

A photograph of a traditional stone building with blue shutters and balconies. The building is multi-storied with ornate architectural details. The sky is clear and blue. A satellite dish is visible on the roof.

HUB-IN

Nicosia

Hub of Innovation



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Action Plan **2023**

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ABOUT HUB-IN

Mission

Hubs of Innovation and Entrepreneurship for the Transformation of Historic Urban Areas (HUB-IN) aims to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in Historic Urban Areas (HUA), while preserving their unique social and cultural identity and the environment. The project adopts innovation and entrepreneurship as the main drivers of urban regeneration in HUAs which directly draws from the UNESCO concept of Historic Urban Landscapes. HUB-IN fully aligns with and contributes to strategic European policy including the international agendas for Cultural Sustainable Development (UNESCO) and Cultural Heritage Strategy (Council of Europe). In the first stage of HUB-IN, a network of Hubs of innovation and entrepreneurship will be developed in the HUAs of eight city partners (Lisbon, Slovenska Bistrica, Braşov, Nicosia, Genova, Grand Angoulême, Belfast, Utrecht) and in the second stage, the resulting methods and tools will be scaled up to a global network of HUAs in follower cities and the HUB-IN Alliance. The Hubs of Innovation and Entrepreneurship will test, demonstrate and pilot activities of co-creation and co-design in three main clusters with the potential to deliver sustainable transformation of HUAs: 1) Culture and Creative industries, 2) New Lifestyles and 3) Resilient and Human Connected Places.

Vision

HUB-IN expects to contribute to reverse trends of abandonment and neglect of historic heritage in a systemic way through the creation of networks of Hubs where innovation will be the main driver. The project will also have a direct impact on the creation of new sustainable opportunities for local traditional businesses and for the development of new creative skills and jobs.

THE CONSORTIUM BEHIND HUB-IN



Belfast
City Council



Culture and creativity are the essence of our city's character and social fabric. They have been, major building blocks of its resilience under the adverse conditions of division it has been facing for decades and a leading force in heritage preservation and The Regeneration of our historic walled city. Combining them with the strengths of Nicosia as a Knowledge city for the sustainable regeneration of the historic centre will enhance the quality of life in the city but also promote new ideas and inspire innovation across various sectors.

Constantinos Yiorkadjis,
Mayor of Nicosia

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Background

This Action Plan has been developed as part of the Horizon 2020 “HUB-IN” project. “HUB-IN” stands for “Hubs of Innovation and Entrepreneurship for the Transformation of Historic Urban Areas” and is a European project aiming to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in Historic Urban Areas (HUA), while preserving their unique social and cultural identity and the environment. Within the project, eight partner cities across Europe (Belfast, Braşov, Genova, Grand Angoulême, Lisbon, Nicosia, Slovenska Bistrica and Utrecht) are developing their own HUBs of innovation and entrepreneurship, testing, demonstrating and piloting activities for the sustainable transformation of their HUAs across three main clusters. Together, the eight HUBs of innovation and entrepreneurship - i.e. the eight “HUB-IN Places” - and the 29 Actions that will be implemented in the partner cities are expected to contribute to the transformation of HUAs and their cultural landscapes both in the pilot cities and more widely across Europe and beyond. The actions will act as a catalyst

to help reverse trends of abandonment and neglect of historic heritage; boost heritage and culture-relevant innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship; create new job opportunities and skills in the cultural, creative, and clean manufacturing sectors and facilitate the development of new and tested regeneration blueprints for wider take up by other European HUAs.

The present document consists of the Action Plan for the city of Nicosia and follows from a Roadmap that the city has previously co-created with local stakeholders to identify the overall vision, values and missions of the envisaged HUB-IN Place. It provides information about the HUB of Innovation that is being set up and details the actions that are going to be implemented in the selected pilot area of the historical area of the city of Nicosia (within the Venetian Walls). A final section provides details as to how the HUB and the planned actions are going to be branded and communicated to local stakeholders.

THE HUB-IN CLUSTERS OF INNOVATION



Culture and Creative Industries (CCI)

- Innovative products and services
- Adaptive reuse of traditional skills
- Cultural and creative tourism



New Life Styles (NLS)

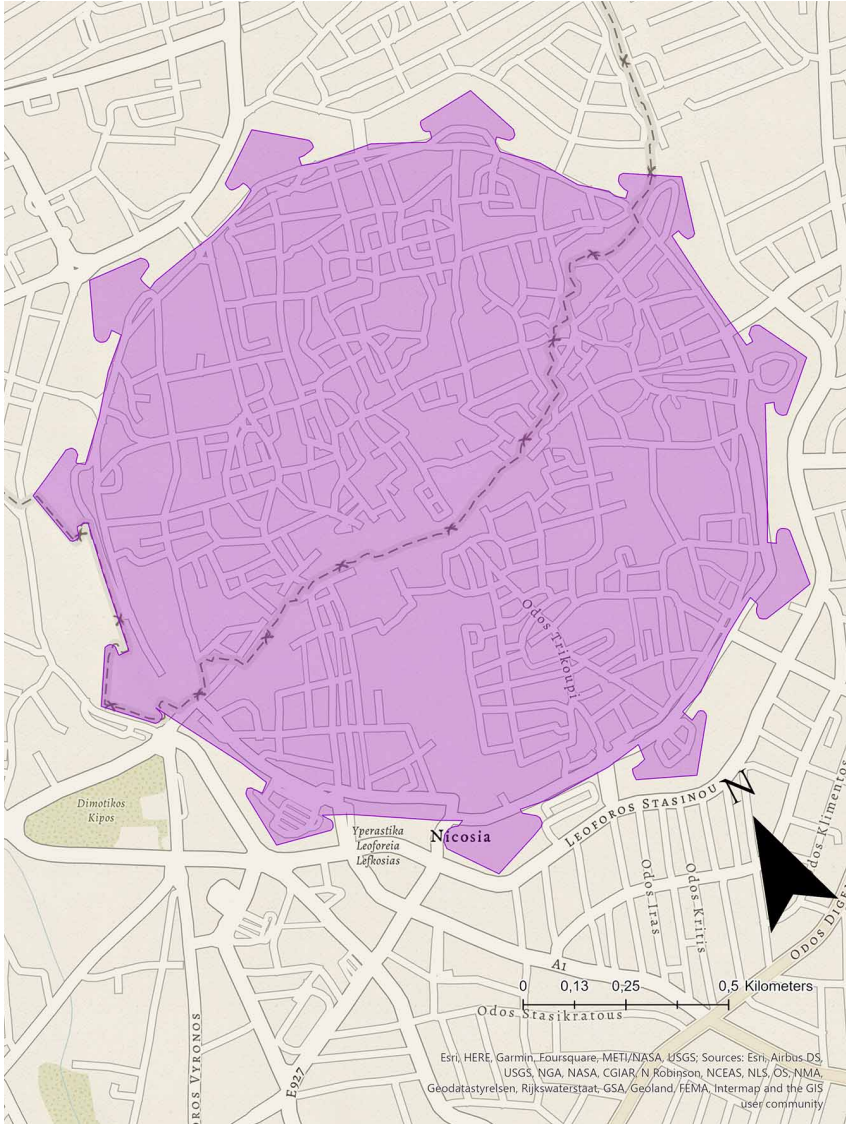
- Consumption and *prosuming*
- Living and mobility
- Health and wellbeing



Resilient & Human Connected Places (RHCP)

- Environmental Balance
- Empowering Communities
- Liveable and connected places

HUB-IN Place Nicosia Walled City



Action Plans: An operational document setting out the individual detailed actions the partner cities are implementing to realise the vision of the eight HUB-IN Places and kickstart the transformation of their historic urban area. Each Action Plan includes an Introduction, description of the Hub, detailed templates for the implementation of the individual Actions and a final section on the branding and communication of the Hubs of Innovation.

Clusters: HUB-IN clusters of innovation are economic, social and ecological hotspots of innovation at the neighbourhood size for the heritage and culture-led regeneration of HUAs.

HUB-IN identifies three main common clusters of innovation that should not be seen as silos of activities, but rather intertwining activities across the three clusters complementing and contributing to the development of HUB-IN Places.

The three clusters are:

- Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI),
- New Lifestyles (NLS) and Resilient and
- Human Connected Places (RHCP).

