



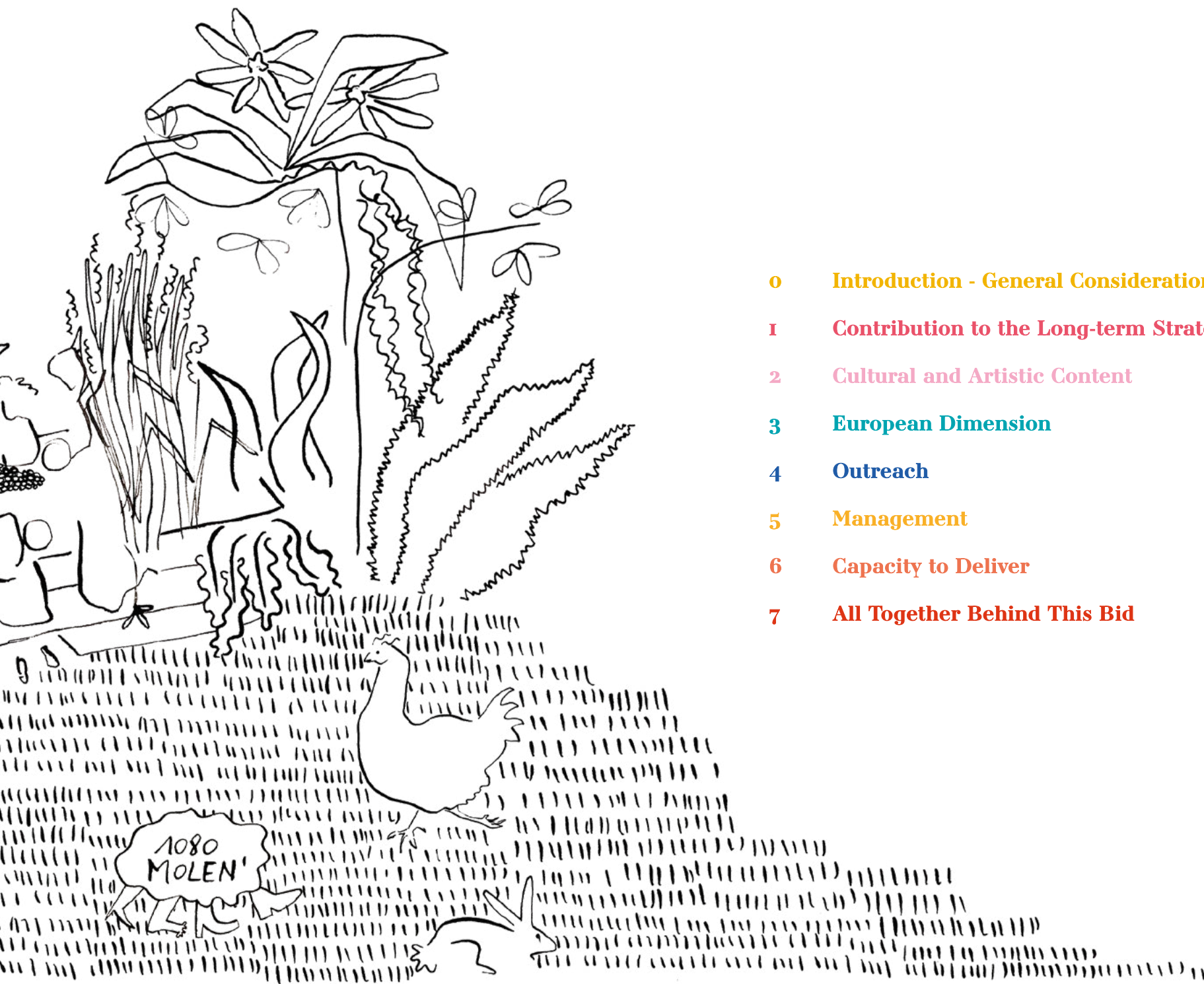
Sadaka

BE GENEROUS

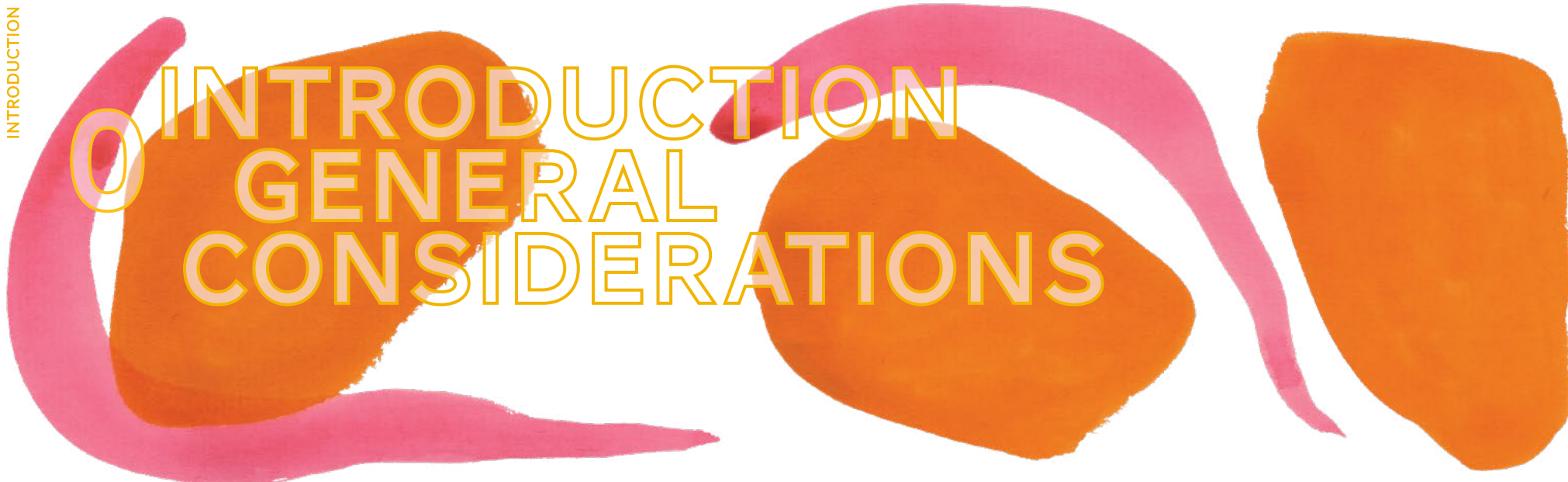
Molenbeek
European capital
of culture
candidate city







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0 INTRODUCTION GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

DEAR EUROPEANS,

It is with humility and pride that we, the Mayor of Molenbeek and the Minister-President of the Brussels-Capital Region, share with you the final Bid of Molenbeek for Brussels 2030 (MB2030).

It goes without saying that we have come a long way thanks to the generous, committed and enduring efforts of all of our Molenbeek and Brussels citizens, artists, cultural operators and politicians.

In 2016, after devastating terror attacks almost irreparably tore our region to shreds, we made the positive and hopeful choice to support a unifying cultural project for the imagination of a better future: to apply to become European Capital of Culture in 2030, starting out from our local and talented communities and, most importantly, reaching out to 450 million Europeans. In these times, we need to stick together: that is what this project proposes, offers and puts into practice.

In 2020, in the midst of the destructive Covid pandemic, we pushed ahead and launched the prepara-

tions. For us, this was never going to be a short-term effort, but an in-depth, co-created and long-lasting transformation. We are in it for the long run, with several legacy projects now in place until 2040.

In 2022 we decided to start from Molenbeek. The city that has been stigmatized by Belgian and international politicians for years, while it is in fact a rich and beautiful treasure box of young, creative and multicultural talents, a treasure box without which a prosperous Europe will never emerge or be created. These young people of Molenbeek and Europe are the ones we have been waiting for. In 2030, out of Molenbeek, and for Brussels and Europe, they will show us the way. Generously and in solidarity, oozing with typical and unique Molenbeek Sadaka.

In the last year, we have put in place cultural, political, financial, infrastructural and governance stability, solidarity and trust. Politicians have put budgets in place, parliaments united behind us, artists joined forces, civil servants set transformations in motion of build-

ings and public spaces. They have proven all the Molenbeek and Brussels bashers wrong: MB2030 is an engine of togetherness that will help us to overcome the divisions that threaten us all but are not a fatality. Hope hides around every corner and MB2030 will help us to uncover it and will drive us forward.

Please read this bid with generosity and allow us to finally fully Flip the Script. Molenbeek needs this project and all of its superdiverse and talented citizens absolutely merit this recognition. Finally, Europe probably needs this project even more. This is not the icing on the cake. This is a healthy, urgent and fundamental meal of cultural food and drink that we all need more than ever.

Generously yours,

*Catherine Moureaux, Mayor of Molenbeek
Rudi Vervoort, Minister-President
of the Brussels-Capital Region*

Q01

HAS THE CONCEPT OF THE PROGRAMME DESCRIBED FOR THE ECOC YEAR CHANGED BETWEEN THE PRE-SELECTION AND THE SELECTION STAGE? IF YES, PLEASE DESCRIBE THE NEW CONCEPT AND EXPLAIN THE REASONS FOR THE CHANGE.

In times of growing pressure on all forms of generosity and solidarity, in particular with regard to those who don't look like us, Europe needs more Sadaka. Creative, creolized Sadaka is exactly what Molenbeek and Molenbeek for Brussels 2030 (MB2030) have to offer, in abundance. Emerging from all of Molenbeek's cultural communities, MB2030 is driven by the desire to share and mix open and gentle cultural practices that prioritize the needs of others over our own. The second round of this competition has allowed us to specify our urgency, clarify our partnerships and construct stability. As a result, we are now much more confident: the train has left the station and there is no turning back. In a world and on a continent where it is impossible in 2025 to ignore that many forms of generosity and solidarity are about to be declared illegal, we need a Sadaka counterforce. That is exactly what, in all modesty, our Molenbeek-driven initiative aims to offer to Europeans.

In the past year, Europe changed again, and drastically. In Belgium, xenophobic and racist violence towards superdiverse Molenbeek reached new levels with the wave of abuse and aggression perpetrated by hordes of Club Brugge football hooligans. Several hundred of them raged through our city last May and made their agenda clear through explicit slogans: 'Go home.' In abusing us, they ignored that a great many of us, however diverse our origins, were born in Molenbeek. The hooligans also showed how difficult it is still for many Europeans to live alongside the superdiverse neighbours who are integral members of their own cities and communities. However, we, the superdiverse citizens of Molenbeek and Brussels, are not going anywhere. We are here to stay and to help build a prosperous European future for all.

In Molenbeek and Brussels, elections made even clearer how fragmented and divided our local and regional political landscapes have become and to what extent a generous and binding long-term cultural project is necessary.

More and more countries in Europe, Belgium included, have succumbed to tough social, migration and ecological policies, targeting in particular those with whom we don't share a common language, religion, cultural frame of reference, or even

form of life. In an age of deepening social and ecological crises, we urgently need to enlarge the circle of those with whom we share our solidarity and care: with all humans obviously, regardless of origin and identity. But also with animals, trees, rivers, waterways.

Overall, the impact on Europe of the return to the US presidency of Donald Trump, responsible for internationally stigmatizing Molenbeek and Brussels by publicly calling them 'hellholes' in 2016, is immense. One could almost legitimately state that many of us have become, especially in Molenbeek, 'illegal aliens', not worthy of the trust, respect and solidarity of the European and Western powers that be.

In this Europe, in 2025, Sadaka - generosity, solidarity and social justice, especially with and towards those who don't look like us, human or non-human, and across all generations - is neither a luxury nor an indulgence, but an urgent necessity. We have to put it into practice, we have to develop, share and promote it every single day. That is exactly what MB2030 is already sharing with 450 million Europeans: a long-term process of cultural and artistic contextual creation that can serve as an antidote to the brutalization of our everyday reality, an antidote to a Europe of illegal aliens. Sadaka alone is no guarantee that Europe will move forward, but without Sadaka we will definitely be moving backward.

The past year has allowed us to share the value of Sadaka with a great many inhabitants of Molenbeek across generations and with all the municipalities of the Brussels-Capital Region (BCR), with our official partner cities of Mechelen and Charleroi, and with many European and non-European allies, from Tunis to Kinshasa, from Tangier to Jenin. Countless gatherings in Molenbeek and Brussels not only spread the word Sadaka, but also Sadaka calls to action.

And indeed we sprang into action with the many schools of Molenbeek, through *MolenSchools*, inviting all of Molenbeek's schools - Flemish, Francophone and other - to finally work together. In youth houses and organizations where the very young population of Molenbeek comes together - through *MolenYouth*, connecting more than 220 young people on the Town Square last May. With many fragile groups of the population, such as LGBTQIA+ and the elderly, that are present and active in Molenbeek, through *MolenQueer*. With a wide diversity of European partners through our European Assembly in April - all of the conti-

ment's regions were represented, thanks to about 50 participants. Last but not least, with our MB2030 Iftar, filling the Church of Saint-Jean-Baptiste in Molenbeek with more than 500 participants. A living, moving and powerful illustration that especially in Molenbeek, a common future can be built between people who don't share a common past.

We also tested, step by step, our conviction that contextual creation must be at the heart of MB2030, knowing that this takes much time and patience as well as a diversity of skills, a widespread willingness to leave our comfort zones, and ideas and practices that we often cling to too militantly. In an initiative structured around the themes of Equal Sadaka, Creole Sadaka, Natural Sadaka, Daring Sadaka and Digital Sadaka, a contextual cultural and artistic programme cannot be cobbled together and will take much more than meetings and conversations. A four-year preparatory process will be key, testing and failing and succeeding together. This process already started last year, with the first, 10-day-long edition of *MolenFest*, which gathered more than 23,000 participants thanks to the collaboration of more than 80 Molenbeek artists and cultural operators, many of them working together for the first time.

The second edition of *MolenFest* in early September 2025 and, of course, a large part of the cultural programme in this bidbook offer a great many testing grounds, creation labs and shared spaces in which to explore, from 2026 to 2029, the possibilities to imagine together what we don't yet fully know today. Therefore, our Bidbook and its cultural content offer both the methodological clarity of a programme brochure, but also the adventurous creativity that a collective civic adventure implies and needs. MB2030 has a stable vision and is built on solid coalitions, which is exactly why its cultural projects are so adventurous, while

at the same time producing clear results. The legacy of MB2030 - our Sadaka Seasons and our Visitor Centre - already have clear and visible foundations and contours. The *Homes of European Sadaka*, the *Settlements of the Future*, the *Euro-Festival* and the *Daring Parades and Ceremonies*, and all long-term digital initiatives are already firmly in the making as part of our legacy strategy. Last but not least, a Molenbeek Cultural Strategy is now in place that firmly, politically and legally frames our legacy impact.

Despite the political uncertainty that surrounds us, we have managed, in a quiet and concentrated way beyond the hubbub of the (social) media space, to gather solid and rich local and regional political coalitions around the many 'hardware' cornerstones this project is built on. With a very large majority, bringing together all political parties involved in the future of our region, the Brussels Parliament voted a resolution clearly defining the region's long-term financial support for MB2030 and the relevant calendar. The Brussels Minister-President and Budget Minister now act on that resolution. The Molenbeek municipal council enthusiastically backed and voted on a local Cultural Strategy integrating MB2030, creating coherence in the midst of local uncertainty, and guaranteeing the long-term legacy. This Cultural Strategy also serves as an important guideline for other regional cultural actors, when deciding about their investments in Molenbeek. The regional agency citydev.brussels validated the acquisition of Brasserie Vandenheuvel, an eye-catching gem of our region's industrial past that will play, in the crucial West Station zone, a key role in the future of Molenbeek. MB2030 has therefore already started to achieve what we mentioned in our first bidbook and what many consider, wrongly, to be impossible in Molenbeek and Brussels today: we have already become a driving force for political unity and for policy coherence in a superdiverse and fragmented context.

Crucially, we have consolidated many elements of the initiative that, we believe breathes some fresh air into all too established perceptions and practices concerning Molenbeek and Europe. In terms of our communication objectives, we have built strategies, tools and partnerships that should effectively allow us to finally 'flip the script' that mainstream media still stubbornly stick to - and show that Molenbeek, and the Sadaka that is integrally part of its communities and generations, is not part of the problem, but part of the solution for Europe. We aim to playfully experiment with some of the building blocks of large-scale European festivals: show that their impact depends on contextual preparations for many consecutive years; make sure that urgent themes and topics drive them (rather than territorial or infrastructural agendas); and acknowledge that North and South are inextricably interconnected today.

Therefore, we find it crucial to integrate in our bid the idea that Europe is much more than a map or passport. It is an idea, one that everybody can embrace and contribute to: from Molenbeek over Malmö and Timișoara and Marseille to Larnaka, Lviv/Dnipro and Tangier. A Europe of Sadaka will start in Molenbeek, but resonate beyond the Schengen borders of our continent. And a Europe of Sadaka is what this bid will be the engine of, through Molenbeek and Brussels-based cultural production: not focusing on more cultural infrastructure or prestigious performances, but on spreading gentle and mutual care among a large and diverse circle of humans and non-humans who, in the decade to come, will most definitely need each other's warmth and support. This Molenbeek-driven Sadaka coalition will lead by generous example, paving the way for the next generation of cultural and social workers, thinkers, activists and policymakers who will keep the European dream alive.



1 CONTRIBUTION TO THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY

Q02
DESCRIBE ANY CHANGES TO THE CULTURAL STRATEGY SINCE THE PRE-SELECTION STAGE, AND THE ROLE OF THE ECoC PRE-SELECTION IN THESE CHANGES, IF RELEVANT. INDICATE SPECIFICALLY WHICH PRIORITIES OF THIS STRATEGY THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE ACTION INTENDS TO CONTRIBUTE TO, AND HOW.

Following Molenbeek's selection as ECoC2030 finalist, a series of round-table discussions was organized to further refine the city's Cultural Strategy. Taking advantage of a unique convergence of timelines (preparing the final ECoC bid in sync with the drafting of new policy plans), these gatherings brought together representatives from Molenbeek's cultural and creative sectors, policymakers, civil society members, academic experts, young people and independent artists. The aim was to move beyond

concurring logics and fragmented perspectives by developing a comprehensive strategy that bridges policy domains and governance levels. In this context, the pre-selection acted as both a mirror - confirming previously defined ambitions and guiding principles - and a catalyst - helping to sharpen strategic priorities and broaden political commitment and cross-sector collaboration. The process marked a shift from cultural ambition to territorial responsibility and laid the groundwork for a unique cultural-civic momentum with long-lasting transformative potential.

Changes to the Cultural Strategy & Role of ECoC pre-selection

A major milestone was reached on 21 May 2025, when the Molenbeek City Council formally adopted the Cultural Strategy titled 'Creative Sadaka-2025-2035'. The adoption not only anchored the strategy politi-

cally, but also mobilized financial, logistical and human resources for gradual implementation.

Commitments include supporting inclusive participation - particularly of the young, elderly and vulnerable - ensuring proactive communication, and the drafting of a follow-up strategy (2035-45) to ensure continuity. The Cultural Strategy was endorsed by the Flemish and French Community Commissions and the BCR: for them it will be the guiding document for their cultural investments in Molenbeek from 2026 to 2035. Whether or not Molenbeek is ultimately selected as ECoC2030, the strategy will serve as a unifying framework, guiding cultural policy actions and investment priorities while ensuring a long-term focus and impact. Obviously, securing the ECoC title would amplify these efforts, enabling significantly more far-reaching and sustainable transformations.

Cultural Strategy Priorities & Contribution of the ECoC Action

Creative Sadaka positions Molenbeek as a driver of cultural-artistic innovation and experimentation targeting people- and planet-friendly urban transitions while promoting social cohesion and solidarity at the local, regional and international level. The strategy is structured around three foundational pillars:

1. Caring Presence - Encouraging sustainable, restorative and empathetic cultural practices attentive to social and ecological well-being.
2. Shared Spaces - Developing both physical and virtual sites of encounter and co-creation where diverse communities can collaborate across differences safely and bravely.
3. Knowledge Democracy - Ensuring equitable access to cultural resources that reflect multiple ways of knowing and foster participation from historically marginalized groups.

The ECoC action is designed to activate and deepen these pillars through three interconnected workstreams:

Workstream A: People- and Planet-Friendly Practices

ECoC2030 leverages cultural initiatives to foster solidarity, environmental stewardship and collective well-being in its full dimensions. By supporting co-learning and capacity-building within local and international networks, MB2030 aims to nurture a socially cohesive and ecologically responsible future, grounded in shared creativity, mutual understanding and care. The ECoC framework provides

a powerful vehicle to amplify these efforts through translocal exchange and visibility.

Workstream B: Grassroots Innovation via Space Repurposing

This workstream focuses on repurposing Molenbeek's industrial and public spaces into vibrant hubs of grassroots creativity. ECoC2030 support will help to empower local cultural actors, embed eco-conscious and diversity-sensitive design, and strengthen inclusive access to cultural infrastructure. The focus remains on people-first development to counteract gentrification while fostering a strong culture of learning and participation across all demographics - from youth collectives to senior-led initiatives, from amateur creators to emerging professionals.

Workstream C: Positioning Molenbeek as a Cultural Powerhouse

ECoC2030 plays a pivotal role in strengthening visibility and experience-sharing, in the process elevating Molenbeek's profile within the region, Europe and beyond. By facilitating cross-border collaborations, experimental artistic practices and representation of all Molenbeek residents in cultural life, the action supports the city's ambition to become an internationally recognized cultural reference point.

Together, these workstreams are driven by six Strategic Directions (SD1-SD6) and 42 policy actions, 22 of which are directly tied to the ECoC initiative. These actions integrate artistic excellence with civic engagement, enabling transformative change across policy domains and social groups. The ECoC

action functions as a central mechanism for the implementation of the proposed Cultural Strategy. Its relevance and actions extend beyond the scope of the candidacy, however, as they are a deliberate response to pressing needs and challenges (*see table on the next page*).

Q03 HAVE YOUR INTENTIONS IN TERMS OF LONG-TERM IMPACT OF THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE ACTION ON THE CITY CHANGED SINCE PRE-SELECTION? IF YES, PLEASE DESCRIBE THE CHANGES OR FURTHER IMPACT FORESEEN.

In parallel with the drafting of its Cultural Strategy, the long-term goals of the MB2030 bid were further refined, focusing on how the intended impact will be monitored, optimized and sustained beyond 2030. To ensure a robust foundation, a pilot group was established, composed of cultural actors and academic experts in such fields as urban studies, ECoC evaluations, education, cultural management, data science and the arts. Their work resulted in the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework structured around key thematic clusters aligned with the six Strategic Directions of MB2030's Cultural Strategy.

This updated framework outlines long-term goals that are in line with the general objectives (GO) and specific objectives (SO) of the ECoC action (Decision No. 445/2014/EU). The framework incorporates baseline data, reference indicators and multi-source evaluation tools to track progress and effects before, during and after the ECoC year (*see the overview table on page 12*).

These refinements reflect a broader, more integrated understanding of the ECoC's potential as a strategic lever to accelerate and sustain learning and change across multiple levels: at the individual level, by shifting personal beliefs, attitudes and behaviours; at the collective level, by strengthening collaborative practices and mindsets; and at the systemic level, by inspiring new policies and models of governance. The revised framework more clearly articulates MB2030's

ambition to harness transformative ECoC power to both strengthen and enrich cultural production, participation and experience, but also to stimulate policy learning as well as institutional and governance change. By grounding its impact in social learning, shared ownership and a transdisciplinary knowledge base, we aim to make cultural democracy and solidarity tangible, measurable and replicable well beyond the title year, both locally and internationally.

Q04

DESCRIBE YOUR PLANS FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF THE TITLE ON YOUR CITY AND FOR DISSEMINATING THE RESULTS OF THE EVALUATION.

To support the MB2030 vision, we have designed a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation model built on three interconnected components:

CREATIVE SADAKA ...

Caring PRESENCE

workstream A

Advancing People- and Planet-Friendly Practices

SD1. Promoting social cohesion through inclusive cultural participation.

as a way to address:

- * socio-spatial divides & segregation
- * lack of cross-cultural & cross-generational understanding
- * lack of social mobility, inclusion & cohesion

SD2. Pioneering sustainable cultural practices, rooted in everyday resilience.

as a way to address:

- * environmental degradation & vulnerability
- * air, water, soil, light & sound pollution
- * digital disruption & toxicity

Shared SPACES

workstream B

Grassroots Innovation via Space Repurposing

SD3. Developing creative hubs that redistribute opportunities and support grassroots innovation.

as a way to address:

- * high levels of unqualified school drop-out & unemployment
- * risk of gentrification & urban escape
- * precarious work conditions in cultural-creative sectors

SD4. Reclaiming public spaces into inclusive, adaptable and expressive environments.

as a way to address:

- * dirty, underused & unsafe public spaces
- * lack of affordable, accessible & adaptable creation spaces
- * lack of accessible (quality) green & water

KNOWLEDGE democracy

workstream C

Positioning Molenbeek as a Cultural Powerhouse

SD5. Building transnational networks of solidarity with cities facing similar challenges.

as a way to address:

- * social polarization, hardening & fragility
- * lack of cross-region/-border/-sector solidarity & collaboration
- * territorial exclusion & isolation

SD6. Encouraging co-production and policy innovation beyond existing divides.

as a way to address:

- * social exclusion & isolation
- * unequal access to & participation in cultural provisions
- * institutional fragmentation, inefficiency & inertia

the New Centres Observatory (NCO), the *SADAKAdemy*, and the *Cultural-Artistic Labs*. These components, operating together from 2025 to 2035, each play a distinct role in observing, documenting, guiding and signalling change - or the lack thereof - and responding by learning and taking well-considered actions together. The proposed model captures the multi-scale impact of MB2030, weaving local, regional and European perspectives into a distributed learning ecosystem. This will allow for a dynamic interplay between cultural programming, monitoring and capacity-building and fuel ongoing learning, rooted in lived experience and responsive to emerging knowledge.

At the heart of our approach are the *Cultural-Artistic Labs* - spaces of cultural-artistic co-creation, dedicated to hands-on experimentation and participatory cultural action. The *Labs* draw inspiration from pioneering practices in previous ECoCs (e.g. Rotterdam's Vakmanstad and Niteshop, Matera's Open Design School, Marseille's Quartiers Créatifs, Chemnitz #3000garages) and are developed in close collaboration with current and future ECoCs, as detailed in Chapters 2 and 3. They will engage people with diverse backgrounds through project-based, language-flexible and art-infused co-creation experiences, valuing diverse needs and sensitivities, diverse ways of knowing and expression, considering them as assets rather than impediments.

As MB2030's reflexive backbone, the NCO will move beyond activity tracking to capture changes in perceptions, relationships and agency. Rooted in participatory research, the NCO will co-produce knowledge with communities rather than knowledge about them. Artists, residents, young people, cultural workers, students and academics will jointly define re-

search frameworks, gather and analyse data, and produce public outputs - such as reports, performances, installations and digital maps - turning research into a catalyst for dialogue and action. Local, regional and European perspectives will be integrated. In cases of cross-border co-production, mirrored data collection will allow for comparative analysis and peer-learning across partner cities. In doing so, we will challenge the notions of periphery and centre and link local experiences to wider European dynamics of superdiversity, deindustrialization and youth-led cultural-artistic innovation in Europe's New Centres.

The *SADAKAdemy* is an open, dynamic platform rooted in experiential pedagogy, with learning cycles through action, observation, reflection and adaptation. This process transforms not only what we know, but how we come to know it. It invites experimentation, collective imagination and ethical generosity - prioritizing process, safety and connection over spectacle. Knowledge democracy takes shape here, as cultural producers, students, residents, municipal workers and visitors all become both learners and teachers, and knowledge circulates freely across roles, backgrounds and generations.

Through this triadic constellation, cultural and civic spaces are reimagined as places of questioning, unlearning and collective imagination. Artistic production - whether a zine, performance or environmental intervention - serves as both a method of inquiry and a pedagogical tool, reframing cultural participation as a shared public good. Learning and experience-sharing will be supported by an online platform that expands this emerging ecosystem with open-access tools and culturally responsive

resources for local and international communities. The platform builds around three adaptable modules - Space Giving, Presence Giving, and Knowledge Giving - offering inspiration and customizable engagement formats. Its aims are to (i) inspire diverse learners to act as agents of change in their everyday environments, (ii) strengthen the cultural-creative ecosystems of Europe's New Centres through cross-border exchange and knowledge sharing, and (iii) cultivate a living archive of practices and insights benefiting future generations.

People & Partnerships

MB2030's monitoring and evaluation model will be grounded in transdisciplinary research and learning communities that observe, document, accompany and analyse the programme's evolving dynamics and outcomes. These communities will be mobilized according to the specific needs of each monitoring axis, ensuring a tailored and responsive approach. A dedicated coordination team will oversee the activity portfolio, comprising three key roles: one coordinator based at the NCO, one at the *SADAKAdemy*, and one within the MB2030 team. Together, they will ensure the continued alignment between project implementation, evaluation and learning.

Key academic and civil society partners include the Molenbeek-based impact agency Maakt Beter!, Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB), Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), Brussels Studies Institute (BSI), Brussels Academy, and international experts engaged during the bid process. A multidisciplinary steering committee, composed of academics representing diverse disciplinary fields, will guide the evaluation strategy. An advisory committee - including representatives from the City of Molenbeek, the BCR,

citizens, artists and cultural workers - will ensure accountability, alignment and transparency.

Persons identified to coordinate the first phase after honoration of the MB2030's bid, are Dirk Jacobs (BSI/BA/ULB), Emilie Garcia Guillen (ULB), Jean-Philippe de Visscher (BSI), Jessy Siongers (VUB), Katarzyna Ruchel-Stockmans (VUB) and Wim Vandenbussche (BSI/BUA/VUB). This group will remain dynamic, expanding or shifting as the process evolves. Simultaneously, collaboration with a broader European network of ECoC experts is already underway, helping to keep the adopted model open, flexible and rooted in mutual learning. Local citizens and student researchers will also play a key role in strengthening long-term capacity.

Building on this foundation, the NCO and *SADA-KAdemy* will activate a targeted set of university-based initiatives (e.g. OpenLab, Green Team Office, PILAR, House of Sustainable Transitions). We will engage closely with educational and cultural institutions, local associations and public bodies, ensuring access to relevant data and community insights. Strategic partnerships will be developed with organizations such as *perspective.brussels*, BISA, ECOOM and EFRO, supporting robust data integration and cross-referencing. Further collaboration will be pursued with citizen committees, local associations, social organizations, innovation hubs, cultural-creative coalitions and public authorities. Simultaneously, connections with transnational research networks will be activated (e.g. European University Alliances CIVIS and EUTOPIA), enabling knowledge exchange and capacity-building across borders. These partnerships will be formalized early on to ensure methodological rigour and comprehensive data access.

Data Collection & Existing Data Sources

Each element of the proposed model is designed to reinforce and inform the others, generating a robust monitoring and evaluation process. Through continuous data collection and analysis, we will not only track project progress but also provide evidence-based insights that support the iterative refinement of cultural practices and policies, while guiding capacity-building efforts across multiple levels. Our emphasis lies in the dynamic process itself - the shared meaning-making, co-presence and collective engagement that the ECoC initiative generates. To capture this complexity, we adopt a mixed-methods approach that integrates quantitative and qualitative datasets and tools. This includes baseline data, performance indicators and lived experiences. By combining existing datasets with newly generated observations, we aim to ensure longitudinal coherence and contextual relevance.

Participatory methods are central to our approach. These include peer interviews, storytelling workshops, debate-stimulating surveys, parades and collaborative data sessions involving artists and researchers. Community-driven practices will be complemented by digital platforms and ethically grounded machine learning tools to enable real-time, responsive monitoring. Local IT partners - such as the Citizen Engagement Hub and BubbleTech - support the technical infrastructure underpinning this hybrid model.

Until now we've mapped more than 20 existing data sources from Brussels and beyond. Major sources include:

- * Neighbourhood Monitoring (*perspective.brussels*): Data on demographics, housing, income, education, employment and urban development.
- * Observatory of Cultural Policies (Wallonia-Brus-

sels Federation): Studies on cultural participation and knowledge.

- * Metropolitan Youth Monitor (Flemish Government): Youth participation and well-being indicators.
- * Cultural Practices Studies (*perspective.brussels*): Street-level surveys in the Canal zone.
- * The Social Study (FWO Flanders, F.R.S.-FNRS): Longitudinal data on cultural participation.
- * MuseumPassMusées & Article 27 data (BE and BCR): Tracking cultural participation in Brussels.
- * Language Barometer (BRIO): Language use and linguistic attitudes in Brussels.
- * Safety Monitor (Belgian Government): Citizens' perceptions of safety, crime and policing.
- * Eurostat (European Commission): Comparative indicators on culture, economy, social inclusion, tourism and urban development.

Timeline & Milestones

The MB2030 evaluation approach will unfold in three iterative phases - activation, peer-learning and multiplicator sessions - repeated in cycles throughout the project's duration:

- * Activation Sessions: Engage and prepare core participants, set research questions, refine indicators, align protocols and build a foundation of trust, shared purpose and ownership.
- * Peer-Learning Sessions: Analyse collected data, reflect on experiences, observations and insights, and foster mutual learning through open dialogue and knowledge exchange.
- * Multiplicator Sessions: Share findings through exhibitions, participatory events, forums and co-created publications, engage local and European partners across cultural, civic and policy sectors, sustain learning legacy and public dialogue.

Our timeline includes:

Year	Objective	Milestone
2026	Establish benchmarks and set up pilots	Baseline study completed, first research communities launched through activation sessions
2027	Monitor, refine and adjust working protocols	Peer-learning sessions, evaluation of pilot labs, draft first progress report, second round of research communities launched through activation sessions
2028	Strengthen learning and expand research/learning communities	Peer-learning and multiplier sessions, mid-cycle progress reporting, scaling of research communities
2029	Consolidate knowledge development and sharing	First impact assessment, drafting of third progress report, scaling of training/learning/mentorship formats
2030	Title year monitoring, learning and evaluation	Continued data collection, experience-sharing, mid-term evaluation of participation, impact, visibility
2031	Consolidate impact assessment	Post-event impact report on immediate and systemic outcomes
2032-35	Legacy and sustainability monitoring	Longitudinal studies on cultural, social, urbanistic, European, economic and ecological legacy

Over time, the NCO is envisioned to transition into a permanent reference institute, dedicated to monitoring, evaluating and supporting urban transformation processes driven by arts and culture. In parallel, the Academy could be established as a lasting capacity-building platform, offering continuous learning and training opportunities for cultural and creative workers in Molenbeek and across the wider European New Centres network.

Dissemination: Giving Back & Moving Forward

Dissemination will be a continuous and shared act. We won't just broadcast findings. Insights and results will return to the communities that shape them and will be shared more widely through a variety of creative and accessible formats.

We share where it matters. Findings will be shared in ways that are locally grounded, through neighbourhood zines, short films, storytelling gatherings and community rituals. We turn evaluation into something that belongs to everyone. Sharing stories that reflect lived experiences. Artists, residents, researchers and students co-create the formats, ensuring multilingual, accessible and culturally relevant content. For example, a mobile 'Zine Van' will travel through Molenbeek neighbourhoods, co-creating print stories with local residents based on evaluation insights. Dissemination won't be a one-way street. Public exhibitions, forums and the annual *Spring Agora* event will create spaces for dialogue between citizens, policymakers and collaborators from across Europe and beyond. These shared moments will take place in cultural spaces, classrooms, cafés and city forums, allowing data to travel and grow into decisions, ideas and future collaborations.

Keeping it alive. With local IT partners, we will build Sadaka Digital, a platform for sharing podcasts, cultural maps, open reports and interactive tools like the Sadaka indicators dashboard. It will enable people to explore, contribute and stay connected. It will also serve as a living archive, tracking how we learn and change together. Networks like Culture Next, UNEeCC, UNICA and the European University Alliances will help to extend these insights beyond Molenbeek into broader learning ecosystems.

Defining Success

For MB2030, success will not be defined solely by metrics. While benchmarks and indicators will be tracked rigorously, the true measure of impact lies in the social learning and systemic shifts that we strive to spark and see unfold. These include:

- * Increased cultural participation and civic engagement;
- * Greater social cohesion and collective well-being;
- * More sustainable approaches to cultural production and spatial design;
- * Enhanced visibility of marginalized histories and voices;
- * Stronger local economies and transnational cultural networks.

The MB2030 monitoring and evaluation model values slowness, experimentation and care. Rather than quick wins, it encourages continuous learning and reflection, recognizing that cultural transformation is a long-term, collective process. Our model welcomes uncertainty and failure, while also allowing space to continually redefine what success means. Regular feedback loops, from baseline assessments to interim evaluations, ensure that the MB2030 programme remains adaptive and responsive. In this way, evaluation becomes not a static endpoint, but an integral, evolving dimension of the project itself.

Monitoring Table

Strategic Direction	SD1 - Promoting social cohesion through inclusive cultural participation.	SD2 - Pioneering sustainable cultural practices, rooted in everyday resilience.	SD3 - Developing creative hubs that redistribute opportunities and support grassroots innovation.
Desired Impact	Creative ecosystems support social cohesion and well-being through generosity-driven partnerships and collaboration models. Cultural-artistic collaboration and participation promote mutual understanding and solidarity among residents of Molenbeek, Brussels, Europe and beyond. Molenbeek residents feel more confident, welcomed and empowered to participate in cultural-artistic production and offers.	Creative ecosystems adopt low-emission and low-waste policies and practices by utilising local resources (both material and human) and promoting a balanced use of digital media. Regional and transnational cultural collaborations implement practical sustainability initiatives that benefit economically disadvantaged communities in Molenbeek, Brussels, Europe and beyond. Participants in cultural-artistic activities develop a sense of responsibility for common resources and infrastructure.	Cultural-creative sectors create new job and learning opportunities, both locally and internationally, especially for young Molenbeek residents. Regional and transnational cultural collaborations are shaped by mutually beneficial exchanges between creative talents and social entrepreneurs. Molenbeek residents feel invited and capable to co-design, manage, scale and sustain cultural-creative hubs and innovations.
Monitoring Indicators	Number of new cultural projects from inter-regional and cross-sector partnerships; percentage of event participants from diverse socio-demographic backgrounds (age, ethnicity, income, education); number of school-based cultural-creative projects promoting intercultural understanding; reach & effectiveness of cultural education programmes in fostering cultural literacy & citizenship; percentage of low-cost / free cultural events; percentage of Molenbeek residents attending cultural activities outside the area, and vice versa; residents' self-reported confidence, empowerment, sense of belonging and well-being (tracked over time); collected stories/testimonials reflecting solidarity, mutual learning & shared experience.	Percentage of cultural projects using low-emission & low-waste approaches; shift in volume of local resources (materials & labour) used in cultural initiatives; number of sustainability initiatives targeting economically disadvantaged communities in Molenbeek & the region; number of educational workshops/events on environmental knowledge & cross-regional sustainability exchange; participant feedback on environmental responsibility (via interviews, surveys & focus groups); audience perceptions of shared environmental responsibility post-event; number of events officially recognized as ESG or LEF (Local, Ecological, Fair-Trade); trends in online cultural participation, esp. among low-income & underrepresented groups.	Number of new workspaces, studios & cultural organizations established in Molenbeek; number of jobs, internships & learning opportunities in CCI (focus on youth & local residents); demographic diversity of participants (ensuring equitable access); qualitative feedback from CCI professionals on skills, job satisfaction & sectoral improvement; Number of artists/organizations in exchange programmes within the BCR & Europe; documented success stories of emerging talents & social entrepreneurs from hubs/exchanges; community perceptions of hub accessibility, inclusiveness & ownership (qualitative feedback); indicators of long-term hub sustainability (e.g. alt. revenue streams, pre-/post-ECOC comparison).
Datasets	Event logs, partnership registers, ticketing data, participation surveys. Participant observation, interviews, focus groups, social media analysis. MB2030, local associations and cultural organizations, regional and municipal bodies, residents, cultural-artistic creators, audiences, European partners.	Project reports, procurement records, sustainability audits, partnership documentation. Field observations, surveys, interviews, focus groups, case study analysis. MB2030, local associations and cultural organizations, regional and municipal bodies, residents, cultural-artistic creators, audiences, European partners.	Administrative records, employment statistics, project reports. Field observations, interviews, success story portfolios, participatory evaluation workshops. MB2030, local associations and cultural organizations, regional and municipal bodies, residents, cultural-artistic creators, audiences, European partners.

