

# Cultura 311+

## Cultural Rights Plan of the Barcelona Provincial Council



Diputació  
Barcelona

# **Cultura 311+ Cultural Rights Plan of the Barcelona Provincial Council**

**2024-2027 Strategic Plan for the Department  
of Culture**

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C Diputació de Barcelona

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# Presentations

Culture is a cornerstone of 21st-century societies, an essential right that enriches the lives of individual people and society as a whole. At the Barcelona Provincial Council (*Diputació de Barcelona*), we firmly believe that access to culture must be universal and inclusive, reflecting the diversity and richness of our communities while breaking down barriers between legitimised forms of culture and other equally valid forms of expression that until now may not have been recognised as much as they should have been.

This document, CULTURA 311+, is the Provincial Council's Plan for Cultural Rights, outlining the strategy developed for the Department of Culture (*Àrea de Cultura*) to ensure that everyone, regardless of their socio-economic situation, personal circumstances or the municipality or neighbourhood where they live, can actively enjoy and participate in cultural life. Cultural rights are a key springboard for cultural democracy, which means the opportunity for anyone to participate in and represent their cultural concerns and identities, safeguarded by public policies and free from any form of discrimination.

The Barcelona Provincial Council extends a helping hand to the 311 municipalities and local entities across the province, providing support and resources to develop and promote a broad range of cultural programmes. Culture is not, and should not be, merely a source of entertainment. It is also a means of reflection and social transformation. This plan therefore addresses three core themes, namely Access, Participation, and Innovation and Knowledge, which are further divided into 13 strategic areas and 57 specific and ambitious actions. These include existing projects that have already proven successful, as well as new ones designed to respond to the changing needs of our communities.

Cross-cutting, networked operations are distinctive features of the Barcelona Provincial Council. One of the goals of this plan is to go a step further, fostering a shared strategic vision within the Department of Culture by working with other departments within the organisation and taking full advantage of the available management networks. Efficacy, efficiency, responsibility and imaginative responses to new challenges. A plan to enhance the quality of life through culture. That's what CULTURA 311+ aims to offer.

**Lluïsa Moret**

**President of the Barcelona Provincial Council**

The Barcelona Provincial Council's Department of Culture is hereby introducing a strategic plan focused on local public policies from the perspective of cultural rights. This plan is designed to draw on the finest tradition of municipal policies that seek to guarantee access to cultural services and programmes for everyone, while also facilitating new outlooks and resources so as to expand their scope across the 311 municipalities that make up the province of Barcelona.

CULTURA 311+ serves as both a formal and institutional recognition of Cultural Rights and as a strategic roadmap for programmes, projects and resources to ensure the effective implementation of those rights. It also hopes to reach out to the 311 municipalities in the province, encouraging policies that promote the right to access and participate in culture without any kind of discrimination.

In this document, the Barcelona Provincial Council outlines a series of actions designed to translate different approaches to cultural rights into concrete policies. And it does so from the conviction that these strategies will endow cultural policies with a new centrality in addressing some of the most pressing concerns of our day in the field of culture, and in the construction of citizenship itself, namely ensuring equality and participation so that people can lead freer lives, and providing the right tools and contexts for individual and collective development, regardless of origin, residence, class or gender.

CULTURA 311+ is structured around three core themes (Access, Participation and Innovation & Knowledge), 13 strategic areas (cultural and artistic languages; promotion of reading; cultural heritage; infrastructure and facilities; institutions and civic cultural fabric; mediation and education; community culture, artistic and literary creation; institutional innovation; international collaboration; learning communities; democratisation of information and open data; and strategic analysis and planning), and 57 key actions, consisting of existing ones that need to be reinforced and new projects that are currently at the design or implementation stages.

The Plan was put together with input from the Department of Culture's own teams, all the time seeking to embed transversal perspectives and strategies in order to finally integrate the whole range of cultural activities sustained and driven by the Provincial Council in a unified programme.

The name CULTURA 311+ refers to the total number of municipalities in the province, reflecting a clear commitment to work across the whole region.

Covering the whole mandate from 2024 to 2027, this strategic document is intended to serve as an instrument that will foster well-being and a better quality of life in all of our municipalities, whose participation and complicity are vital ingredients for its success. This is an instrument to drive full cultural citizenship as a cornerstone of democratic living throughout the province of Barcelona.

**Pau González Val**  
**Delegate President of the Department of Culture**



# Introduction and context

## **Fostering cultural citizenship**

We face many challenges as a society living at the height of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and none of them can be properly tackled without incorporating the cultural dimension in strategies aimed at devising innovative responses. Culture, with its multiple branches associated to knowledge, information, science, collective processes and the arts, is a social space from which to imagine and shape better futures, while at the same time constituting a large proportion of the practices that it entails.

Cultural participation plays an important role in shaping people and their critical thinking, fostering the shift toward mature societies that are aware of and take pride in their diversity, and that are respectful and responsible with regard to other people and the environment. Culture is a driver of change, capable of creating new frameworks and shared narratives while also developing responsible ways of life that are fairer and more sustainable in environmental, economic and social terms. That is why, in building our societies, any collective project that seeks to safeguard coexistence, respect, rights and freedoms must view cultural work as one of its key areas of action.

**While in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the rights to health and education were key components of equality and social democratisation, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, cultural policies are now also central to reducing inequalities and expanding people's rights and opportunities.**

Cultural capacities, in their diversity, are fundamental for democratic life: expression, informed debate, autonomy, a critical perspective, trust, experimentation, knowledge and diversity are all essential aspects that are closely linked to real possibilities for individual and collective progress.

While in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the rights to health and education were the key policies for building people's equality and social democratisation, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, cultural policies must also play a central role if we are to continue entrenching this democratisation, reducing inequalities and expanding citizens' rights and opportunities. Indeed, if culture has always been central to making sense of what we do and continuing to question where we are headed, today, the need to incorporate it into the development of transformative public strategies is inevitable.

### **Freiburg, Rome, Barcelona: New ties for an expanded culture**

In 2025, it will be eighteen years since the Freiburg Declaration, a key document for shaping the global framework of cultural rights, which advocates for extending the scope of cultural policies beyond strategies to promote cultural sectors:

*The term «culture» covers those values, beliefs, convictions, languages, knowledge and the arts, traditions, institutions and ways of life through which a person or a group expresses their humanity and the meaning they give to their existence and to their development.*

Today, this approach to culture still requires the scope of possibilities for public policies to be broadened by incorporating a series of connections that place these actions at the heart of strategic decision-making. The bonds between culture and education, culture and science, culture and technology, culture and natural resources, or culture and health, among others, entail new values that must be explored in order to provide fresh responses to the main challenges affecting our society today.

Cultural rights are an essential springboard for cultural democracy, meaning the ability of every single person to participate in and express their cultural concerns and identities, guaranteed by public policies and free from discrimination. The bonds established in this plan are extremely valuable tools for expanding this right to cultural action, identifying, through the strategies proposed herein, the capacity to foster new forms of participation in diverse contexts.

**The bonds between culture and education, culture and science, culture and technology, culture and natural resources, and culture and health entail new values that help address the main challenges facing society today.**

Closely tied to this capacity to expand the scope for cultural action and participation, the Rome Charter of 2020 introduced a new definition of culture as «everything we do beyond survival ... everything we do to enrich our lives.» As the charter states, any institution working towards democracy and cultural rights must fulfil its duty to collaborate with social actors and agents to ensure that its inhabitants can:

- **Discover their cultural roots**, so they can recognise their heritage, identity and place within their region, as well as understand the contexts of others.
- **Create cultural expressions**, so they can be part of and enrich the life of their region.
- **Share cultures and creativity**, so social and democratic life is advanced by the exchange.
- **Enjoy the region's cultural resources and spaces**, so that all can be inspired, educated and refreshed.
- **Protect the region's common cultural resources**, so that all can benefit from them, today and in years to come.

Building on this thread, we need to establish new connections that will support an expanded idea of public cultural initiatives, recognising that culture extends beyond administrations and local authorities. As the Rome Charter emphasises, this requires new forms of collaboration and co-production of policy initiatives with the network of civic organisations (including associations, businesses, independent groups and communities) that are actively developing tools and projects to promote cultural access and participation in the interest of the common good.

### **Institutional resonances for cultural rights**

We find ourselves immersed in a context in which different administrative and governmental levels have decided to take up the challenge of implementing strategies in support of cultural rights. The Barcelona Cultural Rights Plan (*Pla de Drets Culturals de Barcelona*, 2021), the Draft Cultural Rights Act (*Projecte de Llei de Drets Culturals*) of the Government of Catalonia, and the process initiated by the Spanish Ministry of Culture to establish a nationwide plan on cultural rights all endow CULTURA 311+ with significant coherence across administrations. This alignment could serve as a strategic asset for each of its associated programmes, surely ultimately contributing to a substantial advancement in the recognition and deployment of cultural rights across the region.

**CULTURA 311+ is an open door to local collaboration between public institutions, organisations and communities, serving as a means for political intervention and coordination aimed at expanding the reach and impact of cultural rights.**

Indeed, the plan is an open invitation to collaboration between public administrations and institutions, fostering a desirable form of public intervention and coordination with the ultimate goal of broadening the scope and impact of such policies as a whole, whatever their origin.

### **The province of Barcelona: Relevant socio-demographic data**

73.5% of the population of Catalonia, and around 12% of the Spanish population live in the province of Barcelona. At the end of 2023, there were 5,805,500 people living in the region, of whom 16.3% were of non-Spanish nationality, a figure that is slightly below the Catalan average of 17.2%.

It is a densely populated area, with three times more inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> than the average for Catalonia (750 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup> compared to 246 in Catalonia as a whole), and it is seven times more densely populated than Spain as a whole.

However, there are stark differences between the municipalities in the metropolitan-coastal area and those further inland. Of the 311 municipalities in the province, 230 have fewer than 10,000 inhabitants, many of which are outside the metropolitan-coastal area. The 81 municipalities with more than 10,000 inhabitants concentrate almost 90% of the province's population.

Despite these significant differences between the inland regions and those of the metropolitan-coastal area, depopulation is less marked than in other parts of Catalonia. Only 40 of the 311 municipalities lost population (3,713 inhabitants) between 2005 and 2023, while the other 271 gained more than 580,000.

In the municipalities with the largest populations, there are significant socio-demographic challenges, particularly linked to the cost of housing and the difficulty maintaining a stable place of residence. Gentrification processes are attracting an above-average income population, which is replacing one that was living there before. On the other hand, there are neighbourhoods with high concentrations of poor housing and urban environments where people are living in situations of social and economic vulnerability. Social and residential segregation ultimately leads to stigmatisation, low social participation and limited community organisation. The situation affects families, but it is particularly relevant when it comes to childcare policies, where the effects of structural problems are particularly pronounced.

As for age structure, the current and future population of emancipation age (15–30 years) stands at 17 %, and the population over the age of 65 at 19 %. The demographic trend is towards declining birth rates and an ageing population, as illustrated by the fact that the ageing index in Catalonia has increased considerably over the past 20 years, rising from 10.5 % in 2002 to 16.8 % in 2023. Ageing creates and aggravates major care challenges, both in health and in social and dependency support services, but is also reflected in the need to develop cultural strategies and leisure services, to promote access to information, and to create community spaces.

Finally, we should note the situation of people with disabilities. According to 2020 data, across the province of Barcelona there were 460,530 people with legally recognised disabilities, a figure representing 8 % of the total population and which is remaining stable over time.

### **From data to evidence for the design of new policies for local culture**

Knowledge of the aforesaid data, and of the population's cultural habits and practices, is extremely important for decision-making on cultural policy, as it complements information obtained via other sources and indicators. The day-to-day management of municipalities often provides a general idea of the people's cultural concerns and interests. However, survey-based studies are the only way to obtain comprehensive, systematic knowledge that cross-references socio-demographic data with the practices and habits of both those who participate in cultural activities and those who do not.

In 2019, the Centre for Cultural Studies and Resources (*Centre d'Estudis i Recursos Culturals*, CERC), in collaboration with the cultural policy researcher Nicolás Barbieri, conducted a study on *L'equitat en les polítiques culturals* (Equity in Cultural Policies), which identified inequalities in the effective exercise of cultural rights. In other words, significant differences in the level of cultural participation among individuals, and especially between certain social groups. The research identified key factors that condition or cause these inequalities, described as «barriers to participation». Many of these barriers are associated with material and symbolic resources (education, class or social status, familiarity with culture), others with difference (age or generational perspective, gender, place of residence (i.e. postcode) or place of origin), and a final group is related to disconnection (difficulties accessing information, knowledge and interaction).

→ **Resources:** The classic study by Bourdieu (1979), as well as other more recent work, indicate that social status and level of education are determining factors of inequalities in the type and intensity of cultural participation, and that prior familiarity with artistic capital also plays a role.

- **Difference:** Difference is another key factor that often explains barriers to participation. Age and, above all, generational perspective are especially relevant. For example, certain types of reading material are more widespread among older groups, while younger populations are more familiar with mobile technology. Gender can also be a factor, as can living in a certain neighbourhood or at a certain distance from a city, while cultural participation tends to be lower in socio-economically disadvantaged areas.
- **Disconnection:** Disconnection refers to such a diversity of elements as social support and engagement, mobility and proximity, or access to information and knowledge networks. But it also means digital connectivity, for although such technologies offer huge possibilities for the exercise of cultural rights, they do not always overcome pre-existing inequalities, which ends up leading to new forms of exclusion.

Based on this work, and with an eye to testing these hypotheses against the reality on the ground, the CERC initiated a reflection process to promote a standard survey of cultural habits that could serve as a useful gauge for municipal councils. The survey was unveiled in 2020, and a pilot was carried out in 2021 in the three municipalities of Granollers, Montgat and Sant Feliu de Llobregat. Despite their evident localisation, meaning the findings are not always generalisable to all municipalities in the region, these surveys have pinpointed notable inequalities in terms of access to and participation in culture depending on neighbourhood, gender or household income.

**Postal district is a determining factor when it comes to exercising cultural rights. The data shows that there is major interest in participating in culture in those neighbourhoods where it is most difficult to do so.**

For its part, the cultural rights survey designed by the Technical Secretariat of the Barcelona Institute of Culture (*Institut de Cultura de Barcelona*, ICUB) and Nicolás Barbieri, and conducted twice in 2020 and 2022, confirmed with data the hypotheses of the aforesaid earlier study, *Equity in Cultural Policies*, highlighting two standout issues that, in all likelihood, arise in a similar manner throughout the province of Barcelona:

- **Postal district is a determining factor for the exercise of cultural rights.** The results of the survey show that in some neighbourhoods, the right to culture is more difficult to exercise due to the accumulation of factors that generate inequality. While 58% of people living in low-income neighbourhoods regularly attend cultural events, this percentage rises to 75% in high-income neighbourhoods of the city of Barcelona.
- **There is major interest in participating in culture in the neighbourhoods where it is most difficult to exercise that right.** Cultural life needs to be viewed as something ordinary and everyday, beyond the arts, in the sense that neighbourhoods

themselves are sources of cultural life. The right to culture is experienced in many places through activities and spaces that are not always recognised or legitimised as such. The survey also detects that everyone has cultural needs and that people appreciate culture, regardless of the neighbourhood they live in. For instance, when asked the open-ended question «For you, what are the three most important venues for a neighbourhood's cultural life?», 54 % of respondents mentioned a park, square or beach. These «other» cultural spaces are held in especially high esteem by people living in areas with below-average income.

