

CULTURE & CREATIVITY CLUSTER

ANNUAL WORK PLAN 2026

CLUSTER DESCRIPTION AND KEY PRIORITIES

ERRIN's **Culture and Creativity Cluster** includes the activities of the [Culture, Heritage & Tourism](#), and the [New European Bauhaus and Creativity Working Groups](#), aligning their efforts to address key EU priorities and strengthen the R&I capacities of the regional innovation ecosystems of the ERRIN members. Operating as a Cluster enables the Working Groups to deliver more impactful messages with a collective voice, enhancing their influence on key EU strategies and initiatives. The cross-sectoral perspective further fosters innovative, holistic approaches to complex challenges while enhancing collaboration.

The Cluster actively monitors and engages with major EU priorities and strategies in the field of culture and creative industries, cultural heritage, tourism, and the New European Bauhaus (NEB), including the **Culture Compass**, **Horizon Europe Programme** (Cluster 2 and NEB Facility), **European Partnerships** and the **New European Bauhaus (NEB) initiative**, including the new **NEB Communication** and upcoming **NEB Council Conclusions**.

Key workstreams the Cluster will pursue in 2026 include: **EU culture policy and funding**, including culture in the future **Multiannual Financial Framework** (Horizon Europe, EU Agora) and **project development** (Cluster 2 and the New European Bauhaus); the **New European Bauhaus**, pursued in collaboration with the **Affordable Housing** workstream of the Low Carbon Cluster, with a focus on inclusion, youth policies, and implementation of the NEB Facility; **Culture, health and wellbeing**, developed in collaboration with the Health Cluster; **Innovation and skills for the digital transition**, including **Artificial intelligence**, developed jointly with the ICT Cluster to strengthen resilience; and sustainable tourism.

In 2025, ERRIN launched **two new projects** under the CCI Cluster: Interreg Europe project [PROSPERO](#), placing CCIs in the centre of sustainable and inclusive regional development, and [NEB Junction](#), a Horizon Europe project setting up a NEB Hub for Results and Impacts. Furthermore, ERRIN is looking forward to the upcoming **European Partnership for Resilient Cultural Heritage**, set to be launched in 2026.

More details about each Working Group and projects can be found at the end of this file.

CLUSTER CALENDAR

Date	Topic	Responsible
10 Feb	Culture and Creativity Cluster Kick-off meeting	Cluster activity
16 March	NEB Junction Policy Conversations	ERRIN + NEB&C WG
25 March	Project development session on CCI-related calls	Cluster activity
21 May	Culture, arts and mental health	CHT WG
9 June	Strengthening NEB governance: the local pathway towards the NEB chapter	Cluster activity
11 June	EU Design Day – Housing as a game-changer	NEB&C WG
September TBC	CCI and AI – Risk, Opportunities, Skills and Resilience	Cluster Activity

October TBC	NEB and Youth policies	NEB&C WG
November TBC	Cultural Heritage and Earth Observation	CHT WG
Oct/Nov TBC	Site visit on inspiring NEB solutions	NEB&C + SC WG
Dec TBC	Innovative approaches to sustainable tourism	CHT WG

ACTIVITIES

Culture and Creativity Cluster Kick-off meeting 2026

10 February | 14:30–18:00

Cluster activity

Responsible co-leaders: all leaders

In-person

The first official meeting of the CCI Cluster will offer an opportunity for all ERRIN members active in the Cluster topics to come together, network, and learn about the planned **2026 activities** of the Culture, Heritage and Tourism and New European Bauhaus and Creativity Working Groups.

The event will begin with a **presentation from representatives of the European Commission (DG EAC, JRC, DG RTD)**, who will share the latest developments in **EU Cultural Policy**, including updates on the **Culture Compass** and the **new NEB Communication**, as well as the funding for culture in the new **MF**.

Following this, the **Cluster Annual Work Plan 2026** will be presented, giving an overview of the sessions planned for the cluster in 2026, including EU Design Days, and a project development session, as well as key workstreams for the year ahead.