Monitoring Table

Strategic Direction	SD4 - Reclaiming public spaces into inclusive, adaptable and expressive environments.	SD5 - Building transnational networks of solidarity with cities facing similar challenges.	SD6 - Encouraging co-production and policy innovation beyond existing divides.
Desired Impact	(Semi-)public spaces are transformed into inclusive environments of cultural-artistic encounter, production and experimentation. Cultural-artistic collaborations and interactions in (semi-)public spaces promote a heightened sense of belonging and mutual care. Molenbeek residents, workers and visitors feel more welcome and safe in (semi-)public cultural-artistic environments.	Creative ecosystems build on transnational networks of cultural-artistic operators, social actors and government agencies. Cultural-artistic collaborations promote innovation in solidarity movements by strengthening experience and knowledge exchange. Participants in cultural-artistic activities develop a sense of cosmopolitan belonging and show greater engagement in local and international solidarity initiatives.	Institutional frameworks increasingly acknowledge plural knowledge systems and hybrid modes of cultural expression. Creative ecosystems explore and disseminate hybrid forms of cultural production in Molenbeek, Brussels, Europe and beyond. People from underrepresented communities are increasingly represented, engaged and recognized in cultural institutions, spaces and activities.
Monitoring Indicators	Number of (semi-)public spaces repurposed for cultural-artistic use; frequency of events/activities in these transformed spaces; percentage of events designed for general & specific accessibility (youth, queer, disabled, etc.); qualitative feedback on inclusivity & accessibility from residents/participants; feedback on belonging, safety & connection fostered through cultural-artistic activities; stories/case studies of community-led & collaborative projects in repurposed spaces; qualitative data on resident perceptions of the role of these spaces in cultural/social connection.	Attendance & participant diversity at joint Molenbeek-European cultural events; level of Molenbeek actors' involvement in European cultural networks/initiatives; inclusion of European themes & artists in local cultural programming; number of new products, tools, initiatives or methods for solidarity-driven innovation; monitoring of solidarity via participatory/citizen science approaches; perceived sense of cosmopolitan belonging (via surveys/interviews); qualitative insights into residents' views on European/regional issues (esp. solidarity & integration).	Number of cultural collaborations linking local, regional & international actors across disciplines/institutions; number of new cultural policies/structures recognizing plural knowledge & hybrid practices; institutional reports/public statements on adoption of inclusive & innovative cultural frameworks; number of hybrid cultural productions (interdisciplinary formats, cross-cultural fusions) shared; shift in representation of underrepresented communities in cultural events/programmes/institutions; community feedback on perceived representation & inclusion in cultural spaces; level of community involvement in co-designing & co-delivering cultural events/policies.
Datasets	Facility management records, event calendars, visitor statistics, municipal safety reports. Audience observations, surveys, interviews, visitor feedback forms, ethnographic observations. MB2030, local associations and cultural organizations, regional and municipal bodies, residents, cultural-artistic creators, audiences, European partners.	Partnership agreements, network reports, participant registration databases. Interviews, collaborative project evaluations, participant feedback. MB2030, local associations and cultural organizations, regional and municipal bodies, residents, cultural-artistic creators, audiences, European partners.	Programme catalogues, institutional records, participant lists. Interviews, institutional self-assessments, document analysis. MB2030, local associations and cultural organizations, regional and municipal bodies, residents, cultural-artistic creators, audiences, European partners.



1080 Kisses © Mous Lamrabet



CULTURAL AND 2 ARTISTIC CONTENT

Q05
DESCRIBE IN DETAIL THE ARTISTIC VISION
AND THE STRATEGY FOR THE CULTURAL
PROGRAMME OF THE YEAR OUTLINED AT
PRE-SELECTION STAGE, EXPLAINING ANY
CHANGES BROUGHT IN SINCE PRE-SELECTION.

At the pre-selection stage, we outlined four topical Sadaka Seasons which allow residents, artists, visitors as well as economic and political partners to co-create and share Molenbeek's gift of generosity with Europeans. Today, the practice of Creative Sadaka still underlies our programme. By practising Sadaka from 15 December 2029 to 26 December 2030, our continent will become a space shared among more people and a territory showing more generosity and solidarity. All of us Europeans will be better equipped to face the challenges and transitions of the future, thanks to the creative and young energies and dynamics that Molenbeek and its partner cities in Europe, and beyond will have prepared for us.

We start out with a Season of Equal Sadaka launching the *Homes of European Sadaka* in winter; we continue in spring with Natural Sadaka and the

Settlements of the Future; by late summer it will be harvesting time for Creole Sadaka with a solid *Euro-Festival* of contextual creations marking the beginning of the new cultural season. After autumn we move towards Daring Sadaka with a new futuristic parade, marking the end of a whole *Year of Parades, Ceremonies and Rituals* that will reclaim (semi)public spaces in Molenbeek. These are the legacy projects of MB2030. The four seasons are complemented by a season of Digital Sadaka which runs through the whole year, and by Creative Sadaka in action in the other Brussels municipalities and in the Flemish and Walloon partner cities Mechelen and Charleroi. All our projects and processes, imagined over a period of time stretching well before and long after 2030, will contribute to a generous Europe of solidarity and selflessness, and a more equal future for all, humans and non-humans.

All institutional and political levels operating in Molenbeek support a new synthesis of artistic excellence and broad citizen empowerment; the in-depth local anchorage is connected with practical European collaboration mechanisms (in places like Lviv,

Timișoara, Malmö), while engaging with artists and cultural agents from cities that are intimately linked to Molenbeek through its superdiverse population (Jenin, Tunis, Tangier/Marrakesh/Rabat, Kinshasa/Kisangani and Cape Town/Johannesburg). A bottom up approach very much anchored in Molenbeek is complemented by a clear artistic direction and collaborations supported by institutions from the BCR and Europe.

This strategy is being built and tested in every edition of *MolenFest*, since 2024. *MolenFest* 2025 is a showcase of collaborative co-creation, a display of new dynamics that wouldn't have existed without the preparatory work of the past three years. They are being further developed and strengthened, with key annual activities and presentations during *MolenFest* over the next four years leading straight to the *Euro-Festival* in 2030.

At the pre-selection stage, we presented four categories of projects, now reduced to three. As Molenbeek literally means 'mill's brook' in English, we settled for MILLS, BROOKS and VALLEYS.

MILLS

Large-scale, co-created and sustainable additions to the cultural, institutional and infrastructural landscape of Molenbeek and the surrounding region. These are the legacy projects of MB2030, ranging from €500,000 to a potential €2,000,000, with MB2030 contributing 70 to 80% of funding.

BROOKS

Either community- or artist-driven projects that produce empowering, inclusive high-quality cul-

tural processes, ranging between €100,000 and €300,000 with MB2030 contributing up to 50% of funding.

VALLEYS

Shaped as open calls (both local and European) open to a wide diversity of partners and (micro)initiatives, contributions of up to €100,000, with 20 to 30% coming from MB2030 are now anticipated. An exception is made for the Valley within Natural Sadaka, including all 19 Brussels municipalities: we will allocate a full €100,000 to every municipality. Valleys always include a MB2030 partner.

Apart from this reduction in the number of categories, you may find our programme remarkably consistent with our propositions at the pre-selection stage.

We adhere to the same general priorities formulated at pre-selection: reduce the carbon footprint of our projects as much as possible (50% is a strict minimum, compared to now); aim for a zero-waste production policy (and achieve this without putting extra pressure and demands on local Molenbeek populations); practise a circular economy; enhance radical inclusion and parity in the fields of cultural and social backgrounds, gender, intergenerational relations; balance professional and non-professional collaborators; make a priority of accessibility on all levels (see Chapter 4 for more).

We have also implemented an ambitious digital strategy. Rooted in the everyday knowledge, cultural memory and civic imagination of Molenbeek, we reimagine technology, not as a tool of extrac-

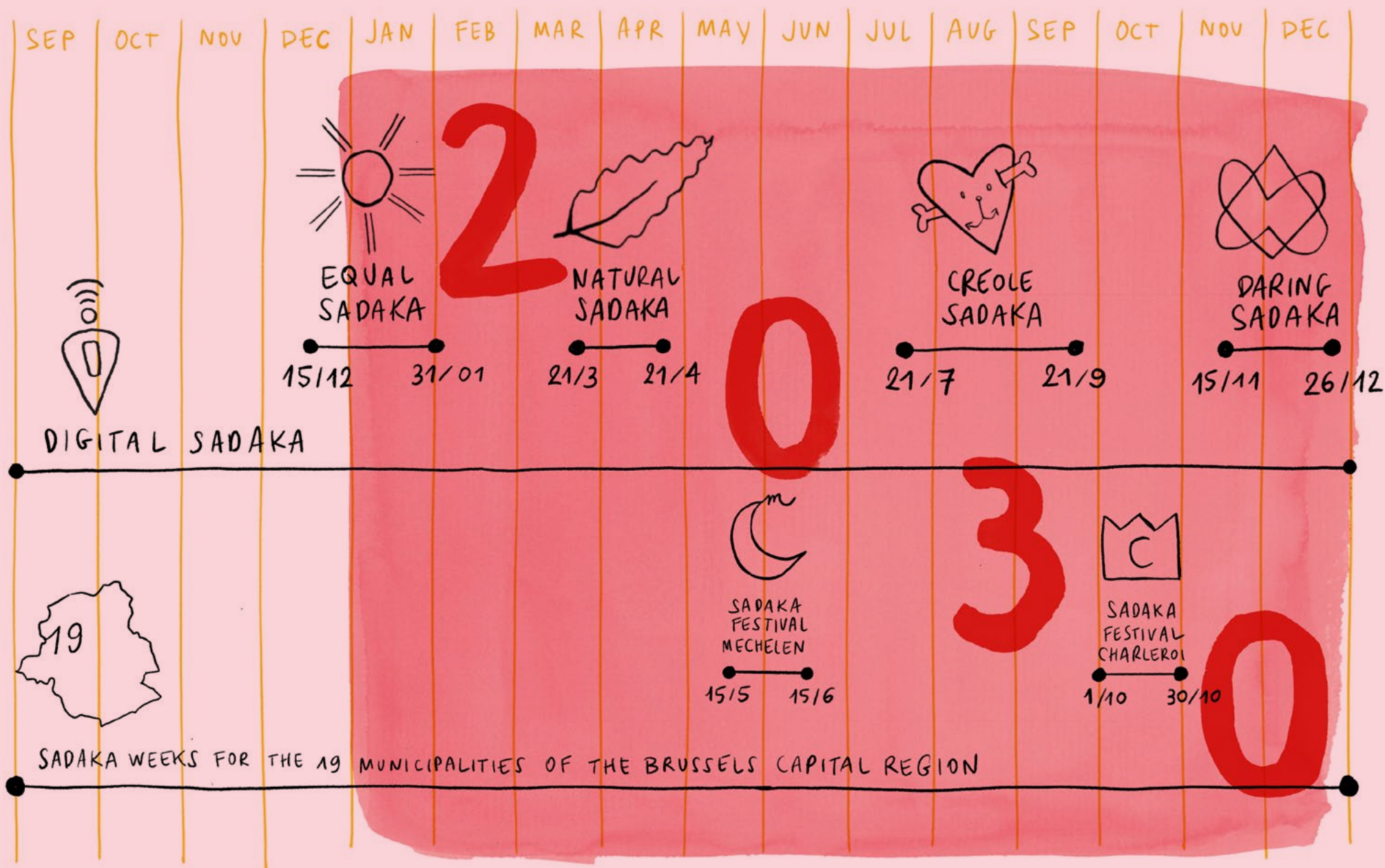
tion, but as a medium of connection, a facilitator of socially shaped empathy that resists the dominant logic of market-driven individualism. Rather than being authored by a single voice, each digital project sets clear parameters to enable shared authorship, ensuring that the outcome is polyphonic by design. We connect our digital strategy to different projects like *Breeding Ground Molenbeek*, *AR Walks & Talks*, *L3X1CoN oF e_u* and many others with digital mechanisms. This complements a fifth season of innovative Digital-only Sadaka.

Q06

DESCRIBE THE STRUCTURE OF THE CULTURAL PROGRAMME, INCLUDING THE RANGE AND DIVERSITY OF THE ACTIVITIES AND THE MAIN EVENTS THAT WILL MARK THE YEAR.

Kick-off MB2030

The MB2030 opening event on 14, 15 and 16 December 2029 coincides with the opening of the Equal Sadaka season and the launch of the *Homes of European Sadaka*, one of the legacy projects of MB2030. It also coincides with *MolenLight*, the Molenbeek light festival that doesn't import spectacular installations but calls on citizens to create their own light sculptures. At the Town Square they claim the keys of the city. From Friday night and through Saturday and Sunday, MB2030 occupies all bridges across the Canal and the waterway itself with a rich diversity of ceremonies, for and with Molenbeek and European artists and audiences.





EQUAL SADAKA

PROJECTS

2024

2025

2026

2027

2028

2029

preparation

2030
off
Season

SEASON SCHEDULE

15/12/2029

31/01/2030

legacy →

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

Week 5

Week 6

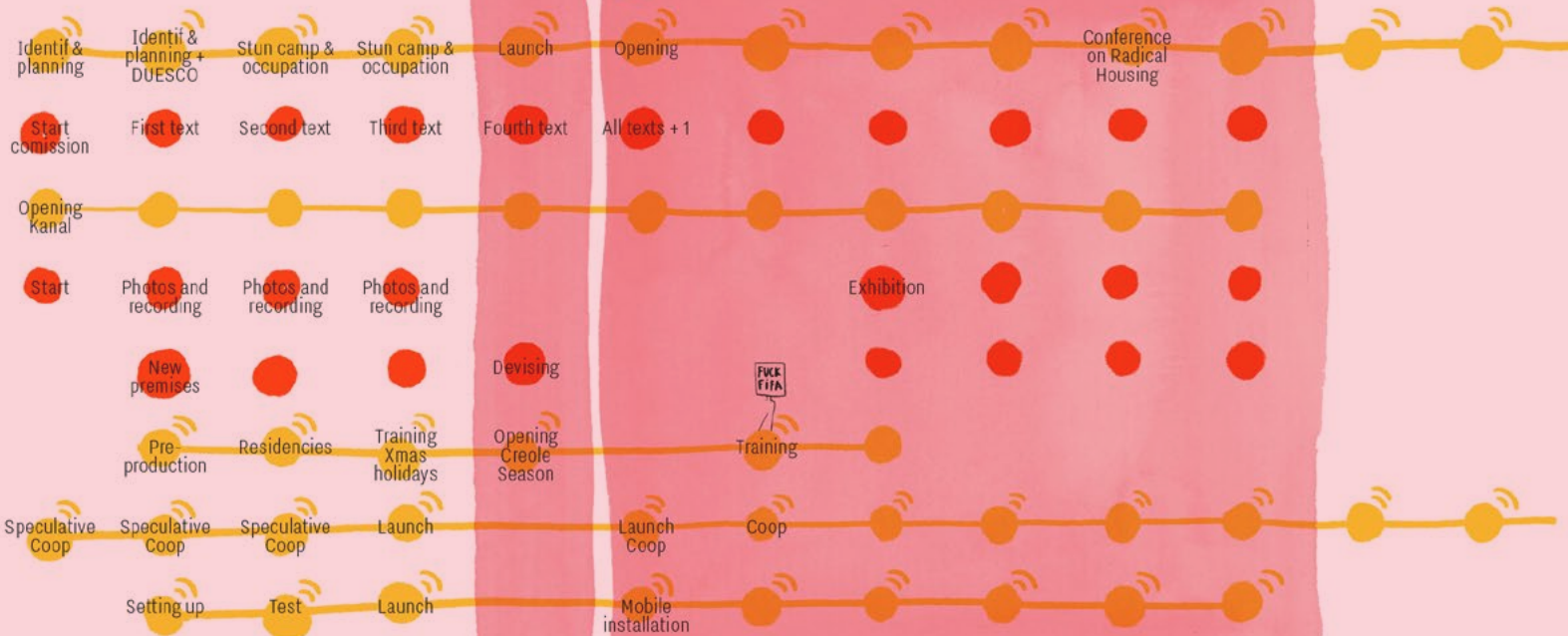
2031

2032

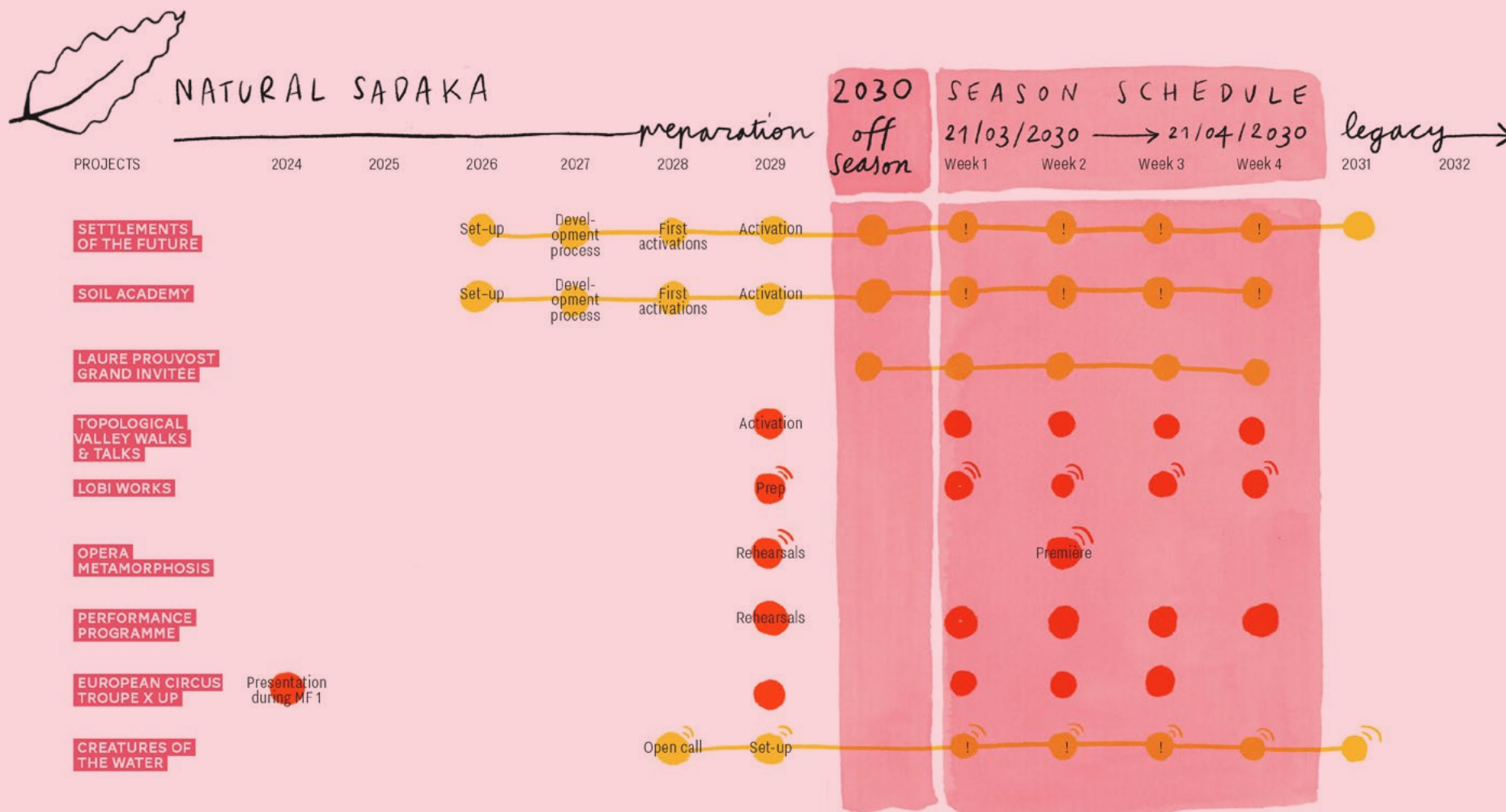
KICK-OFF

HOMES OF EUROPEAN
SADAKA (OPENING)NEW REPERTOIRE OF
SOLIDARITY &
GENEROSITYEUROPEAN GALLERY
OF SOCIAL JUSTICEEUROPE'S INVISIBLE
WORKFORCESEUROPEAN CIRCUS
TROUPE X CIRCUS
ZONDER HANDENBEAUTIFUL GAME
TOURNAMENTBREEDING GROUND
MOLENBEEK

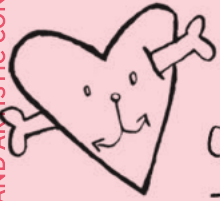
1001 FLYING CARPETS

Presentation
during MF

—●— over the years ● only during Season !! highlight ●● digital component

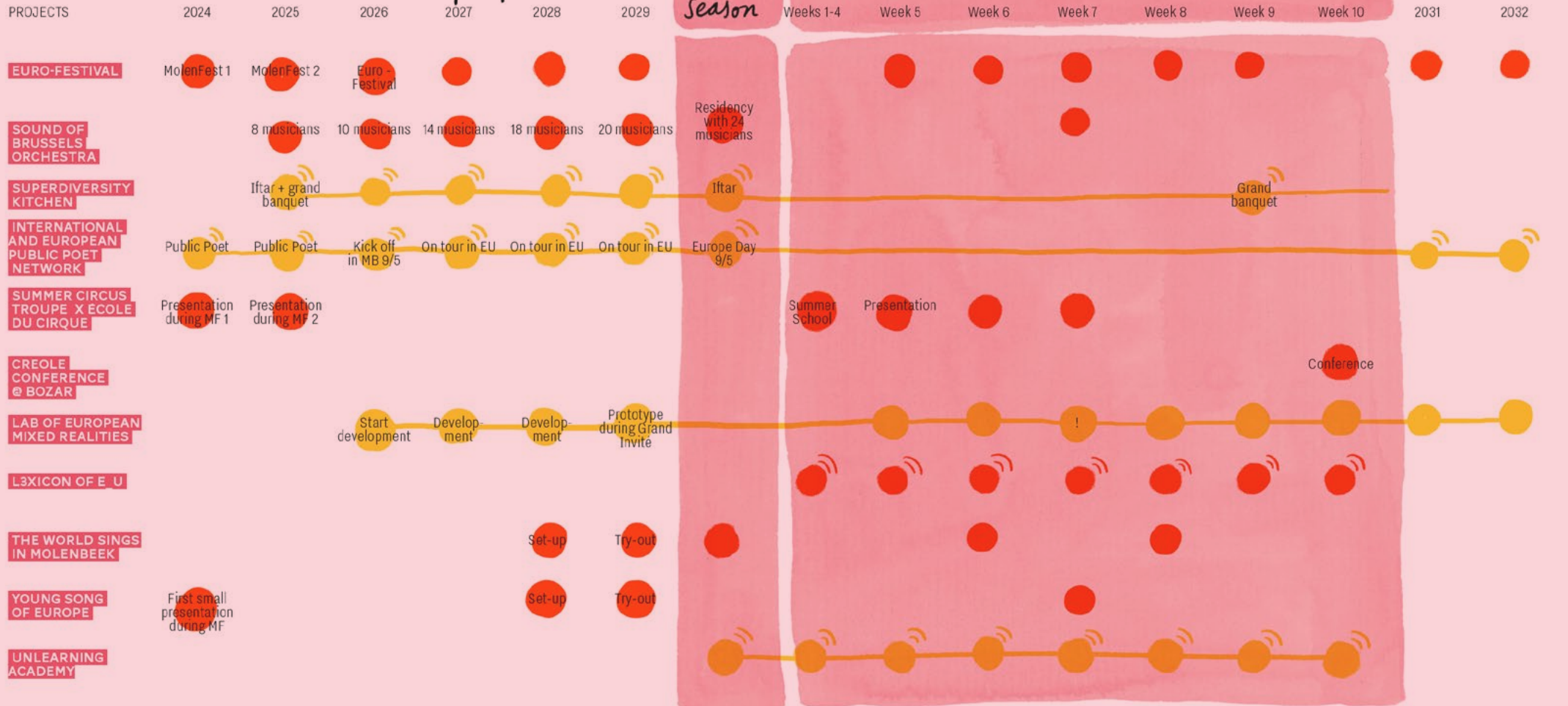


 over the years
  only during Season
   highlight
   digital component



CREOLE SADAKA

preparation



—●— over the years ● only during Season !! highlight ●● digital component



DARING SADAKA

preparation

2030
OFF
SEASON

SEASON SCHEDULE
15/11/2030 → 26/12/2030

legacy →

PROJECTS

2024

2025

2026

2027

2028

2029

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

Week 5

Week 6

2031

2032

THE YEAR OF PARADES
CEREMONIES AND
RITUALS

Presentation
during MF1

MOLENLIGHT XL

Opening
Ceremony

ANNO 2030

Open calls

Open calls

Opening

RITUALS OF HOME -
ABC + YOUYOU GROUP

Activation

THE GREY PRIDE

Setting up

Residencies

Residencies

Opening

FUTURE SOUND STARS
INCUBATOR NETWORK

Residencies

Residencies

Residencies

Residencies

BALLROOMS

Presentation
during MF1

Prep

Balls

Balls in BCR

Prep XL

Presentation
XL

GIRLS MAKE THE CITY

Urban
Design Lab

Urban
Design Lab

Urban
Design Lab

Urban
Design Lab
prep

Final Design
Lab

IN.OUT.SIDER

Prep

Festival

Closing
Ceremony

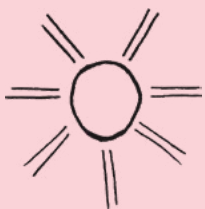
EUROPEAN CIRCUS
TROUPE X UP

CROSSING MOLENBEEK

Mobile
Installation

—●— over the years ● only during Season ! ! highlight ●● digital component

Equal Sadaka



Drawing on Sadaka, we present a diverse platform of projects exploring how artistic practice can serve as a catalyst for equality. These initiatives focus on solidarity, not merely as an abstract value, but as a lived, creative force that challenges injustice and reimagines social relations. Artists, curators, designers, participants and other cultural workers take on the role of committed citizens, working across disciplines and borders to propose feminist, decolonial and environmentally just futures - upholding the dignity of all people and of the non-human life with whom we share the earth that Molenbeek is built on. From reimagining the theatrical canon and the world of football to uncovering *Europe's Invisible Workforces* and reclaiming urban space through artistic activation, these projects creatively propose new models of community, economy and ecology - rooted in solidarity, care and reciprocity. They confront the inequalities of today's social and economic systems, offering cultural visions that challenge extractive practices and reframe value itself. In this way, the cluster reflects Sadaka, not as charity, but as a radical act of equality and mutual commitment. It affirms the power of culture to shape inclusive narratives, sustainable futures and systems that prioritize the common good. In doing so, it invites us to imagine and practise forms of solidarity that truly leave no one behind.



HOMES OF EUROPEAN SADAKA

A network of seven to ten multifunctional temporary, new or existing occupations. Five have already been identified: the existing Cinemaximiliaan, Institut Imelda, Church of Saint-Rémi, Résidence Leopold II and the church hall at 43 Rue de Liverpool.

The *Homes of European Sadaka* connect out-of-use or in-between-use buildings to the Molenbeek community and Europe, with an in-depth approach to the European-wide issues of housing and hosting. Led by the non-profit organization Communa, and engaging with the city of Molenbeek and the BCR, buildings they own will be identified, converted, occupied and artistically activated in the period 2026-35, with a stronger focus on an artistic programme in 2030. The buildings range from large projects, like Institut Imelda on Chaussée de Ninove and the Church of Saint-Rémi in the Maritime District, to smaller spaces like accessible shopfronts. Renovation costs run outside of the programme budget.

Various places will host distinct functions (housing, large-scale kitchen logistics and cultural programmes) where arts and culture are integrated into people's daily lives. The housing component includes accommodation for those with restricted access to spaces to live, eat, work and play, but also residential spaces and accommodation for artists. The accommodation capacity allows for European artists to work and network in Molenbeek.

The activation of these buildings, in liaison Yes We Camp and the European network Social Temporary Use Network, requires adequate management and social skills. This is provided by graduates of a newly established module, a Belgian instalment of the French 'Diplôme Universitaire Espaces Communs' (Université Gustave Eiffel) in collaboration with the Brussels universities VUB and ULB, and vocational training programmes based in Molenbeek like Art-2Work, JES and MolenbeekFormation. This vocational training prepares a number of young professionals from Molenbeek and Europe as a workforce for the development and management of *Homes of European Sadaka*. Trans Europe Halles, the European network of grassroots cultural centres, will co-produce these trainings with their partners, and support volunteer-host European exchanges.



Communa and MB2030 endeavour to turn the network into a (semi-)permanent web through acquisition strategies such as the Community Land Trust Brussels (CLTB) and FairGround Brussels. Thus, the *Homes of European Sadaka* are not a punctual showcase of the possibilities of temporary occupation, but the emanation of a Sadaka methodology designed to be reproducible and inspiring, a model for the creation of a sustainable Molenbeek and European network of shared spaces.

The *Homes of European Sadaka* host a multi-disciplinary artistic programme. Molenbeek-based Cinemaximiliaan serves as an example, offering film screenings and an amateur film festival. European partners will co-curate dedicated weeks: Lublin 2029 based on their Social Space of Cultural Resilience project; TEJA/Network of Cultural Spaces in Support of Emergency Situations, based on their residency programme for artists in precarious situations; and Nikšić 2030 based on their House of Digital Revolution. Several co-creative processes use the *Homes of European Sadaka* as residency spaces for the incubation of their MB2030 projects. Arts collectives can apply for space. The *Homes of European Sadaka* naturally connect to various other projects in our programme, such as the *Superdiversity Kitchen* and the polyphonic women-led YouYou Group. The Church of Saint-Rémi is home to the installation by ABC (Art Basics for Children) within the framework of *Rituals of Home*. The Institut Imelda is the hub for temporary visual artist studios and a series of exhibitions, in collaboration with BARN (Brussels Artist-Run Network) and MAST (Molenbeek Artists Stronger Together). Résidence Leopold II focuses on all issues relating to the cul-



ture of hospitality, mixing lodging for visiting artists, MB2030 visitors and local residents in precarious housing situations.

A targeted, Europe-wide invitation is being launched for applications from urban areas with similar challenges as Molenbeek. As a result, various *Homes of European Sadaka* will carry the names of other neighbourhoods in Europe that identify with MB2030's spirit of Sadaka, such as Amadora (in Lisbon, Portugal) and places in Marseille, London, Rotterdam, Athens, Warsaw, Napoli, etc. Each home hosts events and exhibitions from the partner of that city.

In 2030 the *Homes of European Sadaka* will also link their practices to a reflective approach on housing and hosting. This will result in a curated programme of works with a strong socio political dimension, but also poetic works on the notion of

home. Around the same time, the Brussels universities VUB and ULB will also co-host a *European Conference on Radical Housing*, with and within the *Homes of European Sadaka* and in liaison with the European Year against Homelessness. The conference is conceived as a learning network and advocacy event dedicated to a European discussion on the notions of public and social housing, and of common domestic and cultural space.

For visits to the *Homes of European Sadaka*, Molenbeek residents engage in a participative vocational training as guides for an 'alternative guided tour' programme, in collaboration with the association Alterbrussels and with Nos Héritages, a project run by journalist Sarra El Massoudi. The *Homes of European Sadaka* will not only be a physical network of buildings, but also an online platform and network. The dynamic and complex network of partnerships involved - the European organizations in temporary occupation, linked to various urban areas, as well as the academic connections and arts collectives - aims to connect in a dynamic way in this interactive digital platform.

MB: City of Molenbeek, Communa, Cinemaximiliaan, Ultima Vez, Art2Work, JES vzw, Foyer des Jeunes, MolenbeekFormation

BCR: SPRB / Brussels Region, KANAL - Centre Pompidou, Syndicat des Immenses, Nos Héritages, Alterbrussels, Gilbard, VUB, ULB

EU: Yes We Camp (Marseille), Plateau Urbain (FR), Coop Eskemm (FR), Free Riga (LT), Alte Mu (DE), L'Asilo (IT), Stad In De Maak (NL), Institut For (X) (DK), Université Gustave Eiffel (FR), DUESCO / Ancoats (FR), Nikšić 2030 (ME), Lublin 2029 (PL), TEJA / Network of Cultural Spaces in Support of Emergency Situations (ES), Trans Europe Halles (SE/EU) and Social Temporary Use Network (BE/EU)

WW: Think Tanger (MA)



BROOKS

NEW REPERTOIRE OF SOLIDARITY & GENEROSITY

Staged readings of freshly commissioned plays.

Date: 2026-2030;

staging 15 December 2029 - 31 January 2030

Location: Homes of European Sadaka,
Ras El Hanout and KVS

The new urban centres of Europe will bring to life, both on the page and on stage, a series of new and reimagined theatre plays. What if Sophocles's *Antigone*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and Brecht's *Mother Courage* were young people living in the hyperdiverse neighbourhoods of European capitals? Inspiring examples are *Jihad of Love* by Mohamed El Bachiri and David Van Reybrouck, written after the terrorist attacks in Brussels (22 March 2016) that killed El Bachiri's wife in the Maelbeek metro station, and *Antigone in Molenbeek* by Stefan Hertmans. Yearly from 2026 to 2029, a committee made up of theatrical and literary partners will commission and test new texts to reflect on daily life in the other Molenbeeks of Europe and beyond: in pressure cookers like Jenin and Tunis. A transnational collective of artists proposed by Lviv Theatre Lesi, Inizjamed Festival, CZKD, Freedom Theatre Jenin, Collectif d'Art-d'Art Kinshasa, Zoukak Theatre Collective and more will create a repertoire encouraging a common imaginary of living on the edge.

MB: *Ras El Hanout, Needcompany*

BCR: KVS

BE: *Arsenaal (Mechelen), Théâtre de l'Ancre (Charleroi)*

EU: *Lviv Theatre Lesi (UA), Spajzu Kreattiv/Inizjamed Festival (MT), CZKD - Centre for Cultural Decontamination*

WW: *Freedom Theatre Jenin (PS), Collectif d'Art-d'Art Kinshasa (RDC), Zoukak Theatre Collective (LB)*

EUROPEAN GALLERY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

A series of large-scale topical exhibitions.

Date: 2026-2030, opening

15 December 2029 - 31 January 2030

Location: KANAL-Centre Pompidou

Each exhibition is anchored in a long-term trajectory of public mediation in Molenbeek and other European cities, engaging local young citizens as co-creators of the associated programme of talks and workshops, showcasing their own concerns about social justice or related themes today.

KANAL's Collection Displays, exhibitions lasting 18 months, start off in 2027, after the official opening in November 2026, on the central theme of migration. Banu Cennetoglu's installation, *Right?*, which represents the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in bouquets of golden balloons, is also visiting.

Realism and Social Justice is the blockbuster group exhibition co-produced by KANAL. Featuring an international group of artists proposed by Centre Pompidou, the City of Malmö, Jacksons Lane and more, it includes a 2-day decentralized exhibition in open art studios, bars, late-night bars, empty stores, parks and other unusual venues, curated by 48 Stunden Neukölln. The exhibitions will be documented and will extend beyond 2030 through a multi-platform social-media presence dedicated to

depictions and discussions of social justice in the history of art.

MB: *Musée des Migrations (MMM), MCCS*

BCR: KANAL - Centre Pompidou

EU: *Centre Pompidou (FR), City of Malmö (SE), Jacksons Lane (UK), 48 Stunden Neukölln (DE)*

EUROPE'S INVISIBLE WORKFORCES

An archive with portraits and stories
of the people who move us.

Date: 2026-2030; exhibiting 2-30 January 2030

Location: Molenbeek's bus and metro stations
West Station, Comte de Flandre, Beekkant, Zwarte
Vijvers, Simonis, Osseghem, and Ribaucourt

Photographer Cédric Gerbehaye and writer Caroline Lamarche will document the lives of *The People Who Move Us*, the workforces of the Brussels Intercommunal Transport Company (STIB-MIVB), the National Railway Company of Belgium (SNCB-NMBS) and other public transport companies across Europe. A disproportionately large group of STIB-MIVB workers comes from and lives in Molenbeek. Even the above author Mohamed El Bachiri was a metro driver before he became a writer.

Between 2026 and 2029, the invisible stories of these heroes of our daily commuting rituals across Europe will be portrayed and recorded in photography and literature. The intention of Gerbehaye and Lamarche is to create an archive, in collaboration with and for the transport companies and its employees, and to make this archive publicly accessible. Gerbehaye and Lamarche will also activate a street-level studio in Molenbeek, receiving visitors from a broad spectrum of the Molenbeek and BCR

population, or simply passers-by, who are then portrayed and whose stories are recorded.

January 2030 will see the launch of the online archive and accessible exhibitions in public spaces, in stations, at bus stops, and on/in tram and metro carriages. An online platform and a publication on Europe's mobility workforces complete the work.

The same process will happen in other European cities: Swiss-German artist Mats Staub engages with the Berlin Transport Company (BVG); Faro produces an exhibition for their train warehouse turned art gallery; Bourges 2028 activates their Brussels-Paris-Bourges route of Trans Europe Culture. These European projects exhibit together in Molenbeek in 2030 and all exhibitions interconnect and exchange artistic content between locations.

MB: *MCCS, BubbleTech*

BCR: *STIB-MIVB, NMBS-SNCB*

EU: *Garage Campus (DE), City of Faro (PT), Bourges 2028 (FR)*

EUROPEAN CIRCUS TROUPES

A series of contemporary circus shows.

Date: 2028-2030, showcase 2-30 January 2030

Location: La Grande Halle

Molenbeek has one of Europe's highest densities of circus structures and schools per capita. It is therefore logical that every Season of Sadaka will showcase a series of contemporary circus shows in which new circus artists from Molenbeek and Europe will perform equal-access, fair and radically inclusive indoor and outdoor shows. Young new circus performers proposed by Cirkus Syd, Jacksons

Lane, Eleusis 2023, and members of the Caravan Circus Network will devise and perform together. New performances on solidarity and generosity are incubated with Circus Zonder Handen, a social and inclusive circus, that will occupy their new spaces in La Grande Halle from 2028 onwards.

MB: *Circus Zonder Handen, UP - Circus & Performing Arts*

BCR: *Les Halles de Schaerbeek*

EU: *Cirkus Syd (SE), JL Circus (UK), Eleusis 2023 (EL), Catalan Art (ES), Circusnext - European Circus Label, Incam, Institut Ramon Llull (FR), Caravan Circus Network (BE/EU), European Federation of Professional Circus Schools (BE/EU)*

WW: *Palestinian Circus School Birzeit (PS), Groupe Acrobatique de Tanger (MA)*

BEAUTIFUL GAME TOURNAMENT

A series of performative games.

