



Our collective imagination



Montpellier
capitale
européenne
de la **Culture**
2028

Candidate city

We would like to extend our special thanks to the inhabitants of the **M28** territory, all the cultural, educational, social, economic and institutional stakeholders, the members of the Montpellier 2028 Association Board of Directors, and all those who have helped enrich our bid with their valuable contributions.

By sharing their aspirations and collective imaginations, they have enabled us to build this inclusive bid.

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Introduction

General Considerations

1 Why does your city want to enter the competition for the title of European Capital of Culture?

are a major factor: we need to imagine new ways of living, moving, working and meeting in the city. The vision of artists helps us to project ourselves into the future and unlock unexplored potential.

Making the case for culture

Our bid represents a plea for culture and the affirmation of a genuine **desire for Europe**. In the aftermath of a long health crisis that has tested the creative and heritage sectors, and at the very moment when the war in Ukraine is prompting us to show solidarity with a country fighting for its freedom and independence, we are choosing to affirm the importance and strength of Europe, and of culture as a catalyst for peace and dialogue, bringing people and places closer together.

“Making Europe”...

Faced with the temptation to withdraw into their own identity, as embodied in the lamented Brexit, we are instead defending an idea of “making Europe”, with a people-centred approach.

We defend a vision of Europe as an area of exchange and encounters, where a certain number of democratic values have historically been affirmed, as enshrined in the Treaties. It is an area that maintains a fruitful relationship with its memories and archives, and that remains driven by a certain ideal of human and social

Hospitality made Montpellier what it is: a powerfully welcoming and inventive city. But in recent years we became aware of the fragility of how we live together and of our ways of life, with conviviality playing a fundamental role. Contemporary challenges

progress; an area shaped by the dialogue it maintains with the other areas that make up our multipolar world, in particular with Africa, with which the European Union is seeking to strengthen its links. Montpellier could be the cultural capital of this relationship.

The territory of our bid is a voluntary grouping of cities combining urban and natural spaces, located on the coast of a sea shared by so many peoples and which has known so many civilisations, nestling between lagoons, canals and the foothills of one of the oldest mountain ranges in Europe.

...rising to contemporary challenges

This European plea for culture takes place in a context of weakening territories that are currently affected by various types of fractures: **civic** (democratic challenge), **ecological** (climate challenge and biodiversity), economic and social (increasing inequalities).

2 Has your city associated its surrounding area with the project? Explain this choice.

Building together

Montpellier is at the heart of a territory long marked by territorial competition. Institutional and territorial dialogue is a condition for the success of future development: sharing a language, a vision, reciprocal constraints,

experiencing possible solutions. We have therefore chosen to work together on an iterative approach, creating areas of collective experience, building a candidate territory that is representative of the real living environment of the inhabitants.

The partnership with the city of Sète and its urban area is at the origin of this cooperation. Four other neighbouring inter-communities have joined the collective dynamic: Hérault Méditerranée; Pays de Lunel; Grand Pic Saint-Loup; and Vallée de l'Hérault. Together with the Occitanie Region and the Hérault Departmental councils, 10 regional partners are founding members of the bid association.

This unprecedented gathering is our first achievement.

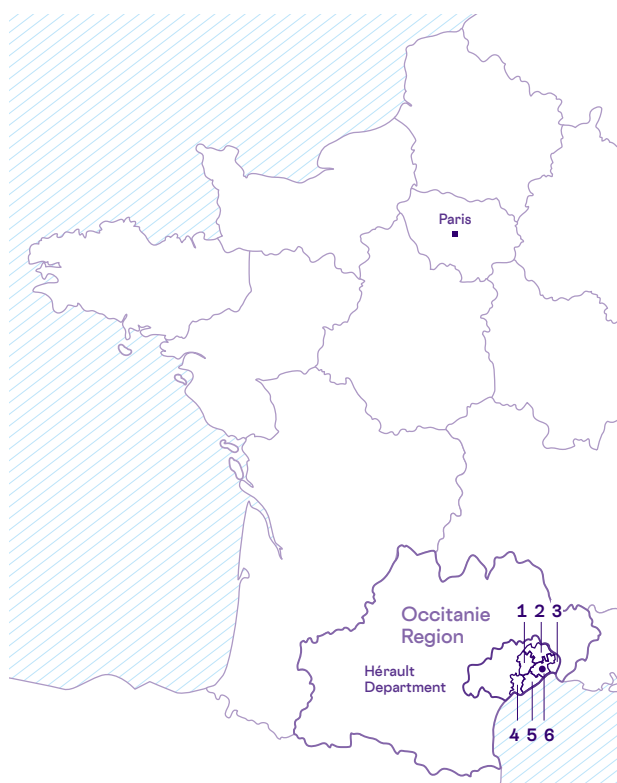
An area at the heart of major change

While our region is preparing to receive 25% of France's demographic growth over the next two decades, and the **European Green Deal** foresees the end of net greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, our local authorities are mobilising to try to (re)reconcile attractiveness and ecological imperatives (the Occitanie Region's Green Pact 2040, free public transport in Montpellier, development of cycle route continuity, soft mobility by waterways in Sète, etc.).

We believe it is essential to build and share a narrative of ecological change that allows us to move away from the logic of institutional competition and short-term visions. This is how we read the **New European Bauhaus**.

Our bid, supported by a large territory, is built on this idea.

142 municipalities and 850,000 inhabitants are thus represented in this joint cultural action.



Inter-communities

- | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 Vallée de l'Hérault | 2 Grand Pic Saint-Loup | 3 Pays de Lunel |
| 4 Hérault Méditerranée | 5 Sète Agglopôle Méditerranée | 6 Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole |

3 Briefly explain the general cultural profile of your city.

Montpellier, a cosmopolitan centre of exchange and knowledge

Montpellier is a "new" city, whose name appeared for the first time in 985, quickly asserted itself

as an important centre of knowledge and a rapidly expanding commercial crossroads. It became the gateway to spices in France and a stronghold in Europe for apothecary and perfumery activities. Under the sovereignty of the kings of Aragon and later Majorca, Montpellier experienced a golden age in the 13th and 14th centuries.

It was also during this period that the Montpellier Consulate was born, a successful experiment in communal government. In 1181, Guilhem VIII promulgated the freedom to teach medicine, regardless of one's origin or faith, just prior to the founding of the Faculty of Medicine, the oldest in the world, in 1220. This academic vocation has never wavered: Montpellier hosts two universities and numerous higher education and research establishments.

The tremendous diversity of this city, populated by students from all over the world, and mainly from Europe and Africa, echoes the tolerance of the Middle Ages. Chased out of Spain by the Almohad Caliphate, Jewish doctors were welcomed in Montpellier, as were Arab doctors. This tradition of tolerance and hospitality was revived in the last century as men and women settled here - agricultural workers from Spain, Italy and North Africa, Spanish Republicans, repatriates from Algeria, students... continuing to the present day with Afghans and Ukrainians fleeing oppression in their countries.

A pioneer territory in cultural decentralisation

Montpellier's uniqueness is also the result of an **ambitious infrastructure policy** initiated in the 1980s thanks to decentralisation, bringing a cultural breath of fresh air which enabled the establishment of national-scale venues (National Dramatic Centre, National Choreographic Centre, Regional Contemporary Art Fund, Montpellier National Opera Orchestra).

This dynamic has led to the **creation of major events** that have earned international recognition over the years (Montpellier Dance Festival, Radio France Festival, the *Comédie du Livre*, *Printemps des Comédiens*).

From the 2000s onwards, cultural development continued with the creation or extension of new facilities dedicated to public reading (a network of 14 media libraries covers the territory), fine arts, international photography, visual arts and performing arts. The recent openings of the MO.CO contemporary art centre and the Cité des Arts (regional conservatory for dance, music and theatre) further enhance this approach.

At the same time, the region is exceptionally dynamic in terms of culture: in Montpellier Metropole alone **more than 400 artistic and cultural associations** are involved in cultural creation and dissemination.

A city of youth

With 70,000 students (1 in 5 inhabitants and 10,000 international students, mainly thanks to the European Erasmus+ programme), Montpellier is a city of youth and innovation. It is home to a rich ecosystem dedicated to cultural and creative industries, numerous comic strip creators and international sports events (FISE). Street art is widely present, illustrating the constant dialogue between tradition and modernity.

4
Explain
the concept of
the programme
that would be
launched if your
city is designated
European Capital
of Culture.

Collective imagination

Thinking about the future can be a source of anxiety if this thinking is not part of the **sharing of desirable collective imaginations**.

Our bid affirms the will to build a horizon where social and individual achievements are no longer measured by the materiality of physical possessions and hierarchies between

persons and the living environment, but rather by solidarity, artistic practice, embracing differences and a renewed connection to our environment.

It also aims to question the uses of art in common areas, such as public places, but also in natural areas where another relationship to time, to others and to the living, is created.

To this end, the Montpellier 2028 (**M28**) bid proposes sharing the lessons learned through its actions by creating **prototypes that can be shared on a European and international scale**.

Our programme is based on three pillars.

CONNECT: Montpellier, Europe from the perspective of its cities

Connecting people: the challenge is to break with the idea of an unchanging *European identity* and to recall that a heritage of identity is above all the result of a process of transformation.

Our bid is considered as a laboratory where we wish to study, illustrate and share the notion of a dynamic identity allowing us to “live the complexity of the world and take action”. It is a question of identifying the resources available to us to create new configurations that “empower” everyone, place value on the local origin of solutions and enable action on a daily basis. We aim to promote a territorialized

Europe, viewed on a human, horizontal and transnational scale, where individuals can work to invent new models of work, cooperation, production and consumption.

Connecting with the living: this involves constructing new cultural narratives in which knowledge, professions and artistic practices integrate the living environment in the broadest sense, not just from the sole human point of view. A construction made possible through a new alliance of researchers, artists and inhabitants which will be a common factor in the design of all the artistic programmes and evaluation processes.

ACT: building experiments

From the outset, Montpellier's bid has been based on cooperation between local authorities of the same level. A founding principle is that culture is a powerful factor in overcoming existing limits, and an important resource for experimenting with new partnerships from a grass roots dynamic. It enables multiplication of horizontal cooperation between institutional and cultural actors not only in the bid area but also on wider scale, including many European, Mediterranean and international cities.

It nurtures cultural projects and cooperative ventures that reflect ecological changes. The key is the emergence of projects carried by a civil society that is enabled by the public authorities, but preserved in its autonomy. These acts of cooperation, when linked together, are intended to build a collective narrative.

CELEBRATE: from animation to events, making M28 a long-term project

Living in the territory, knowing its human and natural history, sharing its challenges and participating in the definition of its future necessarily involves moments of cohesion.

For centuries, popular festivals (*Saint-Louis*, votive festivals) have contributed to forging a strong and welcoming local culture. These are moments of intergenerational cohesion where tradition and modernity interact. Today, it is a question of building new moments and new places for collective celebration with the inhabitants, by integrating the values defended by **M28**: recognition of the living environment, inter-cultural relations and solidarity.

This “celebration” is intended to be an event in itself, a moment that marks the passage to a new stage in the life of our territory, that inaugurates a new type of event, open to heritage and traditions, the living environment, and to other cultures.



Contribution to the Long-Term Strategy

5

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

The current questions being asked of public policy in general, and cultural policies in particular, should make us humble and lead us to consider how we address these new challenges. Openness and

sharing are essential and constitute a first element of response. **Joining forces, building something together and sharing** are ideas that inspire us to consider cultural policy as the perfect terrain to review

territorial cooperation at all levels. The aim is to envisage a form of cultural life for the future that reflects the strength of our city's identity, nurtured by exchanges and encounters with one another.

To achieve this balance, the city of Montpellier's cultural strategy has been devised around six priorities:

Strategic priorities	Current position	Findings, pitfalls and challenges	Long-term plans and aims
Building tomorrow's audiences today	<p>A dense ecosystem of institutions and facilities generating a prolific cultural offer for all audiences.</p> <p>A support mechanism for young people with numerous municipalities and partners (DRAC, Rectorate, CAF, Departmental Council Youth Service, etc.): the CGEAC, a convention for generalisation of artistic and cultural education.</p> <p>An inclusive initiative for people with disabilities: annual publication of a "handi'culture" events guide, available in French Sign Language and audio description. A dedicated space at the new Cité des Arts (Academy) to introduce art to children with learning disabilities or sensory impairments.</p>	<p>Falling audience numbers in traditional arts and culture venues due to a lack of or low level renewal of the offer.</p> <p>Initiatives that fail to properly reach the audiences that need them most.</p> <p>New patterns of audience behaviour and new cultural venues that are less familiar.</p> <p>A need to review the cultural offer and the way it is promoted to widen the scope of audiences who may benefit from it.</p>	<p>A shift in the connection with audiences and renewed partnership arrangements for Artistic and Cultural Education (Teachers' forum, culture passport, etc.).</p> <p>Priority given to young audiences through culture at a child's level, in line with a city at a child's level (creation of a label for programming dedicated to young audiences).</p> <p>A new facility: an art initiation centre for 0-6 year olds, Mille formes with the Georges Pompidou Centre.</p> <p>Enriching the "Age Friendly City" programme for a city adapted to all.</p> <p>Greater clarity for the cultural offer: a digital kiosk for centralised access (information and ticketing) and participant flows.</p> <p>Greater focus on verbal expression, identified as a priority in the regional strategy.</p> <p>Promote multilingualism in the city (regional languages such as Occitan or those resulting from periods of migration that are part of the city's history).</p>

Strategic priorities	Current position	Findings, pitfalls and challenges	Long-term plans and aims
Transform the city through culture and heritage	<p>An urban development plan featuring examples of contemporary architecture (Ricardo Bofill, Paul Chemetov, Sou Fujimoto, Edouard Francois, Massimiliano Fuksas, Xavier Gonzales, Zaha Hadid, Farshid Moussavi, Jean Nouvel, Rudy Ricciotti, Carmen Santana, Philippe Starck and many others).</p> <p>A park of contemporary art installations in the public realm (M by François Morellet, opened in 1986). The park is linked to the public transport network and contains some outstanding works along the tramway network, including Chen Zhen's human constellation, Alain Jacquet's homage to Confucius, Allan MacCollum's Allegories, Sarkis' Voyage and Tony Cragg's Point of View.</p> <p>A tradition of hosting artistic events at public venues: <i>Comédie du Livre</i>, <i>Fête de la Musique</i>, ZAT - Zones Artistiques Temporaires (festival of contemporary design and street art), <i>Festin de Rue</i>, etc.</p>	<p>Surging population growth and a significant risk of urban sprawl. A period of considerable urban renewal (extensive reconstruction work in the city centre, in the north of the city, Mosson neighbourhood regeneration programme and throughout the city by extending the public transport network).</p> <p>These transformational projects have resulted in important changes for local residents in terms of lifestyle, practices, new forms of mobility, relations in the city, as well as the collection, conservation and promotion of memories and stories about the city.</p>	<p>This bid acts as an overarching framework (urban development, mobility, culture), forming a cross-sectoral dynamic that will be sustained after the Capital year.</p> <p>Understanding the city as a vector of civic emancipation: opening a space dedicated to building a contemporary city through models, exhibitions and citizen workshops.</p> <p>Supporting the development of soft mobility through artistic interventions: carriage design for tram line 5, stations designed by artists, itinerant programmes, etc.</p> <p>Systematic integration of art into major urban projects: culture as a lever for "activating" construction sites, creating links with inhabitants, imagining future cultural functions.</p> <p>A manifesto that is continuously being written: 13 new sites for 13 new architectural follies, breaking with the urban sprawl model.</p> <p>A new ambition for temporary urbanism: "Permit to imagine" to experiment with new temporary occupations on neglected sites.</p>

Asserting the reality of a territory of hospitality

Showing hospitality has been a strong and ancient hallmark of the city's growth and history. Relics of the city's past such as the Medieval Mikveh Jewish bath illustrate the many waves of migration that have enriched our history and heritage.

Warmth and openness reserved for artists from all horizons and different artistic expression, whether they come from elite schools (National School of Dramatic Art, Masters degree programme at the National Choreography Centre), the stage or are public performers.

Artist residency programmes for all stages of the creative process. These include joint-productions (MO.CO, Jean Vilar Theatre, Domaine d'O, Printemps des Comédiens, Agora de la Danse, etc.), support for the creative process, research residencies or support for emerging artists (La Vignette Theatre, Texte en Cours Festival, Warm Up, summer residencies at the La Vista Theatre, Studio Libre at the National Centre for Dramatic Art, etc.), promotional activities and exhibitions (Espace Saint-Ravy - exhibition space for emerging artists, etc.).

To allow all forms of artistic expression, including those adopted by artists who are undesirable and not given exposure in their countries.

To respond to the needs of emerging or established artists by helping establish the conditions in which their creative projects can flourish.

To strengthen **genuine ecosystems** in all artistic fields, from training to broadcasting and exposure, including creation and production activities, while encouraging the emergence and organisation of various forms of art overlooked by public policies such as comics, scriptwriting, cross-disciplinary projects, etc.

Insufficient connection between support mechanisms: local authority and government aid for artistic creation, pooling creation "tools" (venues and engineering expertise) tailored to different stages in the creative process (research, writing, emergence, production) and accounting for the sheer diversity of artistic creation (sector-specific and multidisciplinary approaches).

Meet the needs of creators and build a balanced **artistic presence** in the city by identifying new residency facilities: vacant public and social leases, vacant commercial premises.

An ambitious policy of **artistic residencies** by creating new facilities: Villa Bazille, a 18th century estate dedicated to European artists and researchers working in botany and science (Montpellier), *Villa Salis* (Sète),

Hôtel d'Aurès and the former Episcopal Palace (Montpellier).

A European influence: creation of a **"shared contact point"** between cultural institutions to encourage the emergence of European projects.

Renovation of the former Massane tile works, located on the outskirts of Montpellier, better known under the literary name of "Deltheillerie". The former residence of Joseph Delteil was abandoned in the early 1980s. It was formerly a major cultural venue (Henry Miller, Marc Chagall, Lawrence Durrell, Joséphine Baker, Pierre Soulages, Sonia and Robert Delaunay, Blaise Cendrars, Georges Brassens and Charles Trenet, etc.). Tomorrow, it will become a place of creation turned towards Europe.

Strategic priorities	Current position	Findings, pitfalls and challenges	Long-term plans and aims
Foster the region's profile by promoting artistic excellence and its capacity for innovation	<p>Montpellier Festivals is a programme of events sharing the same priority for artistic excellence to welcome works, artists and audiences from all walks of life. These include, the Comédie du Livre now dedicated to European literature, Printemps des Comédiens, Montpellier Danse, Festival Radio France, Arabesques, Cinemed, etc.</p> <p>Cultural venues like windows on to the world, such as the Musée Fabre and its temporary exhibitions featuring exhibits from the greatest museums, the MO.CO and contemporary works from around the world, as well as the Pavillon Populaire and international photography.</p> <p>The prime location for the development of digital cultural and creative industries (video games, audiovisual, digital creation): ESMA colleges, ArtFX, France Televisions studios, etc.</p>	<p>Reassess Montpellier's cultural legacy in the light of contemporary challenges to reconnect with our capacity for innovation and position the city as a cultural crossroads.</p> <p>Encourage trans-disciplinarity and a cross-sectoral approach.</p>	<p>Fabrique de l'image and France 2030: recognition as a centre of excellence for audiovisual production.</p> <p>The Cité Créative, a district dedicated to new digital cultural and creative industries, with 30,000 m² for service companies and commercial businesses, together with 2,500 homes.</p> <p>Consolidate artistic sectors such as contemporary music, circus and street arts.</p>
Invent new forms of territorial cooperation	<p>Programmes with a scope much wider than the Métropole: itinerant festivals throughout the Métropole (Cinema Under The Stars, <i>La Métropole Fait Son Cirque</i>), the Comédie du Livre and its programme of outreach events in bookshops throughout the territory (Sète, Mèze, Lunel, Gignac, Frontignan...).</p> <p>Artistic projects with our twin cities: Palermo, Heidelberg...</p> <p>Artistic event programmes with a European and international dimension.</p>	<p>Not sufficient cooperation between the cities for the exchange of work and installations, artists and to ensure adequate audience numbers.</p> <p>Not sufficient European and international project partnerships.</p>	<p>Greater cooperation on a contractual basis with the inter-municipal councils that comprise the city's catchment area or its local area of attraction.</p> <p>Promote cultural and scientific exchanges between European countries and openness towards others through greater cooperation with Africa by hosting the Africa-France Summit and the <i>Nouvelles d'Afrique</i> Forum.</p>
Celebrating knowledge and skills	<p>Montpellier, with its ancient university heritage (800 year anniversary for the University of Medicine in 2020): the oldest plant garden in France, a herb repository with hundreds of species, a spectacular anatomy conservatory. In 2022, the botanic garden, or <i>Jardin des Plantes</i>, was one of the projects that secured support from the <i>Mission Patrimoine</i> as part of the French heritage lottery fund. The city's tradition as a seat of learning is now embodied in strong support for scientific culture.</p> <p>There is a long-standing commitment to the development of knowledge: the Fabre Museum with its outstanding collection of 17th and 18th century paintings, and a contemporary art collection based on the work of Pierre Soulages and the Supports/Surfaces movement; the Henri Prades archaeological museum, which traces ancient history back to the Etruscans in the coastal lagoons; the municipal and city archives.</p> <p>Other highlights include the Agora des Savoirs, a series of popular science lectures given by French academics.</p> <p>Montpellier was the first city to be awarded the Ville et Pays d'art et d'histoire status for its commitment to the quality of its heritage, architecture and living environment.</p> <p>Montpellier's network of 14 media libraries has made scientific culture one of its priorities and the city is now developing an increasingly diverse offer in its year-round events programme.</p>	<p>Strive for civic empowerment by providing residents with easier access to resources to understand the past and the future.</p> <p>Develop cooperation between the arts and sciences on the key transformational challenges in the city, such as climate, biodiversity, migration and democracy) based on cooperation between cultural stakeholders and flagship programmes in the field of science.</p>	<p>Montpellier, city of science.</p> <p>The city of Montpellier, the University of Montpellier, the State and the Regional Council are partners in two UNESCO programmes to protect and enhance scientific heritage and the development of science. These include the "Memory of the World" for documentary collections and "World Heritage" featuring a complete history of the development of science, illustrated in its built heritage.</p> <p>Promotion of projects administered by the Universities (PIA 4 on research and creation, International Center for Interdisciplinary Research on Water Systems Dynamics).</p> <p>A far-reaching plan for the restoration of tangible and intangible heritage linked to the scientific history of Montpellier and the heritage of its communes.</p> <p>New infrastructure serving knowledge development with the extension of the Musée Fabre: a new page in the history of the museum and the development of its collections through new contemporary donations.</p> <p>The Institute of the History of France and Algeria announced by the President of the Republic: a nationally significant venue celebrating the living memory of Franco-Algerian relations.</p> <p>Amenities that foster scientific and technical culture.</p> <p>The Agora of Knowledge has been enhanced by Faisons Connaissance, a festival of ideas planned for 2023 which will bring together scientists, journalists and speakers from all backgrounds for a weekend each year to discuss the issues affecting our contemporary societies.</p> <p>A centre for scientific culture, to be deployed by 2028: a space of several hundred m² dedicated to scientific, technical and industrial culture.</p>

This strategy is part of a stated desire to work on a wider catchment area for the city, reflecting residents' current mobility patterns, habits and interactions. The aim is to design a territory that makes sense, offering a clear identity, around Montpellier, Sète, the coast and inland. **M28** will be a future cityscape of cultural initiatives and cooperation. **In addition to sustaining the political governance bodies established for this bid, the aim is to design strategies and policies at various levels** which integrate **this wider area** into the collective conscience of local authorities, local residents and cultural stakeholders. Montpellier, Sète and the partner municipalities have adopted converging strategies to achieve a shared goal.

