NETWORK

RECOMMENDATIONS

Subject	Recommendations of the INT-HERIT network for implementation of projects on Cultural Heritage
Network	INT-HERIT, Implementation Network
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INT-HERIT - Recommendations for Implementation

About the INT-HERIT Project

In recent years Strategic Urban Planning became a common practice in many EU cities, however, moving from strategy to implementation is not a straightforward process, thus presenting all sorts of constraints and variables that will definitely influence the final results. Implementation is an intrinsically local process that requires specific solutions for specific local constraints. To overcome these challenges, cities are looking for ways to improve their implementation processes through an integrated and participatory approach with local stakeholders.

An Implementation Network (IN) such as INT-HERIT is a new type of network created under the scope of the URBACT III programme to support cities in meeting their implementation challenges. After the success of the Action-Planning Networks (APN) in helping local authorities to co-create an integrated strategy for their cities, the logical next step of the programme was to advance into the implementation aspects of projects.

INT-HERIT aims to improve cultural heritage protection, conservation or valorisation in small to medium-sized cities in the EU. The project identified, collected and exchanged knowledge across nine small cities with common challenges on how to manage their cultural heritage. New smart, low cost initiatives are being implemented in these cities to overcome current constraints by adopting an integrative and participative approach towards stakeholders. A knowledge base on implementation was published online showcasing different approaches across participating cities and what particular details and common features were discovered.

This document provides an insight over the recommendations that come out of the network knowledge exchange process, both from the local perspective (through the ULG members) and from the sharing of knowledge and experiences during the transnational activities (meetings and visits) implemented throughout the project. It's a contribution of the network for a European knowledge base that will hopefully help to tune current EU and local policies for a better management of cultural heritage, trying to overcome some of their sustainability issues while raising the returns and value created for the community.

Strategy vs Implementation

Strategy is of course a fundamental tool for policy making. It provides a vision and guidelines to build the action plan for implementation. In a perfect world, this would be a straightforward process but in the real world passing from strategy to an operational plan is always a sinuous path to find funding and overcome all the constraints of the local context. This is particularly true in small cities where the lack of resources and operational capacity tends to stall projects for years. However, you should not be stalled for years waiting for things to be solved. You have to keep agile while complying with the legal framework of public procurement.

Building an Implementation Framework

The INT-HERIT network developed an integrated, holistic and structured approach to implementation which could help cities to tackle some of the challenges they're facing in current and future projects. Each city developed an Operational Implementation Framework (OIF), a document condensing the way they tackle those challenges and the learning journey with peers to find the best solutions during project execution. The following recommendations are a result of all these different experiences and approaches, providing guidelines for other cities to build their own Implementation Framework and improve the way cultural heritage is identified, assessed, managed, monitored and communicated. This document is therefore a product of the collaborative efforts of the cities participating in the network and the thematic experts that were involved in some key activities.

A Sustainability Problem

A common concern in any city is how to assure the sustainability of projects. Available funds provide the financial capacity to move projects forward but they cannot provide knowledge or solutions on how to turn them sustainable, leaving municipalities with the difficult task of finding ways to explore the

multiple dimensions of development projects around cultural heritage. This model of financing projects usually leads to a situation where municipalities have to assume all operational and maintenance costs that can rapidly grow to unbearable figures for their budgets. This means that in this model there is a limited number of projects they can promote before running out of resources.

However, due to several factors such as a lack of critical mass, of resources, etc, small to medium-sized cities struggle to reach sustainability in cultural heritage projects. It's not just a matter of money, as regional, national and EU funds have always given attention and support to projects around cultural heritage due to the obvious importance of keeping our common heritage for future generations. It's also a matter of giving a good use to the buildings or areas to be rehabilitated, manage efficiently the allocated resources, promote entrepreneurship and related businesses (namely in the tourism sector) and explore the spillovers of the project such as changes in the involvement of citizens and their perception of the cultural heritage of their own cities, to name a few.

This limitation leads to a paradox where municipalities can get the money to renovate or rehabilitate the sites but not enough money to keep them operating and so have to drop their revitalization. This is particularly important in small to medium-sized cities where resources are usually scarce and the chances to reach sustainability are hampered by the lack of critical mass in the city to make them viable. At the European and national level of historical cities, the need for a new management approach in the field of integrated urban development has already been recognized (see for example the results and recommendations of HerO Project - URBACT II), in order to unlock the potential of cultural heritage to be widely transformed into benefits for the territory.

A SUSTAINABILITY PROBLEM

This can be summarized in the following topics:

- **USE**: How to return buildings and spaces to public use?

- **COST**: The more you rehabilitate the more operational costs you'll have

- **MISMATCH:** public offer and citizens' demand are divergent

Cultural Heritage as a development tool

Cultural heritage plays an important role in any city strategy. It is well recognized as one of the best tools in promoting social and economic development as well as to build a sense of community among citizens. This is particularly true in small historical cities where cultural heritage has an important weight in the local economy. However, several factors such as lack of funding, lack of expertise, etc, are preventing these cities to fully exploit its potential, limiting the capacity to valorise these important assets.

