



OPEN CALL

JOIN THE
BE.CULTOUR
(BEYOND CULTURAL
TOURISM)
COMMUNITY

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1. THE BE.CULTOUR COMMUNITY OF CIRCULAR CULTURAL TOURISM INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS

In the frame of the Horizon 2020 funded project '[Beyond Cultural Tourism \(Be.CULTOUR\)](#)', the European Regions Research and Innovation Network ([ERRIN](#)) is building a community of passionate regional representatives committed to shaping the future of cultural tourism in their territory. Twelve applicants will be selected as '**Mirror Innovation Ecosystems**' and work together with the representatives of six pilot ecosystems in **Aragon (Spain), Basilicata (Italy), Larnaca (Cyprus), Vojvodina (Serbia) and the cross-border area of North-East Romania and Moldova**. The 12 selected applicants will participate in a peer-learning scheme based on the pilot/mirror approach: for three years, a programme made of a blend of offline and online activities will foster collaboration and knowledge transfer between the representatives of six pilot ecosystems, already partners in the consortium, with the 12 additional regional representatives. Together, they form the Be.CULTOUR community and will learn methodologies, tools and practices fostering regional development through circular cultural tourism. Starting from the **shared challenges** linked to deprived, remote or over-exploited areas, the selected participants will mirror the resources developed throughout the project. They will then adapt the resources to their territory while actively engaging in **networking and training activities dedicated to the transfer and uptake of innovative solutions**. Territories featuring unique heritage assets will be at the heart of a learning journey that will focus on how to create attractive destinations after the COVID-19 pandemic. The Be.CULTOUR community will be managed by the European Regions Research and Innovation Network (ERRIN).

Applications to join the Be.CULTOUR community can be submitted by completing the online form on the [ERRIN website](#) until Tuesday, 8th June 2021, 18:00 CET.

2. THE BE.CULTOUR PROJECT IN A NUTSHELL

Be.CULTOUR stands for **‘Beyond CULTural TOURism: heritage innovation networks as drivers of Europeanisation towards a human-centred and circular tourism economy’**. The overarching goal of Be.CULTOUR is to foster sustainable regional development through circular cultural tourism. The project will develop human-centred innovations inspired by cultural heritage, to support the transition of the tourism sector towards a circular economy.

Title of the project	Beyond Cultural Tourism
EU programme	Horizon 2020 (Innovation Action)
Duration	36 months, starting from 1 st February 2021
Coordinator	CNR-IRISS Italian National Research Centre - Institute for Research on Innovation and Services for Development
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche (CNR)-IRISS (IT) • Iniziativa Cube (IT) • Uppsala University (SE) • European Regions Research & Innovation Network (ERRIN) (BE) • ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability (DE) • ICHEC – Business management school (BE) • OUNL – Open University of the Netherlands (NL) • APT-BAS - Association for territorial promotion in Basilicata (IT) • PGT - Provincial Government of Teruel (ES) • ANETEL -Larnaca and Famagusta District Development Agency (CY) • LAONA Foundation for the Conservation and Regeneration of the Cypriot Countryside (CY) • VGR - Cultural Development Administration Region Västra Götaland (SE) • SCTM - Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities National Association of Local Authorities in Serbia (RS) • NERDA - North-East Romania Regional Development Agency (RO) • VEM - NGO Verde e Moldova (MD)

Cultural tourism entails opportunities but also risks. If not managed properly, it can easily generate negative environmental, social and cultural impacts on local communities and ecosystems. Moreover, **the level of development of cultural tourism** between certain regions and sites, including those between the neighbouring countries in Europe, remains still **unbalanced**. Deprived remote, peripheral or deindustrialised areas lag behind, whereas high demand areas are over-exploited in an unsustainable manner.

Moreover, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has brought global, urban, and regional development and cultural tourism to a standstill, hitting all territories without distinctions and seriously jeopardising thousands of European cultural and tourism professionals' livelihoods. Despite the challenges, the tourism and culture sectors today face a unique opportunity to **create new partnerships and collaboration**. They are bound to **jointly reinvent**

and diversify their offer, attract new audiences in different ways, and develop new skills to support this radical transition. **Capitalising on digitalisation, supporting circular tourism and promoting less exploited areas are now key to build a stronger, more sustainable and resilient tourism sector.**

In February 2021, the Horizon 2020 funded project **“[Beyond Cultural Tourism – Be.CULTOUR](#)” project was launched with precisely this ambition**. Selected with the maximum score amongst 86 proposals, Be.CULTOUR has **4 million Euros and 3 years** to help regions develop human-centred and circular models for their cultural tourism sector. Led by the CNR IRISS, Institute for Research on Innovation and Services for Development in Italy, the consortium comprises **15 partners** including research institutes, local and regional authorities, as well as European umbrella organisations such as **[ERRIN](#)**, the **European Regions Research and Innovation Network** and **[ICLEI](#)**, the global network of towns, cities and regions committed to sustainable development.