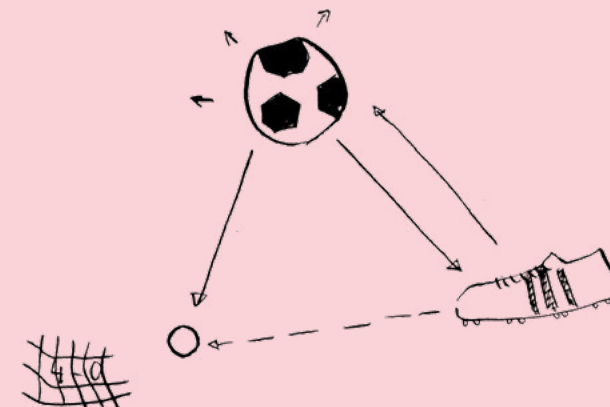
Date: 2027-2029;

during football season breaks in 2030

Location: Sporting site Edmond Machtens

Europe is seeing an increasingly competitive atmosphere in sports, even for children or on amateur levels. The *Beautiful Game Tournament* aims to counter that pure competitiveness with a participative and sharing approach, stressing equality for all in the community-building process of the art of the game. At the intersection of sports and arts, this project responds to the need for greater representation and visibility of women in football.

These projects start from a partnership with RWDM Girls, the biggest girls football club of Belgium with 650 members / 450 active players ranging from 6 to 64 years old, and more than 70 nationalities.



RWDM Girls has a crucial educational and social function in the community. By giving young girls the belief that they can excel in a men's game like football, the club gives them the belief they can excel in other areas in life as well.

During the quiet months of the summer break, the projects will turn the RWDM grounds into a space for arts and culture.

1. A football choreography

Belgium-based Australian theatre-maker Ahilan Ratnamohan has a past as a football player with professional aspirations and is currently coaching a girls team at City Pirates in Antwerp. He developed a practice of creating performances with football moves and brought football players to the theatre stage. With the RWDM Girls team, he develops a large and coordinated group choreography that also serves as a warm-up. In collaboration with the club's coaches and physical trainers, the players turn the warm-up into a show. Other clubs in Europe (with teams in Vienna, Rotterdam and Riga) go through the same process. In the years leading up to MB2030, the players/performers will showcase these performances on their pitch.

In the summer of 2030, during the centenary FIFA World Cup that will take place in Spain, Portugal and Morocco (60% of RWDM girls are of Moroccan/Maghreb origin), the various results of these choreographic sessions will be presented to MB2030 audiences and football crowds alike. An online portal uses QR-accessible mini-tutorials to share the cool moves with trainers and players anywhere in Europe and beyond.

2. Reenactment of an iconic game

Swiss theatre-maker Massimo Furlan has developed a body of work that creates reenactments of iconic football games from the past (e.g. BRD vs DDR, World Cup 1974). Originally he did so alone, with the audience in the stadium, accompanied by a radio account of the game to develop these reenactments. For MB2030 Furlan wants to involve more actors and participants (from various teams) to reenact the Morocco-Belgium game of the 2022 World Cup.

3. The unwinnable games

The UK-based South African academic and performance artist Anthea Moys has been developing various ways of actively sabotaging the competitive element in games, turning sports encounters into joyful experiences of horizontal participation. Moys brings people together to create and play unwinnable games, collaborative experiences that offer a powerful counterpoint to the contemporary obsession with winning, individual success and being 'the best'. The Olympics of Unwinnable Games creates a space where everyone wins through meaningful connections, shared creativity and joy, and the collective wisdom that emerges when we prioritize 'survival of

the friendliest' over 'survival of the fittest'. This approach offers powerful lessons for building solidarity and trust in an increasingly polarized world. Moys plans to work with various European girls football teams during three residencies (Molenbeek, Helsingborg, Donostia) who will present their 'unwinnable' tournament in the summer of MB2030.

The tournament is accompanied by masterclasses on performative football by Kristīne Brīniņa from Liepāja, by hooligan choir performances from Lemesos, sports diplomacy talks co-organized with Donostia Kultura, and social football activities, such as benefit matches for antiracist football tournaments within the FARE network, with football players from Trencin and Elsinore. The Molenbeek association Footmatic, specialized in community football tournaments both on the pitch and in the e-sports world, will connect the Molenbeek games to a European online platform of non-competitive video games.

MB: *RWDM Girls, Footmatic*

BCR: *Kaaitheater*

EU: *City Pirates (BE), 1210 Wien (AT), FK Metta Riga (LV), Feyenoord Rotterdam (NL), FC Helsingør (DK), Donostia Kultura (ES), Liepāja 2027 (LT), Trencin 2026 (SK), Lemesos 2030 (CY),*

WW: *Fondation HIBA (MA)*

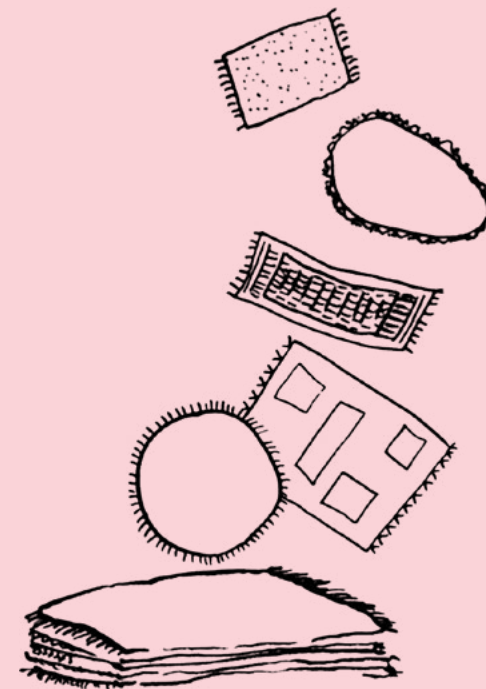
1001 FLYING CARPETS

A travelling community radio on carpets.

Date: 2027-2029; installation and broadcast
15 December 2029 - 31 January 2030 and during
all four seasons

Location: Molenbeek's metro stations

1001 Flying Carpets unites two active community-building elements in a Europe of distant and lonely



people: carpets and radios.

The Molenbeek-based feminist arts collective Maak & Transmettre focuses its activities on the creation of carpets made with various techniques, like the recuperation of used materials and tufting. The carpets express the stories of the participating young people and residents of Molenbeek and create a space for new stories to be written, as ever more carpets travel through the streets and metro stations of Molenbeek in temporary installations.

With various stakeholders of the 'radio field', a Sada-ka radio station will be created. The radio-makers will transmit from the mobile carpet installation, which becomes a place for meeting, reporting, discussions, readings in a live radio format (with, for example, the Pan African Space Station installations by Cape Town-based organization Chimurenga).

The combination of travelling welcoming installation and enabling format of live radio broadcast can link various MB2030 projects, visiting the *Homes of European Sadaka* or competing with the other nomadic installation *Crossing Molenbeek*. Infame Radio from Brno, and members of RADIA, a transnational radio-art and community radio network will connect Molenbeek and European listeners, with co-curated talks and guest performances available online, in real time.

MB: *Recyclart; Maak & Transmettre, Gilbard, Radio Maritime, MCCS*

BCR: *Radio Campus, Radio Panik, Association pour la Création Sonore Radiophonique, Kiosk Radio, Radio Mouette*

EU: *RADIA network, Infame Radio (CZ)*

WW: *Chimurenga (ZA)*

BREEDING GROUND MOLENBEEK

(BGM) the Sadaka Network of Skills and Services.

Date: 2026-2032, public programme

15 December 2029 - 31 January 2030

Location: Alwakan and on Molenbeek markets

In alliance with the Crafting Europe Manifesto 2025 and efforts to activate creative employment in the Molenbeeks of Europe, *Breeding Ground Molenbeek BGM* reinvents the concept of the market in collaboration with artisans, farmers and entrepreneurs from Molenbeek and Europe.

In Molenbeek, a new generation of designers, geeks and crafts(wo)men is emerging, who redirect their mission from 'global branding and personal gain' to 'locally embedded and regenerative practices', clearly breaking with the dominant culture that is tailored to fit the mechanics of gentrification. By doing so, they radically redesign the creative industries as we

know them. These graphic designers, fashion designers, radio- and film-makers, transporters, woodworkers, printers, builders and painters, copywriters and cooks form the breeding ground for *BGM*.

BGM is a cooperation offering an open-source network for everyone eager to offer their skills to the community. It is both a digital hub and network of real people and practices, uniting professionals and amateurs with unique skills.

The scale of MB2030 provides a unique opportunity to build a prototype for a solid infrastructure that supports the network and makes it sustainable beyond 2030. *BGM* starts out as a speculative cooperative (2026-2028) with the goal to consolidate in 2029-2030.

Developed by a small group of local artists/entrepreneurs as a start-up, *BGM* will build a local 'community of skills and services' with the goals to provide:

- a/ resources of skills for innovative production lines for both MB2030 and beyond;
- b/ a public programme in the form of workshops around crafts, food, well-being etc;
- c/ a platform for learning, exchange and skill development, between heritage and innovation.

BGM provides a system of apprenticeship and job creation that is open for European youngsters to develop certain skills, but also learn about this community model. Its model of governance, digital tools, learning modules and economics are completely open source and will be developed transnationally, so it can easily be set up in other communities.

Throughout the ECoC year 2030, monthly exchanges will be organized, coinciding with the 4 seasons

and open to the larger public focusing on fair remuneration within a common (Equal Sadaka), innovative models of production within planetary boundaries (Natural Sadaka), new forms of participative democracy (Creole Sadaka), indigenous economic models (Daring Sadaka).

These exchanges host transnational workshops, trainings and networking with mentors from Open Design School from Matera 2019 or Tartu Centre for Creative Industries, craftsmanship educators from Saber Fazer and ARTERia Foundation, and DIY-organizers from DIY-organizers from Shared Visions, open to European participants and volunteers.

While the *BGM*-hub is based in Alwakan, a community-driven space that fosters artistic production, social interaction, and new economic opportunities, contributing to the ongoing revitalization of Molenbeek, the practices take place in the various 'maker spaces' in Molenbeek: fablabs, studios, work spaces, offices, or Lion City, the new site of Molenbeek makers industry. We will create both a digital and physical map that serves as an alternative guide through Molenbeek.

BGM products will be available in local shops and at the venues of partnering institutions. Every Season, *BGM* will be physically present on the local market at the Town Square, connected to a wider range of local producers.

MB: *Marché Bildy/Espacetous, Alwakan, Gilbard, iMAL, Cinemaximiliaan, Timendotes, Erratum Fashion*

BCR: *Mad, ICHEC, Zinne, SOTA / Shared Visions*

EU: *De Waag (NL), ARTERia Foundation (PL), Saber-Fazer (PT), Tartu Centre For Creative Industries (EE), OpenDesignSchools Matera (IT)*

WW: *The Question of Funding Collective (PS), Ruan-grupa (ID)*



VALLEY

PLAYGROUND(S)

Europe's inner child is invited to come out and play at a new generation of artist- or community-initiated, public or semi-public playgrounds. These are co-designed with children in unexpected coalitions (with, for example, a boxing club, queer association or university for seniors). A transnational open call will be launched by MB2030 between 2026 and 2030 asking for: European creators to co-create safe spaces for cross-cultural conflict through play in Molenbeek and the BCR; and for other European public and private cultural agents to multiply the model in their own country, generating a European route of inclusive site-eccentric playgrounds for big and small.

KANAL is setting the example: with the British collective Assemble, they are preparing a brand-new playground in the huge renovated building that will be co-created and co-constructed with children from Molenbeek. Their proposition serves as a prototype.

BCR: KANAL

EU: Assemble (UK)



A season of Equal Sadaka 15/12/2029 - 31/1/2030 includes:

- * Kick-off 2030 with *MolenLight*
- * Launching of *Homes of European Sadaka*
- * The opening of the blockbuster exhibition *European Gallery of Social Justice* at KANAL
- * The inclusive circus propositions of Circus Zonder Handen in La Grande Halle
- * The training sessions of the *Beautiful Game Tournament* during winter break at Machtens Stadium
- * The activation of *Breeding Ground Molenbeek* with a first market of Molenbeek-made products
- * The first activation of the *1001 Flying Carpets*
- * An Iftar with *Superdiversity Kitchen* x Religion
- * *A Conference on Radical Housing*
- * The opening of at least five *Creatures of the Water*
- * Visiting the Church of Saint-Rémi for Art Basics for Children or listening to a concert of the YouYou Group in a *Home of European Sadaka*
- * Opening of the Visitor Centre, activation of the *Lab of Mixed Realities* and other occupations like the launching of the exhibition *Anno 2030*
- * Different *Ballrooms* in community centres in the BCR
- * The creation of multiple *playgrounds*

Natural Sadaka



Sadaka has long embodied the spirit of solidarity, generosity and compassion among people - a sacred act of giving rooted in empathy and justice. But in a time of ecological crisis, this profound tradition invites us to widen its circle. Natural Sadaka is the extension of that same care to the natural world: to the forests that breathe for us, the rivers that quench our thirst and the soil that feeds us. Just as Sadaka nurtures social bonds, Natural Sadaka fosters a relationship of mutual respect between humanity and the earth. It means giving not only to those in need, but also to the ecosystems we have neglected - planting trees, protecting biodiversity and natural resources, reducing waste, lowering our risk behaviour and living gently on the land. In doing so, we act in solidarity, not only with each other, but with future generations and all living beings. Natural Sadaka is response-ability. It is the generous, everyday act of remembering that the health of our planet is inseparable from the well-being of our communities and our custodianship for future generations.



SETTLEMENTS OF THE FUTURE

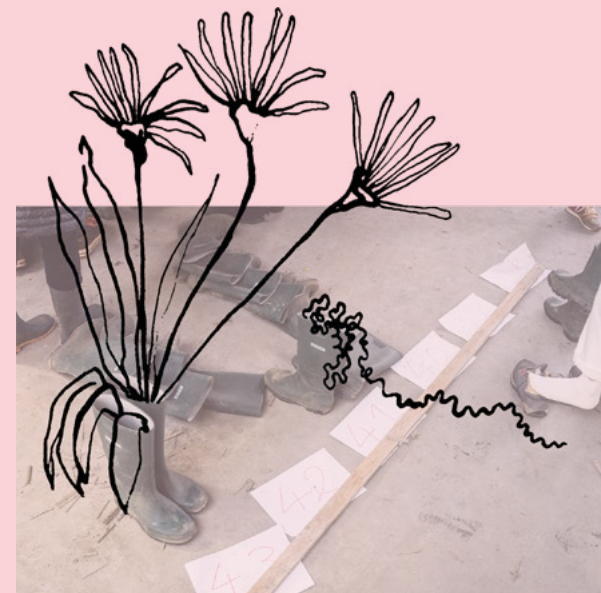
Public experiments in alternative ways of dwelling.

Date: 2026-2031, active 21 March - 21 April 2025

Location: Scheutbos, Moeras van Jette, the Canal and Porte de Ninove

How can Europe challenge the very idea of urban settlement, when our cities heat up or dry out? Artists will be commissioned to conceive and inhabit distinct 'settlements', each a public, situated experiment that invites other artists, communities and thinkers to re-imagine what it means to 'settle' - not as an act of conquest or domination, but one of care, reciprocity and ecological entanglement. Following our quest for *Future Places* at the pre-selection stage, these sites will share key values: relationality, non-extractive thinking, multispecies solidarity and radical imagination.

The term 'settlement' carries the weight of colonial history, while the project itself seeks to decolonize our relationship to nature. Instead of being avoided, that contradiction is embraced, becoming the very field of exploration. Scattered like constellations across the city, these settlements form a chain of ecological and symbolic sites. Together, they question dominant models of urban development and land use, while opening space for more just, speculative and interconnected futures. A European programme of co-curated spaces invites Dnipro-based curators Iryna Polikarchuk and Nataliia Matsenko, to contribute perspectives from occupied Ukraine about environmental destruction as warfare and



contemporary colonialism, Rio Neiva - Environmental NGO to contribute perspectives about New European Bauhaus principles and their natural public space co-creation experiments, and Bourges 2028 to co-produce a session of the European Parliament of Rivers in Molenbeek in 2030. Five planned settlements are described below. Others will emerge through dialogue, context and collaboration.

EU: Rio Neiva - Environmental NGO (PT), European Forum for Restorative Justice (BE/EU), Gallery ARTSVIT (UA), Bourges 2028 (FR).

Settlement #1

A Shelter of Reciprocity

Settling without building.

Location: on the swamp between Molenbeek, Ganshoren and Jette

This *Settlement of the Future* unfolds in one of the last natural swamps of Brussels. Surrounded by railway lines, housing and sports fields, the land holds



memory and pressure, shaped by histories of extraction and neglect. The project starts from a provocation: that we've colonized even our bond to land - forgetting how to dwell with the earth. Inspired by Masanobu Fukuoka's 'doing nothing' - not passivity, but deep ecological care - this settlement resists productivity and control, and instead nurtures presence

and reciprocity. At its heart is a shelter, slowly built within the swamp. It adapts rather than imposes - serving as a studio, gathering space and site of public research. On the grounds of the non-profit Groot Eiland, the artist Wouter de Raeye reimagines architecture as relationship, rooting a future where to settle means to care, answer and listen.

MB: *Groot Eiland, CIVA*

Settlement #2

House Of S/Zenne Guardians

How to care for a river.

Location: Porte de Ninove

This *Settlement of the Future* emerges at a cross-roads, where the hidden S/Zenne flows beneath the surface of Brussels and where histories of erasure, pollution and displacement meet growing calls for care, repair and recognition. Situated near Parc de la Porte de Ninove, along a threshold between the Canal and the city, this settlement gives form to the slow, transregional work of the Natural Contract Lab (NCL), a collective devoted to the long-term protection and personhood of the S/Zenne river. The House of S/Zenne Guardians will serve as a permanent site for research, encounter and advocacy - a place where river allies can gather, reflect and act. Building on years of work, this house carries the momentum of Walking-With Journeys, River Agoras and S/Zenne Guardian Schools. Here, these practices - supported by local communities, artists, ecologists and jurists - will continue to nourish a Living Bill for the S/Zenne, a visionary document seeking legal recognition of the river's rights in the Belgian constitution. More than a symbolic gesture, this house anchors an ongoing alliance with the

more-than-human: a meeting point between law and land, care and cohabitation.

MB: *Maison de Quartier Heyvaert, Comité PorteNinovePoort*

BCR: *KANAL - Centre Pompidou, workspacebrussels*

Settlement #3

Parliament of the Non-Human

A democratic experiment.

Location: Scheutbos

In 930 AD, the Icelandic parliament, the Althing, first met, not in a building, but at Thingvellir, 'the parliament plain'. Set on a rift between tectonic plates, this dramatic landscape symbolized the deep connection between nature, law and community. Nature was not a backdrop but part of the political order. The Althing was legal, cultural and social: laws were proclaimed, disputes settled, stories told and markets held, illustrating how nature and politics were once deeply intertwined.

For the *Parliament of the Non-Human*, we are looking for a site with a similar meaning in Molenbeek - Scheutbos. It is shaped by streams and is home to diverse species, an area of overlap between urban and natural, history and biodiversity, visibility and neglect. The *Parliament of the Non-Human* envisions a symbolic, open-air forum - a place of attunement rather than ownership, where the non-human is not metaphor but participant. It asks how we can sustain multispecies listening within the city's extractive logic - a radical act of humility and a reimagining of the urban as a shared, more-than-human commons.

MB: *iMal, Decoratelier, ULB*

BCR: *KANAL - Centre Pompidou, VUB*

Settlement #4

Networks of Heat

A living network of heat infrastructures.

Location: Molenbeek

Atlas of Ovens imagines a future where ovens - forgotten, improvised, or inherited - become anchors for community, knowledge, and transformation. In Molenbeek, a neighborhood shaped by migration, industry, and layered traditions, this *Settlement of the Future* maps a living network of heat infrastructures: from underground bread markets to communal barbecues, from industrial chimneys to clay kilns. These are not just technical devices - they are relational technologies, radiating warmth, stories, and shared rituals. Starting from embodied fieldwork - walking interviews, thermal mapping, and storytelling - *Atlas of Ovens* activates existing practices and kindles new connections. Collaborating with residents, artisans, and cultural workers, the project reimagines ovens as both tools and totems: places to gather, cook, fire, learn, and repair. Through workshops, residencies, shared meals, and mobile events, this settlement challenges the cold abstraction of urban life and proposes instead a speculative ecology grounded in warmth, care, and convivial transformation. *Atlas of Ovens* will weave a polyphonic archive of practices, maps, and memories - forming a tactile, living atlas of how we heat, relate, and survive together.

MB: iMAL

Settlement #5

Terrain

A choreographic centre grounded in soil

Location: Scheutbos

What if a choreographic centre had no walls, no roof - just a piece of land? What if dance was not confined to a stage, but emerged directly from the earth - shaped by wind, weather, and collective presence? With *Terrain*, choreographer Boris Charmatz has developed a radical proposition: a dance institution without a building, grounded instead in soil. It is not a theatre or a studio, but a living laboratory - a terrain where choreography unfolds in relation to its environment, in response to the rhythms of nature. As part of the *Settlements of the Future*, *Terrain* embodies a deep rethinking of what cultural infrastructure can be. It aligns with ecologically attuned notions of space, community, and practice. Without extraction, without enclosure, *Terrain* becomes an open, adaptable, and situated space - one that listens before it acts.

In Molenbeek, *Terrain* can grow into a choreographic ecosystem: a place for physical exchange, shared breath, and playful seriousness. As a *Settlement of the Future*, it invites us to slow down, attune our senses, and move with care. The dance floor is the land itself - and every step is an act of attention.



BROOKS

SOIL ACADEMY

A series of long-term interdisciplinary artistic and educational projects that reconnect European city dwellers with the living ground beneath their feet.

Date: 2026-2030, activation 21 March - 21 April 2025

Location: Different locations

Soil Academy is about raising awareness of European urban subsoils as a living and valuable continental ecosystem, and about fostering community around local green spaces, parks, vacant lots and urban gardens. Artists, scientists, residents, schoolchildren and policymakers reflect together on what grows, lives and is possible in the urban soil. It also offers an artistic interpretation of soil as memory, habitat and political space, and aims to be an educational project about soil health, urban agriculture and ecology. All these projects connect to the 47 schools in Molenbeek; their more than 10,000 pupils and their families are stakeholders and partic-



ipants in these projects that encourage schools to 'rewild' and connect to the soil they stand on. Soil Academy will incubate exchanges of artists, educators and biologists between European locations, to give and receive creative workshops and arts-and-science experiments: Budweis 2028 via their creative education project Creative Minds, Victoria-Għawdex 2031 via their Climate Parade participatory processions, Aufbruch, Salzkammergut! As legacy of Bad Ischl 2024 microfarming experiments, and Pro Progressione from Budapest via their artistic residency, School of Enough. Four projects are described below. Others will emerge through dialogue, context and collaboration.

EU: Budweis 2028 (CZ), Victoria-Għawdex 2031 (MT), Aufbruch, Salzkammergut! (AT), Pro Progressione (HU).

1. Decoratelier

Underneath

Since 2024 Decoratelier and the social restaurant Cassonade have been operating out of an abandoned factory in Molenbeek. The site is currently in temporary use, awaiting redevelopment into a park within the next five years. In preparation for this, the city's environmental inspection has analysed the terrain, drilling soil samples and mapping underground pollution, including traces of oil and heavy metals. A thick concrete layer now seals the site, preventing any contamination from affecting daily life above ground. But still, what exactly are we standing on? Can we imagine future ecosystems, forms of life and modes of habitation that might one day emerge here? Decoratelier wants to explore these questions over the next five years.

MB: Decoratelier, Cassonade

BCR: Damaged Goods

2. Back2soilbasics

Rebel Black Soil

Back2SoilBasics is a collective of superdiverse activists focused on decolonizing nature through culturally diverse practices. They conceived this long-term project to rewild, connect and open up the unused small gardens and green plots throughout the over-urbanized upper Molenbeek to the whole city. Guerrilla gardens, community orchards, edible playgrounds and public herbal spaces will pop up from 2026 onwards, creating interactive green spaces for new cross-cultural encounters. Together with Molenbeek residents, they will cultivate a living lab of



radically participatory architecture which is economically, ecologically and socially sustainable in 2030. Afterwards, *Rebel Black Soil* will evolve into a safe gathering space for non-white environmental activist groups from Europe, furthering decolonial gardening activities across European borders..

MB: Back2soilbasics; Toestand

BCR: Kaaitheater

3. Laure Prouvost

Oui Grow

Oui Grow, initiated by Laure Prouvost's studio, is a generous project celebrating the connection between nature and art. It supports the integration of flora into urban environments, especially in concrete-heavy urban areas and disadvantaged neighbourhoods. From Prouvost's studio in Molenbeek, the project has expanded into collaborations with partners like Molenbloem and Buumplanters. Donations and sales of editions painted by Prouvost help to plant greenery in cities, creating green façades and improving urban biodiversity. In collaboration with Yto Barrada's *The Mothership* (Tanger).

LA GRANDE INVITÉE

Central artist

Date: spring & autumn 2030

Location: Bozar

Bozar, the federal arts centre next to Central Station, invites a main artist each year. In 2030 Laure Prouvost will be the *Grande Invitée*. With Bozar we will construct reciprocal mediation programmes, reinforcing the exchange between Molenbeek residents and Brussels institutions, challenging both sides to cross the Canal.

TOPOLOGICAL WALKS & TALKS

Making the valley visible again.

Date: 21 March - 21 April 2030

Location: the Senne Valley,
other public spaces and in the digital realm

A series of guided walks and conversations that use walking as a framework for collective reflection, sensory learning and problem-solving, establishing artistic relationships between European flora and fauna. Anchored in the S/Zenne Valley, with a special focus on the Western slopes in Molenbeek, each walk ends at the Parliament of the Non-Human, a symbolic and physical meeting point where insights gathered along the way are shared, transformed and made public. By walking the S/Zenne Valley, we don't just explore the landscape - we reshape our relationship to it. The *Topological Walks & Talks* will be co-curated with artists, ecologists and urbanists from Budweis 2028, Victoria-Ghawdex 2031, Aufbruch, Salzkammergut!, Pro Progressione, Rio Neiva - Environmental NGO, as well as Spazju Kreattiv via Malta's Science In The City. Some examples:

* The S/Zenne Valley as a Living Question: each walk invites participants to listen to the land, engage with more-than-human voices and reconsider how cultural practices might emerge from or respond to overlooked environments.

* Curated Walks: a series of walks led by artists, ecologists, philosophers, community members and urbanists, each highlighting a different perspective on the valley. These might include listening walks (acoustic ecology), foraging walks (edible plants, medicinal herbs), post-industrial walks (tracing pollution and recovery), migrant memory walks

(stories of arrival and displacement), non-human guided tours (speculative narratives from animals, rivers, fungi). Local residents become co-researchers and guides, contributing to the development of walking routes and ecological storytelling.

* Digital walks: A Through Augmented reality (AR) applications on mobile devices or smart glasses, participants can access layered information about the S/Zenne Valley's hidden ecologies, revealing underground river flows, historical landscapes or microscopic soil life in real time as they walk. AR can also animate speculative narratives, inviting walkers to imagine alternative futures shaped by ecological justice. Technology does not distract from the walk, but rather extends perception, fostering a deeper connection between walkers, the land beneath them and the stories it holds. The *Digital Valley Archive* is a multivoiced documentation and the publication *Atlas of the Valley* is a collectively authored book containing essays, maps, interviews and walking scores.

MB: iMAL

BCR: CIVA

EU: Budweis 2028 (CZ), Aufbruch, Salzkammergut! (AT), Pro Progressione (HU), Rio Neiva - Environmental NGO (PT), Victoria-Ghawdex 2031 (MT), Spazju Kreattiv (MT)

LOBI WORKS

An exhibition of affective ecology.

Date: 21th March - 21th April

Location: MMM and KANAL

Referencing the Lobi mythology (Burkina Faso, Ghana, Ivory Coast), the exhibition explores how caring relationships with nature - anchored in heritage practices and dreams for the future - can be

the key to a sustainable and shared European future. *Lobi Works* unites artists and communities from diverse cultural backgrounds (including diasporic, Indigenous, rural and urban traditions) who develop practices that rethink our relationship with the natural world. The exhibition focuses on affective ecologies: ways in which love, care, grief and connection can guide our ecological engagement. Sustainability is not merely a matter of 'green policy', but a profound emotional, spiritual and cultural relationship with the non-human. The exhibition is conceived as a sensory experience, a space where visitors are invited to feel, listen, taste and slow down. It uses natural materials, scents, sounds and textures to create an immersive environment. Artists are encouraged to collaborate with local communities and heritage holders from their own communities.

Local contributing artists: Otobong Nkanga, Aline Yasmin, Younes Baba-Ali, Johan Grimonprez, Samah Hijawi, Noémi Arazi, Hamedine Kane, Léonard Pongo, Radouan Mriziga, Laure Prouvost

The exhibition is a joint effort of MMM and KANAL - Centre Pompidou.

PERFORMANCE SERIES

Bernard Foccroulle & Matthew Jocelyn

Opera Metamorphosis

Date: 21 March - 21 April 2030

Location: Different locations

An opera about climate change? Wasn't opera the medium where the anecdotal libretto never felt like addressing the issues of the day? With this restaging of *Cassandra*, La Monnaie / De Munt, the Brussels opera house under the new direction of Christina Scheppelmann, engages with the MB2030 theme

of Natural Sadaka. Just as Cassandra predicted the fall of Troy without being heard, Sandra predicts the imminent approach of a terrible tragedy, but no one is listening ... How can you convince others when they refuse to hear you?

For their first opera, Belgian composer Bernard Focroulle and librettist Matthew Jocelyn had chosen a highly topical theme: environmental activism in the face of social inertia. Linking the Brussels opera house to Molenbeek also feels like connecting worlds apart, but it's a challenge that both sides are looking forward to. As exotic as Molenbeek might be for some visitors of La Monnaie / De Munt, the opposite holds as well. A well-developed mediation programme may bridge the gap.

MB: *D'Broeij, Cinemaximiliaan, MMM*

BCR: *La Monnaie / De Munt*

Kris Verdonck

The Lost Ones

Based on Samuel Beckett's dystopian novella *Le Dépeupleur*, *The Lost Ones* is set inside a sealed, flattened cylinder. 205 bodies move endlessly in search of their beloved ones, a haunting metaphor for social and emotional displacement. This project takes on a unique dimension by being set in Molenbeek. Inhabitants include refugees, the unemployed and those separated from their families. The claustrophobic setting reflects today's ecological alienation: a closed and overheated system where bodies brush past each other like dry leaves, and the environment itself begins to fail.

This would be the first staging of the work as literally described by Beckett - with 205 performers and ladders, niches, sound, lights and costumes all functioning as a single living system. Through long-term community engagement, *The Lost Ones* becomes a participa-

tory work rooted in Molenbeek. It transforms Beckett's imagined 'hellhole' into a space of connection - where loss is shared and isolation gives way to expression.

MB: *iMal, Two Dogs Company, La Vallée*

BCR: *Kunstenfestivaldesarts, KANAL - Centre Pompidou*

Four New Open-Air Choreographic Commissions

More-than-European urban nature is reinterpreted in new choreographic commissions by Louise Vanneste, Castélie Yalombo Lilonge, Radouan Mriziga and Faustin Linyekula, taking place in the open air - in parks, gardens and transitional spaces where nature and city overlap. These four artists will craft new works exploring the elemental pulse of urban ecosystems. Rooted in ecological thinking and the Gaia theory - which sees planet Earth as a single, living organism - these commissions challenge the illusion of separation between humans and nature. These works do not use nature as a backdrop, but as an active collaborator.

* Louise Vanneste is a Brussels-based choreographer living and working in Molenbeek. Her work explores the intersection of movement, sound and the natural world.

* Radouan Mriziga, a choreographer of Moroccan descent who lives in Brussels, blends architecture, movement and cultural history, often drawing on Amazigh heritage.

* Castélie Yalombo Lilonge is a Brussels-based Spanish-Belgian-Congolese artist who explores themes of collective identity, otherness and the body's subject/object status.

* Faustin Linyekula is a Congolese choreographer and the founder of Studios Kabako, a space for creation and community in Kisangani (CD). His

work interweaves dance, storytelling and politics, rooted in the postcolonial African context.

MB: *Rising Horses, Charleroi danse, Cinemaximiliaan, Vaartkapoen*

BCR: *Kunstenfestivaldesarts, Kaaitheater, KVS, Théâtre National, Les Halles de Schaerbeek*

WW: *Studios Kabako (CD)*

Up-Circus & Performance

Natural Sadaka Edition

A new generation of European circus artists explores the urgent relationship between circus performance and the planet. Through movement, risk and collaboration, they translate ecological concerns into physical language - confronting questions of balance, interdependence and resilience. From aerial acts that echo the fragility of ecosystems to ground-based work rooted in soil, waste or weather, these artists challenge traditional notions of spectacle. Instead, they offer gestures of care, improvisation and adaptation - embodying a circus that listens to the world it inhabits. A discursive need will unite European innovative and ecological circus practitioners to reflect in an international forum on their basically nomadic practice. This programme with a strong European dimension will take place in BCR institutions like the Halles de Schaerbeek and Bozar as well as the public space, abandoned plots of land or rooftops.

MB: *UP - Circus & Performing Arts*

BCR: *Les Halles de Schaerbeek, Bozar, Théâtre National*

EU: *BIAC (FR), Letni-Letna (CZ)*

These performances will be complemented by the contributions from Kiruna 2029 via their Arctic Fire youth festival, Oulu 2026 via their Frozen People festival, Urbani separe from Rijeka, and Derida Dance from Sofia.

EU: *Kiruna 2029 (SE), Oulu 2026 (FI) Urbani separe (EL) Derida Dance (BG).*

VALLEY

CREATURES OF THE WATER

Creatures of the Water is a citywide project that invites 20 contemporary artists, selected through an open call and curated invitations, to reimagine the ancient figure of the gargoyle, present across Europe. The medieval gargoyle, sitting perched atop Gothic cathedrals or civic buildings, was designed to expel water - protecting stone from erosion - while its monstrous form was said to ward off evil spirits. In *Creatures of the Water*, this dual nature becomes a central theme: what are the contemporary evils that haunt our cities - climate change, loneliness, inequality, environmental decay - and what might be the cures - solidarity, rewilding, imagination, resilience? The project offers a speculative, artistic reflection on the fluid boundaries between architecture and nature, body and stone, healing and harm.



One artwork will be co-created with and for each of the 19 Brussels municipalities, with a twentieth piece representing the BCR as a whole, in close dialogue with local communities and civil society. Each opening in every commune will be accompanied by a week-long programme activating the newly created fountain/statue. As examples we can imagine a publication or digital archive tracing the stories, sketches and processes behind each gargoyle or workshops with young people on DIY gargoyles.

Together, these contemporary gargoyles will form a constellation of 20 site-specific (semi)permanent sculptures in the public space - a powerful, poetic translation of Natural Sadaka after 2030. We can also imagine guided bike rides and audio tours linking all sculptures.



A season of Natural Sadaka 21/3/2030 - 21/4/2030 includes:

- * Activation of the *Settlements of the Future* and *Soil Academy* culminating in public and participatory events.
- * A dynamic mix of exhibitions, including *Lobi Works*, installations, workshops, public talks.
- * A variety of *Topological Walks & Talks*
- * Outdoor performances
- * Laure Prouvost as Grande Invitée in Bozar
- * The *Cassandra* opera performance @ La Monnaie / De Munt
- * A series of new circus performances with UP connects to the theme of water
- * Inauguration of five new *Creatures of the Water* in five different municipalities of the BCR. *Superdiversity Kitchen x Ecology* following foraging walks
- * The blockbuster exhibition *European Gallery of Social Justice* continues in KANAL
- * In the Visitor Centre, the research of the *Lab of Mixed Realities* continues
- * The participative exhibition *Anno 2030* collects new items created for the last Mardi Gras
- * The *Homes of European Sadaka* continue to house a mix of artistic, social and activist activities

Creole Sadaka



Molenbeek, with its 140 nationalities and even more languages spoken, is the lens through which we look at Europe. We search for European connections in other contexts like Molenbeek that share with us this sense of fragmentation, but also the embodied survival and know-how that add courage and depth to the future of Europe. Our drive is to build up with all that Molenbeek has to offer: generous and creative collaborations, multilingual practices, a spirit of bravery and risk-taking, and cultural hybridization. This is what we call Creole Sadaka. Achieving the potential of Molenbeek puts contextual creation at the heart of MB2030. This includes forms of co-creation in which residents and citizens become the performers in a first staging of Beckett's *The Lost Ones* and the gardeners of *Oui Grow*. At the same

time, it is not only that: Molenbeek is neither the backdrop to nor the casting reserve for our projects. Contextual creation means: creating common practices and shared spaces for people and contents offered by place, including material and non-human elements. Its sustainability lies in the long-term engagements with the place, coupling artistic excellence with civic engagement based on (long) time and (close) proximity. It is basically creation and not reproduction, with hybrid new forms as an outcome produced by people who don't have common cultural products to refer to (repertoire or canon). Whereas reproduction is based on exclusion, these new hybrids represent Creole Sadaka because they make room for everybody. They also resist assimilation; the hybrid results don't belong to any (dominant or identitarian) group.

This theme proposes projects as generous gestures of creolized communities that don't always feel part of today's Europe. Including a European connection that from day one reconnects the local and European dimension. A digital component turns that into a global connection.

What mental and material changes will Creole Sadaka produce out of Molenbeek? Can it give us the confidence to step out of our social bubbles and safeguard us from fragmentation and polarization? We have moved away from the language of bridging and bonding and actually started to work together with a mix of people willing to leave their silos.



EURO-FESTIVAL

A festival of contextual creations.

Date: 2024-2032,
performances 21 August - 21 September

Location: Public space

Molenbeek's institutional diversity is a source of richness, but also of mental, material and cultural divisions and borders that make collaboration challenging (always), impossible (sometimes) or simply not a part of the mental horizon (sometimes). *MolenFest* (September 2024), organized by MB2030, KANAL and House of Cultures and Social Cohesion (MCCS), with a coalition of Molenbeek partners and as part of the ECoC candidacy, was a first exercise in bringing dozens of partners together for forms of institutional and cultural exchange that simply did not exist before. We learned a lot from the experience.

Building on yearly editions of *MolenFest*, the *Euro-Festival* in 2030 merits its place among the greatest performing arts festivals in Europe. It is a new live gathering at the end of summer, when a new cultural year begins for audiences and theatre-makers across Europe and beyond. We avoid conventional theatre stages and concert halls to explore public and unconventional presentation spaces. Our multidisciplinary projects focus on dance and music to overcome linguistic obstacles, as in *I'd Rather Die* by Wim Vandekeybus; we celebrate popular art forms like hip hop and circus, as in *Summer Circus Troupe*; markets and public spaces become



platforms for presentation, like in *Breeding Ground Molenbeek*; we aim for artistic métissage and invest heavily in translation where needed.

