



Be.CULTOUR:

“Beyond CULTural TOURism: human-centred innovations for sustainable and circular cultural tourism”



HORIZON 2020

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Reports of the Task Force on circular financing and business models for cultural heritage in European regions and cities

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Dissemination Level

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- PU:** Public
- CO:** Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)
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Abstract

The present deliverable provides a detailed description of all the activities and events developed during the Be.CULTOUR project to foster and implement the Task Force on "Circular Financing and Business Models for Cultural Heritage in European Regions and Cities".

The Task Force was activated at CNR - National Research Council of Italy, under the previous Horizon 2020 CLIC project (www.clicproject.eu) to identify innovative financing instruments and promote circular business models for the reuse and regeneration of cultural heritage, fostering experimentation and validation in different contexts, especially in European countries.

The Task Force met during the project, providing experts' feedback on the innovative financing instruments developed by Be.CULTOUR, and orienting its development to create synergies with other initiatives on cultural heritage as driver of sustainable development in regions and cities.



Partners involved in the document

Participant No	Participant organisation name	Short Name	Check if involved
1 Coordinator	CONSIGLIO NAZIONALE DELLE RICERCHE, Institute of Heritage Science	CNR	X
1.1	University of Naples Federico II – DiARC (Linked Third Party)	UNINA	
2	European Regions Research and Innovation Network	ERRIN	
3	ICLEI Europe – Local governments for Sustainability	ICLEI	
4	Iniziativa Cube S.r.l.	INI	X
5	Uppsala University	UU	X
6	Haute Ecole ICHEC - ECAM - ISFSC	ICHEC	
7	Open University of the Netherlands	OUNL	
8	APT Basilicata	APT-BAS	
9	Diputación Provincial de Teruel	PGT	
10	Larnaca and Famagusta Districts Development Agency	ANETEL	
11	Laona Foundation	LAONA	
12	Västra Götaland region	VGR	
13	Stalna Konferencija Gradova I Opstina	SCTM	
14	Agentia Pentru Dezvoltare Regionala Nord-Est	NERDA	
15	Verde e Moldova	VEM	

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1. Description of the Project

Be.CULTOUR stands for “Beyond CULTural TOURism: heritage innovation networks as drivers of Europeanisation towards a human-centred and circular tourism economy”. It expresses the goal to move beyond tourism through a longer-term human-centred development perspective, enhancing cultural heritage and landscape values.

Cultural tourism entails opportunities but also risks. Tourism as a whole can be a highly volatile economic sector. If not managed properly, cultural tourism can also easily turn into a “value extractive” industry, generating negative environmental, social and cultural impacts on local communities and ecosystems. This project developed specific strategies to promote an understanding of cultural tourism, which moves away from a “stop-and-go” consumer-oriented approach towards one that puts humans and circular economy models at its centre, paying attention to nature, communities and cultural diversity. “Place”, intended as the genius loci, the ancient spirit of the site expressing its “intrinsic value” and “people” as co-creators of its uniqueness, culture, art, tradition, folklore, productivity, spirituality, as well as its “time space routine”, are the focus of Be.CULTOUR, which realised a longer-term development project for the pilot areas involved.

The overarching goal of Be.CULTOUR was to co-create and test sustainable human-centred innovations for circular cultural tourism through collaborative innovation networks/methodologies and improved investments strategies. Targeting deprived remote, peripheral or deindustrialized areas and cultural landscapes as well as over-exploited areas, local Heritage innovation networks co-developed a long-term heritage-led development project in the areas involved enhancing inclusive economic growth, communities’ wellbeing and resilience, nature regeneration as well as effective cooperation at cross-border, regional and local level.

Wide and diversified partnerships of stakeholders from 18 EU and non-EU regions of Northern-Central and Southern Europe, the Balkans, the Eastern neighbourhood and the Mediterranean were the driving force of the project. A community of 300 innovators (which includes regional authorities and municipalities, clusters and associations, museums and tourist boards, entrepreneurs, chambers of commerce, citizens, researchers, practitioners as well as project partners) in 6 pilot regions co-created innovative place-based solutions for human-centred development through sustainable and circular cultural tourism.