Six EU and non-EU territories have accepted the challenge: the regions of **Aragon** (Spain), **Basilicata** (Italy), **Larnaca** (Cyprus), **Västra Götaland** (Sweden), **Vojvodina** (Serbia) as well as the cross-border area of **North-East Romania and Moldova** will be equipped with tools, knowledge and contacts to accelerate the **development of innovative solutions in different thematic areas** (rural co-living, augmented cultural tourism, sensorial heritage, contemporary meanings of heritage, religious heritage, natural heritage, industrial heritage, post-cultural tourism, cultural tourism at home, fair cultural tourism and solo tourism) and test them in wide and diversified partnerships of stakeholders.

Twelve additional organisations will be selected and join forces with the six EU and non-EU territories in the Be.CULTOUR community. **Managed by [ERRIN](#)**, the **18 organisations in the Be.CULTOUR community will be actively involved and invited to share their best practices by participating in the project’s co-creation, peer-learning and capacity-building activities**. The community members will have access to a peer-learning scheme 100% funded by Horizon 2020 and dedicated to passionate practitioners in charge of shaping the cultural tourism sector of the future!

3. WHAT'S ON OFFER?

Peer-learning and knowledge transfer will be at the heart of the Be.CULTOUR community. Based on the pilot /mirror approach, local and regional representatives will learn from and reflect on the experiences gained during the implementation of the project’s activities in the 6 pilot areas. The peer-learning programme includes:

- **Interview session (June 2021 – September 2021)**

The 12 selected applicants will firstly be interviewed a by an ERRIN member of staff within the first month. The objective is to gather information on the local/regional innovation ecosystem, challenges and experiences linked to the cultural tourism sector as well as circular economy. A second interview will follow, aiming at understanding the specific learning needs and expectations related to the Be.CULTOUR community. The content of these interviews will be used both for increasing the visibility of the participating innovation ecosystems as well as shaping the peer-learning activities.

- **Dedicated online activities**

The Be.CULTOUR project offers a digital support infrastructure to facilitate the interactions between the regional representatives, while providing them with curated content to further the exploitation of the project's outcomes.

The 12 selected applicants will be invited to participate in:

- **Quarterly community conversations** (June 2021 – August 2022) between pilot and mirror ecosystem representatives offer a shared space for dialogue to exchange on the methodologies, tools and practices developed throughout the project. In addition, this flexible format will allow to invite external speakers with a specific expertise of interest to the Be.CULTOUR community members. These quarterly community conversations are the place for informal peer-learning: they are ensured until halfway through the project and will not last more than two hours. This format can be extended upon request of the Be.CULTOUR community members.
- **Webinar series** (November 2022 – December 2023), organised by the [ICLEI network](#), on the main methodological pillars of the project, such as tourism flow management and evaluation; methodologies and tools for stakeholder engagement; techniques for co-development; prototyping and testing of human-centred innovations in sustainable and circular cultural tourism.

- **Face-to-face activities (September 2022 and December 2023)**

Travel and accommodation costs will be covered for the 12 selected applicants to join two Learning Labs:

- **Brussels Learning Lab** (5-9 September 2022, back to back with a hackathon led by ICHEC Brussels Management School)
- **Naples Learning Lab** (December 2023, back to back with the final conference of the project):

The content of the Learning Labs will be defined at a later stage, in collaboration with the needs and expectations of the Be.CULTOUR community members. Budget for an additional colleague may be available.

4. WHY JOIN?

ENGAGE in a **peer-learning programme** for decision-makers dealing with circular cultural tourism and urban/regional development and mingle with a community of **300+ innovators** across Europe.

12 selected regional representatives will have access to a **peer-learning programme** based on the pilot/mirror approach which includes:

- First-hand access to the tools, methodologies, and resources developed in the frame of the project by experts from [Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche \(CNR\)-IRISS](#), [Iniziativa Cube](#), [Uppsala University](#), [European Regions Research & Innovation Network \(ERRIN\)](#), [ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability](#), [ICHEC – Business management school](#) and [Open University of the Netherlands \(ONUL\)](#).
- 2 Learning Labs in Brussels (September 2022) and Naples (December 2023), with costs of travel and accommodation totally covered;
- 2 interviews and 1 dedicated article on Medium;
- 3 webinars tailored on specific learning needs;
- Quarterly community conversations between the representatives of the pilot and mirror innovation ecosystems;
- Professional community management fostering online and offline networking opportunities;
- Timely information on sector-specific events, calls, tenders, etc.