Euro-Festival is a trans-European co-production: Rotterdam Festivals, Lieux Publics, Euroregional Theatre Festival in Timișoara - TESZT, Festival d'Avignon, Festival de Marseille, Wiener Festwochen, Fondation Hiba (Rabat), L'Art Rue (Tunis), The Centre for the Less Good Idea (Johannesburg), Studios Kabako (Kisangani/Kinshasa), Freedom Theatre (Jenin), and more will share and exchange artistic resources to co-create and deliver these projects together.

Molenbeek is the home of several performance-makers and their companies, world-famous for their practices and work, but with little or no connection to Molenbeek. To name just a few: Serge Aimé Coulibaly and Faso Danse Théâtre, Wim Vandekeybus and Ultima Vez, Jan Lauwers and Need-company, Franck Chartier and Gabriela Carrizo of Peeping Tom, Ayelin Parolin and Mauro Paccagnella (all internationally touring choreographers), Louise Vanneste and Miet Warlop (renowned performance-makers), and the above Alexander Vantournhout. They take on the challenge of bridging the gap with Molenbeek and Europe by making new contextual creations.

Marriage / Leon vzw

Art and community come together in an inclusive celebration of connection set in the public space. Seppe Baeyens and his company Leon saw the light in Molenbeek. The cast unites generations, ideas and backgrounds. Their performance transforms squares and streets into a festive celebration: moving from a procession to a shared meal - everyone

is welcome to join in spontaneously. Music plays a vital role, with collective singing enhancing connection between participants and audience.

The creation of *Mariage* follows a horizontal, open structure centred on collaboration and shared responsibility, allowing all participants to contribute equally and shape the celebration collectively. The performance was tested a first time during *MolenFest 2024* on Place Saint-Jean-Baptiste, and will move to a new location for *MolenFest 2025*. *Marriage* will then see different editions in different places with different partners, before coming back in 2030. After *MolenFest 2025*, it will head to Koekelberg, Anderlecht, Charleroi, Marseille and Tunis, before landing again in 2030.

MB: *MCCS, Hubbie, Kunsthumaniora Brussel, GC Vaartkapoen, GBS Windroos, Cardijnschool, Basisschool Ket&Co, GC De Platoon, Sint-Albert Basisschool, Saint-Rémi, Zonnelied vzw, De Loods, Cultureghem, MUS-E and Charleroi Danse (BE)*

Few Years Before Tomorrow / Faso Danse Théâtre

For the first time, choreographer Serge Aimé Coulibaly is creating in and with Molenbeek in *Few Days Before Tomorrow*, a major open-air performance with 50 intergenerational amateur artists, 9 professional dancers and 15 musicians from MetX, the Brussels production platform for urban music. His diverse group of performers (across generations, cultures and social classes) reclaims a space of local power, setting the performance in the symbolic Town Square of Molenbeek and using the Town Hall as part of the stage. A first try-out in *MolenFest 2025*.

Chaussée Unique / Thomas Bellinck

Thomas Bellinck is a documentary theatre-maker, probably best known for his *Domo de Eüropa Historio en Ekzilo*, a speculative project looking back at life in a former European Union.

Chaussée Unique is a four-year co-created artistic research project that brings to life the hidden histories of Molenbeek's Chaussée de Gand. Running along a centuries-old trade route, Chaussée de Gand is a world-renowned shopping street which attracts more than 20,000 visitors daily, some of whom travel from across the globe to purchase goods originally produced on the other side of the world. Set in shops and homes throughout the street, *Chaussée Unique* takes visitors on a multilingual, self-guided tour of site-specific immersive installations, where historical facts are interwoven with the personal memories, dreams and imagined futures of those who live and work along the chaussée.

I'd Rather Die / Ultima Vez - Wim Vandekeybus

Ultima Vez's premises in Molenbeek are located in the heart of the area. *I'd Rather Die* is a participatory project involving children aged 8 to 13 in India, Ethiopia and Molenbeek. Starting in 2028, at each location, children will embark on a creative journey guided by local artists. Over a two-year preparatory phase, each region will host at least two one-month workshops. Through music, dance and acting - and under the guidance of local co-directors and co-choreographers - the script will be shaped by the cultural landscapes and lived experiences of the participants. Each episode - unique in rhythm, embodiment and perspective - will be woven into a sin-

gle, cohesive work directed by Wim Vandekeybus. This unified piece will have its world premiere at the *Euro-Festival* in 2030, with support from partners including the Festival d'Avignon.

The Magnificent KIDS / Wooshing Machine

Wooshing Machine was founded by dancer and choreographer Mauro Paccagnella in the 1990s. The company, which occupies SEN (Studio Étangs Noirs) in Molenbeek, brings together mid-career dancemakers and performers. *The Magnificent KIDS* is a short film and a participative choreographic project. The film is the result of a meeting between artists from Wooshing Machine and 8-year-old pupils from the municipal primary school No. 5, 'École Chouette', in Molenbeek. The short film, is based on simple, intuitive and playful choreographic gestures. The 15-minute screening is followed by a 15-to-25-minute sharing of choreographic gestures between two artists from the company and the children/adults present in the venue.

MB: *Charleroi danse*

Molenbeek, a Very Belgian Story / Ras el Hanout

Ras el Hanout, a theatre project with strong roots in Molenbeek, travels between Brussels institutions like KVS, Zinnema, Bozar and Bronks and its base at l'Épicerie, a former warehouse. As part of MB2030, Ras El Hanout presents a four-year participatory theatre production entitled *Molenbeek, A Very Belgian Story*. This large-scale theatrical performance will bring to life the migration stories that shaped Molenbeek's identity. Each theatrical chapter will premiere as a distinct performance exploring the following

origins: Flemish, Walloon, Jewish, Italian, Greek, Congolese, Moroccan, Turkish, Eastern-European, Senegalese, Pakistani and Syrian. The culminating show will weave together all previous chapters into a unified theatrical experience in 2030.

We also want to make room for artists with a global impact and a desire to connect to Molenbeek. To mention a few: Palestinian Ahmed Tobasi from the destroyed Freedom Theatre in Jenin, Molenbeek's twin city; Selma and Sofiane Ouissi as the driving forces behind L'Art Rue in Tunis, the inspiration for the basis of our contextualized work; Mohamed El Khatib in residence at Théâtre National; Tiago Rodrigues (PT), author, stage director, and director of the Festival d'Avignon; Mariano Pensotti, who wants to create a Molenbeek version of *La Marea* with KVS. And Soa Ratsifandrihana, choreographer based in Brussels who wants to pursue a long-term trajectory with Molenbeek youngsters, and Saïdo Lehlouh, co-director of the Choreographic Center of Rennes in Bretagne, who dreams of making a Molenbeek-version of *CORE*, his temporary choreographic

community - both these projects will be co-produced by Kaaitheater.

Just some examples:

Tiago Rodrigues is intrigued by the multitude of languages spoken in Molenbeek: he wants to find an iconic apartment building and write about its inhabitants and their languages throughout time, the basis for a performance with professional and non-professional performers from Molenbeek and Europe.

Writer, director, producer and visual artist Mohamed El Khatib (see also *Grey Pride* in Daring Sadaka) created the monumental exhibition *Renault 12* at Mucem (Marseille), inspired by the car journeys taken by French-North African families. This is the starting point for *Operaï*, a monumental music performance between opera and raï, the North African folk music genre, interpreted by professional musicians and Molenbeek residents. The work reconstructs migration stories from the mythical 'return to the homeland' of millions of 'Maghrebi' families for the summer holidays ('Westerners', in Arabic), sketching panoramas of European-Maghrebi relations based on a melancholy archive of pit stops for overloaded cars and songs from radio cassette players.

Selma and Sofiane Ouissi will pick up the work on *L'Opéra du Geste*, a major artistic work that builds on the experience of *The Minor Gesture*, where filmed and edited life stories of marginalized people accompanied by everyday gestures formed the score for a participatory choreography. The life stories were set in Metz, Marseille, Ghent and Brussels: stories of a Syrian refugee, a street worker of Moroccan origins, a lost soul, a woman with recurring



episodes of psychosis, etc. While *The Minor Gesture* focused on a single story, *L'Opéra du Geste* is developing a libretto and a score for a polyphonic interactive performance. Instead of notes and arias, the score consists of gestures that have accompanied life stories from different Molenbeeks of Europe.

All these projects will be produced in collaboration between a wide diversity of Molenbeek partners, the most important cultural institutions of the BCR, such as KANAL, KVS, Théâtre National, Kaaithheater, Halles de Schaerbeek, Beursschouwburg, AB, Botanique, Bozar and La Monnaie / De Munt. Furthermore, important cultural institutions from our partner cities Mechelen and Charleroi (such as kc Nona, het Arsenaal, Charleroi danse, Palais des Beaux-Arts of Charleroi, L'Eden of Charleroi) will also be involved in these co-productions happening first and foremost on the territory of Molenbeek.

Creole Conference

Debate about the future of Europe.

Date: Last week of the *Euro-Festival*, 17-20 September

Location: Bozar and MCCA

During the *Euro-Festival*, at the start of a new cultural year, we will sharpen the debate about the future of Europe, culture and our superdiverse cities, in a multi-angular constellation between Molenbeek, Brussels, Mechelen, Charleroi and the European Commission. In collaboration with VUB, ULB (Brussels and Charleroi) and the Hannah Arendt Instituut (Mechelen), we create a platform to invite the EU to listen to and learn from Molenbeek. This conference will take place in Molenbeek (MCCA, VK, etc.) and Bozar.



Summer Circus Troupe

Circus schools take the streets.

Date: August 2030

Location: École du Cirque, Molenbeek

Molenbeek is the European capital of circus. From 2026 onwards, L'École du Cirque will organize annual summer circus schools with culturally diverse participants, both professional and non-professional, abled and disabled. In collaboration with European circus schools, they form the *European Summer Circus Troupe*, inviting performers from across Europe to train together. On the wish list: a collaboration with Molenbeek-based acrobat and choreographer Alexander Vantournhout (of the not standing company). From 2027 onwards, a different international partner should also be involved in each Summer School. L'École du Cirque is closely connected to the Palestinian Circus School and is eager to collaborate with Zip Zap (Cape Town). All these trainings result in a synthesis presented in the *Euro-Festival* 2030.



BROOKS

SOUND OF BRUSSELS ORCHESTRA

Date: from 2025-2030

Location: Yearly residency in VK and BCR partner venues

What would an orchestra look like if it were invented in our corner of the world? What does Europe's most cosmopolitan city sound like? In order to musically explore these questions with thoroughness and integrity, *Sound of Brussels Orchestra* is engaged in a multi-year journey that runs from 2024 to 2030.

Sound of Brussels Orchestra rests on three pillars: 1) professional Brussels musicians, in all their diversity, are at the heart of the project; 2) a network of diverse cultural partners support, stimulate and facilitate; and 3) both Brussels and non-Brussels audiences are actively engaged. The group of musicians and partners will be expanded throughout the years, from 8 at the start to 24 towards the end, coached and inspired by composer and saxophone player Fabrizio Cassol and cellist Adèle Viret. By touring and testing we broaden our audiences in the course of the journey.

The working method consists of at least one annual artistic residency in which the repertoire is created collectively, and at least two presentations (concert, try-out) per year. Radio Klara, the Flemish classic channel, will invest in a contextual programme for all participants (musicians and audiences) and document the entire process.

MB: Vaartkapoen

BCR: Klarafestival, MetX, Bruxelles Musiques Migrantes (BruMM), De Munt / La Monnaie, AB, and KANAL

THE WORLD SINGS IN MOLENBEEK

Date: 2028-2030,
performances September 2030

Location: Flagey and the Town Square
of Molenbeek

We invite key voices and stars from the countries of origin of Molenbeek's diverse communities (Morocco, Romania, Congo, Poland) to come and perform large-scale concerts in Molenbeek and Flagey (in Elsene).

MB: Vaartkapoen

YOUNG SONG OF EUROPE

Date: 2028-2030,
performances September 2030

Location: Flagey and the Town Square
of Molenbeek

A network of Molenbeek and Europe-based international children's choirs will host annual summer residencies in a European city before a large-scale performance culminating in an XL concert at the *Euro-Festival* in 2030. Potential cities include Évora, Liepāja, Uppsala, Novi Sad, Timișoara, Amsterdam, Tanger, Ramallah and Tunis. *Young Song of Europe* will then continue as a European and international children's choir festival.

MB: Vaartkapoen, *Singing Molenbeek*

BCR: Equinox, Flagey Academy, La Chapelle Royale, Klarafestival

EU: Uppsala 2024 (SE), Holland Festival (NL), Timișoara Children's Choirs (RO), Évora 2027 (PT), Liepāja 2027 (LV), Kulturanova (RS)

WW: Fondation Hiba (MA), Amwajj Chorus Bethlehem (PS)

SUPERDIVERSITY KITCHEN

Generous and creative cooking.

Date: 2026-2030

Location: on different occasions and locations

Whether cooking in public spaces using leftovers from local markets, offering culinary training, providing meals at low cost (or even for free) or paying for the meal of the next person in line, Molenbeek is an expert in bringing together social, community-rooted and creative kitchens, even though they often struggle for financial survival and institutional support.



Food is an expression of European identity and connected to memory. MB2030 combines cooking with storytelling, stories of our roots and displacements, in a series of events that will turn Molenbeek into an open kitchen and a shared dining space. Food is more than nutrition here; it intersects with religion, arts and culture, sports, ecology, education, political resistance and the public space.

Some examples:

- * *SDK x Religion:* An Iftar held in the Church of Saint-Jean-Baptiste in March 2025, where 500 people gathered to share an evening meal during Ramadan.
- * *SDK x Public Space:* A grand banquet on Chaussée de Gand on the final day of *MolenFest* 2025, where 1,000 people shared a meal, with artistic interventions by Up, Zinneke and ESMA.
- * *SDK x Sports:* Screenings of major football matches in the large hall of the Abattoir in Anderlecht (on the border with Molenbeek), featuring dishes from the participating nations.
- * *SDK x Education:* Engaging children and young people in collaborative cooking workshops to rethink food habits.
- * *SDK x Ecology:* From start to finish, this project embraces an ecological approach - using market leftovers, transporting organic produce to Brussels by boat with the help of collective Future Farmers, foraging herbs, or growing our own vegetables in Molenbeek. Every meal embodies Sadaka - not just generosity toward each other, but also toward nature.
- * *SDK x Arts and Culture:* Artistic interventions, like sculptures made from food by Mehdi Khammal, Carlota Lagido and Sama Hijawi.
- * *SDK x Social and Political Resistance:* Distributing meals and hot drinks to the unhoused.

Between 2026 and 2027, *Superdiversity Kitchen* will host a series of experimental dinners and creative workshops in Molenbeek, involving a curated group of 20 cooks and 20 artists. These will be selected according to a 40-30-30 split between Molenbeek, the BCR and other European cities. This selection will be co-developed with local and EU partners. In 2028 and 2029, *Superdiversity Kitchen* will visit the EU partner cities of Larnaca (via their Festival of Flavours), Marseille, Stavanger, Copenhagen, Bolzano, Madrid and Bratislava. Each visit will include a public meal and creative workshop with the aim to strengthen connections across socio-artistic networks and promote intercultural dialogue. This exchange will help to build a shared European platform for communal cooking and storytelling.

A Molenbeek-based content team led by Yume House will document every step of the journey, from sourcing ingredients to sharing meals, and from cook-artist collaborations to public engagement. The result will be a digital archive of hybrid and creolized cooking practices and the stories they carry. Key features of the digital platform will include: a collaborative cookbook that evolves over time, shaped by community input; a podcast series featuring 20-minute audio stories in multiple languages, sharing emotional and personal narratives behind the dishes; An annual printed cookbook/storybook, developed in collaboration with initiatives like Cassonade.

MB: *Cassonade/Alwakan; Les Uns et Les Autres; Groot Eiland; Cinemaximiliaan; Vaartkapoen, MCCA, Yume House*
BCR: *Cultureghem*

EU : *En Chantier, L'Après M (FR), Larnaka2030 (CY), Tou (NO), Maltfabrikken (DK), Basis (IT), hablarenarte (ES) and Nová Cvernovka (SK)*

PUBLIC POETS' NETWORK

Date: 2024-2032, performances May 2030, focus on May 9th as Europe Day

Location: MB in '26 and '30, EU in '27-'29

Between now and 2030 we will create the European and International Network of Public Poets (EIN-PP) as a society of 28 poets: 9 designated through other ECoCs, 9 through different organizations/collectives from Europe's diverse, young and creative urban communities, and 9 through further partnerships inside Molenbeek and the BCR, with current Brussels Public Poet Lisette ma Neza as a curator.

After a kick-off in May 2026 in Molenbeek, the poets gather once a year for network meetings (conceived as mini-festivals of poetry) in different European cities. Larnaka, in connection to their New European Mythologies, will host it after Molenbeek. Costas Manouris (CY), Iva Damjanovski (MK) and Robert Vilsons (LV) are proposed as poets from Larnaka, Skopje and Liepaja, with more being considered by Lviv - UNESCO Creative City of Literature, Budweis 2028 as part of their City Journal initiative and Bourges 2028 as part of their Rap is the New Poetry initiative. All 28 come together in 2030 gathering, for an official celebration of the network in Molenbeek.

There are two main elements on which they work together during the process:

1. The poetic European and international reimagining of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the foundational text of the new international community post-WWII, which dates from 1948.

2. The writing of an epic chain poem that travels across the continent (and sometimes out of it), making a distinct, unique text, by definition pan-European, diverse and subjective.

The 2030 focal moment of the Public Poets project is the event between 5 May 2030, the anniversary of the 1949 foundation of the Council of Europe, and 9 May, Europe Day. Then the reimagined text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights will be read out loud by various artists in iconic spots in Molenbeek, live-streamed to partner venues in Europe. Then the *European Epic Chain Poem* will be made public in one of the *Homes of European Sada-ka* and live-streamed. Next to these highlights: a curated festival of live readings, poetic performance art and slam, the harvest of four years.

MB: *Vaartkapoen, MCCA*

BCR: *Passaporta, KVS, Midis poésie*

EU: *Larnaka2030 (CY), Lviv - Unesco Creative City of Literature (UA), Bourges 2028 (FR), Budweis 2028 (CZ), Writers' Association of Macedonia (MK), Liepaja 2027*

WW: *Hear my Voice (ZA), Maison de la Poésie au Maroc (MA)*

LAB OF MIXED REALITIES & LE GRAND INVITE

Rethinking citizenship for a decolonized future.

Date: 2026-2029,

highlights 21 July - 21 September 2030

Location: Visitor Centre, Brasserie Van den Heuvel

The creation of a centre for documentation, discussion, creation and exhibitions dedicated to the colonial question in Brussels and Belgium is one of the 14 action points called for in the study *Towards the Decolonization of the Public Space* in the BCR (2022).

It is a challenge the artist Sammy Baloji picks up from 2026 onwards, together with a group of artists, academics and citizens. The goal is to craft a place and a programme in which 'rethinking citizenship' is a central point of departure. What did citizenship mean in the (colonial) past and what can it mean in the (decolonized) future?

Decolonizing is a verb and a practice. The *Lab of Mixed Realities* will focus on researching daily decolonizing practices by citizens. It aspires to reach beyond the discourse on the colonial past and historical relationship between Europe and Congo, Rwanda and Burundi, looking at it from a wider European perspective, including all affected countries and communities, from the Maghreb to the Middle East.

With the *Lab of Mixed Realities*, we create a research centre of Molenbeek and Brussels-driven decolonial practices in a European framework that positions itself at the crossroads of the public debate around decolonization, ecology, social justice, democracy, feminism, intersectionality, etc.

The development of this prototype will be part of Baloji's work as the *Grande Invitée* of Bozar in 2029 and his ongoing collaboration with CIVA. The *Lab of Mixed Realities* will get a physical space in the Visitor Centre of 2030, the former industrial building Brasserie Vandenheuvel near West Station.

MB: MMM, La Fonderie

BCR: Studio 29, Traumnouvelle, ICHEC Brussels Management School, CIVA, KANAL, Bozar, Café Congo, Toestand

EU: Tate Liverpool / Slavery Museum / Lever Collection in Liverpool (UK), Framer Framed (NL)

WW: Think Tanger (MA), Picha Art Center/Lubumbashi Biennial (CD)

LEXICON OF E_U,

A single-channel digital video-installation with algorithmic editing system and computing.

Date: 21 July-21 September

Location: online, and exhibition at MMM and Wiels, and a Home of European Sadaka

Inspired by the Critical Dictionary of South East Asia, this is an attempt to co-create a digital mirror of tomorrow's superdiverse Europe and a translingual lexicon for cities, continents and territories which are not unified by language, religion or political structures. This 27-entry new-media installation by artist Ho Tzu Nyen composes a multimedia database of electronic text, music and image about the 26 letters of the Latin alphabet used in international communication and 1 rotating, randomly selected letter from a Europe-related alphabet (€ from Ukraine, ï from North Africa).

Each screening of the installation is unique, as an algorithm selects and weaves together a unique set of sounds and images which bring together fact and myth to mobilize different understandings of the history and politics of Europe. The multimedia website is augmented by digitally connected exhibitions at Kosice's Art & Tech Days, Chemnitz's POCHEN biennale, and in Rijeka's Gallery DM, co-produced on location by European partners, which also work as 'pixel tunnels', with online and in-person workshops where people and machines jointly mine social media and digital heritages of Europeana and other collections. After 2030 and like all dictionaries, the tools will be made open-source for the online community to use in new and local editions.

MB: iMAL, Yume House, MMM

BCR: WIELS, Ohme Studios, BBOT (*This is Us - This is Molenbeek archive*)

EU: Agora Digital Art (UK), CIKE - Creative Industry Kosice (SK), POCHEN biennale (DE), Drugo More (HR)

ACADEMY OF UNLEARNING

A peer-learning exchange for young creatives of Cultural Capitals

Date: 2029-2031

Location: Visitor Centre

The artistic companion to the SADAKAdemy, this transnational peer-learning and exchange programme connects young festival producers from five to eight cultural capitals - from Europe, Africa, Southwest Asia and other regions. Co-developed with leading training experts in charge of Tandem Shaml and Tandem Cultural Capitals, Creative Climate Leadership, Mayaa entrepreneurship, and tailored trainings for Festival Cities by the European Festival Association, it mixes components from these leading training programmes with cultural relations and unlearning processes, anchored in physical encounters and digital exchanges.

As part of learning-by-doing, the programme offers participants support to develop a series of artistic co-productions between Cultural Capitals across continents, exploring the semantics and practices of Sadaka in different cultural contexts in co-created temporary *Homes of European Sadaka*.

MB: MB2030

BCR: ULB/VUB

EU: European Festivals Association (BE/EU), Julie's Bicycle Europe (IE), zusa (DE)

WW: L'Art Rue (TN), IKAM Ségou (ML), Al-Mawred Al-Thaqafy (LB)



VALLEY

MURAL(S)

From cave painting to fresco, from mosaic to post-graffiti, the diverse European traditions of community and public mural art are reinvented and remixed for a celebration of the urban space as artistic canvas. A transnational open call will be launched by MB2030 between 2026 and 2030, asking for European creators to co-create public murals in Molenbeek and the BCR, and for other European public and private cultural agents to multiply the model in their own country, creating a European route of vicinity-inclusive public murals.

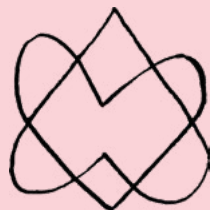


A season of Creole Sadaka

21/7/2030 - 21/9/2030 includes:

- * Multiple contextualized performances during the *Euro-Festival*
- * A *Creole Conference*
- * The *Beautiful Game Tournament* will open the season
- * *Superdiversity Kitchen x Public Space* (le Grand Banquet) and *Superdiversity Kitchen x Sports* during the World Cup
- * *Summer Circus Troupe* with workshops and showings
- * Concerts of the *Sound of Brussels Orchestra*, *Young Song of Europe* and *The World Sings* in Molenbeek
- * The opening of the exhibition *L3XICON of e_u*
- * The highlights of the *Lab of Mixed Realities*
- * *Park Poétik 2030* poetic interventions in public space
- * *Ballrooms* in different community centres in the BCR
- * Another five inaugurations of the *Creatures of the Water* in the BCR
- * The mobile installation of the *1001 Flying Carpets* in the metro stations of Molenbeek
- * The *Homes of European Sadaka*, *Breeding Ground Molenbeek*, *Settlements of the Future*, *Soil Academy*, *ABC* and *YouYou Group* in *Rituals of Home*, *Anno 2030*; they all continue their activities
- * Blockbuster exhibition in KANAL
- * *Girls Make the City Manifesto*
- * *Crossing Molenbeek*: mobile installation of makeshift housing

Daring Sadaka



This theme marks the final chapter of the MB2030 cultural programme, creating and nurturing brave and safe spaces - spaces that encourage fearless speech, open expression and collective courage.

Molenbeek comes alive in its (semi)public spaces - markets, parks, quays, elderly homes, tea houses, schools - spaces full of life and spontaneous encounters, colourful displays and the latest gossip in 140 languages. But beneath the surface lie tensions that need new forms of sharing, governing and caring for these spaces. For the public space of Molenbeek to become safe, resilient and creative, its ability to absorb diversity is key. How do we occupy these spaces and generously share them? Co-creation and co-ownership of these common, safe(r) and accessible spaces provide a solid basis for social grounding, resilience and a healthy hybrid identity. Against the backdrop of systemic injustice, poverty and racism, Daring Sadaka creates awareness about the fragile conditions in which generosity and solidarity are cultivated and sustained. We focus on cultural gestures - big and small - that create resistance against the forces of segregation, racial violence and polemic disputes to make room for safe and brave spaces. The Daring Sadaka programme will be present throughout the year in the form of parades, street residencies, urban labs, circus performances, inclusive balls, a growing, participative exhibition and the celebration of Molenbeek's name day on St John's Day.



YEAR OF PARADES, CEREMONIES AND RITUALS

Throughout European history, public rituals - from religious processions and the ancient agoras to Pride and Black Lives Matter - have been important platforms of expression. Carnivals in particular gave room to the fools and poets who took liberties with the political powers that be. While our ability to feel empathy and solidarity is declining and we urgently need to train our democratic muscles, practices like the co-creation of large- or small-scale parades and ceremonies reconnect us to these basic skills.

In a four-year process, starting in 2026, the Molenbeek- and Brussels-based organizations Zinneke, Park Poétik, MetX and *MolenLight* will explore contemporary forms of parades, celebrations and shared rituals with their European partners, resulting in a neo-parade with a future-oriented, speculative twist. The partners share knowledge, methodologies and practical resources while entering new territories: Zinneke takes the Canal as its main stage, Park Poétik explores such new neighbourhoods as Scheutbos and Peterbos, *MolenLight* will cross the Canal into the other communities of Brussels, and MetX connects *Dia de los Muertos* to other cultural rituals around death. Meanwhile, the consortium of European neo-parades optimizes their collaboration by creating a Participathek, a network of resources, people and workshops.

A growing accompanying exhibition called *Anno 2030* forms the haptic counterpart to the ephemeral events: the year will end in a forward-looking apotheosis with a futuristic neo-parade. This neo-parade is pan-European, co-produced by the International Parade Consortium members Velvet Parade (Prague), Rêvons Rue (Paris, St Denis), St Maartens Parade (Utrecht), Oi Musica (Edinburgh), ICAF (Rotterdam), L'Eden Carnaval de Charleroi (Charleroi), Karlsoy Festival (Norway), as well as Lublin 2029 via their Re:Union Parades, Lemesos 2030 via their Lemesos Carnival, and Niksic 2030. Celebrating Sadaka and Europe as an idea more than a geography, the parade includes an edition of the Cultural Caravan for Peace, in collaboration with the Festival sur le Niger and Festival au Désert in Mali, and Festival Taragalte in Morocco.

MB2030 Opening Ceremony

15/12/2029 // On the streets of Molenbeek, Town Square of Molenbeek and Visitor Centre

A lantern-lit parade, led by the community project MolenLight, converges at the Town Hall, echoing carnival traditions, when citizens symbolically take over the city and claim the keys. This parade will then move on to the Visitor Centre and open the exhibition *Anno 2030*. It is part of the opening ceremony of MB2030.

Mardi Gras

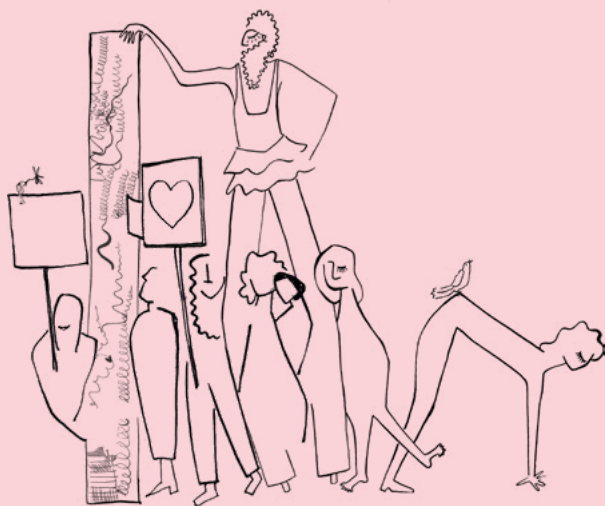
05/03/2030 // Visitor Centre

On this last day of carnival, we will invite all local carnivals to celebrate together around a *Superdiversity Kitchen* created by artists: colourful, queer and abundant.

Pride

May // *Anno 2030*

Pride is by far the most colourful cry for freedom of expression, diversity and inclusion of the last centuries. In the lead-up to *Pride 2030* and in close collaboration with the *Pride Museum*, using the methodology of deliberative democracy, we will hold a series of *Open Agoras* that offer a safe space to openly discuss what it means to share the public space while different cultural values lead to extreme forms of polarization and life-threatening situations.



Zinneke Parade 2030

26/05/2030 // on boats on the Canal

Two years of preparation and co-creation precede an impressive parade of no fewer than 20 Zinnodes arriving by water and symbolically connecting Molenbeek with Mechelen and Charleroi. As the legacy project of the Brussels 2000 ECoC, *Zinneke* will then be celebrating its 30th anniversary.

St John's Day

24/06/2030 // Bridge over the Canal

The historical healing ritual in the form of a dance parade as part of *In.Out.Sider* (see below).

Park Poétik 2030

24/06 - 21/08/2030 // Scheutbos and Peterbos

More than 50 activities spread over two months offer access to culture to those who don't have the luxury of going on holiday. After ten years of activity in the Brussels municipalities St Gilles and Forest, *Park Poétik* will start building new communities in Molenbeek. Artists and citizens come together around context-related, intimate celebrations in the public space, street residencies, surprises and mini-fiestas. For its opening parade, *Park Poétik 2030* will join forces with *In.Out.Sider* for St John's Day. The closing parade on 21 August coincides with the opening of *Euro-Festival*.

Ommegang

July // *Anno 2030*

The annual reenactment of the *Ommegang* speaks to the imagination, but also raises questions about the perspective from which history is told and (re) produced. Within the framework of the *Anno 2030* exhibition and supported by lectures, workshops and artistic interventions, we look at the role of historical reenactment in the creation of collective identity.

Meyboom

August // *Anno 2030*

Unlike many of the Maypole celebrations in Europe, *Meyboom* is celebrated in August and based on a

legend about a family feud sparked during a wedding party. We take the *Meyboom* as a moment to share legends from around the world centred on the core act of peacemaking. What rituals and symbols did these legends bring about? Artist Eleni Kamma reworks a selection of these symbols and adds them to the *Anno 2030* exhibition.

Dia de los Muertos

01/11/2030 // Cemetery of Molenbeek

Nothing connects us more than the shared experience of death. The organizers of *Dia de los Muertos* invite the people to gather at the Cemetery of Molenbeek and share rituals they have been co-creating in workshops in the course of the year.

Closing Ceremonies

26/12/2030 // Streets of Brussels and Molenbeek

On 26 December, Boxing Day and the first day of Ramadan, we will be ready for the final act. Illuminated by thousands of handmade lanterns in *MolenLight XL*, the children of Molenbeek will return the symbolic key to the guardians of this city. We celebrate the second fast of the year with another *Iftar*. A joyful and wildly mixed parade of colourful characters with a speculative twist finds its way from the Visitor Centre to the Town Square. In a specially developed choreography and ritual, the municipal council will promise to take care of this city of *Sadaka*.

MB: *MB2030, MolenLight, MCCA*

BCR: *Zinneke, MetX, Park Poétik*

EU: *Velvet Parade (CZ), Rêvons Rue (FR), St Maartens Parade (NL), Oi Musica (UK), ICAF (NL), L'Eden Carnaval de Charleroi (BE), Karlsoy Festival (NO), Lublin 2029 (PL) Lemesos 2030 (CY), Niksic 2030 (ME)*

Non-EU: *IKAM Ségou (ML)*

ANNO 2030

Participatory exhibition of public parties and protests.

Date: 15/12/2029 - 31/12/2030

Location: Brasserie Vandenheuvel, Visitor Centre

Anno 2030 is a growing participatory exhibition offering a historical overview of key protests, parades, ceremonies and rituals from Europe, reflecting the diverse cultures and concerns of Molenbeek. Its timeline follows multiple global calendars. Starting with basic facts and figures, the exhibition expands daily. In 2028-29, open calls will invite citizens worldwide to contribute personal memories and memorabilia of parades and protests - shared as texts, photos or videos - which will be added to the displays.

In a second layer, the process behind the development of the neo-parades will be made visible, with selected giants, costumes and relics on display. Together, these elements will form a portrait of public expression in Molenbeek, Brussels, Europe and beyond.

The project is developed in close collaboration with artist Eleni Kamma and architect Johnny Leya (Traumnovelle). Volunteers help to collect and curate new stories daily. Eleni Kamma transforms the evolving archive into symbolic figures, objects and aphorisms that reflect the exhibition's layered narratives. Throughout the year, *Anno 2030* will also host workshops, lectures and Open Agoras, activating the space as a living archive and a place for collective reflection.

MB: MMM, MCCC, La Fonderie, MoMuse (Historical Museum of Molenbeek), MolenLight

BCR: KANAL, Zinneke, Park Poétik, MetX, Pride, Ommegang and Meyboom

EU: Velvet Parade (CZ), Rêvons Rue (FR), St Maartens Parade (NL), Oi Musica (UK), ICAF (NL), L'Eden Carnaval de Charleroi (BE), Karlsoy Festival (NO)

THE DARING SADAKA CONFERENCE

A reflection on safe and brave spaces.

Date: Between 16/12 and 21/12/2030

Location: Tents of MolenCircus

A large-scale two-day conference where the European partners of the EU Network of neo-parades and street performances gather for a closing debate and exchange. MB2030 will have enabled a four-year journey, in which profound questions were explored on the role of innovative and co-created parades, ceremonies and rituals in creating safe(r) and brave(r) spaces. What did we discover about connecting while respecting the polyphonic society? Can co-creation in the public space contribute to a renewed urban identity and sense of belonging? And if so, what next steps should be taken?

The *Daring Sadaka Conference* will gratefully make use of the big tops of *MolenCircus 2030* (see below) and host keynotes, discussion tables, working groups and artistic interventions.

**BROOKS****RITUALS OF HOME**

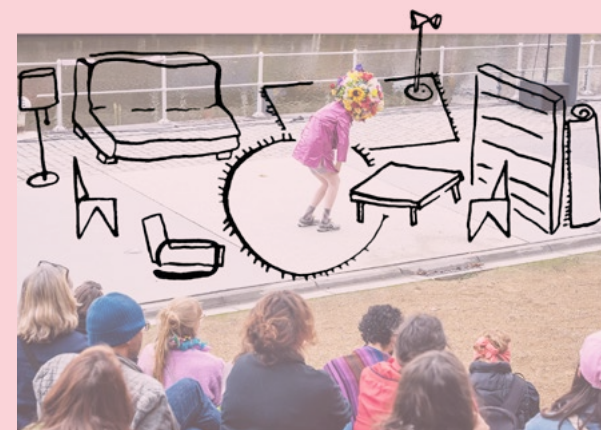
Artistic activation of Homes of European Sadaka

I. ABC

Date: 15/12/2030

Location: Church of Saint-Rémi
(Home of European Sadaka)

The Brussels-based organization Art Basics for Children (ABC) will transform the Church of Saint-Rémi into an immersive installation that connects art and education for children, their school friends and their families. The space will allow them to engage in a playful way with a collection of objects, books, images and other materials, selected for the occasion on topics of home, safe space, belonging, but most importantly with the idea of a European playground, as children and creative pedagogues play together in solidarity when *Rituals of Home* hosts workshops, interventions and projects by collaborators from Växtevärket, Nova Gorica/Gorizia 2025, Arcadia Leeuwarden Fryslan 2028, Niksic 2030 and Johannesburg.



MB: *MB schools*

BCR: *Art Basics for Children (ABC)*

EU: *Växtvärket (SE), Nova Gorica/Gorizia 2025 (SI), Arcadia Leeuwarden Fryslan 2028 (NL) and Nikšić 2030 (ME)*

WW: *Keleketla! (ZA)*

2. YouYou Group

Date: 15/12/2029 - 31/12/2030

Location: in a Home of European Sadaka

YouYou is a women-led art community practising polyphony. The group of some 40 members engages in vocal research and creates artworks centred on the trilling 'youyou' sound known in Arabic as 'zaghareet' or ululation. The group is rooted in a rich and diverse ecosystem of women united by a shared passion for vocal expression, heritage and diaspora.

With *Hoom*, the group seeks to apply its accumulated knowledge and methods on a larger collaborative scale. The aim is to develop a new performative ritual, carried by a collective and grounded in a dedicated space, a place where the public can recognize itself and become actively involved. This 'dedicated space' or 'open home' will be situated in one of the *Homes of European Sadaka*.

IN.OUT.SIDER

Creating a common space for the unconventional.

Date: 21/06 - 24/06/2030

Location: La Vallée, Urban Boat and around the Church of Saint-Jean-Baptiste

In.Out.Sider is an alternative festival with a programme showcasing an inclusive, original and far-from-mainstream line-up, where styles, media and voices collide. Inspired by the concept of outsider

art (and its absence from major cultural festivals), it is co-produced in dialogue with specialists in the fields of mental health and artistic practices, and prioritizes artists with disabilities and vulnerabilities, creating a common space for the unconventional, the daring and all those who exist on the fringes. This radically inclusive European gathering openly invites transnational performances and interventions, in collaboration with Larnaka2030, via their Mahalart platform, Oulu 2026 via Oulu Urban Culture, and Victoria 2031 Ghawdex, via Aphroconfuso. For its 2030 edition, *In.Out.Sider* takes the legend of St John's Day, 24 June, as a starting point. On this day, dancing processions took place in which epileptics could be healed by dancing to Molenbeek and crossing the bridge over the river Zenne without touching the ground, supported and accompanied by bagpipers. Healing powers were also attributed to the dew on the morning of St John's Day. The notion of 'healing' is at the centre of this festival. But rather than thinking of the healing as a transformative process from the 'sick, disabled and outcasts' towards the 'normative healthy', we think the other way round: who needs to be healed from what?

Sound, visual arts, dance, circus, cinema, lectures, workshops, residencies, the realization of a mural and a dance parade compose a 4-day festival in which rhythm, language, logistics and scenery are designed from a radically inclusive perspective, offering a context that creates extraordinary experiences for a 'normative' public.