Collaborative “Heritage Innovation Networks” were established in 6 European deprived remote, peripheral and deindustrialised areas and cultural landscapes identified as “pilot innovation ecosystems”: committed to the project’s objectives, they defined clear cultural tourism-related challenges requiring innovation that served as the basis for the collaboration with the 16 additional “Mirror innovation ecosystems”. Mutual learning and up-scaling of project methodology were the objectives of the collaboration between Pilot and Mirror ecosystems, building the sustainability of the project's results beyond its lifetime.

By adopting a human-centred quadruple helix approach to co-design, Be.CULTOUR resulted in 6 community-led Action Plans and 18 innovative human-centred solutions which will directly contribute to inclusive economic growth, communities’ wellbeing and resilience, and nature regeneration in pilot and Mirror regions, stimulating effective cooperation at a cross-border, regional and local level. The core partners of the Consortium have progressively built Be.CULTOUR sustainability by broadening the interregional collaboration while anchoring it to relevant EU initiatives and other collaborators in the academic, business and institutional realms.

1.1. Be.CULTOUR specific objectives

The scope of the Be.CULTOUR project was achieved through a set of specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-constrained (SMART) specific objectives:

Objective 1 – To assess the impacts and market potential of sustainable and circular cultural tourism at national, regional and local level through multidimensional quantitative and qualitative indicators, innovative statistical methods and advanced smart data management systems;

Objective 2 – To build a Community of Practice of 6 pilot regional ecosystems and a Community of Interest with 16 “Mirror ecosystems” in EU and non-EU countries actively engaged in knowledge-sharing and exploitation of Be.CULTOUR’s approach, methodology, tools, and innovative solutions for sustainable and circular cultural tourism;

Objective 3 – To co-develop 6 Action Plans for sustainable and circular cultural tourism by establishing collaborative “Heritage innovation networks” in 6 pilot regions in Northern-Central and Southern Europe, the Balkans, the Eastern neighbourhood and the Mediterranean;

Objective 4 – To co-develop, prototype and test human-centred and place-specific product, process and service innovations for sustainable and circular cultural tourism in pilot heritage sites;

Objective 5 – To provide policy recommendations for more effective use of European Structural Investment Funds (ESIFs) and other EU funds to support cultural tourism innovation ecosystems in pilot and Mirror regions, and develop a proposal of evolution of ESIFs through synergies with other public funds;

Objective 6 – To contribute to deepening cultural Europeanisation through information and educational activities focused on the European history, identity and culture expressed in tangible and intangible cultural heritage and cultural landscapes, developing European Cultural Routes and European Heritage Labels in pilot heritage sites.

All partners have wide experience in developing and testing the Be.CULTOUR proposed approach, methodology and tools, ensuring the effective and time-constrained achievement of all the above-mentioned specific goals.



2. Introduction

The **Task Force on Circular Financing and Business Models for Cultural Heritage in European Regions and Cities** was activated at CNR - National Research Council of Italy, under the Horizon 2020 CLIC project.¹ The Task Force was included in the European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage within the “CLUSTER OF ACTIONS 5: supporting the adaptive re-use of heritage buildings”.²

The aim of the Task force is to identify innovative financing instruments and promote circular business models for the reuse and regeneration of cultural heritage, fostering experimentation and validation in different contexts, especially in European countries. Within the overall scope of the Task force, the Horizon 2020 Be.CULTOUR project has developed an innovative financing instrument (Social impact pledge for cultural heritage and tourism: Investire Sostenibile), a new platform for heritage investments that focuses on pooling financial and non-financial resources from diverse actors to support innovative projects/startups for cultural heritage and tourism able to generate, manage and assess positive multidimensional impacts for territories and communities (social, cultural, environmental and economic impacts) in the perspective of a circular and regenerative economy in regions and cities.

On these premises, the present document aims to provide all the activities and events developed to foster and implement the Task Force during the Be.CULTOUR project. It also provides some insights and ways forward for the future development of the Task Force to support social impact-oriented initiatives on cultural heritage and sustainable circular business models.

