being, sharing and belonging.

#### BARRIERS TO CULTURAL PARTICIPATION

Through conversations with our diverse communities, associations, cultural operators and especially the people facing these barriers the most, we've identified the hindrances to cultural participation which we need to tackle with our programme:

**PHYSICAL BARRIERS:** While many cultural institutions have responded to the issue, the barriers have not been fully removed yet. People in wheelchairs might get special ramps to enter a concert hall, but will still be separated to certain areas. People who





can't see or hear consume particular versions of the cultural content and will be separated through special devices. We want to go a step further and eliminate these separations. Artists with disabilities belong onto world stages. Accessible cultural production needs to be strengthened and divisions need to be removed.

**Project examples:** Kirsi – Woman with Disabilities

- 365 Windows to Europe • Dance @Station 4.0
- Mobility of Minds • ACCAC Equality Fest

**MOBILITY BARRIERS:** Our region is big but sparsely populated. The lack of mobility in rural areas hinders people from participating in cultural events happening mostly in Tampere. The cultural infrastructure in less urban areas needs improvement and wider audience outreach. We will bring culture to rural surroundings, into the forest and across our region, and we'll use digital tools to reach broader audiences – at home and abroad.

**Project examples:** Augmented TRequality • Library of Creativity • Art on the Outside • Colouring Hay Bales

- Art Castle • Fauns of Pirkanmaa

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC BARRIERS:** Financial barriers hinder citizens from engaging with cultural activities. We offer various projects free of charge and will have special discounts for people unable to pay the full price – be it families, older or younger persons. Our events will not only take place in cultural venues but will happen in public spaces where broad audiences can be reached and surprised – thus allowing for a low-threshold cultural experience.

**Project examples:** Art in Strange Places • Homeless Football World Cup • In the Air, on the Rapids • Guerrilla Lights • Totems of Equality • Forgotten Giants

**MENTAL BARRIERS:** Cultural contents may seem complex and out of touch. During our conversations, we've noticed people fearing the feeling of not being able to fully understand them. We believe that culture is for everyone and that the reason people might feel overwhelmed is because of lacking context. We'll reduce abstract language without losing artistic excellence, and we'll provide background information in exhibitions, workshops, co-creation, performances and artistic projects. With the right context, art becomes accessible, and the complexity inherent in artworks becomes more approachable.

**Project examples:** Art Castle • 100 Community Choirs • Pub(lic) Science • Art on the Outside • Sámi People and Indigenous Arts • Rebel in Me • Insect Symphony • Underground Hopping

## ACCESSIBILITY TAKEN FURTHER

*Our world is full of differences: different backgrounds, different world-views, different abilities and talents. These differences do not have to divide us but should make our society more colourful and worthwhile.*

During the final round of bidding we've got a great addition to our team – Kirsi Mustalahti who dedicates her life to make this world a better and more equal one. With her widely networked community ACCAC Global we have a very strong international partner we're proud of – and this is crucial part of how we translate equality to practice.

We're aiming to make all of our ECoC events barrier-free, and we'll use our projects to leave a lasting legacy. With the on-going process of developing the **EDAS Tool** – including one **Hackathon** already held and more to come – we've observed that the vast majority of cultural operators want to do more in terms of equality, diversity, accessibility and sustainability. However, there are challenges such as prioritising actions and finding up-to-date information, and the **EDAS Tool** will start by tackling these two problems.

In addition to the projects described under our Cultural Programme, we're active players in **European projects** improving the accessibility of culture, sharing good practices and developing cooperation and innovations with international partners. Such outreach collaborations are implemented through **ACCAC**, involving the following two projects, for example:

**CONTACT:** a two-year project which focuses on symbolic borders in public spaces where people with disabilities remain hidden and excluded. Research has shown that merely creating occasions for people of different groups does not necessarily lead to real engagement, but it can even reinforce differentiation. In our view, artistic creation can become the necessary catalyst to turn such encounters into genuine exchanges. Through dance-based workshop activities and seminars Contact sheds away the feeling of embarrassment and fear of acting inappropriately.



**MOBILITY OF MINDS:** showing how accessibility is not only an issue in cultural participation but also in cultural production, the project involves cooperation between ACCAC, local and international artists from Croatia, Portugal, Sweden and the UK to work on our shared vision of equal and accessible future in music production. Vahakn Matossian (UK) provides first hands-free musical instruments tailor-made for disabled musicians. Tim Palm (SE) from Music Tech Fest coordinates the Equality Lab, and sound-artist Tim Yates (UK) will also be featured.

- Assist as carers at children's cultural centre Rulla
- Assist in digitising materials or in curatorial work at Serlachius Museums
- Work with the local skate club on implementing and supporting skateboarding events
- Support ice hockey events
- Act as storytellers to other generations in libraries

Our other projects with volunteers include, for instance, the following:

## VOLUNTEERING

While Tampere is experienced in volunteering for sport events, cultural institutions, social clubs, NGOs and international communities, we now want to bring the diverse interests and background together – to expand the network and to reach an even broader audience. Our volunteering approach highlights wishes, talents and ideas of our volunteers. We want to learn from each other, co-create and engage one another. For example, our volunteers will:

- Encourage others for walks on culture, sports and nature
- Assist museum professionals in Vapriikki picture archive and the Rusko Collection Centre
- Participate in cultural environment work with Pirkanmaa Regional Museum

**CULTURE COMPANIONS:** We're aware of the difficulties to convince yourself to visit and participate in cultural activities on your own, therefore, our volunteers will become new friends and companions for those wishing to participate. Thus we want to tackle isolation and encourage the young, old, cultural newbies and those intimidated by certain cultural settings to participate as spectators or co-creators.

**IMMIGRANTS AS INTEGRATION CO-DEVELOPERS:** The project builds a new, innovative, and inclusion-enhancing model for developing new services for citizens with immigration background. Immigrants are brought inside the processes of developing services and programmes for better integration. This volunteering activity helps to foster community spirit, enabling exchange through improved language skills and a feeling of belonging.

## Q16

### Strategy for audience development, including education and the participation of schools

The basic challenge for audience development is that people using cultural services tend to remain the same – a homogenous group which gets older, but new audiences hardly follow. We reach out across generations and cultures, encourage participation and cultural production, curiosity for the new and boldness to speak our mind.

Our four strategic points of audience development are the following:

- Cultural education
- Reaching the regions
- Digital engagement
- Crossing over cultures and generations





## NEW WAYS OF CULTURAL EDUCATION

*We believe experimental cultural education is the source of enthusiasm and ECoC the catalyst for improvement.*

**Culture in Schools**, developed in co-creation with municipal education services, brings artists to schools, enabling creative encounters and developing new educational structures to create curiosity. Guidelines and adapted cultural education plans for regional cultural education enable new innovative approaches such as local and international artists visiting schools and cultural events where children are starring as co-creators with the artists. In **Open Minds** we develop together with partners from Sweden, Portugal, Croatia and Albania a new educational path focusing on social inclusion, creativity, diversity and democratic thinking. Education in social inclusion, accessibility and innovation is supplemented by research on identifying exclusion factors in local communities.

## REACHING THE REGIONS

*Important cultural audiences come from the nearby regions, and their citizens need easy access to both timely conversations and high-quality arts.*

Our partnering municipalities have attractive cultural sites, and new ones are being built. **Library of Creativity** and **Totems of Equality** extend to all the municipalities of Pirkanmaa, making the diverse towns into accessible venues for lifelong learning and high-level artistic projects. The regions deserve the full range of culture, from eccentric experiments such as **Self-Made Life: Art on the Outside** to projects targeting people across generations (**Skate-Friendly Cities** and **Muralismo**).

## DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

*Analogue and digital engagement are interrelated rather than exclusive – and probably more so post-Covid.*

We create new digital ways expanding our horizon and reaching international audiences. Cooperation with Tampere Universities enables the creation of various joint projects enhancing digital accessibility. In **Augmented TRequality**, students create digital services to enable hybrid accessibility, local or global, for all the ECoC events in 2026. Diverse visitors and residents, nationals or internationals, may participate as active co-creators or passive spectators.

## CROSSING OVER CULTURES AND GENERATIONS

*Our emphasis on equality means that we must reach out also to our senior citizens – as well as those middle-aged – and we need focused projects to reach diverse cultures.*

Finland's aging population means that cultural resources need to be targeted at older persons as well. Our **Senior Power** project under **Cultural Well-being** broadens the cultural activities of our senior citizens. We also need conscious efforts to enable cultural and artistic projects of our diverse minorities. **Sámi People and Indigenous Arts** brings to the fore our Sámi minority – the only indigenous group of people in the EU – and **Laterna Roma** lends visibility to our Roma population. In Tampere and Pirkanmaa, our growing minorities also include Arab-speaking persons, to be engaged through our **EU Challenge** and **Art in Strange Places**.







# Management & Capacity to Deliver



## Q17 Income to cover operating expenditure

After the pre-selection phase and the panel's feedback, the income from the Finnish Government has been revised to bring it in line with the ECoC budget from

Turku 2011. Of the total operating budget of 53 M€ for 2021–2027, 23 M€ is allocated to 2026.