HUB-IN

HUBs of Innovation:

The HUB-IN Places that partner cities are focusing on within the framework of the project. They can be physical and/or virtual Hubs of innovation where cultural wealth and heritage provide a unique competitive advantage - a key resource for enhancing the sustainable regeneration of historic urban areas. Hubs of Innovation are distinguished by their local action and their global interconnection: local hotspots of creativity, community empowerment and entrepreneurship; places to co-design, test and develop new solutions, ideas, and creative businesses in a real urban environment.

They bring together local stakeholders, academia, industry and local governments - characterised by a strategic integrated approach blending three clusters of innovation.

Roadmaps: A strategic document developed during the course of 2021 and 2022 by the HUB-IN partner cities to define the Vision, Values, Missions and Key Actions of the eight Hubs of Innovation - to be further developed in the HUB-IN Action Plans. The eight Roadmaps were co-created with local stakeholders through ad-hoc meetings, workshops and questionnaires.

Historic Urban Areas (HUAs):

The HUA concept draws directly from UNESCO's 'Historic Urban Landscapes' which define urban areas as resulting from the historic layering of cultural and natural values and attributes, extending beyond the notion of "historic centre" or "ensemble" to include the broader urban context and its geographical cultural setting. In this way Historic Urban Areas relate to both the tangible and intangible factors that both set the context and shape the historic area's character, identity and values.

Introducing the Nicosia Action Plan

Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus is located approximately at the geographic centre of the island. Nicosia's Historic Urban Area (HUA) is also known as the Nicosia Walled City: the old city centre surrounded by Venetian Walls dating from 1567. The walls as well as the architectural gems, the landmarks and other hidden treasures they enclose are evidence of a rich history of which every Nicosian is justly proud of.

The walled city uniquely reflects the amalgam of cultures that have shaped Cyprus' unique identity but also its turbulent history. The UN controlled Buffer Zone - also called the Green Line - dividing Nicosia from East to West since 1974, runs through the city's historic and cultural heart, with destructive effects. Since this time, invigorating the city has required long term collective efforts and strategic actions involving integrated regeneration policy and concerted public and private investment interventions. These have aimed to address abandonment and lack of investment, dilapidation of the built environment including heritage buildings, diminishing population, socio-economic and demographic decline, and increasing marginalisation of economic activity amidst rapid centrifugal urban growth.

As part of this process Nicosia Municipality has sustained efforts to initiate a regeneration process within the HUA that focuses on heritage preservation and reuse but also with culture and creativity at its core. This has led to the gradual but steady establishment of the area as the par excellence habitat of

contemporary cultural and creative industry development and, more recently, of the fast-growing start-up grassroots community. Albeit, one can still see the effect of the division, the economic crisis and the pandemic: leaving a legacy of challenges still to be addressed including a large number of abandoned, unmaintained and ageing buildings, unused vacant lots and evolving pockets of social exclusion.

Furthermore, as the long-term tourism strategy of Cyprus promotes the island for sun and sea, Nicosia only attracts a limited number of tourists compared to other cities and areas of Cyprus, even though the city concentrates a big percentage of the tangible and intangible heritage of the island. These visits are primarily of short duration, also highlighting the need for promoting a differentiated and upgraded tourist product linked to the strategic and comparative advantages of the city. Hence, Nicosia's development as a sustainable and cultural travel destination which promotes both the tangible and intangible heritage of the capital and offers innovative, viable and least environmentally impactful ways to explore and experience the city, would provide a new direction for the tourism industry on the island. This redefinition of Nicosia's touristic value, to be truly aligned with its ambitions for cultural regeneration, will aspire to respond to the needs of both domestic and foreign city explorers.

Tangible and Intangible heritage of Nicosia

Tangible assets of the Historic Urban Area of Nicosia include the built fabric of its Walled city with the 11 bastions, the architectural landmarks and monuments, the environmental elements (green spaces and endemic species etc.), the 13 museums with the historic and invaluable collections, as well as everyday items (traditional clothing, tools etc.) that were historically produced and used. Intangible assets of the Historic Urban Areas of Nicosia include the immaterial evidence of its authenticity, oral traditions, local knowledge, local skills, craftsmanship, artistic and creative practices, local traditional lifestyles and festivities.

Spatial Development Strategy of Nicosia

The existing Nicosia Area Plan is based on 3 strategic pillars: spatial policy, infrastructure strategy and regeneration strategy. The regeneration strategy indicates the general direction in which the development of the region should move in the future to regain its vitality and includes the following objectives:

- Protection of the cultural tangible and intangible heritage of Nicosia, which is its comparative advantage over the rest of the cities: as the good to be passed onto future generations, as a means of promoting the city, as the driving force of attracting interest in the process of rejuvenation.
- Systematic utilisation of cultural tangible and intangible heritage to attract local and foreign visitors and customers, to attract creative businesses, to house new residents, to attract new innovative professional categories and to increase cultural infrastructure. Selective targeted allocation of remarkable buildings of cultural value that can house and give prestige to important functions in the field of higher education, research and culture.
- Proclamation of the walled city as a "Special Regeneration Area" and definition of actions aimed at making better use of cultural tangible and intangible heritage.

Strengthening the economy by increasing the number of jobs in the Central Region to the total level of 50,000, or 400,000-500,000 square metres of new development. This objective can be achieved by facilitating office development and retaining government services at the Centre.

The recovery of the population level of the 1970s: with an increase of 2,500-3,000 new permanent residents through the utilisation of the existing available building stock in the Old City, and an increase of about 3,000 more in the Urban Center outside the Walls.

Digital Twin (iNicosia) and Smart City Strategy

The iNicosia project is a digital twin of the city of Nicosia that consists of an "accurate" (as necessary) 3D model of the city, with representations of actual buildings and monuments (e.g., the walls and the old city), the road network, parking places, various metadata about the environment, possibly traffic lights and their state, streetlights, the power grid/water network, vegetation, etc. Such a model would have minimum usability without the inclusion of real-world data; rich time-series data will be collected by various sensors (camera feeds, thermal/humidity/motion sensors, etc.) placed around the city of Nicosia, government open data portal and other private or public initiatives. These data will be geolocated and timestamped, collected, associated and stored alongside the digital twin.

The aim of iNicosia is to generate a Digital Twin which is progressively informed by the real city through real-time spatiotemporal data from infrastructure and human systems.

iNicosia Components

- Interactive 3D model of Nicosia, including exterior and interior spaces
- Connection with the data coming from the Smart City Platform of Nicosia
- Interactive 3D model of Nicosia, including exterior and interior spaces
- Open Data Platform and API
- Apps and Visualization

Services

iNicosia will potentially provide the following services to public and private sector they may include:

- **3D Reconstruction:** 3D Reconstruction of an area, individual building or smaller scale objects using Laser Scanning and Terrestrial and Aerial Photogrammetry Processes
- **Data Visualization:** Data Visualization of IoT connected devices and sensors - augmentation of generated 3D Models through dynamic and static data and metadata
- **Simulations:** Capability to run a series of simulations on the generated models, including crowd, traffic, weather, light and more (based on data received from sensors)
- **Cultural Heritage:** Heritage site capture and documentation
- **Media Production:** Media Production capabilities including walkthrough videos, presentation videos and other visual documentation

Learn more about iNicosia: inicosia.cyens.org.cy

Through a multi-method process of stakeholder and citizen engagement in the framework of the HUB-IN project, a Roadmap for the Nicosia HUB-IN Place was produced in July 2022, which sets the basis and the background for the emergence of the Actions reflected in this Action Plan (2022-2024). The Roadmap presents as guidelines the Vision defined for the HUB-IN Nicosia: *“to safeguard, transit and promote the historic memory of Cyprus and at the same time be the powerhouse of culture and innovation-led transformations”*.