Although from the perspective of the whole province of Barcelona, there is still not enough data, and the instruments proposed by the CERC require further development in order to fully address local strategies and responses, the data that has been obtained, together with other sources and insights, are already providing an essential reference for aligning cultural policies with the challenges they highlight. From urban contexts to the countryside, from major cities to small villages, circumstances are diverse across the region, but in all cases, access to and participation in culture are key assets for fostering equity and equal opportunities.

### **Cultural urbanities and ruralities**

CULTURA 311+ operates from a dual perspective on the relationship between the urban and rural worlds. While in cities and large towns, culture has played a fundamental role in generating new arenas for community life and social cohesion in certain contexts or events, in the less densely populated rural world, cultural activity introduces other meanings and values to culture's potential.

In rural areas, some of the challenges that the province is facing are accentuated, such as the climate crisis, an ageing population, lack of generational renewal and access to housing. At the same time, it is in the countryside that cultural practices are more deeply ingrained, and associated to historian Raymond Williams' idea that «culture is ordinary,» which goes beyond the role of the arts and redefines culture as a fundamental asset for social construction through the «finding of common meanings and direction» in order to innovate and improve together «under the pressures of experience, contact and discovery, writing themselves into the land.»

In other words, culture plays a key role in forms of organisation and collective development that are rooted in everyday life, something that is often blurred in inner-city melting pots. This perspective ties in with the capacity of cultural practice to explore and imagine new kinds of coexistence, through, for example, ancestral folklore, the transfer of knowledge down the generations, or citizen research and experimentation processes linked, among others, to the preservation and management of shared assets and natural resources. These are just a few of the differences between rural and urban-rooted cultural dynamics.

However, despite these contrasts, this idea of the «ordinariness or everydayness of culture» serves as a cross-cutting vector that can be extrapolated to help forge synergies and resonances between two closely linked worlds that do not always recognise one another.

**Cultural rights are a response to the challenge of linking the urban and rural worlds through mutual recognition, respect and the capacity to replicate experiences to serve the common good.**

In both the rural and urban realms, a wide range of strategies are being developed to tackle future challenges, promoting gender equality, reducing inequality and advancing a fairer, more resilient and environmentally sustainable economy. For instance, initiatives rooted in the social and solidarity economy, citizen-led management of public and common resources, and efforts to address the climate emergency are emerging in parallel across both contexts, albeit often without proper coordination or a shared framework.

Commitment to cultural rights is also a response to the challenge of linking the urban and rural worlds through mutual recognition, respect, the ability to replicate methodologies and the construction of a territorially expanded and coordinated cultural fabric, one that is institutionally recognised and resourced in favour of the common good.

# International framework of cultural rights

Democratic life is grounded on human rights, whose own framework is based on one important consideration: it defends the full and equal dignity of all people. This framework also establishes the responsibility of both institutions and all individuals in a society to respect that dignity and to take action to ensure it can fully prosper.

Ever since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the main international human rights documents have made reference to culture. The right of every person to freely participate in cultural life is not only reflected in that document, but also in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). Various adaptations of the same right have also been incorporated into numerous legal texts in other regional contexts, such as the 1978 Spanish Constitution or the 2006 Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia.

In line with the principles of the indivisibility and interdependence of human rights, the right to participate in cultural life cannot be separated from any other human rights. Thus, freedom of conscience, expression, association and participation in civic life, as well as the right to education, all contribute to engagement in cultural life and form part of cultural rights in the broader sense.

Likewise, the fundamental principles of human rights, such as universality, equality and non-discrimination, also apply to cultural rights.

This means that everyone should be able to exercise their cultural rights, and that proactive measures must be taken when clear inequalities are observed among people living in a given place, or when obstacles arise in the fulfilment of these rights. It also implies that while some rights may apply specifically to certain groups, cultural rights are universal, and hence relate to everyone.

### **The right to participate in cultural life cannot be separated from other human rights**

Translating cultural rights into concrete practices has historically been challenging. This is partly because there have been times when they have been treated as a secondary concern within the broader framework of human rights, and partly because their very breadth and complexity have made them hard to implement. Nevertheless, in the last 18 years we have witnessed a number of initiatives aimed at clarifying these rights and shaping how they can be put into practice. These include the Freiburg Declaration on Cultural Rights (2007), General Comment No. 21 on the Right to Take Part in Cultural Life (Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 2009), Agenda 21 for Culture (United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), 2004), the Culture 21: Actions document (UCLG, 2015), the Rome Charter on the Right to Participate Fully and Freely in Cultural Life (2020), Barcelona's *Fem Cultura!* (Let's Do Culture!) Cultural Rights Plan (2021), which presents a roadmap for municipal cultural policy grounded in rights and strategic planning, the Porto Santo Charter (2021) and the San Luis Potosí Charter (2022), both of which make substantial theoretical contributions on the recognition of cultural rights, and a series of reports issued since 2010 by the UN Special Rapporteur in the Field of Cultural Rights.

Together, these documents define specific, key areas that support the notion of cultural rights and form today's international reference framework on the matter:

- **Cultural identities and communities**, which encompass the right to freely choose one's cultural identity and have it respected; to identify or not with one or more cultural communities, regardless of borders; to change that choice; and to access both one's own and others' cultural heritage.
- **Diversity**, which involves recognising the wide range of forms of expression and heritage that are meaningful to the people living in a shared territory, and the requirement for public administrations to protect and foster this diversity, while also paying special attention to people and groups who may need special consideration, such as women, children, the elderly, people with functional diversity, minorities of all kinds, migrants and those living in poverty. Importantly, the international framework for cultural rights does not endorse cultural relativism or undermine the principle of universality when applied to human rights in general: no cultural argument (such as the defence of traditions or customs, or the right to

preserve heritage, or freedom of expression) can justify violations of human rights of any kind. In fact, it's quite the contrary. Only full respect for human rights creates the conditions in which cultural diversity can be guaranteed and flourish.

- **Expression and creation**, which include the freedom to express and create, to practice cultural activities, to develop and share knowledge and cultural expressions, and the right to protect moral and material interests in relation to one's creations. Measures that can be adopted in this area include the provision of cultural infrastructures, programmes and other initiatives that ensure everyone's equitable access to and participation in all types of cultural life, together with the analysis of inequalities and barriers in this regard through studies, statistics and other instruments.
- **Education and training**, which include the right to an education that supports the full and free development of one's cultural identity through greater access to and participation in culture at schools and in both formal and informal education settings, the promotion of arts education, and the fostering of creative and technological capacities. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, broadening opportunities for cultural expression, knowledge and skills (including greater autonomy, confidence, entrepreneurship and experimentation) are closely tied to strengthening democratic life and empowering individuals to shape their surrounding communities.
- **Information and communication**, which encompass the right to free and pluralistic information, and include not only the ability to receive and share information, but also to participate in its creation and dissemination, and also the right to demand correction of false or misleading content. This area is also closely related to freedom of opinion and expression.
- **Urban planning, sustainability and the environment**, which call for the sustainable use of public space, recognition of traditions and knowledge tied to sustainable production and consumption, the conservation of heritage, the prior assessment of the cultural impacts of urban planning, fostering public spaces for cultural access, the integration of culture into mobility policy, and much more.
- **Cultural work and economic resources**, referring to decent labour conditions for people working in cultural production, access to funding, new models for economic innovation, and so on.
- **Cooperation and governance**, which include the right to participate in public debates and decision-making processes related to cultural policy, as well as in the governance of public, private and community-led initiatives, and the responsibility of public authorities, private entities and civil society to ensure cultural rights are upheld, especially for deprived groups, through, among others, staff training and the consideration of the cultural dimension in all human rights.

Regarding the specific application of this international framework to cities, the Culture 21: Actions document, passed by the global United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) organisation in 2015, clearly states that cultural rights provide the strongest foundation on which to develop public cultural policy. This idea shifts the legitimacy of policy towards people's rights, rather than factors that have guided cultural agendas in the past, such as economic impact, social cohesion and urban regeneration. In other words, cultural assets and services were not promoted or disseminated for the good of the people they addressed or their ability to play their own part in the public sphere of culture.

Hence, the affirmation of cultural rights aligns with the view that culture is an essential component of sustainable development (often described as the «fourth pillar», alongside the social, environmental and economic components), while also supporting an understanding of freedom, including cultural freedom, not as a means to an end, but as a fundamental goal of human development.

Cultural rights provide both a vision and a practical roadmap for placing culture at the frontline of the development of our towns and cities, starting from recognition of the dignity and full rights of every person who inhabits them.





## Cultural rights and the 2030 Agenda

CULTURA 311+ strengthens the localisation and implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the province of Barcelona. A cultural policy grounded in cultural rights ensures that the 2030 Agenda is genuinely rooted in the region and has the capacity to involve the entire population in its development process. In order to foster deeper dialogue and resonance between cultural rights and the 2030 Agenda, this section highlights the Goals and Targets that are most closely connected to the former, and also with the mission to provide other institutions and spheres of social intervention with material for reflection and action on this issue:

→ **SDG 4:** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

TARGET 4.7: Educate on human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

→ **SDG 5:** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

TARGET 5.1: End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

TARGET 5.5: Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.

- **SDG 8:** Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
  - TARGET 8.3: Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation.
  - TARGET 8.9: Devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.
- **SDG 10:** Reduce inequality within and among countries.
  - TARGET 10.2: By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.
  - TARGET 10.3: Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.
- **SDG 11:** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
  - TARGET 11.1: Ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.
  - TARGET 11.4: Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.
- **SDG 12:** Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
  - TARGET 12.8: Ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature.
- **SDG 16:** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development.
  - TARGET 16.7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.
  - TARGET 16.10: Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.
- **SDG 17:** Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.
  - TARGET 17.14: Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development.
  - TARGET 17.17: Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships.

# Barcelona Provincial Council's Department of Culture

Provincial councils do not have explicitly recognised cultural responsibilities in Spain's core legislative texts –namely, the 1978 Constitution and the 1985 Local Government Act (*Ley de Bases del Régimen Local*, LBRL). However, this law does establish that provincial councils are tasked with ensuring the comprehensive provision of municipal services throughout their territories. It also grants them authority in areas such as cooperation and support for municipalities and the provision of supra-municipal services. So, the cultural policies of provincial councils should be viewed within the framework of municipal cooperation, aimed at enabling and supporting the delivery of cultural services by municipal councils.

**Barcelona Provincial Council's Department of Culture provides guidance and support to municipal councils with the development of cultural services, programmes and projects. CULTURA 311+ expands, deepens and innovates this role by fostering the exercise of cultural rights at the local level.**

As for municipal councils, the Catalan Municipal and Local Government Act (*Llei Municipal i de Règim Local*), 2/2003 of April 28, identifies cultural activities and facilities among their core responsibilities. However, the only mandatory services explicitly required by law in the

cultural sphere are a public library in municipalities with more than 5,000 residents and a municipal archive in those with over 10,000.

Regarding public libraries, the law and sector-specific regulations set out the services and resources that municipal councils must provide in terms of public reading material. Act 4/1993, of 18 March, on the Library System of Catalonia, by means of its Public Reading Map of Catalonia (*Mapa de Lectura Pública de Catalunya*), establishes the required size, collections and staffing levels of libraries in each municipality. It also allows for the creation of library branches in municipalities with between 3,000 and 5,000 inhabitants, and for the provision of mobile libraries (*bibliobusos*) in municipalities with fewer than 3,000 residents, in order to ensure a reading service of the utmost efficiency across as much of the region as possible. This law is complemented by Decree 124/1999, of 4 May, on the services and staff of the Public Reading System of Catalonia (*Sistema de Lectura Pública de Catalunya*), which elaborates on the functions of support services and the potential role that provincial councils might play within this framework.

Such flexible regulations in other cultural areas have led most municipal councils to develop cultural policies and their corresponding financial obligations, largely without being formally empowered to do so. The cultural functions that these councils have commonly undertaken in recent decades are as follows:

- Creating a public library and promoting reading.
- Conserving and disseminating both tangible and intangible cultural heritage through museums, local archives, restoration of architectural heritage, archaeology, etc.
- Promoting both the performing arts, such as music, and visual arts, by consolidating cultural facilities.
- Engaging with creators and supporting artistic creation.
- Engaging with local cultural associations.
- Traditional and annual festivals.
- Art centres, generally with an educational focus.
- Multi-purpose cultural facilities and community centres.
- Disseminating knowledge through talks, book presentations and similar events.
- Cultural training.

Local cultural policies are therefore, on the whole, somewhat underdeveloped legislatively, often fluctuating between the lack of specific frameworks and competences that overlap between different levels of territorial administration. Despite this imbalance and the resulting scarcity of solid legal powers, local authorities, as they are the closest level of public administration to the people, must address a range of duties that require them to roll out cultural services, programmes and infrastructures to meet the cultural needs of the whole population.

The Department of Culture provides support and guidance to local councils with the provision of all these services, programmes and projects. CULTURA 311+ hopes to deepen, broaden and innovate in its contribution to promoting the exercise of cultural rights at the local level.

### **Barcelona Provincial Council's Action Plan for the 2024-2027 mandate**

CULTURA 311+ is aligned with the Provincial Council's Action Plan for the 2024–2027 mandate, whereby a series of strategies and actions are framed within cultural policy and proposed in order to address contemporary challenges and turn them into opportunities for collective transformation and progress, equality, and social and climate justice.

Accordingly, the Department of Culture is committed to working towards a transformative breed of municipalism, for policy-making that is an honest exercise in service of common interests, and so that social and community engagement in local public policies can become a reality, and one that recognises and shapes a participatory culture across the region.

CULTURA 311+ sets out a strategic framework that integrates the climate transition, digitalisation, and social and territorial cohesion in a cross-cutting manner. It also promotes a series of programmes and projects designed to contribute to sustainable and resilient development across the region in response to the crises and challenges that are defining our future. In this regard, the Department of Culture will liaise with other departments of the Provincial Council to:

- Promote and accelerate green and sustainable transition in the face of the climate emergency.
- Drive the digital transition of the economy, public administration and public services.
- Promote transition towards local wellbeing based on equal rights, equity and social sustainability throughout people's lifecycles.
- Ensure territorial and inter-municipal equality by fairly redistributing investments, resources and services, with particular attention to smaller, lower-income municipalities that have greater needs in terms of development and resilience.
- Improve the detection of urban and regional segregation and gentrification processes, and support cohesive development across regions, municipalities, neighbourhoods and the communities that inhabit them.

As already outlined, the Department of Culture's work for the 2024–2027 mandate is aligned with the Goals and Targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It also endorses the Goals of

the Urban and Rural Agenda as defined in its localised version. Specifically, CULTURA 311+ explicitly incorporates the three Goals highlighted in the Barcelona Provincial Council's Action Plan for the 2024-2027 mandate: The strategic goal related to governance, which aims to «promote effective, innovative and co-creative local policies and institutions that generate public value,» the goal focused on «structuring and articulating a network of cities and towns that supports territorial cohesion,» and the goal to «reduce inequalities and promote cohesion among people and regions.»

**The Department of Culture is committed to advancing transformative local governance, policy in service of the general interest, and meaningful social and community engagement in local public policy.**

Ultimately, CULTURA 311+ incorporates the cross-cutting themes and perspectives defined in the Council's Action Plan for the mandate: The perspective of climate justice; an intersectional perspective of gender, lifecycles and equality; a regenerative perspective; a community-centred perspective; the perspective of knowledge and assessment; the perspective of innovation and transformative talent; a networked perspective; and the perspective of impact and transparency in action.