NEB Junction Policy Conversations

16 March | 12:00–19:00

Responsible WG: NEB&C WG

Responsible co-leaders: ERRIN Secretariat, Giulia Chiarel, Nadia Galluzzo

In-person

NEB Junction – a NEB Hub for Results and Impacts is a Horizon Europe project in which ERRIN participates as a project partner and Work Package leader. Within this framework, ERRIN will organise the **first in a series of three planned high-level policy events** in Brussels, bringing together a broad range of stakeholders from across the New European Bauhaus (NEB) initiative - including national, local and regional authorities, key NEB projects and initiatives, local communities, National Contact Points, local chapters, and representatives from the construction sector and cultural and creative industries – to engage in a direct dialogue with representatives of the European Commission.

The event will focus on the implementation of the current NEB programme and the NEB Facility, addressing challenges, bottlenecks, research and innovation gaps, and emerging needs. Discussions will also explore expectations related to the NEB Communication and forthcoming Council Conclusions and formulate recommendations for the future development of the NEB Facility.

To ensure balanced stakeholder representation and comply with venue capacity constraints, participation will be limited.

Project development session on CCI-related calls

25 March | 10.00–12.00

Cluster activity

Responsible co-leaders: Katinka Sætersdal Remøe, Andreea Leru, Loriane Henninot

Online

The Culture and Creativity Cluster will organise a project development session on [the 2026-2027 Horizon Europe Cluster 2](#) and [New European Bauhaus calls](#) for proposal. The session will take place online, targeting a wider regional participation of stakeholders and practitioners from across the CCI sector and beyond. This online event will include a pitching session where stakeholders can present their project ideas.

Based on the Expression of Interests received through the Project Development Tool on ERRIN's website, the working group leaders will select the calls that will be discussed during the session.

The matchmaking will continue through the Project Development Tool after the session, where members and their local stakeholders can submit expressions of interest, outline their expertise and partner needs and connect directly with others working on the same calls.

Culture, arts and mental health

21 May

Responsible WG: CCI Cluster in cooperation with Health WG

Responsible co-leaders: Martina Hilger, Roberta Negriolli, Marie-Laurence Com

In-person

Each year, nearly one-in-four people are affected by mental health disorders, significantly impacting on people's quality of life, social cohesion and the labour market. As noted in the Commission's Communication on A Comprehensive approach to mental health, participation in cultural activities can positively impact mental health by enhancing social connections, a sense of belonging and self-esteem, while helping to address isolation, stress and loneliness and to strengthen resilience.

This contribution of culture to health and well-being was more recently further underlined in the Culture Compass, notably its chapter on health and well-being, and in the [Open Method of Coordination \(OMC\) report on culture and health](#), which emphasise the added value of cultural participation, particularly at local and regional level.

The meeting, organised in collaboration with ERRIN's Health WG, will explore best practice case studies and activities at a regional level around culture and mental health, as well as EU policies relating to this topic, and options for future activities funded by the EU.

Strengthening NEB governance: the local pathway towards the NEB chapter

9 June

Cluster Activity

Responsible co-leaders: Nadia Galluzzo, Annamaria Cosattini

In-person / Hybrid – Workshop and Networking reception

This event will explore the role of territories and local stakeholders in strengthening New European Bauhaus (NEB) governance, with a particular focus on the development and implementation of NEB Local Chapters. It will bring together regional and local authorities, practitioners and other relevant actors to reflect on how multi-level cooperation and participatory approaches can support the effective translation of NEB ambitions into local practice.

Discussions will examine the NEB Local Chapter instrument as a means to foster collaboration among public authorities, local communities and other stakeholders, and to reinforce inclusive, place-based governance processes. Particular attention will be given to the integration of NEB principles into regional and local policies, including their contribution to the regeneration of public spaces and buildings – such as social housing and schools – and to improving the quality of life of neighbourhoods and communities more broadly.

The event is organised by the Liguria Region, in collaboration with the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, and with the support of ERRIN's NEB & Creativity Working Group, in the context of the NEB Festival 2026.