### OPERATING BUDGET

Total income to cover operating expenditure (in M€)	From the public sector (in M€)	From the public sector (in%)	From the private sector (in M€)	From the private sector (in %)
53,18	48,58	91%	4,60	9%

## Q18 Breakdown of income from the public sector

Income from the public sector to cover operating expenditure	€	%
National government	18 750 000	39 %
City of Tampere	18 750 000	39 %
Participating municipalities	6 480 000	13 %
EU (with exception of the Melina Mercouri Prize)	4 600 000	9 %
Other	0	0
Total	48 580 000	100 %

## Q19 Financial commitment of public authorities

The income from the Finnish Government will be provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture, and it will be announced later in 2021. Our Cultural Programme has been designed to remain flexible for upgrades or downgrades, if government funding does not materialise as we have estimated.

Notably, **all the participating municipalities** have made formal financial commitments to be part of Tampere26 from 2021 to 2027 – and they've already been involved in financing our bid together with the City of Tampere. The decisions have been approved by the **City Council of Tampere** and the respective councils of the 19 other **participating municipalities**.

In addition to Tampere, there are 6 municipalities in Pirkanmaa with more than 20000 inhabitants, and these municipalities (Nokia, Ylöjärvi, Kangasala, Sastamala, Lempäälä and Valkeakoski) are contributing approximately 0,5 M€ or more to the ECoC action. Our main municipal partner, Mänttä-Vilppula (9686 inhabitants) is contributing a similar sum, which makes it the second biggest per capita contributor after Tampere. All other municipalities are making equal per capita contributions.

The city councils of Tampere and all participating municipalities are also committed to Plan B, with a budget of minimum 10% of the original Plan A budget.



## Q20 Fundraising strategy from Union programmes to cover operating expenditure

We work on the development of future EU projects, European co-creation as well as novel cultural policies, with ECoC as a top priority of EU cooperation. Our ECoC EU fundraising strategy builds on the *Roadmap for the City of Tampere: International Activities*, with four fields of action:

1. Knowledge and innovation
2. Sustainable city
3. Cultural wellbeing
4. Equality

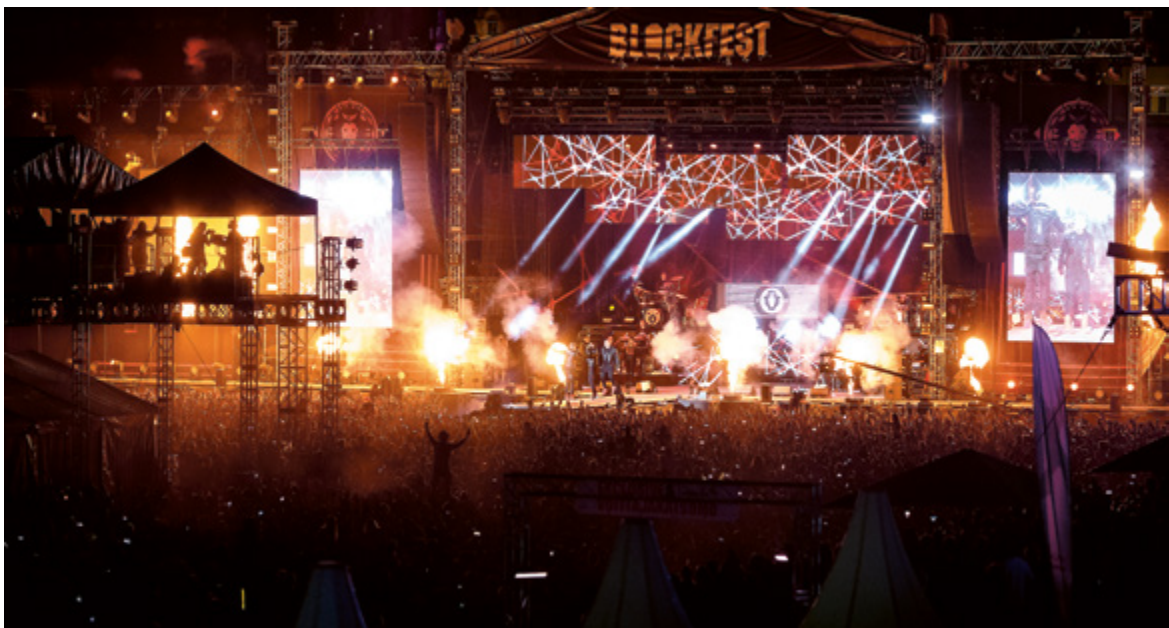
We translate our local and regional challenges into European plans for action, promoting cooperation and co-creation on current European topics. Our targeted funding instruments will include *Creative Europe*, *European Urban Initiative*, *Horizon Europe*, *ERDF* including *Interreg*, and *Erasmus*. As an ECoC, we connect our cultural operators and their projects to the European urban and regional agenda and networks, such as *Eurocities*, as well as to current European initiatives such as the *New European Bauhaus* and the *Green Deal*. Our regional ECoC approach connects us with the EU's regional agenda as well. The Structural Funds

Programme of Finland 2021–2027 will also be utilised for the funding of regional ECoC projects.

Regarding our EU funding competences, we have specialists working closely together with our ECoC team from the city's project office, Tampere Region EU Office in Brussels and the city subsidiary for EU project development, The Baltic Institute Finland. They support our project owners in EU project work – from funding related information services and capacity building, to application preparation and project management.

Despite the challenging pandemic situation, we've been successful in creating strong international projects attracting funds from the European Union. With currently 17 international projects that have already applied or will apply for EU funding, the total sum applied for is approximately 5,8 M€ of which 2,1 M€ is the planned share of Tampere.

The planned projects listed in the table to the right are included in our artistic programme or outreach activities, and the projects with funding already secured are marked with an asterisk (\*).





TAMPERE-DRIVEN PROGRAMMES

Programme and timing	Tampere share / Global EU budget	International partners
Better Together*, 2021	19 305 € / 46 033 €	Zavod Salesanum, OE Skala (SI), L'Art d'En Faire (FR); Palestinian Circus School (PS), Circus Cirkör (SE), Cirqueon (CZ)
CTF Advanced, 2021–2023	20 000 € / 150 000 €	Galway Community Circus (IE), Cirqueon (CZ), Ecole de Cirque de Bruxelles (BE), Circus Cirkör (SE), Les Plus Petit Cirque du Monde (FR)
Enchanting Dance*, 2021–2023	80 000 € / 80 000 €	LEADER fund for local partners
Maker Library*, 2020–2023	75 424 € / 253 511 €	Magnetic Professional (LV), Sápmi Næringshage as (NO), European Laboratory on Training, Education and Citizenship (IT), Muzej grada Pregrade Zlatko Dragutin Tudjina (HR), Ylä-Karjalan taideyhdistys ry (FI)
Mobility of Minds (CR), 2024–2026	120 000 € / 500 000 €	Music Tech Fest (SE), Drake Music (UK), Human Instruments (UK)
NOIA, Network for Outsider and ITE Art*, 2021–2023	12 000 € / 24 000 €	GAIA Outsider Art Museum (DK), Kondas Center (EE)
Quality Through Equality, 2024–2027	540 000 € / 1 400 000	Creative Europe 2021–2027, Cross Sectoral Strand, concept and partner serch 2022, application 2023 (RU, PL, CZ, SE, NO, HU)
SeS Camps and Training, 2021–2023	80 000 € / 300 000 €	Special eSports – Accessible eSports Association (NP), Daglig Verksamhet (SE), ACCAC (BE)
Shared Space, 2022–2024	50 000 € / 350 000 €	Tallinn Music Week (EE), Staton Narva (EE), WORM Rotterdam (NL), Tampere Vocal Festival (FI)
SPECIS, 2024–2026	100 000 € / 400 000 €	International Association of Event Hosts IAEH (Gothenburg, Rotterdam, Innsbruck, Düsseldorf, Brno)
Youth Accreditation, 2021–2027	700 000 € / 700 000 €	Galway Community Circus (IE), Cirqueon (CZ), Ecole de Cirque de Bruxelles (BE), Les Plus Petit Cirque du Monde (FR), Zavod Salesanum OE Skala (SI), L'Art d'En, Faire (FR), Palestinian Circus School (PL), Circus Cirkör (SE)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 796 729 € / 4 203 544 €</b>	