This territorial cooperation is also part of **a renewed relationship with the regional and departmental councils** to introduce joined-up and more effective territorial strategies.

The challenge is also to forge a renewed relationship with the State in the cultural field. This relationship should help to better understand “newcomers”, either from a standpoint of new artistic practices or from that of new **audience expectations**, particularly those of young people.

Once the Capital year is over, the political cooperation bodies set up for the bid will be consolidated and made sustainable by the perpetuation of the Montpellier 2028 Association.

6

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

A policy for development of Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI)

Montpellier is a city with a wide range of **activities connected to the cultural and creative industries**. It has a unique ecosystem of businesses, recognised training providers and an attractive environment. All the components of the CCI sector are present in the territory, from moving images in the broad sense (audiovisual, cinema, animation, video games, 3D, special effects and virtual/augmented reality, etc.) to sound and radio.

This wealth of expertise is the result of a long tradition of hosting film shoots, a unique partnership with France Televisions (production of a daily series) and the creation of an entire industry around video games, sound and animation. The Metropole already hosts two internationally renowned higher education institutes (ESMA and Artfx) and has supported the CCI sector by developing training

(Professional Cinema and Audiovisual Master's degree at Paul-Valéry University, private colleges), business creation in the creative district, and recurrent events.

Key figures for 2021

4 leading sectors: film, sound/audio, video games, animation/ audiovisual media	2,100 jobs in 2020, comprising 36% women
750 exemplary companies working in the sector	More than 1,000 days of filming per year
40 training courses	1 daily series and 2 other series
3 umbrella associations: Occitanie Film, Push Start, Coodio	6 feature films and 12 short films

Our bid provides for **capacity building in the CCI sector** through a range of activities:

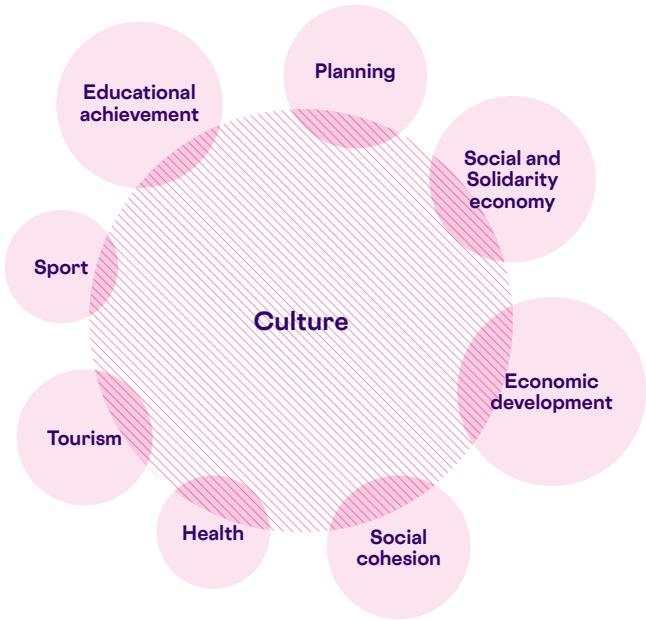
Actions to support the creative process and production	Boosting the city's appeal and organisational arrangements for the CCI sector	Outreach and film heritage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>Talents en court</i> (Cinemed) development grant and residency grants for authors developed (professional bodies and/or associations). • Mentoring and guidance schemes provided by Occitanie Films. • “Meet the talents”, an experimental scheme for actors in conjunction with Occitanie Films. • Support for video game studios with an CCI support fund of €720,000/year (support for the development and production of documentaries, animation, video games and immersive experiences). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the film location reception office. • Support for the establishment of companies with a real estate strategy dedicated to CCIs. Structuring of the sector with the regional agency Occitanie Films and professional associations. • Organisation of dedicated events: ICONIC (a meeting to facilitate meetings between the economic and cultural actors of the CCI), or Cœur de ville en lumières (video mapping on heritage buildings). • CCI Observatory: number of jobs, company turnover, number of students in the various courses, filming days, etc. • Territorial marketing with guided tours of the territory from various angles, such as “Montpellier, the main character in <i>Un si Grand Soleil</i>”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for festivals with the Mediterranean film festival, CINEMED, as well as some twenty other film festivals and events throughout the year (Algerian film festival, student films, animation, Bollywood, Swiss films, Afrik’art, travel films, etc.). • Image education: departmental coordination of the École et Cinéma scheme, hosting of the CRECN (Educational Resource Centre for Digital Culture), support for those working on media education.

With the ambition of becoming a territory of excellence in audiovisual production, and of participating in the national strategy of deploying a collection of studios, we are part of the 2030 programme entitled *La grande fabrique de l'image* which promotes the development of film studios and the related training courses. Between now and 2024, more than 30,000 m² of studios and new training spaces are to be built in various communes (Vendargues, Saint-Gély-du-Fesc, etc.). With these new facilities, the Montpellier hub will strengthen the Lille/Paris/ Montpellier/Marseille network, enabling France to offer filming facilities for international projects.

This future hub seeks to consolidate the capacity of the European audiovisual industry for creating cutting-edge fictional series attracting international audiences, while nurturing a body of **European talent** able to work across national and linguistic boundaries.

Mainstreaming an cross-sectoral approach
Arts policy should not be seen solely in terms of the developing the creation and dissemination

of culture. From the outset, it is intrinsically geared to a cross-sectoral approach and therefore intersects with various other policies:



Culture and Sport

Apart from Paris, Montpellier is the only French city to have clubs playing in the top national and/or European leagues in leading team sports (football, handball, rugby, volleyball, water polo, basketball, etc.). Montpellier has a deep sporting culture, whether professional or amateur, competitive or recreational. Together with Sète and Millau, Montpellier has secured *Terre de Jeux* accreditation for the 2024 Paris Olympic Games. Our territory strongly supports the values of sharing and solidarity that sport helps develop, as well as the pleasure and emotion that it generates. This dimension will be deployed in the framework of **M2S**, starting in 2023.

Culture, art and health

With more than 800 years of medical history, Montpellier continues to be a centre of excellence in the health sector. It brings together a powerful university hospital, large companies, innovative SMEs and VSEs, high-level research centres and the Eurobiomed competitiveness cluster.

By harnessing the hitherto untapped potential of this ecosystem, our bid should accelerate the development of projects linking art and health. This process will be focused on an exclusive partnership with the University of Montpellier.

One of the key ideas of this approach is to strengthen “outreach” by facilitating the accessibility of science to reach a young audience through a programme of small, regular and very frequent meetings in unusual, busy places where an encounter with science is not necessarily expected.

Key figures

32,000

health, science and technology students

4th

most popular university in France for life sciences and medicine

6th

largest university hospital in France

200+

companies comprising

7,500

jobs

This activity also involves a strong link between the European Capital of Culture process and *MedVallée*, a global centre of excellence in world health (agronomy, environment and health), supported by the city which focuses on training, research and innovation.

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

An accelerator for change

The European Capital of Culture programme acts as a **catalyst and accelerator for change** in the strategy. From its inception, this bid was set up as an iterative process, structuring change through listening, observation, dialogue and experimentation.

It should transform the ambition of the city’s cultural offer through a more effective alliance between the production and distribution capacities of cultural institutions, and the needs, of artistic, cultural, social and local associations. In addition to the **development of new cooperative ventures**, the bid should make it possible to **broaden and diversify** the direct **beneficiaries of the region’s** cultural activity, with a view to redeploying resources, taking

into account **new practices and new venues**. Considering these new trends and patterns in an inclusive and innovative manner constitutes one of the priorities of the bid to (re)kindle a desire for culture among the local community.

That is why the bid features a special focus on projects in public spaces.

This decidedly “outdoor” bid (Great Art Walks – Water Trails® or The Tabor Whale®) subsequently meets both the objectives and strategic priorities of “building tomorrow’s audiences today” (Academy of the Future®, Gypsy Symphonic Itineraries®, Bicentenary of the Fabre Museum®) and “transforming the city

through culture and heritage” (Villa Bazille, Mosson regeneration project, Villa Laurens, Artillery Park, Montferrand Castle, Design for Change®).

Equally, the bid addresses the concept of hospitality in a symbolic sense (Our Living Refuges®) or more tangibly through artists’ residency and exchange initiatives (Wide angles: biennial festival of the performing arts in the Mediterranean®).

The programme for the European Capital of Culture year, to be developed in the *Final selection* stages, will feature a more detailed description of the specific

activities for 2028 concerning major cultural events in the city. For example as a prelude to the event, the *Comédie du Livre - 10 jours en Mai*, dedicated to European literature, will host a European novelist for several months to start, pursue or finalise a fiction writing project at the Lattara literature residency.

Finally, the bid will contribute to the construction of **sustainable tools** on a territorial scale, which will naturally participate in the deployment of its strategy: in terms of the circular economy and the reuse of materials, even though the cultural sector is a major consumer of raw materials and resources, the territory currently lacks a specialised

recycling centre. **M2S** will establish one for its events programme. It will be designed for, and linked to, the city’s cultural businesses and operators with support from the Resac network to prompt a change to more responsible and sustainable practices.



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

A new act of intermunicipal cooperation

We have previously illustrated the need to nurture projects carried by territories which have disparate social and economic realities. The social impact could, therefore, be measured primarily in terms of **closer ties between the city centre and the outskirts.**

The simple fact of considering linking them in a joint venture opens new perspectives in terms of communication, how audiences are addressed and how mobility and routes are considered, creating a common area.

Most of all, preparing this bid has shown just how much our narratives about hospitality and urban change through culture have in common. This is why **M28** will be delivered at different sites throughout the city, labelled **“Europa 2028 Spaces”**, that will be representative of projects central to our challenges:

Hospitality

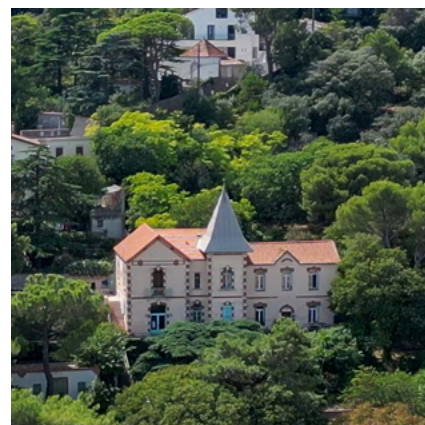
Villa Bazille (Montpellier)

Once known as the Domaine de Méric, this former summer residence of the painter Frédéric Bazille and his family is bordered by a 12-hectare park. It was also the 19th century playground for Gaston Bazille, a winegrower with a curiosity and passion for botany. Thanks to his intervention, the site is now home to many rare species. Plans to restore the estate for the European Capital of Culture bid will return the Villa Bazille to its former glory as a warm and welcoming place, this time for European artists and researchers keen to develop their work on scientific subjects, thus building bridges between the arts and science. The villa will be reopened to local residents and heritage lovers alike with an exhibition retracing the history of the Bazille family and its close ties with botany, a subject that is important to Montpellier as a city of science.



Hôtel d'Aurès and the former Episcopal Palace (Montpellier)

One is an 18th century mansion, the other a neoclassical palace from the early 20th century. The Aurès mansion and the former Episcopal palace used to house the conservatory of music, theatre and dance. Continuing this cultural vocation, they will soon house part of the services of the Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole Council's Culture and Heritage Department, the headquarters of the Montpellier 2028 Association, and spaces dedicated to residency and artistic creation. As hybrid venues, combining cultural engineering and creative effervescence within unique buildings, these two projects aim to rethink the role of the community and its day-to-day relationship with creators and artistic teams.



Villa Salis (Sète)

A major centre for art residencies at Mont Saint Clair.

This unique facility in the Occitanie Region sits opposite the School of Fine Arts in Sète and offers all-year-round accommodation for artists to foster their creative work and artistic output. The new centre has 25 beds, workspaces, a restaurant, various recreational and meeting areas, as well as natural, outdoor spaces ideal for contemplating the sea and coastal lagoons. It will also connect with international projects (POSTEFA Programme with Palma de Majorca, Girona and Perpignan) and national initiatives (photographic grants, creative support schemes for the performing arts, etc.), as well as local organisations in Sète, Montpellier, Pézenas or Agde (*Maison de la Chanson Française*, *Mécènes du Sud* sponsorship scheme for contemporary creation, etc.).

Transforming the city through culture

The impact of ECoC (European Capital of Culture) status will be particularly pronounced in some areas of the city which are undergoing major urban renewal programmes:

The Mosson district (Montpellier)

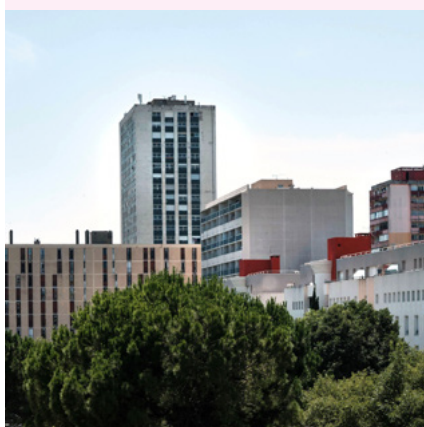
The Mosson district is in the north part of the city and home to some 20,000 residents. Built in the 1960s, at a time of urban development through large scale housing projects intended to accommodate the return of expatriates and to respond to the demographic expansion from the post-war boom, it is now a priority district for the city (QPV) and the subject of an urban renewal project with a programme of demolitions, reconstructions and transformations.

The goal is to restore a social and economic balance in the city, while acting as a catalyst for urban and social change in the district.

Culture has subsequently been identified as one of the key priorities for the Mosson urban renewal programme. The deployment of **M2S** is a lever to achieve this goal.

Three key themes for action have been identified:

- capitalise on artistic and cultural operators based in the Mosson district to develop a new events programme;
- support the urban transformation process and pave the way for new roles for art and culture in the district, thus ensuring that the arts are established and sustained from the outset;
- establish new cultural facilities and functions in the district while ensuring increased audience flows throughout the greater Montpellier area.



A Collaborative Activity Zone (Z.A.C.) (Sète)

A cultural priority with the construction of theatres and auditoriums, exhibition spaces, artists' studios and premises dedicated to Cultural and Creative Industries.

A Collaborative Activity Zone in the eastern part of Sète that will prioritise cultural activities, with the construction of theatres and auditoriums, exhibition spaces, artists' studios and premises dedicated to Cultural and Creative Industries

Sète town council plans to expand the International Museum of Modest Arts in a former wine warehouse which is also a fine example of 20th century industrial heritage. The President of the museum is internationally renowned local artist, Hervé Di Rosa.

The redeveloped building will have two concert halls (400 and 1,200 seats) as well as cultural coworking spaces. A bar and a restaurant will help promote interaction and the district lifestyle.

This area of the town will also feature artists' studios (André Cervera, Celeste Boursier Mougeot, Robert Combas, François Boisrond, Jean Denant, etc.) and workspaces for businesses in the cultural and CCI (books, film, television and video, digital, etc.) as well as exhibition spaces.

This new district will be fully completed by 2040 and be part of an urban development including Victor Hugo square featuring works by Jean-Michel Othoniel, the *Théâtre Molière* which is home to the *Scène Nationale* (accreditation given to a national network of French public theatres promoting culture), the *Pointe Courte* district treasured by Agnès Varda and the shipyard where old sailing ships are restored.

ISIS, an iconic art installation by Robert Combas, will be located at the "gateway" to the district to symbolise the local area's cultural vocation. Its height and beauty will become an artistic hallmark for the bid.

Artistic Freedom Zones (Z.L.A.) (Sète)

Using currently abandoned sites in the city, artists, architects, designers and cultural event organisers will have the freedom to come up with bold and innovative proposals that reconsider the connection between artistic activities and local people, while addressing issues related to people, proximity and the ecology of relationships.

Two areas in the city have been earmarked as ZLAs:

- The former music and arts academy in the city centre;
- The ex-Lafarge factory, a 5,000 m² brownfield site currently being redeveloped (new uses to be defined).

Abbaye d'Aniane (Vallée de l'Hérault)

The abbey was founded in the 8th century by a person connected to Charlemagne and became a monastery embodying the power of Christianity and the might of St Benedict's rule. The abbey also had an international influence, reflecting the illustrious scale of this spiritual, economic and political hub. However, misfortune eventually befell it as it was destroyed during the War of Religions and then seized during the French Revolution. The wheel of fortune turned and it was converted into a cloth mill and then a prison for men and children.

Today, the Vallée de l'Hérault inter-municipal association has made a firm commitment to passing on this heritage to future generations and is working to restore the abbey to its former glory. It is launching three projects to redevelop the abbey from 2023 to 2028.

The old chapel will be restored while a new cultural centre will immerse artists and visitors in the dialogue with the abbey through the years.

The cloister will be reopened to allow people to connect with the history of the site, the village and the Vallée de l'Hérault countryside beyond.

The buildings, archaeological sequences and collections from the archaeological records will all tell the tale of the place. Finally, a craft village will be created in the old workshops, in keeping with the manufacturing and training activities that are part of the abbey's identity.

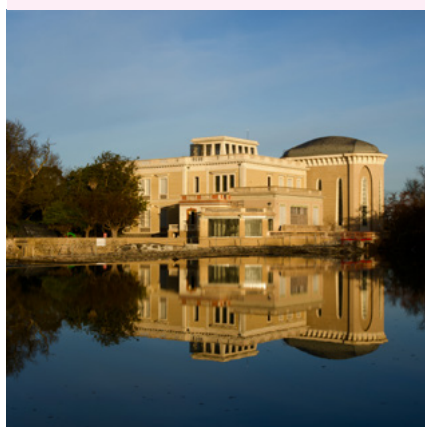
Villa Laurens (Agde)

The intertwined stories of the villa and its creator, Emmanuel Laurens, illustrate the extraordinary vitality of the artistic movements and technical innovations that occurred at the dawn of the 20th century. It challenges our contemporary world on the place of art and nature, together with cultural and scientific curiosity, in a society overwhelmed by the ideology of progress.

As a heritage site focused on culture and tourism, Villa Laurens will soon be open to a diverse public, fostering accessibility, spreading culture and promoting territorial cohesion.

2023 will be dedicated to the preparatory work. The policy of public events for the 2024 and 2025 seasons will be based on two key priorities. The first is to develop an agenda of contemporary art exhibitions, while the second will feature local development activities geared towards learning. The local development activities designed for schoolchildren will be particularly focused on technical and vocational subjects.

To capitalise on the investment secured to restore the villa, a network of professionals in the field of heritage buildings, restoration experts and crafts persons will be set up to provide a platform for exchange and dialogue designed to promote the development of art-related professions.



Château de Montferrand (Pic Saint Loup)

Grand Pic Saint-Loup inter-municipal council is responsible for the conservation and development of the Château de Montferrand. The castle ruins sit on the ridge of the Pic Saint Loup, towering over the surrounding area like a lighthouse, or landmark both in the countryside and in time. The intention is to reappraise Montferrand as part of the **M2S** bid to enhance a key component of the local identity.

Montferrand is a medieval castle built on an outstanding natural site marking the gateway to the Mediterranean and to the Cévennes. The fortress appears to emerge from the cliffs, so much so that it is difficult at times to tell between the masonry and the natural rock. However, there is an ever-present threat that large sections of the walls may fall, taking with them the hallmark of the Melgueil ward and a key component of the local identity. Conserving and developing the castle is a scientific, cultural and social undertaking for all those who travel through or live in the eastern part of the Hérault Departmental council.

The aim is to make the fortress a venue where people meet to celebrate heritage, the winegrowing landscape and nature, deep in the Pic Saint Loup mountain range. The ambitious conservation plan for the buildings forming the castle will last a decade and begin by restoring the historic GR60 hiking trail, followed by work to make the site safe and secure for public access. Once this is done, heritage restoration workcamps will be organised with volunteers. Contemporary architectural and landscape-related activities will also protect and enhance the site.

Artillery Park (Lunel)

Lunel inter-municipal association and the Lunel town council are working together to develop the artillery park in Lunel, currently owned by the French Ministry of Defence.

This site has been abandoned for several years but has great potential in terms of its buildings and the land that can be redeveloped (approximately 4 hectares). The **M2S** dynamic will convert it into a third place or collaborative venue for exhibitions, shows, concerts, art residencies, conferences and other artistic events.

The plan will enable the Pays de Lunel inter-municipal association and the town council to acquire an innovative cultural facility that will act as a catalyst for a new form of culture, open to all audiences.

These initiatives illustrate the close ties between culture and urban development and, as such, the importance of culture in promoting a sustainable urban development approach that fosters integrated policies and contributes to making our economy more environmentally sound.