MB: *In.Out.Sider Festival vzw, Zonnelied, la Vallée*

BCR: *Creahmbxl, Centre Sésame, Syndicat des immenses, Park Poétik*

EU: *Kunstwerkplaats De Zandberg, Notre Village, Urban Boat (FR), Krake Festival (DE), Larnaka2030 (CY), Oulu 2026 (FI), and Victoria 2031 Ghawdex (MT)*

CROSSING MOLENBEEK

Installation in public space tackling homelessness.

Date: July & August 2030

Location: East/West axis of Molenbeek

Carrying simple tables, chairs, bedding and suitcases, French artists Laurent Boijeot and Sébastien Renauld will live and sleep in the streets of Molenbeek for 30 days, accompanied throughout the action by photographer Clément Martin. Assembling the furniture by day to create seating and shared public areas, Boijeot and Renauld invite passers-by for a coffee or to engage in a chat, game or meal. At night the artists reconfigure the furniture to create numerous beds and sleep on the street, offering space to anyone who wishes to sleep in one of the beds, and they bathe at the homes of strangers who become friends.

Crossing Molenbeek creates occasions for shared connection and collective memory in ways that are uncommon. With backgrounds in the disciplines of architecture and sociology, as well as graffiti and juggling, the artists' practice playfully explores concepts of communal urban space and architecture and questions what it means to be able to freely inhabit a public area.

European co-creators and visitors are invited to experience the sensation of homely streets. The process will be documented in various media, generating new forms to interact with the actions in remote and asynchronous ways.

MB: *Cinemaximiliaan, MCCA, MMM, EHPAD Molenbeek*

BCR: *Les Halles de Schaerbeek, Park Poétik*

GIRLS MAKE THE CITY

Girls reinvent public space.

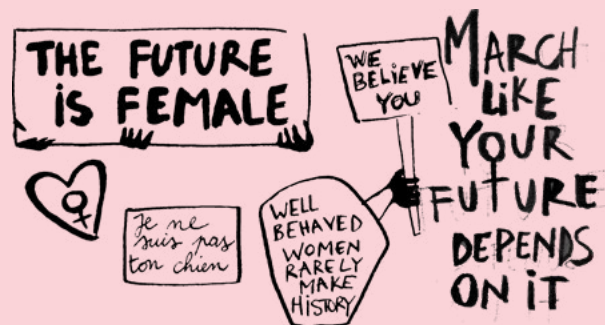
Date: 01/08 - 30/08

Location: Residency, Urban Design Lab

@ Beekkant; 01/09 Presentation

How female-friendly are European cities? *Girls Make the City (GMTC)* empowers young women to reimagine and co-create safe, inclusive and inspiring public spaces. Fostering sisterhood and community ownership, the project unlocks the neighbourhood potential through regenerative development rooted in local culture, people, and history.

Piloted in Molenbeek, *GMTC* will expand activities to Nicosia, Marseille, Vilvoorde, Tilburg, Tunis, Cape Town, Nova Gorica/Gorizia, Kosice, Rijeka and Leeuwarden, with an open invitation for new places to join. In 2030 the project will return to Molenbeek. An international group of young women will join forces in a 1-month residency and explore the neighbourhood of Beekkant. Using the research methodology of Urban Design Lab, they will also write a manifesto based on their experiences. By the end of the residency, this European Network of Girls that Make the City will present the project



and manifesto in the Town Hall of Molenbeek to the City Council, members of the Brussels Parliament and urban.brussels, the regional administration for city development.

MB: Zijkant vzw, FilterCafeFiltre vzw, Maison Femmes, Periferia, Molenbeek Rebels, Athlema, vzw Toestand,

BCR: Women 100

EU: Zijkant vzw (BE), Urban Gorillas (CY), Marseille Solutions (FR), Fieldlab West / Fontys + Avans Hogeschool (NL), x Centre (SI), Arcadia Leeuwarden Fryslan 2028 (NL), Creative Industry Kosice (SK), Urbani separe (HR)

WW: Open Design Afrika (ZA), Oecumene Spaces for Dignity (TN)

MOLENCIRCUS 2030

Date: November & December 2030

Location: Spread over 20 locations in Molenbeek

Twenty contemporary big tops will turn Molenbeek into a circus territory, creating a poetic transformation of Molenbeek. Parks, squares, wastelands and neighbourhoods will produce an ephemeral and spectacular map: *MolenCircus 2030*.

Led by UP - Circus & Performing Arts, this project will make full use of the organization's expertise in big top production, local ties and contemporary circus creation. Whereas *UP Festival 2030* brings together the best of the circus on the big stages of Brussels in the spring, *MolenCircus 2030* is rooted in the city, with daring works newly produced daring works that resonate with the territory and formats that respond to the need for hospitality and the gentle, poetic occupation of the public space.

This artistic and territorial mapping will transform the city into a circus territory, at once a Stage (performance venues), a Village (places of life and

encounter) and an Agora (places of debate, mediation and artistic education). Each big top becomes a unique universe, hosting a variety of artistic proposals, promoting the diversity of languages, bodies and trajectories. This project mobilizes the local associative fabric as well as European partners.

THE GREY PRIDE

Elderly home turned into art centre.

Date: 2027-2030 Residencies,

15/11/2020 Opening exhibition

Location: Résidence Arcadia (Molenbeek)

How does an aging Europe keep its vitality? For this artistic occupation and transformation of the elderly home of Résidence Arcadia, run by the CPAS of Molenbeek, the French theatre-maker Mohamed El Khatib will enter a process of engagement with the inhabitants, the staff of the homes, and a curated set of artists from Molenbeek and Europe. The artists will be invited to a residency at the elderly home and engage contextually with this environment: Teatrिंगestazione from Napoli will explore how the Altifest concept of cultural production and performance in private homes can work in an elderly home, and Nønne Mai Svalholm from Århus will explore new potentials of her work with 60+ dance companies in Århus 2017. The works will be exhibited there, transforming the home into a living cultural centre. A technical team will assist in transforming the home through a more holistic approach, in close exchange with its inhabitants. Their desire for change will create a welcoming space, for both the people and the artworks. In association with Papy Booom, a series of punctual but dynamic activities with and by the elderly is planned, also al-

lowing access to two other Molenbeek homes: the privately run Maisons de Repos et de Soins Fuchsias et Acacias.

MB: *Résidence Arcadia* (CPAS Molenbeek), *Maisons de Repos et de Soins Fuchsias et Acacias* (Novadia), *asbl Papy Boom*

EU: *Les Blés d'Or*, *EHPAD in Saint Baldolph* (Chambéry), *Altifest* (IT), *Svalholm + Art & Aout* (DK), *Kenniscentrum wwz* (BE)

BALLROOMS

Mixability party time.

Date: 2024-2029, throughout 2030, 21/12/2030

Location: community centres of Brussels (VGC and COCOF) and closing Ballrooms XL in La Grande Halle

Ballroom dance is a pan-European tradition. *Ballrooms* is a 3-hour dance performance organized like a party, dissolving the lines between performers and audience. Based on a protocol developed by choreographer Andrew Graham and laGeste, the party follows a 2-week creation process on-site. During Invitation Week, inclusive workshops reach people with visible or invisible disabilities, mental health issues or neurodivergence, as well as people who are/feel socially excluded. The workshops take place in centres for physical re-education, daycare centres, places that host migrants and LGBTQIA+ populations, homes for the elderly, schools for children with special needs, facilities for the homeless, etc. During Creation Week, the second phase, participants leave their familiar/safe space in order to meet & mingle and create mini-performances by reinventing our physical relationships in parties, with a focus on touch, connection and non-verbal communication. The final *Ballroom* brings everyone

together in a transformed space where informed participants and audience move as one. The project thrives on accessibility, collaboration and shared joy through dance.



Between 2029 and 2030, a series of *Ballrooms* will be organized in community centres across the BCR and in other European cities. *Ballrooms* is the title for an expanding collection of Balls, but every organizer can rename their Ball. In *Molenfest* 2024 the event was renamed *Bal Amical.e*. At the end of 2030, we invite the participants of all these *Ballrooms* to come together for a *Ballroom XL*, as part of the closing event of Daring Sadaka and MB2030.

Artists / artistic direction: Andrew Graham and laGeste

MB: *Charleroi danse*, *Zonnelied vzw*, *Lumina*, *Jezebel Studio*

BCR: *N22* (GC De Linde in Haren; GC De Kroon in Sint-Agatha-Berchem; GC Essegem in Jette; GC De Maalbeek in Etterbeek), *Le Senghor - CC d'Etterbeek*; *Wolubilis*, *Mouvance*

EU: *L'Autre Maison* (FR), *laGeste* (BE)

FUTURE SOUND STARS INCUBATOR

Fostering hidden urban talent.

Date: 2027 - 2030

Location: Residencies, Presentations in Vaartkapoen, Volta; concerts during the Daring Sadaka season

What does Europe sound like in 2030? Molenbeek's music structures join forces to highlight the urban talent hidden within European neighbourhoods. This music incubator, initiated in Molenbeek and embedded in the wider European music ecosystem, is designed to nurture the next generation of Molenbeek urban music stars at the pre-career stage. It offers an intensive development programme that includes music residencies, composer workshops, feedback sessions, showcase festivals and debut concerts, with guest trainers from All City Arts College in Haringey, London, TAKT FEST from Association Kulturanova in Novi Sad. Focused on future genres and emerging urban music phenomena, the incubator supports young creators in the earliest stages of their artistic development. It connects them to the broader European music scene through partnerships with international curators, experts and talent platforms, via the Europavox showcase festival exchange in Austria, Belgium, Croatia, France, Italy, Lithuania and Romania.

The incubator is delivered through a long-term collaboration between local and European partners, including Volta (a music residency and concert space) and VK, Molenbeek youth houses like JES and D'Broej, and renowned Brussels venues such as Ancienne Belgique and Botanique, with the support of JMI Europe. By working closely with local

ambassadors like Udeyfa, Nabyi, Jazz Brak and Pitcho, as well as youth centres such as JES, D'Broej and Foyer, the incubator connects deeply with the local talent and everyday realities of Molenbeek's young people. These lived experiences are transformed into high-quality music that resonates from Molenbeek to Brussels and across Europe.

Each year, an open call will be launched inviting emerging talent to apply. A jury of experts and community members closely tied to Molenbeek will select four standout artists annually. These selected artists will gain access to Volta's studios and infrastructure to produce their own records, they will benefit from professional coaching, networking opportunities and connections to showcase festivals both in Brussels and across Europe. The programme is multilingual, rooted in the urban music field - but not limited to rap - and is intentionally inclusive, attentive to gender, background and identity.

In partnership with Jeunesses Musicales International and Europavox, one of the four incubator slots will be open to international talent. Thus the incubator also amplifies the young voices of Europe and expands their professional horizons. The project aims to build a sustainable European network of music incubators, welcoming young artists from diverse urban contexts like Lviv, Tunis, Kinshasa and Johannesburg. At the end of 2030 we will bring them together in Molenbeek during the Daring Sadaka season.

MB: Vaartkapoen, Volta, JES, D'Broej

BCR: AB, Botanique

EU: Jeunesses Musicales International (BE/EU), Europavox (FR), All City Arts College (UK), Association Kulturanova (RS).

WW: Visa For Music (Rabat, MA)



VALLEY

EUROPEAN HEROES OF SADAKA

To straighten out what is crooked and demand justice where it is not obvious requires courage and fearless speech. And this requires heroes: people and communities that selflessly and fearlessly take up that leading role to speak up, inspire and strive for change.

Every community has its own heroes and heroic stories. We associate the name of Greta Thunberg with historically impactful actions. But so many others deserve a spotlight, too, because their courage changed the lives of many. Because they saved a piece of nature. Because they prevented a local dialect from dying away. Because they stood up against local corruption.

A transnational open call will be launched by MB2030 between 2026 and 2030 asking for communities to come forward with stories of their local heroes and heroic actions. What is this one story we should never forget about?

Schools, libraries and local newspapers are invited to dedicate time to discover these stories in their community ... Together with the Molenbeek writer and illustrator Judith Vanistendael, we select one story for every week of the year and create a unique graphic novel on the *European Heroes of Sadaka* with 52 stories of those who moved a stone in the river.

BCR: PassaPorta

A season of Daring Sadaka 15/II/2030 - 26/12/2030 includes:

Marked on one end by Feest van de Dynastie, celebrating the bicentenary of the Kingdom of Belgium, and on the other end by Boxing Day:

- * 20 big tops from UP in *European Circus Troupe*, with concerts of *The World Sings in Molenbeek*
- * The Closing Parade of the *Year of Parades, Ceremonies and Rituals*
- * Highlights of the *Anno 2030* exhibition
- * The closing party with the *Ballrooms XL*
- * Inauguration of the *Grey Pride*
- * Highlighting the *Rituals of Home*
- * Showcase Festival of the *Future Sound Stars Incubator Network*
- * The *Conference on Neo-Parades*, together with Zinneke, Park Poétik and MetX and their European partners
- * Launching of the graphic novel *Heroes of European Sadaka*
- * Continued occupation of *The Homes of European Sadaka*, *BGM*, *1001 Flying Carpets*, inauguration of the last five *Creatures of the Water*, *Superdiversity Kitchen x Religion*

Digital Sadaka



A permacomputing lab for diverse digital cultures 2026-2031.

Curator: *Lucía García (ES)*

The digital mechanisms of the Sadaka inspired artistic programme are deployed, connected and activated in a fifth, transversal, telecreative season of the Digital Sadaka.

As a European antidote to big-tech-powered social atrophy, Digital Sadaka employs art as a methodology for social connection and technology as a facilitator of a healthy biotope/cybertope of diverse voices. With Digital Sadaka, MB2030 proposes a mixed digital culture that doesn't seek scale at the expense of planetary resources or social harmony: electronic-artistic content is created through citizens, in their communities, following these principles:

- * we appropriate social engineering from tech agents and turn it into community agency for the european public good;
- * we design artistic processes as social media, no matter the technology being experimented with;
- * we build and reuse a permacomputing ecosystem of circular, inclusive, free and open resources ;
- * we invest in citizen-creators and pilot a community data trust to remunerate contributors collectively, via participatory budgets for social tech initiatives.

The permacomputing lab runs from 2026 to 2031, facilitating the digital components of the whole programme, and four digital-first artistic projects devised by artist Alex Verhaest, one per Sadaka season:

THE AUGMENTED GENEROSITY ATLAS

Equal Sadaka season

An interactive map where residents can leave behind small acts of kindness, like voice notes, drawings or recipes, for others to discover and exchange as they move through the neighbourhood.

CRUMBS OF THE FORGOTTEN

Natural Sadaka season

Virtual Reality (VR) forest grown from community myths - children draw the stories they hear, and their images become immersive landscapes where the tales are heard anew.

CHORAL BLOOM

Creole Sadaka season

A choir where no one sings in their own voice; each person carries another's through real-time vocal transformation, turning collective singing into an act of empathy.

MURMUR

Daring Sadaka season

A locally trained large language model built from neighbourhood knowledge; a version of AI where data sovereignty stays with the community, running offline on solar-powered, open-source systems.



Q07 HOW WILL THE EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES THAT WILL CONSTITUTE THE CULTURAL PROGRAMME FOR THE YEAR BE CHOSEN?

It should be clear from the above that the events and activities making up the cultural programme have been chosen, their timings defined, their partnerships set up. Projects and collaborations are being tested and will be reshaped where necessary and refined where possible in the course of the coming years. But what you see is what you get. The programme is also very consistent with what we proposed at the pre-selection stage. There is room for improvement; there are still missing links and connections that need to be made. But now we need the leverage of the ECoC title to be able to make the next step.

Q08 HOW WILL THE CULTURAL PROGRAMME COMBINE LOCAL CULTURAL HERITAGE AND TRADITIONAL ART FORMS WITH NEW, INNOVATIVE AND EXPERIMENTAL CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS?

We open the heritage concept to diasporic, indigenous and rural traditions. Every Sadaka season includes a project dedicated to that kind of heritage. In Equal Sadaka, that is the case with *Breeding Ground Molenbeek*, honouring crafts and embodied knowledge by offering a digital platform for real services and skills. In Natural Sadaka, the *Lobi Works* exhi-

bition of KANAL with MigratieMuseumMigration (MMM) honours practices that rethink our relation with the natural world. The artists involved work with the heritage holders from their own communities (Maghreb, Eastern Europe, Middle East, etc.). In Creole Sadaka *Superdiversity Kitchen* focuses on food with connections to nomadic foraging, ancient ways of conserving food, fermenting and fermentation as part of Molenbeek's beer brewing heritage. In Daring Sadaka the YouYou Group's *Hoom* as part of *Rituals of Home* serves as an example of innovation in reconnecting with existing vocal traditions like ululation. But the innovative aspect becomes most visible in our digital Sadaka season where we connect digital tools with community building. Cultural heritage is also deeply imbedded in the conceptualisation of the *Anno 2030* exhibition.

Q9 HOW HAS THE CITY INVOLVED LOCAL ART- ISTS AND CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS IN THE CONCEPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CULTURAL PROGRAMME?

In the conception, the outreach programme Artist Trail with Molenbeek artists served as a source of ideas and feedback. In the implementation, many Molenbeek-based artists have been included. More still, it is one of the focal points of Creole Sadaka to connect world-famous artists working from Molenbeek to Molenbeek participation and audiences. That was definitely a major missing link in our city.

Although there are many small cultural organizations in Molenbeek, there is definitely a lack of major cultural institutions with a larger producing capacity. This gap will be filled by the generous engagement of basically all Brussels-based large cultural institutions supporting the Molenbeek-generated cultural products with their production know-how. For each project, two Molenbeek partners connect with one BCR partner and several European ones. These coalitions obviously reinforce our capacity to deliver, while also allowing all partners to be revitalized and re-energized by the young, superdiverse and creative forces of Molenbeek. But the real major asset is that we have been able to seduce major European and international artists to relocate, to rethink and reconnect their works to a place like Molenbeek. We experience this as a sign of common understanding of what Sadaka from Molenbeek can mean to the world. It is proof of the wide coalition's understanding of the necessity and urgency of the MB2030 bid.

Q10 PLEASE GIVE SOME CONCRETE EXAMPLES AND NAME SOME LOCAL ARTISTS AND CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS WITH WHICH COOPERATION IS ENVISAGED AND SPECIFY THE TYPE OF EXCHANGES IN QUESTION.

They have been named and indicated below every project. We have their intentions on paper. Please find the list on page 99.





3 EUROPEAN DIMENSION

Our European mission continues: to make Sadaka - all forms of Sadaka as practised in our artistic programme - a universalized value of European culture. Last time, we talked about how Europe's culture of giving is in an existential crisis. The World Giving Index 2024* shows that, despite having some of the best living standards in the world, we, Europeans, are globally among the less generous people, the less selfless, the less empathic, the less solidary.

As they address European citizens' legitimate concerns about war, inequality, poverty, loneliness, authoritarianism and other crises, community leaders across Europe don't yet grasp that Europe, to many, doesn't quite feel like the utopia we claim it is. There are growing differences between the idealized story and the lived reality of the European dream. Within Europe, not everyone is in love with it, many are visibly disillusioned with the European project, some are simply uninterested, while others feel like outsiders. The year 2024 was the busiest election year in history and included the European Parliament elections, choosing those in charge of 450 million Europeans for the coming five years. Results also

exposed the factual under-participation of some parts of society in this building of a common European future: non-white and Muslim Europeans, Central and Eastern Europeans, and the young citizens of Europe - the very communities that make up Molenbeek, and other places like it across Europe. These communities intersect, and as those with power to make decisions fail to represent the diverse character of European societies, they are unconvinced by the ideals of Europe as a free, open, and equal space, as they mostly feel marginalized, alienated and 'out of place'. As anti-immigration discourse spreads from the ideological fringes to mainstream democratic processes, gaining hold in governance structures, these communities are put at the centre of one of Europe's most urgent and neglected social challenges: Europe's shared drift towards an 'ethnic' rather than a 'civic' understanding of Europeanness.

We represent and activate the young, diverse, creative generations of Europe. We start from the reality of Molenbeek and its peer territories that share our reality: young, superdiverse, dynamic and organized, but also fragile and mar-

ginalized. And we include and empower all European citizens who are part of this young, diverse, creative generation, no matter where they are or what they look like: artists fleeing the Ukrainian frontline into eastern Poland, indigenous Sámi leaders standing their ground in northern Sweden, citizen movements re-interpreting Central and Eastern European nationalism into open contemporary communities with democratic values, designers in Cyprus reimagining their city, or futurists making forgotten cities into a new heartland of France.

We have family and friends spread across many borders and share four to six languages in different alphabets, and that is our daily European experience - in practice and beyond appearances. We are the conflict and contact zone between two visions about the European future: let's all be more of the same we've always been, either Flemish or Walloon vs the future of a dynamic, creole, transcultural

Europe right here and now. Most importantly, we are learning by doing and feel like we have talked enough. Let's get down to action and to how we want to make this happen.

MB2030 builds our European dimension on three strategic methods:

- * Giving creative agency to underrepresented communities to collaborate across European borders
- * Offering international formats to practise Sadaka and co-define its shared meanings across European languages and cultures
- * Calling European citizens to co-construct a civic European identity, defined by actions before nationality and ethnicity

QII_A

ELABORATE ON THE SCOPE AND QUALITY OF THE ACTIVITIES:

European citizens (professional creators or active audiences) are co-creators of our programme. As such, they are agents of sharing and representing the diversity of cultural backgrounds, identities and practices they carry with them daily. European dialogue and reconciliation happen neither on an intellectual level nor a theoretical level, but as part of creative and performative activities. It is when people march, sing or play music with someone from a different cultural background and country that our European dimension is activated in our artistic programme: the programme simply cannot happen without it. Some non-exhaustive examples (more details in Chapter 2):

Activities	Project	European themes/mechanisms
Promoting the cultural diversity of Europe and intercultural dialogue		
Participants in the Ommegang (a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage pageant) and participants in the Pride Parade march at the same event, bridging different traditions and exchanging views on the role of ritual parades in social bonding.	<i>Year of Parades, Ceremonies and Rituals</i>	Daring Sadaka - talking about issues of systemic, social, gender violence among others, including in digital environments by highlighting group rituals and cultural acts of civic movements as forms of non-violent resistance and constructive social bonding.
Professional and amateur musicians trained in different art-music forms (European classical and folk, Carnatic or African griot music) from different countries form an orchestra to perform culturally hybrid versions of heritage songs.	<i>Sound of Brussels Orchestra</i>	Creole Sadaka - exchanging superdiverse cultural practices and transforming them into shared cultural experiences, as such increasing mutual appreciation of different cultural heritages as a way to reduce polarization.
Artists from diaspora, Indigenous, rural and urban backgrounds create and exhibit sensory experiences interpreting affective relationships with nature, in collaboration with local heritage holders from their own and other communities.	<i>Lobi Works</i>	Natural Sadaka - talking about issues of environmental emergency (urban heat, water scarcity) shared across European countries, including and exchanging different cultural perspectives, in the process creating new dialogues about sustainable futures.

Activities	Project	European themes/mechanisms
Greater mutual understanding between European citizens		
Chefs and citizens from different culinary heritages cook together, exchange recipes and co-develop intercultural menus via cooking classes and volunteer events. Then food is shared as part of cultural events providing new intercultural, intergenerational encounters.	<i>Superdiversity Kitchen</i>	Creole Sadaka - exchanging superdiverse cultural practices and transforming them into shared cultural experiences, as such increasing mutual appreciation of different cultural heritages as a way to reduce polarization.
An intergenerational group of sports practitioners from different European countries perform their own choreographies together and engage in collaborative processes for game development, building new and positive social bonds.	<i>Beautiful Game Tournament</i>	Equal Sadaka - addressing issues of social fragility, exclusion and loneliness by promoting opportunities for enjoyable encounter and contact between European citizens who otherwise would not meet.
Highlighting the common aspects of European cultures, heritage and history		
Playwrights from different countries and dramaturgic heritages recreate classical theatre works in contemporary urban contexts and create original texts about the defining urban experiences of different European countries today.	<i>New Repertoire of Solidarity and Generosity</i>	Equal Sadaka - making use of literary works and performative traditions from the shared European cultural canon to create and share new stories about contemporary experiences of European citizens, establishing parallelisms between different places.
Poets representing poetic cultures from different countries (folk or slam poetry) gather annually for micro-poetry festivals with readings and workshops and collaborate on a joint poetic work replicating, mixing and updating classical European poetic forms.	<i>European and International Public Poets' Network</i>	Creole Sadaka - presenting and exchanging superdiverse cultural practices and transforming them into shared cultural experiences, as such increasing mutual appreciation of different cultural heritages as a way to reduce polarization.
European integration and current European themes		
Curators in several disciplines from Molenbeek, Madrid, Marseille, Riga, Lviv and other places share a roof and co-curate a cultural programme in dialogue with resident and international artists.	<i>Homes of European Sadaka</i>	Equal Sadaka - piloting new practical and organizational models of tactical urbanism and placemaking, reflecting on the shared European challenge of the spiralling urban housing crisis, facilitated by artistic methods from different countries.
Artists, ecologists and more-than-human biomes from different European regions meet and interact in Molenbeek via group exhibitions, international conversations and hybrid/sensory experiences.	<i>Settlements of the Future</i>	Natural Sadaka - organizing international dialogues with civic and policy impacts across European borders, towards including nature-based solutions in European urbanism, dealing collectively with challenges of water scarcity, urban heat and urban biodiversity loss.
Digital artists from all over Europe guide community storytelling gatherings (remote and in-real-life), collecting voice recordings and community input to build multisensory VR environments about ancestral European ecologies.	<i>Digital Sadaka - Crumbs of the Forgotten</i>	Natural Sadaka - documenting personal experiences of nature and environmental change across different European countries, mixing and re-using data to generate creative visions for ecological practices common across Europe.
Artists and curators from different European countries come together in a shared space of cultural production in an elderly care home, presenting and exchanging participatory methods with each other and locally.	<i>Grey Pride</i>	Daring Sadaka - developing community processes engaging elderly residents, the care staff from different cultural backgrounds, intergenerational families of resident relatives, and local neighbours in artistic processes making use of the arts and health techniques to foster a sense of European identity among participants and to address the loneliness and mental health crises affecting different countries and generations of Europeans.

QII_B (CONT.)**FEATURING EUROPEAN ARTISTS, COOPERATION WITH OPERATORS AND CITIES IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES, AND TRANSNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS.****NAME SOME EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS, OPERATORS AND CITIES WITH WHICH COOPERATION IS ENVISAGED AND SPECIFY THE TYPE OF EXCHANGES IN QUESTION.****NAME THE TRANSNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS YOUR CITY HAS ALREADY ESTABLISHED OR PLANS TO ESTABLISH.**

Transnational collaboration is the defining factor of our artistic programme and all projects involve some degree of cooperation with European artists, cultural operators and cities in different countries, even outside Europe.

Our ambition is for each project to be co-produced by a transnational partnership including, beyond the local partners, at least: a) a new centre, i.e. an urban territory sharing the challenges and potentials of Molenbeek in a different European country; b) a city which is a former, future, designated, winner or (forever) candidate to the title of European Capital of Culture (ECoC), and c) a European or non-European cultural and/or artistic partner representing creative practices exemplifying forms of Sadaka: giving freely, sharing empathically, caring for others.

This partnership model provides opportunities for transdisciplinary dialogue, intercultural understanding, artistic cross-fertilization and transnational community-building. Some non-exhaustive examples of concrete, confirmed partnerships (excluding ECoCs) are given in the following table and map (more details in Chapter 2):

Artist/cultural operators in different countries	Project	Types of European collaboration and impacts
Yes We Camp (FR), Trans Europe Halles (EU), L'Asilo (IT), Free Riga (LV) and more.	<i>Homes of European Sadaka</i>	Co-creation and co-production of events. Exchange of staff and methods.
ARTeria Foundation (PL), SaberFazer (PT), Open Design School in Matera-Basilicata (IT), and more.	<i>Breeding Ground Molenbeek</i>	Cross-border cultural and creative tourism. Exchange of creative skills and knowledge.
Iryna Polikarchuk and Nataliia Matsenko (UA), Rio Neiva - Environmental NGO (PT), and more.	<i>Settlements of the Future</i>	Capacity-building for European citizens. Transnational conversations on European topics.
Aufbruch, Salzkammergut! (AT), Pro Progressione (HU) and more.	<i>Soil Academy</i>	Co-curation and co-production of events. Capacity-building for European citizens.
Tiago Rodrigues (PT/FR), Ahmed Tobasi (PS), Selma and Sofiane Ouissi (TN), Mariano Pensotti (AR).	<i>Euro-Festival</i>	Co-curation and co-production of events. Artistic exploration of European symbols and heroes.
Costas Mannouris (CY), Iva Damjanovski (MK) and Robert Vilsons (LV) and more.	<i>European & International Public Poets' Network</i>	Co-curation and co-production of events. Promotion of European cultural networks.
International Parade Consortium with partners in 6 countries, Institut Kòrè des Arts et Métiers in Ségou (ML) and more.	<i>Year of Parades, Ceremonies and Rituals</i>	Cross-border cultural and creative tourism. Co-curation and co-production of events.
Teatringestazione (IT) and Nønne Mai Svalholm (DK).	<i>Grey Pride</i>	Co-curation and co-production of events. Artistic residencies and exchange of staff and method.

- NEW CENTRES, PLACES LIKE MOLENBEEK
- FORMER, FUTURE, DESIGNATED, OR (FOREVER) CANDIDATE TO ECO-C
- ✱ EU/NON-EU PLACES OF SADAKA

✱ Molenbeek (BE)	● Kosice (SK)
○ Charleroi (BE)	✱ Eindhoven (NL)
○ Mechelen (BE)	○ Riga (LV)
● Rotterdam (NL)	○ Amsterdam (NL)
○ Malmö (SE)	○ Copenhagen (DK)
● London (UK)	✱ Bilbao (ES)
● Berlin (DE)	● Donostia/San Sebastian (ES)
● Lisbon (PT)	○ Paris (FR)
● Madrid (ES)	○ Belgrade (RS)
○ Prague (CZ)	● Vezprem-Balaton (HU)
● Marseille (FR)	● Bad Ischl (AT)
○ Napoli (IT)	○ Nicosia (CY)
● Timișoara (RO)	○ Gijón (ES)
○ Larnaca (CY)	○ Dublin (IE)
○ Lviv (UA)	○ Valetta (MT)
● Skopje (MK)	○ Edinburgh (UK)
○ Sofia (BG)	○ Novi Sad (RS)
○ Beirut (LB)	○ Eleusis (EL)
○ Tunis (TN)	○ Arhus (DK)
○ Kinsasha-Kisangani (CD)	○ Cluj (RO)
○ Jenin (PS)	○ Victoria (MT)
○ Nikšić (MN)	○ Ségou (ML)
● Lublin (PL)	○ Porto (PT)
● Kiruna (SE)	○ Stavanger (NO)
● Bourges (FR)	○ Bratislava (SK)
● Budweis (CZ)	○ Faro (PT)
● Évora (PT)	○ Uppsala (SE)
● Liepāja (LV)	○ Dnipro (UA)
● Oulu (FI)	○ Clermont-Ferrand (FR)
● Trencin (SK)	○ Cape Town (ZA)
● Chemnitz (DE)	○ Johannesburg (ZA)
● Nova Gorica (SI)	○ Marrakech (MA)
○ Budapest (HU)	○ Tanger (MA)
● Leeuwarden (NL)	○ Rabat (MA)
● Helsingør (DK)	
● Tartu (EE)	
● Rijeka (HR)	
✱ Braga (PT)	
✱ Zabrze (PL)	
✱ Matera (IT)	



Q13

DESCRIBE THE LINKS DEVELOPED OR TO BE DEVELOPED BETWEEN YOUR CULTURAL PROGRAMME AND THE CULTURAL PROGRAMME OF OTHER CITIES HOLDING THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE TITLE.

Our programme is a dialogue with former, present, future and (forever) candidate ECoCs. We go beyond the winner/loser dichotomy of the 2020-33 framework to connect meaningfully with other cultural dynamics. Since last time, we co-organized the 2nd meeting of 2030 ECoC candidates with Larnaka 2030 and Nikšić 2030. Leuven, Namur and Molenbeek met Larnaka, Lemesos, and Lviv for bilateral talks to develop programme collaborations and our European dimension(s). We hosted the European Spring Ateliers, a co-creative lab for local and

European guests, with representatives from Kiruna 2029, Lublin 2029, Skopje 2028, Liepāja 2027, Oulu 2026, Chemnitz 2025, Nova Gorica-Gorizia 2025, Rijeka 2020, Leeuwarden 2018, Kosice 2013, Lille 2004, and candidates Lviv 2030 and Nikšić 2030. Sessions of knowledge-exchange and programme co-development about digital and civic participation, capacity-building and artistic exchange invited guests from Haringey 2027 - London Borough of Culture and cultural operators from Berlin, Rotterdam, Jenin, and Kinsasha, leading to active new collaborations. Up to and after 2030, European Spring Ateliers will continue as yearly thematic gatherings, for cultural new centres, ECoC cities, and European/non-European Sadaka places. In 2026, we will gather all 2030 ECoC candidates to formally budgets, timelines, communication and synergies for collaboration and artistic exchanges. Some confirmed programme collaborations are:

Partner city	Projects	Topics and mode of collaboration
Victoria 2031 (candidate)	<i>Soil Academy; Walks & Talks; In.Out.Sider</i>	Curatorial exchange with Climate Parade and Aphroconfuso.
Lviv 2030 (candidate)	<i>New Repertoire of Solidarity and Generosity; International and European Public Poets Network</i>	Playwright and Poet from Lviv participate in MB2030 activities, with artistic programme exchange between cities.
Larnaka 2030 (candidate)	<i>International and European Public Poets Network; Superdiversity Kitchen; In.Out.Sider</i>	Poet from Larnaka participates in MB2030 activities, festival co-produced within New European Mythologies, exchange of cooks via Festival of Flavours, and of performers via Mahalart.
Lemesos 2030 (candidate)	<i>Beautiful Game Tournament; Year of Parades, Ceremonies and Rituals</i>	Exchange of performers and artists, via Art Fanatics and Lemesos Carnival.
Nikšić 2030 (candidate)	<i>Homes of European Sadaka, Year of Parades, Ceremonies and Rituals; Rituals of Home</i>	Co-curation and co-production of events via House of Digital Revolution, participation of artists from Nikšić in MB2030 activities.
Kiruna 2029	<i>Natural Sadaka commissions</i>	Co-production of events and programme exchange, via Arctic Fire.
Lublin 2029	<i>Homes of European Sadaka; Year of Parades, Ceremonies and Rituals</i>	Co-curation of events in MB2030 via Social Space of Cultural Resilience, Exchange of programme and artists via Re:Union Parades.
Skopje 2028	<i>International and European Public Poets Network</i>	Poet from Skopje participates in MB2030 activities.
Bourges 2028	<i>Europe's Invisible Workforces; Settlements of the Future; International and European Public Poets Network</i>	Curatorial collaborations via Trans Europe Culture, European Parliament of Rivers, and Rap is the New Poetry.
Budweis 2028	<i>Soil Academy; Topological Walk Talks; International and European Public Poets Network</i>	Exchange of educators and co-curation of events via Creative Minds, exchange of artists via Jižní Svěrák, participation of poet from Budweis in MB2030 activities via City Journal.
Évora 2027	<i>Young Song of Europe</i>	Event co-production, exchange of youth choir via VOZ COMUM.
Liepāja 2027	<i>Young Song of Europe; Beautiful Game Tournament; International and European Public Poets Network</i>	Participation of youth choir, dramaturge, and poet in MB2030 activities.
Oulu 2026	<i>In.Out.Sider; Natural Sadaka commissions</i>	Participation of performers from Oulu in MB2030 activities, via Oulu Urban Culture and Frozen People.
Trencin 2026	<i>Beautiful Game Tournament</i>	Co-curation and co-production of activities in MB2030, via Fair Play.
Chemnitz 2025	<i>Europe's Invisible Workforces</i>	Co-curation and co-production of shared exhibition at Garage Campus.
Nova Gorica/Gorizia 2025	<i>Rituals of Home; Girls Make the City</i>	Co-curation and co-production of activities in MB2030 activities, as well as in Nova Gorica/Gorizia.

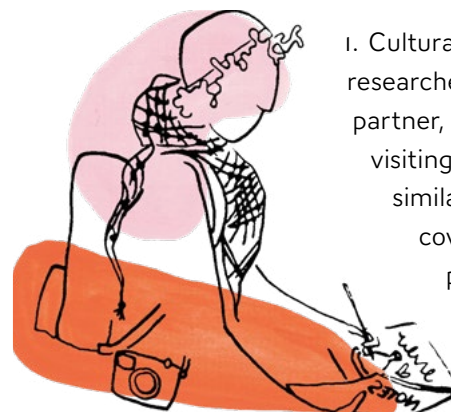
Q12

CAN YOU EXPLAIN IN DETAIL YOUR STRATEGY TO ATTRACT THE INTEREST OF A BROAD EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC?

Our strategy to engage European and international audiences is the same as for local audiences and social partners: those who enter into contact with our programme are invited to become its co-creators and 'get up on stage'. More than attracting passive visitors or passers-by, we create new dialogues and stimulate reflection on the cultural methods used by Molenbeek and its peers. We are already testing methods to empower young, diverse, creative generations and to extend their impact and dialogue with European communities. The feedback they give us is that there is a need to learn about concrete solutions and opportunities already available in European cultural networks. Everyone, whether they come to Molenbeek in person or interact with the project in one of its digital layers, will have access to a unique experience based on one or more of the following four elements:

- * Artistic experiences based on socially engaging and participatory arts projects designed to instigate new encounters and available nowhere else;
- * A travelling and staying experience designed as a contribution to processes of citizenrification - the opposite of gentrification, in which the city is by default developed for the benefit of all its citizenry and strata of society (not only for the benefit of the affluent);
- * Connectivity to hybrid and informal networks where people are already dedicated to topics which matter to those same people;
- * Benefit from local tourism and marketing infrastructures which walk the talk, change their jargons and make every interaction sustainable, safe and generous.

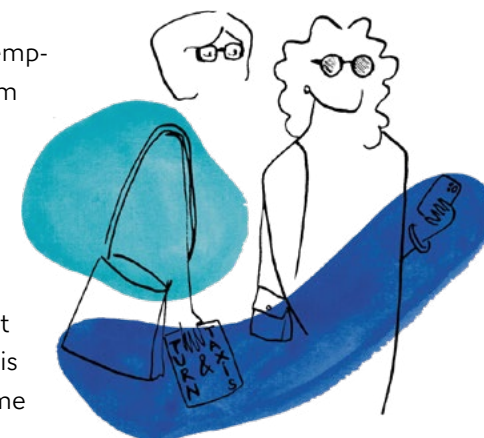
The BCR welcomes more than three million visitors every year, but many of them don't know or understand or see what Molenbeek is. Different people will find our cultural programme attractive for different reasons, but our strategy starts by working with four predefined personas in mind (here simplified, but which will intersect and cross paths with each other all the time):



1. Cultural adventurer is a part-time young artist and researcher of mixed heritage, travelling solo, with a partner, or with a group of friends who have been visiting Capitals of Culture or cultural festivals of a similar scale for several years now, looking to discover the unique heritages and vibes in each place. They are audiences by habit and inspire other audiences by chance, and they want to experience Molenbeek as a local and as soon as possible. They plan their visit for the Kick-off and the Equal Sadaka season,

after learning at their local cultural institution that they would be collaborating with MB2030. Their experience of the programme starts when they stay at a micro-housing station in one of the *Homes of European Sadaka*, sharing a sleeping space with locals and newcomers, and then clearing their breakfast table at the venue's social restaurant. On their way to attending an artist talk at KANAL, connected to one of the multimedia exhibitions of the *European Gallery of Social Justice*, they even discover the photo exhibition *Europe's Invisible Workforces* at West Station, and they read more about it on the digital publication available by QR code. During their stay, they also get their hands dirty in a workshop offered by *Atlas of Ovens in Networks of Heat*, which they discovered by visiting one of the underground bread markets. While they have dinner and a drink, an inspiring street performance by young people engaged in the *European Summer Circus Troupe* nudges them to share a secret poem of their own with the rest of Molenbeek and Europe on the Augmented Generosity Atlas.