EU Design Day

Housing as a Game-Changer – Affordable Living through the New European Bauhaus: Social Inclusion, Urban Regeneration and the Power of Regions

11 June

Responsible WG: NEB & Creativity, with support from Low Carbon Cluster

Responsible co-leaders: Anna Spechtenhauser, Marie-Laurence Com, Roberta Negriolli, Giulia Chiarel

In-person

The 14th edition of the EU Design Day (EUDD) will focus on affordable housing as a key societal challenge, exploring the role of regions in shaping inclusive, sustainable, and high-quality living environments through the lens of the New European Bauhaus. The event will focus on three key thematic dimensions:

1. **Inclusive and social housing:** looking at how housing policies, design approaches and governance models can foster social inclusion, affordability and accessibility.
2. **Sustainable housing and climate adaptation:** looking at the role of housing in the ecological transition, addressing energy efficiency, circular construction, climate-resilience design, and the use of sustainable materials, as well as the role of regions as laboratories of innovation and pioneering projects.
3. **Urban regeneration and transformation of the built environment:** looking at the role of culture as a driver of urban regeneration, with an emphasis on territorial approaches, co-creation processes, innovation and resident-centric urban transformation.



Through a series of keynotes, breakout sessions, and networking, participants from different backgrounds – regional stakeholders, policymakers, designers, architects – will share their experiences, reflect on challenges, and learn from success stories on the topic of housing.

CCI and AI – Risks, Opportunities, Skills needs and Resilience

September | TBC

Responsible WG: Cluster activity, in cooperation with ICT WG

Responsible co-leaders: Anna Spechtenhauser, Loriane Henninot, Giulia Chiarel

In-person

Artificial Intelligence is reshaping the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCSI), opening up new opportunities, innovative business models, and forms of collaboration. At the same time, it brings significant challenges, including ethical and legal considerations, skills gaps, and the need for resilience in a rapidly evolving landscape.

This ERRIN event will explore these key opportunities and challenges AI presents for the CCSI sector. Participants will learn how different stakeholders - from creative professionals and SMEs to clusters, regions, and policymakers - can harness AI responsibly and strategically, looking at areas such as digital skills. The event will be organised in cooperation with ERRIN's ICT WG and will showcase practical tools and approaches and highlight relevant EU initiatives and support instruments in the AI space.

NEB and Youth policies

October | TBC

Responsible WG: NEB & Creativity

Responsible co-leaders: Giulia Chiarel, Annamaria Cosattini, Loriane Henninot, Nadia Galluzzo, Roberta Negriolli

In-person

As the New European Bauhaus (NEB) progresses from vision to implementation, there is an increasing need to involve citizens not only as beneficiaries, but also as co-creators of sustainable, inclusive and aesthetic living environments. In this context, young people represent a key yet underutilised stakeholder group: while disproportionately affected by challenges such as climate change, housing shortages and spatial inequalities, they are also important drivers of innovation, creativity and social engagement. EU youth policy frameworks, including the EU Youth Strategy 2019–2027 and recent initiatives to strengthen youth participation in policymaking, underline the importance of embedding youth perspectives across relevant policy areas.

Despite this progress, links between NEB implementation and structured youth policy instruments remain limited. Awareness of NEB opportunities among young people is uneven, while policymakers often lack dedicated spaces to systematically integrate youth perspectives into NEB-related planning and governance. This event will address this gap by focusing on the regional level and on the NEB tools and actions available to strengthen youth participation.

Cultural Heritage and Earth Observation

November | TBC

Responsible WG: Culture, Heritage & Tourism, in cooperation with ICT WG

Responsible co-leaders: Martina Hilger, Andreea Leru

In-person

Modern earth monitoring technologies enable systematic observation of cultural heritage sites in the field. Satellites, drones, and GIS capture changes and environmental impacts, while early warning systems detect threats such as erosion or vandalism. Copernicus and EGNOS/Galileo have entered the stage of operability and provide data and signals which can be transformed into useful information for regions across Europe.