A paradigm shift and its cultural impact: reinstating culture as a key component of public policies to better transform them

European Capital of Culture status will help support and accelerate an overhaul of the public policy matrix for the city and surrounding area. Rather than focusing on changing the city's urban image or developing cultural tourism, the emphasis is on **demonstrating that political/public change is both possible and desirable through sensory-based experiences that adopt an artistic, cultural and heritage-based approach.**

This paradigm change will be an integral part of a dialogue with the other European cities and their stakeholders through joint projects and, in particular, by developing

a **platform for documentation of the approach** and exchange of good practices.

Montpellier not only seeks to position itself as a major capital

for culture but also as a **land of possibilities** in which critical appraisal is allowed. It will be a laboratory for experimentation and trialling policies and projects to propagate innovation.

Inter-communities

- 1 Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole
- 2 Sète Agglopôle Méditerranée
- 3 Hérault Méditerranée
- 4 Vallée de l'Hérault
- 5 Grand Pic Saint-Loup
- 6 Pays de Lunel



9

Outline briefly the plans for monitoring and evaluation.

A monitoring and evaluation plan jointly developed with the universities

A European capital of culture is a research subject that should be approached from a comparative (devising and gathering indicators similar to other equivalent projects) and evolutionary perspective

(challenging the programme itself by adding new questions and methods).

The comparative component

This component of the plan measures the effects of the bid to make comparisons with those of other European Capitals of Culture.

The comparative indicators are broken down as follows:

Ecological	Social	Economic	Cultural	Policies
Carbon footprint, audience mobility and producing events	Cultural audience numbers	Employment	Development of international partnerships	Transparency of processes
Artificialisation of soils	Social and cultural inclusiveness	Financial spin-offs	Development of amateur activities	The sense of "ownership" in the local community
Waste	Accessibility	Tourism	Development of arts or science programmes	Development of cooperation projects
Investment neutrality	Gender equality and diversity	Securing European funding		
	Young people Intergenerational			

The strength of this component is based on comparisons over time and with other European capitals.

As such, Montpellier-based partner universities and their laboratories will coordinate scientific networks (symposia, study days) to boost scientific cooperation with other European universities with experience of these evaluations.

A **methodology seminar** will be organised in 2023 by the Montpellier 2028 Association in conjunction with the universities of Montpellier to validate the principle of "creative research".

In 2024, an **"ECOC lab"** will be established, comprising partner laboratories to oversee the evaluation process in a transparent and independent manner.

This research group will draft interim reports from 2025 and organise a **European Review Conference** in 2029.

An evolving component

The European Capitals of Culture programme not only challenges the European Union's own cultural policy but also national culture policies.

Our bid seeks to measure the impact it has on changing the approach to public policy, particularly in terms of environmentally-sound changes (mobility, regional cooperation, innovation and education, etc.).

Our bid raises two key issues:

- **Translating imagination** by challenging the theoretical shift resulting from ecological change (**Serial futures, Water that connects us, Trans?**, cf. question 10), then discussing it with local communities and decision-makers, enabling them to take ownership of it.
- Measuring the impact of a bid on our territory's ability to devise public policies that adopt a horizontal structure, **stakeholder cooperation** and **feedback (ACT/CONNECT)**.

As such, an initial partnership will be developed with ICEReward/the UNESCO Chair of the University of Montpellier and the Departments of Human and Social Sciences at Paul Valéry University, to systematically challenge current scientific output and the epistemological context in which they are generated.

In addition, many laboratories and researchers will be involved as part of a project proposal submitted by Paul Valéry University to the Investments for the Future Programme (PIA4) to produce research to:

- Understand living things, investigate the resource, our aesthetic relationship to this resource, examine changes to our relationship and challenge underlying ethnocentrism.
- Determine the obstacles, changes and effects in terms of cooperation, to identify if and how a "cultural territory" can redraw the administrative and political boundaries to bring it closer to the conscious experience felt in local communities.
- Determine the capacity for innovation that cultural policy brings to formulating public policy or the economy.

All research tools, methodologies and findings will be published on a **resource website**.



Cultural and Artistic Content

10

What is your artistic vision and strategy for the year's cultural programme?

The editorial line for this Capital of Culture year was immediately designed around the principle of **sustainability**.

Based on the concepts of **CONNECT, ACT, CELEBRATE**, the creation of 2028 starts in 2022. Through a series of actions aimed at strengthening cooperation, horizontality and links to the living world while taking into account climate issues, three programme sections will help us rethink our relationship with the future in a positive way and share our **collective imagination**.

To this end, **a series of dates** throughout the year will mark historic times for our territory, not only for people and the living world, but also moments that were significant in **European and international history**.

For our territory, the opportunity to build European and international partnerships and give real impetus to European advocacy for culture is reflected in **an objective of 85% of projects with a European and/or international dimension**.

Considering how our identities relate to others and the living world: **Water that connects us**

Over a distance of about fifty kilometres, the **Water** that crosses our territory takes many forms, inhabits many natural areas and shapes many cultures.

From the arid terrain of the Cévennes foothills to the Mediterranean and networks of rivers and lagoons, the territory covered by our bid has an important resource: **Water**.

Two key principles underpin the **"Water that connect us"** editorial line. On the one hand, water produces the landscape and crosses it; on the other, water makes up a very large part of our bodies. During the COVID crisis, we realised that the air we were breathing was a vector for transmission. By choosing water as one of the key concepts in our bid, we want to broaden the issue that places air and decarbonisation at the forefront of environmental objectives. In this way, we would like to use water as a vector for understanding the relationships between humans and the living world and to develop a broad cultural vision of ecological change leading to a shift in vision, practices and relationships.

The main challenge will be to give people a chance to see things in a new way by exploring our aesthetic relationship with the territory. It is also important to **understand the interdependence between the "culture" of individuals and the ecosystem in which it is built**.

The cultures associated with the sea, the fishermen, the joustiers of Saint-Louis, the market gardeners of Lunel, the winegrowers of the Pic Saint-Loup, the merchants of Lattes and the doctors, botanists and pharmacists of Montpellier all reflect different facets of our identities, our history, and our history's relationship to water as a living element.

These cultures connected to the living world are also powerful vectors of relationships between human beings, and have shaped local and international trade to turn them into the cosmopolitan cities they are today.

Thinking about the future: **Serial futures**

Imagining the future is a cyclical act. Successive generations have all imagined a different future and their "futures" evolve according to the historical events that impact them.

To **CONNECT** generations, connect to our cultural heritages and build common solutions to the challenges we face, we must **bring these futures into dialogue over time and between generations**.

The objective of this programme is to engage in the construction of new narratives of the **future** based on a strong attachment to science and real data. This **alliance of art and science** will be achieved through an ever-evolving format that will allow us to escape from grandiose posturing, by integrating the social, cultural and scientific evolution of society.

The aim is to put together dynamic, evolving, transdisciplinary artistic programmes that encourage artists, scientists and inhabitants to all come together around the major challenges of change.

From a formal point of view, this programme will focus on the production of **series**.

Series (e.g. manga, comics, novels, video games, audiovisual fictions, etc.) are a dynamic narrative mode which, starting from a basic premise, integrates current events “along the way”. In a complex and rapidly changing world, we feel it is an interesting **narrative approach**.

Finally, as put forward in our general concept, changing the way we look at our territory requires a **new alliance between scientists and artists** to go beyond the classic oppositions of reality/fiction, fact/speculation. From this perspective, we also want to get young people involved in asking questions, organising debates and reports, and appropriating the conclusions.

An open question: **Trans?**

The *trans* prefix is at the heart of many current issues. More than the words it precedes, it seems to conceal a **powerful sign of the times**, where mutation, passage and transformation play a fundamental role in the construction of our imaginations.

Transition is based on a **Transdisciplinary** approach that combines scientific and artistic approaches from all disciplines.

It speaks of the complexity and the transition from one state to another and raises the question of **Transmedia** methods. Going beyond disciplines and inventing new ones, particularly in the field of art and culture, is a key element in the response to this challenge.

Furthermore, we believe that transitions pose significant risks of causing fractures in our society that need to be identified, named and healed. Inclusion, dialogue and solidarity, in our view, require the support of **Transgenerational** and **Transnational** approaches.

By focusing on the *trans* prefix, we intend to give artists, scientists and citizens room for exploration where debate is welcome and questions can be openly posed, and where the protocols of answers go beyond the traditional methodologies to favour innovation, intercultural dialogue and blending.

Finally, the idea of **Trans(e)** [trance] links all our concepts together.

It means “to pass” or “to flow” and recalls the physical or psychic states where humans connect to something greater than themselves. It often occurs with dancing and celebrations, with collective gatherings and celebrations.

It brings us together through
Our collective imagination!



Outline the structure of your cultural programme, including the scope and range of activities/major events that will take place during the year.



FutureFolkFiction®


@T Folk dances are an immense part of Europe's heritage. Their diversity yet also their often shared vocabulary is linked to celebrations of nature and people. Christian Rizzo has developed part of his work by linking this heritage to contemporary choreographic creation. During the first years of the project, a group of artists and academics will observe and record existing traditional dances (the areas concerned: from

the local to the European scale, e.g. the cities twinned with Montpellier). From 2027 onwards, directed by Christian Rizzo, the project will materialise through the creation of a joint dance celebration in the form of a performance (itinerant, parade-type) for a large group of amateurs and professionals. This performance will include the creation of costumes, objects, accessories and musical composition.

Events will take place in various locations, including in the towns of Agde (Villa Laurens), Pézenas, Sète and Lunel.

Project leader: **Christian Rizzo, ICI-CCN**
Partners: **Théâtre National de la Danse (Chaillot), Biennale de la Danse (Lyon), Circa Auch, Charleroi Danse (Belgium), Mercats de les flores (Barcelona-Catalonia), Braga 2027, Life Long Burning Europe network.**

Our Living Refuges®

 This project puts four approaches, four times, four modalities into action to support a paradigm shift in our relationship with the living world, to encourage our citizens, inhabitants and tourists to take ownership of it (local or other type of tourism that adheres to an eco-responsible approach).

We plan to focus on sites closely related to water in the wider territory covered in the bid towards:

- An event for interprofessional and public sharing of knowledge and attention on: The Conversation(s): speakers recruited on a European scale and according to their areas of expertise.
- An event for artistic research: an invitation to professional artists; young artists who have recently graduated in the fields of the performing arts, visual arts, architecture, landscaping; and young engineers.

The aim of these two events will be to provide material from which to build the following:

- A festive, celebratory, inaugural and unifying event on the site chosen to host a hut, a refuge for humans and other living species.
- The design and construction of a refuge.


By “refuge”, we mean several things: shelter, hut, observation post, belvedere. Each refuge will be able to accommodate one hour, one afternoon. Each refuge should be inspired by, or at least reflect, ancient local practices (e.g. small stone huts known as *capitelles*) and be designed ethically and in accordance with eco-responsible criteria. Each refuge that is built must fit into the surroundings of the chosen site aesthetically, symbolically and organically.

Existing examples from around France can be used for inspiration. Efforts to encourage citizen appropriation (collective of locals, association, community, educational structure, integration, cultural structure, etc.) will be made.

Project leader: **L'Atellene**

Partners: **École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Montpellier, LIFAM, Institut Français, Goethe Institute, RamiMed, Meds (Meeting of European Design Students), IAAC Institute for Advanced Architecture of Catalonia, Draft Inn - José Manuel Mora - draftinn.com, Escuela Superior de Arte Dramático de Castilla y León, Casa da arquitectura - Portugal, University of Bonn - Germany, INWARD - International Network on Writing Art Research and Development**

Bicentennial of the Musée Fabre®

 In 2028, the Musée Fabre  in Montpellier will celebrate the bicentennial of its opening to the public. For 200 years, the collections of the Musée Fabre - which include artists from de Zurbaran to Matisse, Courbet and Soulages - have given visitors access to more than five centuries of painting. As part of the city's strategy, an extension to the museum will be inaugurated in 2028 to accommodate new collections enhanced by an ambitious acquisition policy based on a sponsorship policy and various donations.

From 2025, all student classes in the city will become ambassadors for the museum by participating in the “one class, one work [of art]” project. The ambition is to both promote the collections and organise a transgenerational reflection on the future of the museum.

This project will be linked to the “hack museum” project, which involves a citizen consultation where students, artists, social partners and schools will be invited to suggest new ways of visiting and using the museum in order to imagine the “Museum of the future”.

The IN/OUT project, focused on creation, encourages audiences to reflect on the dialogue between the classic ways of discovering art and the emerging practices linked to public space. In discussion with the museum team, a dozen artists from the graphic arts community (Montpellier/EU) will each choose a work of art from the Musée Fabre's collection and reinterpret it by creating murals in the public space in Montpellier and around the bid territory. These creative works will be enhanced by an augmented reality application that brings the mural into dialogue with the original work from the collection.

Project leader: **Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole - Musée Fabre**

Gypsy Symphonic Itineraries®

 Romani populations adopted settled lifestyles several hundred years ago in our territory. As a result, cultural exchanges have multiplied and Romani music, recognised as intangible European cultural heritage, is found throughout our territory from West to East and has strong roots in Agde, Sète and Montpellier.

This project, built with the inhabitants of the Romani neighbourhoods of the territory's cities, aims to encourage encounters between Romani music and

symphonic music and to promote the learning of Romani music within conservatories and music schools.


Since 2022, a Romani music class has been offered to pupils in certain schools in the bid territory to introduce them to artistic practice and Romani culture as well as to encourage transcultural projects.

In 2028, a musical itinerary from the neighbourhoods to the concert halls will be organised to promote the creative work of the pupils involved in the music classes.

Ultimately, this project seeks to develop a range of music education options in the project's partner institutions.

Project leaders: **Cité des Arts Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole, Conservatoire de Sète Agglopôle, École de musique d'Agde**
Partners: **Academia de Música de Murcia (Spain)**

MicroRivers - Alea Jacta Est®

 What if these micro-rivers had great things to tell us? Despite their modest size, these rivers, their basins and their tributaries raise major questions that are as much about the life of their watercourses as about the banks they separate: their landscapes, their riparians, the symbols and realities they carry, the problems they bring with them. Perhaps they are asking the eternal Rubicon question: that of the point of no return, that of the lines that are best not crossed. A collective was founded that brings together artists from the five European regions crossed by the rivers. The artists work in different disciplines. The project will be run by a team with experience in documentary theatre.

Artists from the five regions will meet with scientists from the five regions to discuss, in European languages, international and local data on their micro-rivers.

Works will be produced along the five rivers, in formats to be invented. Scientific meetings and public events invite visitors to “travel” to the five “regions”. Works will be presented on the water's edge, travelling from one river to another. One or more works will be produced in Montpellier as part of an international collaboration involving all the artists of the collective.

The project will bring together groups of artists and amateurs, working on four European coastal rivers: the Rubicon (Italy), the Yser (Belgium), the Boco (Portugal) and the Urumea (Spain).

Project leader: **Jean Vilar Theatre - City of Montpellier**
Partners: **Aveiro 2027, Lille 2004**

Write and Produce Your Own Series!®

@F Originally a national scriptwriting challenge for young people aged 11 to 18, this television scriptwriting challenge allows for collective work and expression, in groups of three to eight, accompanied by audiovisual professionals.

The theme of the challenge will be the desirable future and will result each year (2024-2027) in the production of a "series bible" (note of intent, concept, presentation of the characters, elements of the narrative arcs, scenario of a pilot episode).

Each year, the most successful projects will be pitched to a professional jury and rewarded. In 2027, the winning project will create a pilot of the project, carried out by European film and audiovisual schools at the Studios de Vendargues (France Televisions).

Project leaders: **City of Montpellier, Occitanie Films, Montpellier 2028**
Partners: **Studio France Televisions, European film schools (FEMIS-Paris, FAMU-Prague, ESCAC-Barcelona)**

Great Art Walks - Water Trails®

@E Water criss-crosses our territories, but our aesthetic relationship with nature often develops in a way that opposes nature and culture. Through 15 thematic routes designed by European and international curators, this project, which

will install 100 permanent or ephemeral works over a distance of more than 50 kilometres, will offer visitors the opportunity to travel through the bid territory via soft mobility to discover a new relationship between art and the landscape, and to question the cultural links that are forged in our relationship with living things. Sustainability, professional and artistic uses, and the lifestyles of populations that have a relationship with water and its ecosystems are all subjects that the project will address through permanent dialogue between the bid territory and partner areas, particularly in Europe and Africa.

Based on historical documentation, it will also build perspectives for reflection on global warming and more specifically on salinisation, coastline retreat and the resulting degradation of water resources.

Artistic residencies will be held at the Villa Bazille, Villa Laurens and Château de Castries.

As part of the soft mobility strategy, the project will also connect the towns in the bid by developing a network of cycling paths and footpaths.

Project leaders: **MO.CO, City of Sète**
Partners: **Musée Paul-Valéry Sète, CRAC, Villa Laurens Agde, MIAM, Centre photographique documentaire, international artists (Africa/Europe)**

Radio Fiction®

@F In the spirit of the radio dramas of the 1950s, this transmedia project encourages reflection on the creation of radio/podcast dramas built around the themes of the bid.

The project will invite stakeholders from the other projects in the bid to freely choose the forms of their radio production, to diversify access to and the methods of artistic creation, and to encourage wide dissemination and inclusion of the populations. As a genuine logbook of the **M28** programme, it will contribute to the living and future memory of the event, constituting artistic traces that are diverse in their conception, but linked by the same objective: to keep the **M28** values alive.

These projects will be broadcast on the France Bleu network and posted online on the various platforms.

Project leader: **Montpellier 2028**
Partner: **Radio France Bleu Hérault**

Modest Art on the Move®


@T "Modest art" is an art movement initiated by Hervé Di Rosa in the late 1980s that includes images, objects, shapes and thoughts. A humble approach to art, modest art is an art for all, a heterogeneous gathering of objects and productions placed on the margins of creation and art history. It brings together the sensibilities of very different people (contemporary artists, amateur artists, craftsperson, etc.). It aims to explore a territory without borders that extends from contemporary art to advertising figurines, outsider art, sacred art, crafts, punk music and all the practices stemming from the underground and countercultures. It is a territory that has lost its centre and is reforming its margins to put an end to the exclusion, oblivion or indifference generated by a one-sided narrative of art history.

The project involves the use of modest caravans created and designed by Hervé Di Rosa, which can be easily moved. These caravans can be containers/boxes dedicated to the modest arts that will contain extracts from the collections of the International Museum of Modest Arts (MIAM). The tour will take place in cities, villages and the countryside to meet all types of audiences as well as in partner cities (Europe, Africa).

Project leader: **MIAM, City of Sète**
Partners: **MAAT Lisbon, Dakar Biennale, BPS22 Charleroi, Musée Zinsou Cotonou Benin**



The States of Water®

 The project consists of the production of an eco-political fiction in 14 episodes for public spaces and virtual spaces (installation, augmented reality, video games, interactive film, among others) developed based on the constitution of new rituals linked to water to reconsider our relationship to water in this Anthropocene world.

In this fiction, bodies of water are seen as people who demand attention from humans and consideration of their own interests.


Imagined by an author who reports on rising waters, this fiction will inspire different formats of transmedia narratives and various rituals of attachment related to water in our territory.

A time of communion and nomadic gatherings, these new rituals will take place in seven large hydrological scenes (delta, seabed, ponds, lagoons, etc.) from Montpellier to Sète, and will be made up of pop-up dance halls, microarchitectural structures, reimagined dance balls and traditional festivals, sound siestas, storytelling walks, shared banquets, night walks, moonrises, bivouacs, parties and performances.

The general dramaturgy will be entrusted to an author who will collaborate with seven artists working on each of the selected sites. Meanwhile, seven multimedia fictions will be commissioned from art schools, video game studios and transmedia artists.

Project leader: **Bi-Polar**
- **Illusion et Macadam**

Of Earth and Water: Constructions for the future, Techniques from the past®

 The reality of climate change being even more striking in our territory than in other European areas, resulting in profound impacts.

How can we cope with hotter summers? How can we produce buildings using local resources and fewer carbon-based materials?

To address these issues, this project examines adobe and baked brick constructions through the transdisciplinary lens of archaeology and architecture.

In a similar vein to the New European Bauhaus perspective, the project will include the preservation and enhancement of the built heritage and an experimental component through the organisation, from 2025 onwards, of experimental

archaeology workshops bringing together specialists in history and contemporary architects, particularly from Africa. In 2028, an architectural/archaeological exhibition will be held to present the work carried out during this period.

Project leader: **Musée Henri Prades - Lattara archaeological site - Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole**
Partners: **École nationale supérieure d'architecture de Montpellier, CRAterre, Grenoble (International center for earthen architecture), Réseau terre (promotion and development of research on adobe construction from Prehistory to today), UMR 5140 - Archaeology of Mediterranean Societies, IFAO - French Institute for Oriental Archaeology/DAI - German Archaeological Institute (Cairo, Egypt)**

Future Transcended®

 The project seeks to strengthen European creative links in the field of film production by organising workshops in Montpellier between the producers/scriptwriters of "The Creative Connection" programme and European broadcasters.

During three annual sessions (Montpellier and a European partner city), The Creative Connexion will organise experimental and interdisciplinary workshops for reflection and pre-writing.

The aim of these workshops is to strengthen the relationship between producers and scriptwriters by inviting them to share inspiration, knowledge and expertise.


The three-year programme will be closed out with a meeting with European broadcasters.

Beforehand, a working session with European broadcasters and experts from different fields of research (technological, environmental, philosophical) will be organised to support the evolution of writing for the screen (narratives/purpose).

The project's ambition is to bring together two-person scriptwriter/producer teams and European broadcasters through meetings in the form of Talk, with duos drawn at random.

Project leaders: **The Creative Connection - City of Montpellier, Montpellier 2028**
Partners: **European artists and producers - France Televisions**

Design for Change_Montpellier28®

 The climate emergency calls for new ways of doing things and encourages us to anticipate the consequences of the upheavals it causes, to both human and non-human ecosystems.

To contribute to change and act in favour of this transition, the Design for Change association is proposing to associate a community of emerging European and non-European creatives to address the questions and needs emanating from the territory's stakeholders (cultural and associative organisations, training and research centres, local/regional authorities and entrepreneurs). This action will take the form of an international competition aimed at design, architecture and landscape design schools. The competition will focus on the design and implementation of these new practices within the context of the ECoC 2028. The issues submitted to the competition will relate to infrastructure scales - soft mobility, for example, which is necessary to connect small towns - or to scenarios of use applicable to the territory and more widely to other contexts, such as what constitutes a "hospital territory".