Within the complex context of Nicosia described above and the multidimensional and multilateral efforts to regenerate the Cypriot capital, the HUB-IN Place can have a significant impact towards the City’s objectives and challenges. Thus, the

proposed HUB-IN Action Plan for Nicosia:

- **aims to contribute to and enrich the broader regeneration of the historic part of the city both in terms of its tangible and intangible heritage assets as a focus for the creative industries and more sustainable tourism**
- **is fully aligned with the Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) of the Municipality promoting innovation and the cultural and creative industries and their importance towards making Nicosia a more vibrant City - attractive to both citizens and visitors.**
- **will further develop and fully exploit both the ‘Digital Twin’ tool and the smart City Strategy as key opportunities and aids to the successful heritage-led regeneration of the HUA.**

This has been an inductive process, starting with the needs and wishes of the stakeholders in the historic urban area, and aligning with the HUB-IN clusters, “formatting” the expressed aggregated needs, to fit with the HUB-IN approach. The proposed Action Plan therefore aims to be an operational and useful instrument to promote and scale up the cultural and creative industries community and local businesses supported in the historical and cultural past of the walled city, whilst contributing to the connection and well-being of the community and the enhancement of the tourism offer and the visitor’s experience. As such, the HUB-IN action plan for Nicosia lines up with the broader agenda for the walled city, and in this way, they will impact, reinforce and accelerate each other’s success.

The four suggested actions will also serve the purpose of testing services and programs that can be replicated and improved, assuring the continuity of stakeholders’ engagement and the feasibility of the hub in the mid-term. The actions aspire to illustrate a new approach to attract new businesses which is a challenge in Nicosia as there is uncertainty about the future of the area and how real estate will develop considering the division and the property issues. Also, the actions recognise the creative community as an important agent for the regeneration of the city and they emphasise their shared interests requiring coordinated collective participation in the process which has been identified as a local challenge. More importantly, the four actions are aligned with the overall objectives of HUB-IN Project, such as promotion of innovation and entrepreneurship as well as with UNESCO’s recommendations for historic urban landscapes (promoting Historic Neighbourhoods as a unique and integral part of the world’s diversity, through the combination of history, culture, nature and heritage).

Action 1 - “Setting the Digital Stage”

will involve the development of a platform/website that will include existing and updated information for the Cultural and Creative Industries that can contribute to the development of the CCI sector, as well as entrepreneurs, businesses and other relevant elements in the HUA. Furthermore, the platform will give access to a layer that will be developed on top of the digital twin and will also be connected with the GeoTool developed for Nicosia in HUB-IN. The action is linked with the “Cultural and Creative Industries Quarter” project that the Municipality is implementing. The project is expected to provide support to the growing community of CCIs in an effort to implement the objectives of the city’s Integrated Development Strategy, aiming to encourage and facilitate existing and prospective businesses to establish space and/or move their activities in the designated area.

Action 2 - “Heritage Walks and their Twins”

will involve the design and implementation of different walking routes/promenades within the walled City, promoting neighbourhood pride for residents (building stronger communities) and for visitors. These walks can:

- a) highlight different cultural and creative elements of both tangible and intangible heritage within the walled city
- b) include innovative elements like digital storytelling and different experiences
- c) Also be available in the digital form, on the digital twin of the walled city
- d) This action will also promote collaboration among the craftsmen in the local community.

Action 3 - “Activations of the Hub:

Interacting and Engaging” will include a set of relevant activities with different but complementary purposes:

- Upskilling local artists, creatives and craftsmen that will have an impact in

activating the locals

- Development of upscaled and/or immersive experiences related to different CCIs including but not limited to food, pottery, etc, that will be exciting for locals and visitors alike
- Establishment of HUA Ambassadors from locals that will promote the HUA to locals, visitors and tourists.

A city centre with events that are co-led by its own community leaders and key actors of the cultural scene and business ecosystem will promote innovation and entrepreneurship and support the cultural and creative industry, as well as improve the tourism offer.

Action 4 - “Creation of a CCI startup acceleration programme” - will facilitate cultural entrepreneurs and artists to professionalise and create sustainable and scalable business practices. The accelerator will empower creative professionals and support capacity building in business, finance, and marketing. It will support talent by helping artists and creative workers in the HUA to develop themselves further and develop their ideas or start-ups.

The Hub-In Nicosia will be the brand for creativity, culture, collaboration and inclusiveness in the city bringing together actors from the quintuple helix. The actions are synergistic with other initiatives of the Municipality enhancing the impact exponentially. Hub-In Nicosia utilises all the relevant existing resources in the City’s strategy for cultural and creative industries, innovation and entrepreneurship highlighting unique assets of the city for experimentation and progress.

With this action plan, Nicosia aims to empower its residents and the cultural and creative industries enhancing life in the city. Through cultural and creative exchanges, the plan will promote

cooperation and the sense of community, leading to solutions through collaboration and knowledge exchange, enriching the well-being of the community in the city.

The Nicosia Hub

Nicosia's HUB of Innovation will be a network of connected places and people who embody and manifest the vision of Nicosia becoming a place to safeguard, transit and promote the historic memory of Cyprus and at the same time be the powerhouse of culture and innovation-led transformations.

Nicosia's Hub of Innovation will not be a specific physical location, but rather become the umbrella to connect and showcase the strong elements of the HUA, aligning and connecting heritage, culture, community, memories with proofing the city, taking on international motives yet having a clear and solid link to the historical lineage of the city population.

Nonetheless, it is expected that there will be an office to be used as the "coordination office" in order to monitor, coordinate and have an overview of all the relevant actions. This physical space will be located at the **Hub of Entrepreneurship and Innovation-Nicosia** where already many activities are taking place including the operations of the CYENS Centre of Excellence, CYENS Makerspace and co-working space, Nicosia Smart City Platform, CSEO (Cyprus Space Exploration Organisation), the Municipality's EU Affairs Office etc.

Nicosia Hub's Governance structure

Nicosia Municipality will be leading the HUB, setting the strategy, guidelines and framework safeguarding the benefits for the citizens and the city as a whole. For this to be successful, other stakeholders will be actively involved bringing in their expertise, knowledge and knowhow.

The governance model of the HUB will have a **coordination committee** that will comprise from members of the Municipality for the initiation of the Hub. These include both elected municipal councillors but also employees from the Municipality from various departments that are relevant for the implementation of the Hub (e.g., technical services, Nicosia Master Plan, mobility, culture, etc.). Other stakeholders such as CYENS CoE, CIPA (Cyprus Investment Promotion Agency), Nicosia Tourism Board, Deputy Ministry for Research, Innovation and Digital Policy etc. will act as an advisory board to the Municipality supporting, providing guidance and bringing together all relevant stakeholders institutional and grassroots.

As the HUB evolves, it is expected that other stakeholders will be engaged and support its implementation. Such stakeholders may include a financial institution (a bank) that will support (financially and professionally by providing business guidance) the creation and enhancement of the HUB.

The establishment of the HUB is not happening in isolation of other activities. The implementation of the HUB-In project and the establishment of the HUB are in synergy with the Integrated Spatial Strategy (2021-2030) of the city of Nicosia.

Since the HUB is part of the Municipality's structure, the city will continue to find ways to support the implementation of activities and actions that will promote the regeneration of the HUA through innovation and entrepreneurship, while protecting the cultural tangible and intangible heritage, history and values of the city.

For the implementation of the HUB, it is expected that some preparation time will be needed until May 2024, and that frequent meetings of the coordination committee will be taking place throughout the implementation of the project. This action will also support the Municipality in setting up a structure that will help its HUB beyond the scope of the HUB-In project. It is important to note that the Municipality of Nicosia will also use and rely on the Nicosia Hub Branding to provide a visual as well as tangible connection between the different actions. More importantly, given that the long term continuation of the HUB is aligned with the strategy of the Municipality of Nicosia, the Municipality will work closely with the key stakeholders to ensure that a development plan is created to support the transition post Hub-In and the sustainability into the future.

Background information for Nicosia's context and in which the Nicosia HUB adds value

Due to the longstanding division of the city, the Municipality has been heavily investing funding in order to reverse the abandonment trends. The Municipality has been proactive in setting up the scene, actively supporting the HUA, creating the right circumstances, attracting the funding resources and supporting the sustainable transformation of its HUA.

Nicosia Municipality, since the implementation of its Integrated Sustainable Urban Development Strategy (2014-2020), proceeded to the creation of the CYENS Center of Excellence, setting from the beginning the knowledge society as well as Innovation and Entrepreneurship as the main supporting structures in its wider effort for the development of a local ecosystem. In this context and through its role as coordinator of the CYENS Centre of Excellence in Research and Innovation (with partners the University

of Cyprus, the Cyprus University of Technology and the Open University of Cyprus), the Municipality participated in a number of meetings with various stakeholders of both the research and business community of Cyprus in order to better understand and support the ecosystem.