TAMPERE-PARTICIPATING PROGRAMMES

Programme	Tampere share / Global EU budget	International partners
Contact (FR)*, 2021–2023	107 099 € / 299 997 €	DK-Bel (FR), Elan Interculturel (FR), Dimitra Svigkou single member P.C (EL), Teatro Atomon Me Anapiria (EL), Vimmart – yhdenvertaisen taiteen oppilaitoksen tuki ry (FI), Esteetön taide ja kulttuuri ry (FI)
2M2M2G (FR), 2024–2026	75 000 € / 300 000 €	DK-Bel (FR), ACCAC (BE, CM, KR, EL, FI)
Dream (IT)*, 2021–2022	34 080 € / 300 000 €	M9 District S.r.l (IT), Stati Generali Dell Innovazione Dipromozione Sociale (IT), Centar Tehnicke Kulture Rijeka (HR), Pomorski I povijesni muzej Hrvatskog primorja Rijeka (HR), Mapa da Ideias – Edicodes de publicacoes LDA (PT), Câmara Municipal de Oeiras (PT), Postimuseosäätiö SR / the Finnish Postal Museum (FI)
Face Up (IT)*, 2021–2022	25 000 € / 241 920 €	Gabrovo Municipality (BG), LDA Mostar (BA), ALDA – European Association for Local Democracy, Municipality of Novaci (MK), University of Lodz (PL), Puerto de Sagunto (ES), Stadt Oberhausen (DE), City of Norrköping (SE), City of Tampere (FI)
Culture Up (SE)*, 2021–2022	23 200 € / 110 400 €	Ringkøbing-Skjern Kommune (DK), with project partners representing Tampere26, Novi Sad 2021, Galway 2020, Leeuwarden 2018 and Aarhus 2017
Open Minds (SE), 2021–2023	75 520 € / 298 575 €	Music Tech Fest (SE) (main coordinator), ACCAC (FI), Polis University (AL), FabLab (HR), INESC TEC (PT)
<b>Total</b>	<b>349 999 € / 1 619 435 €</b>	



## Q21 Timetable and breakdown of the income to cover operating expenditure

Source of income for operating expenditure (M€)	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
EU	0,4	0,5	0,4	1	0,9	0,9	0,4	4,5
National Government	0,4	1	1,7	2,2	5,1	7,5	0,85	18,75
City of Tampere	0,6	0,8	1,7	2,2	5,1	7,5	0,85	18,75
Municipalities	0,1	0,4	0,8	1	1,7	2,2	0,3	6,5
Partners	0	0,1	0,3	0,3	1,4	2,3	0,2	4,6
Total annual income to cover operating expenditure (M€)	1,5	2,8	4,9	6,7	14,2	20,4	2,6	53,1

## Q22 Fundraising strategy for private sponsorships

*We prefer to talk about strategy for business cooperation rather than strategy for fundraising. Focusing on creative engagement, broad visibility and shared values, we forge new links between businesses and cultural operators, responding to the needs of both parties.*

We want to engage the corporate sector, its employees and customers and provide opportunities to connect to and be identified with the social, sustainable and economic development of the region. The backbone of our cooperation is to develop **business through culture** – through our artistic and cultural projects and our capacity building tools. We co-create contents, and we share methods and tools for mutual benefits, and we also make amendments to the working conditions of cultural and creative operators.

### SPONSORSHIP GOAL – AND HOW TO REACH IT?

Our private sponsorship goal for 2022–2027 is **4,6 M€**. We're not looking only for partners here and there,

but we're going for the long haul and substantial partnerships – reaping mutual benefits during the five ramp-up years and also after 2026. The partners will be involved as co-creators of the ECoC experience, supported by our partnership manager. Currently, we have secured 0,45 M€ private funding from a Finnish foundation. We're also in the bidding phase for the *King Sejong Institute Foundation* to establish the first KSI Institute of **Finland** in Tampere. From 2022 onwards, we'll grow further roots for partnerships with the business sector at various levels.

Our business partners come in three sizes, which also structures our work of finding them. First, we search out three **premium partners** with a contribution of at least 400 000 €. Second, we look for five **medium-sized partners** and ten merch distributors. The latter means a business partner ready to use our brand of Equally European / Tampere26 either in form of accessories (such as jewellery) or digital contents. Third, we look for about fifteen **smaller partners** and four institutional partners, with businesses of all shapes and sizes having a chance to work with us.



## LEVELS OF CONTRIBUTION

Partnership	Minimum value of contribution €	Amount of contributors	Total contribution €
Premium partner	400 000	3	1 200 000
Medium partner	100 000	5	500 000
Merch distributor	100 000	10	1 000 000
Single event partner	20 000	15	300 000
Other institutional partners	400 000	4	1 600 000
Total			4 600 000

To organise our plans for cooperation, we've factored in all the six criteria of ECoC, since all of these are relevant for our business cooperation. The six core ideas of our business cooperation are the following:

- **CULTURE-LED BUSINESS:** through joined work with companies, we create and use models for integrating culture and the arts into their day-to-day business
- **CO-CREATIVE STORYTELLING:** artists and cultural operators may make important contributions to companies' marketing and communications, creating for example corporate stories
- **THINKING BIG – AND INTERNATIONAL:** cultural operators and businesses have a great deal to give to each other in upscaling their innovations
- **COMMUNITY-BASED LEADERSHIP:** we use cultural and artistic tools to develop quality of work and work-efficiency, sparking excellence of workers
- **WORKING SPACES FOR EFFICIENCY AND EQUALITY:** bigger and smaller companies provide both temporary and permanent solutions for creative use of shared spaces
- **EQUALLY EUROPEAN PLATFORM:** as a legacy, we will root large-scale models for operations and networks for other operators to join in the future

### CULTURE-LED BUSINESS

During the past five years, businesses have made increasing efforts to work as active members of society, advocating the values of sustainable development and social equality. Since these are our ECoC values as well, we don't view our business cooperation as something added on top of the daily activities of the corporations – rather, we believe our vision to be shared by our business partners as well. We will provide our **EDAS Tool** for businesses to use freely whereby they can take practical steps towards greater equality, diversity, accessibility, and sustainability. Culture-led methods will also involve crossover projects such

as **Disruption Point**, using arts to increase quality of work and work efficiency. They may also involve high-level artistic productions – which, however, must be sensitive to the needs of both parties.

### CO-CREATIVE STORYTELLING

Virtually every company has not only a vision and a mission but also a story to tell, often interlinked with their corporate responsibilities. We encourage new models of cooperation whereby the specialists in storytelling – a diverse range of creative professionals from literary authors to journalists and humanist researchers – offer their services for companies to use. We will bring the companies Returns on Investments but we also believe in Value in Kind – whereby both parties gain benefits. We opt for a collaborative approach in which partners are involved as co-producers, strongly focusing on co-creation of content, and experience combined with more traditional methods of brand visibility.

### THINKING BIG – AND INTERNATIONAL

One need we've diagnosed in our creative sector is that it's not Equally European which means that the operators often lack the resources to upscale their projects on an international scale. Businesses, in contrast, thrive from aiming high and forging international operating models. By encouraging face-to-face business cooperation, we seek to subject not only the corporations to the creative sparks of talents of the artists – but also the artists to the best corporate practices of upscaling innovations and reaching international customers. This links with audience engagement and audience expansion – new ways to structure our international activities and transform the size and scope of our audiences.



## COMMUNITY-BASED LEADERSHIP

If we institute cultural and artistic tools across the spectrum in the corporations, these will help their workers to see the hidden talents of different workers, both in-house and out-house. Every company needs trust between its staff members, and a well-tested way to increase this trust is to share the diverse talents within the team – replacing a narrow-minded image of our “work identity” with a more holistic understanding of who we are. For example, the company replaces its traditional leadership model with a more cooperative model whereby the staff members give each other “cultural lessons” – in topics as diverse as yoga, playing the drums, or reading poetry, or cooking. We also encourage self-leadership of workers in form of creative and independent thinking.

## WORKING SPACES FOR EFFICIENCY AND EQUALITY

Another need of our creative sector relevant for business cooperation is the broadly recognised problem of insufficient working spaces for the artists and creative professionals in Tampere. We work together

with corporations to see how they may offer their underused premises for residency work, for public events, or for gallery space. Thereby we increase not only the visibility of the arts in our cities and towns – but we also spark the creative potential of the companies themselves. In some cases, the projects on temporary working spaces will grow into more permanent solutions for co-creative infrastructure.

## EQUALLY EUROPEAN PLATFORM

While our ECoC action involves tangible goals for our business cooperation, our ultimate aim is to leave a legacy on new forms of cross-sectoral cooperation – an open-ended **Equally European platform** that any creative thinker or maker may join from 2027 onwards. Our models for business cooperation to be instituted involve cross-sectoral initiatives also in cooperation with the City of Tampere, which means that practical incentives will be set in place to spark innovations in Tampere. As one example of this, we mention here the so called production incentive for movie productions in Tampere and Pirkanmaa – which has already resulted in a couple of Hollywood film productions taking place in our region.

## Q23 Breakdown of the operating expenditure

Programme expenditure	Programme expenditure (in%)	Promotion and marketing	Promotion and marketing (in%)	Wages, overheads and administration	Wages, overheads and administration (in%)	Other (please specify)	Other (please specify) (in%)	Total of the operating expenditure
31,8 M€	60	8 M€	15	8 M€	15	5,3 M€	10	53 M€

The “Other” category includes costs for evaluation, research, logistics and reserves.