Identifying the issues to be addressed, bringing together many local actors and drawing in talents on an international scale all require a methodical orchestration which will be deployed as follows:

2024

- Winter: a call for participation will be sent to all stakeholders across the vast territory. Five major issues to be questioned.

- Spring: launch of the international competition.

- Autumn "warm-up": five days during which international designers, local actors and experts can come together to discuss the issues raised. These days will be an opportunity for inspiring meetings with experts and visits to sites where future experiments will take place. Inter-school workshops will provide stimulation for competition participants.


2025

- May/June: reception of proposals
- July: selection of winners
- September: announcement of the winners and planning for project implementation

In 2028, a manifesto exhibition will report on the proposals that emerged from the competition. They will be compared with prospective practices identified at international level.

Project leader: **Design for change**
Partner: **World Design Organization**
- Montreal Quebec

TRANS/ports®

 **CONNECTING** Europe's ports through a documentary photography project.

ImageSingulières is a festival dedicated to documentary photography that builds part of its scenography based on an ephemeral approach by using transport containers.

This project will develop residencies and exchanges of European and international artists invited to work on water issues (aesthetic, scientific, sociological, etc.). During the residencies, the artists will work in close collaboration with the populations of the territories of the ports concerned (professionals, residents, students).

The works produced, in the field of photography and video, will be exhibited in containers that will travel to the European partner ports that have a festival, an art centre or photographer collectives.

Project leader: **Festival ImageSingulières**
Partners: **Arnal-Resotainer,**
Geoscience Montpellier,
Photon Toulouse, Aveiro 2027

The sea is my cultural heritage!®

 What connects us?

How have marine traditions created ties across the shores of the Mediterranean for centuries?

While our cultures are often equated with our national culture or religion, this project proposes to emphasise the importance of the link to the living world in our cultures.

In their relationship with the sea, sailors, fishermen and artists have forged important ties that transcend borders and languages. The sea can thus be understood as a genuinely transnational common cultural heritage.


Through a dynamic archaeological approach, this project will bring together archaeologists, ethnologists and artists to explore the techniques of navigation, fishing and pictorial representations of the sailor in a transcultural and historical approach, from Antiquity to the present day.

This project also aims to link actors from very different sectors, whether from the museum and archaeological approach, the environmental approach or large-scale events through

the creation of a major exhibition to be presented on the occasion of Escale à Sète in 2028.

Project leader: **Musée Henri Prades**
- **Lattara archaeological site** -
Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole
Partners: **Escale à Sète, Musée de la marine de Toulon, Réseau des Centres du patrimoine maritime du Grand-Golfe: Musée d'Histoire de Marseille, Drassm (Department of subaquatic and submarine archaeological research), Musée départemental Arles antique, Musée de l'éphèbe et d'archéologie sous-marine d'Agde, Musée de la Mer de Sète, Musée ethnographique de l'étang de Thau, Atelier des barques de Port-Vendres, Parc naturel marin du golfe du Lion**

Academy of the Future®

 How is our own vision of the future changing?
How do unexpected events change our projections?

This major project consists of linking students from different schools and cultural stakeholders (theatres, choreographic centres, film producers, publishers, etc.) to build a narrative of the future through four episodes between 2024 and 2028.

Each year through theatre, dance, comics, cinema and visual arts, the groups will create their episodes in connection with an artistic discipline by exploring the possibility of linking them through a common narrative thread.

Along with this creative work, all the young people involved will put together an annual thematic conference on a common topic: the future of human relations, the future of the planet, the future of democracy, the future of Europe.

This thematic conference is also an opportunity to present the artistic work of the year and give the groups a chance to discuss their practices.

The project will be carried out in partnership with Braga, Aveiro and the bid cities in the Czech Republic: a group of pupils from each of these cities will be invited to participate in the programme.

In 2028, a major celebration of the Academy of the Future will present all the work and bring together students from the partner cities for a European Academy of the Future on the occasion of Europe Day, on the 9th May 2028.

Project leader: **Montpellier 2028**
Partners: **CDN Montpellier 13 vents, Opéra National de Montpellier, Scène nationale de Sète, Centre Chorégraphique national de Montpellier, MO.CO, France Télévisions, Aveiro 2027, Braga 2027**

Printemps des Comédiens - European Edition 2028®

 This project affirms the ambition of the *Printemps des Comédiens* [theatre festival] to become a unique space for creation, research and residency in Europe. While the theatre festival is the starting point for the whole project, the underlying goal is to become a perennial centre for the production and dissemination of contemporary performing arts by conquering a new status as a European centre for theatrical creation in the region. The programming must be a bridge between theatrical heritage and contemporary creation, striking a balance between contemporary aesthetics using texts from the repertoire and creations proposing new dramaturgical forms.

The creations must continue to be a celebration of the living arts and knowledge, while democratising access to French, European and world creations of the highest standards. They must nurture dialogue between different worldviews to serve as a beacon for a Europe based on the free flow of ideas and the celebration of difference, a Europe that is innovative, supportive and dynamic, and which presents itself as a bright alternative to nationalist extremism, intolerance and an obsession with trade. To do this, the project will rely on:

Travelling shows planned on a European scale in the region through the implementation of an itinerant system of creations by international artists.

Presentations of work by students from European and local art schools (Exerce, ENSAD, Lido, etc.) to support the development of young artists.

Campus PCM training workshops led by international artists and involving students from different European schools (ENSAD, TNS, etc.).

Visitor itineraries to travel between the different venues of the *Cité du théâtre/Domaine d'O-Printemps des Comédiens Montpellier*.

Project leader: **Printemps des Comédiens** Partners: **Nowy Teatr Warsaw, Théâtre National Wallonie-Bruxelles, Thalia Theater - Hamburg, Théâtre Vidy Lausanne, Festival d'Avignon, Wiener Festwochen, Napoli Teatro, Athens and Epidaurus Festival, Santiago AMI, Grec - Barcelona, Ruhrtriennale, Holland Festival, Temporada Alta - Girona, Manchester International Festival, Festival TransAmériques - Montreal, MIT - São Paulo, FIBA - Buenos Aires**

Performance and Posidonia®

@E This project, which aims to promote the cultural vitality of intermediate cities and to explore the new territories of art, will be organised around the Thau lagoon.

Combining a parade, street and circus arts, and artistic creations in the public space, and calling upon different artists – choreographers, visual artists, circus artists, musicians – this event will place the participation of amateurs and thus the population front and centre. Based on a Call for Projects to be launched in 2026 and artistic partnerships on a local and European scale, it will unite all of the 14 towns located around the Thau lagoon.

By taking into account the strong identity of the Thau lagoon, which is full of resources but also a fragile ecosystem, and by linking the artistic, the social, the urbanistic and the ecological, this project will also be an opportunity to anchor a tradition of artistic endeavours across the territories. The project will be supported by both professional companies and European artistic teams.

It also aims to highlight a network of towns and villages that have managed to preserve their

historic urban fabric and a territory with undeniable landscape qualities through presence in unique locations.

Project leader: **Théâtre Molière Sète, Scène Nationale**
Partners: **Salia Sanou, Komplex Kapharnaüm, Le cirque acrobatique de Tanger (Morocco), Lonely Circus, Jordi Galli (Spain), Bistaki, European artistic teams**

The Transymphonics®

@T This project is supported by the Radio France Festival which, since 1985, has been organising more than 150 concerts (classical, jazz, electronic) and cultural events in more than 60 towns in the territory each year in the summer, most of which are free and open to the public. Some of these projects are broadcast live or on replay on France Culture and France Musique to reach national and international audiences.

In 2028, the festival will offer a European edition by commissioning 28 European composers to create a musical piece with multiple vocal artists.

Orchestras and choirs from the European Broadcasting Union will be invited to offer a repertoire celebrating five centuries of

music, highlighting pieces that were created or inspired by exile, exchange, peoples and hopes placed in a Europe in the making on the margins of national narratives.

Finally, a large music summer school will be organised for young musicians from all over Europe and internationally.

Project leader: **Radio France Montpellier Occitanie Festival**
Partners: **Radio France, European Broadcasting Union - Geneva (Switzerland), European Youth Orchestra - Ferrara (Italy)**

Montpellier Euromed Music®

@T The project's strategic objective is to develop a space for musical creation and dissemination between East and West, based on exchange, respect and equal opportunities.

Drawing on the international expertise of the Arabesques Festival, this project will take place in several phases.

The first, in 2023, during the Fez Festival (Morocco), will consist of bringing together those involved in music creation for professional meetings to identify areas of cooperation. From 2025, co-creation projects will be set up, leading to workshops and productions.

In 2027, a brand-new concert combining classical and Arab-Andalusian traditions will be produced in partnership with the Arab-Andalusian Orchestra of Fez and the National Orchestra of Montpellier. The concert will be broadcast at the openings of the Fez Festival and the Arabesques Festival. This concert will then go on tour starting in 2029.

Project leaders: **Uni'sons**
Partners: **Institut du Monde Arabe, Opéra Orchestre National de Montpellier, Embassies of Arab and Mediterranean countries, the Fez Festival of Sacred Music (Morocco), Centre des Musiques Arabes et Méditerranéennes (Tunisia), Conservatoire de Musiques in Tlemcen (Algeria), Casa Arabe in Madrid, Moussem in Brussels**



Biennial event dedicated to African creation (Africa Montpellier Forum)[®]

 Following the momentum generated by the hosting of the New Africa-France Summit and its public offshoot on the Esplanade in Montpellier in October 2021, many ties have been forged between our territory and the African continent, particularly in the field of culture. This momentum lends itself to creating a major recurring event. It will link the existing dynamics between Montpellier and the African continent, initiating new ties between our territory and the African continent and welcoming and promoting regional, national and international dynamics of cooperation between our two continents.

From 2023, then in 2025 and finally during a special edition in 2028, the biennial of African creation will explore the multiple facets of African creation.

For Montpellier, the aim is to become a place of constant exchange between African and European artists wishing to work on the major themes of the future. The project also seeks to build a new type of relationship, based on horizontality, the reciprocal sharing of knowledge and know-how, particularly in the processes of training, creation and public relations. Finally, efforts will be made to strengthen the links that unite the African continent and Europe around the major challenges of ecological change and international solidarity.

Relying on the facilities of the metropolitan area and on our capacity to welcome, support dialogue and explore, the artists will benefit from residencies in the territory (Villa Bazille, Villa Laurens, Villa Salis), forums for exchange with the public (universities, schools) and from presentation events.

Each edition will be an opportunity to tackle a specific theme (water, housing, training, etc.) involving issues of tradition and contemporary creation.

For each edition, a curator will be appointed, selected for their mastery of cooperation issues and knowledge of African arts.

Project leaders: **Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole - Montpellier 2028**
Partners: **Montpellier Danse, Arabesques Festival, Afrik'art, Récréatérale in Ouagadougou, Biennale des Arts de la Scène en Méditerranée, Rockstore, Afrotopies Festival, local associations, Institut Français Paris and all the Instituts Français in Africa**

Imagining, making and experiencing the cinema of 2028 together[®]

 The Cinemed film festival, created in Montpellier in 1979, is one of the major international film events dedicated to Mediterranean filmmakers. Committed to supporting filmmakers, the project's ambition is to make the city a bridge between the audiovisual industries and schools established across the territory and to establish contacts with European investors/producers to build an ecosystem conducive to projects to create the cinema of tomorrow.

The first phase of the project, through networking co-managed by the Federation of European Screen Directors (FERA) and the European Film Academy (EFA) and the major European festivals (Cannes, Venice, Berlin, San Sebastian), aims to achieve the signature in 2028 in Montpellier of a European film charter covering the distribution of moving images.

The second phase will consist of open-air screenings of European heritage films in the 142 towns and cities in the bid between May and September.



Project leader: **Association festival Cinemed** Partners: **European Film Academy - Berlin (Germany), Federation of European Screen Directors - Brussels (Belgium)**

GraphisMs: Festival of graphic design in southern France[®]

 The only one of its kind in the Occitanie Region, GraphisMs is an annual festival dedicated to graphic design - a discipline located at the crossroads of cultural message publishing, public spaces and artistic creation. This project will be rolled out in the metropolitan area's network of 14 media libraries and in the public spaces and transport networks of the bid territory. Exploring form and content, the festival will be a space for overcoming the divide between independent graphic design and commercial visual communication.

Project leaders: **Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole network of media libraries, Centre d'art La Fenêtre**
Partners: **Le Signe - National graphic design centre - Communications departments of the local/regional authorities participating in the bid - Polish Graphic Design Foundation (Warsaw, Poland), Graphic Days (Turin, Italy), Graphic Matters (Breda, the Netherlands), FIG: festival indiscipliné de graphisme (Belgium)**

Ad Aeternam: Past Futures[®]

 Our vision of the future is constantly evolving and each era has its own future.
 Creating new collective imaginations requires precise knowledge of the visions of the future that previous generations have produced.

From collaborative research into past traces of projection into the future, this project uses a transmedia approach to put together exhibitions and mini-series (literature/web series) by bringing the "visions" of the future into dialogue.

It brings together players from the creative industries, university research, public archives and contemporary creation and is part of a long-term strategy to renew the promotion of the heritage via exhibition rooms and across various media.

Project leader: **Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole network of media libraries**
Partners: **Municipal and departmental archives, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MO.CO, Institut National de l'Audiovisuel**

Wide angles: biennial festival of the performing arts in the Mediterranean[®]

 Since 2021, the *Biennale des Arts de la Scène en Méditerranée* [biennial for the performing arts in the Mediterranean] has been part of the Montpellier-Sète region thanks to a network of cultural partners committed to a collective approach. Developing this event on a local and international scale for the 2023, 2025 and 2028 editions will make it possible to consider its sustainability, the forging of strong international cooperation and the deployment of innovative projects that support circulating works and sharing them with the public as well as training for professionals.

The programme of live performances will be designed and presented by some twenty cultural partners in Montpellier-Sète and the surrounding area over several weeks to showcase the work of artists based in the Mediterranean, with a strong focus on Euro-Mediterranean countries (between fifteen and twenty countries represented). Priority will be given to creations and series (several performances of the same show), to give artists in the territory better visibility.

Between two biennials (2024 and 2027), the annual gatherings between Mediterranean artists


will be held in a partner city (Athens, Palermo). Imagined and led by researchers, the gatherings will be open to the public to share the conditions of creation in the Mediterranean, to get involved in issues regarding the future of the artistic sector in light of global warming, and to explore aesthetics and artistic trends.

Finally, the project plans to set up an “ephemeral transgenerational school” with students from Euro-Mediterranean art schools and biennial visitors to share a journey through the programme for several weeks, with critical analysis workshops led by philosophers and art historians along with meetings with the hosted artists.

Project leaders: **CDN Théâtre des 13 vents + Consortium of the Biennial** composed of 13 partner organisations in the region (**Opera, ESAT la Bulle Bleu, ICI-CCN, etc.**)

Partners: **Teatre Nacional de Catalunya (Spain), Aldes (Italy), Onassis Stegi Production Foundation (Greece), Zoukak collective (Beirut, Lebanon)**

Bililingi®*

 This exhibition will start from the desire to tell the story of the relationship between the African continent and images from popular culture and advertising, through comics, signage design, posters, costumes, graphic design and typography, while placing these practices in a productive and uninterrupted transcontinental dialogue.

The exhibition will bring two large ensembles into dialogue. The first, MIAM, will present the complexity and richness of African vernacular images: from cinema posters from Ghana, unique and original pieces that are easier to produce than to reproduce in large numbers, to shop signs for hairdressers and jewellery stalls, comic books from Kinshasa and album covers for Fela, with the highlight being the caravan of Esther Mahlangu, a painter whose work is part of the mural painting tradition of the Ndebele people of South Africa.

Meanwhile, *La Fenêtre* will focus on a second track that will recall the variety of writing and design systems that are specific to the African continent (alphabetical systems, syllabics, hieroglyphs, ideograms), and which have existed alongside the Roman alphabet to produce the abovementioned forms, while allowing the spread of Western graphic design in African cities throughout the twentieth century. At the same time, pioneering



artists and designers, sometimes from the diasporas, were demanding more multiculturalism, particularly in the graphic design canon.

They paved the way for a young generation of African designers who are now breaking free from the shackles of exoticism and claiming, re-adapting and developing forms and motifs that have entered the Western vocabulary by their strength and power.

Project leaders: **MIAM Sète, La Fenêtre**
Partners: **Fine Arts Schools (Sète/Montpellier), Instituts Français in Africa: Kinshasa, Dakar, Casablanca, Abidjan, Accra, Johannesburg, Kigali** (* images in Lingala)

The Tabor Whale®


 This project is based on the expertise of the “temporary artistic zones” (ZAT), launched in Montpellier in 2010. The ZAT bring together a large part of the population around artistic proposals designed for the public space.

For 2028, the ZAT proposes building a human and artistic epic based on a nomadic Franco-Czech camp and its whale caravan. It is a place for Czech, French and international artists to meet, share and enjoy themselves with the locals and other curious people from here and elsewhere in the **M2S** bid territory.

The camp will move throughout the bid territory through a slow, sensitive and festive itinerary, addressing themes related to Romani cultures, travelling peoples and transnational European adventurers.

Project leader: **ZAT City of Montpellier**
- Artistic direction of Pascal Lebrun Cordier, Montpellier 2028
Partners: **Broumov 2028, Petr & Matej Forman, Cirque Trottola, Baro d’evel**

Montpelhièr 2028, l’esperit de la fèsta®

 The Languedoc area is noted for the diverse symbolic resources marshalled by its local communities, characteristic of an original relationship with the living world and the elements. This dialogue between time and matter, bodies and nature, is embodied in the *Totemics*, masterpieces of wood and canvas, which obey a precise ritual and which, each time they are brought out, unite people with the sound of the *auboi* [Mediterranean oboe], the *pifre* [fife] and the *bodega* [a variation of the bagpipes]. These processions, which date back to the fifteenth century, have continued to be reinvented or reactivated over the years to the point of giving rise to new creations.

This intangible heritage, remarked or recognised by UNESCO (totemic animals 2008, Solstice fire festivals 2015), is indicative of a territory where festive celebrations present both an exceptional geographical and cultural coherence as well as a great permanence in time, in forms that are specific, even exclusive.

This spirit of celebration, marked as much by a great freedom of form as by the continuity of its manifestations, will be apparent once again in 2028 through an impressive spectacle where Languedoc culture, heir to a history whose Occitan sources are enriched by multiple cultural contributions, will reinvent itself and experience one of its many metamorphoses to which the centuries have borne witness. The intercultural dimension will be at the heart of the event, and new or priority neighbourhoods will be a particular focus.

The 37 medieval towers of the Languedoc region, will be lit up, much like the *brandons* [torches] of Sant Joan [Saint John], to send a signal towards the Mediterranean, in unison with an event celebrating a thousand years of festivals and culture with all the towns and villages of the greater Montpellier area, gathered in its metropolitan *còr* [heart].

Project leader: **CIRDOC**

Partners: **Eurorégion Pyrénées Méditerranée**, Institut Ramon Llull, Institut Valencià de Cultura, Colles Castelleres de Catalunya, Consell Assessor de Cultura Popular i Tradicional de les Illes Balears, Karu Prod (Rumba Catalana)

Grand Participatory Opera®

@T A participatory opera involves a very large number of actors united around a common dynamic. A commissioned piece will anchor this dynamic in our complex times. The performers (full- and part-time professionals from the Montpellier National Opera Orchestra, artists from partner institutions such as the MO.CO, and all the amateurs involved) will be guided in this gigantic creation by an artistic team made up of professions linked to the stage and the reflection on staged forms - scenography, decoration, dramaturgy, costumes, video design, etc.

The themes of sharing, dialogue and living together are inherent to the project. The specific themes related to the major issues of the twenty-first century (sustainable development in the face of crises impacting ecology, economy and society) will be determined as the content is constructed in a collaborative manner.

Project leader: **Opéra Orchestre National de Montpellier**

Partner: **Opéra Europa network**



12

Explain concisely how the programme combines local cultural heritage and traditional art forms with innovative and experimental modes of cultural expression?

For centuries, populations from Europe and Africa have settled in our territory, bringing with them their traditions and beginning a long process of cultural blending. However, rapid population growth and the effect of urban development have often rendered these traditions and cultures invisible, relegating them to a place of folklore.

Thus, **M2S**'s first ambition is to render these cultures and traditions **visible** and to value them not only to foster **inclusion** and **intercultural dialogue**, but also as a method of mobilising our collective imagination to confront the issues of the day.

The **Trans?** programme includes projects that promote the

Romani, Occitan and Mediterranean cultures, just as the **Water** and **Future** programmes encourage reflection on the geographical and historical dimension of the ties that bind these cultures.

Vernacular traditions and their ability to provide solutions to reflect on our future will often be at the heart of the proposed projects. In particular, the programme will count on the indispensable support

from the CIRDOC and the many excellent associations that maintain ties between Occitan and contemporary creation. Two key institutions in Montpellier – La Rampe Tio interregional Occitan theatre and the Montpellier radio association Ràdio associative Lengua d’Òc – will be significantly involved with this programme. Their influence will enable the region of Occitanie and its intangible heritage to be better known in Europe and beyond.

Additionally, **M28** includes an important scientific component in connection with the two Montpellier universities where sociological and anthropological issues, and more generally approaches from the humanities and social sciences, will give rise to debates, research work and international symposiums.

Finally, in conjunction with the region’s economic players, the catering and beverage/restaurant component of the 2028 programme will be planned so as to incorporate the region’s **culinary** and **agricultural traditions** in an innovative and responsible way (short supply chains, organic produce, gastronomic and oenological competitions).

13

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

The writing of the project was initiated by a design process that included five thematic workshops with more than 150 professionals, artists and associations working on the major strategic priorities of the territory’s cultural policy. The selected themes were: Europe, living together, hospitality for artists, youth, and the development of territories through culture (cf. question 5).

Participants were able to exchange views, offer critiques, and put forward new ideas and enhance them as well as identify the major issues that were of concern to them and that were representative of their aspirations for the bid. Finally, on 30 June 2022, a presentation of the work was made to the public and to elected representatives.