Thus, with strategic decisions of the Municipal Council, significant funding has been invested for the HUA of the city that mainly focuses on:

- the regeneration of cultural heritage buildings
- the attraction of residents, businesses and visitors
- the improvement of the physical environment
- the improvement of accessibility
- the attraction of investment.

The aim of the actions that the Municipality has been undertaking is to further develop the innovation ecosystem that will connect citizens, public authorities, academia and businesses. Therefore, the city aims to create a prosperous environment for other stakeholders to innovate and to create the connection between different actors/stakeholders.

In addition, the city of Nicosia has been nominated for the European Capital of Culture 2030 title and will be working on preparing its proposal to win the bid. Thus, the actions introduced through the HUB-In project are key in supporting the evolution of the city and its bid to become the European Capital of Culture in 2030.

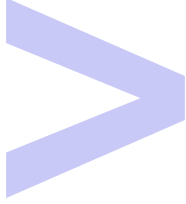
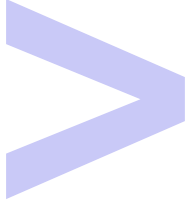
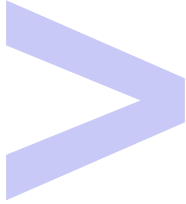
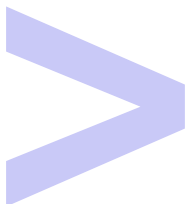
The city within the Walls (the HUA of Nicosia) should be considered as a 'public good': as a cultural and social asset that all the people of Cyprus and the wider public enjoy and visit. It has not yet been included in

the World Heritage List, but it is just as important as many other UNESCO-declared- walled cities.

Relevant projects that are complementary to the activities of the HUB include:

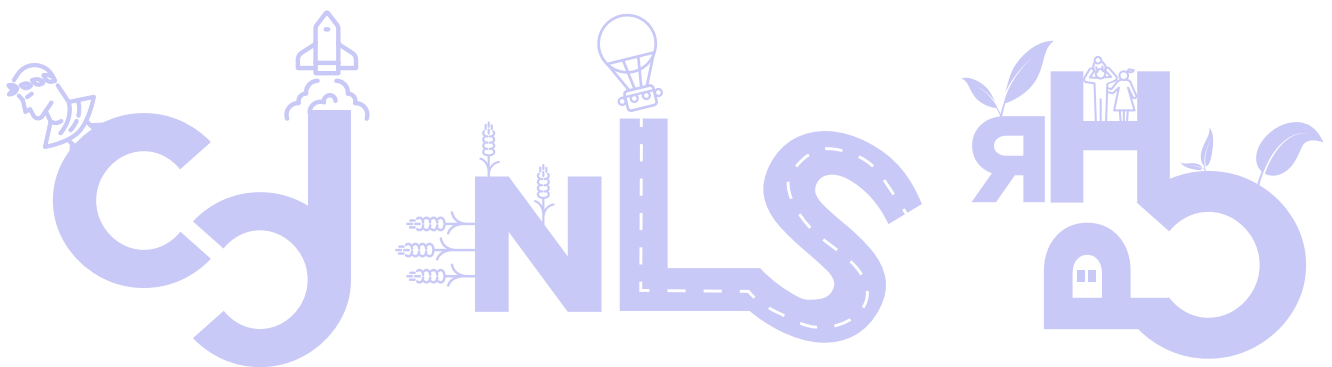
- The renovation of the Municipal Market of the Old Town Hall (CYENS) that will house scientists, researchers, laboratories but also facilities and services to promote innovation in various sectors of the economy. Through the implementation of the RISE Teaming project, that sets up CYENS Centre of Excellence, many jobs have been created for young and qualified scientists, and support has been provided to both start-ups and innovative businesses. In addition, the Centre creates synergies between the CYENS Centre of Excellence and the creation of a smart city in Nicosia, by engaging the scientific and business community. The centre also supports the municipality in revitalising the Green Line area, bringing new activity that attracts new investments and new uses. CYENS attracts new and productive forces to the historic centre. It also creates bridges of communication and cooperation with the Turkish Cypriot community, as the functions of CYENS can also be exploited by people in the creative sector and start-ups of Turkish Cypriots.
- The creation of the Creative Business Quarter District. The aim of the quarter is to act as a catalyst and to be the focal point of gathering artists and people involved in creative micro-enterprises in its heart within the City Walls, along the buffer zone. It aims to contribute to the activation of the area's economy, and to strengthen existing businesses, handicraft workshops and other creative activities. It is also important to note that the buffer zone of the historic centre of Nicosia is included in the “Seven most endangered heritage sites 2013” of Europa Nostra.

The Nicosia Actions

- 1**  **Setting the digital stage**
- 2**  **Heritage walks and their twins**
- 3**  **Activations of the Hub - Interacting and Engaging**
- 4**  **Creation of a CCI start-up accelerator programme**

1 >

Setting the digital stage



CITY MISSION

Mission 2: The Platform - Establish a user-friendly platform for HUA to serve as an umbrella and bridge within the HUA Nicosia network

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COORDINATION

Nicosia Municipality will lead the action and be responsible for its implementation. Parts of the implementation will be outsourced to appropriate technical expertise.

Supporting subjects include members of Nicosia Municipal Council's Committee designated for the Walled City of Nicosia.

Nicosia Municipality will set up a working group in order to better design, implement and disseminate the action.

Municipality:

- Ms Charis Theocharous European Affairs Officer and RISE project coordinator, European Affairs Office (Coordinator).
- Mrs Athina Papadopoulou, Senior Architect, Head of Nicosia Master Plan Office

CYENS Centre of Excellence:

- Dr Styliani Petroudi-Head of Research Office
- Dr Antigone Heraclidou - Senior Researcher, Museum Lab MRG, Principal Investigator of the DeepNic (Deep mapping of Nicosia's urban centre, 1960-2020) project
- Mr Kyriacos Larmos-iNicosia Digital Twin-Project Manager
- Mr Marios Constantinides-Senior Makerspace Manager

Nicosia Tourism Board:

- Mr Soteris Christoforou, secretary/officer

Cyprus Energy Agency:

- Marina Kyriakou, Architect & Urban Planner Climate Change & Environment

CONTEXT

A significant number of monuments and listed buildings of outstanding cultural value lie within the circular 16th century Venetian walls surrounding the HUA. The walled city of Nicosia uniquely reflects the amalgam of cultures that have shaped Cyprus' unique identity but also its turbulent history. The UN controlled Buffer Zone dividing Nicosia from East to West since 1974 runs through the city's historic and cultural heart, causing deep material and emotional scars and turning the heart of the city into an urban fringe with wide-ranging devastating impacts, the reversal of which required long term integrated regeneration policy, concerted public investment interventions encouraging at the same time private investment.

To date, notwithstanding strides made towards regenerating the walled city, there remains a large number of abandoned, unmaintained and ageing buildings, unused vacant lots and evolving pockets of social exclusion. The HUA is lagging behind in economic activity and, despite the continuing growth of tourism in Cyprus, Nicosia remains a not very well-known tourist destination and attracts an extremely small percentage of tourists compared to other cities and areas of Cyprus. Visits by tourists are primarily of short duration and usually only for a day-trip, indicating the outstanding need for the provision of a differentiated and upgraded tourist

product linked to the strategic and comparative advantages of the city.

Sustained efforts by Nicosia Municipality, with culture and creativity at their core have had a positive impact towards progress and prosperity. Albeit the economic crisis that Cyprus has undergone and the pandemic have affected and limited the general improvement.

In the last couple of decades Nicosia has focused on integrating and building on the above and a range of other strategic advantages to create mechanisms capable of supporting the diversification, sustainability and extrovert outlook of cultural, creative, academic, research and innovation activity in the HUA and beyond.

Nicosia Municipality is leading the creation of CYENS Centre of Excellence, which is a Research and Innovation Organisation, situated at the heart of old Nicosia, next to the Green Line. The Centre has been established through the RISE HORIZON 2020 Teaming for Excellence project with complimentary funding from the Republic of Cyprus. Its flagship project is the creation of the Digital Twin of the city of Nicosia, which is a 3D model of a physical construct of a big part of the city and covers the whole of the HUA. This 3D virtual replica of the real-world built environment, is connected to massive amounts of data and software tools.