## Q24 Planned timetable for spending operating expenditure in Tampere

Timetable for spending	Programme expenditure (M€)	Programme expenditure (%)	Promotion and marketing (M€)	Promotion and marketing (%)	Wages, overheads and administration (M€)	Wages, overheads and administration (%)	Other (M€)	Other (%)	Total spending (M€)	Total spending (%)
2021	0,3	0,6	0,1	0,2	0,3	0,6	0,1	0,2	0,8	1,6
2022	1,2	2,3	0,3	0,6	0,5	0,9	0,2	0,4	2,2	4,2
2023	1,5	2,8	0,4	0,8	0,6	1,1	0,5	0,9	3	5,6
2024	4	7,6	0,6	1,1	0,9	1,7	0,6	1,1	6,1	11,5
2025	10	18,8	2	3,8	1,7	3,2	1,1	2,1	14,8	27,9
2026	13,4	25,3	4,1	7,7	3,5	6,5	2,2	4,2	23,2	43,7
2027	1	1,9	0,3	0,6	0,4	0,8	0,4	0,9	2,1	4,2
Later	0,4	0,7	0,1	0,2	0,1	0,2	0,1	0,2	0,7	1,3
Total	31,8	60%	8	15%	8	15%	5,2	10%	53	100

## Q25 Income from the public sector to cover capital expenditure in connection with the title year

Tampere and Pirkanmaa are in the middle of a large-scale renewal and construction phase. We're growing into an internationally attractive region, and from the large figures reserved for the investments by the city, we may see how culture and creativity play an important role to lend soul to this development. Our Equally European action will work as the catalyst to accelerate this process, to ensure a cultural identity after the renewal phase – and as a legacy, ECoC action will be vital for keeping Tampere and Pirkanmaa filled with meaningful life and a unique character, in midst of top modernised infrastructure.

Tampere and all participating municipalities are prepared for a total of **866,6 M€** to cover capital

expenditure in 2021–2027. Of this sum, **71,6 M€** is reserved for cultural investments directly related to ECoC (for example, projects set in motion by it). While the tables listing these investment projects (see Q29 and Q43) focus mainly on Tampere, the partnering municipalities of Pirkanmaa are contributing 101 M€ of their own capital expenditure. Alongside cultural investments, Tampere has various investment projects affecting people's general well-being and our ECoC values like accessibility and sustainability. For example, the biggest expenditure component in the near future, the Tampere tram, 313 M€, will reduce our carbon footprint and improve accessibility. Governmental funding for the tram will be 30% of the city funding.



#### INCOME FROM THE PUBLIC SECTOR TO COVER CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Income from the public sector to cover capital expenditure (2020–2027)	M€	%
National Government	200	19
City of Tampere	766	72
Municipalities	101	9
EU (with exception of the Melina Mercouri Prize)	0	0
Other	0	0
Total	1067	100

## Q26 Financial commitments of public finance authorities for capital expenditure

All investments mentioned in our Bid Book are included in the investment lists of cities and municipalities and under active planning. If Tampere is selected, it will be of huge importance for cultural

investment decisions, especially for new artist residencies, Tampere Art Museum, Sara Hildén Art Museum, Piippo Venue, Tampere Theatre renovation, as well as other city development projects.

## Q27 Fundraising strategy for Union programmes to cover capital expenditure

Regarding capital expenditure, EU funding is planned to be utilised only for the development of culture-driven activities, as well as for smaller-scale investments focusing on culture-led regeneration of urban spaces and sustainable development projects. We aim to provide improved and strategically planned facilities,

premises, services and cooperation opportunities for cultural operators with flexible operational models. The investments also contribute to the sustainability of our ECoC action, strengthening our ECoC legacy and forging long-term links between the regional creative sector and the economic and social sectors.

## Q28 Timetable for income to cover capital expenditure in Tampere and the municipalities

#### ESTIMATED TIMETABLE FOR INCOME TO COVER CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Source of income for capital expenditure M€	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026 ECOC year	2027– 2030
EU	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
National government	42	25	22	23	29	41	18
City	83	59	47	68	112	135	262
Municipalities	29	18	22	23	6	3	0
Partners	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



## Q29 Amounts spent for new cultural infrastructure in Tampere and Pirkanmaa

During the final phase of the bid, the number of newly planned cultural infrastructure investments has increased. Here you may find the cultural infrastructure

projects with strong links to ECoC, including projects set in motion by ECoC and/or the Cultural Strategy of Tampere:

Investment	Timing	Project	Budget M€	ECoC Connection
Tampere Art Museum	2023–2026	The new extension “Siilo” for Tampere Art Museum	23,5	Olafur Eliasson with Nordic Contemporaries
Sara Hildén Art Museum	2022	A new building for the Art Museum in the Finlayson area	3	A world-class exhibition site in the former industrial area
Renovation of Tampere Theatre	2023–2026	Full technical renovation of Tampere Theatre	18	Two Cities
Nekala Campus for Art and Culture	2022–2024	Ongoing process of refurbishing the old school into a campus of art and culture	7	Underground Hopping, The Future of Working Spaces
Tulli Area, including Tullikamari	2021–2023	Development of a cultural area in Tampere with three buildings and a cultural public square, and the full renovation of a cultural venue (Tullikamari)	8,1	Special eSports, ACCAC Fest, Romeo and Juliet Re-cited
Museum of Communication and the Digital Age	2021–2026	A new museum exhibition to be opened at Museum Centre Vapriikki in 2025–2026	1,5	Demoscene Lives
Mänttä - Vilppula: Cultural center	2022–2024	Conversion of a former shopping mall at town centre into art exhibition spaces and cultural facilities	0,5	Art on the Outside
Lempäälä: Piippo Venue	2021–2026	Repurposing of a former factory building to a cultural venue and home for performing arts	10	Cultural Well-being / I am Hope
Total			71,6	

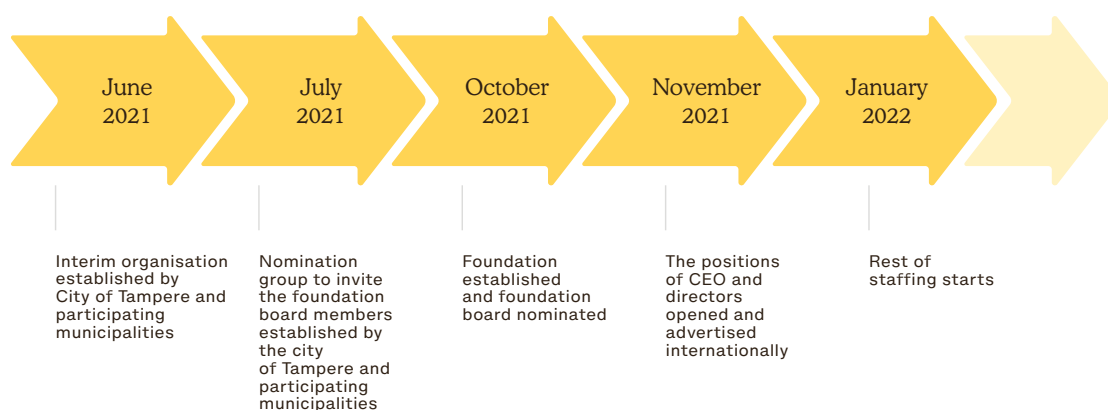
## Q30 Governance and delivery structure

Tampere City Board and all participating municipalities have made the decision to establish the Tampere26 Foundation as the governance structure. This structure has been developed while exploring different governance models from the perspectives of economy, operational functionality, internationality and political independence and the requirements of Finnish law. The Tampere26 Foundation will guarantee an independent political status with the aim to act transparently, competently and reliably and to

enable a seamless collaboration between the ECoC organisation, Tampere city administration as well as all participating municipalities and partners.

Our organisational structure reflects our overall values and goals: to be as effective, as inclusive and as democratic as possible – to provide a solid platform for our cultural and artistic diversity and excellence to grow and flourish. The foundation will take the necessary steps to implement our Equally European vision.





Until the foundation is established, the core of the current ECoC team forms an interim organisation, with Perttu Pesä continuing to lead the team. The interim project director will ensure that the foundation regulations and the nomination of the foundation board will follow not only Finnish law but especially our project values and ECoC requirements. While the interim organisation continues to develop the artistic programme and audience development actions, it further negotiates the contracts with stakeholders whose projects' implementation starts already in 2022.

## GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

### FOUNDATION BOARD

**MAIN TASKS:** Tasks of the foundation board include the development and pursuit of the strategic direction, ensuring the budget and performing budget controls, appointing the organisations CEO, monitoring the progress of the foundation as well as advising the CEO and Directors. Furthermore, the board ensures that the Artistic production team is able to act freely and independently within their budget constraints.

**MEMBERS:** The city of Tampere will establish the foundation and will nominate two out of seven board members. The interim project director and the current ECoC steering group is responsible for forming an independent preparatory group who will then invite foundation board members. In principle, the Foundation Board must represent international, national and regional levels, high level cultural and educational institutes and key business partners.

We believe that a wide range of culturally-minded board members gives us a solid base to undertake the actions of our ECoC project.

### ADVISORY BOARD

**MAIN TASKS:** providing strategic advice as well as the interface and communication tool to report project progress to the city and our regional society, without direct decision making power.

**MEMBERS:** The Foundation Board will nominate 20–25 advisors representing participating municipalities as well as local, regional and national stakeholders. For example representatives from civil society, minority groups, creative industries, religious groups, sport sector, tourism sector and the economic sector.