Along with this reflective work, a Call for Projects with a budget of €700,000 was launched to invite the region’s cultural stakeholders to develop actions that respond to the issues identified during the workshops. Of the 260 respondents, 50 projects were selected from a wide variety of fields and across the entire bid territory. During this phase, in addition to helping us measure the very strong interest among the stakeholders for this unifying project, we were able to identify the weaknesses of our respective organisations. Specifically, we were able to assess the fragility of the international and European networks of the smallest cultural actors and the need for support from

a “Europe and International” unit aimed at improving training, sharing knowledge and resources, and encouraging inventiveness and creation. This is one of our challenges for the years to come (cf. question 33).

All this work served as an ever-evolving basis for the writing of our concepts (**CONNECT, ACT, CELEBRATE**) and an editorial line capable of uniting people on the largest scope possible.

Our bidbook thus presents artistic projects led by local cultural stakeholders who, from 2022 on, have been able to take part in the European dimension of the bid project. During this first stage, these actors were mostly large and historical players who already had production practice and/or international networks. A new Call for Projects with the same budget (€700,000) has already been launched for 2023. It explicitly aims to invite the territory’s cultural stakeholders to begin creating prototypes, which may be included in the 2028 programme. The Call for Projects, will identify the most promising organisations and provide them with support from January 2023 (networking, curatorial work, production) to involve them as early as possible in the process and allow them to develop and bring to fruition their ideas and creativity for the **M28** project.



European Dimension

14

Present the activities designed to:

→ Promote cultural diversity in Europe, intercultural dialogue and greater mutual understanding between European citizens;

European Montpellier

Since its founding in the Middle Ages, Montpellier has been part of an intercultural dialogue with the European continent. The city developed through the Middle Ages on the basis of the commune system similar to that in Italy. Visited by humanists and intellectuals during the Renaissance, it was

also frequented by many foreign students who came to study medicine at its famous faculty.

With 4,000 additional inhabitants each year, Montpellier's population is growing by 1.5% per year. This demographic growth is due essentially to the city's migratory balance, which alone accounts for 1.1% of annual population growth. Today the most attractive Metropole in France, it is one of the hundred largest European cities and has conserved a genuine European culture and identity. In 2021, Montpellier reaffirmed this by signing of a charter of adhesion to European values and principles along with all the Mayors of the member municipalities of Montpellier Méditerranée Metropole on Europe Day on the 9th May.

In March 2022, under the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union, Montpellier hosted the Informal Meeting of Development Ministers of the European Union, at the Musée Fabre.

The City also supports the work of the Brussels-based association *Occitanie Europe*, which enables Montpellier to maintain a close link with European policies and decision-makers.

A welcoming region

International partnerships are a central strategic focus of the work of the City and the Metropole: by networking with territories all over the world, it smooths the exchange of good practices, promotes the mobility

and reputation of local stakeholders, builds connections with international partners and ensures that the city and metropolis are not only attractive, but above all in phase with the challenges of tomorrow.

M2S's bid is fully aligned with Montpellier's international policy roadmap that will be voted in December 2022.

Montpellier is a "World City": its medical faculty, the oldest in the world still in active, has always made it a place of welcome, subject to diverse influences. Its exceptional heritage, quality of life, the quality of its university and economic ecosystem and its cultural and sporting excellence make it an especially attractive region today.

Numerous and dynamic diasporas are present. They are fully integrated into the city life and are a source of cultural richness, innovation and social cohesion.

An entry point for African-European relations

The government's choice of Montpellier in 2020 as the venue of the New Africa-France Summit is an acknowledgement of this identity as a land of welcome and diversity. Montpellier has invested every effort in this course of redefining France's relationship with the African continent, based on mutual respect, enrichment and on highlighting the strengths of African civil society.

Following this summit, Montpellier hosted two other events in partnership with the Innovation and Prospective Foundation (FPI): first of all, the Summer University of Young African Entrepreneurs (9 young leaders from this initial year group came to Montpellier for a fortnight to exchange ideas and work with economic players in the region). In 2021 and 2022, Montpellier also hosted

the FPI's forum *Nouvelles d'Afrique*, which focused on the need, against a complex backcloth, to mobilise African and European skills in order to unleash the innovativeness and power to act that will enable the African continent to meet future challenges.

At the same time, but at the European level, the European Union-African Union Summit of February 2022 was held with the objective of building a common vision between Africa and Europe for 2030. The Africa-Europe alliance aims to create an area of solidarity, security, peace and sustainable prosperity.

This process of **redefining links with the African territory** is part and parcel of the **M2S** bid; in particular, the duration and resonance of the summit is to be prolonged with a biennial event on African culture, the first of which will take place in 2023. The 2028 event will be a special edition (cf. question 11).

At the end of 2022, Montpellier will also welcome the cities of the **RIZOMA** network for a progress report on their work concerning one of the major issues of the 21st century between Europe and Africa: the question of restitution.

The **RIZOMA** project, supported by the European Commission, builds on the long-standing commitment of its partners (cf. map p.33) towards innovative integration and inclusion policies for testing new models. It enables migrant and second generation communities to act on their right to maintain links with their country of origin and to act on the potential of this link to foster cultural and economic development.

Concerning the Mediterranean Basin, the project of the **Institute of the History of France and Algeria** is the result of a vast effort towards reconciliation and the healing of memories based on the recommendations of the State-commissioned report written by Benjamin Stora. This institute, the national status of which will be a guarantee of its success, will have a cultural, historical and memorial vocation following the example of the Africa-France summit in 2021. This institute will host the heritage collections built up by Montpellier and currently housed at the Mucem in Marseille.

→ Highlight the common aspects of European cultures, history and heritage, as well as European integration and current European issues;

or techniques and approaches developed in regions facing the same challenges.

M2S proposes to **ACT** on these issues both at the European and international level by means of horizontal cooperation, in particular with Africa.

Supporting the objectives the European Green Deal to meet the challenges of climate change and densification, **M2S** has chosen to develop projects that question aspects of urbanism, design and mobility by following the principles of the **New European Bauhaus**.

This approach is especially evident in the projects of the **Water that connects us** programme, which combines historical and scientific approaches with traditional or contemporary artistic practices.

Building new communities of European stakeholders

To this end, the aim will be rather to **CONNECT** modern scientific knowledge with vernacular know-how, with South-North exchanges and with stakeholders' knowledge acquired through close proximity to the realities of their respective regions, thus questioning modern-day usages of housing, mobility, the city and public space.

These relations will be especially highlighted by the cultural stakeholders in the design of the artistic programme, as well as through the parallel programmes dealing with issues of reception, mobility of audiences (with an approach fostering inclusion and transgenerational relations), and evaluation, in conjunction with the universities.

The transmedia approach of the bid is aimed at developing and facilitating the transfer of knowledge between science and society by multiplying the points of contact between researchers, artists and the rest of society. This approach can be seen in particular in the **Research Creation programme (PIA 4)** and in the twinning between the city of Montpellier and the city of Heidelberg.

This aspect is especially highlighted in the **Serial futures** and **Trans?** programmes.

M2S's will also develop **inclusive** projects, together with the inhabitants, for minority cultures, promoting multilingual approaches, gastronomic cultures and professional practices, and increasing cooperation with other European groups.

Experimenting with environmental changes

Developing responses to these future challenges calls for greater exchanges of knowledge and practices at both the institutional and local levels. It also requires better knowledge of past practices



Twin cities

● [Barcelona](#) - Spain
 ● [Bethlehem](#) - West Bank
 ● [Chengdu](#) - China
 ● [Fez](#) - Morocco
 ● [Heidelberg](#) - Germany
 ● [Kos](#) - Greece
 ● [Louisville](#) - USA
 ● [Manchester](#) - England
 ● [Palermo](#) - Italy
 ● [Rio de Janeiro](#) - Brazil
 ● [Sherbrooke](#) - Canada
 ● [Tiberias](#) - Israel
 ● [Tlemcen](#) - Algeria

CEC partnerships

■ [Aveiro](#) - Portugal
 ■ [Braga](#) - Portugal
 ■ [Broumov](#) - Czech Republic
 ■ [Budweis](#) - Czech Republic
 ■ [Esch-sur-Alzette](#) - Luxembourg
 ■ [Liberec](#) - Czech Republic
 ■ [Porto](#) - Portugal
 ■ [Warsaw](#) - Poland

CEC projects

◆ [Abidjan](#) - Ivory Coast
 ◆ [Accra](#) - Ghana
 ◆ [Amsterdam](#) - Holland
 ◆ [Arles](#) - France
 ◆ [Athens](#) - Greece
 ◆ [Auch](#) - France
 ◆ [Aveiro](#) - Portugal
 ◆ [Avignon](#) - France
 ◆ [Barcelona](#) - Spain
 ◆ [Berlin](#) - Germany
 ◆ [Beirut](#) - Lebanon
 ◆ [Bonn](#) - Germany
 ◆ [Braga](#) - Portugal
 ◆ [Breda](#) - Holland
 ◆ [Brno](#) - Czech Republic
 ◆ [Broumov](#) - Czech Republic
 ◆ [Brussels](#) - Belgium
 ◆ [Buenos Aires](#) - Argentina
 ◆ [Casablanca](#) - Morocco
 ◆ [Charleroi](#) - Belgium
 ◆ [Cotonou](#) - Benin
 ◆ [Dakar](#) - Senegal
 ◆ [Epidauros](#) - Greece
 ◆ [Essen](#) - Germany
 ◆ [Ferrara](#) - Italy
 ◆ [Fez](#) - Morocco
 ◆ [Geneva](#) - Switzerland
 ◆ [Girona](#) - Spain
 ◆ [Grenoble](#) - France
 ◆ [Hamburg](#) - Germany
 ◆ [Johannesburg](#) - South Africa
 ◆ [Kigali](#) - Rwanda

◆ [Kinshasa](#) - RDC
 ◆ [Lausanne](#) - Suisse
 ◆ [Cairo](#) - Egypt
 ◆ [Lisbon](#) - Portugal
 ◆ [Lyon](#) - France
 ◆ [Madrid](#) - Spain
 ◆ [Manchester](#) - England
 ◆ [Marseille](#) - France
 ◆ [Matosinhos](#) - Portugal
 ◆ [Montreal](#) - Canada
 ◆ [Murcia](#) - Spain
 ◆ [Naples](#) - Italy
 ◆ [Ouagadougou](#) - Burkina Faso
 ◆ [Palma de Mallorca](#) - Spain
 ◆ [Paris](#) - France
 ◆ [Porcari](#) - Italy
 ◆ [Port-Vendres](#) - France
 ◆ [Prague](#) - Czech Republic
 ◆ [Santiago](#) - Chile
 ◆ [Sao Paulo](#) - Brazil
 ◆ [Sidi Bou Said](#) - Tunisia
 ◆ [Tangier](#) - Morocco
 ◆ [Tarragone](#) - Spain
 ◆ [Tlemcen](#) - Algeria
 ◆ [Toulon](#) - France
 ◆ [Toulouse](#) - France
 ◆ [Turin](#) - Italy
 ◆ [Valence](#) - Spain
 ◆ [Valladolid](#) - Spain
 ◆ [Warsaw](#) - Poland
 ◆ [Vienna](#) - Austria

RIZOMA network

▼ [Athens](#) - Greece
 ▼ [Bergamo](#) - Italy
 ▼ [Braga](#) - Portugal
 ▼ [Düsseldorf](#) - Germany
 ▼ [Marseille](#) - France
 ▼ [Mannheim](#) - Germany
 ▼ [Palermo](#) - Italy
 ▼ [Reggio Calabria](#) - Italy
 ▼ [Tirana](#) - Albania

Eurocities having signed the "sustainable culture" charter

● [Erfurt](#) - Germany
 ● [Esch-sur-Alzette](#) - Luxembourg
 ● [Kharkiv](#) - Ukraine
 ● [Leeds](#) - United Kingdom
 ● [Liege](#) - Belgium
 ● [Turin](#) - Italy
 ● [Valladolid](#) - Spain
 ● [Wroclaw](#) - Poland

City of Children/ international network

■ [A Guarda](#) - Spain
 ■ [Almoradí](#) - Spain
 ■ [Arroyito](#) - Argentina
 ■ [Bilbao](#) - Spain

■ [Buenos Aires](#) - Argentina
 ■ [Carbajosa de la Sagrada](#) - Spain
 ■ [Catoira](#) - Spain
 ■ [Carpi](#) - Italy
 ■ [Ermua](#) - Spain
 ■ [Fano](#) - Italy
 ■ [Querétaro](#) - Mexico
 ■ [Girardot](#) - Venezuela
 ■ [Granada](#) - Spain
 ■ [Huesca](#) - Spain
 ■ [Canary Islands](#) - Spain
 ■ [Jesus Maria](#) - Argentina
 ■ [Leioa](#) - Spain
 ■ [Lima](#) - Peru
 ■ [Lleida](#) - Spain
 ■ [Malnate](#) - Italy
 ■ [Medellín](#) - Colombia
 ■ [Murcia](#) - Spain
 ■ [Naples](#) - Italy
 ■ [Punta Arenas](#) - Chile
 ■ [Rome](#) - Italy
 ■ [Rosario](#) - Argentina
 ■ [San Giorgio a Cremano](#) - Italy
 ■ [Santa Fe](#) - Argentina
 ■ [San Martín de los Andes](#) - Argentina
 ■ [Totoras](#) - Argentina
 ■ [Vasanello](#) - Italy

This approach can be found not only in the artistic projects Gypsy Symphonic Itineraries® and Euromed music®, but also in projects dealing with communication with the public (translations), food (gastronomy) and research projects.

Furthermore, we are committed to the development of the **Social Economy**, as recently defined by the Commission Action Plan on Social Economy. While a significant part of the cultural sector depends on the Social Economy, there is relatively little dialogue between the two worlds.

The hospitality of the Montpellier area is also illustrated by the response to the influx of refugees fleeing **Ukraine**. In the same spirit as the European Commission's **FAST-CARE** initiative, its aim is to tackle the consequences of the war by providing emergency solutions and flexibility. In Montpellier, a reception centre was set up in the very first few weeks to provide an initial welcome for refugees. Students have also been welcomed and accommodated (e.g. in the MO.CO/art school). Thus, two of them took part in the residency/creation supported by **M2S**. Lastly, some of the proceeds from the MO.CO exhibition "Museums in Exile" will be donated to an association supporting artists from countries at war. The dancePlatForma project, funded under our Call for Projects 2022, is also part of the Acting for Peace scheme, which is open to Ukrainian artists and artists from Eastern Europe bordering the conflict.

→ Showcase European artists, collaborate with stakeholders or cities from different countries and transnational partnerships .

The 2028 programming package will be an opportunity to put Europe in the spotlight. The themes dealt with in these programmes directly echo the major current issues facing the EU, whether they be

environmental or climate issues (e.g.: projects Our Living Refuges®, MicroRivers - Alea Jacta est®, Design for Change_Montpellier28®, etc.), our European identity, the celebration of the communities that make it up, the question of living together (FuturFolkFiction®, Gypsy Symphonic Itineraries®, Academy of the Future®, etc.) or the guarantee of the principle of free movement of goods and people within Europe (Modest Art on the Move®, TRANS/ports®, Printemps des Comédiens - European Edition 2028®, etc.).

We will also highlight the diversity of European artists through collaborative projects (e.g. Bicentenary of the Fabre Museum, Write and Produce Your Own Series!®, Future Transcended®) and projected transnational partnerships (Transymphonics®, Montpellier Euromed Music®, Imagining, making and experiencing the cinema of 2028 together®, GraphisMs: Festival of graphic design in southern France®, Wide angles: biennial festival of the performing arts in the Mediterranean®).

The international relations developed by our cultural structures over more than



40 years are an important resource that we can mobilise to this end.

In the long run, **Villa Bazille** is intended to be an open window on European creation: as a place at the crossroads of the arts and sciences hosting European artists and researchers from all disciplines, its residency programme will be composed in collaboration with other European artistic and cultural institutions. The aim of these **cross-residencies** is to strengthen European and international dialogue and exchange. The programme will also be drawn up on the basis of mentoring between a local institution (MO.CO, *Domaine d'O*, *Agora de la Danse*, etc.) and a foreign institution, encouraging greater dialogue and exchange between organisations over and beyond the support of artistic creation.

In addition, to encourage the emergence of collaborations and projects with a European dimension, a **shared point of contact** will be created with institutional partners that will draw on the work of local authorities, regional agencies and specialised associations (*Occitanie Europe*).

Our participation in numerous European and international networks of European cities (Eurocities), Mediterranean cities (MedCités), cooperation aid organisations (*Occitanie Coopération*, *Cités Unies*, association of university cities), defence of LGBTQI+ rights networks (Rainbow Cities Network) and anti-racism bodies (ECCRA-ICCRA) will provide us with invaluable resources (cf. map p.33) for building partnerships.

We also aim to **CONNECT** by hosting or participating in meetings and exchanges with other European actors. For example, in 2023, Montpellier and various third places in the Greater Montpellier and Pic Saint-Loup areas, Sète and Lodève will host the “**Third Places for Europe**” meeting, the first European gathering of cultural third places, fab labs, media libraries, short circuits, coworking centres, run by user communities tackling operational challenges in the face of current change. More than 300 participants are expected from over 20 European countries, with the steering committee already including representatives from ten countries (Portugal, Spain, Italy, Romania, Croatia, Slovenia, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and Ireland).

Access to **cultural rights**, as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and reinforced by the 2007 Fribourg Declaration, will be one of the first topics of discussion.

15 Can you explain in detail your strategy for attracting the interest of a wide European and international audience?

Our region is highly attractive both in France and internationally. 33% of the Hérault's tourist clientele are foreigners, mostly European. The ambition of the Region in the years ahead is to become the **leading European destination by promoting sustainable tourism** that meets the needs

not only of tourists but also of its territories, while protecting and improving resources for the future.

Objectives

- Get the people already living in the region to visit it.
- Extend tourism periods by the way we construct our programmes.
- Implement mechanisms to improve tourism quality.
- Set up a supplementary attractiveness strategy focusing on the months outside peak tourism periods.

Actions

- Together with the tourist offices, develop a tourist mobility application that includes cultural, gastronomic and wine tours promoting the specific characteristics of the region.
- Organise a major project of cross-residencies between starred chefs, currently limited to France (e.g. residence between Sète/Agde and Montmartre-Paris 18), which would be extended to the European level. With 51 Michelin-starred restaurants in the Occitanie Region, including 10 in the Hérault (5 in Montpellier, 1 in Sète, 1 in Pézenas), our region is currently experiencing a real boom in terms of gastronomy. This new generation of chefs, who are committed to sourcing from local producers practising sustainable agriculture, make sharing and discovery a focal centre of their work.
- Develop language skills in tourist offices and cultural structures (staff training, adaptation of communication channels).
- Set up a soft mobility trail including the promotion of sports activities (hiking/biking/canoeing/running, etc.) associated with our project **Great Art Walks - Water Trails®**.

Describe the links developed or to be developed between your cultural programme and that of other cities holding the title of European Capital of Culture.

Our priority was to contact the four candidate cities in the **Czech Republic** to consider various cooperative projects for our 2028 programme. With **Budweis**, we are holding rich exchanges on issues relating to the links to the arts and sciences, to water and to youth. We will therefore be sharing three jointly identified projects: *Performing (digital) LARPS; Utopic Zones (2028);*

Theatre of the oppressed 2028.

With **Broumov**, we are building our project *The Tabor Whale*®, a human and artistic epic based on a nomadic Franco-Czech camp and its caravan.

In the same way, it seemed relevant to share our experiences with the **Portuguese candidate cities** for the year 2027. We were already linked to **Braga** through the RIZOMA network. Several projects now bring us together in our bids: *Common Good; Creators Academy with CCN; Contempl/ACTION Cinema Platform with Cinemed; Granary with Maison de l'Architecture*. We are also working together on memorial issues related to the future Institute of French and Algerian History. We will be hosting the *Colonial Silences* exhibition project as part of our Africa Biennial. Our *FuturFolkFiction*® project will be presented as part of the *Europe Day Pilgrimage* programme in 2027.

We travelled to **Aveiro** to meet their team. We have a shared concern about rising water levels and have devised a number of cooperative projects aimed at creating a community of practitioners on a European scale through artistic as well as scientific exchanges. The *MicroRivers*® project is based on our geophysical proximity to the rivers in our regions (the Lez and the Rio Bocco) and the *TRANS/port*® project links our ports with a documentary photography project.

Our link to **Palermo** is particularly important. Firstly because of the cultural partnership agreement that we have mutually committed to for the years ahead, and secondly because of the RIZOMA project, launched this year with Athens, Bergamo, Braga, Düsseldorf, Marseille, Mannheim, Reggio Calabria, and Tirana (cf. question 14). Based in Palermo, Studio **RIZOMA** is a transnational hub that develops artistic productions and research projects by programming residencies and grants.

The nomadic SLA festival is another link. A biennial of contemporary art organized by an association (Sète-Los Angeles), this festival is staged in a different venue in Europe each year to create lasting links between the artists of Sète and elsewhere. Its aim is to form

a cosmopolitan and growing artistic community radiating out from the city of Sète. For its second edition in 2022, the Sicilian capital and 2018 European Capital of Culture, Palermo, was chosen.

We have regular contacts with the cities of **Marseille** and **Lille**, former European capitals in France. In September in Lille, on the occasion of the Eurocities culture forum, where local cultural action professionals come together, Montpellier signed the network's **sustainable culture charter**. This "Lille Appeal" launched a European initiative on sustainable culture together with many European cities such as **Leeds** (UK), **Liège** (Belgium), **Esch-sur-Alzette** (Luxembourg), **Erfurt** (Germany), **Wroclaw** (Poland), **Turin** (Italy), **Valladolid** (Spain) and **Kharkiv** (Ukraine).

This year, Montpellier celebrates the 60th anniversary of its twinning with **Heidelberg**. During the celebration of this anniversary in September, the mayors of both cities visited Heidelberg's Holocaust Documentation Centre of the Sinti Roma, the German gypsies, the city library and the refugee reception centre and attended a discussion at Barcamp between French and German young people.

We also signed joint declaration in favour of the commitment to ecological transition to draw mutual advantage from our respective fields of excellence: the City of Heidelberg wishes to gain inspiration from Montpellier's sustainable mobility programme by trialling a 30 km/h speed limit and laying the foundations for the introduction of free transport. Montpellier will rely on Heidelberg's great expertise to help it make the transition to cycling (more than 35% of the people of Heidelberg travel by bike on a daily basis).