GATHER DATA on the **market potential** of circular cultural tourism in your region

The Be.CULTOUR project will create innovative **quantitative/statistical as well as qualitative tools and methods** which will combine official statistics and big data for evidence-based policies, effective destination management, business intelligence and resilience, and conduct an analysis of market potential of circular cultural tourism in you region, based on a set of data provided by applicants.

IMPROVE sustainable and circular cultural tourism policies and practices, at various levels, while strengthening local innovation ecosystems

Learn how to **drive co-creation processes** to engage local ecosystem stakeholders in the definition of **challenge-driven and community-led Action Plans**. The Be.CULTOUR community members will be able to closely follow these processes in the six pilot ecosystems and reflect on how this contributes to the **creation of destinations** which are built on sustainability and circularity.

SHAPE the development of human-centred innovative solutions for circular cultural tourism

Work closely peers tackling similar territorial challenges linked to circular cultural tourism and discover how innovation ecosystem stakeholders can engage in co-creation processes leading to human-centred solutions for the sector.

EXCHANGE on how to make more efficient use of European Structural and Investment Funds and learn about innovative financing for the circular cultural tourism sector.

Many potential sources of European funds can be used for financing sustainable and circular cultural tourism projects. Unfortunately, in many cases, these opportunities are not always apparent. Be.CULTOUR will provide **strategic guidance on the efficient and effective use of European Structural Investments Funds and pre-accession funds in the cultural tourism sector** to support local innovation ecosystems.

INCREASE the visibility of your Innovation Ecosystem

As a representative of a Be.CULTOUR mirror innovation ecosystem, you will be able to provide input to **showcase appealing regional stories linked to sustainable and circular cultural tourism** as well as the peer-learning experience. This content will be featured on **dedicated webpages** which will be updated regularly according to the activities carried out. With a large network of EU and non-EU stakeholders, we will **ensure considerable visibility** to your heritage assets and innovation ecosystem.

5. WHO CAN APPLY?

The Be.CULTOUR community and peer-learning scheme **targets decision-makers at the local and regional levels** committed to shaping the future of the cultural tourism sector in their region. We are looking for civil servants who are **passionate about innovation** and wish to **achieve urban and regional development** through sustainable and circular cultural tourism policies and programmes.

Ideally, the profile of the applicant should reflect:

- Commitment to learning and sharing challenges, experiences and innovative ideas.
- Professional experiences related to cultural tourism, urban & regional development, circular economy and innovation processes.
- The ability to mobilise a broader ecosystem of interested stakeholders (destination managers, tourism guides, entrepreneurs, tourism operators, etc.).
- Interest in actively participate in the Be.CULTOUR peer-learning scheme (certificate of attendance provided).
- Interest in new co-creation methodologies, preferably with some experience in participatory/collaborative approaches to innovation.
- Based in Europe (27 EU and non-EU countries).

The Be.CULTOUR project looks at specific areas, territories and heritage assets.

The Be.CULTOUR community will be learning and reflecting on identified challenges and concrete policies and programmes.

Therefore, **applicants should be able to indicate:**

REQUIRED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant priorities in the Smart Specialization Strategy (RIS3 14-20 21-27), Circular Economy Strategy, etc. or interest to update their RIS3 in this direction. • Relevant strategies in the cultural tourism sector, with programmes/projects fostering the transition towards a circular economy model. • Ability to identify a specific challenge linked to the cultural tourism sector • Identification of a specific Heritage Site or Asset. • Willingness to participate in the peer-learning scheme (identification of a coordinator). • Capacity to demonstrate the institutional commitment. • Capacity to mobilise the commitment of the innovation ecosystem. • Interest in one or more challenges identified by the Pilot ecosystems.
OPTIONAL / PREFERRED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host a UNESCO Heritage Site/European Heritage Label. • Experience in co-creation and participatory approaches. • Participation in emerging European networks of heritage sites, such as European Cultural Routes. • Experience in EU-funded projects, especially if related to the urban & regional development and cultural tourism sector. • Experience in cross-border cooperation in the tourism sector/field of circular economy; • Interest in/existence of public-private-people partnerships.