This meeting will explore current state of play, considering ongoing geopolitical threats, and the impact of climate change, as well as the legal and ethical considerations needed when using these kinds of technologies in relation to heritage. The meeting will be organised in co-operation with ERRIN's ICT WG and the network NEREUS, the Network of European Regions using Space Technologies.

Site visit on inspiring NEB solutions

October/November

Responsible WG: Smart Cities and NEB & Creativity

Responsible leader: Anna Jorgensen, Marie-Laurence Com

The ERRIN Smart Cities and NEB & Creativity Working Groups will organise a joint study visit to a New European Bauhaus (NEB)-related site in Brussels or its wider vicinity. The visit will showcase an inspiring example of how the green transition can be combined with high-quality design, aesthetics and improvements to the living environment.

Participants will explore concrete, place-based solutions that integrate sustainability, innovation and social value at local level, and engage in exchanges with local actors and project representatives. The visit will foster peer learning and reflection on how NEB principles can be translated into urban and regional practice, highlighting people-centred approaches to sustainable urban development.

Innovative approaches to Sustainable tourism

December | TBC

Responsible WG: Cultural Heritage & Tourism

Responsible co-leaders: Nadia Galluzzo, Katinka Sætersdal Remøe

In-person

The EU's approach to sustainable, responsible tourism has been a key topic of discussion in recent years. The Commission launched a consultation for the EU's first-ever Sustainable Tourism Strategy in June 2025, following on from work previously done via the Tourism Transition Pathway.

Finding targeted, innovative solutions, which take account of specific local circumstances, is a real challenge when it comes to sustainable tourism. This meeting will look at how regions are driving sustainable tourism, looking at measures taken to preserve the local environment, such as climate

adaptation policies. The session will also focus on future social and economic sustainability, and the role sustainable, responsible tourism can play in making this a reality for regions across Europe.

OPPORTUNITIES AND OUTPUTS IN ERRIN PROJECTS

Two new ERRIN projects were launched under the CCI Cluster in spring 2025:

PROSPERO

[PROSPERO](#) is an INTERREG EUROPE project that aims to enhance policy innovation at regional level, leveraging the CCI as drivers for substantiable regional development, contributing to efforts in climate adaptation, competitiveness of SME's, social services, digitalisation, NEB and funding and investments. ERRIN is working with several members involved in the pilot schemes, collecting good practices and facilitating peer-learnings. The project started on 1 May 2025.

As part of PROSPERO Project, ERRIN Secretariat will take part in two different activities this year:

- **22–23 April:** PROSPERO Interregional Meeting (PIM) 3 in Sarajevo Canton (BiH)
- **Sept/October:** PIM4 in South-West Oltenia (RO)

The interregional meetings consist of interactive but structured exchange sessions involving experts and practitioners from culture and creative industries, representatives of other sectors and policy areas and experts in cross-cutting topics.

NEB Junction

ERRIN is a proud partner of [NEB Junction](#), a Horizon Europe Coordination and Support Action, whose core objective is to establish a NEB Hub for Results and Impacts. The project collects, packages, and validates stakeholder knowledge into "**Knowledge Gems**", to be made publicly available via an **AI-supported, accessible IT Portal**. NEB Junction engages a broad range of stakeholders—including those not yet involved or traditionally excluded—through **multi-stakeholder sessions, learning journeys, and stakeholder assemblies**. Its Monitoring System will integrate **cultural, creative, environmental, economic, social, health, and governance perspectives**, making sustainable solutions more relatable and actionable for **policy makers, public authorities, construction ecosystems, and local communities**.

Within ERRIN's task, the project specifically focuses on **connecting stakeholders with the NEB Facility**, identifying R&I **gaps, needs, and opportunities**, and supporting the development of **pathways and a Roadmap for NEB implementation**. ERRIN's work ensures that NEB knowledge is **inclusive, co-designed, and relevant** for local authorities and communities, supporting the long-term effectiveness of the NEB Facility.