## **One department, two divisions, and four territorial networks**

The Department of Culture works to strengthen its commitment to its municipalities and their populations across various areas of public cultural intervention. Its actions are intended to promote the implementation of cultural rights across the region using tools and resources that foster access, creation and cultural participation, as well as to support municipal councils in designing cultural policies and innovation processes.

To carry out these functions, the Department of Culture is structured into two management divisions: the Cultural Services Division (*Gerència de Serveis de Cultura*) and the Library Services Division (*Gerència de Serveis de Biblioteques*). Although the communication between the two divisions is already fluid and effective, one of the goals of CULTURA 311+ is to go a step further in this relationship and encourage a strategic vision at the departmental level, as well as systematic cooperation between the two divisions through cross-cutting methodologies and joint ventures. Also arising from a broad and transversal strategic vision of culture capable of responding globally to the needs of municipal councils, collaboration is expected to intensify with other departments of Barcelona Provincial Council. These include the Departments of Education, Infrastructure and Territory, Climate Action and Energy Transition, Feminism and Equality, and several others.

CULTURA 311+ is proposing new cross-cutting mechanisms that entail coordinating teams and resources to enhance the development of programmes and projects in liaison with local and county councils, and various other organisations.

Barcelona Provincial Council typically likes to leverage management networks to address local affairs. Its inter-municipal service management networks are characterised by their flexibility and non-hierarchical structures, enabling economies of scale, knowledge sharing and resource optimisation. Within them, municipal councils play an active role, as they are both the receivers and providers of those resources and that knowledge.

The Department of Culture coordinates the Municipal Libraries Network (*Xarxa de Biblioteques Municipals*, XBM), the Local Museums Network (*Xarxa de Museus Locals*, XML), the Municipal Archives Network (*Xarxa d'Arxius Municipals*, XAM), and the Network of Municipal Performing Arts Venues (*Xarxa d'Espais Escènics Municipals*).

### **Library Services Division**

The Library Services Division (GSB) advises and supports municipal councils in the creation and development of library services, and leads the Municipal Libraries Network of the Province of Barcelona with its mission of ensuring a balanced quality of service in library matters across the region, as well as access for all to information, knowledge and culture. The Library Services Division is internally organised around two offices: the Library Programming and Evaluation Office (*Oficina de Programació i Avaluació de Biblioteques*) and the Libraries Network Services Office (*Oficina de Serveis a la Xarxa de Biblioteques*). A total of 109 people work in the Division, in addition to 324 more who are distributed around various libraries and mobile library services, and who, together with municipal staff, manage the facilities of the Municipal Libraries Network (XBM).

In recent years, the Library Services Division has embarked upon several projects aimed at advancing towards an XBM Model of public libraries that can show the way forward. These initiatives arose from the so-called Study on the Value of Libraries in Society (*Estudi sobre el valor les biblioteques en la societat*), which identified several core areas for action that highlight the importance of libraries as drivers of change in their immediate environs, a focus that was intensified in the last mandate.

The XBM Model preserves the essence of a traditional library while innovating in methodologies for promoting reading, access to information and knowledge, learning support and providing a meeting space.

This concept forms the common foundation for all XBM libraries but, in order to have a real impact, each library must be adapted and tailored to its own context. The first results can be seen in the projects and activities of the *BiblioLab* programme and in recently inaugurated libraries such as the Pilarín Bayés Library in Vic and the Gabriel García Márquez Library in Barcelona, winner of the 2023

Public Library of the Year Award from the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA).

### **Municipal Libraries Network**

The Municipal Libraries Network (XBM) is made up of 247 library facilities that serve 285 municipalities. The Barcelona Provincial Council has agreements with 149 municipalities for the management of 235 libraries, and with 138 municipalities for the service provided by 12 mobile libraries. In total, 5.6 million people have access to an XBM library or mobile library stop in their municipality, which equates to coverage of over 98 % of the provincial population.

As of December 2023, XBM libraries and mobile libraries possessed a total collection of 9.8 million documents, a usable area of more than 292,000 m<sup>2</sup>, and an annual current expenditure of €22 per inhabitant. 40 % of the operating costs of XBM libraries are financed by the Provincial Council, municipal councils cover nearly 60 %, and the Government of Catalonia contributes slightly less than 3 %.

In 2023, XBM libraries received a total of 16.7 million visits, 11.9 million publications were loaned, and 640,000 people attended the 39,000 cultural activities. More than 2.2 million people have an XBM user card (38 % of the province's population).

The networked approach enables libraries to share experiences and resources, promote services from a broader perspective than the local one, and produce joint services. It also keeps everything working at the same pace with no losses in terms of proximity-based management, which reduces costs and makes possible, among other things, the management of the collective catalogue, the design of new services, the centralised purchase of collections, interlibrary loans, joint subscriptions to magazines and databases, and the provision of virtual services.

### **Cultural Services Division**

The Cultural Services Division advises and supports municipal councils on the development of their cultural policies and the promotion of cultural rights, coordinates various regional networks of cultural facilities, promotes a system of continuous training and mutual learning among leading technical and political cultural stakeholders across the province, and organises a wide range of actions to encourage cultural knowledge, activity and innovation. The Cultural Services Division is organised into five management centres:

- **The Office for Cultural Studies and Resources (*Centre d'Estudis i Recursos Culturals, CERC*)** is intended to cooperate with municipalities in all matters related to cultural policy and management, including analysis, training, information, advice and innovation.
- **The Office for Cultural Heritage (*Oficina de Patrimoni Cultural, OPC*)** specialises in the cooperation and promotion of local cultural heritage and is structured around two sectoral and

regional networks: the Municipal Archives Network and the Local Museums Network, as well as the Cultural Heritage Studies and Projects Programme.

- **The Office for Artistic Dissemination (*Oficina de Difusió Artística, ODA*)** is responsible for promoting artistic languages and expression in the local sphere, fostering cultural participation, and supporting local creative work.
- **The Palau Güell Directorate (*Direcció del Palau Güell, DPG*)** coordinates and manages the preservation, conservation, dissemination and public engagement activities conducted from this former palace, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1984.
- **The Office for Support and Cross-cutting Projects (*Oficina de Suport i Projectes Transversals, OSPT*)** supports the entire Division in matters related to e-administration, legal and administrative management, budgeting and finance, and human resources. The OSPT also provides technical support for cross-cutting tasks and projects across the Division, such as marketing, communication and press, institutional and international relations, as well as advice on architecture, cultural policy and the strategic positioning of the Division.

### Local Museums Network (XML)

The Office for Cultural Heritage promotes and coordinates the Local Museums Network (XML), which is made up of 64 museums in 51 municipalities across the province of Barcelona. These are organised as a community and share tools and resources for managing local heritage and legacy. Through the XML, the OPC promotes measures aimed at making museums more efficient, with spaces and programmes rooted in their local context, fully accessible and inclusive, placing people at the centre of museum activity and recognising the full diversity of contemporary society. Its main objective is to explore cooperative approaches to the management, preservation, dissemination and promotion of museums and local heritage; to foster the exchange of experiences and knowledge among museum professionals; and to provide training and ongoing vocational development for this group. In 2023, the Network's Strategic Plan was completed, helping to define new strategies and actions adapted to the current context and needs of local museums.

### Municipal Archives Network (XAM)

The Municipal Archives Network (XAM), also coordinated by the OPC, is made up of 250 archives and provides resources and support services to municipal archives through two programmes: The Maintenance Programme (*Programa de Manteniment*, for municipalities with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants and no in-house archivist), supported by a team of 10 itinerant archivists, and the Technical Services Hub (*Central de Serveis Tècnics*), which provides services to 88 municipal archives in the province that do have their own archivist. The network's goals for the coming years encompass innovation

and the incorporation of cultural mediation processes, and include the following:

- Implement a participatory governance framework for the XAM's strategic plan.
- Foster collaboration among municipal archives.
- Ensure balanced and continuous technical growth across the XAM archives.
- Raise public awareness of the role of archives in society.
- Promote innovation in information processing and citizen engagement as part of a project to democratise information and open data.

### Network of Municipal Performing Arts Venues

The Office for Artistic Dissemination (*Oficina de Difusió Artística*) manages the Circuit of the Network of Municipal Performing Arts Venues, whose mission is to drive stable municipal performing arts programmes, offer technical and financial support services, advise local authorities on the promotion of performing arts venues as public service facilities, and drive strategies that ensure their accessibility. To participate in the Circuit, local authorities must meet certain criteria related to the conditions of their performing arts venues and programmes.

The Circuit of the Network of Municipal Performing Arts Venues is one of the ODA's instruments for supporting municipal policies with their efforts to promote access to culture, which it achieves by providing technical and financial assistance for regular live arts programmes and by promoting circuits for artistic dissemination. Currently, a framework agreement exists between the Barcelona Provincial Council and the Government of Catalonia for the joint management of support of professional arts programmes at municipal performing arts venues through *Programa.cat*, which supports performing arts professionals and local authorities.

### Public sector and participating entities

The Department of Culture sits on the governing bodies of the consortia and foundations that form part of the public sector of the Barcelona Provincial Council: the Theatre Institute (*Institut del Teatre*), Barcelona Contemporary Culture Centre (*Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona, CCCB*), the Documentation Centre and Textile Museum of Terrassa (*Centre de Documentació i Museu Tèxtil de Terrassa*), the Sitges Heritage Consortium (*Consorti del Patrimoni de Sitges*), Barcelona Maritime Museum, and the Palau Foundation. The Department of Culture also works with other entities with significant Provincial Council involvement, such as the Barcelona Libraries Consortium (*Consorti de les Biblioteques de Barcelona*), the Gran Teatre del Liceu, the Teatre Lliure, and the Colònia Güell Consortium (*Consorti de la Colònia Güell*).

# Goals and principles of CULTURA 311+

## Goals

CULTURA 311+ is presented with the aim of recognising the role of municipal councils in the defence of cultural rights, reinforcing and expanding existing strategies, and establishing and implementing new ones.

The Plan provides tools for innovation in local cultural policies through public projects and programmes and fosters a new form of regional coordination that will generate network dynamics beyond strictly local frameworks, opening new possibilities in collaboration with the cultural fabric and organised civil society.

The ultimate goal is to design public policies within the framework of cultural rights and show the way forward toward formal recognition of these rights for all citizens of the province of Barcelona. The idea is to ensure that people have access to culture, can participate in it, and are guaranteed the right to contribute to the cultural life of their municipalities.

## Principles for the public value of culture

In contrast to the economic calculations that have historically valued culture as a resource linked to the logic of macroeconomic formulations such as GDP, or processes driving other industries like tourism, advertising and the real estate market, cultural rights entail values and principles linked to the public interest, which are indispensable in this changing era. Both for the promotion of the cultural industry and under the pretext of the growth of other economies and sectors, cultural policy has not always been deployed with public value at the heart of its strategies. This is why CULTURA 311+ identifies some of the main attributes that culture can contribute to the notion of full citizenship. These principles are transversal across all actions:

→ **Promotion of diversity and interculturality.** A cultural policy plan aimed at promoting cultural rights must place the recognition and promotion of the expression of the different cultures coexisting in the Barcelona region at the forefront of its actions, making it, day by day, an open and diverse region.

**Cultural policies must be viewed as a new public value linked to the public interest, the common good and human rights.**

→ **Catalan Language.** This has played and continues to play a fundamental role as a driver of social cohesion. Defence of the Catalan language has historically been a central element of a right that identifies and enriches us culturally, while promoting democratic coexistence. Strengthening this right related to the native language, literacy and freedom of expression, together with the recognition of the linguistic diversities that exist alongside us, are some of the cornerstones of this document, and which apply across all sections and measures presented herein.

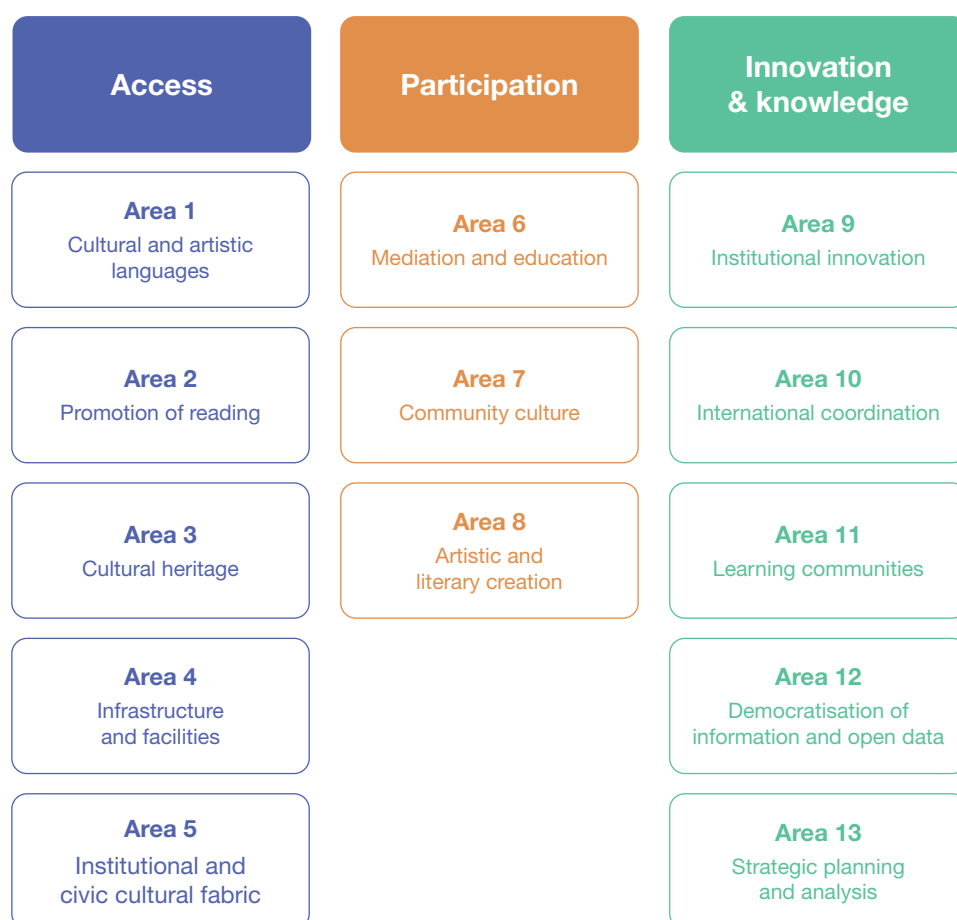
→ **Feminist perspective.** CULTURA 311+'s commitment to a feminist perspective is grounded on the principle of gender mainstreaming (integrating the gender perspective at all levels and dimensions of policy) and gender justice (recognition of essential values such as respect, recognition, equality and freedom). In this regard, the feminist perspective must be present in the planning, management, execution and evaluation of all cultural policies and in each of the programmes and projects that are developed or supported. This transversal approach should achieve an equitable and just culture from a feminist perspective, ensuring equal access, representation and decision-making, reflecting on gender stereotypes and showcasing the cultural production and historical legacy of women and all people who do not conform to the androcentric, heterosexual norm.