### HONORARY COMMITTEE

**MAIN TASKS:** assuring high level social relations as well as national and international networking to support Tampere26 on its way. The Honorary Committee will have no decision making role.

**MEMBERS:** 5–10 influencers from Finland and Europe.

### FORUMS

To ensure a smooth and constructive cooperation with our stakeholders, we will develop three forums without decision making power for information sharing, gathering advice as well as various perspectives. With around 10 members in each forum, changing annually, we work on strengthening our overall project.



The three forums and their focus areas are:

- Cultural stakeholders who are interacting with the artistic and cultural production
- Private sector business representatives who are interacting with management
- Citizens who are interacting with the capacity building programmes and audience development actions

## DELIVERY STRUCTURE

The CEO, Development Director, Artistic Director and Administrative Director form the core of the organisation. The Development Director is equal with the other two directors, responsible for capacity building,

outreach and continuous learning. Implementing our ambitious programme of Equally European means that the Development Director will also carry out our “Equaliser” capacity building programme.

The Artistic Director is in charge of the artistic programme in line with our artistic vision and overall concept. She’s also responsible for cultural European and international exchanges within budget constraints. While the Artistic Director works formally under the CEO, she has the necessary artistic freedoms to implement a visionary programme of artistic excellence.

The Administrative Director will be responsible for communications, finance, administration and sales. The duties also include regional cooperation and risk management, among other responsibilities.

## Q31/32

## Organisational structure at management level and recruiting staff

The organisational structure is divided into three levels: the strategic, supervising, and operational.

### STRATEGIC LEVEL

The strategic level consists of the Foundation Board and the CEO. The CEO has the final responsibility of global leadership reporting to the Foundation Board.

**KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:** The Foundation Board nominates the CEO, approves the overall vision and strategy, monitors the projects’ progress, controls the budget and advises the CEO and directors. The CEO acts independently of the Foundation Board within the approved strategy constraints and supervises and implements the overall vision and strategy of ECoC.

**APPROPRIATE SKILLS:** strong evidence of large-scale management experience in international operating environments and networks, good leadership and communication skills and the ability to think strategically – and also a cultural and creative mind-set.

### SUPERVISING LEVEL

The supervising level is divided into three sections that are closely working together. Each section is led by a Director. The designated directors take responsibility and will report developments to the CEO.

**KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:** The Directors of the supervising level participate in strategic planning and supervise the implementation of vision and strategy. The supervising level sets the annual targets and budgets and is in charge of hiring staff. The Artistic Director plays the key role in implementing the Cultural Programme and its artistic vision. The Development Director fosters outreach and on-going learning and the Administrative Director ensures regional and international communication, administration and sales.

**APPROPRIATE SKILLS:** high-level experience in their respective fields in international contexts, advanced leadership and communication skills to inspire, and the ability to think strategically and creatively on an operational level.



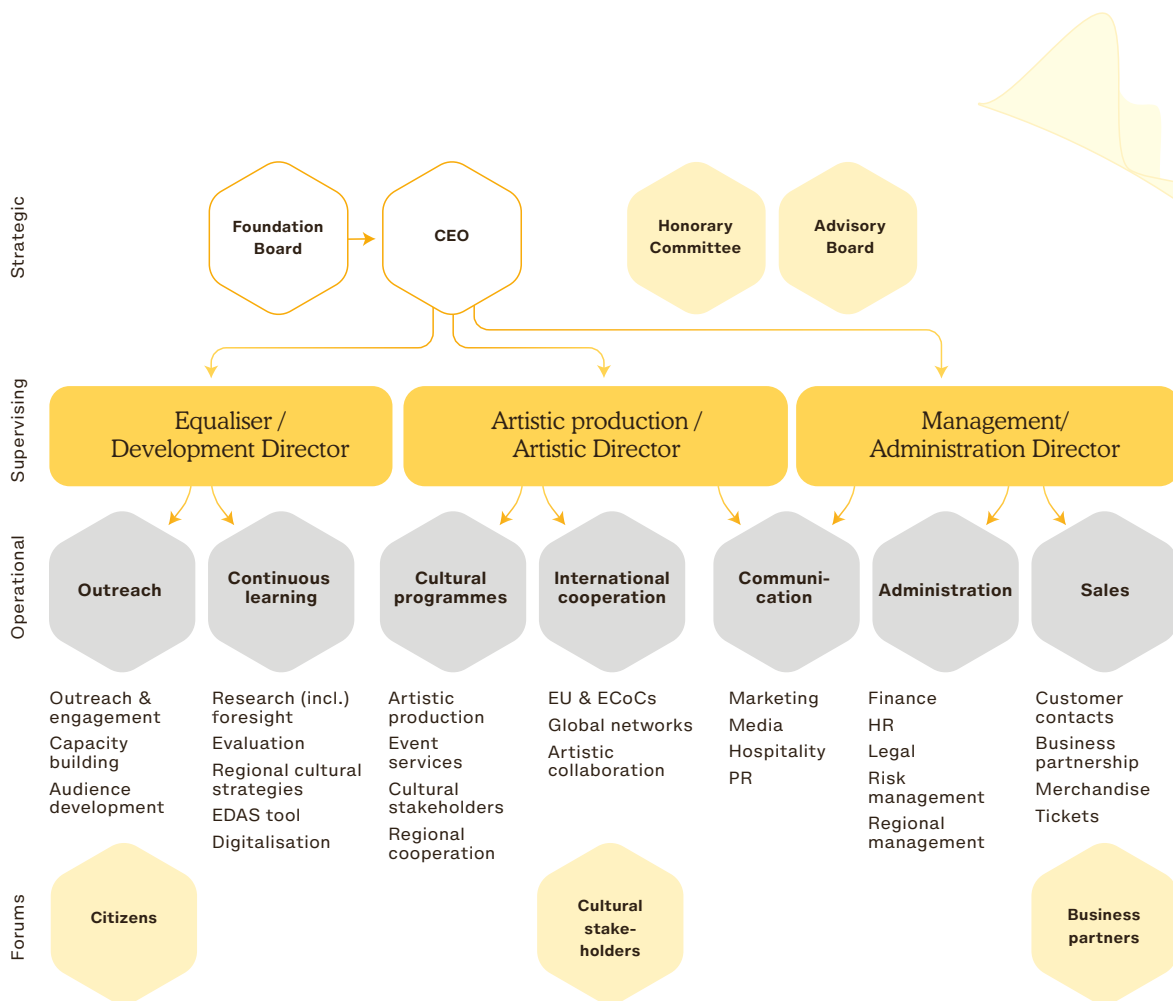
## OPERATIONAL LEVEL

The operational level consists of seven teams, each led by a designated team leader who reports developments to the director of the corresponding section. The staffing for team leaders starts after the nomination of the CEO and Artistic, Development and Administrative Directors in 2022.

**KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:** Each team leader manages and coordinates the operative workflow of their own team, supervising the planning and implementation of action plans and leads the cooperation with stakeholders and subcontractors. The coordinators, curators and producers will implement the developed action plans.

**APPROPRIATE SKILLS:** versatile experience in their respective field as well as in project or programme management, advanced leadership and communication skills, creative problem solving skills and international experience and networks. The coordinators, curators and producers need advanced experience in their field and should have the ability to motivate their team, have a systematic way of thinking, driven by a cultural and creative mind-set.

**STAFF:** The operational level includes one leader per team as well as full time producers, coordinators and curators, in total 20–25 full time employees. The artistic programme has the largest staff, summing up to around 50% of the overall operational level staff. National and international interns and volunteers bring additional input, outside perspectives and further knowledge to the production work.





## Q33 Cooperation between Tampere, the municipalities, and the Tampere26 Foundation

A solid base for cooperation has been created already during the bidding phase when the ECoC team belonged to the city of Tampere organisation. Regular forums and meetings with participating municipalities and our regional coordinator ensure that the municipalities are strongly involved in the plans and are fairly represented in our overall vision, reflecting all participating municipalities. This involvement has been formally approved by all the city and municipality

councils of the participating municipalities. Our key values in cooperation are transparency, participation and effective communication to ensure a continuing smooth partnership. Members of local authorities will be represented in the boards and forums, acting as liaisons between the foundation and local authorities – enabling the participation of municipalities in decision making as well as in shaping our common cultural atmosphere.

## Q34 Appointment of the CEO and Artistic Director and their fields of action

The recruiting process will start soon after Tampere26 foundation's establishment in 2021. The CEO and the three Director positions will be advertised internationally and filled via open recruitment process in

2022. To follow our vision of Equally European we strongly emphasise the identification and the willingness to sustainably develop our future in all hiring procedures.