This is also an opportunity to develop new citizen exchange projects, including a theatrical performance led by the company *La Chouette Blanche* featuring representatives of both the Montpellier and German gypsy communities who will be enriching our bid and that of **Heidelberg 2035!**

In 2023, we will be developing our links with the city of **Wroclaw** and, more broadly, with the Metrex network (European Metropolitan Regions and Areas), presided by the Mayor of Wroclaw and which will be a partner of the Young European Baroque Orchestra, the winner of our 2022 Call for Projects.



Outreach

17

Explain in detail how the local population and civil society have been involved in the preparation of the bid and how they will be involved in the delivery of the event.

A mutually developed bid

We have the ambition of a **mutual bid developed for the common good**. The involvement of the local population and civil society has been a prerequisite of our approach from the outset and remains so. We have engaged in a real collective thought process with the aim of rethinking culture on the scale of contemporary European issues and inventing a sustainable and shared project for tomorrow.

The first step was to **organise a series of co-construction workshops** with all the actors involved in our territory (cf. question 13).

In parallel, we developed an **open survey** via an on-line questionnaire based on the main themes of these workshops to ask inhabitants about their visions and expectations for this bid and generate initial support for our approach. The survey has been operational since spring 2022, and we distribute it at every event (cultural, associative, etc.) in the region. We have already been able to draw several lessons from it. The first observation is that Montpellier has a strong cultural identity, with a wide range of events and festivals of national and international importance. Its geographical position, the Mediterranean

lifestyle and its architectural and historical heritage are often praised, confirming the perspectives offered by events that link culture and public areas. Its youth, dynamism, attractiveness and cosmopolitanism are often cited. Finally, we warmly welcomed declarations from inhabitants underlining the free and accessible cultural offer as a real benefit, or praising the transport and mobility policies of a city widely considered as well served.

However, according to the respondents, there are some areas that deserve special attention. Three major issues were raised for the Capital year: the programme should be innovative and meaningful, while boosting the agenda of existing cultural venues and establishments (14.4%); it should be inclusive and accessible to all (inter-generational, accessibility for all audiences, "going towards the populations", notably through artistic and cultural education, or even open-air culture and an opening onto the public space, etc. 19.7%); and it should be ecologically virtuous (mutualisation, soft transport, eco-responsible projects, 10.9%).



Nous aurons plusieurs occasions de travailler sur différents sujets ou projets portés dans le cadre de cette candidature. Sans attendre nous souhaitons savoir :

> Qu'est-ce qui vous plaît dans le fait de participer au Conseil des Enfants ?

On peut proposer et admettre nos idées et accepter celles des autres. On est là pour améliorer la vie dans l'école et dans les temps périscolaires. Cela permet aussi de faire aimer l'école et d'aider les enfants qui arrivent dans les écoles primaires.

> Aimerez-vous participer au projet de la Capitale Européenne de la Culture ? Comment ? Avez-vous des idées ?

J'aimerais participer au projet de la Capitale Européenne de la Culture car j'aimerais faire aimer l'art aux autres personnes. On pourrait faire un concours de tags ou de peintures.

A sample response from the Children's Municipal Council.

We will have several opportunities to work on different topics or projects within the framework of this bid. To begin, we would like to know:

What do you like about participating in the Children's Council?

We can make proposals and submit our ideas and accept those of others. We are here to improve life in the school and in extracurricular activities. It also helps to create a love of school and provide support for children entering primary schools.

Would you like to participate in the European Capital of Culture project?

I would like to participate in the European Capital of Culture project because I would like to make other people love art. We could have a graffiti or painting competition.

Finally, almost half of the participants shared their vision of a 2028 “rich in events”, “festive”, “sparkling” and “inspiring”, with programming “throughout the territory” that would be “federating” but also “participatory” for a “celebration” of the Capital year (42.4%).

These expectations, needs and issues identified by the local population feed our approach in building the **M2S** project.

Co-constructing with citizens' assemblies

Particular attention was paid to children's views. For this, we relied on the **Children's Municipal Council**, which brings together 60 elected counsellors from final years of primary school (CM2) throughout the commune. Accompanied by a facilitator and municipal staff, these young elected citizens present the achievements of their mandate to the Mayor and the Municipal Council each year at the General Assembly. At the last session, we met with these young counsellors and asked them to complete a form designed for the **M2S** bid. Their contributions have helped us to reflect on the bid and, more widely, on cultural interactions with and for children.

The **Development Council** (CODEV) – a citizens' assembly and think tank that assists elected representatives by giving opinions and making proposals on public policy in their area

– also mobilised its members to promote our initiatives and projects that encourage living together. The CODEVs of Sète Agglopôle, Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole, the Pays Cœur d'Hérault (Sydel), the CODEV being set up in the Grand Pic Saint-Loup, as well as the Pays de l'Or and the Pays de Lunel have already given their support and imagined, in 2023, joint actions that have never been undertaken before.

Ever wider inclusion

We have already involved the economic actors in our approach thanks to the mobilisation of the **Chamber of Commerce and Industry**, the **universities** (on projects but also in our evaluation process of our success indicators, cf. question 9), and the **education authority** (concerning the link with school audiences, cf. question 19).

Because a territory can be discovered by walking through it, **urban walks** open to all have also been organised. Through routes, exhibitions and installations, these walks seek to reveal possibilities and continuities that had not been perceived as such previously and also to set up new ones to enable citizens to actively participate in feeding public policies on ecological infrastructures.

To involve the local population and civil society in the preparation of the bid, we have also set up a **partnership with one of the main local radio stations**, France Bleu Hérault, whose broadcasting radius covers the entire **M2S** territory. The pre-bid **podcasts** are aimed at informing inhabitants of the region about the principle of the European Capital of Culture year, the progress of our bid, our strengths deployed... while inviting them to share their reactions, opinions and remarks to continue to enrich our project.

Finally, the projects resulting from our **Calls for Projects** represent an important lever for ensuring the involvement of inhabitants. Indeed, one of the main criteria used by the jury to select the winners is the ability of the project to mobilise and unite the population around the arts and culture, through inclusive approaches, and with the involvement of specific audiences (people with disabilities, families, seniors, etc.).

Since the first Call for Projects, certain projects have illustrated this in a number of ways, as summarised in the following table.

Form of active involvement of the local population	Type of event (project name)		
Participatory artistic creations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory shows that question our living spaces and our cohabitation with the living (<i>Murmuration</i>) • Participatory exhibition in the public space with a photographic artist who accompanied inhabitants in taking pictures on the theme of the importance of the coastline in our culture (<i>Beaches</i>) • Invitation to dance in the public space thanks to QR codes allowing you to make your own dance ((re)COMPOSE & DANSE(here)) Artistic banquets (<i>Quartiers Capitales!</i>) • Co-creation of a sound object with inhabitants during a radio marathon (<i>Maison Lieu: like on the radio!</i>) • Participatory project to create a film based on super 8 films by local people (<i>N'autre histoire</i>) • Participatory and digital concert in the public space based on sound, text and video material collected by the artists from inhabitants about bullfighting practices, a local intangible heritage (<i>Manade Orchestra!</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound and music show to promote the collection of songs by families from the area through an artistic creation (<i>Au creux de l'oreille</i>) • Collection of testimonials on the relationship between inhabitants and their landscape throughout the M28 territory (<i>VIVANT</i>, new narratives in the public space), their attachment to the river Lez for a radio creation (<i>Écoutez Lez!</i>) or the collection of dreams for a sound creation (<i>Les Ombres de la nuit</i>) • Radio creation workshops during a sea trip for young people (<i>Vagabonde</i>, immediate boarding for a maritime and sound adventure!) • Costume workshops enabling people in difficulty to find a social link (<i>My Dream in Costume: the fashion show</i>) • Filmed dance workshops for asylum seekers and refugees (<i>CAD'ANSE</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artistic practice workshops by a contemporary dance platform dedicated to Eastern European artists (<i>dansePlatForma</i>) • Textile art and embroidery workshops for asylum seekers and refugees (<i>What about the weather?</i>) • Playful writing workshops for young people on the theme of European citizenship (<i>Spaces for European youth to speak</i>) • Body expression workshops outdoors (<i>Lost Territories</i>) • Art workshops (<i>Open Air Collection - Armelle Caron, Nina Childress, Toma Dutter and Pablo Garcia</i>)
Public debates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens' Cafés and round tables on the war in Ukraine and on the theme "Being an artist in wartime" • <i>Ciné Philo</i> discussion meetings on European citizenship for young people (European youth forums) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Barkamp" between young Europeans from Germany and France (A cultural city for all) • Time for interprofessional and public sharing with scientists and citizens in the form of walking tours (<i>VIVANT</i>, new narratives in public space) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycle of conferences (Tomorrow, the public space. Cycle of inspiring meetings)

In addition, numerous artistic projects in the bid are based on the **participation of the population**. For example, through the creation of a **bid anthem** that will be performed by a band of young musicians from the region, *Les Loustics du Pics*, on the occasion of the major 2028 events.

In the 2028 programme, the MicroRivers® project is based directly on the collection of stories by European artists from populations living near waterways. The Grand participatory opera® to close the Capital year will be performed by a choir made up of a multitude of amateur singers from the region.

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

Clearly identified as an area for improvement (cf. question 33), the participation of marginalised and disadvantaged groups is an essential part of our approach. In order to develop our mutualised bid, we carried out an initial inventory of the specific audiences for which we intend to act.

A social policy allowing access to culture for all

To this end, our local authorities have committed to projects in the 12 neighbourhoods covered by the city's policy (53,000 inhabitants), via the local cultural centres, the media libraries, the Jean Vilar theatre and the *Centre Communal d'Action Sociale*, which promote the “**outreach**” that is essential for encouraging people to come to the facilities and events. This takes the form of **awareness-raising activities, meetings and exchanges**, but also by putting the public in **active positions** through projects linked to dance, theatre, etc.

To support the implementation of this approach, access to the 2028 programme will be **largely free of charge**. From 2024 onwards, we will be testing a “**complicity ticketing**” system for certain events, where everyone will be able to choose their own price.

Increased accessibility for people with special needs

Access to culture and universal accessibility are major issues for people with special needs. These are vectors of emancipation, autonomy and development. The **annual Handi'Culture programme** of Montpellier City and Metropole Councils has been designed with this in mind: its cultural programme is intended to be accessible and more inclusive, facilitated through specific

visits and adapted mediation mechanisms. The ECoC initiative aims to amplify this trajectory and reinforce the accessibility of the programme. From the outset in 2022 the Call for Projects has enabled us to place a special accent on projects with a strong inclusive dimension. This is the case, for example, of the *Culture Atout Sens* project, a two-part experiment with, on the one hand, a contemporary music concert in which hearing-impaired or deaf people were equipped with waistcoats lent by Montpellier Opera, enabling them to physically feel the music being played, and, on the other hand, a cinema screening with accessibility tools thanks to a live subtitling and audio description system. Or the mobile Escape Game project for visually impaired people: a game where players are deprived of their sense of sight, thus combining sensory experiences and awareness of the situation of visual impairment.

One of the objectives in 2023 will be to formalise a structural project for the **M28** territory: *cultureliensocial*, allowing a reinforcement of the use of culture as a lever for mobilising users with special needs.

Our 2028 programme will be demanding in terms of accessibility, taking into account all specific needs to enable every member of the public to fully experience the Capital year.

An exemplary application in terms of anti-discrimination and equality policy

In its latest report of 2022, the Observatory of Equality between Women and Men draws up a specific assessment of the situation in the culture and communication sector, notably on the persistence of **sexist stereotypes** which are present in the professional environment

as well as in that of art and creation, where women encounter greater difficulties and where sexual and sexist violence and harassment persist. This report, coupled with the Equality Roadmap, reinforces our conviction that these issues remain highly topical.

Also, from a structural point of view, we are committed to ensuring that access to employment is based on strict **parity** within the Montpellier 2028 Association, with a perfectly equal pay policy. We will also ensure that this parity is respected in all of its entities (cf. diagram question 32) as well as within its decision-making bodies (for example, the selection juries for calls for projects). In addition to the presidency of the Association, the strategic management function is currently held by a woman.

In order to ensure that the Association's obligations as an employer are respected, employee awareness of sexual harassment and gender-based violence will be mandatory and we will develop an internal procedure for reporting and dealing with sexual harassment. Depending on the number of employees, a contact person may also be appointed.

This awareness-raising will also be provided to the organising teams of the Capital year events to ensure that all audiences can fully and freely experience the 2028 events that will celebrate diversity.

In addition, our **equality policy** also covers members of the LGBTQIA+ community. The City and Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole are members of the Rainbow Cities Network, which enables the sharing of innovations on the LGBTQIA+ theme, a key issue for our very proactive authorities in this area. Montpellier is the first city in France that has celebrated same-sex marriage. The Montpellier Pride March, created in 1994, is one of the oldest in France and is now the second largest in terms of numbers of participants after Paris.

Moreover, the Occitanie Region is the first region in France to be awarded the “*Région Friendly*” label, which aims to promote proactive public or private policies in terms of diversity (such as hotels). With this in mind, a major awareness-raising campaign will be launched in the run-up to the Capital year.

Attention to the elderly with intergenerational projects

Although the Montpellier region remains young and dynamic, it will not escape the demographic challenge of an ageing population. Today, over-60s represent 21.4% of the inhabitants in Montpellier Méditerranée Metropole, i.e. some 135,000 people, and 27.1% of the inhabitants of the Hérault department.

From this point of view, the bid area is very diverse.

M28 will be striving to develop new **intergenerational** projects following the example of existing experiences such as *Dis-moi l'histoire*, a theatrical project between high school students and residents from senior citizens' homes with the *Le Baril* collective, or the partnership with

the University Hospital through the *l'Art Emoi* scheme which enables outings to the Fabre Museum adapted to Alzheimer's sufferers.

Beyond the projects carried out by cultural actors for special operations, a more perennial approach is being adopted. Convinced that the cultural offer contributes to “ageing well”, Montpellier is already committed to a “**City of Elders**” approach. This represents a new approach to “outreach”, allowing for local programming (hosting artists in places of residence, concerts by the conservatory, in sheltered accommodation...) and a rethinking of the accessibility to places where culture is presented and displayed (facilitating mobility for the elderly and frail in the museum circuit, etc.).

A policy addressing mental health issues

The City of Montpellier has joined forces with UNAFAM, the national Union for Families and Friends of persons with Mental Illnesses or Handicaps, as well as with user associations and psychiatric care services, families, carers, health professionals and social and medico-social workers to propose awareness-raising and information actions. Mental health is also a subject and a field that has been taken up by several associations and artists' groups (*La Bulle bleue* or *Nu Collectif*). Creative research programmes are essential for enriching this approach and enabling the inclusion of all audiences. Going further, **M28** will develop specific interactions with community organisations (in particular mutual aid groups) to make events more accessible to all audiences.

19

Explain in detail your audience development strategy, in particular its link with the educational community and the involvement of school audiences.

A child-friendly cultural city

Montpellier has a strong policy in favour of development of the city for and with children: diversification of the artistic and cultural education offer for the educational environment, development of peaceful neighbourhoods and streets for schoolchildren, and free public transport for children.

To accelerate this process, Montpellier was the first French city to join the international “City of Children” network in 2022, led by the “APS Francesco Tonucci association”. This international network is driven by the philosophy and proposals of a cross-cutting project (culture, citizen participation, leisure activities, etc.) which aims to create a city for all, where everyone can flourish and where

Montpellier's children become active citizens of the city. This approach is based on the creation of a “Children's City Laboratory”. Composed of representatives of the local authority, external partners (residents, associations, schools, the school community, academics, parents, etc.) and a children's council linked to the current Children's Municipal Council (cf. question 17), it is intended to act as an intermediary between the administration and children. In line with this, an action for a culture adapted to children is being developed.

The 2028 programme foresees the creation of a **label to identify** programming dedicated to **young audiences**. This label could eventually be extended to other areas of public policy that include actions for young people.



Specific actions for artistic and cultural education

For the Capital year, our strategy for the development and participation of school audiences is based in part on our flagship project, Academy of the Future®.

Through this structuring programme, carried out in direct collaboration with the education authorities, we are addressing young people directly. From 2024, we intend to **CONNECT** as many pupils as possible in the **M28** territory. Pursuing the “outreach” approach, particular attention will be given to the inclusion of primary and secondary schools from priority urban neighbourhoods or schools whose artistic and cultural education programmes need to be strengthened. To this end, an inventory will be carried out in conjunction with the territory’s educational community by 2024. By exploring all artistic disciplines and meeting with cultural actors, we intend to strengthen the participation of the school public through this long-term joint creative work. In order to strengthen the link with

educational teams in schools, an **annual forum for teachers** will be organised to present the entire artistic and cultural education offer as part of the dynamic created by the bid. This moment will allow a wide and exhaustive dissemination of the offer and should encourage more transversality. It is also a means of creating a link between the teaching teams and the teams dedicated to the development of the Artistic and Cultural Education offer.

Without waiting for the launch of this project, from 2023 onwards, the “Mysteries of Montpellier” writing operation will be given a European flavour. It will involve ten classes and will result in texts brought together in a collective work, illustrated by the pupils themselves, which take the form of short stories and poetic texts. The theme of Europe specifically chosen for 2023 can be treated in all registers of fiction writing... or autofiction! This operation places pupils in the real situation of writing a text that is published and distributed as part of a collective project. For the capital year, other actions aimed at strengthening our audience development strategy and

in particular the link with the educational sector and the participation of school audiences, are being implemented. For example, as part of the Fabre Museum’s bicentenary in 2028®, the museum is building a specific itinerary so that each class in Montpellier (800 classes and 18,000 pupils) can choose a work from the 11,000 in the museum’s collections. This **“One class, one work”** approach should make it possible to experiment with and initiate a new heritage pathway for pupils within museums, with the aim of making the offer more systematic and reaching all pupils.

It prefigures the implementation in the Montpellier area of the Occitanie Regional council’s “culture everywhere for all” strategy, in conjunction with the National Education authorities, aiming to propose a new compulsory subject in the school curriculum which enables cultural expression by pupils.

Financial aspects

Municipal budget for culture

20

What has been the annual municipal budget for culture over the last five years (excluding expenditure on the current European Capital of Culture bid)?

Budget for Montpellier City and Metropole

Year	Annual budget for culture (in Euros)	Annual budget (as % of total annual budget)
2018	€91,443,447	10%
2019	€105,749,745	9%
2020	€98,694,650	9%
2021	€92,699,637	9%
2022 (*)	€104,730,719	9%

(*) 2022 forecast data

The table presented is the consolidation of the budgets of two institutions (City of Montpellier and Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole). It shows the cumulative operating and capital expenditure. In total, this budget, which marks Montpellier's commitment to culture, has increased by 15% over the period, representing on average 9% of the overall budget.

Within this budget, Montpellier devotes 30% to financial support for the territory's cultural actors.

The drop in expenditure during the 2 years of the pandemic is linked to the slowdown in investments that could not be made during lockdown periods. On the other hand, in terms of accompaniment, significant measures have been implemented: support for cultural actors, dedicated aid funds, maintenance of the cultural offer and social links.

21

If the city plans to use part of its annual cultural budget to finance the European Capital of Culture project, please indicate this amount, from the year of the bid submission to the year in which the title is awarded.

The annual budget devoted to culture by the City of Montpellier and Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole will be progressively increased from 2023 to 2028, to finance the Montpellier 2028 Association, representing a total of 25.25 million Euros over the entire period.

22

What is the share of the overall annual budget that the city intends to invest in culture after 2028 (in Euros and as a percentage of the overall annual budget)?

Looking ahead from 2028, Montpellier plans to maintain a financial effort of 10% of its overall budget for culture and heritage, i.e. an average envelope of 120 million Euros which will evolve according to the overall annual budget.

Operating budget for the Capital year

23

Income required to cover operating costs:

Please explain the overall operating budget (i.e. the funds specifically earmarked to cover operating costs). The budget covers the preparation phase, the year for which the title is awarded, evaluation and provisions for follow-up activities.

Total financing needed to cover operating costs (in Euros)	€62,000,000
Public sector funding (in Euros)	€54,000,000
Public sector funding (%)	87%
Private sector funding (in Euros)	€8,000,000
Private sector funding (%)	13%

Public sector funding

24

What is the distribution of public sector funding to cover operating costs?

The participation indicated for the “City” in the table below includes the City of Montpellier and Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole, these two authorities share competence for culture in the territory.

Public sector funding to cover operating costs	In Euros	%
State	€4,000,000	6%
City	€25,250,000	41%
Region	€7,000,000	11%
EU (except the Melina Mercouri Prize)	€1,300,000	2%
Other	€16,450,000	27%
Total	€54,000,000	87%

25

Have public financial authorities (municipality, region, state) already voted or made financial commitments to cover operating costs? If not, when is this planned?

The State has always shown commitment to French cities designated as European Capitals of Culture. We consider, based on previous commitments and the nature of the projects proposed in our bid, that it will participate both in the bid, to the amount of 4 million Euros, and the financing of infrastructure.

The local authorities whose funding is mentioned above (City, Region, others) are all members of the Montpellier 2028 Association. They have adopted the statutes, committing to supporting the bid, its approach, its dynamics and its financial trajectory.

Private sector funding

26

What strategy will you implement to raise funds from private sector sponsors? What role do you plan to give sponsors in the organisation of events?

Beyond the essential source of financing that this represents, we intend to use sponsorship as a real **tool for citizen participation**. Sourcing private funds will thus make it possible to **federate the economic forces and civil society** around our project. Sponsorship or patronage is a means of mobilising a new public for culture, the patrons themselves, their employees, their families, etc. It is perceived as strengthening links between the cultural sector, the economic sector and the inhabitants.

Mobilise

The sponsorship project includes the mobilisation of companies and individuals. 4 business circles are targeted: Ambassadors (local economic forces such as the liberal professions, craftsmen, shopkeepers), Founders (local economic forces of Very Small Enterprises - VSEs, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises - SMEs), Promoters (subsidiaries of large groups and large SMEs established locally, large national companies) and Honorary patrons (essentially large national and international companies). The first two circles are based on existing sponsorship initiatives in the region around cultural institutions. Four patrons have already joined the association's dedicated college, for a total budget of €200,000 in 2022. The sponsorship strategy implemented aims to mobilise all types of sponsorship: **financial, in-kind, skills-based** and dynamic. In particular, this strategy is envisaged to finance the production of certain works via artists' residencies in companies, on the basis of sponsorship in kind and skills. Inhabitants and art and culture lovers beyond the territory will be invited to support the project through donations via various **participatory funding** actions that will be held in preparation for the event. They will, among other things, be involved in heritage restoration projects or the acquisition of works. Local authorities have also expressed their desire to mobilise the skills of their agents in the framework of sponsorship contributions.