Cultural heritage projects are usually planned and implemented in a kind of closed box where all decisions are taken by a closed group of people typically including the staff from the city council and several professionals as architects, urbanists, experts in heritage, etc. In order to advance into a more collaborative system, cities need to break this 'box' and do the linkage with the "outside world" where citizens associations, the private sector and other entities can interact and this way build a collaborative and integrated approach to projects. It's like opening that "closed box" and building a multi-connected node where the diverse relations with the outside world are analysed, exploited and measured to promote social and economic transformation.

The need for a new management approach in urban development is necessary to unlock the potential of cultural heritage and create returns for the local community and its territory. To develop this concept, INT-HERIT explored the following 5 dimensions to build in each city an integrated and participative approach to cultural heritage management as shown in the following chart:
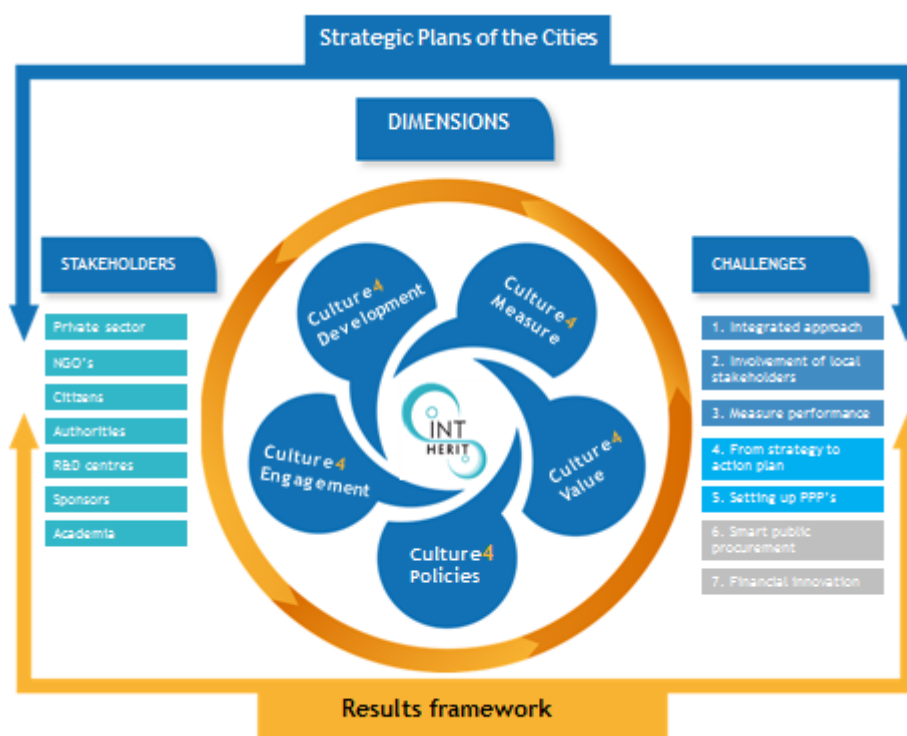
Figure 1: The five dimensions of Cultural Heritage Management

On the left side of the chart we can find the stakeholders and on the right side the proposed challenges to be addressed, while in the middle there is this moving wheel of dimensions that partners explored throughout the project to bring their strategic plans into action plans and build a results framework to shoe advances.

An Implementation Framework

In this sense, we looked in particular for initiatives and actions that go beyond the conservation works in a strict sense and targeted one of the five Implementation Challenges initially identified. Here's some insight of the problems and solutions proposed by participating cities.

Policy objectives	Tools	Results
Transparency	Build a shared vision	Agile governance
Openness	New Governance models	Constructive Dialogue
Collaboration	Civic participation tools (events, methods)	Social returns for the community
Shared ownership		Economic returns for the city (residents and visitors)
Multi-dimensional	Activation of local networks (stakeholder analysis; ULG meetings)	
International Cooperation		Promotion of cultural heritage related entrepreneurship
	Implementation Checklists	
		Measuring performance
Evaluation	Transnational visits	
		Better communication with residents and visitors
	Storytelling to communicate the identity of the places	
	Monitoring system	

HORIZONTAL & VERTICAL INTEGRATION

INTEGRATED APPROACH

COLLABORATION

is the key to successfully tackle and achieve complex processes; establishing a collaborative environment with proper channels.

STAKEHOLDERS ANALYSIS

is important to understand **who** you want to engage first and **why**, otherwise the result could be counterproductive.

CO-GOVERNANCE MULTILEVEL GOVERNANCE

using a bottom-up approach in decision making and putting ownership and co-governance together through shared knowledge.

PROJECT INTEGRATION

to maximize the impacts and sustainability of projects and build synergies among them through cross-departmental cooperation.