The **selection process** will be driven by the European Regions Research and Innovation Network (ERRIN), who will be responsible for setting up a **selection jury made by one expert from each core partner of the Be.CULTOUR consortium.**

The **evaluation criteria** focus on:

- Strategic vision, including links with EU policy framework and programmes
- Motivation and ambition
- Challenge definition
- Institutional commitment
- Innovation ecosystem mobilisation and ecosystem thinking
- Expression of European culture and history (incl. European Heritage Label, European Cultural Route)
- Experience/examples/best practices of sustainable and circular cultural tourism
- Approach to gender and minority cultures

6. HOW TO APPLY?

- [Optional] Register for the webinar on [‘Creating destinations after COVID-19. The new competitive advantage of remote areas’](#), **Tuesday 13th April from 14:00 to 16:15 CEST**. During the event the open call, the project and the peer-learning programme will be presented and participants will have the opportunity to receive first-hand information and join the Q&A session.
- If you have any further questions, get in touch with Gaia Marotta by sending an email to gaia.marotta@errin.eu (**deadline to send questions: 14th May, 18:00 CEST**)
- Visit the [Frequently Asked Question webpage](#)
- Download the [form](#) intended to support you in filling out the online submission form.
- Fill-out the online submission form on the [ERRIN website](#) by **30th May 2021, 18.00 CEST**

7. BE.CULTOUR GLOSSARY

MIRROR INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS	Twelve Mirror Innovation Ecosystems will adapt and exploit Be.CULTOUR models and products in their region. Mirror Innovation Ecosystems will form the Community of Interest and actively engage in peer-learning activities .
PILOT INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM	The 6 Innovation Ecosystems where Be.CULTOUR pilot actions will be implemented. Each Pilot Innovation Ecosystem will engage multiple local actors to co-create innovative demand-driven innovative solutions for circular tourism through improved investment strategies .
BE.CULTOUR COMMUNITY OF INTEREST	Community of 12 Mirror Innovation Ecosystems selected to engage in knowledge-sharing activities and exploitation of project results. They will team up with experienced peers from the six Pilot Innovation Ecosystems and improve regional policies and programmes in the field of circular cultural tourism.
HERITAGE SITE OR ASSET	Every Mirror and Pilot Innovation Ecosystem select one Heritage Site (a cultural or natural overexploited or a deprived remote, peripheral or deindustrialized area that has the potential to become an attractive touristic location), or a cultural tangible or intangible Asset to focus the analysis. The selected Heritage Site will be enhanced through support an innovative circular cultural tourism strategy.
LOCAL COORDINATOR	The legal entity selected to participate in the Community of Interest and coordinate the regional activities in order to contribute to Be.CULTOUR objectives and exploit project results.

CIRCULAR TOURISM	Tourism has a major environmental impact and can create great pressure on local resources. Circular Economy holds big potentials for the tourism sector in reaching higher sustainability and profitability by reducing waste, regenerating natural resources, and empowering local communities.
HUMAN-CENTRED INNOVATION	The human-centred approach places real people and communities , instead of abstract 'consumers' at the centre of the co-development of innovative services, products, policies and practices. This allows responding to specific identified needs and demands and developing innovative human-centred solutions.
CO-CREATION METHODOLOGIES	Be.CULTOUR is based on a participatory co-creation and co-design approach that will involve a diverse range of quadruple helix stakeholders in open discussion and analysis in order to co-define innovative solutions that will respond to the co-identified challenges.
QUADRUPLE HELIX	The project will involve regional stakeholders from the public sector, academia, industry and SMEs and civil society.