The sponsorship strategy will be deployed by the association and supported by the local authorities. Financial resources (public relations and communication budget), human resources (one then three FTEs) and communication resources (visual identity, website, etc.) will be dedicated to the initiative, which aims to raise 6 million Euros by 2028.

Associate

The sponsors are already integrated into the governance of the Montpellier 2028 Association, within the ad hoc college. They will be involved in the progressive ramping up of the project through our programming. Quarterly events and an annual highlight will set the rhythm of the activities of the network of patrons. The aim is to involve them in supporting the bid (from 2022), to **ACT** and unite around the pre-selection (2023), to mobilise a large number of people and build loyalty during the construction period of the Capital year (2024-2027), to share and thank (2028) and to evaluate (after 2028).

A grid of counterparts is set for each target. They are to be invited to participate in previews, master classes, meetings with artists and dress rehearsals, but also receive specific access to the various events of the Capital year by involving employees in this dynamic. An "I support **M28**" label will be designed to allow donors to communicate their support.

Sponsorship of Montpellier European Capital of Culture not only represents a substantial source of funding for our project but is also a tool for diversifying the event's audience, which is widely distributed throughout the region (cf. question 33).

27

Breakdown of operating costs

Please detail the breakdown of your operating costs in the table below.

Programme expenditure (in Euros)	€39,860,000
Programme expenditure (%)	64%
Promotion and marketing (in Euros)	€9,850,000
Promotion and marketing (in %)	16%
Salaries, overheads and administration (in Euros)	€9,170,000
Salaries, overheads and administration (in %)	15%
Other (contingencies and emergency plan) (in Euros)	€3,120,000
Other (contingencies and emergency plan) (%)	5%
Total operating costs	€62,000,000

Budget for infrastructure expenditure

28

What is the planned distribution of public sector income to cover the infrastructure costs of the European Capital of Culture status?

The participation indicated for the "City" in the table below includes all the Public Establishments within the Intercommunal Cooperation involved in the **M28** application, representing the 142 communes of the territory.

Public sector revenue to cover infrastructure expenditure	En euros	%
State	€24,430,000	16%
City	€103,080,000	68%
Region	€16,325,000	11%
EU (except the Melina Mercouri Prize)	€8,365,000	5%
Other		
Total	€152,200,000	100%

29

Have the public financial authorities (municipalities, region, state) already voted or made financial commitments to cover infrastructure expenditure? If not, when is this planned?

Some financial commitments have already been established through different financial programming documents:

- The multi-annual investment programmes (PPI) of the City of Montpellier and Montpellier Méditerranée Metropole,
- The State-Region contract (CPER) 2021-2027,
- The Occitanie/Pyrénées-Méditerranée territorial contract (CTO) 2022 to 2028, which provides for a regional funding rate of some 20%.

Each operation is then the subject of an individual grant application.

What is your strategy for obtaining financial support from EU programmes and funds to cover infrastructure costs?

Over the previous period, European funds made it possible to finance twenty structuring projects for the Montpellier Méditerranée Metropole, to the amount of half a billion Euros. **ERDF** funds have been particularly mobilised around one of the central themes for this territory, **water** (securing the dykes of the lower valley of the Mosson, upstream capping of the Aigue-Vive springs, studies for the hydraulic management plan for the Lez and the Mosson and tributaries...).

Paying special attention to its twelve priority neighbourhoods, the city of Montpellier has also mobilised European funds through the ERDF contributing to the rehabilitation of the Neptune Water Sports Centre located in the heart of the Mosson popular district. Europe is also very present alongside the territory's **innovative companies**. Montpellier's Business & Innovation Centre (BIC) has won recognition as the world's second best incubator for innovative companies, thanks to support from the European Union and in particular the ESF mobilised during the previous campaign. The BIC is accompanied by numerous companies in the cultural and creative industries, which are one of the strengths of the territory in its bid to become European Capital of Culture in 2028. European funding has also been obtained for one of the key projects of the beginning of the 2020-2026 mandate: the **digital plan** for the 116 **public schools** in the city. This plan has made it possible to install a computer and a video projector in each of the city's 900 classrooms, thanks in particular to **React-EU** funding.

Since 2020, Montpellier and the Occitanie Regional Council have been working hand in hand. Our strategy can also rely on a group of four agents dedicated to European funding, recently created by Montpellier Méditerranée Metropole. Membership of networks such as *Eurocities* and AFCCRE are also important support points. **For the 2021-2027 period**, a draft Occitanie **ERDF-ESF+** (European Regional Development Fund - European Social Fund plus) programme has been submitted to the European Commission by the regional managing authority, the Occitanie Region. This programme is built on two pillars: fostering a new development model and promoting territorial rebalancing. This last point of the ERDF programme provides for support for a development strategy driven at the metropolitan level to support **sustainable urban development**. Within the framework of the European priority "**A Europe closer to its citizens**", the European Commission makes funding conditional on the implementation

of multi-thematic territorial approaches known as integrated territorial approaches (ITA) which will be linked to the Occitanie territorial contracts (CTO) between the Region and the territories.

In order to select the territories with an ITA strategy, the regional managing authority launched a call for expressions of interest in mid-June 2022. Montpellier has prepared a bid that integrates into the five objectives of the ITA. The first objective is to improve the living environment of inhabitants in disadvantaged areas. Montpellier City and Metropole have included numerous projects relating to the twelve priority territories, including the creation or rehabilitation of **public spaces, cultural, recreational and sports facilities**, infrastructure for social services and basic education, local services and commercial revitalisation. The fifth key objective supported by the territory is the development of **cultural, tourist and leisure facilities for all**. This is directly in line with our bid and allows us to mobilise European funds to strengthen the attractiveness of the territory by promoting its cultural, natural and memorial heritage and by encouraging an upmarket and diversified tourist, cultural and leisure offer.

In this respect, the extension of the Fabre Museum, the Lattara Conservation and Study Centre and the "Mille Formes" art initiation centre for young children, were included in the response to the ITA.

We also plan to mobilise other European programmes such as Creative Europe, Erasmus +, Horizon Europe, Citizens for Equality and Rights and Values, in line with the priorities of the application.

31

If applicable, please insert here a table specifying the amounts that will be spent on financing new cultural infrastructure to be used in the year for which the title is awarded.

Cf. question 38.

Organisational structure

32

Please outline the governance and implementation structure for the year in which the title is awarded.

The constitution of the Montpellier 2028 Association has established a specific and shared governance. This encompasses both political and project governance (cf. Introduction).

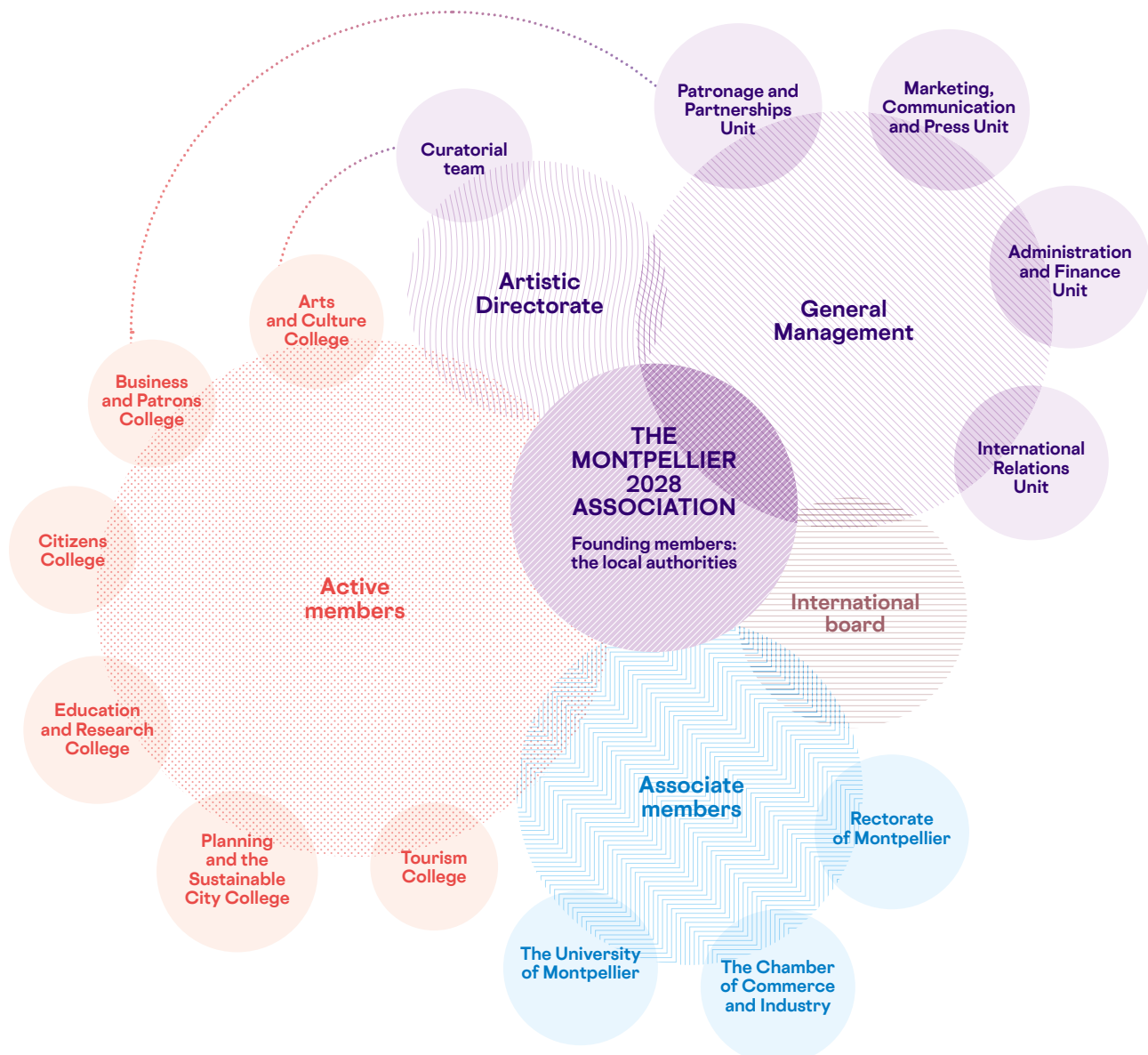
The association's structure will evolve to meet the challenges of the different phases of the bid. Since its creation, it has had several complementary bodies with which it interacts directly and continuously. These entities are intended to be adaptable to the issues and needs identified at the different stages of the bid.

The Montpellier 2028 association will be managed by a General Management team which will bring together five key functions, corresponding to the identified needs of the bid:

- An Administration and Finance Unit
- A Patronage and Partnerships Unit, directly linked to the Business and Patrons College
- An International Relations Unit
- A Marketing, Communication and Press Unit
- An Artistic Unit

The Artistic Directorate will include a curatorial team of national and international members who will guide the major orientations of the bid and the programming of the Capital year.

The elected Board of Directors will continue to represent the driving forces of Montpellier 2028: its founding members, the local authorities, and its associate members from the economic, educational and cultural sectors. Representatives of the associate members will be divided into six Colleges:



Business and Patrons; Citizens; Tourism; Teaching, Education and Research; Planning and the Sustainable City; and Arts and Culture. These will actively participate in the activities of the association. The Arts and Culture college for the territory will be directly linked to the Artistic Directorate.

The association will also be able to call upon an international board composed of members with experience of similar events, for the 2024-2028 phase.

33

Emergency plan

→ What are the main strengths and weaknesses of your project? How do you intend to overcome the identified weaknesses?

Co-construction workshops with the different players from the territory (cultural, social, territorial and cultural actors, institutions, private partners, associations and artists) carried out from the beginning of the pre-bid phase as well as the questionnaire sent to the local population, have allowed us to establish and share collectively an inventory of the strengths and weaknesses of the territory, which we summarise in the following table.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks to its geographical and historical heritage, the territory has an exceptionally rich tangible and intangible heritage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Numerous skill sets that constitute elements of local pride and identity. — An “outdoor” territory favourable to open festival-type activities and programming and which has a close relationship with its environment. — The diversity and quality of its landscape, illustrated by the presence of very varied natural environments. — A culture of reception and friendliness that is asserted and enriched by a multicultural approach. — An opening onto the Mediterranean basin which facilitates exchanges of all kinds. • The territory, because of its administrative and political heritage, has clearly marked sectors, particularly in terms of cultural policies: since the beginning of the bid, the 142 municipalities in the area have been fully committed and are already working together. • The area has a strong cultural and artistic heritage: over the last few decades the city of Montpellier has developed artistic and cultural activities in many sectors, thus contributing to its international influence. Today, it has a rich and complementary network of artistic and cultural associations which drive grass roots creation and cultural dissemination and participate in the vitality of the entire territory, alongside the major artistic and cultural events initiated by the local authorities and which are referenced on a national and international scale. The bid is an opportunity for these actors and events to take a fresh approach to contemporary challenges (ecological, demographic, etc.). 	<p>With regard to the expectations shared by the territory’s dynamic forces, various obstacles have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mobility offer: towns are well served by main roads, but there is an incomplete and unsuitable mobility offer, which is not yet sufficient to create a true territorial network. • The reception of the public: a need to diversify the accommodation offer and to train the actors to accompany international groups. • The inclusiveness of the current cultural offer: a free and varied offer, but which is not always sufficient to mobilise certain so-called “remote” audiences, with a segmentation of audiences that needs to be overcome by creating adapted access channels. • These actors are extremely diverse and complementary, but today they suffer from a lack of cooperation or a difficulty in intuitively working together or in common. This is linked to the absence of dialogue bodies and to a relative lack of knowledge of their respective actions and ambitions, whether at the territorial or European Union level. The result is a difficulty in entering into frameworks of creation and innovative experimentation, a difficulty due in particular to partitioned operations.

Strengthened by the awareness of our weaknesses, we aim to make the ECoC an event that will mark the transition from before to after, a common object from which to federate and build together. Carrying out this ambition means first of all giving concrete expression to the desire to “do things better and differently” through the identification, circulation and promotion of innovative approaches or projects within the territory.

Strengthening cooperation:

This requires both the creation of regular exchange and meeting times to allow pooling of resources, skills and know-how in a spirit of cooperation and also the definition of places (physical and symbolic) for creation and experimentation capable of responding to a changing world. The idea is to define spaces for artists to learn, share and experiment on their practices, integrating environmental issues to a wider extent, and taking advantage of the innovative framework of the bid to encourage more experimental approaches.

Furthermore, we are counting on the ECoC to develop and support the diversity of actors in the region in a dynamic that is resolutely turned towards Europe, encouraging exchanges and meetings with European actors. The aim is to establish itinerant partnerships, develop a “transversal” cultural ecosystem, and design and support cultural projects that take a fresh look at, or conjure up new images related to, major European issues. By testing new adaptable practices, based on European indicators, this body will make it possible to design a new model for responsible, sustainable and inclusive cultural events.

For these first two areas, work has already begun through the first Call for Projects, for which we have made the partnership dimension – infra-territorial or on a European scale – and innovation, two priority selection criteria for the winning projects.

Strengthening reception and mobility:

We intend to make the ECoC a tool for “making territory” and for building a territory of relationships, a territory of possibilities, and thus improve the reception and mobility infrastructures (cf. question 37).

The aim is to build a solid territorial network, to identify “what makes a territory” by taking into account the relationships that link inhabitants to their environment, and including a collaborative dynamic in a logic of “doing with” in every project. It will also be a question of linking practices and territories through the design of “cultural routes” and itinerant projects.

Strengthening inclusiveness:

Finally, our approach allows us to build a guideline shared throughout the territory for the definition of a common cultural strategy for the long term. By taking time to reflect on and review the incompatibilities in current ways of doing things, we plan to establish the shared values behind “making a territory” which will guide each stage of the bid and define, together, new indicators of success based on a more qualitative and desirable approach, with special attention paid to the so-called “prevented” public... but also to the cultural structures themselves (especially the most fragile).

The existence of health, climatic or geopolitical risks requires us to anticipate situations where the programming planned for the Capital year has to be adapted. The COVID crisis has shown the capacity of the cultural sector to think about new forms of intervention integrating constraints of audience numbers, spaces and circulation. The bid team has naturally integrated this dimension.

At a time when the energy crisis is affecting both production and distribution costs, we are particularly mindful of these elements of uncertainty. This is why the bid budget includes a 5% margin for contingencies.

As Virginija Vitkienė, CEO of Kaunas (ECoC 2022), so aptly put it, a programme initially built around the question of ‘happiness’, no longer made sense in the light of the outbreak of war in Ukraine. The programme was changed in just a few days and took over the spaces of a former post office to welcome artists and Ukrainian refugees, a form of living centre to create links.

This is where culture belongs, and our teams are perfectly aware of this.

In the event of an emergency, the association will be able to rely on the City and the Metropole of Montpellier, which have a recognised culture of critical risk management. In 2022, the City of Montpellier was awarded the “*Résilience France collectivités*” label for its level of preparation for risk management in terms of protection, prevention, information and crisis management. By awarding three stars to the City of Montpellier, the French High Commission for National Resilience underlines the City’s ability to take into account various risks, whether natural (fires, floods, etc.), technological, health-related, threats (cyber-security, attacks, etc.) or related to large gatherings. On this latter point, which could be strengthened by becoming

the European Capital of Culture, the civil security and public security players were involved in the production of a guide for large gatherings which formalises all the actions to be taken to prevent and deal with potential crises.



Marketing and communication

34

Please outline the city's planned marketing and communication strategy for the year for which the title is awarded.

Communicating in a network

From the application phase onwards, **M28** is at the heart of all the events in the region, its logo being used as a vector for awareness. Stands ensure links to the projects and the collective appropriation of the approach in order to encourage sharing and support.

6 inter-municipalities, 142 municipalities, the Regional and Departmental councils

All local authority partners will relay all initiatives and events before and during 2028. A dedicated section will be created in the Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole magazine "En commun", with a print run of 220,000 copies and distribution to 500,000 inhabitants.

The volunteer network

A network of volunteers, acting as relays for the population throughout the territory and on social networks, will participate in the quality of reception in 2028 for major events, providing information to visitors.

Montpellier is cosmopolitan. In conjunction with the various tourist offices that criss-cross the **M28** territory, visitors and inhabitants who speak the same language will be brought together for unique and individualised visits.

The ambassadors' network

A "network of ambassadors" will be launched in 2024 in Europe and around the world. Representatives of the cultural, sporting and associative sectors, business leaders, inhabitants of the region or those with a link to Montpellier, will all be mobilised to share with their networks the news and events linked to **M28**.

The Twin Cities Network

Montpellier has 13 twin cities in the world (cf. International Map p.33). Cultural and communication exchanges will be organised with the European cities of Barcelona, Heidelberg, Palermo and Kos.

Communicating through and for artistic creation

The Montpellier tramway in the colours of M28

The Montpellier tramway has a strong artistic identity: the carriages on each of its four lines (five in 2025) have been designed

by an internationally renowned artist (Christian Lacroix, Garouste & Bonetti, etc.). They have a very high profile in Montpellier and in 2021 helped make Montpellier the only French city selected by the New York Times in its selection of 45 cities to discover. Since 2022, a tram bearing the bid's colours has been running in Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole. As a symbol of sustainable mobility, it will be dedicated to artists and events in the run up to the Capital year.

Presence at railway stations

Each station is fully integrated into the territory it serves as a place of diversity and encounter par excellence. In stations from 2024, in partnership with SNCF Gares et Connexions, which works to promote the dissemination of culture, **M28** will bring the bid to life by presenting our projects and their imagination and emotion.

Poster materials dedicated to the bid and to art

As soon as the bid was launched, Montpellier used its poster and billboard networks to paint the city in the bid's colours. In 2028, this system will be permanent and will be extended to the entire bid area thanks to partnerships with all the local authorities.

The use of artistic commissions for the bid documents and posters

Following the example of this year's commission to Alain Le Querrec for the 14 July poster, the first piece of a nascent collection destined to be enriched rapidly, the commissioning of future posters from designers and artists will be one of the strong markers of the visual identity deployed on the territory.

Particularly attached to the importance of sign posting and the visitor experience, we will launch a European Call for Projects to create and harmonise our systems in this area, whether it be reception areas at stations or airports, public transport maps or signposted routes (pedestrian, cyclist, etc.) to access the programme venues.

Partnership dimension

Media partnerships

On a national and international scale, we will negotiate partnerships with France Televisions, *Radio France*, *Arte* and *Euronews*. At the local level, all the major media will be involved in the adventure: the major regional daily *Midi Libre*, the television channels *France 3 Occitanie* and *Via Occitanie* and the public service radio station *France Bleu Hérault*. These partnerships may take the form of regular columns and podcasts, before and during 2028, to report on all initiatives and programming.

Patronage and sponsorship

The communication strategy will naturally be linked to the strategy implemented in terms of patronage and sponsorship (cf. question 26) with the primary objective of enabling as many people as possible to participate: large companies, businesses, residents. Everyone will be able to become a relay for **M28**.

Press relations

We will use the services of a European-wide press relations agency to promote the entire **M28** programme. Without waiting for 2028, every year we will invite ten journalism students from the cities designated as European capitals for the years 2024 to 2028, to visit Montpellier to document the preparation of our Capital year and analyse the different approaches and ways of doing things. Their work will be reported on our networks.

Advertising space purchases

Priority to sponsoring on social networks

A budget will be dedicated to the purchase of advertising space mainly on social networks, on a European scale and targeting the European regions whose inhabitants are most likely to come to Montpellier, according to travel habits and rail and air services. The tourist offices will be associated in this process and will offer turnkey holidays.

Buying space in the press

For the launch of the event in 2028, an advertising campaign in major French and European newspapers will be organised according to the geographical targets most likely to visit Montpellier.

Social networks to spearhead citizen participation

Accounts have already been set up on most social networks to showcase the vitality of **M28**. A dedicated team will propose regular content, drawing in particular on the strength of the cultural structures in our region. The main objective will be to create a vast community in order to optimise the relays for the event in 2028, with priority given to citizen participation.