The aim of Action 1 is to develop a platform/website, built on the already existing Digital Twin (at the moment the 3D reconstruction of the HUA is completed however no data or information are incorporated), that can be used as a tool to find alternative and refreshing ways to:

- raise awareness of the HUA among local and foreign visitors
- tell the story of contemporary creative and cultural actors
- preserve and make accessible the history and cultural heritage of the city
- create a tourist product and enhance related business opportunities
- promote synergies between the stakeholders
- provide visibility to the users.

This will be done through the development of a platform/website that will give access to a layer that will be developed on top of the digital twin and will also be connected with the HUB-IN GeoTool. The action is linked with the “Cultural and Creative industries District” project that the municipality is implementing. The aim of the district is to act as a catalyst, bring together artists and people involved with the creative industries and become a melting pot for initiatives promoting culture, creativity and innovation in the heart of the old city adjacent to the green line. It aims to contribute to the activation and diversification of the economy of the area, and to strengthen existing businesses, workshops, crafts and other creative activities.

Existing policy documents such as the Integrated Spatial Development Strategy (2021-2027), the Integrated Sustainable Urban Development Strategy (2014-2020), the Nicosia Central Area Scheme and the Integrated SMART City Strategy will be taken into consideration for this action.

DESCRIPTION

The implementation of the action will unfold in different stages. In particular:

A. Gathering of information:

1. Update the existing information for the CCIs (cultural infrastructure, individuals, artists, designers, organisations etc that contribute or could contribute to the sector development, entrepreneurs, businesses, spaces and other relevant elements - to be defined. Collecting information through crowdsource will be explored for this action.
2. Break them down in categories, identify all the relevant stakeholders in the HUA.
3. The information collected must be converted to a georeferenced document that will be integrated to both the GeoTool and the Digital Twin. At the moment the 3D reconstruction of the HUA is completed however no data or information are incorporated. This will be done as another layer of information that will sit on top of the Digital Twin, specifically for this action.
4. The interaction of the public with the digital twin will be defined with the relevant CYENS and Municipality team.

B. Utilisation of the tools:

1. Identify the ways that these tools can be used: - planning tool for the municipality (permissions for new buildings, creation of special events, better monitoring of the area, creation of new relevant policies, etc).
2. Dissemination of the action to inform the relevant stakeholders (get their approval to be included in the platform).

C. Creation of a user-friendly platform/website:

1. Design the platform/ connect it with the various tools (GeoTool, Digital Twin). This platform/website will include new and existing businesses as well as creators in Nicosia (HUA) for the promotion of businesses and the strengthening of creative entrepreneurship. The main goal of this platform is strengthening cooperation among creative businesses, but also providing stimulation for creative businesses and their products, not only for supporting the businesses themselves but also the cultural and creative product of the city, the city's identity, and the cultural and creative tourism. This platform will not only showcase the information but it will also promote interaction.
2. Tender procedure for the creation/development/operation of the platform/website. All involved stakeholders should be given opportunities for synergies, clustering, collaboration, promotion etc.
3. Education/training for the use of the platform.

D. Promotion/dissemination:

1. Event for promoting action.
2. Creation of relevant promotional material.

For the implementation of this action the research that has been done for DeepNic (Deep mapping of Nicosia's urban centre, 1960-2020) project from Dr. Antigone Heraclidou will also be taken into account. This will be updated in order to include georeferenced details of the mapping information that will be collected.

EXPECTED RESULTS

For the Municipality:

- keep record of the CCIS
- monitor / observe the development of this business category
- support / enhance activities for CCI
- follow up on the development
- the tools will help the municipality to better shape policies for CCIs
- easier access to data
- better visualisation of data
- engage with stakeholders
- improve relations with CCIs
- create a branding of the city
- CCIs awareness
- enhance cross -sector interaction
- creation of new tool (digital instrument) to enhance the activities of this action
- further alignment with the New European Bauhaus

General:

- enhancement of CCIs economic activity
- creation of a network
- create conditions for matchmaking

STAKEHOLDERS TO BE INVOLVED

Stakeholders list:

- Nicosia municipality - European office - Cultural affairs department
- Cultural and creative industries of the city
- CYENS staff - Research office, Museum lab, Makerspace
- Cyprus Energy Agency
- Nicosia Tourism Board
- Gardens of the future
- Museums and galleries
- Local entrepreneurs

Stakeholders' engagement:

- engage with the network
- provide information and guidance

Value generation:

- access to knowledge / research
- access to the CCIs
- access to information
- access to promotion

KEY RESOURCES REQUIRED

1 person from Nicosia Municipality and 1 person from CYENS will be coordinating the action.

The action will be funded through the project budget.

The cost breakdown:

- Digital Twin - cost of the creation of the digital map
- Platform/website creation and maintenance
- Merging information from one tool to another (geo tool and digital twin)
- Outreach activities

TIMING

The action will start in 2023 and it will continue in 2024 allowing time for the preparation of the platform.

The first step will include the sourcing of information (Spring 2023)

This will be followed by the development of the information layer that will sit on top of the Digital Twin (Summer 2023)

And last but not least the platform will be launched (Autumn 2023).

GDPR

Do not expect to have GDPR related issues. Any issues will be dealt according to the legislation under the guidance of the Data Protection Office of the Municipality of Nicosia.

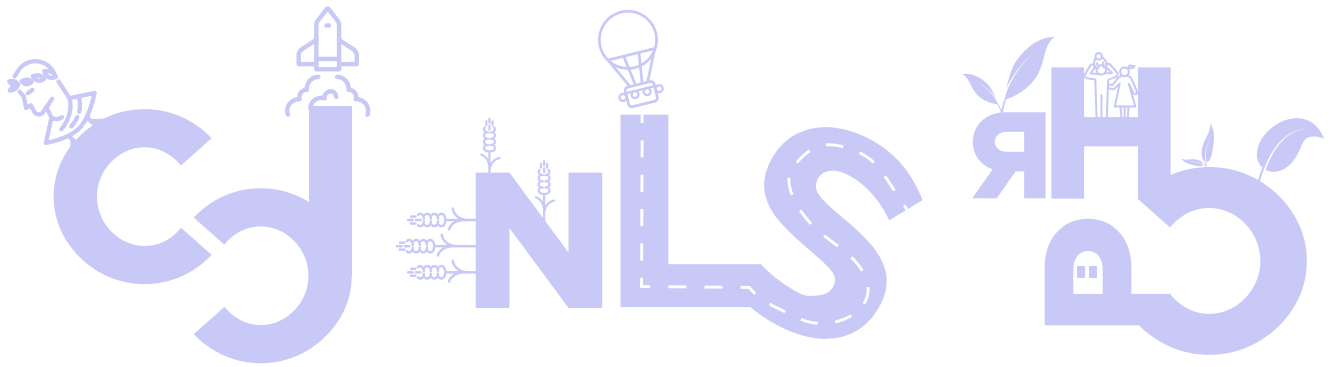
POTENTIAL RISKS

- Risk of CCI stakeholders not having interest in participating and engaging with the mapping process and the tool.
- Risk of outdated information on the current CCI and for its future development.

Facing these risks, the Municipality will promote the action and will engage with the stakeholders through different actions - including other European Projects and or through the CYENS CoE to mitigate these risks wherever possible.

2 >

Heritage Walks and their Twins



CITY MISSION

Mission 1: The Neighbourhood- Establish a strong and Inclusive Neighbourhood: Improving the local experience and creating a sense of belonging

Mission 2: The Platform -Establish a user-friendly platform for HUA to serve as an umbrella and bridge within the HUA Nicosia network

Mission 3: Activations - Establish a strong mechanism of HUA to be welcoming, transparent and measurable for all

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COORDINATION

The action will be coordinated by the European Affairs Office of Nicosia Municipality in collaboration with Nicosia Tourism Board.

The “Urban Planning” Department of the Municipality will be involved in the preparation and addressing the needs and the implementation for the different HUA routes in collaboration with the Cyprus Energy Agency - CEA.

The Nicosia Municipal Arts Centre (NiMaC) and the Centre of Visual Arts and Research (CVAR) will provide support in the preparation of presentation material as will CYENS Centre of Excellence. Other departments of Nicosia Municipality as well as the Nicosia HUB-IN team members will also participate.

