



This project is funded by the Swedish Institute

Short Description

The **Baltic Sea Cultural Cities (BSCC)** project **connects cities, people, cultural organisations and cultural professionals** by increasing the **visibility of the cultural diversity** on local level within the Baltic Sea Region. It is a cross-border, multi-level governance project which annually or biannually will nominate the “**Baltic Sea City of Culture**”.

Under the principle of ‘water connects us, but culture unites us’ it is aimed to create **synergies** and **cooperation** focussing on **citizen participation** and **citizen ownership** rather than on competition among the participating cities and communities.

Objectives

The BSCC initiative encourages **every city or municipality, every cultural organisation, every cultural professional** and **every person living** in the Baltic Sea Region to participate in the project, even if they are not directly connected to the nominated “Baltic Sea City of Culture”. The project is a **platform for cooperation and cultural exchange** and **regional identification** rather than a competition between cities. The nomination of the “Baltic Sea City of Culture” is a mechanism to create visibility for the project. This ensures a **long-term sustainable Baltic Sea cultural format** on a local level. Everyone living in the area is invited to take part in each step of the project. This strong **citizen ownership** will lead to engage even marginal societal groups, who are often excluded from taking part in the cultural life of cities. Another focus is to include the youth as consumers of arts and encourage young artists to produce art within their local environment.

As all parts of society work together in creation and consumption of the outcomes a **feeling of togetherness, solidarity, tolerance** and a **regional identity** will be created. The project aims to **promote the Baltic Sea Region cultural diversity** and will also be valuable to the Policy Area Tourism.

Activities

Local artists, Art in public places, cultural and historical heritage within each city will be made more aware of and the substantial meaning of art as part of urban and regional cultural life will be **easier to understand for a broad audience**.

The annual or biannual nomination of the “**Baltic Sea City of Culture**” is the flagship of the project and ensures **continuity** and a **strong unity** of the cooperating cities, as every city can **contribute to the programme** and bring in their ideas, while also being able to **develop own projects** and **striving to be nominated** the next time.

Current status



The project is currently in its **seed-funding phase**, which will last **until February 2021**. Until then a strategy on how to continue the project will be developed.

The project partners are developing a **communication strategy**, comprising the branding and marketing of the project and aiming to brand the BSCC even outside the Baltic Sea Region.

Furthermore, the **consortium of partners needs to be widened**. Possible new partners can be cultural institutions, municipal administration, city marketing bureaus, national level cultural actors, artists from different backgrounds, NGOs, tourism offices and many more.

Partners

- Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS)
- Kaunas Artists' House (KAH)
- Union of Baltic Cities (UBC)
- City Culture Institute in Gdansk
- Agency for International Affairs and Regional Cooperation Kaliningrad
- Ars Baltica
- Regional Council of Ostrobothnia – Cultural Department
- Ministry of Justice, European Affairs, Consumer Protection and Equality Schleswig-Holstein
- City of Kiel, Department of Youth and Culture

Budget and Funding

The total budget of the initiation of the project funded by the Swedish Institute is **500.000 SEK** (approx. 47.000€).

Future prospect is to acquire sponsorship from private sector (e.g. tourism) and engage participating municipalities and regions financially, as well as transnational institutions involved.

The project will address funding sources such as national funding, the Creative Europe Program, Interreg programmes and other EU funding programmes.

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