8. THE SIX BE.CULTOUR PILOT ECOSYSTEMS

<p style="text-align: center;">6 PILOT ECOSYSTEMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Park of Rio Martin, Aragon (ES) • City of Venosa, Basilicata (IT) • Cultural Landscape and rural villages, Larnaca (CY) • Forsvik and Ridal, Vastra Gotaland (SE) • 3 municipalities, Vojvodina (SRB) • Stephen the Great Cultural Route, NE-RO and Moldovaia (cross-border) 	<p>In Be.CULTOUR, 6 pilot ecosystems represented by a lead organisation will co-create innovative solutions for circular cultural tourism.</p> <p>Every pilot has identified one or more challenges to a deprived, remote or peripheral area that includes an under-exploited heritage asset on which it will focus its activities.</p> <p>The additional Be.CULTOUR community members selected via the open call will be invited to share their best practices and actively participate in the co-creation, peer-learning and capacity building activities.</p>
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PILOT ECOSYSTEM	HERITAGE ASSET	HERITAGE TYPE	CHALLENGE(S)
<p>ARAGON REGION, SPAIN</p>	<p>THE CULTURAL PARK OF THE RÍO MARTÍN, PROVINCE OF TERUEL</p>	<p>Archaeological, religious and rural heritage</p>	<p>Accessibility of remote areas and depopulation of rural areas</p> <p>The tourism sector already accounts for 54% of the GDP of the province. Nevertheless, its importance at the regional level is small compared to destinations as the Pyrenees or Saragossa. Moreover, an excessive concentration in one industrial sector is neither advisable. Implementing new business models linked to the circular economy will increase the tourism demand and diversify tourism activity in a more balanced and sustainable way.</p> <p>The province is intensely rural and with a scattered population. Although Teruel is the most advanced province in circular economy models at the institutional level, its influence has not yet sufficiently reached companies and local strategies. The current tourism policy focuses more on short-returns and marketing than on local population involvement. Furthermore, an open and collaborative innovation methodology has not yet been sufficiently rooted at the political level to establish innovative action plans.</p>
<p>BASILICATA REGION, ITALY</p>	<p>CITY OF VENOSA</p>	<p>Archaeological and rural heritage</p>	<p>Abandonment and depopulation of rural areas</p> <p>The Region of Basilicata is facing the challenge of building on the legacy of the Matera European Capital of Culture 2019 to intensify the connections with the wider regional area beyond the urban boundaries. The objective is to contribute, via the development of community-led Action Plans and human-centred innovations, to the smart and sustainable development of rural areas, improve the management and valorisation of the cultural heritage, and build a sustainable cultural tourism economy in the inner parts of Basilicata.</p> <p>Specific challenges are linked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Concentration in one site, Matera; ● Abandonment and depopulation of rural areas and ● Accessibility of remote areas.
<p>LARNACA, CYPRUS</p>	<p>THE RURAL CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF LARNACA</p>	<p>Terraced cultural landscape</p>	<p>Overexploitation of high-demand areas</p> <p>The site of Larnaca suffers from the focus on Sun & Sea tourism, which, as a result of fierce competition between both new and mature destinations, is becoming increasingly</p>

			price dependent. The strong seasonality of the tourism sector affects the area. The identified need which will be tackled by the community-led Action Plans and human-centred innovations is linked to the improvement/development of the new itineraries as well as of cultural infrastructure and equipment.
NORTH-EAST ROMANIA – MOLDOVA (CROSS-BORDER PILOT)	THE ROUTE OF STEPHAN THE GREAT AND SAINT	Religious heritage and natural reserve	<p>Abandonment and depopulation of rural areas</p> <p>The challenges addressed by community-led Action Plans and human-centred innovations are related to the accessibility of remote areas, quality standards for cultural tourism, language barriers and cultural mediation.</p> <p>There are rural villages with relevant cultural heritage sites in the focus area that need to be valorised for tourism purposes. These destinations are unknown, and their local economy is underdeveloped, making it important to assist local communities in their local economic development strategies. Rural areas are affected by the migration of young people in the western part of Europe for work, causing the loss of these villages' immaterial heritage. Lack of public funding for tourism promotion is a challenge, and a lack of qualified human resources in tourism caused by the migration phenomenon.</p>
VÄSTRA GÖTALAND REGION, SWEDEN	FORSVIK AND RYDAL	Industrial heritage	<p>Deprived and polluted industrial heritage sites</p> <p>The challenges related to under-exploited industrial heritage, the lack of accessibility of remote areas and the abandonment/depopulation of rural areas will orient the Action Plan and human-centred innovations in Forsvik and Rydal. An urbanisation process is currently underway in Västra Götaland, following a long period of de-industrialisation.</p> <p>Many former rural industrial environments, now considered cultural heritage, have been transformed into tourist destinations. They attract visitors during parts of the year but have not fully utilised their potential for a transformation that attracts new residents, companies and organisations. Industrial heritage in itself is not enough to attract tourists, and the lack of services, such as public transportation and accommodation, coupled with an overall unappealing perception of the places' identity hinders the potentialities of regional development via cultural tourism.</p>



<p>VOJVODINA, SERBIA</p>	<p>BAC, SREMSKI KARLOVCI AND IRIG IN</p>	<p>Cultural, Religious and Natural heritage</p>	<p>Concentration in one site (such as Novi Sad European Capital of Culture 2021) and lack of communication and synergetic action towards joint potentials</p> <p>The Action Plan and human-centred innovations will focus on the development of the River Cruise enhancing its accessibility, and the development of cultural itineraries that combine wine, gastronomy, religious, cultural and natural, spa and congress tourism.</p>
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