The “Communication and Events” department of the Municipality along with Nicosia Tourism Board will lead the communication for the marketing of the action, stakeholder engagement and the dissemination of results.

CONTEXT

Cyprus’ geographic position at the crossroads between East and West has caused Cyprus to be influenced by diverse Eastern Mediterranean and European civilisations. This is especially evident if you walk in the HUA of Nicosia. The identity of the area has been forged through the interaction of different cultures over different periods and constitutes a unique urban asset of great historic, social and economic value. Still, due to the Turkish invasion the area suffers from abandonment and decadence/neglect. The economic crisis of 2013 and the COVID pandemic have led to further abandonment of the historic centre, with businesses, shops and restaurants closing down resulting in further desertion and disrepair.

While strong physical reminders of conflict, fragmentation and segregation are present, so are tangible and intangible expressions of coexistence, dialogue, negotiation, and compromise. The latter are embodied in constant efforts of the city to build bridges across the divide, preserve shared heritage and stimulate a process of creativity and culture led regeneration with tangible results that have been demonstrated to be the foundation for a resilient city which cultivates the skills of an adaptive local community.

Based on the citizens survey carried out in 2022 by the Municipality and the Cyprus Energy Agency, residents and visitors alike find that walkability and multiculturalism are two significant assets of the HUA.

The Action aims to preserve and enhance the tangible and intangible assets of the HUA, through a set of walks that highlight these, and this is further enhanced with storytelling involving the creative sector. The walks will also be made available digitally, to reach a wider and diverse audience. The digitization of the walks can be used to engage with the visitors so as to provide a more enhanced engagement and thus attract more visitors to follow the walks and also engage

with the CCIs, also in an economic manner.

The connected walks and experiences will promote neighbourhood pride, hopefully leading to more active engagement on the part of local residents; and also promote HUA's cultural tangible and intangible heritage better known outside its immediate perimeter, increasing its attractiveness and wider participation to local events and initiatives. There may be a need for supporting activities with businesses/residents/visitors to promote "neighbourhood pride". There will be at least 1 event to initiate each walk.

The Action will be developed in synergy with the other HUB-IN Actions, as well as with the physical regeneration interventions that are currently taking place in the pilot area through the use of European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and other funds and other related initiatives.

The innovative elements that will be created in support of the walks will promote a common identity among CCIs and locals but more importantly recognisability of the walks and the Hub. More importantly it will bring residents and CCIs together, enhancing neighbourhood pride, but also walkability and culture. Furthermore, it can enhance the engagement of residents and local CCIs and make the HUA's cultural heritage better known, increasing its attractiveness and wider participation to local events and initiatives.

DESCRIPTION

The action will involve the design and implementation of different walking routes/promenades within the walled City, mainly for visitors, that:

- highlight different cultural and creative elements within the walled city
- include innovative elements like digital storytelling and different experiences
- are also available in the digital form, on the digital twin of the walled city

Nicosia Municipality and the HUB-IN team will work together with stakeholders like museums, local artists and organisations to develop a specific set of walking routes (at least 3) that highlight different cultural and creative elements within the walled city. These will highlight either different types of experiences (e.g., museum walks, pottery walks, etc) and/or different historical eras (e.g., listed houses from a specific period).

The Municipality of Nicosia with other stakeholders like the Cyprus Energy Agency will explore ways and form partnerships to allow for soft mobility for the visitors, people who work and tourists alike.

The Municipality of Nicosia will publish **a tender for the development and implementation of creative innovative elements like recordings and/or videos that may be accessed through a QR code to promote and enhance the memory of the HUA for added cultural value.**

Furthermore, the walks and the creative innovative elements will also be replicated in a digital form on the digital twin of Nicosia - that is currently implemented from the CYENS CoE.

The innovative creative elements will focus on providing historical and cultural information on

HUA and its surroundings, finding innovative and creative ways to show what makes the HUA. This can include a combination of recording, example short-videos, 3D reconstructions of listed buildings etc. The Nicosia Hub In and supporting team will have to co-create the content with the help of local stakeholders and residents, ranging from youth going to school in the city, senior citizens that have spent their life in the walled city, people from different communities, including Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot, local businesses and artists. The aim is to develop a set of strongly innovative material to create interest and build knowledge of the local heritage both to residents, visitors and tourists, also stimulating neighbourhood pride.

The corresponding maps and creative elements will be hosted by the Municipality's institutional channels (website and social media), as well as on the geomap and GeoTool that will be created and on the digital twin that will be hosted on CYENS website and social media channels. The digital twin will also showcase other relevant projects and will create synergies with other projects, actions and initiatives in the area. The HUB-in Nicosia partners will aim to maximise public dissemination of the walking routes with dedicated activities targeting the widest possible audience. This will include the organisation of ad-hoc local events (e.g., launching event), promotion in other existing events and through the Nicosia Tourism board, promotion in existing large events.

The indicative steps of the Heritage Walks Action are the following:

- walks design, in collaboration with stakeholders
- design, development and implementation of the innovative elements that are part of the walk, including co-creation activities (and if needed a tender call by the Municipality)
- digital twin representation of the developed walk routes
- various initiatives (digital and physical) are organised to promote and disseminate the project (by the Municipality and the involved parties).

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Revitalization of the HUA
- Preserving and reinforcing the memory of the HUA
- Increased visits and visibility of the area making the HUA heritage and culture known to visitors and tourists
- Promotion of soft mobility/active travel
- Developing a sense of pride and ownership among local residents

STAKEHOLDERS TO BE INVOLVED

CYENS Centre of Excellence - creators of the digital twin, will implement the specific routes, 3d reconstructions, etc, dissemination, etc

Nicosia Tourism Board - involved in the design and implementation of the routes – promote the routes for tourists and other visitors.

Local Museums - NiMac, CVAR, Leventis, etc - aiding in the preparation of the innovative material and dissemination.

Local Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) - co-creation of the routes aiding in the preparation of

the innovative material - lead wider engagement with CCIs
 Shopkeepers, Local Businesses - Dissemination
 Deputy Ministry for Culture - wider impact
 Deputy Ministry for Research and Innovation - impact for entrepreneurship
 Local Residents - for promoting collaboration and neighbourhood pride
 Visitors - benefit from walkability and culture
 Tourists - increased value

KEY RESOURCES REQUIRED

- Time: 2 persons from Municipality's European Affairs Office to coordinate, 2 more members from the local HUB-IN team, 2 other departments from the Municipality like the Urban Planning and Communication and Dissemination
- Funds: The Action will be funded through HUB-IN funds, with in kind contribution from CYENS CoE
- Space: Create signage that will be used to identify the physical routes. The Municipality will lead the installation of signs (e.g., including QR codes and/or branding)
- Regulatory support: The Municipality will manage the policy, legal aspects and permits
- Tools, materials, etc: Further to the physical place create the routes on the digital twin of the walled city.

TIMING

The indicative timeline for the implementation of the action is between October 2023 to March 2024, when the weather is more pleasant. This timeline is for the establishment of the walks including the implementation of the innovative elements to be included, up to the launch. The walks will be initially identified based on monuments as well as other better known CCIs, but additions and modifications will be made based on the output of the mapping of CCIs. The walks will be initiated in autumn as the weather is more pleasant, there is less heat and people are not visiting beaches and the sea.