2. Transmetropolitan European is an empty-nester, visiting for business or study from a neighbouring country. They were invited to the BCR to attend an international conference on 'Generative AI and Environmental Sustainability', co-organized by an MB2030 sponsor they worked with in the past. They are audiences by choice, not always culturally active. Since Molenbeek is ECoC, they take the chance and book some



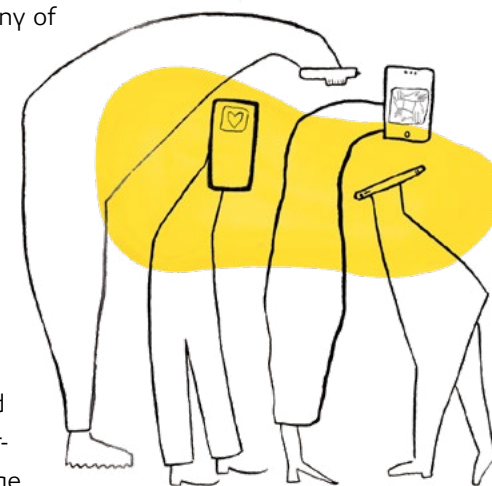
extra days in town, for a city break with their partner. Time is limited, so their focus will be on the highlights. Their experience of the programme starts with checking out Bozar, where Laure Prouvost is artist of the year - in connection with their MB2030 project *Oui Grow*, and they are quickly directed to where the real stuff is happening. A few metro stations further, they are surprised by *Terrain* by Boris Charmatz, in one of the *Settlements of the Future* by the Canal. An MB2030 volunteer from their own country is there and suggests they should do one of the *Topological Walks & Talks*. They go on an AR-assisted non-human guided tour (speculative narrative from the viewpoint of urban fauna), finishing at the *Parliament of the Non-Human*, another of the *Settlements of the Future*, but in the Scheutbos Park. There, they contribute to a discussion on the legal rights of waterbodies based on their professional experience, and even try a light salad, locally sourced from the Back2SoilBasics gardens rewilded in the neighbourhood. On the way back from Molenbeek, they do some shopping at Chaussée de Gand (quickly catching *Chaussée Unique* by Thomas Bellinck) before ending their day at La Monnaie / De Munt to see the environmental opera *Metamorphosis*, part of the *WildWaterWadi* performances - where another young person from their country is featured as a performer, embodying the spirit of the environmental challenge the visitor's own city is most urgently focusing on for the future.



3. Extended family are youngsters and their parents, from Rotterdam, Madrid and other places, with relatives living in Molenbeek. They haven't met in a few years, but some connections between artistic projects in Molenbeek and their cities created an uncommon opportunity for the family to meet. They are audiences by surprise (they rarely feel welcome in cultural institutions), but feel at ease engaging with the Molenbeek atmosphere of generosity, where their own familiar context makes them feel (temporarily) at home. The younger cousins from Madrid sing at the *Young Song of Europe*, the whole family is there to support them, and they even listen to a choir from

the non-European country where their ancestors were born. The teenagers (footballers) perform in the *Beautiful Game Tournament* choreographed by Ahilan Ratnamohan, and all the cousins join the collective game-making led by Anthea Moys, both at the new RWDM Girls sports complex. The aunts get actively involved in *Superdiversity Kitchen*, giving cooking workshops in preparation of one of the *Breaking Bread* meals and sharing breakfast with a local family or group of interventional visitors becomes a fun tradition during this stay. At the end of the week(end), there is still time to actively participate in a large-scale performance of the *Euro-Festival*, specifically *Mariage* by Leon / Seppe Baeyens, making new and reviving old memories with family and strangers, dancing together to the best wedding singers from many European and non-European places. The party is shared online, on social media and in WhatsApp groups, even livestreamed at points, to include all the other relatives and friends who could not join physically.

4. Friends on the screen may represent any of the other three personas. They research MB2030 online before visiting, they keep track of it after visiting, and even if they don't physically visit, they find some cultural and emotional connection to MB2030 and what is happening in Molenbeek in the build-up to and during 2030. Their points of contact are the MB2030 digital-first, community-driven experiences mediated via artistic projects, designed to cater to new media and audience paradigms without losing their creative edge and artistic integrity. Digital audiences are not a secondary thought, but an active part of finding and co-creating new communities. With this digital component of our programme, Friends on the screen crowdfund personalized craft objects via the online platform of *Breeding Ground Molenbeek*, visit the digital exhibition of *L3XiCON of e_u*, they immerse themselves among marchers of the *Closing Parade of Sadaka*, composed by a mix of Gaussian splat, 360° multimedia and XR tools, they download the mixtapes made by the artists in the *Future Sound Stars Incubator*, and more - some of which we will only discover soon, as the technology and users are not here yet.





1080 Kisses © Mous Lamrabat

4 OUTREACH

Q14_A

EXPLAIN IN DETAIL HOW THE LOCAL POPULATION AND YOUR CIVIL SOCIETY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE PREPARATION OF THE APPLICATION.

The themes that structure our programme were decided upon by young people in the pre-selection stage. We worked in two steps: Speak Up! with 1,000 young people, and then the *Youth Coalition* with 100 superdiverse young people from the BCR. Collaborative negotiations led to these four themes: Equality and Social Justice, Superdiversity, Nature in the City, Safe and Brave Spaces. These young people will be the leading voices in 2030 and they therefore have the greatest say. After the *Youth Coalition*, we made a third step in the last eight months from BCR youth to Molenbeek youth. We started with the youth, then opened the dialogue with other groups and communities in Molenbeek.

Q15

HOW WILL THE TITLE CREATE IN YOUR CITY NEW AND SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR A WIDE RANGE OF CITIZENS TO ATTEND OR PARTICIPATE IN CULTURAL ACTIVITIES, IN PARTICULAR YOUNG PEOPLE, VOLUNTEERS AND THE MARGINALISED AND DISADVANTAGED, INCLUDING MINORITIES? PLEASE ALSO ELABORATE ON THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THESE ACTIVITIES TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND THE ELDERLY. SPECIFY THE RELEVANT PARTS OF THE PROGRAMME PLANNED FOR THESE VARIOUS GROUPS.

Since the pre-selection stage, we have launched the first phase of our outreach strategy, aimed at a shared understanding of local needs with a wide range of citizens and specific target groups. To work on the issues of the Molenbeek communities with

European peers can only be a slow and steady set of steps in a consistent process spread over three or four years.

We therefore grounded our process in mapping out, gathering, listening to and engaging with young people through the *MolenYouth* ecosystem (under-30s and youth workers), kids, students, teachers and education coordinators (part of the *Molen-Schools* network), volunteers (who inform citizens during our rallying events), the Senior Squad (representing the over-65s, active in the sociocultural field or in elderly homes, as well as workers in the elderly network), LGBTQIA+ individuals (either representing a collective or simply being themselves), the newcomers and undocumented people ecosystem (affiliated with sociocultural organizations and social workers), Roms and Doms communities, the Sadaka ecosystem, (including single parents, food-waste activists and the catering industry, volunteer

mothers who actively cook for those in need the whole year and especially during Ramadan for the most vulnerable) and the sports sector as a key cultural ally (Urban Youth Games, Molenbeek Rebels). We activated Molenbeek's non-profit ecosystem (social, cultural, environmental), engaging with key cultural and social organizations that act as trusted intermediaries in the community.

We brought together key economic actors. This includes local businesses (e.g. the Sadaka banquet is co-organized with the merchants' association) to discuss mobilizing entrepreneurs for the candidacy. TheMerode Business Club, with employer's organizations - like Brussels Entreprises Commerces and Industry (BECI) and Flanders' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Voka Metropolitan) - also joined to reflect on their role in fostering investment and employment. These efforts show strong stakeholder engagement, including universities, companies like JCDecaux or P&V, to boost visibility and embed the project in economic networks.

Each encounter followed a common framework of ten co-developed criteria. This framework ensures that our work is not only inclusive, but also strategic, creative and future-proof:

1. Sadaka - Promoting solidarity, social justice and generosity
2. New Us - Fostering collective identity and belonging in Molenbeek, Brussels, Belgium, Europe and beyond
3. European scope - Connecting to broader European values and alliances - Europe as a common thread
4. Cultural and artistic ambition - Placing artistic expression at the heart of each outreach activity



5. Radical inclusion - Making every intervention accessible, inclusive and welcoming
 6. Long-term solutions - Prioritizing a sustainable impact and legacy beyond 2030
 7. Resilience - Reclaiming narratives and building community strength - Flip the script!
 8. Innovation - Supporting forward-looking new, creative and original solutions
 9. Digital reflection - Ensuring a relevant and ethical digital mirror
 10. Power of place - Valuing Molenbeek's unique spaces as a starting point for collaboration with Brussels and other European cities and beyond.
- This grid has already been tested in projects to evaluate, design and align community expectations.

The next step within our outreach framework is to move beyond divisions of 'us' and 'them' within

target groups, encouraging genuine mixing and dialogue. This is the roadmap to MB2030 and a key element of our European dimension: from communitarian to a mixed Us, from group identity to cultural hybrids, by taking small steps and testing.

The *Iftar in the Church* was a breaking of the fast in the Church of Saint-Jean-Baptiste, taking place during Ramadan and Lent, and on the first weekend of spring. This event united participants of Muslim, Christian, Jewish, and secular communities for a lively meal attended by 500 participants, 17 partner organizations and 82 volunteers, of which 24 young people. The event also received international media coverage, being featured by Euronews, Al Jazeera, as well as various Italian, Moroccan, and French media outlets.

MolenFest 2024 comprised an impressive 84 activities spread over 12 days, co-organized with 68 partners and supported by 88 volunteers. The festival gave a taste of what 2030 could look like. We welcomed more than 23,500 participants, reflecting the strong engagement and enthusiasm of the local community and beyond. In recognition of its inclusive spirit and collaborative approach, MB2030 was awarded the Co-Creation Award by visit.brussels for *MolenFest 2024*.

The next step of building inclusive joy is the *Sadaka Banquet*, part of *MolenFest 2025*, which will take place along the Chaussée de Gand as a festive and symbolic act of collective generosity. Local shopkeepers and associations will co-host this shared meal, to which we will invite everyone encountered throughout our outreach journey.

We are building confidence through doing together rather than convincing to participate only through audience development and communication strategies.

Young people

After the *Youth Coalition*, we focused more on our *MolenYouth* community (50 young people + 50 youth workers). They gathered for a powerful event on the Town Square. At its core, a collective action: 150 colourful wooden panels with personal requests and hopes for the future, integrated in a powerful fresco forming a reimagined European flag, symbolizing young Molenbeek's voices speaking to Europe. For the first time, we brought together youth organizations from Molenbeek (both French- and Dutch-speaking) active in various sectors such as culture, sports, and media.

Our young people lead as volunteers, creators, ambassadors of Sadaka. Through Enter (Kulturregion Chemnitz 2025), we offer EU-level cultural opportunities. Four members of *MolenYouth* will go on a mission to Nova Gorica 2025 (SI) for the summer school 2025: Crossing borders through memories. With other young Europeans, they will tackle the topic of making memories in the digital age. And that's only a first step in the building of strong European ties.

In 2030 we will hold the *European MolenYouth Coalition* at the European Parliament, gathering the young people from all across Europe in a new edition of Speak Up! to reflect on what will have changed since 2023, for better or worse. Young people play a key role within our artistic programme, especially in *Future Sound Stars Incubator* (with young urban musicians).

We are already connecting with young people from across the continent, including the Cultterra team in Eleusis 2023 (GR), Lemosos 2030 (CY) to foster deeper collaboration and shared learning across European cities.

People with disabilities

Disabled people, whether physically and/or mentally, are unfairly considered a 'niche', while about 15 percent of the population has care needs. We engaged with members of the disabled community in a dedicated round-table discussion with 10 Molenbeek-based associations, like Lumina and CCPH (Conseil Consultatif Handicap de Molenbeek). If there is one thing we learned, it is that we are all only temporarily abled bodies.

Citizens on wheels, people with Down's syndrome, the elderly, refugees and marginalized groups will share their dances in the mixability project *Mariage*

by Leon. Our programme *In.Out.Sider* is dedicated to psychic vulnerability, safe spaces and outsider art. People with disabilities will be co-curators, performers and volunteers.

We are partners with Inclusion & Brussels Festivals, an informal network of people with disabilities who organize five Brussels festivals, led by Lasso, the Brussels platform for cultural participation. Since *MolenFest 2024*, we have collaborated to enhance accessibility and promote the European Disability Card.

Seniors

Building on the Seniors' Advisory Council's Memorandum for the 2024 municipal elections, MB2030 aims to address five priority areas identified by seniors: Citizenship, Quality of Life, Health & Prevention, Housing, and Mobility. This memorandum is directly informed by the VADA (WHO Age-Friendly Cities) framework and rooted in Molenbeek's aspiration to become a reference model for an age-inclusive city in the BCR by 2030. We met with over 100 seniors, as well as senior-focused staff from a dozen local organizations, including CPAS, Novadia care homes, Red Cross and Zenniors 1080. Our programmes are built with an eye on intergenerational and cross-cultural collaboration: for *MolenFest 2025*, primary schools and the elderly home Acacias will partner; seniors with migrant backgrounds will share their musical memories from holiday trips back to their countries of origin in *Operai*; elderly homes will be transformed into art centres for the *Grey Pride*; Radio Mouette will participate in the *1001 Flying Carpets*.

We co-created a dance night in a Brussels nightclub with seniors from Molenbeek's elderly home Acacias, in collaboration with Papy Boom. A joyful break from age stereotypes, and new connections

with young people. A step towards active ageing and keeping seniors visible, valued, and involved in shaping Molenbeek's future. The event caught international attention, featured by *The New York Times*, highlighting its wider impact in June 2025.

Women

We agree, women are not a marginalized group, but they often remain invisibilized. Therefore, we pay tribute to all women of Molenbeek, from entrepreneurs to stay-at-home mums. Collectives like W100 will participate in the cooperative of Crafts and Skills *Breeding Ground Molenbeek*, the female-led YouYou Group, the female chefs of *Superdiversity Kitchen* and *Girls Make the City*, a social design project by and with young women.

Our entire approach remains an intersectional perspective, placing gender at the heart of every target group, from youth to seniors, from artists to entrepreneurs. This also feeds into our reflection on women's place in public space, echoing Theme 4: Daring Sadaka.

LGBTQIA+

MB2030 initiated collaborations with 22 key actors of the community including 13 queer organizations such as Molenqueens, Pride Museum, Rainbow House and Corne de Gazelle. In Molenbeek, queerness reveals the urgent need for intersectional safe spaces for LGBTQIA+ identities shaped by migration, religion and working-class realities. This year, Molenbeek saw the first rainbow and trans flag crossings. We aim to co-create Molenbeek's first Pride, during the *Year of Parades, Ceremonies and Rituals*.

Roms & Doms

The Rom coordination meeting in Molenbeek gathered key stakeholders from Foyer, Molen-Rom, CPAS and community partners. The focus was on improving representation and support for Rom and Dom communities, particularly with Romanian, Bulgarian and Syrian backgrounds. From this group, we learned that the Dom community is rapidly growing, particularly among school-age children; early motherhood is reported among Dom girls at an average age of 15.

MolenFest 2025 will welcome rituals for new arrivals in *BELGefête - VerBELGingsfeest*. The stars of Rom and Dom music will visit in 2030 in *The World Sings in Molenbeek*.

European networks

Our outreach activities are not limited to the local territory, but take our European uniqueness as a starting point. To co-create our programmes, we reach out to citizens from far and near that contribute to the idea of Europe on a daily basis. Especially those who live in dense, superdiverse areas like ours. Engaging in pan-European cultural networks allows us to present the candidacy, seek partnerships (see CH3) and bring depth by adding much-needed diversity to the table. For example, we took part in the event *Beyond 2025: Being Many in Turin* by Culture Action Europe. We explored how to amplify underrepresented voices through the candidacy and rethink accessibility as a core pillar of democratic cultural leadership. Our European Spring Ateliers in Molenbeek gathered artists, researchers, policymakers, and citizens from across Europe. It connected Molenbeek cultural workers and Europeans around key topics like

social inclusion. The event will grow into a larger Creole conference with ULB and VUB.

Volunteers

Volunteers, the heartbeat of MB2030, include all target groups (people with disabilities, seniors, young people, LGBTQIA+, Roms and Doms), ensuring diversity both locally and across European 'Molenbeeks'. Volunteers have found their way to us through local networks. Three key ways to engage with our candidacy as a volunteer:

1. **Ambassadors:** Committed voices who voluntarily represent MB2030, helping to inspire and spread its message locally and across Europe.
2. **Volunteers:** Extra hands and brains joining the MB2030 team, they assist with logistics, communication, accessibility and care. These volunteers are engaged through agreements and compensated with a voluntary stipend.
3. **Participants:** Citizens (local or international) who actively join our co-created and contextualized productions and projects. Their engagement stems from a desire to contribute to and experience hands-on culture with transportation costs covered. Take the example of the performance *Few Days Before Tomorrow* by Serge Aimé Coulibaly, as part of *MolenFest 2025*. During three months, 50 participants aged from 7 to 77 joined dance workshops with Faso Danse Théâtre.

Our volunteer strategy has evolved to include:

- * Paid daily compensation/insurance, ensuring inclusivity for economically vulnerable groups
- * Skill-building workshops, as part of *SADAKAdemy*
- * A mix of local and European volunteers, fostering intercultural learning.

The principles and criteria for a successful volunteer action plan:

- * The Art of Giving: Methodology and Volunteer Management for building a strong, inclusive, empowering and sustainable volunteer programme.
- * Dedicated Volunteer Team: Establishing a dedicated team to coordinate and support volunteer work.
- * Attractiveness: Access to top cultural events.
- * Co-design approach: Involving long-term volunteers and partners in the planning and development of the volunteer programme and advancing careers.
- * Training and leadership: Training opportunities and leadership tracks.
- * Inclusion awareness: Ensuring all volunteers receive training on LGBTQIA+ topics, accessibility, inclusion, cultural rights, and decolonial practices.
- * Safe & Brave Team: Volunteers train to handle discrimination or aggression at events.



- * Mobility: Enabling volunteers to travel and represent MB2030 abroad via EU solidarity corps exchange.
- * Evaluation & Reflection: Continuously assessing and improving volunteer experience.

Radical inclusion

Accessibility of cultural information, physical accessibility of public spaces and transport, as well as financial accessibility are priorities for MB2030. Our goal for cultural participation is to provide a twin-track: general accessibility offering cultural activities that are adaptable, available, affordable, accessible and acceptable for minorities and disadvantaged groups, paired with special needs by demand, working across sections and separations. The strategy is that the efforts taken to include all of us contribute to access for all. Stages of the work are intersectional diagnosis (2024-25), repairing



(2026-28), developing best practices (2028-30) and sharing via digitization (after 2030).

Building on the experience of *MolenFest*, we can already say that presenting (free) multidisciplinary cultural activities in the (semi)public space is part of the answer to many of these questions. Our projects focus on imagining radically inclusive approaches for our interaction with humans and the non-humans alike, like in the *Parliament of the Non-Human*. We celebrate popular art forms like hip hop and circus, as in *European Circus Troupe*; markets and public spaces become platforms for presentation like in *Crossing Molenbeek*; we aim for artistic métissage to enable wide identification (and not just for the culturally educated); and we invest heavily in any form of translation where needed, including sign language, subtitles and audio description.

Here are some concrete steps towards radical inclusion:

- * Safe space: promoting the Safe Space Charter developed with the queer community as well as the app and hotline on violence.
- * Gentrification watch: keeping a close eye on possible gentrifying effects. In this context, we organized a workshop with experts, academics, and local organizations to discuss the risks and impacts of gentrification on Molenbeek in relation to the ECOC process.
- * Provide adapted transportation: if public transport is not PRM-friendly (for people with reduced mobility), offer adapted shuttles.
- * Programme during hours that suit the people with disabilities, the elderly, families with children.
- * Financial access: collaborate with organizations

who contribute financially to those in need (e.g. Article 27) for activities with ticketing.

- * Non-digital info: ensuring offline communication channels to fight information exclusion.
- * Urban inclusion: pushing for benches, public toilets, wheelchair access in public spaces.
- * Safe and Brave team: identifiable volunteers to treat a lack of safety.
- * Childcare: to enable parent's participation.

MolenClean

Beyond cultural reflection (Natural Sadaka), we aim for concrete action. For the past year, we have been working with the City of Molenbeek on the development of its Climate Action Plan (CAP), which aims to improve living conditions by reducing environmental inequalities and cutting emissions. *MolenFest 2025* will coincide with the launch of *MolenClean*, a large-scale clean-up action with residents, staff and local organizations. *MolenClean* is a collective moment of pride, care and solidarity for our shared public spaces. We also join Culture Next's SDG LAB to localize and reach the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Q16

EXPLAIN IN DETAIL YOUR STRATEGY FOR AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT, AND IN PARTICULAR THE LINK WITH EDUCATION AND THE PARTICIPATION OF SCHOOLS

For our general audience development strategy, we refer to the communication strategy outlined in Chapter 5. Here, we focus specifically on our approach to engaging with schools.

In response to the jury's recommendation, we are developing a stronger alliance with educational institutions, starting with the project MolenSchools, building on prior initiatives like MolenKids. The main goal is to strengthen the connection between children, schools, educational actors and cultural organizations while taking into account the area's pedagogical ambitions and social realities. To put it bluntly, children in Molenbeek face educational inequalities: shortage of teachers; difficult social and economic conditions due to single-parent situations, poverty, lack of knowledge of teaching languages (Dutch or French). For the first time, we managed to bring together schools from different communities and different networks (French-speaking, Dutch-speaking, Catholic, non-confessional, Muslim, to name a few) - a minor miracle in itself.

We conducted discussions with 20 school principals, 50 teachers and 200 children to hear directly from them, exploring games, imagining festivals and working on Sadaka and being European. Food emerged as a key point leading to the *Superdiversity Kitchen* linking cultural heritage, health and nutrition, ecology and sustainability, identity and memory, social connection and redistribution to the disadvantaged. A powerful example is Sadaka Action, co-organized with schools and elderly homes: kids and seniors cooked together with donated market food, sharing Molenbeek's spirit of generosity.

Projects for schools in the artistic programme being tested during *MolenFest 2024* and 2025 include: mediation programmes for KANAL's *Collection Displays* (blockbuster exhibitions on the theme of Equal Sadaka) *Creatures of the Water and Mo-*

lenLight XL, Edible Playgrounds and rewilding with Soil Academy (Natural Sadaka); an invitation to children and schools in *Rituals of Home/ABC* in one of the *Homes of European Sadaka*; children's choirs in *Young Song of Europe (Creole Sadaka)*; and children in *Park Poétik*: classes taking part in *Zinneke 2030* or preparing with their schools for the futuristic parade at the end of MB2030; artistic projects with children including Wooshing Machine's *The Magnificent KIDS*, Singing Molenbeek and Wim Vandekeybus' *I'd rather die*.

Q14_B

EXPLAIN IN DETAIL HOW THE LOCAL POPULATION AND YOUR CIVIL SOCIETY WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE YEAR

Our outreach process, which started at the pre-selection stage, was not a one-time consultation, but the foundation of a long-term co-creation strategy. The Sadaka programmes are set up to accommodate the creation of a mixed identity: a lot has already been put in place, a lot still needs to be done: merchants from Chaussée de Gand will open up their stores and stories, and *Anno 2030* is only possible thanks to citizens wanting to share their rituals and ceremonies with one another.

Unfortunately, co-creation is a buzzword that all too often fails to fulfil its promises. When MB2030 wants to put co-creation at the centre of its programme, of its Sadaka in action, and move away from a communitarian to a mixed Us, from group identity to cultural hybrids, let's be clear about what we mean in practice:

1. Creating content and materials related to context (defined by place/time) through research and development; then sharing them with artists and institutions, with their specific expertise of creation. For example, Tiago Rodrigues tracing migration history in Molenbeek by mapping language shifts in an apartment building over the last 50 years.
2. Connecting content and material with a 'cast' of participants in target groups; the act of inviting is crucial in this phase because people may feel instrumentalized or tokenized when not addressed properly; this can be avoided



by first engaging with people on their own terms, spending time in their 'communities' and work(shopp)ing on their premises - in their elderly homes, schools or youth clubs. This is the kind of outreach we have been describing above.

3. Inviting individuals to step out of their communities and into a mix of people they haven't met yet; proposing and collaborating with others beyond their circle, expressing and shaping ideas in consultation with other people; rehearsals and try-outs.



4. Transformation and presentation; bringing your experience transformed in dialogue and collaboration with others into the public sphere; in front of an audience, and engaging again with new strangers. Transformation can be major, like the project of artistic distilling, or minor, like a 'déplacement', just shifting things to an unexpected place. For example, Park Poétik, who are relocating their activities from Vorst to Molenbeek, or the *Zinneke Parade* taking place on the Brussels Canal for the first time in its 30-year history.

Our projects basically go through all stages. They are all based on proximity and time. *MolenFest* as a yearly festival is the context for trying out work-in-progress. It is the testing ground for projects that will arrive at fruition in 2030.

In some projects, the general public will have a chance during the year to experience the excitement of emancipatory co-creation processes. A project like *Ballrooms*, which we tested during *MolenFest 2024*, will take place in several community centres throughout the BCR in the years before 2030 and land in a major dance event at La Grande Halle at the end of 2030. Each Ball is in itself a kind of speed-up - extended over two weeks - of the co-creation process described above.

This shows how our outreach and artistic programmes are intertwined, mutually enriching, and create opportunities for exchanges with EU citizens.

We are aware that it takes time and is not easy. It requires listening, decentralization and humility to break out of these silos. It is a real challenge in Molenbeek, Europe and beyond. This candidacy, part of a long EU process, will help drive that change.





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5 MANAGEMENT

Q17

INCOME TO COVER OPERATING EXPENDITURE:

- PLEASE CONFIRM OR UPDATE THE BUDGET FIGURES USING THE TABLES BELOW. EXPLAIN ANY DIFFERENCES WITH REGARDS TO PRE-SELECTION.
- TOTAL OPERATING BUDGET (I.E. FUNDS THAT ARE SPECIFICALLY SET ASIDE TO COVER OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURE)

Total income to cover operating expenditure (in euros)	From the public sector (in euros)	From the public sector (in %)	From the private sector	From the private sector (in %)
97,951,000.00	88,951,000.00	91%	9,000,000.00	9%

MB2030 can count on the renewed commitments of all government levels, which were redrawn following the elections of 9/06/2024 (BCR, Wallonia, Flanders, Federal Government) and 13/10/2024 (City of Molenbeek).

The revenue from public funds is increasing, mainly due to the commitments of a €15,000,000 budget - if Molenbeek is awarded the title of European Capital of Culture in 2030 (ECoC2030) - from the Wallonia-Brussels Federation (FWB). For the Flemish Region, the 8,100,000.00 integrated in the pre-selection bidbook are confirmed. An increase to 15,000,000.00, to level the Flemish contribution with the FWB contribution is under consideration. However, due to prudent budgeting we currently stick to the 8,100,000.00 from Flanders as mentioned in the pre-selection bidbook. The fact that MB2030 formally collaborates with Walloon and Flemish partner cities Charleroi and Mechelen obviously strengthens their commitments to MB2030.

With regard to its own resources, MB2030 has developed a forward-looking strategy with the collaboration of the experts of the We Are Impact Collective. Funding will be set in motion through the so-called Generous Funding Family of MB2030. This network of sponsors is a diverse group, with all contributing according to their means.

Started in June 2025, the Generous Funding Family will meet twice a year with the aim of gradually building a fund of €9,000,000. By strategically supplementing public funding with private contributions, financial strength increases alongside societal engagement towards more Sadaka.

Q18

INCOME FROM THE PUBLIC SECTOR: WHAT IS THE BREAKDOWN OF THE INCOME TO BE RECEIVED FROM THE PUBLIC SECTOR TO COVER OPERATING EXPENDITURE? PLEASE FILL IN THE TABLE BELOW:

Income from the public sector to cover operating expenditure	in euros	%
Belgian Federal Government	€ 15,000,000.00	16.86%
Municipality of Molenbeek	€ 4,000,000.00	4.50%
Brussels-Capital Region	€ 37,800,000.00	42.50%
EU	€ 810,000.00	0.91%
Wallonia-Brussels Federation	€ 15,000,000.00	16.86%
Flanders	€ 8,100,000.00	9.11%
French Community Commission	€ 4,110,000.00	4.62%
Flemish Community Commission	€ 4,131,000.00	4.64%
Total	88,951,000.00	100%

Q19

HAVE THE PUBLIC FINANCE AUTHORITIES (CITY, REGION, STATE) ALREADY VOTED ON OR MADE FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS TO COVER OPERATING EXPENDITURE? IF NOT, WHEN WILL THEY DO SO?

Solid agreements have been put in place in the past year between MB2030, the fully operational BCR caretaker government and the Brussels Parliament which has a fundamental role in the current political situation. A parliamentary resolution introduced by and voted by a very large majority (more than 85% of MPs) was passed in Parliament on 27 June. The resolution explicitly demands all current and potential future governments and ministers of the BCR to, among other crucial commitments, provide the full budget of €40,000,000 for MB2030. The annual subsidies will be allocated, according to a calendar agreed in advance, to the independent legal entity responsible for carrying out MB2030. The financial resources allocated must be spent in full before the end of 2032.

Of the total subsidy amount, €4,000,000 will be allocated immediately to the City of Molenbeek, which will transfer this amount directly to MB2030 according

the table in Q21.

The Belgian federal government officially committed to a financial contribution of €15,000,000 for the city that will be awarded the title of European Capital of Culture 2030. This contribution will be spread over five equal annual instalments, beginning in 2026.

The FWB and the Flemish Community, both also with a responsibility and commitment to cultural policy in the BCR, have both committed to financially support to MB2030.

The French Community Commission (COCOF), represented by Minister-President Rudi Vervoort, has pledged a sum of €4,110,000.

The Flemish Community Commission (VGC), represented by Secretary of state Ans Persoons, confirmed a commitment of €4,131,000.

The estimated €810,000 from the European Union (EU) will be secured through four small-scale Creative Europe cooperation projects, since smaller ones have a higher chance for success than bigger applications, commencing in 2028. These projects are designed to help retain expertise after the active phase of the project concludes and the budget decreases. They will also complement our own investment in legacy activities, ensuring these efforts remain fundamentally European. As outlined in Q20, this plan will be revised once formal decisions have been made regarding the 2028-34 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF).

Q20

WHAT IS YOUR FUNDRAISING STRATEGY TO SEEK FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM UNION PROGRAMMES/FUNDS TO COVER OPERATING EXPENDITURE?

The EU's MFF for 2028-34 is currently being prepared by the European Commission (EC), so how EU-funding for cultural and artistic activities in 2028, 2029, 2030 and beyond is not confirmed. We engaged in the public consultation process promoted by the Commission, advocating for reinforced long-term EU funding for cross-border education, training and solidarity, youth, media, culture and creative sectors, values and civil society. Assuming a framework in 2028 which is similar to the current framework, our provisional strategy will be:

- * to design all projects in the artistic programme, *SADAKAdemy*, volunteering or research efforts with European partnerships at their heart, so they can by

default be integrated in EU funding applications as a whole or in part; to support the active membership of our cultural and civic partners in different European cultural networks, of which some are already partners in our candidacy, to promote capacity-building and networking opportunities for involvement in EU-funding applications;

- * to support capacity-building about EU-funding and collaboration for our cultural and civic partners, in collaboration with other ECoCs, in the form

transnational courses, project co-development workshops and mentoring sessions, tied to our *SADAKAdemy*;

- * to focus EU fundraising efforts on long-term projects contributing to the MB2030 legacy, attracting funding to Molenbeek in the years following 2030;
- * to include dedicated officers to EU fundraising in the business team, in dialogue with international relations officers or as the format may be. Other speculative plans for EU fundraising directly connected to programme projects are:

Activities	Project	EU funding programme
Artistic residencies / exchange and exhibition co-production between different countries	<i>Europe's Invisible Workforces</i>	Creative Europe
Sustainable, inclusive, beautiful architectural interventions by transnational groups of creatives	<i>Homes of European Sadaka</i>	New European Bauhaus Facility
International conference co-organized by partners in different countries	<i>Year of Parades, Ceremonies and Rituals</i>	CERV
Exchange between European circus schools for training events and pedagogic development	<i>European Summer Circus Troupe</i>	Erasmus+
Young volunteers from abroad working long-term in the digital fablabs of Molenbeek	Digital Sadaka	European Solidarity Corps

Q21

ACCORDING TO WHAT TIMETABLE SHOULD THE INCOME TO COVER OPERATING EXPENDITURE BE RECEIVED BY THE CITY AND/OR THE BODY RESPONSIBLE FOR PREPARING AND IMPLEMENTING THE ECOC PROJECT IF THE CITY RECEIVES THE TITLE OF EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE?

	basic							legacy		
Source of income (in euros)	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	subtotal	2031	2032	Total
Brussels-Capital Region	1,800,000.00	2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	5,854,545.45	6,561,363.64	17,870,454.55	36,086,363.64	856,818.18	856,818.18	37,800,000.00
City of Molenbeek	0.00	0.00	600,000.00	1,040,000.00	1,040,000.00	1,160,000.00	3,840,000.00	80,000.00	80,000.00	4,000,000.00
Belgian Federal Government	0.00	3,000,000.00	3,000,000.00	3,000,000.00	3,000,000.00	3,000,000.00	15,000,000.00	0.00	0.00	15,000,000.00
Wallonia-Brussels Federation	0.00	0.00	600,000.00	2,100,000.00	2,100,000.00	7,800,000.00	12,600,000.00	1,400,000.00	1,000,000.00	15,000,000.00
Flanders	0.00	0.00	1,161,540.00	1,160,730.00	1,160,730.00	4,131,000.00	7,614,000.00	324,000.00	162,000.00	8,100,000.00
French Community Commission	60,000.00	50,625.00	648,000.00	729,000.00	263,250.00	2,065,500.00	3,816,375.00	293,625.00	0.00	4,110,000.00
Flemish Community Commission	81,000.00	50,625.00	648,000.00	729,000.00	263,250.00	2,065,500.00	3,837,375.00	293,625.00	0.00	4,131,000.00
EU	0.00	0.00	0.00	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00	600,000.00	210,000.00	0.00	810,000.00
Funding	300,000.00	710,000.00	1,565,000.00	3,475,000.00	2,225,000.00	725,000.00	9,000,000.00	0.00	0.00	9,000,000.00
Total	2,241,000.00	5,811,250.00	10,222,540.00	18,288,275.45	16,813,593.64	39,017,454.55	92,394,113.64	3,458,068.18	2,098,818.18	97,951,000.00

An agreement with all governments involved ensures that committed funds are deposited into a dedicated MB2030 bank account in the respective year. All funds are spent by MB2030 by the end of 2032 latest. Biannual reports covering both content and financial aspects will be provided to all relevant stakeholders to guarantee full transparency and accountability. The project, as outlined in the bidbook, serves as the guiding framework for all decision-making throughout its implementation. Furthermore, these funds are expected to act as a catalyst to attract additional investments. For the years 2031 and 2032, the necessary budgets for operating expenses have also already been allocated by the respective authorities. For the year 2031, this includes an additional budget of €3,458,068.18 and for 2032 an additional budget of €2,098,818.18. This ensures the financial resources for the legacy of the ECoC year 2030 in the City of Molenbeek.

Q22

INCOME FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR: WHAT IS THE FUNDRAISING STRATEGY TO SEEK SUPPORT FROM PRIVATE SPONSORS? WHAT IS THE PLAN FOR INVOLVING SPONSORS IN THE EVENT?

MB2030 aims to raise € 9,000,000 in private funding by 2030, this is around 10% of the total investment of €97,951,000. This target is not only feasible - it has already been set in motion. The funding strategy is built on Generously Growing Together, a key element of Sadaka.

MB2030 speaks to a new generation of funders; it is not about charity, but about shared responsibility. We are looking for funders who recognize that in a Europe facing fragmentation, generosity must be practised systemically. Our emphasis on social equity, cultural inclusion and community resilience is directly in line with emerging CSR and ESG priorities. Funders will be engaged not only financially but also through co-creation, storytelling and advisory participation, including roles in strategic boards and community-facing programmes.

The Generous Funding Family

At the heart of this approach is the Generous Funding Family, a living metaphor for a community of partners who believe that generosity is a strategic force for urban transformation. Like a tree, our Generous Funding Family will grow each year: deepening roots, branching out and generating new leaves. The model is both strategic and symbolic - resilient, expansive and locally grounded. The Fund-

ing Family Tree is a tiered structure ranging from Seed Catalysts to Root Funders:

- * Seed Catalysts: citizens and diaspora creating civic energy and early momentum
- * Community Builders: local businesses and SMEs funding neighbourhood events
- * Growth Contributors: funders supporting thematic strands and pilot actions
- * Impact Enablers: major backers of innovation, visibility and infrastructure
- * Root Funders: legacy partners shaping MB2030's long-term impact and governance

A growing Generous Funding Family is not only a source of financial support, but a source of energy, imagination and momentum. By involving funders as people, not just patrons, we unlock new ideas, attract new networks and generate a ripple effect of commitment and creativity. The growth of the Funding Family is driven by tailored activation tactics for each funder category - ranging from micro-donation campaigns and community events to strategic co-creation and long-term governance roles. These approaches are seeded early, nurtured annually through events like *MolenFest*, and continually expanded through targeted outreach, storytelling and peer engagement.

A Funding Narrative Embedded in the Cultural Programme

Private funding is not an add-on - it is the engine behind MB2030's transformation agenda. Each contribution is a generous act that finds concrete resonance in the cultural programme - through what we call funding hooks: thematic alignments where funders' core missions meet our shared values.

These include:

- Food Partners: In Molenbeek, food is not a side dish, it is a cultural connector, a ritual of trust, a platform for regeneration. Funders co-create inclusive culinary labs where meals foster climate care, ancestral pride and inter-generational exchange.
Superdiversity Kitchen (Creole Sadaka) MB2030 blends cooking and storytelling in a series of events that transform Molenbeek into an open kitchen and shared dining space, where food becomes a lens through which to explore roots and displacements as well as food's intersections with religion, arts, culture, sports, ecology, education, political resistance and the public space.
- Logistics: Logistics in Molenbeek is reimagined, not for speed, but for dignity. With young people at the centre, partners are invited to co-develop neighbourhood-based delivery systems and zero-emission routes.

The *Homes of European Sadaka* (Equal Sadaka) seek to connect out-of-use or in-between-use buildings to the Molenbeek community and Europe, offering housing and accommodation, cultural programmes and artistic interventions.