2.1. Document structure

The document is structured as follows:

- **Section 1** describes the Be.CULTOUR project;
- **Section 2** introduces the objectives and structure of this document;
- **Section 3** describes the activities and events developed during the Be.CULTOUR project to foster and implement the Task Force;
- **Section 4** draws conclusions and provides insights on the future actions for further development of the Task Force

¹ <https://www.clicproject.eu/taskforce/>

² <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/5a9c3144-80f1-11e9-9f05-01aa75ed71a1>

3. The Be.CULTOUR Task Force

During the Be.CULTOUR project, specific activities, and events have been developed to continue and promote the Task Force activated under the previous Horizon 2020 project CLIC, namely:

- Launch of the “Pledge Fund” Investment Model
- The Task Force Round Table Meeting in Italy
- Webinar on Innovative finance for circular cultural tourism
- Task Force Meeting on Circular Financing and Business Models

Each of them is addressed in detail in the following paragraphs.

3.1. Launch of the “Pledge Fund” Be.CULTOUR investment model

Within the Be.CULTOUR project, Iniziativa Cube has developed the pilot initiative for the "Pledge Fund" investment model, launched in June 2023. The overall goal of the "Pledge Fund" is to support investments in equity stakes for early-stage financing in innovative and socially oriented start-ups located in Italy. These investments will be made in accordance with circular investment programs in the tourism, culture, creative, and cultural heritage sectors, with the aim of enhancing the territory and creating and impact on the local community.

In addition, the initiatives should also be aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda and pay particular attention to the valorization of rural areas, urban regeneration, and sustainable cultural tourism, actively contributing to the renewal of the tourism ecosystem and the enhancement of cultural heritage.

As a pilot initiative, it draws inspiration from some of characteristic elements of a traditional pledge fund, such as the central role of the management team and the investors' decision-making autonomy, in order to test a simplified investment model.³

³ For further information: <https://www.iniziativa.cc/materiali-e-schede-2/>
or <https://becultour.eu/green-light-launch-pilot-initiative-pledge-fund-investment-model-becultour>

3.2. The Task Force Round Table Meeting in Italy

The investment vehicle “Investire Sostenibile” was presented and discussed in Italy, Naples, during a Round Table on the topic: "Creating social value for the innovation ecosystem and local community: innovative investment models between public, private and civic".

The event aimed to explore the evolution of innovative and social impact start-ups operating in the sectors of sustainable tourism, cultural, creative, and heritage conservation in Italy.

It offered a unique opportunity to understand how they are redefining the business world with circular investment programs in tourism and cultural and creative industries that can enhance the local area and positively impact the community.

The Round Table was a public event open for all investors and entrepreneurs interested in meaningful opportunities, socially value-oriented initiatives, or simply eager to better understand responsible innovation, collecting experts’ feedback on the innovative financing instruments developed by Be.CULTOUR and orienting its development as a pilot initiative at the national level.



Figure 1 - Task Force Round Table Meeting in Italy

Among the speakers, the CEO and founder of Initiative Cube, Ivo Allegro, highlighted the need for sustainable investments for initiatives that generate real cultural value and lasting impacts on communities. Indeed, prioritizing the social pillar alongside environmental sustainability requires new financial instruments combining measurable social impacts with economic feasibility.

During the event, Valeria Fascione, the Minister for Startups, Innovation, Internationalisation of Campania Region, also emphasized how the Pledge Fund represents an innovative investment model that can effectively facilitate access to venture capital in a context such as the Italian one, where it is often challenging, especially for SMEs and startups.

Date and time

- September 14, 2023
- From 3 to 7 PM CET

Location

- Palazzo Ischitella, Via Riviera di Chiaia 270, Naples

Speakers

- Giovanni Lombardi | Founder and Chairman of Tecno Group
- Antonia Gravagnuolo | CNR ISPC - Institute of Heritage Science, H2020 Be.CULTOUR project coordinator
- Ivo Allegro | CEO - Iniziativa Cube
- Alfonso Riccardi | Consultant of Iniziativa Cube
- Luigi Fusco Girard | Emeritus Professor at the University of Naples Federico II
- Antonio Loffredo | Member of the ethics committee of Banca Etica
- Agostino Riitano | Cultural Manager
- Aliona Lupu | Partner of Iniziativa Cube
- Valeria Fascione | Regional Minister for Startups, Innovation, Internationalisation of Campania Region