GDPR

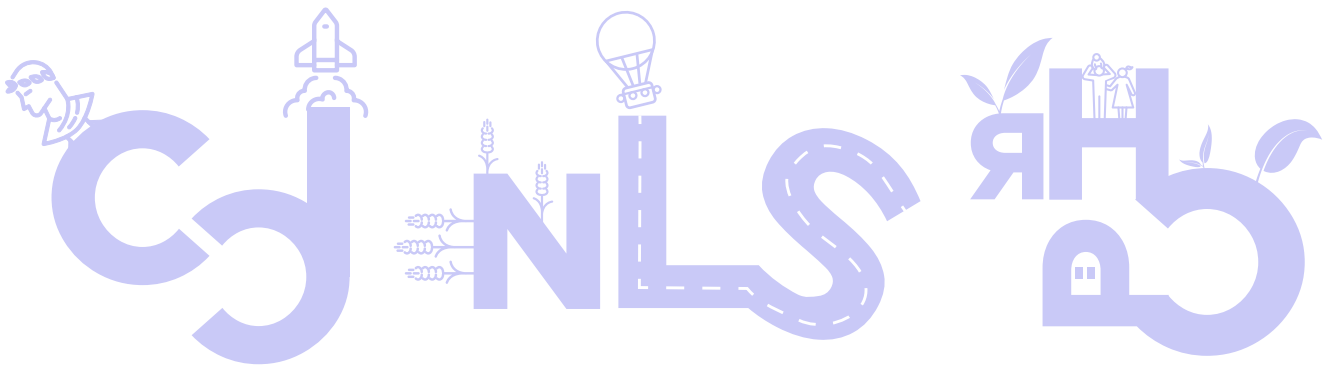
The Municipality will provide data subjects with all the relevant information and will ask for the signature of the privacy consent form if necessary.

POTENTIAL RISKS

- Risk of stakeholders not having interest in participating in the action. To mitigate this risk, the stakeholders will be involved across the different steps of the implementation of the action and the communication will be crucial in keeping them informed and engaged.
- Risk of lack of interest or lack of participation in the walks. To mitigate this risk, surveys and statistics will be evaluated to ensure the needs of the visitors are met and to make appropriate choices when designing the action.

3 >

Activations of the Hub - Interacting and Engaging



CITY MISSION

Mission 3: Activations - Establish a strong mechanism of HUA to be welcoming, transparent and measurable for all

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COORDINATION

The EU Affairs Office of the Nicosia Municipality (which is also the designated Physical info point of Nicosia HUB) will be responsible for planning and implementation. The office is located at the CYENS. The work will be done in collaboration with some of CYENS departments, including the Research Department and the Makerspace.

The Communication & Social media team of both the Municipality of Nicosia and the Cyprus Energy Agency will be responsible for the promotion of the Action.

NiMaC (Nicosia Municipal Arts Centre) will also be involved in the development of different activities of the action.

CONTEXT

The sense of abandonment of Nicosia's HUA impacts the inhabitants and workers of the area. Despite the diversity of citizens groups represented within the HUA, there is lack of collectivism and there is a real need in creating social interactions and activity intersections. Historically, the area has been a craftsmen area and the place where creatives and artists gathered, but also the place of many craftsmanship studios. Today, the CYENS Makerspace is the reincarnation of these, but also a way to reconnect the old and the new skills and knowledge. This action focuses on the engagement of this population and the attraction of other Nicosia-enthusiasts to create a livelier centre. Following the placemaking principle of Triangulation*, this action will initiate a process to create linkages between the people living and working in the Nicosia HUA, by providing experiential events as cultural stimuli. Using the ingredients that constitute the values of Nicosia HUB (as identified in 3.2 - Values in Nicosia's Roadmap and the Current Landscape report) and elements of the tangible and intangible cultural fabric of the city will become the occasion to bring together people that wouldn't otherwise connect. An example would be to use the theme of the "bicycle" and host an event at an antique shop with a mobility professional. Or, use the theme of "street culture" and set up a workshop with a graffiti artist and a food vendor sharing their knowledge and experience.

This stimulation of the cultural agents will activate a network of HUA Nicosia Ambassadors. The Ambassadors network establishes a win-win situation with the Municipality and the Nicosia HUB, as the Ambassadors are involved as partners or agents in the effort of urban regeneration. An event-filled city centre that is co-led by its own community leaders and key actors of the cultural scene and business ecosystem will promote innovation and entrepreneurship and support the cultural and creative industry.

**"Triangulation is the process by which some external stimulus provides a linkage between people and prompts strangers to talk to other strangers as if they knew each other" (Holly Whyte). Read more on Triangulation and the other Principles for Creating Great Community Places as they are outlined by the Project for Public Spaces in the following link <https://www.pps.org/article/11steps>*

DESCRIPTION

The Action for activating the HUA will include a set of relevant activities with different but complementary purposes:

- Upskilling local artists, creatives and craftsmen that will have an impact in activating the locals
- Develop scale up and/or immersive experiences related to different CCIs including but not limited to food, pottery, etc, that will be exciting for locals and visitors alike.
- Establish HUA Ambassadors from locals that will promote the HUA to locals visitors and tourists.

The CYENS Thinker Maker Space which is part of the CYENS Centre of Excellence, is a multifunctional creative space that supports local entrepreneurs, designers, artists and researchers. The Makerspace promotes technology led innovation by encouraging the local creative community to develop projects that utilise digital fabrication techniques and rapid prototyping. The Makerspace will develop and deliver upskilling seminars related to the use of new technologies in the cultural and creative industries. Thus its staff will be involved and will support the implementation of this action with their knowhow and expertise. The space of the Makerspace will be utilised for activities that will need to take place for the action.

Furthermore, the Makerspace has space for small exhibitions and will also provide the space for upscaling experience workshops related to different tangible and intangible heritage aspects of the HUA. A diversity of events (recurring or one-off) will be curated based on identified themes e.g., food related, clay related, etc. The event will have a two-fold objective: to offer fresh experiences of existing practices in the HUA while developing skills and training interested parties in old and new methods. The experiential events will connect traditional and contemporary practices and the people who represent them. For example, a thematic walk can provide the experience of learning and tasting from a workshop on traditional sweet making in a local patisserie and a workshop on 3D printed chocolate at the CYENS Makerspace. Another example is a demonstration of new products created through the combination of traditional and digital clay-working (pottery) techniques.

This action creates direct engagement through creation experiences that will bring the visitors and the artists closer both in terms of the art but also in terms for promoting new arts and technologies. For example, creating new forms and new processes that can upgrade the resulting products.

This series of events will manifest the new Branding for Nicosia's HUA and will be complementary to the Action no 4. Some events will be small-scale and one-off while some others can be annual and more ambitious, (if possible, a Cultural Hackathon may be run which will call for integration of tangible and intangible heritage and innovation).

Ultimately, the people involved in the creation of these events will be initiated into a growing network of Nicosia HUA Ambassadors. The Ambassadors will be selected for their potential to raise awareness for the HUA through their everyday activities which reveal the cultural and entrepreneurial spirit of the capital. The Ambassadors will be following the new Branding for Nicosia's HUA for the promotion of their own work as well as other happenings. They will also support the upskilling of the local community through their participation in the hackathons and acceleration programs.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Promote the creative and cultural industries that already exist in the HUA
- Stimulate and encourage the development of new collaborations, new products & services
- Elevate the sense of pride and sense of belonging for the local creative community
- Raise awareness on the Nicosia HUB through the community itself.

STAKEHOLDERS TO BE INVOLVED

Stakeholders list:

- Universities
- CYENS CoE
- Municipality
- Information and training centre for enhancing employment and entrepreneurship - Nicosia Municipality Multifunctional Foundation
- Cyprus Energy Agency
- Local residents and entrepreneurs
- Local companies
- Artists and craftsmen
- Museums
- Small business
- Local restaurants

Stakeholder engagement:

- participation in activities
- organisation of activities
- use of their space
- knowledge exchange

Value generation:

- exchange of new ideas
- enhance interaction
- mobilise and engage stakeholders
- raise awareness

KEY RESOURCES REQUIRED

Engagement of staff (municipality, CYENS makerspace)

- use of project funding
- use of space (CYENS CoE and stakeholders' premises)

TIMING

Spring 2023:

Design the action with CYENS CoE Makerspace

List the relevant stakeholders
Engage and inform them about the activities

Summer 2023:
Implement the action in collaboration with relevant stakeholders

There will be at least 2 upskilling training and two upscaling events open to the public.