	CEO	Artistic Director
<b>Field of Action</b>	As the executive decision making body, the CEO will be responsible for the overall implementation of the Tampere26 project and its vision and mission.	The Artistic Director is responsible for implementing the artistic programme of Tampere26 and is in charge of artistic decision making.
<b>Profile</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strong evidence of large scale management expertise in an international operating environment</li> <li>• experienced in planning and implementing of complex projects</li> <li>• convincing leadership qualities and communication skills</li> <li>• broad national and international networks</li> <li>• strategic oriented thinking</li> <li>• cultural mindset and experience</li> <li>• stress tolerance and team player</li> <li>• genuine identification with the concept of equality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strong evidence of high level international artistic programme expertise</li> <li>• experienced in planning and implementing large scale artistic projects</li> <li>• inspiring leadership personality and excellent communication skills</li> <li>• broad international network</li> <li>• advanced understanding of digital developments and interdisciplinarity</li> <li>• creative and development oriented thinking</li> <li>• stress tolerance and team player</li> <li>• genuine identification with the concept of equality</li> </ul>
<b>Appointed by</b>	Foundation Board	CEO
<b>Designation</b>	Relying on an international open call, the CEO will be designated in early 2022.	Relying on an international open call, the Artistic Director will be designated in early 2022.



# Q35/36

## Risk assessment and mitigating measures

After a precise analysis of internal strengths and challenges as well as external threats and precautions during the first phase, we're now building on our experience to further identify the risks related to our

cultural programme, our international cooperation and the ability to engage our broad and diverse local and European audiences and stakeholders. Being aware of potential threats enables us to counteract in time.

### RISKS

### MITIGATING MEASURES

#### CULTURAL PROGRAMME QUALITY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Poor perception of projects in terms of quality, not fitting to overall vision and reaching only specific target audiences	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of specific selection criteria for programme planning according to theme, reach and quality</li> <li>Broad cultural programme targeting all citizens of the region as well as visitors</li> </ul>
Lack of engagement of European artists and European partners	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Future staff experienced in handling international relations</li> <li>Already agreed partnerships, like ACCAC Global, international cultural institutions and previous and sister ECoCs, will be strengthened throughout the next years and new ones further developed</li> <li>Cultural projects build on international exchange and artistic cooperation</li> </ul>
Unable to communicate to a broad and diverse local audience as well as beyond Finnish borders to attract and engage international audiences	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hiring of internationally minded staff who understand the regional focus as well as our European and international dimension</li> <li>Broad marketing activities including international cultural partners, conscious European influencers, cooperation with national tourism boards and international media</li> <li>Enabling digital participation for people unable or unwilling to travel</li> </ul>
Insufficient capacity and expertise of local stakeholders to implement planned events, and a poor quality of projects submitted through open calls	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broad capacity building programme including workshops, webinars and European exchange</li> <li>On-going knowledge exchange with previous ECoCs and European partners and experts</li> <li>Close cooperation with universities and local IT sectors</li> <li>Designated ECoC producers to assist the project development process as advisors</li> </ul>

#### REGIONAL PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Lack of motivation and engagement of our local and regional public	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong outreach and audience development strategy reaching broad public including youth, elderly, families, immigrants, sceptics and enthusiasts throughout the region</li> <li>Close cooperation with schools, universities, adult education, social organizations, sport clubs and communities</li> <li>Sufficient resources for communication, marketing and engaging activities</li> </ul>
Unequal participation possibilities according to demographic aspects, diverse abilities, mobility and financial resources	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EDAS Tool to translate important steps of inclusion and accessibility to local and international stakeholders</li> <li>Projects empowering youth, seniors, people with different abilities and new Tampereans to engage and volunteer</li> <li>Active Passport, Youth Passport and free entries</li> </ul>
Dissatisfaction among regional municipalities and their citizens about not being equally represented in the programme, loss of regional support and commitment	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional coordinator as spokesperson to engage municipalities in programme planning and decision making</li> <li>Political support secured at early stage including contracts, financial commitments and legal bindings</li> <li>Cultural programme taking place throughout the region</li> </ul>



#### MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

Unable to build a functioning organization for a diverse and international project and not being prepared for unexpected changes	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning from previous ECoCs and international ECoC experts</li> <li>• Careful selection of staff according to specific criteria and experience</li> <li>• Temporary solutions for unexpected changes and clear back up plans</li> <li>• Clear responsibilities and open information sharing and communication to keep everyone on the same track</li> </ul>
Changes of interest due to political leadership	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal agreements signed at early stage</li> <li>• Organizational structure does not allow political influence and avoids any influence of personal interests</li> <li>• Informative sessions and transparent exchange to show positive effects of culture and the genuine engagement of all participating municipalities</li> </ul>
Difficulties to apply for EU funding and to attract sufficient funds from the private sector	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-going webinars, workshops and additional hiring of funding experts as well as close cooperation with experienced city authorities</li> <li>• Private funding strategy includes creative sponsor packages fitting to overall theme</li> </ul>
Image problems and bad publicity	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital campaigns and broad media relations with public and private, marginal and boulevard media</li> <li>• Transparent communication approach</li> <li>• Hiring of PR spokesperson and experienced staff to handle unforeseen situations and crisis management</li> <li>• Careful selection of private sponsors fitting to our overall vision and concept to avoid external image threats</li> </ul>

#### EVENT SAFETY AND BLACK SWANS

Pandemic	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparing for digital events and enabling digital participation in close cooperation with local universities</li> <li>• Informative sessions on how to remain flexible and how to adapt to digital new ways of cultural offerings</li> <li>• Health safety taken into account in programme planning as well as capacity building</li> </ul>
Negative event impacts on the environment	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acting according to green event checklists and in close cooperation with environmental organisations</li> <li>• Projects creating environmental awareness</li> <li>• Choosing Sub-contractors according to shared environmental values</li> </ul>
Event safety	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event security measures as well as hygiene concepts in use at all events</li> <li>• Crowd management, visitor management and accessibility checklists in use</li> <li>• Development of incident plans and risk plans</li> <li>• Data specialists and digitalization experts involved to ensure data security and assurance of sufficient resources and know-how of local stakeholders</li> </ul>

#### LEGACY

Being unable to utilise the ECoC year in the long run, to change the cultural life of the city and region as well as the ability to attract future funds	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-going audience development programme including new art education paths</li> <li>• New capacity developed to produce culture, create international partnerships and apply for future funds</li> <li>• 2026 to increase the perception of culture in administrative offices as well as in private sectors to ensure continuing cultural support</li> <li>• Newly developing cultural infrastructure</li> <li>• ECoC to strengthen the local cultural scene and to develop new jobs in the creative industries</li> </ul>
Unable to change attitudes toward an equal and inclusive future of our broad national and international audiences	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of EDAS Tool and enabling it for international use</li> <li>• Cultural programme focusing on creating awareness and embracing our differences</li> <li>• Close international cooperation bringing accessible culture and art to international audiences</li> </ul>
Insufficient implementation of evaluation findings to further improve the region and the well-being of its citizens	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long-term evaluation planned until 2032 and on-going monitoring process and presentation of findings as well as utilizing these in development actions</li> </ul>

**Q37**

Artistic programme summed up by a slogan

- EQUALLY EUROPEAN -



## Q38/39

### Marketing and communication strategy for Equally European

*A year of surprises, encounters and co-creation, bringing diverse communities together for new narratives about our city and region, based on our shared history but dedicated to the future of Equally European Tampere.*

Our marketing and communication strategy is based on our vision, our ambitious aim for a future of equality, diversity and accessibility. We focus on telling individual stories of our diverse communities, neighbours and European friends.

**Who are we at the moment?** We're a region suffering from brain drain, from low work-related immigration and hiding – at least brand-wise – in the shadow of Finland's capital. We try to become international but are not yet daring enough. We have rich post industrial heritage, a growing cultural infrastructure, yet we're still rough around the edges and searching our identity. We have stunning nature and creative talent, yet we aren't ready to open up to the unknown.

**How do we want people to see us?** We want to be known as a region that helped to break down the barriers in cultural participation, physical and mental. We want to reach out and cross over without prejudice – fusing knowledge and art, community involvement and bold sparks of creativity. And we want to be seen as a vibrant city, surrounded by a diverse region full of creativity and natural beauty.

**Who do we wish to join our work?** We want to reach a diverse public: cultural enthusiasts, new Tampereans, sport fanatics, edgy ones, the ones living in rural areas and the ones who remain sceptical. We want to reach our European neighbours: the ones from near and far, the ones looking for authentic experiences, for sustainable travel solutions as well as creative encounters.

Our communication goals are to encourage our diverse public as well as our visitors to participate, engage and co-create. To create a feeling of togetherness, a new European identity and to challenge our thinking of accessibility and diversity. Through analogue and digital platforms we'll share discussions, engage and work together on becoming **Equally European**.

Communication and marketing are not something added on top of a cultural programme but a part of our artistic concept. Reaching our diverse international audiences calls for diverse communication tools and new innovations. Our legacy will be to keep our diverse audiences with us and to expand them on a global level towards and beyond 2026. Through innovative cultural experiments and spontaneous artistic encounters in our daily lives we'll reach culture lovers and the ones still sceptical.

#### OUR KEY TRAITS

**SUSTAINABLE** – We use sustainable marketing materials, eco-friendly yet socially relevant.

**ACCESSIBLE** – Our marketing activities reach out to diverse audiences across the region and beyond. We adapt our activities to all needs and different abilities.

**INCLUSIVE** – We advocate two-way communication to include our diverse communities by providing broad content and honest engagement.