Examples:

LEIEDAL	ESPINHO
The TRANSFO site integrated approach: vertical and horizontal integration in a new governance model.	Cross-project integration in Espinho: the case of "Castro de Ovil" Archaeological Site and ReCaFe centre revitalization projects.
Video (click the image)	Video (click the image)
Solution Story:	Solution Story:
https://www.int-herit.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Leiedal_Solution_Story.pdf	https://www.int-herit.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Espinho_Solution_Story.pdf

STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGEMENT

INVOLVEMENT OF LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS

- People want to engage but don't know **HOW**

- Show people the potential to **CREATE VALUE** and promote **CHANGE**

- Engage people through **PASSION**;

- Give them a sense of **PURPOSE**.

- Effective co-creation is built on **TRUST**

- Empowerment brings also **RESPONSIBILITY**

- Share **OWNERSHIP** of heritage with residents

- Build a **COLLABORATIVE** environment

TRUST	**CONTINUITY**
Build trust between city officials and stakeholders by showing that their opinion matters and rewarding their participation; inform of the advances; effective co-creation is built on trust and responsibility.	To achieve continuity, engage people in policymaking and show them the potential to create value and promote change; empowerment brings also responsibility.
TRANSPARENCY	**EDUCATION**
Transparency of processes and information exchange builds trust; it is important to share information among citizens about the policy / decision making process, explain advances but also what went wrong.	Increase awareness and knowledge of heritage among students; engage students in volunteering schemes of conservation and valorisation; build a sense of community across generations.

Examples

CAHORS	BAENA
A pilot project to boost civic participation in the rehabilitation of the city old centre: the revitalization of the Château-du-Roi Street. Video (click the image) Solution Story: https://www.int-herit.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Cahors_Solution_Story.pdf	A participatory approach towards cultural heritage management: the case of the Castle of Baena and Torreparedones archaeological site. Video (click the image) Solution Story: https://www.int-herit.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Baena_Solution_Story.pdf

Monitoring & Evaluation

MEASURING PERFORMANCE

EVALUATE

Evaluation is critical to monitor changes in the city and to build a knowledge base of implementation to improve future projects; don't go for complex systems; start with a few indicators and evolve from there.

COMMUNICATE

Communicate your achievements; show citizens which services were created, why; try crowdsourcing to get feedback; don't communicate complex projects, it will switch people off. Show small meaningful projects.

CITIZEN SENSING

People want their voice to be heard, and when their opinion matters they will be more engaged and collaborative; get feedback from residents and visitors periodically.

RULES

Clear rules are the basis for an effective collaboration; co-create rules with residents and monitor difficulties and weaknesses during implementation.

Examples

MANTOVA	SIGULDA
Rules for public-private agreeements: the case of the Le Pescherie di Giulio Romano and Palazzo Te.	Measuring social and economic impacts in cultural heritage projects: promoting entrepreneurship in the Castle Complex.
Video (click the image)	Video (click the image)

Solution Story:
https://www.int-herit.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Mantova_Solution_Story.pdf

Solution Story:
https://www.int-herit.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Sigulda_Solution_Story.pdf

Final remarks

Strategy is important but cities shouldn't be stranded in designing the perfect strategy, something that usually leads to complex and unmanageable projects that small cities have difficulties to cope with. That's why it's so important that the URBACT programme keeps supporting these type of networks more focused on implementation. INT-HERIT, along with three other Implementation Networks were a sort of test bed in this first edition of this typology of URBACT networks and, as the work done is coming to an end, it is important to retrieve lessons learned and extract solutions and recommendations to feed future editions of these type of networks.

No doubt that the proposed challenges were pertinent and provide useful guidelines to promote change in the cities but, at the same time, it was difficult to translate them into the everyday practical problems that small cities have to face while implementing their action plans. Some concepts were hard to grasp by partners particularly at the beginning of the project but, as the works went forward (through capacity building session, workshops, visits, transnational and ULG's meetings), these ideas started to consolidate and now at the end it is clear that cities were able to create an Operational Implementation Framework that is not only relevant for improving current actions but also to build a knowledge base future implementation plans can rely on.

Trust, **agility** and **pragmatism** were some of the key words most mentioned throughout the project, stating the importance to build **trust** with stakeholders to achieve proper collaboration ('stakeholders management' should be at the core of any implementation team strategy), **agility** to keep moving on despite local constraints (e.g. lack of resources, a rigid legal framework, etc) and of course some **pragmatism** in the implementation plan in order to keep it feasible (e.g. reducing complexity by breaking the plan into small and short actions that are easy to implement). This will allow cities to

capitalize on small achievements and develop a communication campaign throughout implementation to keep engaging citizens to participate in its development.

However, this requires that cities implement some level of **systematization** of processes within their teams (e.g. new governance models more flexible and collaborative, an evaluation system, etc) in order to get results. That's where INT-HERIT can help urban policies by providing Case Examples, Solution Stories and Operational Frameworks from where other cities can extract knowledge and hopefully be inspired to introduce these changes while managing cultural heritage.

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Links:

Videos - all videos of the project are published at the following link:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgAgOInUVReFeL8TZuDpfWw

Solution Stories & Case Examples can be found at the project website:

https://www.int-herit.eu/