Main Contents

- Cultural regeneration of territories beyond tourism;
- Pledge Fund: an innovative investment model as a tool for social value creation in the local ecosystem;
- Circular business, governance and financing models for cultural heritage;
- Socially oriented entrepreneurship and ethical finance;
- Cultural participation and co-creation as a prospect for future investment;
- European Digital Innovation Hub/Heritage Smart Lab as a territorial catalyst for the development of cultural and creative enterprises;
- Ecosystem of innovation in the Campania Region.

3.3. Webinar on Innovative finance for circular cultural tourism

The webinar on “Innovative finance for circular cultural tourism” has been included in the Be.CULTOUR webinar series , which provided learning and exchange opportunities between Be.CULTOUR partners and many relevant European and global stakeholders for actively promoting innovation toward circular and sustainable cultural tourism and territorial regeneration.

The webinar moderated by Aliona Lupu of Iniziativa Cube, presented innovative investment models for circular cultural tourism as tools for creating shared value in local ecosystems and supporting social and community-led entrepreneurship through sustainable impact-based finance.



Figure 2 - Webinar on Innovative finance for circular cultural tourism

The experimental model of the Pledge Fund hybridised with a Project Development Assistance instrument for innovative cultural tourism enterprises/startups was discussed with representatives of financial and public institutions, who provided feedback and insights. They included Ilaria D'Auria, Head of Programmes of Thematic Collaborations at Philea - Philanthropy Europe Association, which nurtures an inclusive ecosystem of foundations, philanthropic organizations, and networks working for the common good. Gianluca Gaggiotti, Knowledge Manager at Impact Europe, a network of impact capital providers along the full capital continuum

that aims to increase prosperity, social progress, and planet preservation. The founder and president of the Cultural Heritage Finance Alliance (CHiFA), Bonnie Burnham, promoting heritage-led regeneration through collaborative and innovative financing solutions for capital investment in historic places.

Examples of "circular" investment programs for tourism, culture, creativity, and cultural heritage were also presented, supporting the regeneration of heritage sites and the generation of positive impacts for local communities.

Date and time

- November 30, 2023
- From 2 to 3h30 PM CET

Location

- Online event

Speakers

- Ilaria D'Auria | Philea - Philanthropy Europe Association
- Bonnie Burnham | CHiFA Cultural Heritage Finance Alliance
- Gianluca Gaggiotti | EVPA European Venture Philanthropy Association/Impact Europe
- Aliona Lupu | Iniziativa Cube

Panel discussion with:

- Anatolie Risina | Verde e Moldova, Agency for Development of Moldova
- Christer Gustafsson | Uppsala University, EIT KIC Culture & Creativity member

Main Contents

- Pledge Fund: an innovative investment model as a tool for creating social shared value in local ecosystems;
- Art and culture at the core of philanthropy;
- Innovative finance for cultural heritage and tourism;
- Impact investing in the cultural sector.

3.4.Task Force Meeting on Circular Financing and Business Models

As the project approached its end, the second dedicated Task Force meeting on "Circular Financing and Business Models for Cultural Heritage in European Regions and Cities" was organized.

The objective of this Task Force meeting was to introduce to international potential collaborators the investment platform "Investire Sostenibile", that is already active at the national level in Italy as a result of the Be.CULTOUR project, and projected to be replicated in other EU countries. The meeting was aimed at leveraging feedback, suggestions, and eventual interest to cooperate from relevant actors in the impact investment, heritage conservation, and heritage economics sectors. The meeting also aimed to gain insights and potential ways forward for the Task Force future development.



Figure 3 - Task Force Meeting on Circular Financing and Business Models

The meeting included an introduction of the Task Force initiative from CLIC project to Be.CULTOUR by Antonia Gravagnuolo, coordinator of the project, followed by an in-depth presentation of Aliona Lupu, partner of Iniziativa Cube, on the platform "Investire Sostenibile", a social impact pledge investment vehicle for cultural heritage and tourism.