**EXCITING** – Our marketing is exciting, relevant and engaging – and our European story is about overcoming social divides and becoming Equally European.

Currently, we're rethinking our **visual identity** to represent our region in an innovative and attractive way, and to grow Tampere26 into a brand. The preparations for 2026 and the projects will be accompanied by professional photographers and video artists. Such high quality marketing content will be used to promote Tampere26 and will end up in an artistic after movie to be shared at home and abroad – easily identified by our newly developed visual identity.

Also, our vision of equality doesn't end at marketing. On the contrary, our communication materials will be translated into various languages, including sign language and special sound and visual editions – to make it more accessible for our diverse world.



## STRATEGY AND CHANNELS

**DIGITAL MARKETING AND SOCIAL MEDIA:** Our digital communication activities focus on being present wherever our target audiences are. We use several social media channels on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Clubhouse and TikTok, and we're ready for the ones which will pop up during the next few years. We invite conscious European influencers and podcast hosts working on themes such as inclusion, sustainability and equality to tell their stories and to create new European stories connecting us. These influencers work with us in several media workshops with our youth, and they'll be invited to join our cultural programme, to participate physically or digitally, and to create authentic contents on cultural, social and environmental themes.

**DIGITAL APPLICATION:** an interactive channel and app *Tampere.Finland* offers community features, promotes sustainable living, shows our carbon footprint and presents hidden treasures in the city as well as public transportation routes. While the app is already in use (with 70k users) we're developing it further as an event calendar, a map for design, culture and lake routes, and as a platform to meet people in projects such as **Culture Companion**.

**URBAN MARKETING:** Even though we can transcend our borders through digital communication, we also need off-line connections. Using tested methods from guerrilla and urban marketing in the streets of Pirkanmaa, we generate public enthusiasm for the ECoC year. In pop-up cultural encounters in cooperation with our local artists and their sound and visual installations we will create attention. The urban artists of *Spraycankontrol* will create street art in the region introducing our vision, and *Sorin Sirkus* will bring artists to culturally less active areas in the cities and will inform about our volunteering opportunities.

We also use urban marketing across the country. For example in trains going from Helsinki to Rovaniemi, at Helsinki and Kittilä airports and at harbours where ships are leaving to Russia, Sweden, Estonia and Germany.

**MARKETING ABROAD:** Through cooperation with previous ECoCs and various international cultural institutions, we're able to bring our cultural programme to Europe and beyond, already before 2026. **Reflection**

**on a Forest** takes Finnish video art to Paris and New York, **Dance @Station 4.0** brings contemporary dance to European train stations and Sorin Sirkus will tour through Europe to promote and intermix different art forms. **ACCAC Global** enables us to share our vision and attract a diverse audience throughout Europe, but also Asia, South America and Africa. The organisation allows us also to be present in the inclusive art festival in 2021 in Paris, and the accessibility congress in 2022 in Nepal.

**COMMUNICATION PARTNERSHIPS:** A close cooperation has been developed with the regional and national tourism boards **Visit Tampere** and **Visit Finland**. Both platforms offer wide networks of businesses from nature and culture experiences to live streamed performances, allowing us to be represented through various communication channels. Our communication activities also include direct cooperation with our regional gastronomy and hospitality sector. By offering marketing workshops, briefings and constant exchange, we create tailored cultural packages for the diverse audiences of our various operators. Our cultural programme as well as capacity building activities include strong partnerships with local universities. By working closely with study programmes such as *Sustainable Digital Life* we create further digital platforms for participation and co-creation which will increase our reach and create international cultural encounters without being physically present.

Additionally, we will use communication channels of regional cultural institutions, the city and municipality itself as well as the channels of our public libraries and international library network.

## MEDIA COLLABORATIONS

Our vision needs attention to create a lasting impact – and our communication strategy builds on strong media partnerships. We've developed close collaborations with **Aamulehti**, the second biggest daily Finnish newspaper based in Tampere (now part of the same media corporation with Helsingin Sanomat, our biggest newspaper in Finland) and the free city paper **Tamperelainen** – both having covered our ECoC action throughout the process. With five newspapers and two radio stations, **Pirmediat Oy** will monitor and report our ECoC action in diverse media. The Helsinki-based alternative radio station **Radio Helsinki** will also do long-term reporting of Tampere26 – a great partner



for social and philosophical discussions, subculture and diverse events taking place in Radio Helsinki's G Livelab cultural venue in Tampere.

While YLE, the Finnish Public Broadcasting Company, will collaborate with any Finnish ECoC, it has three cooperation projects going on with the city of Tampere, and these will be used to market Tampere as ECoC: 1) a jointly arranged annual national Cultural Gala in Tampere; 2) Children's Media World to be built in the Särkänniemi Amusement Park; 3) A co-creative Media Lab for future innovations, together with the city and Tampere University. We also plan to offer 365 **Windows**

**to Europe** to Finnish homes through the online TV streaming service YLE Areena.

Among cultural journals, we've developed magazine partnerships with **Episodi** (film), **Parnasso** (literature), **Taide-lehti** (visual arts), **Tanssi-lehti** (dance), **Teatteri-lehti** (theatre) and **Tulva** (feminism). We also cooperate with Tampere based design magazine **DOT**, with the Finnish art magazine **FAT Finnish Art Today**, the regional cultural platform **Kulttuuritoimitus.fi** and **Big Issue**. From 2021 onwards, we'll also establish partnerships with various international media, for example through the Finnish News Agency Tampere (with 65000 recipients).



## Q40 Mobilising our own citizens as communicators of the year to the outside world

*Creating a spark of curiosity and offering engaging marketing activities will mobilize our public to become communicators. Our programme engages diverse citizens and our marketing activities will do the same.*

**THE COMMUNITY PLATFORM:** Imagine you see a screen in the main street inviting you to take a picture of a red shirt. The next day you see a message in *Tampere.Finland* inviting you to capture something yellow. Finally, you can see a 3D video including all the flags of EU member states which are built from the pictures that people have sent. It can be seen on

every social media channel and on our giant video screen at the market square. This user-generated content involves every visitor's input and is a vital piece in our shared European Culture Capital 2026 journey.

The community platform will also serve as a public discussion space, enabling European conversations on an equal and a sustainable future. Questions and answers about our endangered values will be collected through an online app and showcased on digital screens and billboards, spread throughout Finland and participating European cities.



**MEDIA TAKEOVER:** Our social media channels will be taken over by local ambassadors such as Sorin Sirkus, by ice skating and ice hockey athletes, by various artists, by cultural institutions and by our diverse communities. Their content includes favourite city spots, their programme picks, but also current topics on equality, sustainability and our diverse society.

**IDEA GENERATING WORKSHOPS:** By offering media workshops for our youth we want to strengthen design thinking and media competence. Accompanied by European conscious influencers and media and design experts, we encourage our youth to think critically about the influential power of social media and encourage content creation instead of consumption only. In cooperation with our local educational institutes we invite our national and international students to produce innovative ways to spread our common message and create awareness for our European challenges.

**MEET A LOCAL:** Our visitors to meet new people and to experience tailor-made city tours as well as cultural

activities which result in authentic personal encounters. In cooperation with our local tourism services and our broad volunteer programmes, Meet a local is developed as a unique offering from citizens for national and international visitors.

**OPEN CALLS AND DESIGN COMPETITIONS:** Through future open calls and design competitions for innovative ECoC merchandise, we'll foster pride and enthusiasm in our citizens and visitors. With the great talents of our citizens we create a special designed **ECoC flag of Equality** and information stalls, enabling local designers to co-create the visibility of our project across the region and beyond.

Our artistic programme is full of engaging experiences people will want to talk about. The involvement of citizens and visitors as co-creators and decision makers in projects such as **Guerrilla Lights** or **Two Cities** will develop a sense of ownership and pride. Thus we trust in word-of-mouth marketing next to our marketing strategy.

## **Q41** Highlighting ECoC as an action of the European Union

The EU is not only a marketing issue for us; it is the focus of many of our projects (for example, **EU Challenge, (Pub)lic Science**). The European values of equality and freedom are at the core of our action.

Broad international exchange across the full cultural spectrum, engaging citizens and visitors will create a feeling of being part of something bigger, something that goes beyond our borders. Our programme of **Equally European** starts conversations on our respective roles in the on-going process of making of European identities.

If we receive the **Melina Mercouri Prize**, we'll use it to fund cultural operators following our values. *Imaginative, Equal and Accessible Arts Fund* would fund in 2025–2035 sustainable cultural productions and cross-cultural artistic work. One half of the activities would support international residencies, and the other half artistic productions and performances.

The EU will figure in our visual communications as well. Regional information stalls and merchandise will be designed by local professionals with EU elements. Our special ECoC flag of Equality includes the EU symbols and will be flown across the region at all participating cultural institutions and organisations. The EU will also feature in our after-movie, widely available as future marketing material, and our user-generated EU member flag will also lend public visibility to the EU.

We'll revise our cooperation also when welcoming European guests of honour to our venues. Teams of previous and future ECoCs as well as our sister ECoC from Slovakia will be invited to Tampere in 2026, including the celebration of the title handover. After the festivities, we'll also meet face-to-face over informal brainstorming sessions to strengthen our relationships after an era of online meetings. These discussions will be open for local cultural operators and our diverse public.