- **Technology:** Technology in Molenbeek is not about control, but about connection. Funders help to prototype inclusive tools - apps, data platforms, open-source software - that expand access, amplify voices and turn digital infrastructure into civic engagement.

L3XICoN oF e_u (Brave Sadaka) A single-channel digital video installation with algorithmic editing system and computing, an attempt to co-create a digital mirror of tomorrow's superdiverse Europe and a translingual lexicon for cities, continents and territories which are not unified by language, religion or political structures.

- **Infrastructure:** Infrastructure becomes emotional capital. Charging stations become meeting hubs, public benches are reimagined as social anchors. Funders support spaces that hold meaning, welcome difference and create what we call Return on Involvement.

Edible Playgrounds (Equal Sadaka) Europe's inner child is invited to come out and play at a new generation of artist- or community-initiated, public or semi-public playgrounds, co-designed with children in unexpected ways via a transnational open call.

- **Social Economy & Staffing:** MB2030 is a human laboratory for the future of work. From soft-skill incubators to inclusive HR models, funders support eco-systems where empathy and intercultural fluency are valued as strategic capital.

Breeding Ground Molenbeek (Equal Sadaka) In dialogue with Europe's creative and cultural industrial complex to activate creative employment in the Molenbeeks of Europe, *Breeding Ground Molenbeek* reinvents the concept of the market in collaboration with artisans, farmers and entrepreneurs from Molenbeek and Europe.

- **Media & Visibility:** Visibility is power - and who gets to tell the story can play a key role. Funders collaborate on community media hubs, storytelling formats and hybrid media events that centre voices and foster new public imaginaries across Europe.

1001 Flying Carpets (Equal Sadaka (with radio station)) *1001 Flying Carpets* unites two active community-building elements: first, a travelling installation developed around the creation of carpets; second, a social radio project.

- **Culture & Stages:** MB2030 is a stage for the unexpected. Through open calls and radical cultural programmes, funders empower artists and communities to occupy the cultural space - transforming streets, spaces and stages into living theatres of belonging.

Year of Parades, Ceremonies and Rituals (specifically: closing parade of Sadaka - 26.12.2030 - Brave Sadaka) In a 4-year trajectory, starting in 2026, the Molenbeek- and Brussels-based organisations Zinneke, Park Poétik, MetX and MolenLight as well as their European partners will explore contemporary forms of parades, celebrations and shared rituals, resulting in a neo-parade, with a future-oriented, speculative twist.

Across these domains, funders are not 'sponsors' but systemic allies - integrated into storytelling, advisory roles, testing grounds and community rituals. Each contribution helps to design Europe's most generous cultural laboratory, where every act of giving sparks shared ownership, mutual learning and deep belonging.

A Movement, Not a Marketplace

MB2030 is not selling sponsorship - it is cultivating stewardship. The Generous Funding Family is not a donor list, but a community of engaged partners who grow with the project: through time, trust and shared transformation. Key funders and institutional partners are already engaged.

MB2030 is not waiting to begin - it is already growing. With a clear roadmap, early funder traction and a Generous Funding Family that embodies Sadaka in action, we are shaping a European future where generosity is not an exception, but the new norm.

On June 17, 2025, MB2030, in collaboration with the private members club TheMerode, organized an introductory evening attended by 46 companies. The importance of this ECoC project was emphasized by several CEOs, including Ms. Hilde Vernailen (CEO of P&V Insurance & Foundation), Mr. Philippe Andrianne (Co-CEO of JC Decaux), and Ms. Lynn Tytgat (CEO of TheMerode). Entrepreneurs with their origin in Molenbeek were invited. The event was co-organized with the support of various umbrella business organizations. In the coming period, these contacts will be further developed with the aim of securing commitments in the form of letters of support and letters of intent.

Key funder moments such as *MolenFest* and twice-yearly funder gatherings anchor the annual rhythm of engagement with funders. *MolenFest* will serve as the seed annual event to grow the Generous Funding Family.

Organizations active in the social economy sector within the BCR have collaborated on a charter outlining the opportunities for cooperation between the ECoC 2030 project and the broader sector members. This initiative was carried out under the auspices of the P&V Group.

Q23

OPERATING EXPENDITURE: PLEASE PROVIDE A BREAKDOWN OF THE OPERATING EXPENDITURE, BY FILLING IN THE TABLE BELOW.

Programme expenditure (in euros)	Programme expenditure (in %)	Promotion and marketing (in euros)	Promotion and marketing (in %)	Wages, overheads, administration (in euros)	Wages, overheads, administration (in %)	Other - reserve (in euro)	Other - reserve (in %)	Total of the operating expenditure
61,709,130.00	63%	18,610,690.00	19%	13,713,140.00	14%	3,918,040.00	4%	97,951,000.00

Q24

PLANNED TIMETABLE FOR SPENDING OPERATING EXPENDITURE

Timetable for spending operating expenditure	Programme expenditure (in euros)	Programme expenditure (in %)	Marketing and promotion expenditure (in euros)	Marketing and promotion expenditure (in %)	Wages, overheads, administration (in euros)	Wages, overheads, administration (in %)	Other - reserve (in euro)	Other - reserve (in %)
2025	123,418.26	0.20%	186,106.90	1.00%	1,298,634.36	9.47%	117,541.20	3.00%
2026	1,542,728.25	2.50%	465,267.25	2.50%	1,097,051.20	8.00%	195,902.00	5.00%
2027	3,085,456.50	5.00%	1,302,748.30	7.00%	1,234,182.60	9.00%	235,082.40	6.00%
2028	5,553,821.70	9.00%	1,674,962.10	9.00%	1,782,708.20	13.00%	274,262.80	7.00%
2029	18,235,047.92	29.55%	5,583,207.00	30.00%	2,742,628.00	20.00%	470,164.80	12.00%
2030	26,843,471.55	43.50%	7,165,115.65	38.50%	3,775,227.44	27.53%	1,253,772.80	32.00%
2031	4,936,730.40	8.00%	1,473,966.65	7.92%	1,234,182.60	9.00%	1,175,412.00	30.00%
2032	1,388,455.43	2.25%	759,316.15	4.08%	548,525.60	4.00%	195,902.00	5.00%
Total	61,709,130.00	100.00%	18,610,690.00	100.00%	13,713,140.00	100.00%	3,918,040.00	100%

Programme

From 2025 onwards, investments in the cultural programme will be increased systematically, with the aim of reaching a peak in 2030. The programme is structured in such a way that expenses always remain in line with the available budget. The year 2029 is considered a crucial preparatory year, with a specific budget

allocated to carefully support the transition to 2030. The funds provided for the programme include not only artistic content, but also the mobilization of additional staff, the artists, their technical and logistical teams, and other necessary suppliers. It is important to emphasize that costs for the cultural programme are essentially also investments in people and communities.

Labour Costs

The labour costs in the budget (table Q24) concern exclusively the remuneration of the overhead staff, i.e. staff responsible for the operational running of the project. MB2030 takes into account an average all-in labour cost for an FTE of €70,000 over the entire period.

In addition to structural wages (table Q24), the other budget lines for programme and communication include labour costs for artists, their teams and external service providers. The table in Q32 lists all staff.

Marketing and Promotion

The budgetary ramifications of MB2030's communication approach are firmly centred on staff for expansive community engagement and advanced digital infrastructures, capturing most of the financial investment. Substantial funds will be allocated to initiatives like multilingual digital platforms, inclusive communication systems, mobile digital solidarity hubs, augmented reality (AR) experiences and community-driven hackathons, each designed to promote accessibility, participation and innovation. High-cost components include the sophisticated MB2030 App, our avatar AR explorations and international pop-up events, as well as comprehensive multilingual support services and real-time audience analytics, reflecting the priority placed on ensuring seamless, inclusive engagement for diverse audiences at both local and European scales. Investments in traditional mass-marketing will be made, only where we find it imperative to be present and communicate.

Conversely, the budget is designed to minimize expenditure on narrowly targeted digital advertising. Instead, strategic emphasis, and thus more significant financial resources, are placed on fostering emotional resonance and spontaneous viral sharing through community storytelling, collaborative events and innovative yet accessible technologies, ensuring maximum impact while responsibly stewarding the allocated funds.

Unforeseen Expenses

Given the complexity of the project, a sensible amount is set aside annually for unforeseen circumstances. These may include variations in subsidies, delays in deliveries, budgetary uncertainties, an additional last-minute programme part

or other external factors with a financial impact. Over the entire duration, this reserve amounts to 4% of the total budget.

Unused reserves are automatically transferred to the next financial year. At the end of 2032, all remaining funds will have been reinvested in the project.

Q25

WHAT IS THE BREAKDOWN OF THE INCOME TO BE RECEIVED FROM THE PUBLIC SECTOR TO COVER CAPITAL EXPENDITURE IN CONNECTION WITH THE TITLE YEAR? PLEASE FILL IN THE TABLE BELOW:

Income from the public sector to cover capital expenditure	in euros	%
Belgian Federal Government (Beliris)	10,929,559.75	4.28%
Brussels-Capital Region	236,928,220.34	92.70%
City of Molenbeek	1,587,255.55	0.62%
EU (with the exception of the Melina Mercouri Prize)	6,150,365.00	2.41%
Total	255,595,400.64	100%

Q26

HAVE THE PUBLIC FINANCE AUTHORITIES (CITY, REGION, STATE) ALREADY VOTED ON OR MADE FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS TO COVER CAPITAL EXPENDITURE? IF NOT, WHEN WILL THEY DO SO?

All investments listed in table Q29 are formalized commitments.

Q27

WHAT IS YOUR FUNDRAISING STRATEGY TO SEEK FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM UNION PROGRAMMES/FUNDS TO COVER CAPITAL EXPENDITURE?

In the last nine months we focused on the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), including ESF (European Social Fund) and ERDF (European Regional Development Fund) that are the most suitable policy instruments to finance capital expenditure, and the instruments prioritized by MB2030 when

fundraising to cover capital expenditure. In the BCR, these instruments are administered by the ERDF Unit of the Brussels Regional Public Service in the case of ERDF, and by Actiris, the Brussels Employment Office, in the case of ESF. Molenbeek as a geographical and political unit is an eligible beneficiary of ERDF and ESF due to its statistics, and will liaise, together with the MB2030 foundation, with the regional authorities at the BCR level to align regional investments with the policy goals of the Creative Sadaka cultural strategy and the needs of the MB2030 for the title year. This coordination group includes regional and municipal political bodies and their representatives, as well as strategic organizations like citydev.brussels (the BCR's development agency, an independent but publicly owned organization) and Innoviris (the public organization that funds and supports research and innovation in the BCR), or regional public service providers such as VIVAQUA (the public company which produces and distributes drinking water in the BCR) or the Brussels Intercommunal Transport Company (which manages public transportation regionally).

Following the transparent procedures associated with the disbursement of these public funding sources, MB2030 collaborates with partners to directly allocate funding to capital expenditures when legally appropriate to do so and develop joint funding applications. This will result in concrete, practical applications, such as the purchase and renovation of the future Visitor Centre, or social employment and training projects part of the *Homes of European Sadaka*. The specific examples of what infrastructure receives which investment for which purpose is detailed from Q25 to Q29 and in Chapter 6.

We will also look at interregional funding programmes in which the BCR participates: Interreg North-West Europe; Interreg Europe; European Urban Initiative (EUI) and URBACT and their funding opportunities to develop European projects bridging capital and operating expenditures, also offering the business, urban development and research communities engaged in our project to be an active part of its European dimension via knowledge exchange and innovation development.

Q28
ACCORDING TO WHAT TIMETABLE SHOULD THE INCOME TO COVER CAPITAL EXPENDITURE BE RECEIVED BY THE CITY AND/OR THE BODY RESPONSIBLE FOR PREPARING AND IMPLEMENTING THE ECOC PROJECT IF THE CITY RECEIVES THE TITLE OF EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE? PLEASE FILL IN THE TABLE BELOW.

Source of income for capital expenditure	Year 2025	Year 2026	Year 2027	Year 2028	Year 2029	Year 2030
Belgian Federal Government (Beliris)	€ 2,500,000.00			€ 8,429,559.75		
Brussels-Capital Region	€ 25,000,000.00	€ 198,000,000.00	€ 4,300,000.00	€ 9,628,220.34		
City of Molenbeek					€ 1,587,255.55	
EU (with the exception of the Melina Mercouri Prize)					€ 6,150,365.00	

Q29

IF APPROPRIATE, PLEASE INSERT A TABLE HERE THAT SPECIFIES WHICH AMOUNTS WILL BE SPENT FOR NEW CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE TO BE USED IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE TITLE YEAR

Envisioned date (Q26)	Amount in euros as decided (Q29)	Public finance authority (Q29)	Location	Destination
2025	€ 2,500,000.00	Belgian Federal Government (Beliris)	Brasserie Vandenheuvel	Visitor Centre: The project will combine ticket office, micro-expositions room, head office
2028	€ 8,429,559.75	Belgian Federal Government (Beliris)	Birmingham/Manchester	Creative Sadaka Street - Alternative artistic hub
	€ 10,929,559.75	Total Belgian Federal Government (Beliris)		
2025	€ 25,000,000.00	Brussels-Capital Region	KANAL - Centre Pompidou (Phase 1)	Blockbuster exhibition space
2026	€ 198,000,000.00	Brussels-Capital Region	KANAL - Centre Pompidou (Phase 2)	Blockbuster exhibition space
2027	€ 4,300,000.00	Brussels-Capital Region	Westpark	Creation of a new public park on the former West Station railway wasteland
2029	€ 8,040,964.79	Brussels-Capital Region	House of Cultures and Social Cohesion	Extension to local cultural centre
2029	€ 1,587,255.55	Brussels-Capital Region	Parc de la Fonderie	Open space around the park
	€ 236,928.220,34	Total Brussels-Capital Region		
2029	€ 1,300,000.00	EU (Feder)	House of Cultures and Social Cohesion	Extension to Local Cultural Centre
2029	€ 4,850,365.00	EU (Feder)	Birmingham/Manchester	Creative Sadaka Street - Alternative artistic hub
	€ 6,150,365.00	Total EU (Feder)		
2029	€ 1,587,255.55	City of Molenbeek	House of Cultures and Social Cohesion	Extension to Local Cultural Centre
	€ 1,587,255.55	Total City of Molenbeek		
2026-2032		SPRB	Ropsy Chaudron, Résidence Leopold II, Institut Imedla	Home of European Sadaka
2027-2032		Free usage	Church of Saint-Rémi, Universal Church of the Kingdom of God	Home of European Sadaka
2027-2032		Free usage	Town Square, Parvis, Grande Halle, Scheutbos, Parc Porte de Ninove	Sadaka in open spaces
	€ 255,595,400.64	Grand Total		

Q30**WHAT KIND OF GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY STRUCTURE IS EN-VISAGED FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE YEAR?**

In recent months, following extensive research, the decision was taken to establish a Foundation of Public Utility (FPU; Stichting van openbaar nut/Fondation d'utilité publique). This legal structure was carefully selected in view of Molenbeek's potential designation as ECoC2030. Once this designation is confirmed, the bylaws of the FPU - meticulously prepared by tax law expert Peter Verbanck of Verbanck, Plas & Partners - will be implemented in October 2025. The final date for establishment is 1 January 2026. The foundation's mission is to serve the public good in a sustainable and socially relevant manner.

Its activities are of course strictly non-commercial and designed to create broad societal value. To ensure transparency and accountability, a double-entry analytical accounting system applying the Belgian GAAP will be used, with annual publication with the Belgian National Bank of both the financial statements and the social balance sheet. Furthermore, a company auditor, will be nominated. Choosing the FPU as legal form provides access to specific tax benefits granted by the government, while supporting a rigorous operational framework.

An FPU is not subject to corporate tax, can be exempt from property tax and is authorized to receive donations and legacies, for which reduced tax rates or even full exemptions apply. Once the foundation is officially recognized by the Federal Public Service Finance, donations become tax-deductible (within certain limits) for donors in their personal tax return.

According to the Code of Companies and Associations, an FPU has two legal organs of representation: the Board (mandatory) and the Daily Management (operational). Furthermore, within the FPU organization, three committees will be established: an Advisory Committee, a Remuneration Committee, and a Patronage Committee. The FPU can participate in other legal entities.

Q31**HOW WILL THIS STRUCTURE BE ORGANISED AT MANAGEMENT LEVEL? PLEASE MAKE CLEAR WHO WILL BE THE PERSON(S) HAVING THE FINAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR GLOBAL LEADERSHIP OF THE PROJECT?**

A Board should ideally make decisions collegially, with the chair ensuring clear decision-making. Board decisions must be made based on a two-thirds majority, as explicitly stipulated in the bylaws.

The Board

holds the ultimate legal responsibility for the foundation. It is chaired by a remunerated president, has at least three members and may include up to four additional members. Board members are appointed through a transparent selection process, based on their international (particularly European) profiles and their relevant expertise in leading large-scale cultural initiatives. The Board's appointment and its activities are overseen by two government commissioners and one representative; one from the Cabinet of the Minister-President of the BCR alongside a commissioner under the BCR Budget Minister and a representative of the City of Molenbeek. They attend all Board meetings without voting rights. Through the Advisory, Patronage and Remuneration Committees, the government commissioners and the representative of the City of Molenbeek also have access to all relevant decisions, ensuring transparency, oversight and coordination between public entities.

Operational leadership

is entrusted to the Management consisting of up to four members: an Artistic Director, a Business Director, an External Relations Director and an Operations Director. The Management is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of both the artistic vision and the business strategy, with the bidbook as guiding document. It reports directly to the Board and the Advisory and Patronage Committees, ensuring transparency and accountability. The chair invites the management to the board meetings.

The Business Director

is responsible for the full implementation of the financial plan and ensures that the financial results align with the budget. She/He is also accountable for the administrative operations.

The Artistic

Director guarantees the execution of the artistic plan as described in the bidbook.

The Director

of External Relations is responsible for marketing, communication and relations with all stakeholders.

The Operational

Director ensures that all necessary actions leading to flawless execution are well coordinated.

The Advisory

Committee ensures the involvement of all relevant stakeholders and alignment with the Bidbook, the project's guiding document.

The Remuneration Committee

ensures a fair and responsible compensation policy within the FPU.

The Patronage Committee

comprises individuals who support the foundation through financial contributions or other forms of engagement.

This governance structure

guarantees clear accountability, efficient operations and meaningful stakeholder engagement, essential elements for the successful delivery of a project of this scale and significance.

See Organisation chart on page 82.

Q32

HOW WILL YOU ENSURE THAT THIS STRUCTURE HAS THE STAFF WITH THE APPROPRIATE SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE TO PLAN, MANAGE AND DELIVER THE CULTURAL PROGRAMME FOR THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE PROJECT?

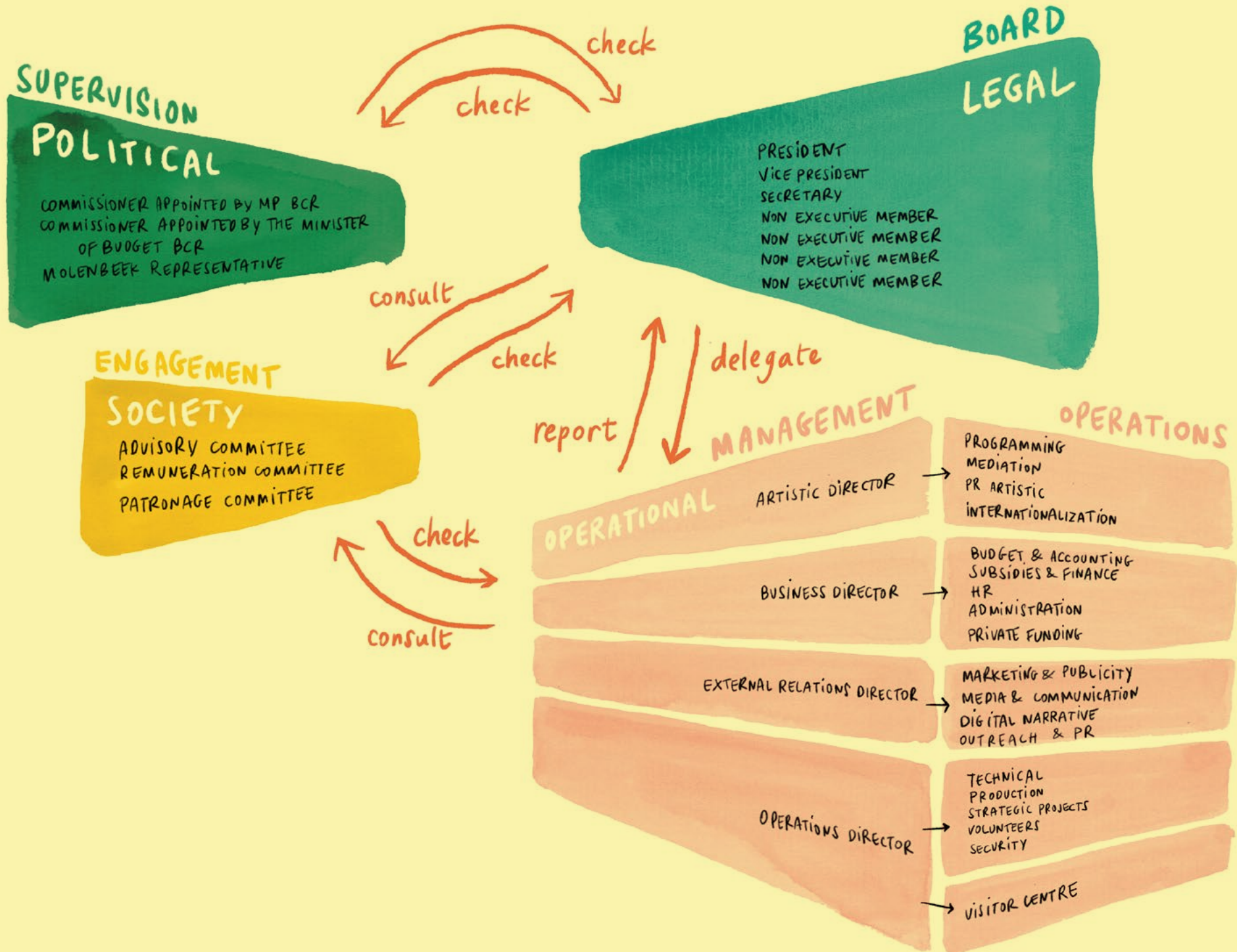
The statutory organization of the FPU ensures an efficient, transparent and well-coordinated operation across all levels of management and governance. The day-to-day implementation of the project is carried out by a network of specialized operational teams. The Visitor Centre will get its own team.

All operational teams are composed of professionals employed through formal contracts with the organization. Recruitment is led by the HR department and follows a coherent and consistent HR and payroll policy. When specific expertise or senior-level experience is required, international recruitment calls will be issued to attract highly qualified professionals.

Staffing levels across the teams will scale proportionally with the annual budget. Each team operates according to a self-management principle: every member is individually accountable while also contributing to shared team objectives. This structure deviates from the traditional top-down hierarchy favouring an inclusive and democratic process. Members are encouraged to take on multiple roles, increasing the team's flexibility and effectiveness.

In addition to contracted staff, volunteers with relevant skills will be engaged to support specific tasks. This flexible, scalable and multidisciplinary structure ensures that the organization is equipped at all times with the right expertise to successfully plan, manage and deliver the cultural programme at the highest level.

See Organisation chart on page 83.



Planned in Q24	19	16	18	25	39	54	18	8
Total	7	18	22	33	51	77	28	9
Year	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Business	1	4	5	6	10	13	8	1
Director	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Budget & Accounting	0	1	1	1	2	2	1	0
Subsidies & Finance	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	0
HR	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	0
Administration	1	1	1	1	3	4	3	0
Private funding	0	0	1	2	2	2	0	0
Artistic	2	5	6	8	14	19	7	2
Director	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Programming	1	2	2	3	5	8	2	1
Mediation	0	2	2	2	3	5	2	0
PR Artistic	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	0
Internationalization	0	0	1	2	3	3	1	0
External Relations	3	5	5	6	7	12	3	2
Director	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Marketing & Publicity	1	1	1	2	2	3	1	1
Media & communication	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0
Digital narrative	0	2	2	2	2	3	1	0
Outreach & PR	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
Operations	1	4	5	9	15	25	8	3
Director	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1
Technical	0	0	0	2	4	6	2	1
Production	1	2	2	3	4	8	2	1
Strategic projects	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	0
Volunteers	0	1	1	1	1	4	1	0
Security	0	0	1	1	4	4	1	0
Visitor Centre	0	0	1	4	5	8	2	1
Visitor Centre	0	0	1	4	5	8	2	1

Q33

HOW WILL YOU MAKE SURE THAT THERE IS AN APPROPRIATE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THIS STRUCTURE, INCLUDING THE ARTISTIC TEAM?

The authorities of the City of Molenbeek and the BCR play a pivotal role in selecting the Board members and in recruiting both the Business Director and Artistic Director as precisely outlined in the FPU bylaws. Recruitments and dismissals within the executive management are decisions strictly reserved for the Board.

From the outset of the FPU, these authorities will be actively involved - just as they were during the previous period - to maintain and strengthen their confidence in its governance and they will have access to all decisions made by the Board.

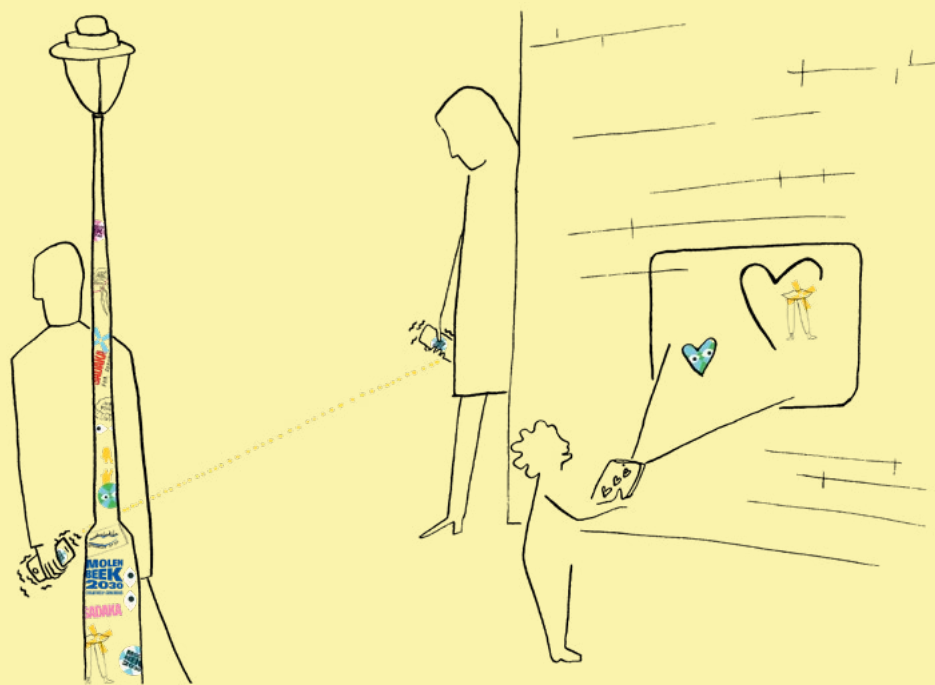
Within the FPU, an Advisory Committee will be established, comprising local residents with various expertise, local politicians and representatives of the artistic team. This Committee offers constructive feedback on ongoing and future projects.

The FPU bylaws require the Management to submit a detailed interim report every six months to both the City of Molenbeek and the Brussels regional government. This report includes the financial status, a summary of completed and upcoming artistic activities, an evaluation of community engagement - including participation data and survey results - as well as the identification of challenges and suggested corrective measures. The bidbook serves as the compass and guiding document for all decisions concerning the FPU.

Q34**ACCORDING TO WHICH CRITERIA AND UNDER WHICH ARRANGEMENTS HAVE THE GENERAL DIRECTOR AND THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR BEEN CHOSEN - OR WILL BE CHOSEN? WHAT ARE - OR WILL BE - THEIR RESPECTIVE PROFILES? WHEN WILL THEY TAKE UP THE APPOINTMENT? WHAT WILL BE THEIR RESPECTIVE FIELDS OF ACTION?**

As explained in Q30, a new FPU will be established once Molenbeek is officially awarded the title. This process starts with the appointment of a Business Director. The current mandates of Jan Goossens (Artistic Director) and Fatima Zibouh (External Relations Director) are confirmed until 30 June 2026. The Management of the FPU will consist of four members. Jan Goossens and Fatima Zibouh- together with representatives of the BCR and the City of Molenbeek- will lead the establishment of the new structure once the title has been officially granted to Molenbeek.

The Business Director must demonstrate outstanding financial expertise also with public finance, strategic leadership and proven experience in managing complex, large-scale projects. The role entails ensuring transparent budgeting, aligning the different stakeholders and managing resources effectively.



The Artistic Director must bring a compelling and coherent artistic vision, paired with deep cultural and social sensitivity. A solid track record in curating multidisciplinary, large-scale artistic programmes is essential. The Artistic Director must fully embrace the artistic concept presented in the bidbook and possess the professional network and expertise necessary to further shape and realize that vision. This role involves curating and implementing the artistic programme, fostering collaboration with both established and emerging artists, and ensuring the content remains aligned with the bid's core values. The position requires a careful balance between artistic ambition and strategic, financial and organizational responsibilities.

The Director of External Relations leads the strategic development and management of partnerships, communications, and stakeholder engagement for Molenbeek's ECoC 2030 project. This role is responsible for building strong relationships with local, national, and international institutions, cultural networks, sponsors, and media. The director ensures coherent messaging, promotes the project's vision, and maximizes visibility and support across diverse audiences. Any vacant executive positions must be filled exclusively through an international open call, conducted with full transparency and broad public communication. Candidates who successfully complete the procedure will be validated by the Advisory Committee, the Board and finally by the Minister-President of the BCR, the primary subsidizer.

Q35 & 36:**HAVE YOU CARRIED OUT/PLANNED A RISK ASSESSMENT EXERCISE? WHAT ARE YOUR PLANNED MITIGATING MEASURES?**

Yes. Working from the feedback of the expert panel's report at the pre-selection stage, we have carried out a preliminary risk assessment exercise. In close cooperation with the non-profit municipal organization Brussels Major Events (BME), we gained experience in organizing large-scale public events and supporting public stakeholders. The exercise included a dialogue with different political, security, communication, logistics and eco-responsibility partners, and will be regularly revised en route to 2028 in order to be ready by 2030.

Risk analysis	Mitigation plan	
Risks and sources of risk	Measures	Responsible partner & Follow-up
Resilience & production risks		
Cultural infrastructure is insufficient due to lack of local venues prepared for world-class cultural productions.	Programme design mapped the following outdoor public space infrastructure as major cultural venues for event production: Place St Jean Baptiste; Town Square; Rue Sainte Marie; streets along the Canal; Chaussée de Gand; park and courtyard of Karreveld Castle; Scheutbos Park; Grande Halle and RWDM Stadium. Collaboration with Visit Brussels, organizers the Pride Brussels (70,000 annual visitors).	MB2030 asbl vzw and City of Molenbeek, with set-up of logistics task force for public space maintenance and use.
Uncertainties about adverse/extreme weather, pandemics or other force majeure complications.	Each project programme has a contingency plan designed for postponement or indoor adaptation due to weather, or force majeure, and cancellation insurance. Use of Brussels Major Events weather early communication system for Winter Wonders, the winter market with 4 million visitors.	MB2030 asbl vzw and Brussels Major Events in continuous dialogue.
Strikes block mobility of staff, talent or audiences (airport, public transport).	Plan for the rerouting of talent via national or international airports within 2 hours-distance, e.g. Charleroi, Lille, Eindhoven, Maastricht. Stimulate bike riding.	MB2030 asbl vzw with Production partners, internal production meetings.
Safety & security risks		
Threats, harassment, violence, or aggressive behaviour in public space, preventing vehicle attacks.	Police conducts site-specific risk analysis and deploys safety protocols to plan emergency services accordingly, including safe and barrier zones. Plans are based on de-escalation and non-violent conflict resolution techniques, complemented by an early warning system connected to volunteer teams.	MB2030 asbl vzw with Production partners, Victim Support Service (SCAV), in collaborative planning with police department for Gender, LGBTQIA+ and inclusion.
Crowd management is difficult, number of visitors exceeds capacity, evacuation routes are blocked.	Safety protocols designed by emergency services and police, based on maximum allowed capacity of production partners, as well as goodwill and consultation between the stakeholder (Port of Brussels, police, Bruxelles Mobilité, STIB-MIVB) and emergency response disciplines.	
Medical services, food safety experts and fire assistance.	Emergency medical services handled by Intensive Care and Emergency Medical Assistance (SIAMU), Fire department and subcontractors (e.g. Red Cross), operating joint Crisis centre. Food providers required a 'street trading' licence from Molenbeek's safety permit organization AFSCA.	Emergency and security partners, setting-up agreements.
Concerns about children and young people attending or participating.	Safety protocols for children developed in dialogue with emergency services and police, particularly for children-focused projects (e.g. <i>Young Song of Europe</i> or <i>European Summer Circus Troupe</i>). Setting-up 'lost children' area protocols and safe(r) space guidelines regarding alcohol or drug abuse.	MB2030 asbl vzw and Production partners, with Internal production meetings.
Staff and volunteer safety.	Internal code of conduct signed by all staff, detailing legal rights and responsibilities, relating to Equal treatment, anti-harassment and anti-corruption policies in place at MB2030.	MB2030 asbl vzw with monitoring and update of internal code of conduct
Sabotage, demonstrations, riots or terrorism.	Post-2016 practice of requesting event organizers (own staff, staff of production partners, talent) to provide ID and national registration for state security check, and enhanced security measures and electronic early warning systems, including exercises by anti-terrorist units and data department of the police.	Emergency and security partners, with risk monitoring by Safe Brussels (regional security organization).

Risk analysis	Mitigation plan	
Risks & sources of risk	Measures	Key responsible partner
Cybersecurity & communication risks		
Cybersecurity threats, e.g. AI-driven assaults to disrupt data management, supply chains, broadcasts or ticketing.	Enhancing digital platform for early-threat detection, collaboration with regional authorities and Federal Computer Crime Unit on intelligence-sharing, vigilance against phishing, online fraud and misinformation campaigns communicated on official MB2030 channels.	MB2030 asbl vzw, with Emergency and security partners, with continuous monitoring of risks.
The ECoC project and Molenbeek are the target of populist/ xenophobic misinformation campaigns.	Close collaboration with communication departments at municipal, regional and institutional level to counteract misinformation campaigns via coordinated crisis efforts, dialogue with CUTA (Coordination Unit for Threat Analysis), the Belgian body for analysing the terrorist and extremist threat.	MB2030 asbl vzw and Production partners, with continuous risk monitoring.
Political & governance risks		
Complex bureaucratic and political relations complicate financial allocations and implementation of activities.	Political agreements established across the political spectrum, with funding decisions approved. Extra agreements with Flemish and Walloon regional authorities. Continuous monitoring of governmental negotiations/ processes at BCR level, via the MB2030 board in dialogue with specialized advisers.	MB2030 asbl vzw, with new high-level meetings with political parties upon selection.
Regional institutions take over the process from local/ independent cultural agents.	Programme establishes a majority of production partners in Molenbeek for each project, with major institutions in a support role.	MB2030 asbl vzw, with continuous monitoring.
Socio-economic fragility and its challenges (perceived or actual criminality, systemic violence conflicts).	Dialogue between police forces and youngsters led by Molenbeek-based JES, their project Community Policing Without Borders, and their work on increasing diversity within police forces through recruitment and involvement of local police closer to certain communities. Prevention of safety of residents/ visitors through participation.	MB2030 asbl vzw and Emergency and security partner, with continuous monitoring of risks.
Gentrification of the Canal zone due to MB2030 contributes to the exclusion of local residents.	Guidance by regional and local authorities to property developers, promoting mixed-housing and mixed-use buildings, with social and market pricing offers. Investment of Generous Family Funding programmes in local employment and training.	BCR and MB2030 asbl vzw, with continuous alignment of development plans with MB2030 goals.

Q37

COULD YOUR ARTISTIC PROGRAMME BE SUMMED UP BY A SLOGAN?

Creatively Generous is the summary of our artistic program. The two parts are equally important. 'Creatively' indicates this is not a charity campaign but an artistic gesture, favouring creation and not reproduction. And creation is not seen as the domain of artists only but as a creative act from a wide range of actors and agents in civil society. Generous is giving without expecting a return, giving in abundance. Generous creativity is what Molenbeek has to offer in abundance

and what Europe needs. By the end of MB2030 we will have flipped the script: the perception of Europe will have shifted by the integration of creative generosity into the European set of values. Without being creatively generous you cannot be European in 2031.

Our artistic program could also be summed up by an image. Take any picture of Mous Lamrabet in this bidbook, e.g. the one on pg. 53, closing the artistic program. It pictures The Champions, as the two Burundian asylum seekers are

called in their SAMUSOCIAL housing complex. They train on the athletics tracks in Molenbeek and ended up first and third at the 20 km of Brussels 2025. The picture is taken against the backdrop of a tyre shop on Chaussée de Gand, an aesthetic gesture playing with shapes and forms, with refugees and real trophies and an artist catching their dream of defending the Belgian colors as athletes. This is Creatively Generous in action.

Q38

WHAT IS THE CITY'S INTENDED MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE YEAR, IN PARTICULAR WITH REGARD TO THE MEDIA STRATEGY AND THE MOBILISATION OF LARGE AUDIENCES? THIS INCLUDES THE USE OF DIGITAL COMMUNICATION CHANNELS.

From first ripple to full tide: Planting generosity at the heart of Europe

Promoting Molenbeek on a large scale today is no easy task. Molenbeek's story keeps getting retold, but rarely by the people who live it. We flip that script once and for all. Rooted in Sadaka, we invite all Europeans to look through Molenbeek's window and see a continent that is already hyper-diverse, collaborative and wired for solidarity. From our perspective, Molenbeek is not a problem to be fixed but a generosity engine waiting to run at European scale. Therein we find our strength: this is a people's project, propelling on people power. Yes, institutions, authorities, political frictions and fringe groups in our region and beyond complicate the picture. But when the going gets tough, we get resourceful and bring what we have to the table. Because generosity is a creative force of nature, running on a renewable source that lets a small district in the heart of Europe, light up a continent.

So we break through the noise with kindness and authenticity, and bring - with all of us - the real Molenbeek to the forefront. The one we know and we are proud of. And you are invited to come, discover, explore, join and share it, together. That is the mission of our communication and marketing strategy. Flipping the script is our *modus operandi*, it is not a slogan. We create a counter-narrative for Molenbeek, by creating and boosting much needed stories of optimism, hope and solidarity.

We have piloted local events, such as the community Iftar dinner, and co-created artistic projects for *MolenFest* 2024 and 2025, demonstrating how generosity sparks authentic connections, locally, internationally and digitally. Now fortified by digital innovation, not as an extension or derivative but as an inherent core component in everything we do, our strategic communication goals, anchored in actionable projects and actions, are:

Sharing the Creatively Generous brand - one message, many voices

Everything now rallies behind our purpose-driven baseline Creatively Generous. It is intuitively comprehensible, relatable, indisputably inclusive and a fertile common ground to initiate any connection. It should be known that Molenbeek is both creative and generous. This approach works, as MolenVibes shows, a hyper-locally publicly crowdsourced playlist that you can listen to on our Spotify. We counter algorithmic exclusion by working with community-led recommendation engines and open-source editorial boards, as in Digital Sadaka, ensuring that even the quietest voices find amplification.