During the panel discussion with Christer Gustafsson, full professor in Conservation at Uppsala University and ICOMOS Advisory Committee Officer, the debate addressed the possibility of

adapting and replicating the initiative in Sweden and in synergy with the KIC Culture and Creativity.

The initiative also met the interest of the financial advisor Sander Winckel, who finds it particularly innovative for attracting private sector funds to social goals, such as cultural heritage and merging commercial with non-commercial investments. Furthermore, he discussed the possibility of setting up another fund that can be used Europe-wide in cooperation with other EU relevant initiatives. In this regard, some initiatives for urban regeneration at the European level were also mentioned, such as JASPERS⁴, a partnership funded by the European Commission and the European Investment Bank, which advises on strategies and projects that contribute to a greener, more connected, and more innovative Europe, helping beneficiaries align their projects with the highest EU standards, and improving their chances of securing EU funding.

Date and time

- June 25, 2024
- Form 10 to 12 AM CET

Location

- Online event

Speakers

- Antonia Gravagnuolo | CNR Institute of Heritage Science
- Aliona Lupu | Iniziativa Cube

Panel discussion with:

- Christer Gustafsson | Uppsala University, EIT KIC Culture & Creativity member
- Sander Winckel | Advisor Innovative/Blended Finance

Main Contents

- The Task Force initiative from CLIC project to Be.CULTOUR – Experimenting Innovative Financial Instruments for Cultural Heritage;

⁴ <https://jaspers.eib.org>

- A social impact pledge investment vehicle for cultural heritage and tourism: Investire Sostenibile;
- Panel Discussion for collecting feedback and suggestions from participants on the instruments of Pledge Fund linked with Project Development Assistance, according to their background and experience in financial and non-financial support of social impact-oriented initiatives on cultural heritage and sustainable/circular business models.



4. Conclusions

The Task Force on “Circular models for cultural heritage adaptive reuse in cities and regions” established under the H2020 CLIC project has been boosted and implemented during the Be.CULTOUR project.

Following the launch of the "Pledge Fund" Be.CULTOUR investment model by Iniziativa Cube, specific activities and events were developed in order to advance knowledge and promote “circular” business and financial models in the tourism, cultural, creative, and cultural heritage sectors.

Thus, the presented activities do not represent concluding events but rather important steps of an ongoing process to foster innovative financing instruments for cultural heritage valorization and reuse and cultural tourism. For example, during the Be.CULTOUR final conference “Beyond Cultural Tourism: beautiful, circular, human (5-7 June 2024, Naples) a specific session was dedicated to “Investire Sostenibile”. The session moderated by Aliona Lupu of Iniziativa Cube presented some initiatives supported, and discussed about key topics related to sustainable and innovative financing, including the importance of the evaluation impact tools in the impact investment sector, with the participation of Gianluca Gaggiotti of Impact Europe.

Based on these different experiences gained and the engagement of the community of research and practice established during the project, also some main ways forward have been identified, including:

- Identification and engagement of relevant actors in the impact investment sector, heritage conservation, and heritage economics sectors interested in initiating cooperation;
- Adaptation and replication of the investment platform in other EU countries.

Currently, the organization potentially interested in starting a collaboration are the following:

- ChiFA Cultural Heritage Finance Alliance [<https://heritagefinance.org>]
- Philea - Philanthropy Europe Association [<https://philea.eu>]
- Impact Europe [<https://www.impacteurope.net>]
- EIT KIC Culture and Creativity [<https://eit-culture-creativity.eu>]
- Uppsala University [<https://www.uu.se/en>]
- Investment Moldova Agency [<https://www.invest.gov.md>]
- Intesa San Paolo Bank [<https://www.intesasanpaolo.com>]

- Europa Nostra [<https://www.europanostra.org>]
- Banca Etica [<https://www.bancaetica.it>]
- Campania Region
- Basilicata Region
- Barrabes.biz [<https://www.barrabes.biz/es/>]

In order to strengthen the network and define a cooperative model within the Task Force a series of bilateral meetings are planned after the project end (between July and October 2024) with the above mentioned organisations, involving experts in financial and non-financial support of social impact-oriented initiatives on cultural heritage and circular business models.