Key opportunities for the involvement of ERRIN members:

- **NEB Junction Policy Conversations** – first in-person interactive policy-focused meeting will take place on 16 March 2026. Due to limited capacities, the number of places will be limited. Two additional meetings will be organised in the course of the project.
- **NEB Junction Stakeholder Assemblies** – online wide-range participation format, collecting opinions, evidence and recommendations for the further development of the platform and engagement with the NEB. The first Stakeholder Assembly session is taking place in Jan/Feb 2026, with two additional rounds organised in the course of the project.
- **NEB Festival** – the NEB Junction project will be present at the NEB Festival with opportunities for interactive exchange and further information sharing.

Innovation for Place-based Transformation

Additionally, the ERRIN secretariat works on the [EU Preparatory Action 'Innovation for Place-based Transformation'](#) that offers ERRIN members a concrete opportunity to engage in place-based innovation experimentation and cross-sectoral learning. In the context of this action, ERRIN is involved in the implementation of the NEB Experimentation Journey with a group of territories from across Europe. The objective of the Experimentation Journeys is to use innovative tools and methodologies to tackle specific challenges that the territories are facing, and achieve transformation in policies and practice in line with the principles of the New European Bauhaus. Project-related events:

- **2–3 March:** In-person workshop of the NEB Experimentation Journey in Florence (closed event)
- **2 June:** Presentation of the Preparatory Action at the European Parliament and announcement of new thematic Experimentation Journeys

EU Partnership on Resilient Cultural Heritage

ERRIN is looking forward to the launch of the European Partnership for Resilient Cultural Heritage (RCH), expected in the course of 2026. The RCH is a decade-long instrument for addressing two general objectives: on one hand, the increased research and evidence regarding adaptation strategies and the impact of climate and environmental change on cultural heritage, and, on the other hand, the enhanced understanding, use and recognition of how cultural heritage can inform policies and guide implementation measures, including the role of traditional and local knowledge. ERRIN will provide more information on the RCH, ensure representation and involvement of its members in this important instrument, as its implementation unfolds.

OTHER ISSUES/TOPICS TO BE MONITORED:

Further strategic and policy initiatives of interest to the Cluster:

- Continued active engagement in the **EC Expert Group on Cultural Heritage**
- Following the activities of the **Large-scale Skills Partnership on CCI**, including **Working group on Regional Skills Partnerships**
- Engaging in the **Creative Skills week** to take place in September in Brussels (TBC)

- Following the work of the **EIT Culture and Creativity KIC** – activities and opportunities for ERRIN members
- Further tightening collaboration with relevant DGs following Culture and NEB: DG EAC, DG RTD, JRC – NEB Unit, DG REGIO, etc., as well as NCPs
- Following implementation or discussions on following policy documents:
 - the **Affordable Housing Act**
 - the **Sustainable Tourism Strategy**
 - the **AI strategy for CCI**

MORE INFORMATION ON LEADERS AND WORKING GROUPS

New European Bauhaus & Creativity Working Group



In light of the growing relevance of NEB policies across wider EU initiatives, the decision has been taken to merge the NEB Task Force with the Design and Creativity Working Group as of 2026. This new '[NEB and Creativity Working Group](#)' reflects the central role that design and creativity play within the NEB initiative. The **Working Group** supports the development and implementation of the New European Bauhaus (NEB) in line with the latest EU policies and the NEB Communication, placing design and creativity at the core of the initiative. It follows EU-level NEB developments while showcasing concrete local and regional activities that demonstrate how design- and creativity-driven approaches can deliver sustainable, inclusive and beautiful solutions in practice, helping to build momentum towards a stronger and more actionable NEB across Europe.

The Working Group strengthens members' understanding of the NEB framework and enhances their capacity to engage with it by mobilising local ecosystems and fostering cross-sector collaboration between designers, creative professionals, policymakers, businesses and civil society. As a NEB partner, ERRIN uses the Working Group as a platform to reinforce policy dialogue with EU institutions, driven by members most active on NEB-related topics, while creating opportunities for project development, knowledge exchange and the visibility of members' ideas, stories and ongoing activities within the wider EU NEB community.