Increasing audience engagement through Concentric Ripple Communications

Molenbeek is used to controversy; to us it is an opportunity to engage. We have learned from experience that while outrage is often loud, solidarity speaks deeper: gatherings like our cross-cultural Iftar sparked backlash from some, but hope for many more. In this case, it was through a viral wave of interactions on TikTok, breathing fresh air and new perspectives into young people, thirsty for unity and connection, from countries with highly polarized mediascapes.

So, communication for MB2030 moves outward, like ripples caused by a pebble dropped into the Canal. Each authentic message originates in Molenbeek, co-created with residents and local creative partners like BubbleTech, Yume House and Molenzine, and spreads across local, national and European layers. Our audiences are already internationally connected through family, friends and professional links. They are accustomed to pan-European messages and connections, and are ready to use those connections.

And it works. Throughout 2024 and 2025 our multilayered and decentralized communication strategy includes everyone from local WhatsApp groups to mainstream European media like Euronews, ARTE and influencer endorsements. Our experience has also taught us that part of our challenge lies in siloed com-

munication channels created for separate audiences. These silos lose their relevance the moment we bring authentic and real-life generosity into the conversation. We found that generosity connects people on an emotional level and speaks directly to the person, blurring dividing labels, and moves them to sharing, resulting in organic virality. Narrowly targeted digital advertising, now a standard practice, in fact excludes many eyes and voices, reinforcing digital echo chambers and filter bubbles. That is why we deliberately diversify our approach:

- * Our innermost circle includes residents often invisible to mainstream media and digital algorithms: people rooted in the Global South or Eastern Europe, NEET youth, LGBTQIA+ community members, single parents, undocumented neighbours, disabled residents, and seniors eager to contribute. Initiatives like Papy Boom's Olympiades and the *In.Out.Sider* festival actively connect these groups, empowering them to amplify authentic messages within their own communities.
- * A second circle includes the million residents and four million annual visitors who easily reach Molenbeek by public transport, bike or ride-sharing, drawn by authentic local experiences. Here again, informal family, friend, and diaspora networks amplify our stories into the wider region.
- * The third circle reaches 60 million Europeans within two hours by train or short flight. We've defined four personas: cultural adventurers (connoisseurs and Gen-Z explorers), transmetropolitan weekend explorers and volunteer hosts, budget-conscious extended families, and friends on the screen. Each receives tailored messaging, seamless booking paths, multilingual MB2030-app support, and strategies to activate their own networks, ensuring our message authentically spreads across Europe's social fabric.
- * Finally, our fourth circle stretches beyond Europe's borders. Through Molenbeek's diverse families of Moroccan, Turkish, Ukrainian and Congolese origin, our community naturally weaves into a rich transnational fabric. Through the daily interactions and digital conversations of family, friends and relatives, MB2030 remains continuously present and relevant within these international communities.

Central to our communication approach is mutual understanding. We actively nurture exchanges between residents and visitors through international tandem projects or a buddy-system. As said, many Molenbeek residents are, on a daily basis, used to bridging worlds seemingly apart.



Activating digital diasporas, engaging Europeans through pop-up experiences and persona-powered journeys

Engagement starts with sparking curiosity, gently inviting participation and leading to lasting advocacy. Our messaging flows with the Canal, seasons, school year, and the title year, always staying in rhythm.

Beyond personal networks, our outreach thrives on public pop-ups: roaming murals in Murals Valley, canal-boat festivals touring Europe with Zinneke, and traveling soup kitchens sharing recipes for Superdiversity Kitchen. JCDcaux screens

at Brussels Airport offer visitors live glimpses of Molenbeek's roaring cultural energy. These pop-up experiences foster mutual understanding by connecting distant communities through shared cultural moments and real exchanges.

Real-time insights from transparently sourced data - from our apps, visitors' behaviour and their instant feedback, web analytics, online listening and digital monitoring tools - enable quick communication shifts, enriching and adjusting visitor journeys tailored to our four personas. Multilingual tools, local hosts and buddies, accessible infrastructure, and inviting plug&play co-creation blurs boundaries between makers and audiences, screens and sidewalks. Success isn't tickets sold but how swiftly passers-by turn into spectators, spectators into participants, and participants into contagious ambassadors.

Visualizing identity with agency rooted in Sadaka

Our branding visuals and language are a modular, scalable, open-source gift. The iconic Molenbeek (mill + brook) symbol with four vanes has evolved into a generous window inviting partners to personalize their engagement. Our distinctive hand gesture (reflecting the mill's four vanes and Sadaka values like empathy, selflessness, solidarity and generosity) has now been widely adopted, from local football players to community elders, sending messages of generosity across territories. Interactive booths at the Visitor Centre enable residents to remix our visuals and messages, organically spreading brand recognition both digitally and physically, from street posters to public screens across Europe.

Generating smart multichannel storytelling: achieving accessibility at the core

We will be present on the platforms where our (potential) visitors are. Our communications highlight real experiences and resident voices, shared through youth manifestos, micro-documentaries, and peer-to-peer recommendations. In Digital Sadaka's Augmented Generosity Atlas, every story must pass the Creatively Generous test: clear, inclusive, relatable and emotionally engaging. Real-time dashboards track reach, impact, behaviour, sentiment, and shareability, continuously refining our approach based on community feedback. Every story we share actively seeks to help our audiences see and appreciate both differences and commonalities. These narratives turn digital encounters into meaningful exchanges, one of our explicit goals.

Q39

PLEASE DESCRIBE THE PARTNERSHIPS PLANNED OR ESTABLISHED WITH MEDIA WITH A VIEW TO ENSURING WIDE COVERAGE OF THE EVENT.

We are becoming a media ourselves. At the time of writing, we are a committed community of:

4,600 Instagram	750,000 profiles reached
3,300 Facebook	3,5 million content impressions
2,200 LinkedIn	40 countries, 49 languages
115,000 video views on TikTok	5,000 newsletter subscribers
460 Whatsapp contacts	122,000 website visitors

Our media strategy does more than spread the word, it builds civic infrastructure, creating stories that last:

We amplify authentic stories by acting locally and thinking globally: *MolenYouth* vloggers, Yume House streamers, iMAL radio hosts, A-Phone-Sound pop-ups, and Molenzine podcasters are matched with mainstream outlets eager for local authenticity. Building on successful youth-led advocacy, we now develop workshops, bootcamps and internships to deepen local storytelling expertise.

Leveraging Brussels' vast journalist network, our New Centres Media Room offers tailored briefings, hot-desking, and correspondent residencies. Through strategic partnerships with local to international networks, such as the Press Club Brussels Europe (home to 550 journalists and influencers, and 200 diplomats), we amplify our message across 146 countries.

Partnerships with BCR media outlets BRUZZ and BXI are already in place for *MolenFest* and future commitments following selection have been established to capture, repackage and disseminate our messages across various local and national European channels. Partnerships with both Belgian national broadcasters RTBF and VRT, members of the European Broadcasting Union, have also been agreed. Building on extensive coverage by EuroNews, Le Figaro, MSN News and Al Jazeera during our Iftar dinner, we continue our globally impactful storytelling. These media partnerships are amplified by strategic placements targeting European culture-travellers: ads in Eurostar magazines, major European newspapers

and in-flight publications. Collaborations with visit.brussels, STIB-MIVB, Brussels Airlines, public transport, taxis, ride-sharing and rail services ensure pan-European visibility. For our project in general and for *MolenFest* in particular, barter deals with generous private and public partners already boost our messages on buses, trams, metros, regional TV and radio, magazines, websites, newsletters, stadium LED boards, billboards and high-impact digital screens, delivering a projected media value exceeding €200,000 in 2025.

Q40 HOW WILL YOU MOBILISE YOUR OWN CITIZENS AS COMMUNICATORS OF THE YEAR TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD?

Every piece of content we share on our accounts already speaks directly to, features or is co-created by and with Molenbeek residents, ensuring authentic voices remain at the heart of our communication.

Community-led initiatives such as the *Youth Coalition*, *MolenYouth*, *Senior Squad* and *MolenQueer* offer space for stories from the community. Open-source visual toolkits and street-print booths enable citizens and organizations to remix and share branded messages, amplifying our visual identity in their own hyper-local channels.

To build a solid local user base, the MB2030 app launches as a digital solidarity hub and a citizen empowerment platform, facilitating peer-to-peer storytelling, personalized guidance and micro-volunteering opportunities, helping citizens to contribute, create and share content and experiences for the digital-first projects in Digital Sadaka. As we progress, the app will be developed through hackathons organized together with the local developers to strengthen our capacity building, adding tools and functionality people will actually use to join and experience the project.

We walk the talk; more than tell it, we can show it: our social media channels are proof that we exclusively feature content created by young, emerging and undiscovered local talents.

Q41 HOW DOES THE CITY PLAN TO HIGHLIGHT THAT THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE IS AN ACTION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION?

Our citizens still don't feel that the EU is part of their life, and when they do, the impact is often assessed as negative; because of the democratic deficit, they don't always feel part of the EU, which is seen as too bureaucratic, enclaved, opaque. But winning the title of ECoC might change that image favourably; it can prove the EU's positive role in the transformation of our lives by inviting all of us to be more generous. We can only do that by being authentic, present, accessible and transparent, all the things our people are missing from the EU.

Yes, the established visibility methods are covered: official EU logos and symbols appear across all communications, digital platforms and public spaces, strictly adhering to guidelines. Local transport routes in Molenbeek carry joint MB2030-EU branding, while public buildings visibly display EU insignia and flags. EU representatives join past and future ECoC cities at key ceremonies and media moments, explicitly mentioning the EU partnership.

But can we also have a little fun? We want the EU to feel and be cool and generous like us. We will offer free public transportation tickets to visitors of *Europe's Invisible Workforce* and hide giveaways in the QR codes of the exhibition, with tongue-in-cheek messages like 'the EU wishes you safe and free travels ;-)''. We will distribute practical solidarity materials like tents, blankets and sleeping bags carrying our messages to vulnerable populations across European capitals. Our Long Table of Europe dinners will bring EU representatives together with everyday citizens.

We also bring EU symbols like the EU flag into contact with the creativity of European citizens with an unofficial competition of alternative EU logos. Below you can see our own first suggestion: mixing the circle of stars with the mill symbol means something in Molenbeek. This DIY flag is our European flag. We spread them on stickers, stencil art and digital GIFs.

Creative media interventions like the *European Heroes of Sadaka* graphic novel will get people across the continent investigating and sharing stories of the EU that matter to them. Europe Day on 9 May is marked in our calendar for an out-of-the-box ceremony.



6 CAPACITY TO DELIVER

Q42

PLEASE SUPPLY EVIDENCE OF THE CONTINUOUS POLITICAL SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT FROM THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES.

Since 2016, the level of political commitment and progress expressed by the City of Molenbeek and the BCR in support of MB2030 and our vision has been constant and stable. From a fractured region to a unique and rare, shared common vision. MB2030 is the one project that gathers all of the BCR in the shared intention to invest in Molenbeek in its regional setting for the benefit of all of the region's citizens. These are the landmark moments of political support to our bid:

1. 09/09/2016: Rudi Vervoort, Minister-President of the BCR, officially announces his desire to submit a bid for the title of ECoC 2030.
2. 26/04/2023: Molenbeek formalized as candidate.
3. 10/04/2024: The 19 BCR municipalities unanimously formalize support for Molenbeek.
4. 17/04/2024: Confirmation by the Belgian Federal Government of €15,000,000 for the

designed Belgian ECoC 2030 in batches of €3,000,000 annually from 2026 to 2030.

5. 30/05/2024: Molenbeek municipal council unanimously supports the candidacy.
6. 21/05/2025 Molenbeek municipal council approves the city's cultural strategy 2025-35.
7. 06/06/2025: The Wallonia-Brussels Federation approves support for the candidacy if MB2030 is awarded the ECoC title.
8. 10/06/2025: Charleroi city council confirms decision to enter into a formal partnership with MB2030 and approves the note of intent drafted following the 27 March meeting with Alderwoman of Culture Julie Patte and city officials.
9. 13/06/2025: Mechelen confirms decision to enter into a formal partnership with MB2030.
10. 18/06/2025: Meeting of the 19 BCR mayors and aldermen of culture in support of the municipal cooperation project, reiterating the support given before the elections of October 2024.
11. 20/06/2025: The board of directors of citydev, brussels, the regional urban development agency,

approves the acquisition of the Brasserie Vandenneuvel building, with funds already earmarked by Beliris.

12. 27/06/2025: The Brussels Regional Parliament approves unanimously a resolution of support for the candidacy (€40,000,000).
13. 04/07/2025: The Flemish Government decides on financial support for the candidacy if MB2030 is awarded the ECoC-title.
14. 04/07/2025: The Flemish Community Commission (VGC) approves a resolution of support for the candidacy.
15. 04/07/2025: The French Community Commission (COCOF) approves a resolution of support for the candidacy.
16. July 2025: Brussels Minister-President Rudi Vervoort and Budget Minister Sven Gatz formally confirm that they will implement all the regional commitments included in the Parliamentary Resolution, voted unanimously by the Brussels Parliament on June 27, 2025.

Q43

PLEASE DETAIL THE STATE OF PLAY OF THE FORESEEN INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS DETAILED AT PRE-SELECTION STAGE, INCLUDING THE PLANNED TIMETABLE FOR THE WORKS. PLEASE CLARIFY THE LINKS WITH THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE PROJECT.

Our artistic programme activates six zones of cultural infrastructure. These zones include most of the infrastructure projects from the pre-selection stage. We have focused them on the major sites that will anchor most of the citizens' and visitors' interactions. A detailed update of the capital expenditure decisions can be found in questions 25-29. Each zone will offer:

Zone 1

Nature & Forest Scheutbos: 50 hectares of unique urban forest where Molenbeek becomes wild again. Nature and animals take over, and we are invited as cultural practitioners and citizens to directly connect our life and work to the natural and cultural habitats of Molenbeek.

Zone 2

High Molenbeek: The grounds of Molenbeek's hidden treasure box of cultural and sports stars. The diverse Machtens sports and culture complex integrates football pitches, swimming pools and athletic tracks where urban culture blooms and invites us to connect to the next generations of local and European role models in sports and culture.

Zone 3

New Centre: Molenbeek's new centre, next to West-Station and Molenbeek's 'green lung'. Former colonial-industrial hotspot Brasserie Vandenheuvel becomes the throbbing heart of MB2030. We are invited to meet thousands of visitors, our offices and international artistic and decolonial practices for European capitals, developed by world-renowned artist Sammy Baloji.

Zone 4

Industrial Past & Cultural Future: The main courtyard of MB2030, with the recently renovated Grande Halle, across from Rue de Manchester. The public and semi-public space is transformed into an accessible space for cultural production and presentation, inviting us as close as possible to Molenbeek citizens and a daily practice of Europe.

Zone 5

Power to the People: The Church of Saint-Jean-Baptiste Square and the Town Hall with its marketplaces, sites of former and current spiritual life and community rituals with a deep connection to the MB2030 artistic programme. We are invited as concrete actors of projects in churches and squares, like *MolenFest 2024* and 2025 and our *Iftar in the Church*.

Zone 6

Canal: A walkable path between KANAL (an ambitious, accessible, high-quality art centre with room for large audiences and international exhibitions), our permacomputing lab at iMAL (art centre for digital cultures & technology) and other public spaces connecting our zones. We are invited into these complementary cultural powerhouses of our common European future.



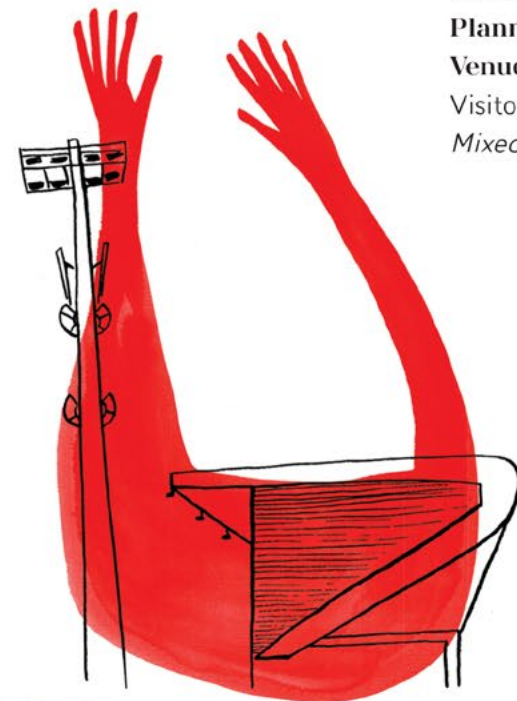
① SCHEUTBOS

Green public space, 50 hectares.

Status and work start: Finished.

Planned opening: Open.

Venue/Space for: *Parliament of the Non-Human, Valley Walks & Talks, Park Poétik.*



② SPORTING SITE EDMOND MACHTENS

2 stadiums, public swimming pool, 9 000 seats.

Status and work start: Finished.

Planned opening: Open.

Venue/Space for: *Beautiful Game Tournament.*



③ VISITOR CENTRE BRASSERIE VANDENHEUVEL

Empty brewery, 5,470 m² of unused potential.

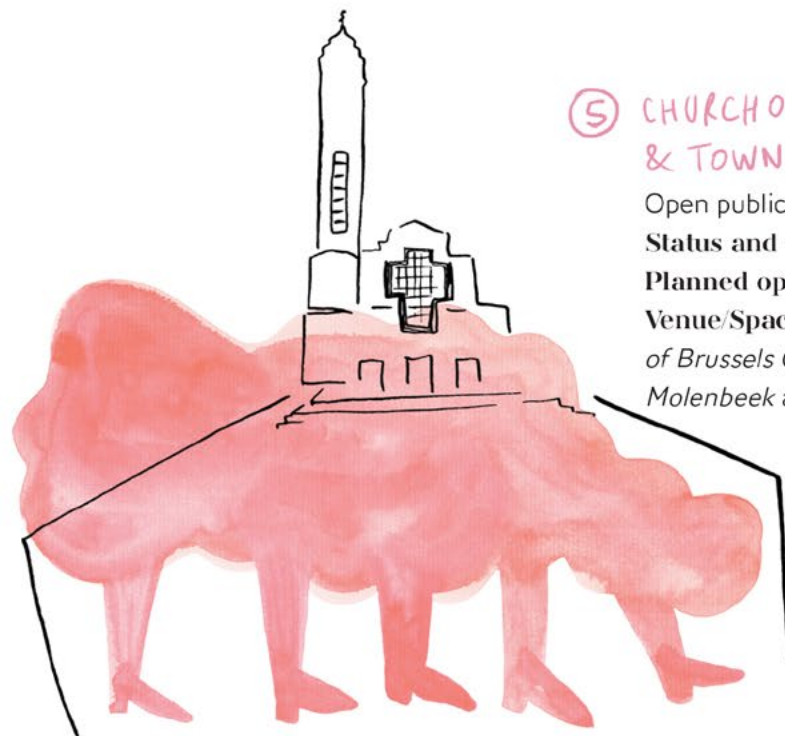
Status and work start: Purchase for 2025, renovation starts in 2026.

Planned opening: 2029.

Venue/Space for: MB2030

Visitor Centre and offices, *Lab of Mixed Realities, Anno 2030.*





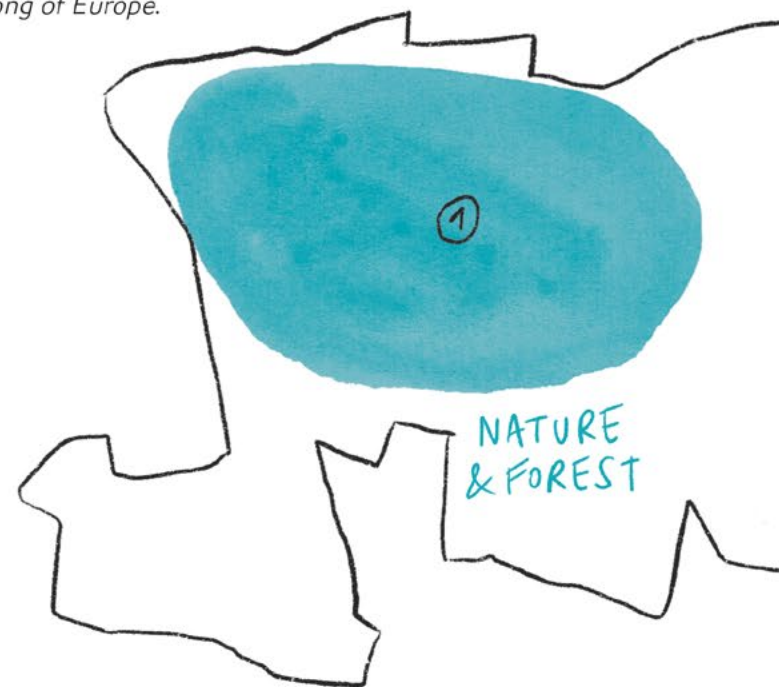
⑤ CHURCH OF SAINT-JEAN-BAPTISTE & TOWN HALL & THEIR SQUARES

Open public space, temporary artistic structures.

Status and work start: Finished.

Planned opening: Open.

Venue/Space for: *Euro-Festival, Sound of Brussels Orchestra, The World Sings in Molenbeek and Young Song of Europe.*



④ GRANDE HALLE

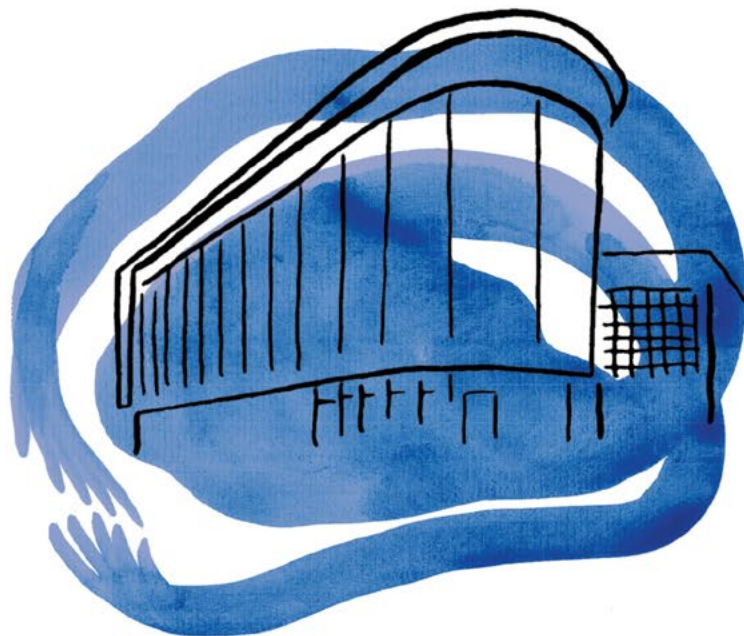
Multifunctional open public space.

Status and work start:

Finished (2020-2022).

Planned opening: Open.

Venue/Space for: *Euro-Festival.*



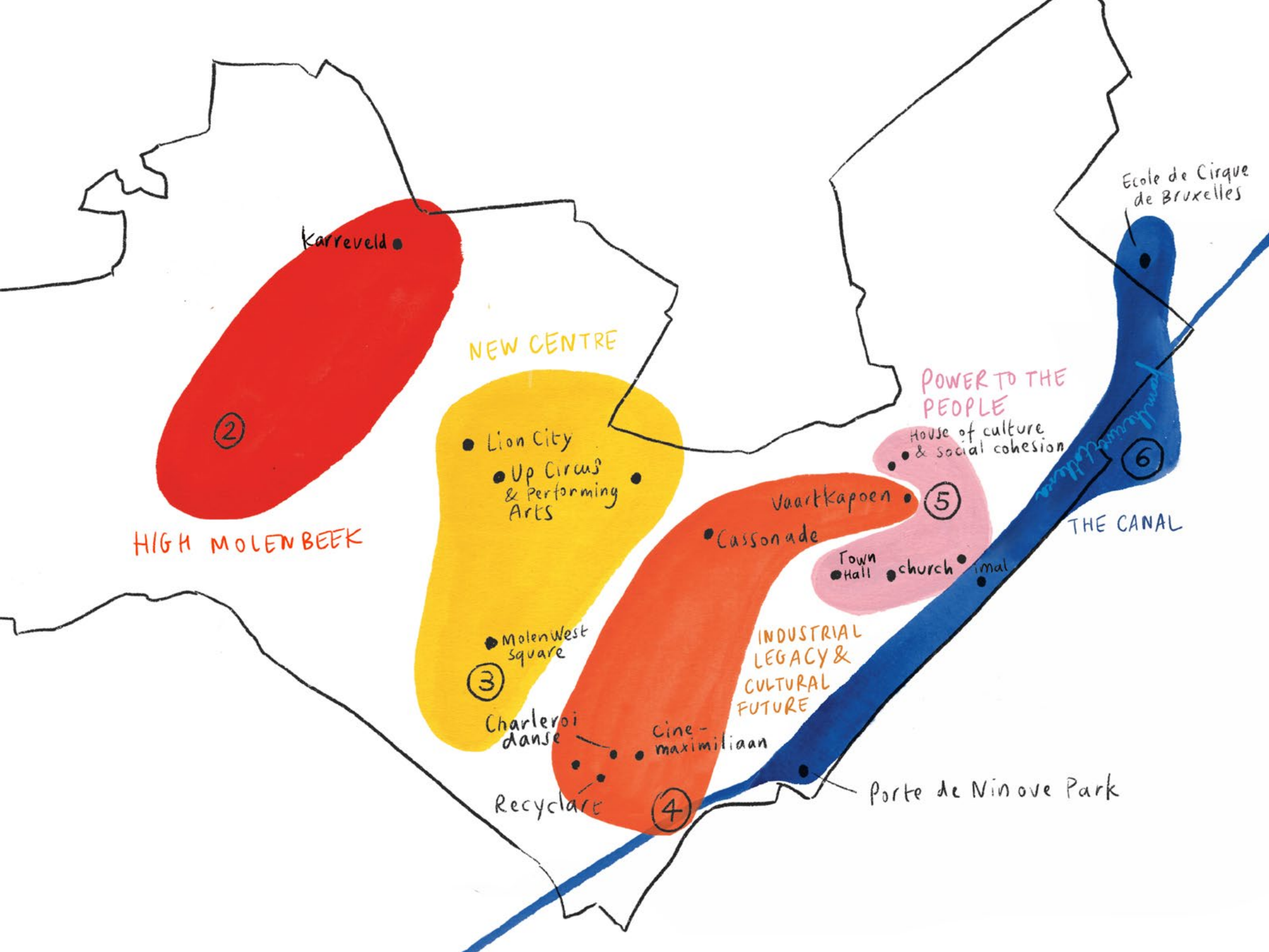
⑥ KANAL-CENTRE POMPIDOU

Arts centre and contemporary art museum.

Status and work start: Under renovation.

Planned opening: Autumn 2026.

Venue/Space for: *European Gallery of Social Justice.*

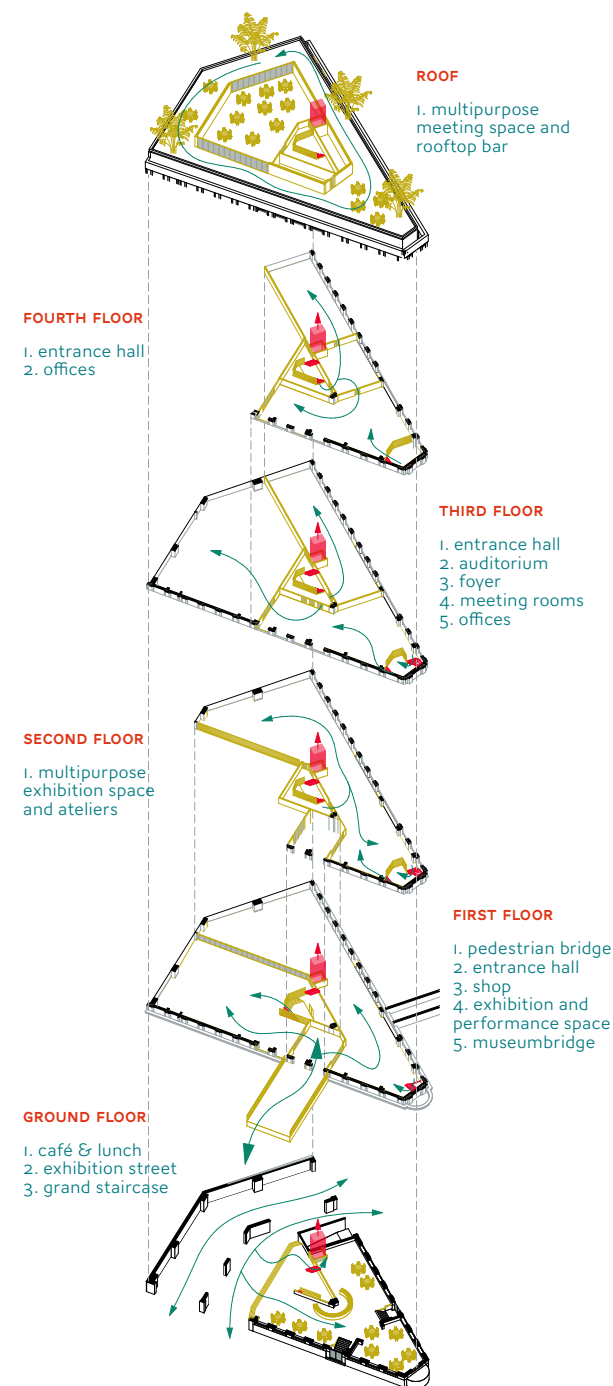




At Brasserie Vandenneuvel, we reimagine Europe with a decolonial lens. An artefact of Belgium's past as a colonial power, Vandenneuvel sponsored the World's Fair Expo 58 in order to sell its beer: the expo offered beer from Molenbeek, Germany, Czechia, the Netherlands and the Democratic Republic of Congo, brewed next to a 'human zoo'. As it was built, Belgium imposed an extractive colonial economy in Congo: it controlled the beer market, and siphoned profits back to Europe.

It will be transformed into ECoC legacy, as a laboratory of decolonization, for artistic and collective practices reinterpreting the colonial heritages of Belgium and Europe. For 2030 and after, it will be the Visitor Centre where European

visitors discover our artistic programme, buy MB2030 merchandise, or connect to Digital Sadaka; it will host the *Lab of Mixed Realities*, Academy of Unlearning and the headquarters of the MB2030 legacy foundation, re-developing the building from the start, and the post-2030 future. Molenbeek gets a mixed-use city square connecting high- and low- Molenbeek, offering an indoor open street for artistic production on the ground floor, inspired by Palais de Tokyo and #104Paris, linked to the mobility hub of West Station and its connections to the Brussels-Capital Region and the Zaventem Airport, and the playgrounds and open landscape of Molen-West Square.





○ LETTERS OF INTENT & COMMITMENTS

All these partners have written letters or expressed commitments to MB2030

MOLENBEEK

- Art2Work
- Atlas of Ovens
- Bien ou Bien
- BubbleTech
- Cassonade
- Charleroi danse
- Cinemaximiliaan
- Circus Zonder Handen
- Communa
- Decoratier/Jozef Wouters
- Ecole de Cirque de Bruxelles
- Erratum Fashion
- Espacetous by Einat Tuchman
- Faso Danse Théâtre/Serge Aimé Coulibaly
- Foyer des Jeunes
- GC De Vaartkapoen
- Groot Eiland
- iMal
- JES - Jeugd en Stad
- Jezebel Studio
- La Fonderie
- La Vallée
- Leon/Seppe Baeyens
- MCCS - Maison des Cultures et de la Cohésion Sociale
- MMM - MigratieMuseumMigration
- Molenbeek Rebels
- MolenGeek
- MOLENQUEENS
- Molenzine
- MOVE

- Natural Contract Lab/Maria Lucia Cruz Correia
- Needcompany/Jan Lauwers
- Papy Boom
- Peeping Tom/Franck Chartier & Gabriela Carrizo
- Pride Museum
- Ras El Hanout
- Recyclart
- Rising Horses/Louise Vanneste
- RWDM Girls
- Singing Molenbeek/Zeno Popescu
- Studio Laure Prouvost/Laure Prouvost
- Timendotes
- Two Dogs Company/Kris Verdonck
- Ultima Vez/Wim Vandekeybus
- UP - Circus & Performing Arts
- Urban Youth Games
- Volta
- Wooshing Machine/Mauro Paccagnella

BRUSSELS-CAPITAL REGION

- ABC - Art Basics for Children
- Adèle Viret & Fabrizio Cassol
- All 18 other municipalities from the BCR
- Ancienne Belgique
- Beci - Brussels Enterprises Commerce and Industry
- Bernard Focroulle
- Beursschouwburg
- Bozar - Palais des Beaux-Arts de Bruxelles
- BSI - Brussels Studies Institute
- BX1 & BRUZZ
- Castélie Yalombo
- Cédric Gerbehaye
- Choraes Equinox
- CIVA - Centre International pour la Villa, l'Architecture et le Paysage
- Cultureghem
- Eleni Kamma
- Flagey - Maison des cultures et des médias
- JCDecaux

- Kaaithater
- KANAL - Centre Pompidou
- Klarafestival
- KVS - Koninklijke Vlaamse Schouwburg
- La Monnaie / De Munt - Opéra national de Belgique
- Le Botanique - Centre Culturel de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles
- Les Halles de Schaerbeek
- MetX
- N22 - Network of Brussels Community Centres
- P&V
- Park Poetik
- RAB/BKO - Réseau des Arts à Bruxelles/Brussels Kunstenoverleg
- Radouan Mriziga
- Sammy Balaji
- STIB/MIVB
- Théâtre National Wallonie-Bruxelles
- Thomas Bellinck
- ULB - Université libre de Bruxelles & VUB - Vrije Universiteit Brussel
- Voka Metropolitan - Vlaams netwerk van ondernemingen
- Zinneke

EUROPE

- 1210 Wien (AT)
- 48 Stunden Neukölln (DE)
- Agora Digital Art (UK)
- Ahilan Ratnamohan (BE)
- Alte Mu (DE)
- Altofest (IT)
- Arcadia Leeuwarden Fryslan 2028 (NL)
- Arsenaal/LAZARUS (BE)
- Art & About (DK)
- Association Kulturanova (RS)
- Aufbruch, Salzkammergut! (AT)
- Baltan Laboratories (NL)
- BIAC (FR)
- Boris Charmatz (FR)
- Brave New Alps (IT)
- Caravan Circus network (BE/EU)
- Catalan Art (SP)
- Choir of the Centrl de zi Sf. Nicolae Timișoara (RO)
- Choir of the Liceul Teoretic Special Iris Timișoara (RO)
- Choir of the Școala Gimnazială nr. 1 Timișoara (RO)
- CIKE - Creative Industry Kosice (SK)
- Circusnext - European Circus Label (BE/EU)
- Cirkus Syd (SE)
- City of Malmö (SE)
- City Pirates (BE)
- Coop Eskemm (FR)
- Cultterra (GR)
- Culture Action Europe
- De Waag (BE)
- Decolonial Film Festival Paris (FR)
- Derida Dance (BG)
- Donostia Kultura (ES)
- Drugo More (HR)
- DUESCO / Ancoats (FR)
- Enter - Junge Kulturregion Chemnitz (DE)
- Europavox Festival (FR)
- European Federation of Professional Circus Schools (BE/EU)
- European Festivals Association (BE/EU)
- FC Helsingør (DK)
- Festival d'Avignon (FR)
- Fieldlab West / Fontys + Avans Hogeschool (NL)
- FK Metta Riga (LV)
- Free Riga (LV)
- Fundacja ARTERIA (PL)
- Garage Campus (DE)
- Holland Festival (NL)
- ICAF - International Community Arts Festival (NL)
- Incam - Circus Arts Media Projects (IT/EU)
- Infame Radio (CZ)
- Inizjamed Festival (MT)
- Institut For (DK)
- Jeunesses Musicales International
- Johan Grimonpez (BE)
- Julie's Bicycle Europe (IE)

- Karlsoy Festival (NO)
- Krake Festival (DE)
- L'Asilo (IT)
- L'Eden - Académie de musique, de danse et de théâtre de Charleroi (BE)
- La Geste (BE)
- Laurent Boijeot (FR)
- Les Blés d'Or, EHPAD in Saint Baldolph (FR)
- Letni Letná (CZ)
- Lviv - Unesco Creative City of Literature (UA)
- Marseille Solutions (FR)
- Massimo Furlan (CH)
- Mohamed El Khatib (FR)
- Municipality of Faro (PT)
- Musée de l'histoire de l'immigration (FR)
- Oecumene Spaces for Dignity (TN)
- Oi Musica (GB)
- OpenDesignSchools Matera (IT)
- Plateau Urbain (FR)
- POCHEN biennale (DE)
- Pro Progressione (HU)
- RADIA network
- Rêvons Rue (FR)
- Rio Neiva - Environmental NGO (PT)
- RTBF (Radio-Télévision Belge de la Communauté française) (BE)
- SaberFazer (PT)
- Sébastien Renault (FR)
- Social Temporary Use Network (BE/EU)
- St Maartens Parade (NL)
- Stad In De Maak (NL)
- Stad Mechelen (BE)
- State of the Arts - Shared Vision
- Stun Camp (FR)
- SVALHOLM/Nønne Mai Svalholm (DK)
- Tartu Centre For Creative Industries (EE)
- Teatr Lesi (UA)
- TEJA / Network of Cultural Spaces (ES)
- Théâtre de l'Ancre (BE)
- Tiago Rodrigues (PT)
- Trans Europe Halles (SE/EU)
- Université Gustave Eiffel (FR)
- Urban Boat (FR)
- Urban Gorillas (CY)
- Urbani separe (EL)
- Växtnäring (SE)
- Velvet Parade (CZ)
- Victoria-Ghawdex 2031 (MT)
- Ville de Charleroi (BE)
- VRT (Vlaamse Radio- en Televisieomroeporganisatie) (BE)
- Wetopia (BE)
- Wiener Festwochen (AT)
- Writers' Association of Macedonia (MK)
- X Centre (SI)
- Yes We Camp (FR/EU)
- Zijkant (BE)
- Zusa (DE)

WORLDWIDE

- Al-Mawred Al-Thaqafy (LB)
- Amwaj Choir (PS)
- Anthea Moys (UK/ZA)
- Centre for the Less Good Idea/ William Kentridge (ZA)
- Chimurenga (ZA)
- Collectif d'Art d'Art Kinshasa (CD)
- Festival au Désert (ML)
- Festival Taragalte (MA)
- Fondation Hiba (MA)
- Groupe Acrobatique de Tanger (MA)
- IKAM Ségou (ML)
- Keleketla! (ZA)
- L'Art Rue/Selma & Sofiane Ouissi (TN)
- Maison de la Poésie au Maroc (MA)
- Mariano Pensotti (AR)
- Mats Staub (CH/DE)
- Open Design Afrika (ZA)
- Palestinian Circus School Birzeit (PS)
- Ruangrupa Jakarta (ID)
- Studios Kabako/Faustin Linyekula (CD)
- The Freedom Theatre Jenin/ Ahmed Tobasi (PS)
- The Question of Funding Collective (PS)
- Think Tanger (MA)
- Visa For Music (MA)
- Zoukak Theatre Collective (LB)

COLOPHON

Co-mission holders MB2030

Fatima Zibouh, Jan Goossens

Team MB2030

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