- **Transparency and good governance.** In exercising the responsibility of managing public resources, mechanisms are needed to facilitate ongoing observation and public monitoring of management practices. Therefore, transparency and active publicity will be promoted by designing tools for monitoring and controlling such matters. These tools will also include all information related to the consortia, foundations and other bodies in which the Barcelona Provincial Council participates.
- **Transversality.** When carrying out actions, there are certain conceptual elements and specific actions (such as mediation, the gender perspective, access, addressing vulnerability, democratic governance and the promotion of diversity) that are repeated. This reiteration is due to the transversality of all those aforesaid actions and the desire to achieve coherence and a global strategic outlook based on cultural rights.
- **Decentralisation and new centralities.** Part of the fulfilment of the projects and programmes included in CULTURA 311+, such as the networks of existing cultural facilities, involves a major shift towards the decentralisation of cultural activity and the recognition of new centralities, valuing proximity, distributing efforts throughout the territory, and recognising all culture that arises across the province, making it visible and supporting it to ensure that it can prosper under the best possible conditions.
- **Legitimacy.** Institutions and the market have generated spaces and models that have historically defined what is considered cultural. This filter has therefore conditioned the legitimacy of many alternative or marginalised practices and spaces that form part of what the Plan does consider to be cultural contexts. Broadening this perspective to provide legitimacy and cultural recognition to these dynamics is a key principle of CULTURA 311+.
- **Sustainability.** The Plan is implemented on the basis of the unavoidable association between culture and sustainability. This form of sustainability is rooted in environmentally respectful management of all cultural practices that are promoted or supported, but also includes respectful and sustainable practices in a social, economic or labour-related sense.



# Core themes and areas of intervention

CULTURA 311+ is based around three core themes, namely Access, Participation and Innovation & Knowledge. These, in turn, are divided into thirteen intervention areas which, far from being presented as isolated categories, are closely connected to one another and are manifested in the form of programmes and projects.





# Access

This thematic area is all about promoting access to cultural programmes on equal terms, without discrimination based on class, origin, gender or any other factor. It relates to the social dimension of culture and the ability to decentralise programmes and resources, while also supporting local creation and cultural spaces used for socialisation and community action.

This involves ensuring the availability of these resources to promote equal opportunities for everyone, covering all stages of life, and regardless of factors such as income, education or geographical location.

**This theme focuses on fostering access to culture under equal conditions, without any form of discrimination.**

The promotion of access to culture is fundamental for both social and personal development, as it fosters creativity, identity and a sense of belonging. It also helps ensure that diverse voices and sensibilities are heard and appreciated across society as a whole.

From the promotion of artistic languages to recognition of the value of our cultural heritage, along with strong drives to develop strategies for reading engagement, to improve facilities and infrastructures, and to coordinate the institutional and community-based cultural fabric, the Access theme is structured across five areas of intervention.

# Area 1

## Cultural and artistic languages

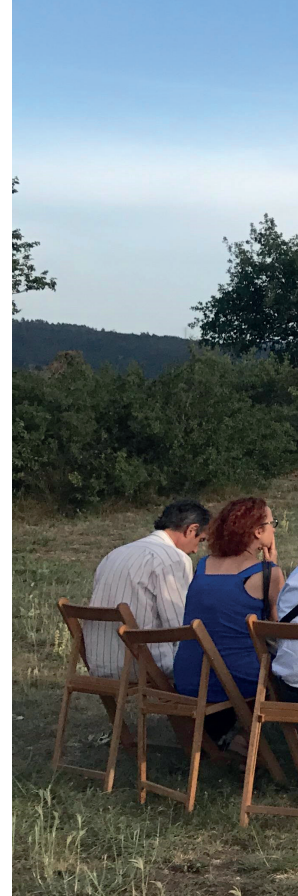
### Contextualisation

The arts and culture enable people to learn about, explore, experience and discover the world through the senses. They are essential for creating spaces where individuals and communities can meet, as well as for building shared meanings and collective identities. Cultural access policies must ensure that everyone is free to express themselves culturally, enjoy artistic and cultural activities, and develop and share knowledge through various artistic, literary, cultural and scientific languages.

To do so, special attention must be paid to the obstacles or barriers that some social groups and communities may face, which reduce their opportunities to participate in the cultural life of their towns and cities. In this regard, it is vital to identify and address all forms of prejudice in the provision of and access to public services, which includes all discrimination based on people's gender, ethnicity or economic status.

### Strategy

The Department of Culture intends to continue supporting municipalities in their efforts to ensure that all people have the opportunities and resources needed to enjoy culture in all its dimensions. This involves recognising and valuing all forms of artistic expression, and leaving behind past prejudices based on ignorance or power relations that historically created divisions between «legitimate» culture and other forms of expression that were not deemed worthy of consideration as culture or art.





**CULTURA 311+ is committed to cultural hybridity by encouraging access to critical thinking and to artistic and scientific languages, all the while promoting the convergence of knowledge and disciplines and their diverse practices.**

It is equally essential to ensure that everyone is familiar with artistic, literary, cultural and scientific languages, and has the tools and resources to understand, decode and ultimately enjoy them. Hence, the actions within this area of intervention are designed to provide the public with a wide array of cultural expressions, placing particular emphasis on the educational and pedagogical aspects of programmes. Initiatives will cover visual and audiovisual arts, live arts, cultural heritage, literature and scientific culture. There will also be a focus on promoting the use of the Catalan language in artistic and literary expression.

**CULTURA 311+ seeks to promote the Catalan language as a connection point, a vehicle for communication, and a driver of interaction and social cohesion.**

What's more, support for artistic performance is support for the professionalisation of artists and creators and for the promotion of decent working conditions in the live arts and contemporary art sectors.

## Key actions

- 1) Promote access to and understanding of artistic languages and contemporary thinking, with special attention to the barriers faced by the most vulnerable groups.
  - Equip municipal councils with contemporary art exhibitions conceptualised, designed and produced by the team from the Visual Arts Programme at the Office for Artistic Dissemination (ODA), in collaboration with leading artistic institutions, contemporary artists and thinkers. These exhibitions include educational and mediation programmes that are specially tailored to ensure that they are accessible to increasingly wider segments of the population.
  - Broaden access to artistic languages and discourses of yesterday via the Local Museums Network (XML), to raise awareness and understanding of today's social challenges through the interpretation of our shared past. These exhibitions will incorporate an educational dimension tailored to the needs of diverse audiences, including people with disabilities.
  - Strengthen the programme of thematic exhibitions at libraries belonging to the XBM, covering contemporary, historical, educational and literary topics. These exhibitions are designed to spark users' interest in themes for which the member libraries hold significant bibliographic and documentary collections, and are often accompanied by related activities.
  - Launch initiatives in libraries to promote writing and literary languages through projects such as *Escriure de cinema* (Write about Cinema), which combines visual and literary arts in participatory film criticism workshops.
  - Promote and raise awareness of local library collections and authors at the libraries in the XBM network through book launches and creative writing workshops.
  - Motivate access to contemporary thinking and scientific languages by fostering connections between knowledge and disciplines that have traditionally been viewed as incompatible. Work toward the integration of a culture that encompasses the arts, humanities, sciences and technology through initiatives such as the BCN Science Corner monthly magazine published by Centre for Cultural Studies and Resources (CERC), and the *Bibliolab* activities and projects that promote experimentation with innovative and creative methodologies in a collaborative, open-to-everyone environment.

- 2) Reinforce programmes supporting live arts to make them a key platform for accessing culture at the local level, while promoting professionalisation in the sector and supporting emerging talent.
- Advise municipal councils on policies concerning the creation and dissemination of live arts, and participate in joint ventures for the design, analysis and evaluation of the activities happening at local performing arts venues.
  - Continue to promote local artistic experiences in alternative venues through the *Escenari Secret* (Secret Stage) programme offered by the ODA to municipal councils. This programme rewards the most committed and engaged audiences of cultural venues, while also serving as a means to bring the languages of the live arts closer to people who are typically less inclined to frequent such places.
  - Promote and enhance the *Escenari* website ([escenari.diba.cat](http://escenari.diba.cat)), which lists the professional activities happening at local performing arts venues. The website includes a catalogue containing the essential details of professional companies and artists available for tours across theatres and auditoriums in the province of Barcelona.



- Support the regular programmes at municipal performing arts venues through the Circuit of the Network of Municipal Performing Arts Venues, providing financial and material support as well as strategies to ensure accessibility and guidance in live arts affairs.
- Promote access to and knowledge of musical languages through the music programme at Palau Güell, such as the *Nits del Palau* (Palau Nights), the *Cicle de Música* (Music Season) with its experimental activities in collaboration with local musicians, and the *Música a Fons* (Deep into Music) programme run by the Municipal Libraries Network, which introduces all audiences to music with the help of experts at sessions combining theory, practice and participation.
- Support art fairs, shows, markets and festivals, and strengthen their local connections through calls for funding for municipal councils and organisations that run such events across the province of Barcelona.



# Area 2

## Promotion of reading

### Contextualisation

The importance of fostering reading habits lies in the fact that, beyond providing instruction, it endows people with the tools they need to acquire the full range of reflection, analysis, perseverance and concentration skills that will serve them throughout life, which entails direct benefits for society in general.

Reading comprehension is a key aspect of educational and social development, and guarantees access to knowledge. The promotion of reading habits thus requires a cross-sectoral approach that brings together education, social and cultural policies. Within this field of local cultural policy, libraries play a fundamental role.

The IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto (2022) defines the creation and enhancement of reading habits from childhood to adulthood, as well as the promotion of literacy activities and programmes to develop reading and writing skills, as core functions of libraries.

Proximity is one of the main values promoted by the Municipal Libraries Network (XBM). Its 235 libraries and 12 mobile libraries (*bibliobusos*) ensure that 99% of the population of the province of Barcelona has access to public library services in their municipality of residence. This comprehensive coverage, together with the interlibrary document lending service and the *Biblio Digital* platform for lending electronic materials —all of which are free services— meant nearly 12 million documents were loaned in 2023, continuing the upward trend of recent years.

Despite these results, there is still work to be done to boost both reading levels and reading comprehension. The results of the 2022 PISA report, which evaluated pupils in the fourth year of secondary education, are the lowest ever recorded for Catalonia and confirm the concerns already raised in the latest PIRLS report (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study, 2021), which assessed the reading comprehension of pupils in the fourth year of primary school. Catalonia is below the European average, and a worrying decline in reading comprehension has been observed compared with previous studies.

Reading skills evidently need to be improved, especially as the impact is clearly not the same across society.

## Strategy

Public libraries and the promotion of reading have always gone hand in hand, but encouragement of reading habits is a shared responsibility of society as a whole. The good health of this pairing depends on collaboration between public and private parties, and on coordination across cultural, social and educational policies. There is a clear need to promote joint programmes and actions aimed at developing reading and writing skills. Reading access and promotion efforts must go beyond libraries alone, which need to liaise with other social, cultural and educational institutions, especially at the local level.

Work must continue to be done to ensure full coverage and to improve services throughout the region, completing the rollout in those municipalities that are legally required to provide a library, and ensuring that mobile libraries reach all municipalities with fewer than 3,000 inhabitants.

**Beyond coverage across the province, CULTURA 311+ is committed to what it terms «lifelong reading coverage», working towards universal access that takes into account the different stages and circumstances of people's lives.**

Coverage across the province is essential to guarantee access, but that alone is not enough. It must be complemented by the concept of «lifelong reading coverage», supporting people with services and resources that meet the specific needs of each stage in the life cycle. This means going beyond infrastructure and focusing on:



- Helping individuals with reading in all stages of life, from early childhood to adulthood.
- Guaranteeing the right to access public reading material in situations where this is more difficult to guarantee (with particular attention to juvenile justice or prison centres, hospitals, and old people's homes), so that all people have access to reading material regardless of where they live or their individual life circumstances.

### Key actions

- 3) Ensure public reading services reach all municipalities in the province that are legally required to have a library, thus guaranteeing the right of access to culture and reading material regardless of place of residence.

The mobile library service will be enhanced through fleet expansion and modernisation, the goal being to serve all municipalities with fewer than 3,000 inhabitants that do not have their own library. During this mandate, a new mobile library will be created, vehicles will be replaced and updated, the service will be getting a new visual identity, and relationships between mobile libraries and local stakeholders will be strengthened.

- 4) Advise municipalities with the draft of a Municipal Reading Plan (*Pla de lectura municipal*), which will be integrated into their strategic cultural planning, to promote reading and coordinate the various stakeholders, offering:

- *Support and guidance documents* for municipal councils wishing to implement their plan.
- A resource available in the *Catalogue of Services* to assist with the preparation of the Municipal Reading Plan.

- 5) Promote library programmes and projects to foster reading:

- In-person and *virtual* reading clubs: Reading groups provide a space where participants can share their opinions and experiences after reading the same book. They encourage interaction between readers and enrich personal perspectives by pooling each of their contributions in a climate of dialogue and mutual respect. Virtual reading groups also enable participation for those who, for various reasons, cannot attend in person.
- *Book Club*: A series of meetings with writers, held both in face-to-face format in libraries and online via Instagram at [@bibliotequesXBM](https://www.instagram.com/bibliotequesXBM).



- 6) Comprehensive programme of activities to improve reading habits and promote culture in municipalities served by mobile libraries, entailing the provision of financial support for the hire of cultural outreach officers, working jointly in small geographically grouped municipalities.
- 7) Improve and promote the range of services and projects for target groups with specific needs, guaranteeing access to reading for all without discrimination:
- «*Amb tots els sentits: primera infància, lectura i biblioteques*» (With All the Senses: Early childhood, reading and libraries) is a project designed to equip librarians with skills and tools for reflection and discussion around reading in early childhood.
  - Services for senior citizens: The growing number of older people points to the need for new community spaces, and libraries are ideal hubs for social cohesion. Libraries will continue to adapt their collections, activities and services to the needs of this increasingly larger sector of the population.
  - Services for newcomers: The reception and provision of services to new arrivals has long been a priority for public libraries. «*WelcomeBIB*» is a social inclusion and integration project run by the Government of Catalonia, designed to make public libraries places that reach out to the local community and groups arriving from outside of Catalonia. The goal is to equip libraries with frameworks and resources to offer services to and facilitate the integration of these populations.
  - «*Biblioteques Inclusives*» (Inclusive Libraries) is a project in which the Library Services Division supports the goal of ensuring that all public libraries in Catalonia are inclusive spaces—not just in order to comply with legal and theoretical frameworks, but to offer real opportunities to people with diverse abilities..
  - Creation of inclusive projects based on culture and reading as vehicles for social inclusion and integration. Work has already begun on the «*Biblioteques i centres educatius de justícia juvenil*» (Libraries and Juvenile Justice Educational Centres) project, which is soon to be extended to hospitals and old people's homes.
- 8) Promote the Catalan language through reading:
- «*Ponts literaris*» (Literary Bridges) is a cooperative project between the Municipal Libraries Network and libraries in the Valencian Community and the Balearic Islands, designed to strengthen and promote the use of Catalan across these regions by exploring their respective literature and sharing language-based readings and experiences.



- 9) Promote virtual library services for access to and dissemination of content: Cultural consumption habits are evolving, and digital formats are expected to become even more predominant among users. Key actions will focus on improvements to the *Virtual Library* and the digital lending platform (*Biblio digital*).
- 10) Enhance projects that combine text-based reading with other artistic forms of reading, such as visual, audiovisual and performative expression.



# Area 3

## Cultural heritage

### Contextualisation

Local cultural policies are at the crossroads between the symbolic and the expressive, between avant-garde cultural expressions and everyday culture. The importance of the symbolic dimension of social practices, the recognition of traditional trades, shared legacy, traditional knowledge and folk festivities all form part of this intersection.