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Culture, Heritage and Tourism Working Group



The [Culture, Heritage and Tourism Working Group](#) has three main lines of action: Sustainable Tourism, Cultural Heritage, and wider Cultural policy, and the policies and actions that link these areas. In this context, the Working Group investigates R&I-related measures to mitigate touristic flows' environmental and social impact and encourage the transition towards sustainable tourism and cultural policies and practices. To this end, the Working Group supports ERRIN members in the uptake of digital technologies and the development of skills/competences in the Culture, Heritage and Tourism sectors, facilitating exchanges of good practices and developing new projects.

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ERRIN CONTAC



Culture, Heritage & Tourism

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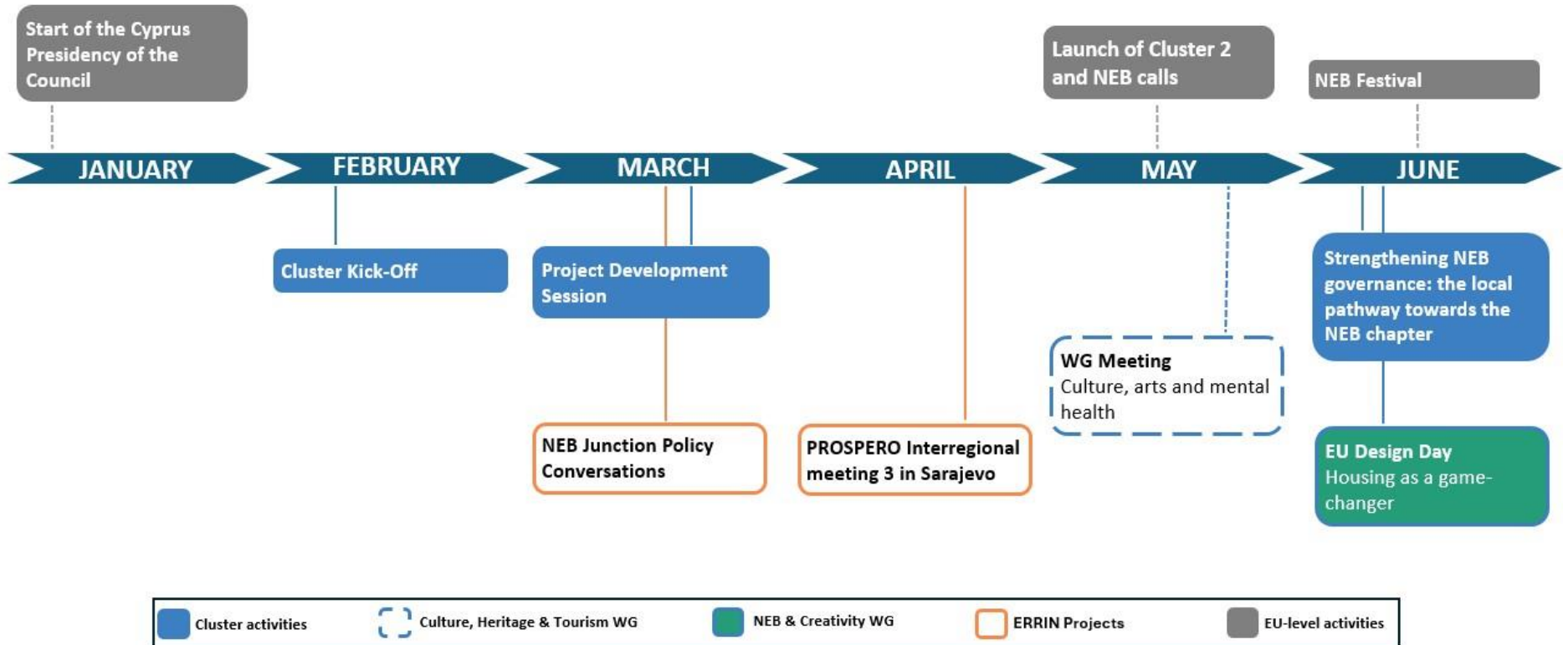


New European Bauhaus & Creativity

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CULTURE & CREATIVITY CLUSTER 2026 TIMELINE



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