As we did for the photographic collective *Tendance Floue* in 2022, the feed of our Instagram account could be temporarily entrusted to artists.

A participatory website and a dedicated mobile application

The **M28** website and dedicated mobile application will have a triple function: provide detailed information on the programme; relay citizen's initiatives that are being supported; and collect and archive the memory of the creative process and the associated events. The dedicated digital team will be responsible for providing regular content on all social networks, website and video. The mobile application will be enriched with detailed itineraries, so that visitors can easily move around the whole territory.

Specific resources for video creation

Specific resources will be devoted to the production of videos of the events in order to share them with as many people as possible via social networks. Students from the region's creative schools (ARTFX, ETPA, etc.) will be mobilised for this purpose.

Fanzines

The successful experience of the fanzine produced in 48 hours by the photographers' collective *Tendance Floue* along with students from the Montpellier School of Fine Arts showed the richness of a collaborative intervention. In the same spirit, from 2024 onwards, fanzines with rotating editorial teams will be produced to report on the bid's projects, initiatives and events. In 2028 they will be monthly, and bilingual.

Communication that is accessible to all and responsible

All communication will be produced in French and English and digital materials will be accessible according to WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines).

Our communication will integrate the challenges linked to **eco-communication** by limiting the consumption of natural resources (energy, paper, packaging, etc.), the use of harmful or dangerous products (inks, solvents, etc.), the production of waste, pollution linked to manufacturing, transport and use, and by taking into account the challenges of inclusion and accessibility.

35

How does the municipality plan to highlight the fact that the European Capital of Culture is a European Union initiative?

The starting point for the ECoC initiative is already mentioned on the bid website. As we already do in all our speeches presenting the challenges of our bid, we always mention the context in which it is taking place.

Beyond the necessary visibility materialized

by integrating logos onto all our physical and digital media, we wish to develop a more informative communication. And thus embody the place and role of the European Union beyond this specific action in a broader framework, illustrating the values that founded the European Union and forge its identity.

In order to address children more specifically, an **M28 passport** will be given to all primary school children so that they can discover the programme and prepare their visit. It will introduce the initiative and recall the role and history of the EU.

By relying on the creativity of the territory's actors, we will create an introductory **teaser "Montpellier 2028"** offering strong visibility to the European Union, in the manner of a generic or refrain, a strong marker for the Capital year, projected as an introduction to all the events where possible.

Finally, we have chosen to match the **key dates** of the Capital year programme with days that refer to the European idea and consciousness (cf. question 11).

In 2028, the official buildings will be decorated with the European flag to emphasise that the ECoC is an initiative of the European Union, as was the case when the European ministers were welcomed to Montpellier last March.

In order to **"make Europe" in situ**, we will launch an invitation to the European Commission to host one of their working meetings in Montpellier in 2028.

Finally, throughout the year, European students will be identified by Montpellier's universities to act as European ambassadors for the bid and to promote the programme in their home town.



Capacity to Deliver

36

Please confirm and demonstrate that you have broad and determined political support and sustained commitment from the relevant local, regional and national public authorities.

On 22 and 29 March 2022, Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole and the City of Montpellier unanimously adopted resolutions to approve the establishment and articles of the “Montpellier 2028 - European Capital of Culture” Association, duly confirming their membership of this association, payment of the subscription fee, and registration of the related credits on the budgets of the two bodies.

In addition, the very structure of the pre-bid association

demonstrates the strong commitment of local and regional public authorities to the process: in the first few months of the pre-bid, partner local authorities were invited to vote to join. All inter-municipal cooperation bodies unanimously adopted the same motion, demonstrating the commitment of the entire **M28** territory with regards to this bid.

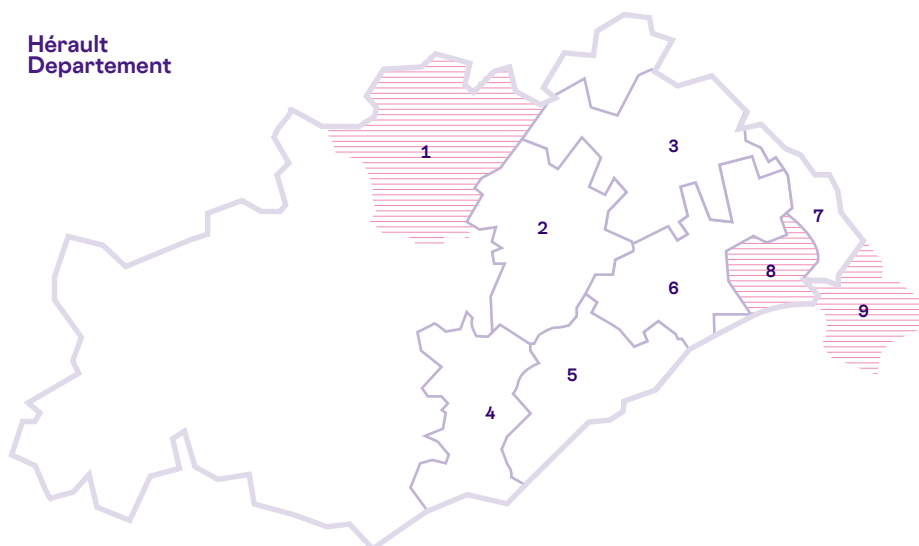
For example, the **Hérault Departmental Council** unanimously adopted this motion

at its Standing Committee on 27 June 2022. The **Occitanie Regional Council** also unanimously adopted this motion at its Standing Committee on 15 April 2022. The Regional Council is fully involved in the bid: its Vice-President for Culture is also Vice-President of the Montpellier 2028 association. The Regional Council’s commitment is also demonstrated through its financial participation.

In addition to membership, the 10 partner local authorities approved financing for the Montpellier 2028 association for year 2022 and 2023 at the Board meeting on 14 October 2022. Further to the association’s second Annual General Meeting, held on the same day, 3 additional inter-municipal bodies formalised their support for the bid in 2022, joining the association in 2023: Communauté d’Agglomération du Pays de l’Or; Communauté de Communes du Lodévois et Larzac; and Terre de Camargue, located in the Gard.

181 municipalities and nearly one million inhabitants will share the common goal of becoming European capital of culture in 2028.

Hérault
Département



Inter-communities

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 Lodévois et Larzac | 6 Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole |
| 2 Vallée de l’Hérault | 7 Pays de Lunel |
| 3 Grand Pic Saint-Loup | 8 Pays de l’Or |
| 4 Hérault Méditerranée | 9 Terre de Camargue |
| 5 Sète Agglopôle Méditerranée | |

Outside the strict perimeter of the bid, several major local authorities in the Occitanie Region have formalised their support and are proposing cultural partnerships.

The Agglomeration of Rodez in the Aveyron (Soulages museum), Alès in the Gard (selected as one of the three finalists for the French Capital of Culture 2024), Carcassonne in the Aude (medieval city classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site)

and the municipality of Sérignan in the Hérault Department (regional museum of contemporary art) are among the supporters of the initiative. These future partnerships further consolidate the network of institutions in the bid.

37

Please confirm and prove that your city has or will have an adequate and viable infrastructure to hold the title. For this, please answer the following questions:

→ Briefly explain how the European Capital of Culture event will use and develop the city's cultural infrastructure.

Thanks to an ambitious infrastructure policy that has been in place for many years, Montpellier and its population catchment area already have a large number of facilities (cf. Introduction). The dynamic of Montpellier, European Capital of Culture, offers the opportunity to pursue this even further through a renewed perspective guided by the context of the energy and environmental crisis, which encourages us to adopt a measured approach.

Consequently, all the infrastructure development projects envisaged will consist of **renovating existing buildings** and creating heritage value: *Mille formes* in a former media library, *Villa Bazille* in a ruined 18th century estate, *Hôtel d'Aurès - Centre Culturel* in the former conservatory, *Villa Salis* in a former youth hostel... renovation, restoration and transformation will be the key words.

Above all, the ECoC event and its extended reach throughout the territory, invites us to consider future for facilities in a complementary manner, taking into account a much wider source than the Montpellier area alone: this is a way of encouraging the circulation of the public and promoting the logic of sharing, pooling and savings.

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

An interconnected city

As the gateway to southern Europe, Montpellier is strategically located at the heart of the Mediterranean arc. Its TGV stations, Saint-Roch (in the city centre) and Sud de France (near the airport), its international airport, Montpellier Méditerranée, 15 minutes from the city centre, its easy access to motorways and its rich public transport network make it an ideally served city.

The international airport is very easy to reach by direct flight from Paris, Berlin, Copenhagen, Madrid, Seville, Athens, Rome, or Luxembourg. Some ten airlines operate direct connections to 25 international destinations and 10 destinations in France.

This network of existing and future cultural venues will be a formidable canvas for the event, enhancing the programming and bringing it as close as possible to all inhabitants in the territory: each institution and each venue will be both a host venue and a stakeholder in the Capital year, encouraging "outreach" and ensuring the widest possible dissemination and local access to the programme.

Montpellier's rail access is a real asset, offering efficient connections throughout the Occitanie Region, France and neighbouring European countries.

Up to 17 Paris-Montpellier trains per day ensure constant availability. 3.15 hours from Paris, 3 hours from Barcelona, 2 hours from Lyon and Marseille and 2.5 hours from Toulouse, Montpellier is strategically located.

Montpellier Saint-Roch station is linked to the rest of the city by the four tram lines as well as buses 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 16 and is located in the heart of the city, 200 metres from the Place de la Comédie.

The Montpellier Sud de France train station is located near the airport. It is currently served by bus and shuttle. From 2025, this station will be directly accessible by tram. It is located in the heart of the future Cambacérès district, an “innovation” area hosting companies, start-ups and higher education establishments in a landscaped environment.

Motorway access is also smooth: A9/A709 to Marseille (1.5 hours), Lyon (2.5 hours), Toulouse (2.5 hours), Spain (2 hours), and Italy (3.5 hours), and A75 to Clermont Ferrand, central France and Paris.

An ambitious policy for the development of soft mobility

The well-developed public transport network makes it easy to get around on foot, by bike, bus and tram throughout the Metropole. Montpellier currently has 4 tram lines, 36 bus lines, more than 50 self-service bicycle stations, 160 kilometres of cycle paths, and numerous peripheral car parks.

Above all, Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole plans to invest more than one billion Euros between now and 2026 in a transport system that is socially and environmentally friendly, serving over 90% of the inhabitants of its territory. The construction of line 5 of the tramway, and five high service level bus lines for urban, suburban and rural areas, will complete a dense public transport offer, free to inhabitants, and adapted to the needs of the whole population. Delivered in 2025, this tram/bustram network will be completed by an express bicycle line network representing more than 235 kilometres of safe and comfortable bicycle paths that will facilitate all types of use, whether for everyday life, leisure, tourism or logistics. This network, combined with the financial aid currently offered for the acquisition of electrically assisted bicycles and cargo bikes, will thus provide users with a real opportunity to travel differently throughout the Metropole.

M2S, a factor in improving mobility in the bid area

Our ambitious response to ecological transition and the energy crisis also includes all inhabitants from neighbouring territories, partners in **M2S**. Numerous agreements are being formalised with these inter-municipalities to ensure the continuity of routes dedicated to active mobility beyond the administrative boundaries of the Metropole. Within a radius of 10 to 15 kilometres, they are an efficient alternative to the private car for commuting. But they also allow people to travel to natural areas and nearby recreational areas, the coastline and its beaches. This alliance of territories in favour of economically sustainable alternatives to car use is based on stakeholder coordination and the interconnection of networks.

In this respect, work is currently being carried out to organise the merger of inter-city bus lines with the metropolitan transport network, particularly at the termini of tram and future Rapid Transit bus lines.

The aim is to increase the frequency of regional express trains linking the stations of Nîmes, Lunel, Baillargues, Montpellier, Sète and Agde, and also to coordinate their arrival times with tram and bus lines in order to optimise the user experience. Progressive implementation of governance covering the entire territory should finally make it possible to define and implement, along with the neighbouring inter-municipal structures, the Hérault Departmental and Occitanie Regional councils, a network of car-sharing areas integrated into the urban and inter-urban public transport systems.

It is also within this framework that a High Service Level Bus will be brought into service by 2026 for the towns of Lodève, Clermont and Gignac, thus ensuring connections with the metropolitan transport network. This virtuous transport system is, above all, intended for commuting between home and work, but it is also intended to allow low-carbon,

local tourism to the Hérault gorges, the Pont du Diable and Saint Guilhem le Désert, thanks to a complementary system of electrically assisted bicycle rental positioned at the future Multimodal Interchange Hub of Gignac.

A €1 TER operation during M2S major events

For the Capital year, Regional Express Trains will be specifically adapted to the 2028 programme. Thus, to access the towns of Agde, Marseillan Plage, Vias, Sète, Lunel, Lunel Viel, Baillargues and Frontignan located in the bid area, two offers will be specifically reinforced by the Occitanie Region for the major dates: *AvantagiO'*, which allows travel for €1; and *ÉvasiO' Culture*, a special rate for combining travel with a visit to a cultural site.



→ What is the capacity of the city in terms of tourist accommodation?

2021 was marked in Montpellier by the inauguration of the five-star Richer de Belleval hotel in a 17th century mansion, the former city hall of Montpellier. It includes a gastronomic restaurant and a contemporary art foundation offering temporary exhibitions and a collection of permanent contemporary works integrated into the architecture of the building. Three years previously, the Belaroïa, literally “jewel” in Occitan, was inaugurated, housing a four-star “Golden Tulip” hotel and a three-star “Campanile” hotel in the station district. The hotel offer in Montpellier is developing continuously.

With a hotel capacity of more than 6,400 hotel rooms and apartments in hotel residences, Montpellier offers a wide choice of accommodation: from chain hotels to the charm of historic buildings, from budget hotels to 5* hotels, Montpellier’s hotel industry is able to meet all requirements. With one hundred establishments – 82 hotels

and 18 residences – the territory covers all categories: 2 five*, 13 four*, 44 three*, 21 two*, and 19 non-classified or one* establishments. By 2028 other new establishments will be in place. From classic hotels near the Sud de France station and in the Port Marianne district, to innovative establishments such as the coliving residences currently being developed in the Cité Créative district and also in the north of the city of Montpellier, as well as one in a former cinema in the heart of the city.

In the coming months, two youth hostels will replace the one that was becoming obsolete in the city centre. They will be located in the hyper centre, near the Saint-Roch station and the Place de la Comédie. Together with the 8,000 or so furnished holiday homes and the twenty campsites located near Montpellier, these youth hostels complete the accommodation offer in the area. **M2S** can also rely on a rich offer

from all territories supporting the bid. Outside the Métropole, the territory has 64 hotels and residences with a total of almost 4,000 rooms within 30 minutes of the city centre. This offer is complemented by the towns of Sète, which has fifteen 2* and 3* hotels, i.e. 511 rooms, and Agde with 21 hotels and 5 hotel residences (1,173 accommodations including 577 rooms and 596 apartments).

Hosting capacity of the Hérault Department

915,000
tourist beds

209,000
beds in
commercial
accommodation

706,000
beds in secondary
residence
129,800
french residences
and **11,400**
foreign residences

A diversified tourist offer

The tourist offer of the territory is multiple, responding to many different types of tourism: business or leisure tourism, itinerant or sedentary clientele, lovers of urban tourism or the great outdoors, heritage and nature, individual or group stays.

Since 14 March 2022 it has held the **Vignobles et Découvertes label** outlining the importance of its historical, architectural and vernacular heritage, the quality and diversity of its art of living and its conviviality, and the diversity of actors (winemakers, restaurateurs, cellar masters, but also oenologists and scientists specialised in the culture and chemistry of wines).

This recognition is also the fruit of partnerships with sector professionals, accommodation structures and the neighbouring

inter-municipal structures associated with the European Capital of Culture bid. It acknowledges a network of vineyards, places of residence and wine tasting via active modes of transport (footpaths, cycle tracks, mountain bike tracks) for a global offer combining **urban, gourmet and outdoor tourism**.

It reinforces the role of the Languedoc capital as a starting point for short and medium-term stays, ensuring a sustainable and low-carbon discovery of the quality wine-growing areas of the city, as well as of the renowned crus of Pic Saint-Loup and Vallée de l'Hérault (Aniane, Montpeyrroux).

The outdoor sports plan, drawn up in collaboration with neighbouring and associated inter-municipalities, creates continuity for active mobility

Tourist traffic

52 million

touristic overnight stays

The Hérault
Department makes up to

26%

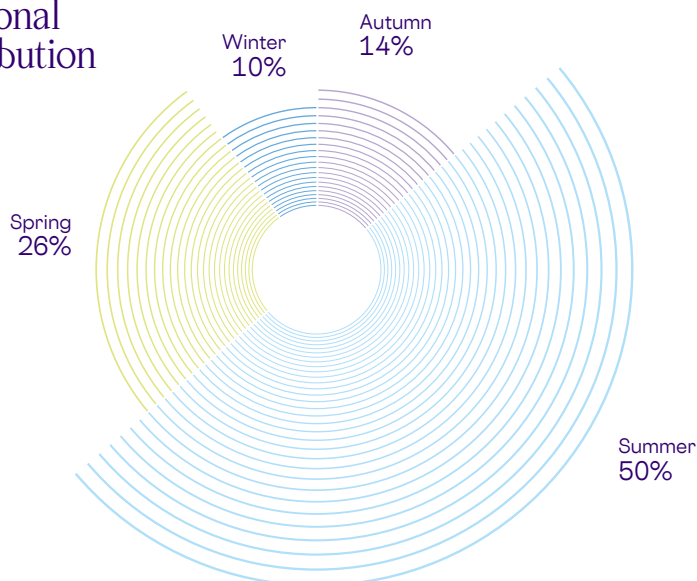
of the Occitanie Region
tourist traffic

solutions linking the metropolitan area to **major European cycling routes** (V8, V84, V60 and V70) and **walking routes** (653, GR60, GR78).

It offers clear, signposted tourism, accessible to all, structured by comfortable stages, adapted to the expectations of all and taking into account all seasonal variations.

Finally, a study has recently been engaged with the French waterways body (*Voies Navigables de France*) and all the local authorities and groups concerned, to ensure the coexistence of freight and tourist activities on the Rhône-Sète Canal. Connecting the canal to its territories and structuring the tourist offer for this infrastructure equally contributes to the development dynamic of the greater Montpellier area.

Seasonal distribution



		Investment budget	Delivery
Heritage, Knowledge, Understanding			
Extension of the Musée Fabre	Extension of the Musée Fabre to write a new page in its history and the development of its collections around new contemporary donations.	€15 M (First phase)	2028
Restoration of scientific collections / Botanical Garden - UNESCO programmes	The process of registering Montpellier in the UNESCO programmes is accompanied by the restoration of the tangible and intangible heritage relating to the scientific history of Montpellier: plant garden, herbarium, anatomy conservatory. The restoration of the botanical garden thus marks the first phase.	€10.3 M	2026
Institute of the History of France and Algeria	The Institute of the History of France and Algeria: a place of national interest intended to embody the living memory of Franco-Algerian relations and, more broadly, cooperation between Africa and France.	€31 M	2028
The Lattara conservation centre and archaeological site - Musée Henri Prades (Lattes)	Renovation and extension of the Henri Prade Museum - Lattara archaeological site in order to enhance the archaeological complex through the development of an archaeological trail and the creation of a Metropolitan Conservation and Study Centre.	€8 M - CCE €7.1 M - Archaeological site	2026 - CCE 2027 - archaeological site
Château de Montferrand (Grand Pic Saint-Loup)	Project to conserve and promote the Castle as a heritage centre.	€1.3 M	2028
Exhibition area dedicated to the artistic scene in Sète	Creation of an exhibition area to promote artists from the Sète area.	€5 M	2027
Cultural Centre (Mèze)	Renovation of the former cooperative cellar to create a unique complex combining artistic teaching activities, a media library and an auditorium.	€10 M	2027
Abbaye d'Aniane (Vallée de l'Hérault)	Restoration of the old chapel and cloister. Installation of a craft village.	€3.1 M €300,000	2025 2028
Hospitality			
Domaine de Méric - Villa Bazille	Rehabilitation of a 18th century estate to host a programme of artistic residencies in a network with several European residencies.	€7.8 M (building) €7 M (park)	2027
Hôtel d'Aurès, cultural centre and former Episcopal Palace, dance residencies	Opening of a mixed space composed of offices dedicated to cultural engineering, workspaces for artists in residence and spaces for communication and meetings with the public.	€5 M (First phase)	2027
Hôtel des Postes - L'Atelline (Juvignac)	Project to restructure the former Hôtel des Postes in Juvignac to house L'Atelline, a workshop for activating public areas through art and live performance.	€1.3 M	2025
Carré Sainte-Anne	Renovation of the Sainte-Anne church, which until 2014 hosted major exhibitions, into a contemporary art centre.	€2.5 M	2025
Villa Salis (Sète)	Restoration of a former villa in Sète into a major artistic residence on Mont Saint-Clair.	€5 M	2027
Youth			
Mille Formes	Over 1,000 m² dedicated to an art initiation centre for 0-6 year olds, designed in partnership with the Centre Pompidou, the second of its kind in France after Clermont-Ferrand.	€1.5 M	2025
Transform the City			
Urban project centre - Échelles de la Ville	A place dedicated to the promotion and understanding of the contemporary city through models, exhibitions on architecture and construction, and participative workshops. A place to engage citizens on urban planning issues.	€1.5 M	2024
Cultural redevelopment at La Mosson	Two emblematic sites in the district, the Mosson stadium and the Bonnier de la Mosson estate, will be redeveloped and will include cultural functions.	€10 M (First phase)	2027
East Z.A.C. (Sète)	Installation of a monumental sculpture, ISIS by Robert Combas, an artistic emblem of the bid, in Sète.	€10 M	2028
Villa Laurens (Agde)	Opening of a completely restored Art Nouveau villa offering a programme based on interactions between art and nature, highlighting trades and crafts. It will be linked to the heart of the town of Agde by a footbridge.	€4.5 M (footbridge)	2026
Artillery Park (Lunel)	Rehabilitation of the Lunel artillery park with a view to transforming it into a cultural third place.	€5 M	2027
Total		€152.2 M	



Our collective imagination