The dialogue between «tradition» and «modernity» has often been approached by attempting to frame or isolate tradition. Today, the Barcelona Provincial Council's Department of Culture advocates for a dynamic conception of tradition, one that engages with both the present and the past and strives to ensure that the various cultural narratives coexisting across the province are recognised as part of a common identity. A tradition that does not connect with the present —in all its complexity— becomes static, just as an avant-garde movement that starts from scratch and disregards tradition can feel empty.

This perspective is all about bolstering the role of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage as a key factor in safeguarding the right to access to and participation in culture, the dissemination of knowledge, preservation, legacy and representation. To this end, the Department promotes and runs a series of services to support the municipal management of cultural heritage, complementing the services provided by local councils and ensuring balance across the province.

### Strategy

The Department of Culture promotes actions aimed at improving the management, conservation and dissemination of both tangible and intangible heritage across the region's municipalities, as well as strengthening the relationship between heritage facilities and local communities, in order to connect research centres with knowledge, management and reflection around local patrimony. Its work revolves around three core areas (territory, heritage and people) as it helps to forge a collective identity and legacy by creating spaces for learning, socialisation and leisure, so the public can explore local traditions,



engage with them and feel a sense of belonging to them, thus leveraging traditions to inform and enrich new cultural practices, and helping to root them in their local context.

**Tangible and intangible heritage form a set of essential assets for the guarantee of cultural rights. CULTURA 311+ addresses these with the intention of fostering both access to and the use of resources, creating contexts for learning, socialisation, creativity and enjoyment.**

A dual strategy is pursued. On the one hand, the consolidation of existing programmes focused on the protection, conservation and dissemination of cultural heritage, while deepening their connection with local cultural life and the diversity of cultural expressions within each municipality. On the other hand, setting in motion cultural initiatives related to the legacy and history of art and culture, thus supporting regional equality and the inclusion of the most deprived communities.



## Key actions

- 11) Improve the management, conservation and dissemination of heritage and the facilities that house it through the Local Museums Network (XML), the Municipal Archives Network (XAM), and the Municipal Libraries Network (XBM). This includes making the management of these facilities and their relationships with their local communities more professional.
- 12) Provide councils with tools and technical assistance for the integrated management of local cultural heritage, thus helping to consolidate a regional system for the protection, study, preservation and dissemination of cultural heritage as a means of democratising culture:
  - Provide financial support for the planning, communication and implementation of activities involving the museums and archives in the XML and XAM networks, respectively. This includes funding for educational, engagement and mediation activities involving those museums and archives and the organisation of temporary exhibitions.
  - Support the development and implementation of strategic plans and projects promoted by museums in the XML, including master plans and their extensions, museological or museographic projects, collection management plans, accessibility plans, social and gender inclusion plans, communication plans, educational and research projects, security plans, and audience studies and evaluations. Also the provision of technical and financial support and advice to councils with their museum projects and with the documentation of heritage collections, venues and infrastructures that are not part of the XML.
  - Contribute to the processing, documentation, preventive conservation and restoration of local museum and archive collections.
  - Enhance and complement the exhibition programmes of XML museums by leveraging the travelling exhibition programme coordinated by the Cultural Heritage Office (*Oficina de Patrimoni Cultural*, OPC). During this mandate, new elements are expected to be incorporated to boost the impact of these exhibitions and of the museums in the network, such as co-produced exhibitions by member museums, modular displays that can be adapted to the specific context of each museum, and improvements to the cultural and educational programmes associated with these exhibitions.
  - Actions to promote museums as spaces for health and well-being. The OPC sits on the Museums and Health Board (*Taula de Museus i Salut*), and several XML museums have adopted this line of work.

- Provide technical and financial resources to public libraries and municipal archives for the management, cataloguing, conservation and dissemination of special, local and heritage collections.
- Design and create a network of basic heritage facilities to help structure, connect and resource those spaces which, though they may not meet the criteria to be classified as museums, are of significance to local legacy and identity.

**13)** Work to guarantee the conservation, documentation, knowledge and research of Palau Güell, a former palace designed by the architect Antoni Gaudí and listed as a World Heritage Site since 1984, located in the Raval neighbourhood of Barcelona.

- Drive research to expand knowledge about Palau Güell and link it to new research lines that foster a critical view of the history of Western cultural heritage.
- Manage the building's activities, and especially public visits, with a particular focus on local audiences and groups with special needs. Organise both mobile and in-house exhibitions.
- Host a series of debates on decolonisation to provoke a rereading of the origins of this building and the Güell family behind it, and connect these observations to historical research into the role of colonisation in the development and consolidation of Eurocentric modernity.



- 14)** Support expressions of popular and traditional culture as central elements of the dialogue between tradition and modernity, with special attention to the protection and promotion of diverse cultural expressions.
- Maintain and improve grant programmes supporting popular and traditional cultural activities organised by local organisations and federations.
- 15)** Safeguard the preservation of intangible heritage, oral traditions and democratic legacy.
- Promote community projects such as human libraries, which foster interpersonal, intercultural and intergenerational understanding. So-called «Human Books» are individuals with unique experiences who share their life stories in a direct, personal way. This format allows participants to listen and learn from diverse human experiences, encouraging mutual understanding, intercultural dialogue and social cohesion within the communities residing in specific municipalities or neighbourhoods.
  - Foster programmes to recover democratic legacy through local museums and archives, and to honour and highlight women's history, for instance through the XML's *Galeria de Dones* (Gallery of Women).
- 16)** Consolidate the digitisation of heritage and enhance communication strategies and engagement with the local people and cultural communities.
- Support the digitisation of documents held in municipal archives that are part of the XAM, with the goal of preserving and disseminating these collections, and continue digitising and publishing the local and heritage collections held in public libraries.
  - Work to consolidate the *El museu més gran de Catalunya* (Catalonia's Biggest Museum) website as a means of communication that showcases the XML online.
  - Hold virtual exhibitions of archival documents based around key themes to make the local documentary heritage that is managed and preserved by municipal archives more accessible to the public and researchers.
  - Promote universal access to digitised archives and library collections via platforms such as *Trencadís* (unique collections contained in the digital repository of the Municipal Libraries Network) and *Imagina* (archives).
  - Continue collaborating with the Digital Innovation Office (*Gabinet d'Innovació Digital*) to implement electronic administration in municipalities with fewer than 5,000 inhabitants, ensuring the effective operation and monitoring of document management and archiving tools.

# Area 4

## Infrastructure and facilities

### Contextualisation

Cultural facilities are venues for participation and cultural expression, and as such contribute to local development. They act as hubs for economic, social and cultural engagement within municipalities.

Policies concerning access to culture are closely tied to the availability of either purpose-built venues or open-air sites where such participation can happen, both individually and collectively, and professionally or on an amateur basis. It is therefore important to consider cultural infrastructures and facilities as part of the broader picture.

The legal and regulatory framework, along with the associated spatial planning tools, set out the basic guidelines for this area. The *Pla d'Equipaments Culturals* (Cultural Facilities Plan, PECCat), the *Mapa de Lectura de Catalunya* (Reading Map of Catalonia) and various plans for municipal cultural facilities describe the needs of and propose actions for each municipality.

Although new facilities have been built in recent years and others have been redeveloped, many municipalities still lack basic cultural services, while a significant number of facilities are so old or limited that they struggle to meet modern service requirements and user needs.

The recently introduced *Codi d'Accessibilitat de Catalunya* (Accessibility Code of Catalonia) covers matters such as sensory and cognitive accessibility to facilities. This framework encourages inclusive policies that promote cultural diversity and universal accessibility.

## Strategy

The guarantee of cultural rights means ensuring equitable access to cultural infrastructures and facilities regardless of socio-economic status, origin or geographic location. This requires inclusive policies that promote cultural diversity and universal accessibility, supported by efficient, complementary and sustainable development and upgrading of facilities.

**Cultural infrastructures should function as meeting places that guarantee access not only to programmed events but also to possibilities for use by cultural groups and the wider public.**

The promotion of green technologies and sustainable practices is essential to ensure that these cultural facilities not only serve current communities but will also be viable for future generations. They should be designed and built with sustainability in mind, incorporating energy saving and waste reduction measures, both architecturally and in day-to-day management. Existing facilities also need to be progressively adapted to meet sustainability standards.



## Key actions

- 17)** Guide and advise municipal councils with the creation and improvement of cultural facilities.
- Libraries: Implement the XBM Model in creation, renovation and transformation projects. Offer guidance and support to councils throughout all stages of the project, from drafting the functional brief through to inauguration.
  - Performing arts and music venues: Financial support for strategic planning in order to improve services, management, functionality and comfort.
  - Heritage facilities: Technical support for converting spaces, archaeological sites and local collections into museums, plus funding for modernisation and improvements to these facilities.
  - Support also for the creation of community reserves among XML museums.
  - Multi-purpose cultural centres: Financial support to adapt facilities to public needs, and technical support to define uses and regulations.
  - Develop plans for municipal cultural facilities in general and do so from a holistic perspective, including how they connect to facilities in neighbouring areas. Also, produce plans for the use of individual facilities, in connection with the guidance programme issued by the Centre for Cultural Studies and Resources (CERC).
- 18)** Advance towards more sustainable, energy-efficient, accessible and better-maintained cultural buildings.
- Conduct analyses and surveys of the current status of municipal cultural facilities across the province to get a clearer picture of their conditions and thus adequately inform support policies in this area and be able to design appropriate ordinary and corrective maintenance programmes for different types of cultural facilities (libraries, theatres, archives, museums, art centres, multi-purpose cultural centres, and so on).
  - Advise municipal councils by conducting library maintenance and energy efficiency studies to help optimise consumption, minimise environmental impact and reduce management costs.
  - Integrate cultural facilities into the climate shelter network to mitigate the effects of climate change, and promote ecological transition laboratories for sharing environmental initiatives in order to work towards more sustainable and locally aligned models.

- Improve the energy efficiency and sustainability of Palau Güell as part of its expansion, in line with the obligations derived from the Biosphere certification that it has held since 2023. Promote actions to improve sensory and cognitive accessibility.
- Adapt all cultural facilities to the new Accessibility Code of Catalonia to ensure universal access, particularly for people with diverse abilities, and also address the challenges of an ageing population.
- Hold workshops on architecture and cultural facilities to foster debate and share experiences aimed at making these buildings more accessible, inclusive and sustainable.

The first of these workshops, focused on libraries and architecture, will be held in Barcelona in November and December 2024.

- Foster user autonomy and self-service in libraries.

Continue installing Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) across the XBM network: As of June 2024, 135 libraries (55 % of the total) had adopted RFID technology for lending and security management. The aim is to achieve full coverage with this technology across the network of libraries, while further potential applications of this technology are currently being explored.

- Support and encourage municipal councils in creating self-access library spaces outside of opening hours for study and group work.



# Area 5

## Institutional and civic cultural fabric

### Contextualisation

Cultural action in municipalities is forged through aligning the provision of public services by institutions and initiatives arising from the local cultural fabric, with a spirit of shared responsibility. Beyond designing, planning and implementing cultural programmes, the role of municipal councils also involves stimulating and supporting citizen-led projects.

Support for municipal cultural action, particularly in terms of programming, reflection and strategic development, has been and continues to be one of the cornerstones of the work done by the Department of Culture. This is materialised in the form of various tools and channels such as the Catalogue of Services, grants, collaboration agreements, and other frameworks. This variety of formulas makes it possible to meet the needs of municipal councils and public cultural facilities, as well as local entities and communities. This promotes cultural development based on multiplicity, interaction and cooperation among all actors that are part of the cultural ecosystem, including public institutions and local groups and communities.

### Strategy

The perspective in this area is to maintain and strengthen a commitment that spans from institutional programmes to projects directly driven by local organisations and citizen groups.

Programmes supporting public initiatives will be continued, but also those of local organisations and citizen groups, as well as projects that foster collaboration between institutions and between them and the cultural and civic fabric. In all of these, the goal is to promote access to and participation in cultural processes, both of which are essential if people in vulnerable or underprivileged situations are to have their own say in the social community. Support will be given

to a diverse range of cultural expressions, from the most popular and festive forms to projects aimed at bringing culture closer to the populace through workshops, training activities and groups working for the interests and professionalisation of different cultural sectors. In this context, the Plan fosters the Catalan language as a connecting point, a vehicle for communication, and a driver of interaction and social cohesion.

**CULTURA 311+ promotes cultural development based on the multiplicity, interaction and cooperation of all actors that are part of the cultural ecosystem, including public institutions and local groups and communities.**

Additionally, during this mandate, there are plans to increase the presence across the province of the participant entities in the Department of Culture and its autonomous bodies, and to establish decentralised projects in collaboration with municipal councils and local entities.

## Key actions

- 19)** Provide financial support for cultural programmes through the Catalogue of Services and collaboration agreements.
- The *Catàleg de serveis* is one of the instruments used by the Barcelona Provincial Council to carry out its functions of local assistance and cooperation. The Department of Culture has 23 resources in the 2024-2027 Catalogue of Services, including technical, material and financial ones. Financial resources are aimed at providing direct support for the cultural programmes of municipalities and are intended to contribute to the development of local cultural policies and facilitate the implementation of





cultural rights across the province. Resources are available for activities run by archives and museums within the corresponding networks, for organising artistic festivals, for workshops and training activities, for promoting reading, and for innovative cultural projects, among others.

- In the agreements on the comprehensive management of the Municipal Libraries Network signed with municipal councils, the Provincial Council shares responsibility for an annual contribution of resources for scheduling reading promotion activities and for purchasing documentary materials.
- 20)** Support municipal programmes that focus on institutional collaboration and with local organisations and cultural groups, seeking shared responsibility in the provision of public services.
- Continue financially supporting cultural activities carried out within the framework of annual local festivals in all municipalities within the province of Barcelona.
  - Support the organisation by local bodies of public training activities in the fields of the performing arts, visual and audiovisual arts, history, heritage, literature, music, popular culture and science.
  - Create working committees with the participation of public sector facilities and stakeholder entities, as well as staff from the Cultural Heritage Office, the Artistic Diffusion Office, the Cultural Studies and Resources Office, and the Library Network Services Office, to coordinate actions and decentralise projects across the province.
  - Continue offering specific training in different areas of cultural management and promoting bespoke training across the municipalities.

**21)** Support citizen projects that directly impact the cultural life of the province's municipalities and promote the participation of citizens and collectives with diverse profiles.

- Continue calls for support for symphonic or chamber orchestras based in municipalities in the province, for festivals organised by entities, and for entities representing cultural sectors, as mechanisms for supporting and driving citizen initiatives aimed at promoting access to culture and the closer coordination of the cultural sector.
- Drive actions carried out in collaboration between the museums in the Local Museums Network, the general public and local entities.

**22)** Encourage the organisation of supra-municipal cultural projects in collaboration with municipal councils in the province and generate shared processes for the design, production and coordination of these events.

- Continue processes such as those of recent years in which the Department of Culture has participated in inter-municipal collaboration projects like the Metropolitan Dance Festival, the Perspectives programme at the Teatre Lliure and the *Manifesta 15* project. The aim is to support existing festivals and programmes, but also to foster the creation of new ones.







# Participation

Cultural participation is linked to the capacity of the entire population to engage in cultural practices as protagonists of various processes, based on the right to self-representation and participation in the productive cultural life of their municipalities. This participatory dimension is associated with different expressions, creative processes, and educational and training activities.