## Q42 Political support and commitment from the relevant authorities

The City Councils of Tampere and our main partner Mänttä-Vilppula have unanimously decided to commit to the European Capital of Culture project between 2021–2027, both economically and operationally. A solid base for the cooperation has been created already during the bidding phase when the ECoC team belonged to the city of Tampere organisation and involved a wide range of departments. The other 18 municipal partners have made council-level decisions to commit to the ECoC project.

The European Capital of Culture project is part of the Tampere City Strategy and the Tampere Mayoral Programme – integrating culture more closely than

ever to city development. As a high priority development programme, it is steered by the Tampere City Board and including an advisory board led by the Mayor of Tampere since 2019. The advisory board consists of all major local cultural organisations, mayors of municipal partners, representatives from the business sector and leading third sector organisations.

The economic development agency of the Tampere region Business Tampere Ltd, Tampere's tourism and marketing organisation Visit Tampere Ltd, and Tampere Chamber of Commerce and Industry have all committed to close partnerships and to advancing the ECoC project together.

## Q43 Infrastructure projects, their planned timetables and links with ECoC action

This table shows the ongoing and upcoming infrastructure projects (as well as two projects completed between the bidding phases) most pertinent to our Equally European action. While the partnering

municipalities of Pirkanmaa also have various infrastructure investments for 2021–2026, the following table focuses on Tampere with a couple of selected examples from the region:

Project	Planned timetable	Description	Budget (M€)	Links with Equally European
COMPLETED CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE BETWEEN BIDDING PHASES				
Nokia: Culture Centre and library	2020	A new Culture Centre and a public library	11,5	Illuminated Land, Cities at Rapids
Lempäälä: Lempäälä Hall	2020	Community hall with a library, exhibitions, concerts and other activities	33,3	Library of Creativity



#### CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE (ONGOING CONSTRUCTION)

Uros Live	2018–2021	Major event and concert venue, new digital platforms and businesses as part of the Five Star City Centre	9,8	Moomin on Ice, Winter Miracle, Louhi Musical, The Story of Tampere, Comedy Games Europe
Tampere Hall	2021–2016	Mixed renovation, including technical renovation of the main stage, concert and congress halls, and the Moomin Museum	4,8	Voices of Women, Carmina Jerosolymitana, Memory of Water
Pyynikki Campus for Performing Arts	2021–2025	Refurbishment of an educational centre into a campus for performing arts and a music-focused high school	30,5	Future of Working Spaces
Mänttä-Vilppula: Serlachius Art Sauna	2021–2022	An accessible sauna open for all in the Serlachius Museums premises	2,0	Europe Comes in for Sauna

#### URBAN AND REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE (ONGOING CONSTRUCTION)

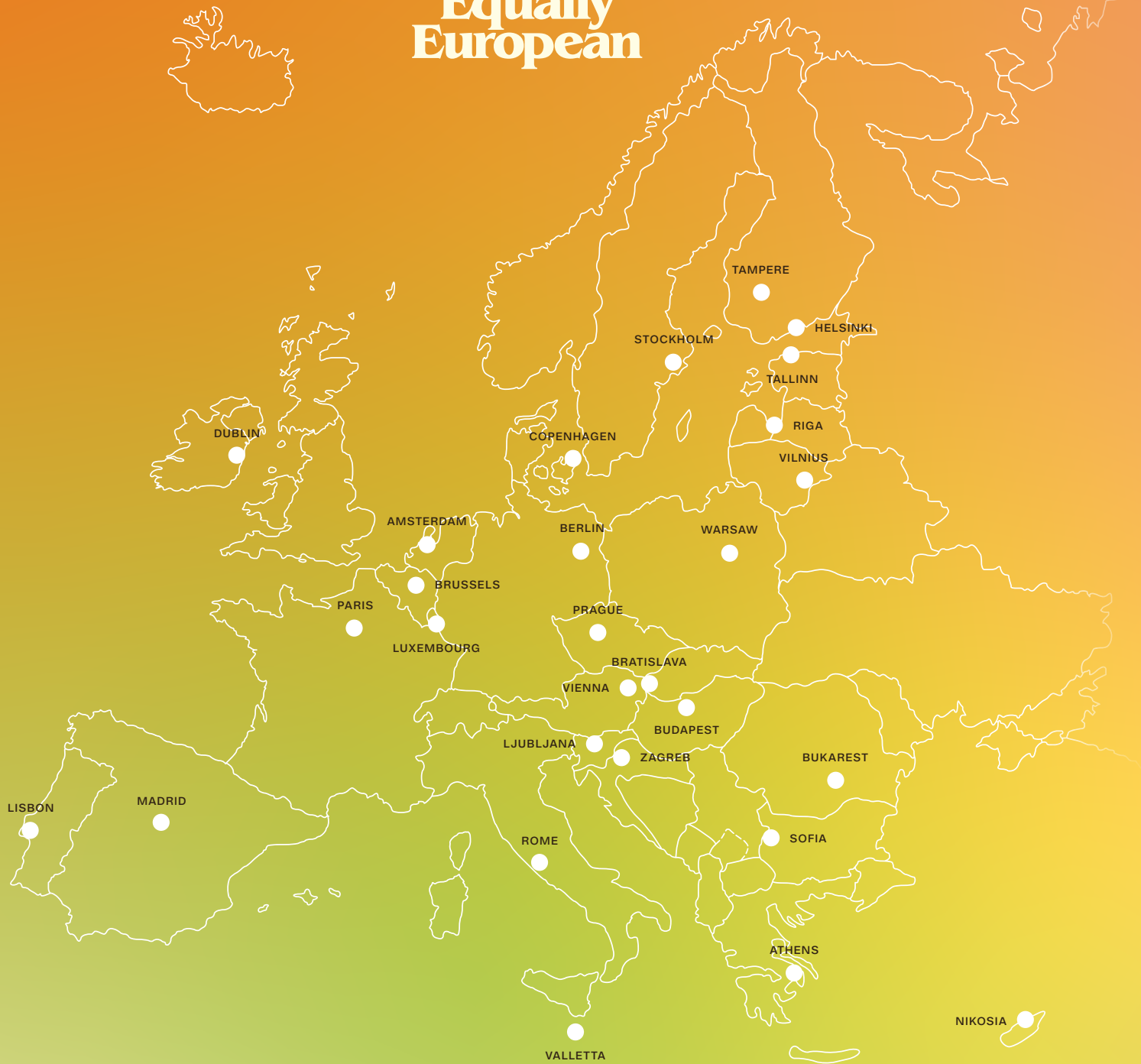
Hiedanranta	2020–2050	A refurbished city district, formerly used by heavy industry, with 21000 inhabitants, 8000 jobs and a tram connection	91	Hiedanranta Green Deal, Skate-Friendly Cities, Muralismo
Rauhaniemi sauna	2020–2022	Renovating our popular public sauna, the so-called Rauhaniemi folk spa	0,5	Europe Comes in for Sauna
Tramway	2021–2024	Most important means of public transport, pollutant free transport	313	Dance @Station 4.0, Art in Strange Places
Kauppi sports centre	2021–2022	Centre for Finnish baseball and football, recreational area	7,8	Homeless Football World Cup
Sustainable transportation and travel	2021–2030	Sustainable travel within the city by creating more routes for pedestrians and cyclists, creating more accessible travel possibilities	34,2	Europe Comes in for Sauna, Forgotten Giants

#### UPCOMING URBAN AND REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE/RENOVATION

The new Särkänniemi	2022–2030	Reshaping of the city-owned amusement park into a hub of sustainable tourism and a climate-positive area of experiences	100	Forgotten Giants
Pirkkala: Sport campus	2022–2024	Centre of different indoor sports	5	Skate-Friendly Cities
Art Centre Mäntinranta	2023–2024	Renovation of the art centre, galleries and workshops	1,5	Folk Art Tampere
Viinikanlahti	2024–2028	New wastewater treatment plant area turned into homes for 3000 inhabitants and a recreational area by the lake	27,6	Shit is Equal
Kauppahalli renovation	2024–2027	Renovation of the old market hall, enhancing business opportunities for small entrepreneurs	11	Cultural Wellbeing/Senior Power, Future of Working Spaces
Travel and service centre	2025–2030	One part of overall renovation work of the railway station area, serving trains, buses and trams throughout the city and the country	72,8	Dance @Station 4.0
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>711,5</b>	



# Equally European





# Tampere26

## EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE CANDIDATE CITY

Final selection stage bid book, 2021

### THE APPLICANT

Tampere City in partnership  
with 19 municipalities from  
Pirkanmaa: Akaa, Hämeenkyrö,  
Ikaalinen, Kangasala, Kuhmoinen,  
Lempäälä, Mänttä-Vilppula (main  
partner), Nokia, Orivesi, Parkano,  
Pirkkala, Pälkäne, Ruovesi,  
Sastamala, Urjala, Valkeakoski,  
Vesilahti, Virrat, Ylöjärvi

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