From the perspective of artistic creation, the right to cultural participation also includes supporting creators in municipalities so they can develop their careers under dignified conditions. The struggle against precariousness in the sector, the right to freedom of expression, and the strengthening of the social, economic and productive fabric of towns and cities are just some of the elements that frame this approach.

Within this thematic area, community cultural practice takes on a significant dimension, and one that is linked to the development of programmes and strategies that fortify the role of culture in the population's social capital. It also often has to do with getting collectives, groups and entities that are already engaged in economic, social or regional cultural processes to formalise their actions to a certain extent.

**Cultural participation concerns people's ability to engage in cultural practices, whether individually or collectively, as well as supporting creators so they can develop their careers under dignified conditions.**

From this perspective, there is also the need to address innovation processes in cultural governance models, linked to the capacity to create open spaces for public, public-private and public-community participation in decision-making around cultural affairs in municipalities.

The areas of intervention within this thematic area include such wide-ranging ideas as expanded education, the incorporation of mediation processes to ensure local grounding, the implementation of programmes supporting collective creation, the fight against precariousness in the sector, the promotion of a community culture and the right to artistic and literary creation.

# Area 6

## Mediation and education

### Contextualisation

Cultural mediation is a benchmark participatory framework and methodology for cultural rights. Cultural and artistic mediation constitutes a form of practice rooted in collective, non-contemplative cultural actions, where the focus is on constructing culture through collaborative experiences led by active citizen participation.

All these processes are built on active listening to the specific contexts in which intervention is sought, incorporating diverse opinions and circumstances. Cultural mediation is therefore a distinct way of working within the cultural sector, fundamentally built around the integration of participatory processes into cultural activities in order to address a wide range of contexts. It has much to do with pedagogical processes, fostering the ability to recognise or develop new centralities and to ambitiously engage with cultural diversity.

Cultural and artistic mediation often intersects with educational action, particularly in settings such as schools, cultural institutions, communities and local regions. The Department of Culture has been gradually incorporating mediation processes and techniques into its activities, and plans to intensify these efforts throughout the current mandate.

### Strategy

The local level offers an ideal environment for exploring the synergies between formal and non-formal education, identifying learning opportunities in everyday situations, and building mediation processes in a coordinated and collaborative manner with local social, cultural, educational and community stakeholders, who are well-acquainted with the specific context and circumstances of each municipality or neighbourhood. These processes must treat all members of the population, but especially children, young adults, minorities and

people and groups in vulnerable situations, as competent and sensitive subjects, and must legitimise their cultural experiences.

Work must continue to develop cross-cutting public policy in the fields of culture and education, placing mediation at the core, and not as an accessory, of cultural action. It should draw on the tools of cultural and artistic education, namely critical and investigative capacity, teamwork, and personal subjectivity and sensitivity.

**Cultural and artistic mediation constitutes a form of practice rooted in collective, non-contemplative cultural action, where the focus is on the construction of culture through collaborative experiences driven by the citizens themselves.**

The Department of Culture is committed to promoting such processes, which should also serve to drive full participation in cultural rights by the full diversity of the population, while also helping to forge peaceful, free, equitable and cooperative societies.



## Key actions

- 23) Incorporate artistic mediation into the programmes and activities promoted by the Cultural Services Division with the aim of building bridges between artistic projects and audiences or participants through collective experiences, with the support of practitioners, thereby opening the doors toward full participation in cultural rights by an increasingly broad and diverse population.
- Promote and enhance the IT Reverberations (*Reverberacions IT*) programme at the Teatre Lliure, starting with a pilot project in five municipalities. This scheme aims to build networks and connect the Teatre Lliure's vocational project (for graduates of the Theatre Institute) with the social, cultural, educational and community ecosystems of municipalities in the province of Barcelona, with the ultimate goal of enabling occasional (or more intensive) cultural democracy projects that contribute to building peaceful, free, equal and cooperative societies.
  - Provide training and guidance to local professionals so they can generate artistic mediation processes that support closer relationships with and performances of contemporary art, while also expanding and enhancing the didactic resources included in the mobile exhibitions of the Visual Arts Programme run by the Office for Artistic Dissemination (ODA) to drive the connection between contemporary art, the specific contexts of the municipalities hosting the exhibitions, and the communities living in them.





- Consolidate mediation actions linked to the mobile exhibitions of the Local Museums Network (XML) and to the activities of the Municipal Archives Network (XAM). This includes activities addressed at a more general public and those that focus on people with disabilities or special needs.
- Design and implement mediation and educational innovation processes at Palau Güell to support and enrich the visitor experience and ensure access to knowledge about this unique Gaudí monument. At the same time, the programme of activities at the Palau will be expanded to take full account of the diversity of users and their associated interests. These actions form part of the new direction for the Palau linked to its upcoming expansion project.
- Maintain and reinforce the *Anem al Teatre* (Let's Go to the Theatre) programme promoted by the Office for Artistic Dissemination (ODA), which offers drama and musical performances geared toward kindergarten, primary, secondary, high school and vocational students. The programme, which was selected by an expert committee, stands out for the artistic quality and pedagogical suitability of the shows, which are all targeted at a specific level of education. All performances are accompanied by didactic guides and are held in venues with limited capacity to ensure that the audience gets to enjoy ideal viewing conditions.
- Revive the ODA's *Flipart* programme, which brings artists and arts professionals into schools through various types of activities, including life stories shared by performing arts professionals with students; first-hand accounts of learning experiences, career paths and challenges presented by practitioners working in various walks of the performing arts; and thematic arts

sessions (*Monogràfics d'arts*) in which artists introduce students to different performing arts disciplines by means of practical workshops.

- 24)** Promote literary mediation processes at the libraries in the Municipal Libraries Network as a way to foster a love of language and literature across increasingly broader sections of society.

The XBM's literary mediation projects involve activities in direct contact with users in combination with professional training and networking through a community of practice. Examples include:

- *Ficció en joc* (Fiction at Play), which aims to build a cultural mediation system around digital fiction in libraries.
- *Debat a bat* (Wide Open Debate), which takes teenagers on a journey through art, literature, and philosophy using illustrated albums.
- *Laboratoris de Lectura* (Reading Labs), which engage families in promoting reading and literary education among their children.

- 25)** Strengthen the relationships between XBM libraries and the education community.

Although public libraries are already working closely with schools and colleges, these collaborations will be reinforced through the following actions:



- Enhance the role of public libraries as an information resource for the education community, especially in the context of research projects (*SOS TR* project).
  - Relaunch the collaboration between libraries and the *Nascuts per Llegir* (Born to Read) programme, which promotes reading among children aged 0 to 3 in coordination with primary healthcare centres and kindergartens.
- 26)** Incorporate mediation into work and engagement processes with deprived or special needs groups.
- Renew commitment to the *CulturaMENT* programme, which supports cultural activities addressed at people with mental health conditions and their carers. The programme focuses on people who face particular barriers to cultural access due to mental illness. Support includes cultural activities for people with mental health conditions and training and awareness-raising for their caregivers and front-of-house staff at cultural facilities.
  - Consolidate the relationship between the staff at Palau Güell with cultural organisations, institutions and grassroots initiatives in Barcelona's Raval neighbourhood. This includes arranging public visits with special attention to local residents and groups with specific needs.
  - Continue incorporating functional, sensory and cognitive accessibility measures into contemporary art exhibitions promoted by the Office for Artistic Dissemination (ODA), as well as the exhibitions at Palau Güell and museums in the Local Museums Network (XML). One key programme in this regard is *La Mirada Tàctil* (The Tactile Gaze), a programme run by the Office for Cultural Heritage (OPC) that makes the permanent exhibitions at XML museums accessible to the visually impaired or blind, the oral and signing deaf community, and people with reading difficulties.
  - Provide support and guidance to libraries operating in high-complexity environments. Libraries are spaces for social relations and connections that reflect the tensions and contradictions of the communities they serve. The aim is to identify criteria that help predict which library facilities may be in socially complex settings and to engage local councils in improvement actions. Work will be aimed at offering tools to library staff and connecting libraries with municipal mediation professionals, in coordination with the Service for Coexistence, Diversity, Children and the Elderly (*Servei de Convivència, Diversitat, Infància i Persones grans*).

# Area 7

## Community culture

### Contextualisation

This line of action seeks to bolster social cohesion by recognising the universal right to culture and by offering learning and community-building opportunities across all municipalities in the province of Barcelona.

The programmes linked to this thematic area will address social challenges identified in the local ecosystem, providing open access to new knowledge and promoting innovative forms of institutional practice. Partnerships will be established with local agents and organisations, forging partnerships that will enrich learning and foster both individual and collective development, with the aim of contributing to the construction of more equitable, democratic and sustainable societies.





The Department of Culture has experience in driving participatory social innovation initiatives, which have promoted creativity and community collaboration in the resolution of collective challenges concerning the province's cultural facilities. Notable among these are *Bibli-oLab*, a programme developed within the Municipal Library Network (XBM) that brings the XBM Model closer to the public; and *Memòria en Xarxa* (Networked Memory), a project run by the Local Museums Network (XML) aimed at recovering the democratic past through exhibitions across the region, structured around historical events and the local specificities of a shared cultural legacy.

### Strategy

The general public will be called on to participate in resolving social challenges through community-based cultural creation projects in municipal performing arts venues, local museums and archives, art and civic centres, the libraries within the Municipal Libraries Network, and other council facilities.

**Community cultural action boosts the local population's social capital and facilitates horizontal governance processes that help to solve local challenges and improve people's quality of life and wellbeing.**

Particular attention will be paid to practices carried out collectively, due to their value for education and for building active, critical and innovative communities, as well as for their positive impacts in terms of equality, regional cohesion and the recognition of diverse cultural expressions.

Community cultural management often revolves around common assets or resources (such as cultural projects and programmes, natural spaces, cultural facilities, intangible heritage, digital data, and so on), highlighting their transformative potential. In this regard, the synergy between community cultural practice and local infrastructures, facilities and cultural resources is a key factor for the social development and cultural revitalisation of neighbourhoods, towns and cities.

## Key actions

- 27)** Promote *Cultura Viva* (Living Culture), an open programme for the research and development of projects aimed at recognising and supporting spaces for participation and cultural circulation and co-production.

*Cultura Viva* will be a cross-cutting programme rooted in specific activities and practices from a community-based artistic or cultural perspective. Every project, work process and related research will be conducted in collaboration with part of the cultural fabric in local municipalities, implementing new formulas for public–community management and governance.

Several different lines of action are envisaged, including the use of new infrastructures for civic practices (radio and audiovisual production studios, art workshops, etc.), new methodologies for recognising popular traditions and legacies, and programmes aimed at fostering community participation in management and decision-making. The first step in this area will be the identification of so-called «culture points», i.e. agents, organisations and communities in the province that are developing strategies to revitalise culture, participation and community action.

- 28)** Development of citizen science projects in libraries.

These projects will include, wherever possible, the involvement of public administrations (encouraging cross-sector collaboration within the Barcelona Provincial Council and with municipal councils), the general public and universities.

Good examples of projects carried out so far include *Llegim el riu*, (We Read the River), a citizen science initiative involving Barcelona Provincial Council's Department of the Environment and Department of Culture, which addresses public policy challenges concerning the condition of the Llobregat and Besòs river basins; *De l'hort a la biblioteca* (From the Garden to the Library), a programme of activities and resources designed to help library users learn about local produce and adopt healthier lifestyles,

and *Parcs i biblioteques, naturalment* (Parks and Libraries, Naturally), a collaboration between Barcelona Provincial Council's Library Services Division and the Natural Spaces Services Division, which is designed to raise awareness of the region's natural and cultural heritage.

**29)** Support for community-based creative projects.

A specific call will be launched to support community creation within the libraries of the Municipal Libraries Network, alongside support mechanisms for community projects happening at facilities belonging to the Local Museums Network, the Municipal Archives Network, the Network of Municipal Performing Arts Venues and other municipal facilities such as arts and civic centres, multi-purpose cultural centres, and other public, private or community-run spaces.

The aim is to address social challenges through community creation, forging alliances with various agents within the local ecosystem. In the case of libraries, the idea is for these projects to support the transformation process toward the new XBM Model of public libraries.



# Area 8

## Artistic and literary creation

### Contextualisation

The approach to creation is grounded in the population's right to express themselves in a creative manner, as well as the right to the protection of the moral and material interests arising from that which is created. For the Department of Culture, working in the field of creativity involves broadening the perspective to influence both individual and collective creative processes in their entirety. This means embracing all phases and stakeholders concerned, from the conception of ideas to their exhibition, publication and dissemination, including production, trial and error, and all other stages of the process.

Artistic and literary creation, as a set of practices, has the capacity to actively engage cultural agents (as well as people and groups of all kinds) with culture through citizen participation. These processes contribute significantly to the education of individuals and communities, fostering the capacity for critical thinking and nurturing the transition towards more mature societies that are fully aware of and proud of their diversity, and who are respectful and responsible towards others and their environment. Social transformation towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) cannot be envisaged without the active participation of the population. It is in this sense that citizens are placed at the heart of the Department of Culture's strategy to foster creation and cultural participation.

### Strategy

To make a real impact in the field of creation, the transformative *COCREA* project has been designed, encompassing a major proportion of the actions planned in this area. The project, which will always endeavour to seek the collaboration and implication of municipal councils, is aimed at the local cultural and artistic fabric. Its medium- and long-term vocation is to help build a structured, global and coherent system for fostering creation. This ambitiously complex

programme involves multiple stakeholders and includes some noteworthy initiatives that are already up and running. The idea is for the project to be developed in close cooperation with the institutions and organisations that are currently working in the field of creation, so that the actions of all parties can mutually complement and reinforce each other, thus adding value to the Catalan ecosystem of creative agents and spaces.

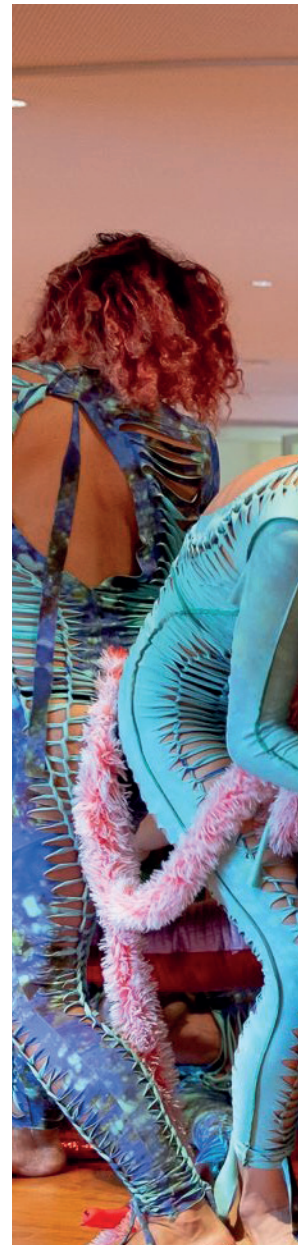
**COCREA, the new transformative project for this mandate, is conceived as a cross-cutting programme with the primary aim of promoting artistic and literary creation across the province's municipalities, grounded in the defence of cultural rights.**

The main objective of this project is to promote artistic and literary creation in municipalities within the framework of cultural rights and cultural development. To achieve this, a series of actions has been set in motion to support innovative artistic and cultural creation, to disseminate knowledge and critical thinking, and to develop collaborative networks among local cultural agents.



## Key actions

- 30) Define, identify, structure and support the spaces that host and accompany artistic and literary creation processes across the territory of the Barcelona Provincial Council.
- One of the first planned actions in the field of creation is a study to analyse the support mechanisms for creative and cultural production that already exist across the province of Barcelona, and to put forward proposals for the future to complement and strengthen these initiatives. This work will also serve to define the concept of a «creative space» within the context of the Provincial Council's actions, to identify such spaces, to understand their characteristics, to detect their main needs, and to gain insight into the creative communities that already exist and operate in the region.
  - Define a network of creative spaces across the region governed by the Barcelona Provincial Council based on the findings of this study, as a means to identify the spaces and agents currently involved in artistic and literary creation. The project will be developed in a cross-departmental manner, onboarding the Cultural Services Division and the Library Services Division, and will seek collaboration from municipal councils, the creative spaces themselves, and local agents and groups who are working in this area. This network will channel support for creation while also enabling resource pooling, the exchange of experiences, and joint management of shared interests among the teams running these types of facilities.
  - Once the criteria for joining the network and the proposed support mechanisms have been defined, a pilot test will be run with a limited number of facilities in order to trial the instrument on the ground and be able to introduce any necessary changes to ensure it functions in the optimal manner.



- 31)** Conceptualise and promote a set of actions to support creation, encompassing both individual creators and collectives or companies.
- Launch a pilot programme of artistic and literary residencies in municipal spaces or facilities owned by the Barcelona Provincial Council that are currently vacant or that have no defined use. The Department of Culture will decide which of these spaces meet the necessary requirements to host artistic and literary residencies, and plans for usage and proposed content will be developed. The aim is to launch artistic and literary residencies around the province that are promoted directly by the Provincial Council in liaison with the municipal councils where those facilities are located. Initially, one or two pilot projects will be carried out to test the programme and help define its posterior development.
  - Collaborations will also be arranged with the Ramon Llull Institute to promote international projection and cultural exchanges for Catalan writers and creators.





# Innovation and knowledge

This third thematic area is dedicated to strengthening the capacity of institutions to drive and support innovation processes that, through projects, instruments and programmes, address the challenges posed by the development of cultural rights in the broadest sense. These include tensions between responsibilities and competencies, the efficient use of resources, the deployment of open digital strategies, and the creation of networks for sharing experiences and exploring potential collaborative strategies.

**Cultural innovation is part of the collective responses we generate as a society to the biggest challenges we face. In this regard, the right to knowledge and information aligns with cultural rights as it is about fostering critical capacity, diverse identities and coexistence.**

From this perspective, we also address the right to information and knowledge, which plays a fundamental role in shaping how people engage with their cultural environment, their traditions, values, beliefs and the associated social activities, thus enabling them to develop a well-informed, critical outlook. Today, this is a key area for ensuring comfortable coexistence and combating hate speech and the stigmatisation of difference.

The focal actions in this thematic area include the creation of projects related to open data and the democratisation of information (such as the use of public archives and collections), programmes that promote the formation of inter-municipal learning communities, and the organisation of events where perspectives and experiences on the role of culture in building citizenship can be shared.

# Area 9

## Institutional innovation

### Contextualisation

A changing society requires flexible organisations that can adapt to the circumstances at any given time and that can review their coherence and ways of operating in response to the (also changing) needs of their surrounding environment, in all its diversity. In this context, innovation becomes a necessity that must be addressed at different levels and through specific strategies. Institutional innovation is therefore the set of changes that institutions must undergo when society changes. But also when people change, along with their actions and the ways they relate to each other and to institutions. Institutional innovation is, in fact, a social process.

Public cultural institutions, for their part, are fundamental tools for recognising and promoting cultural rights. Often spread across the territory, they act as nodes with huge potential for social interaction. With the aim of recognising the individual journey of each institution and promoting them as living bodies in favour of this institutional and social interaction, the Barcelona Provincial Council's Department of Culture facilitates processes and provides resources to enhance existing capacities and also foster new ones.

### Strategy

With the cooperation and accumulated knowledge of current management teams, the main drivers of the new processes of institutional innovation (as in the other areas of this plan) will be the search for means to enhance access to existing resources, and the encouragement of participatory methodologies within the functional programmes of the institutional framework, the cultural fabric and the general public as a whole.



**CULTURA 311+ is committed to a new form of institutional framework that recognises the public value of local administrations, organisations and communities engaged with the advancement of cultural rights, and that requires tools for their promotion and coordination.**

Opening up cultural projects and facilities to other areas of public action and to the general public, driving inter-municipal relations and new networks of collaboration, or revisiting institutional narratives and discourse from a critical lens that incorporates the views and perspectives of groups that have historically lived on the margins are just a few of the actions the Department of Culture aims to promote in the framework of institutional innovation.

### **Key actions**

**32)** Design and launch the *Expandir el Palau* (Expand the Palau) project.

In 2025, work will begin on defining the new museological and museographic programmes for Palau Güell, which will include the creation of a programme to foster thoughts on culture, architecture and public space from a decolonisation perspective. These

programmes will seek to deepen the relationship with the palace's immediate environs, essentially the Raval neighbourhood of Barcelona, and contribute to the development of cultural rights. Opportune steps will also be taken to set the building's renovation process in motion, with the aim of establishing it as a benchmark venue dedicated to the life, work and thoughts of Antoni Gaudí.

**33)** Drive a strategic repositioning of the Centre for Cultural Studies and Resources (CERC) and its headquarters at the building known as Pati Manning (the «Manning Courtyard») with the *Pati Manning–Pati Cultural* project, opening it up to the cultural sector and fostering reflection on contemporary cultural policies. This programme consolidates a space for encounter and exchange of ideas among cultural practitioners and agents, reinforcing the CERC's role as a benchmark in innovation and research in cultural policy.

- Events relating to cultural management and local cultural policies will be organised at Pati Manning, such as book launches, debates and small-format performances aimed at municipal culture officers and cultural management professionals.
- Pati Manning will be opened up to organisations in the cultural sector so that they can host public events linked to their work.
- Collaboration will be strengthened with organisations based at the Casa de la Caritat building, such as the Catalan Association of Cultural Management Professionals (*Associació de Professionals de la Gestió Cultural de Catalunya*, APGCC), Centre of Contemporary Culture of Barcelona (*Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona*, CCCB) and the Menéndez Pelayo International University Barcelona Consortium – Ernest Lluch Centre (*Consorci Universitat Internacional Menéndez Pelayo Barcelona-Centre Ernest Lluch*, CUIMP) to jointly organise events in collaboration with groups from the district and elsewhere in the province.

**34)** Generate a space for debate and reflection on facilities and infrastructures for cultural participation, to explore and discuss roles, goals, operating mechanisms, shared strategies and complementary actions among the various types of local cultural facilities that host or could host citizen initiatives, which include multi-purpose cultural centres, libraries, local museums, performance venues, archives, youth centres, old people's homes and even the streets.

- Resume the line of work on infrastructures for cultural participation launched by the CERC in the previous mandate, with the aim of supporting municipal councils in the process of rethinking and reorienting these spaces, and especially multi-purpose cultural centres.
- Design and coordinate a network of multi-purpose cultural centres that facilitates the pooling of resources, communication, exchange of experiences and the management of shared interests among the municipal teams responsible for this type of facility.



- 35) Expand the XBM Model across the libraries in the network, adapting services, spaces and collections to the new needs of the public and advancing the digital and technological services offered by libraries. The XBM Model, inspired by international best practices but adapted to our local reality, is a roadmap toward the library of the future, preserving its essence while innovating in methodology.
- 36) Promote research toward the development of cultural policies that incorporate the evolving demands of contemporary society, such as the integration of the gender perspective, sustainability and inclusion within cultural institutions and cultural promotion.



# Area 10

## International coordination

### Contextualisation

International connections are essential for bringing the work of the Department of Culture into contact with other realities and for acquiring or sharing tools, methodologies and experiences that can strengthen cultural policies.

Cultural rights are a key element in this international coordination. Through its Department of Culture, the Barcelona Provincial Council seeks to uphold these rights both on a local and international scale, promoting a culture that is both inclusive and accessible to all.

In this context, active participation by the Provincial Council in international networks for culture, heritage and libraries is crucial for promoting cultural rights. This participation not only makes it possible to learn from the experiences of other regions and develop joint projects, but also to share the cultural governance model of the province of Barcelona, thus supporting innovation in cultural policy and reinforcing the Provincial Council's commitment to cultural diversity.

### Strategy

Through collaboration with other regions and countries, common challenges will be addressed and mutual enrichment of the participating communities promoted, including cultural exchange and sustainable global development. Internationalisation will be materialised through the co-design and execution of international cooperation projects, the holding of conferences and congresses, participation in professional networks and communities, and involvement in professional placements and exchanges.



**Participation in international networks enables learning, knowledge-sharing and experience exchange with organisations around the globe, as well as the development of joint projects that support the international advancement of cultural rights.**

Holding conferences and congresses will not only encourage knowledge exchange and continuous professional development among participants, but will also serve to showcase the expertise and work methods developed in the province of Barcelona in the cultural sphere, which will help to raise their international profile.

### **Key actions**

**37)** Organise conferences and congresses that promote the province as an international benchmark for cultural innovation.

Among others, the Department of Culture will organise, in collaboration with other institutions:

- The International Library Congress focused on cultural rights, democracy and public reading (Barcelona, 2024).
- The National Mobile Library Congress (*Congrés Nacional de Bibliobusos*, Vic, 2024).
- The International Archives Congress (2025).
- The second edition of *Culturòpolis*, an international meeting to reflect on and debate cultural rights, to consider and reconsider how they take shape, and to conceive and identify mechanisms to promote and guarantee them (Barcelona, 2025).

*Culturòpolis* will coincide with *Mondiacult 2025*, with the aim of offering an alternative space for local institutions and the broader social and cultural ecosystem committed to the recognition and development of cultural rights.

→ Gaudí Year (*Any Gaudí, 2026*), commemorating the centenary of Antoni Gaudí's death.

**38)** Promote and support municipal councils in undertaking international cultural cooperation projects:

→ In 2024, the libraries of Cerdanyola and Manresa are taking part, alongside libraries in Aarhus, Berlin and London, in the Build the Change project, promoted by LEGO and linked to sustainability. And libraries in Terrassa are participating in *The Europe Challenge: Libraries, Communities and Democracy* with an inclusive project.

**39)** Strengthen the presence of the Department of Culture in international bodies and networks such as United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).

The Library Services Division will continue its collaboration with the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), forming part of various sections and working groups.

**40)** Foster cultural development and cultural rights in other countries through participation in international cooperation and solidarity projects. In this regard, and viewing cultural rights as a fundamental part of human rights, we shall develop and participate in initiatives that promote a culture of peace and combat hate speech on a global scale.



# Area 11

## Learning communities

### **Contextualisation**

The origins of learning communities lie in educational practice, and are grounded in the principles of inclusion, equality and dialogue, as well as in the existence of shared goals and challenges that can be addressed collectively. Learning communities are participatory, horizontal and sustained over time, being spaces where shared knowledge is generated from the expertise of the various stakeholders. As such, they involve all the people who directly or indirectly influence the design, planning and implementation of a given project.

One of the main assets of the Barcelona Provincial Council is precisely its commitment to networking. In the case of the Department of Culture, this includes establishing relationships with local cultural teams and connecting people who might be from very different municipalities but who are engaged in very similar activities, have to deal with comparable circumstances, and therefore share challenges, goals and interests. These people also bring with them significant expertise and potential for sharing, complementing and enriching each other's knowledge.

### **Strategy**

The Department of Culture is committed to generating communities of learning and practice as opportunities for sharing and communicating knowledge and transforming it into actions and projects. This will be approached from a dual internal and external perspective.

Internally, the aim is to influence and innovate the Department's methods in order to strengthen relationships between the teams of its two Divisions and to incorporate more transversal, open and collaborative working methods that facilitate the sharing of knowledge and expertise generated through each of their actions.

**CULTURA 311+ is committed to fostering transversal, stable learning communities that include diverse actors and the opinions of leading local cultural figures to generate shared knowledge and strategies.**

At the same time, the focus is on the territory, on spaces for learning and exchange with local cultural figures of reference and with the cultural sector in general.

## Key actions

- 41)** Strengthen the networking between councillors, municipal officers and XBM professionals, with the support of the Department of Culture's own staff members.
- Promote Inter-Municipal Benchmarking Programmes (*Cercles de Comparació Intermunicipals*) for libraries, museums, archives, performing arts venues and cultural services, in collaboration with the Programming Service of the Department of General Services and Digital Transition, as spaces for exchange, reflection and process improvement.
  - Reinforce forums of cultural councillors through debating programmes, platforms for joint reflection and experience-sharing sessions on cultural topics of relevance to local councils in the context of cultural facilities and services.
  - Promote peer-to-peer exchanges between municipal practitioners, including cultural managers and officers, and members of the XBM to foster knowledge transfer and continuous learning based on these people's talent, skills and capabilities.
  - Promote XBM projects arising from learning communities among its professionals, ensuring both vocational development and equality throughout the province.
- 42)** Continue to nurture and update the Bank of Good Practices in Cultural Projects (*Banc de Bones pràctiques de projectes culturals*) with the aim of turning it into a specific reference website for cultural projects within the province of Barcelona. The bank collects projects and initiatives from across the region that stand out for their role in promoting cultural rights, serving as inspiration for other projects, encouraging replication, sparking new ideas and generating further good practices. Ultimately, the goal is to share knowledge in order to stimulate and multiply efforts. The Bank of Good Practices in Cultural Projects is a joint initiative of the Library Services Division and the Cultural Services Division.
- 43)** Hold the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> editions of the Interacció conference.
- Organised biennially by the CERC, *Interacció* has become a key meeting point for cultural leaders and practitioners, and a benchmark for debate and idea generation in the field.



As a gathering space, *Interacció* has brought together policy-makers, managers, artists, thinkers and researchers from the public, private and third sectors. The presence of internationally renowned figures and the high quality of the sessions are hallmarks of this longstanding initiative of the Department of Culture, which dates back to 1984.

→ The next editions will take place in 2025 and 2027, with the aim of reinforcing the event's role as a platform for debate on cultural policy and local governance in the current context.

44) Position the CERC's Centre for Information and Documentation (*Centre d'Informació i Documentació*, CIDOC) as a specialised library that is a benchmark for cultural policy and management. Operating continuously since 1986, CIDOC holds a collection of over 15,600 items including periodicals, monographs, articles and technical documents, both in print and digital formats.

→ Continue to expand, manage and disseminate CIDOC's physical and digital collection on the social, economic, political and technological aspects of culture, the arts and heritage.

→ Provide guidance and support to staff of the Provincial Council, municipal officers, elected representatives, professionals in the sector, the general public, institutions and businesses engaged in cultural policy and management research.

→ Promote collaboration with academic researchers and research groups in the cultural field by offering access to resources and bibliographic research support.

→ Drive new publications and research in the field through the Pati Manning–Pati Cultural programme.



→ Participate in cooperative bodies of specialised centres in Catalonia and Spain to establish working and collaborative networks.

**45)** Reinforce the Provincial Council's virtual communities as online meeting and exchange spaces for professionals.

→ *Interacció* virtual community: Since 2010, beyond the biennial conference, *Interacció* has also functioned as an online community for knowledge and experience sharing, with a cooperative spirit in support of local cultural policies. Managed by the CERC team, it is a rich, dynamic and diverse open-access source of information and resources for the cultural management and public cultural policy sectors.

→ The virtual communities of archives and museums are designed to share knowledge, tools and experiences that help to enrich and disseminate the work of the Municipal Archives Network and the Local Museums Network. These tools are available to anyone interested, including researchers and professional groups that work with archives and museums.

→ The virtual community of libraries (*comunitatXBM*) is a collaborative workspace open to all professionals in the Municipal Libraries Network, where they can communicate, work together and generate knowledge. It is structured around working groups aligned to common goals.

**46)** Maintain and reinforce vocational and support spaces, particularly training workshops and conferences, with the aim of bringing professionals together and showcasing the expertise and work methods developed in the cultural field both within the Department of Culture and by local authorities across the province of Barcelona.

→ Organise the annual Local Museums Network Conference, which since 1989 has addressed the most pressing challenges faced by local museum managers and has become a red-letter event for the entire cultural heritage and local museum sector.





- Also organise the yearly Confluence Space (*Espai Confluències*) promoted by the Local Museums Network as a platform for dialogue, reflection and exchange with practitioners from sectors and disciplines that are not directly linked to the museum world, to broaden perspectives and explore new connections.
  - Ensure the continuation of the Municipal Archives Laboratory (*Laboratori d'Arxius Municipals*), a biennial workshop for municipal archivists, co-organised with the Government of Catalonia's Directorate-General for Cultural Heritage, the Municipal Archive of Barcelona and the Association of Archivists and Records Managers of Catalonia (*Associació de Professionals de l'Arxivística i la Gestió de Documents de Catalunya*).
  - Renew the commitment to continuing education for cultural leaders in municipalities throughout the province. The CERC coordinates the training programme for the Cultural Services Division, which addresses the concerns, interests and vocational needs of local cultural officers in areas such as local cultural management, cultural heritage and the performing and visual arts.
  - Oversee the training offered to staff of the Municipal Libraries Network (XBM) and the Library Services Division (GSB). Training should be understood not only in terms of more formal activities, but also as including self-learning resources made available to professionals.
  - Offer scholarships and placements in the Barcelona Provincial Council's Department of Culture for students and young professionals who are currently entering the cultural management field.
  - Promote industrial PhD projects focused on applied research in the Department's various working areas.
- 47)** Reorient the Department of Culture's working methods to foster a shift towards more streamlined and collaborative dynamics between and within its two divisions, moving away from the historically hierarchical approach to instead promote greater creativity, innovation, synergy-building and mutual learning as the drivers of action.

# Area 12

## Democratisation of information and open data

### Contextualisation

The democratisation of information and open data in the cultural realm is closely linked to the population's media and information literacy. Only with better-informed, critically thinking citizens can we create more empowered, democratic and participatory societies.

Open data refers to datasets that are made available to the public for consultation and reuse, thereby enabling the creation of new services that generate value, innovation and economic and social momentum. The Provincial Council operates an [open data portal](#) featuring various datasets provided by the Department of Culture, including data on archives, exhibitions, heritage sites, the activity of museums and performing arts venues, libraries, mobile libraries, and much more.

The Department of Culture also leads and coordinates digital repositories in collaboration with municipal councils. Examples include *Trencadís*, which contains historical and contemporary local collections preserved at XBM member libraries, and *Imagina*, a site that houses collections of images preserved by the Municipal Archives Network. These repositories help disseminate and universalise local culture.

Through the democratisation of information and open data, the Barcelona Provincial Council upholds the rights of access, participation and contribution with regard to cultural life, facilitates access to knowledge, and promotes a more informed population that is engaged with its cultural environment.

In parallel, the rise of digital production and consumption, along with the digitalisation of personal and administrative relationships, makes digital literacy and free access to digital resources more necessary than ever.

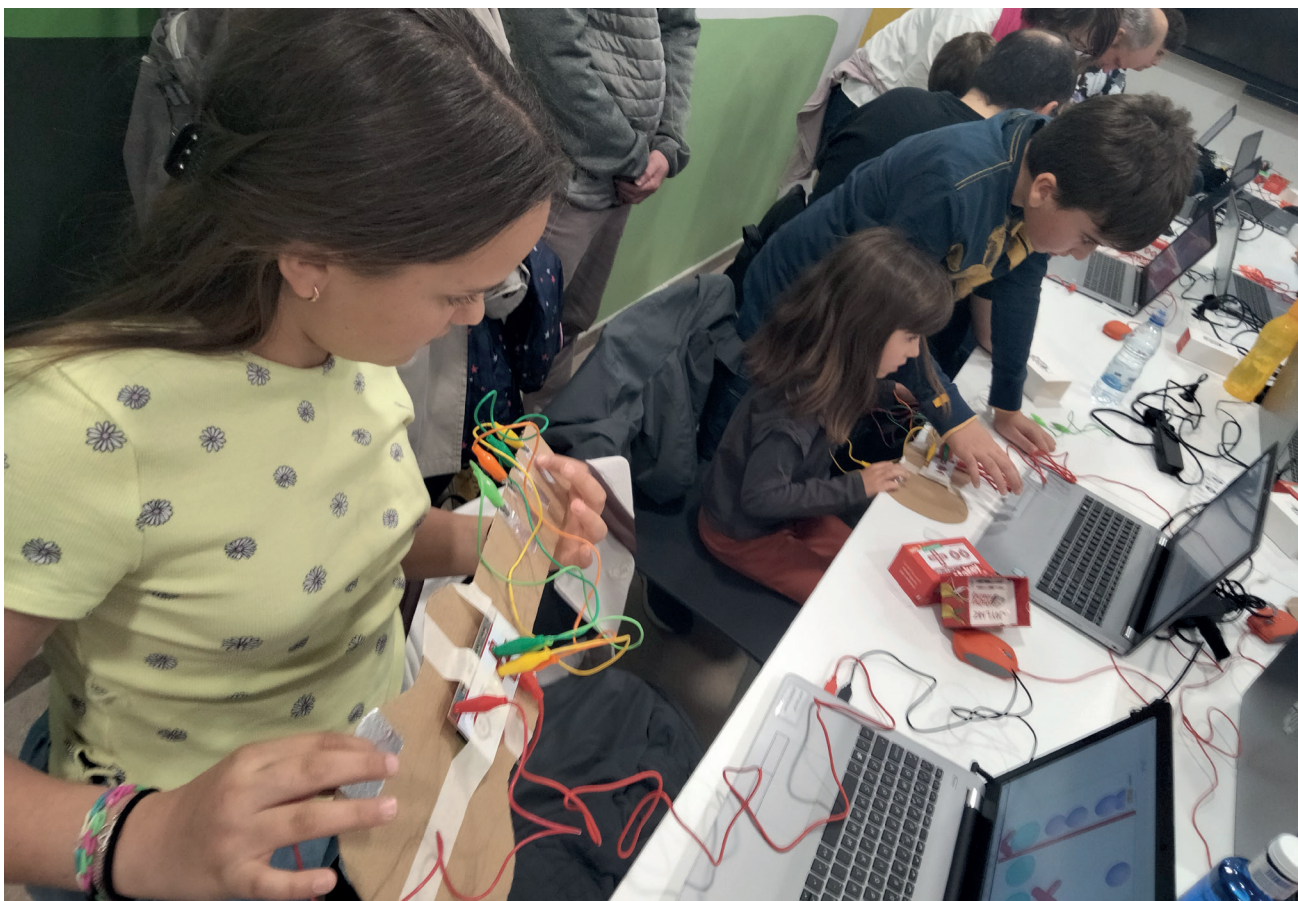
## Strategy

Efforts will be directed at universalising and democratising information, exploring new ways of communicating and circulating data, gaining insights into users, detecting needs and demands, and recognising best practices and emerging trends in digitalisation and open data. To ensure no one is left behind, programmes will also be developed to combat the digital divide, guaranteeing connectivity and digital literacy for all.

**The use of open data in the cultural field benefits access to public information, archives, collections and resources, and fosters their circulation for use in creative, educational or transparency-related processes.**

Throughout this mandate, the goal is to motivate innovation in how information is used and how citizens interact with it, and to facilitate access to and use of data related to local collections within the Provincial Council's network of cultural facilities.

Likewise, different formulas will be explored for addressing debates around access to information, freedom of expression and digital technologies within a lifelong learning context with which all cultural actors are called upon to engage.



## Key actions

**48)** Gradual release of data generated by the Department of Culture's work and research programmes.

- Promote Open Archives (*Arxius Oberts*), an open data project aimed at designing a comprehensive strategy governing access to digital repositories in archives, museums, libraries, the Palau Güell and the Provincial Council's own historical and artistic collection. The project will also include a communication strategy to raise awareness among potential data users, including the general public.
- Gradually release all datasets generated by the Department of Culture, including those from Inter-municipal Benchmarking Programmes, surveys of cultural habits and budget analyses.
- Continue participating in the Barcelona Provincial Council's open data project, which currently includes datasets managed by the Department of Culture, such as one of cultural heritage items, a map of the cultural heritage inventory, classification charts and inventories of the documents held in municipal archives, library and mobile library schedules, addresses and contact details, and much more.

**49)** Complete the province-wide coverage of the Cultural Heritage Maps (*Mapes de Patrimoni Cultural*), which inventory all immovable, movable, documentary, intangible and natural heritage elements in each municipality. These maps are open-access knowledge and management instruments that are made available to local councils and the general public via the *patrimonicultural.diba.cat* website. Currently, 76 % of the province of Barcelona's municipalities (236 in total) have a completed or in-progress map.

**50)** Foster critical thinking and a better-informed society through information literacy programmes at library members of the XBM network:

- *Altres veus* (Other Voices): A hybrid in-person and online series of lectures addressing topical matters.
- *Entre línies* (Between the Lines): A misinformation and digital verification project that trains XBM professionals to run awareness workshops with the general public.
- *El que jo sé* (What I Know): Intergenerational workshops on misinformation about the European Union, delivered in collaboration with the Barcelona Provincial Council's Directorate for International Relations and the European Commission.



**51)** Address the digital divide through digital literacy programmes and ICT tools and services provided in the XBM libraries.

Examples of current programmes and activities include:

- *Connecta't* (Get Connected): Workshops on digital literacy and electronic administration procedures.
- *Univers Internet* (Internet Universe): Project to critically and creatively reflect with the general public on internet-related technologies.
- *Labs portàtils tecnològics* (Mobile Tech Labs); Bringing «maker» culture to library users through four modules on electronics, robotics, 3D printing and vinyl cutting.
- ICT tools and services: All XBM libraries provide free Internet and office software access (*Internet i +*) via computers and tablets for people to use, and free Wi-Fi. Most also regularly offer courses and workshops on information and communication technology (ICT) topics.

- 52)** Explore the potential of artificial intelligence to improve the management and delivery of cultural services.
- In partnership with the Barcelona Supercomputing Center (BSC), a recommendation system is being developed to support the management of XBM library collections. The system provides personalised reading suggestions based on user interactions with other documents.
  - Participate in the Provincial Council's data governance programme to optimise data use, which includes integrating artificial intelligence into work processes.

**53)** Platform for cultural circulation in the digital realm.

The Department of Culture will study the possibility of creating an open-source digital platform at the institutional level to support experimentation with new audiovisual and transmedia formats. This platform would respond to the needs of municipal institutions and facilities that need to develop open digital tools for their services, while at the same time providing an instrument for the cultural community to share and distribute their content without having to rely on intermediaries associated to large commercial platforms. The goal is to offer municipalities and cultural creators in the province a fairer alternative to mainstream platforms, hence aligning with the principles of a just, ethical, socially responsible and solidarity-based digital economy.



# Area 13

## Strategic planning and analysis

### Contextualisation

The Department of Culture has a long-standing tradition in terms of devising, planning and evaluating cultural policy across all of its dimensions. The Centre for Cultural Studies and Resources (CERC), as well as the Office for Artistic Dissemination (ODA), the Office for Cultural Heritage (OPC), Palau Güell and the Library Services Division (GSB) all contribute to the development of cultural discourse in their respective areas of action.

Accessibility, regional balance, efficiency, adequacy and adaptability are basic criteria in strategic planning for the cultural sector. Furthermore, advancing cultural rights requires integrating aspects such as equality, sustainability, a feminist outlook and a focus on diversity.

Complementarity and cross-cutting collaboration are also among the different cultural services and facilities whose impact needs to be maximised. This should include cooperation between libraries, archives, museums, theatres and other cultural centres, thus enabling better management and optimisation of resources, and encouraging the creation of shared projects that leverage the strengths of each facility.

To plan properly and make the most sound decisions, prior analysis and diagnosis based on service evaluation is indispensable. In this regard, particular note should be made of the work carried out in liaison with the Inter-Municipal Benchmarking Programme (for Cultural Services, Performing Arts Venues, Museums, Archives and Libraries), as well as the data collection and analysis undertaken by the offices in relation to the various networks of facilities (the Municipal Libraries Network, the Circuit of the Network of Municipal Performing Arts Venues, the Municipal Archives Network and the Local Museums Network).

## Strategy

The Department of Culture's strategy in this area will focus on advising municipal councils on planning and evaluating cultural policy, providing technical assistance and support for management, analysing cultural policies and practices, and producing monitoring and evaluation studies.

Projects and studies will be promoted to better understand the cultural landscape of the province and its communities, and personalised accompaniment will be offered in the municipalities with ongoing innovation and strategic planning processes.

**Projects will be promoted and studies carried out to gain insight into the cultural landscape of municipalities and their communities, based on an analysis of their actions. Whether from a global perspective or focusing on specific areas of cultural policy, these initiatives are designed to provide local managers with a range of conceptual tools and regional knowledge to support their decision-making processes.**



Likewise, personalised support and guidance will also be provided to municipal councils that are currently undertaking innovation or strategic planning processes. The idea is to help create the ideal conditions for municipalities to reflect on their current situation, define the right consensus-based future scenarios, and accordingly define the most suitable strategies.

### Key actions

**54)** Advisory support for cultural policy planning, management and evaluation. The CERC's advisory programme provides specialist support to municipal councils with the definition, planning and development of cultural policies and projects, and does so by means of a technical assistance and cooperation system based on the transfer of information, the development of conceptual frameworks and the creation of spaces for reflection. This methodology encompasses the following lines of action:

- Strategic plans and projects: Cultural action plans, plans for cultural facilities and other strategic documents.



- Tools and resources for cultural management: Usage plans for cultural facilities, diagnoses of cultural dynamics, regulations and proposals on facility management, cost analyses and other specific resources.
- Evaluation and impact reports: Studies on the social impact of cultural events and activities; analyses of cultural policies based on the Agenda 21 for Culture and in the framework of the SDGs; evaluations of the implementation of cultural action plans; and other specific reports.
- Guidance with cultural policy implementation and application processes: Support with the introduction of cultural action plans, setting up participatory spaces and developing new cultural projects.

As well as these resources, this key action also encompasses other services provided by the Department of Culture, such as support with the development of municipal reading plans, studies for the creation, transfer and expansion of library facilities, technical guidance and support for archives, museums and other heritage spaces, and strategic planning for performing arts and music venues. All of these have been addressed in earlier sections of this strategic plan.

**55)** Equip local authorities with tools, studies and analyses to support the evaluation and improvement of cultural services.

- Gather, process and disclose statistical data and indicators so that municipal councils, researchers and the general public can assess the past evolution and current status of cultural services and facilities.







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