GDPR

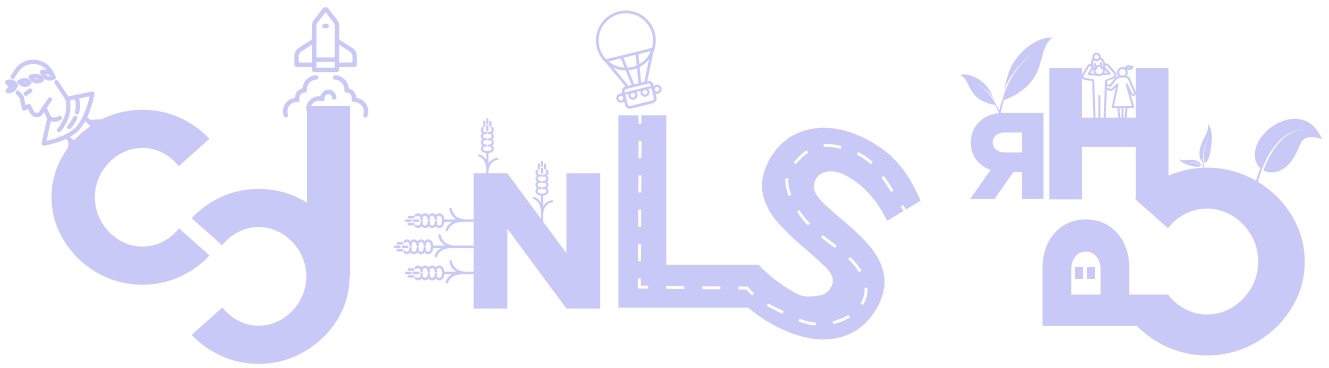
Not very sensitive in terms of GDPR.

POTENTIAL RISKS

- Risk of lack of engagement/interest from local actors when invited to be ambassadors and not including a diversity of groups and individuals. To mitigate this risk, an idea would be to provide some incentives. The incentives will be determined after the first proposals on the ambassadors community (who, what they will provide, what they will gain etc).
- Risk of lack of participation in the events. To mitigate this risk, the Municipality will need to reorganise and provide better communication and dissemination of the HUB and the action aims.

4 >

Creation of a CCI start-up accelerator programme



CITY MISSION

**Mission 3: Activations-Establish
a strong mechanism of HUA to be
welcoming, transparent and measurable
for all**

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COORDINATION

The action will be coordinated by the European Affairs Department of the Municipality of Nicosia in collaboration with CYENS Centre of Excellence and all the Hub-in teams' members.

The Information and Training Centre for Enhancing Employment and Entrepreneurship of the Multifunctional Centre (KEEAED) of the Municipality of Nicosia with input from CYENS Centre of Excellence will run the accelerator programme in collaboration with different incubators and accelerators in the city.

Cyprus Energy Agency will also have a strong role to help the start-ups considering Sustainability issues.

Nicosia HUB-IN partners will support the accelerator and they will also all contribute in dissemination and communication.

Furthermore, other stakeholders such as NiMAC and CVAR will be involved in promoting the accelerator.

CONTEXT

The Municipality together with Cyprus Energy Agency held a questionnaire to raise awareness for the HUB-In project and engage with local stakeholders. The residents, employees and visitors of the city within the wall were asked to complete the questionnaire and share their opinion about the historic centre of Nicosia. The answers that have been collected were used for the creation of the roadmap. A total of 800 answers were received and it was evident from the answers that people appreciate the art and cultural tangible and intangible heritage of the city. They will visit the city for this reason, and they believe that they will visit the HUA more often if there are more cultural institutions, it's clean and safe to walk around. They also suggested that they wish to see more economic activity of museums, cultural centres and of the creative industry (independent designers, arts and crafts etc.) 92% agree that the HUA of Nicosia should prioritise and protect the creative industry.

It is evident from the questionnaire feedback that there should be an immediate priority to utilise vacant buildings and preserve local heritage. At the same time most respondents agree that Nicosia's ambition to transform the HUA into a HUB of Entrepreneurship and Innovation could bring more opportunities for the employment in the centre as well as younger populations to live in the centre and increase the liveability of the area, Innovation and Entrepreneurship seem to be understood as drivers for revitalisation.

The questionnaire completed by residents and visitors of Nicosia highlighted the need to see more cultural and creative industries in the HUA of Nicosia, including independent designers, arts and crafts studios and shops, museums and cultural centres.

Based on this, along with the need for generating new jobs and stimulating further economic activity at the local and municipal level, Nicosia will run an accelerator programme for CCIs.

This action is expected to address the issues of abandonment and low number of tourists and other visitors spending time and money in the HUA by engaging more stakeholders, attracting more people in the old city and enhancing its core values, culture, creativity and tangible and intangible heritage.

The acceleration programme will support entrepreneurship and development of selected CCI actors and/or startups will be carried out. The focus of the acceleration programme will be the CCIs. The accelerator can facilitate cultural entrepreneurs and artists and to help them to professionalise and create sustainable and scalable business practices. These can in turn become active in the HUA and/or do artistic interventions and/or pop-ups spinning a tale of more creative works in the Hub.

The accelerator can contribute to a solution for multiple challenges in the HUA such as improving the attractiveness of the HUA for new talented workers in the HUA, supporting cultural centres present in the HUA, and helping to professionalise these workers and improve their entrepreneurial capacities.

The participants will be asked to focus on a specific challenge and they will have to come up with ideas, solutions, products or services that will address the challenges that will be specified.

DESCRIPTION

The accelerator will empower creative professionals and support capacity building in business, finance, and marketing. It will support talent by helping artists and creative workers in the HUA to develop themselves further and develop their ideas or startups.

The acceleration programme will be designed in collaboration with local stakeholders and to address needs of artists and people in the creative industries. The plan will include content structure, timeline, budget, and partners involved. That includes legal and administrative grounds too (contracts etc.).

There will be an open call with a committee with members from the HUA as well as supporting local stakeholders, who will also be involved in the design of the accelerator.

The call will aim to create solutions that will impact cultural, creative, social and environmental areas that are aligned with the HUB-IN clusters. The challenges that may be tackled with the open call include but are not limited to: CCIs, New Lifestyles, Resilient & Human Connected Places, and Environmental Balance, Sustainable use of space, better promotion of CCIs etc.

This open call will have as its primary target audience the people that live or work in the HUA, as it intended to increase the involvement and participation of the community in tackling the challenges posed in the open call; but it will not be limited to them.

Following the open call, the applications will be evaluated using a set of established criteria. The start-up companies that will take part will be selected. Selection will be based on the predefined

criteria in the call and will be conducted in a most transparent way.

The chosen participants will undergo training to develop their idea and their business, including the evaluation of its market potential. The program will also address existing knowledge and skill gaps. They will also have access to the CYENS Makerspace, as needed for the development of their products.

The accelerator participants will have to attend a set of mentoring events, workshops, master classes and networking (e.g., Economic, digital and sustainable literacy programs). These will increase creative professionals' access to funding and global markets. The program of these events will be widely communicated on the network established from the mapping.

EXPECTED RESULTS

It is expected that this action will result in the creation of more cultural and creative industries in the HUA of Nicosia, including independent designers, arts and crafts studios and shops, museums and cultural centres. This will increase the economic activity in the HUA, will bring more people to live, work and visit in the HUA. More importantly it will provide for new perspectives and opportunities for young people.

Artistic and creative entrepreneurship will flourish by triggering new developed craft techniques and increasing entrepreneurial skills for the provision of heritage-inspired goods and services.

This will further enhance the Nicosia Municipality's efforts to transform the Historic Centre into a Hub of Entrepreneurship & Innovation. It could bring more opportunities for employment in the centre as well as younger populations to live in the centre and increase the liveability of the area. Innovation and Entrepreneurship seem to be understood as drivers for revitalisation.

In addition, this action will:

- raise awareness for the CCI's
- increase creative professionals access to research institutions
- empower CCI's with capacity building in business, finance and marketing
- increase CCI's capabilities
- create cross-sector interactions and collaborations.

STAKEHOLDERS TO BE INVOLVED

Stakeholders list:

- Nicosia Municipality
- KEEAED - information centre
- CYENS Centre of Excellence- makerspace, innovation
- Cyprus Energy Agency
- Universities
- local innovation stakeholders
- CCI's

- incubators
- C4E - centre for entrepreneurship

KEY RESOURCES REQUIRED

Key Resources required

Time-staff: municipality, CYENS, KEAED

Funds:

- Funding for acceleration from HUB- in project
- Dissemination activities to promote the acceleration
- Need to engage an expert to support with the acceleration activities
- Space: Need for space for the meetings and training. Use existing spaces in the HUA.

TIMING

The action is expected to start during autumn 2023 and will be completed by March 2024.

Some preliminary activities that relate to the previous 2 actions will take place in the summer in order to identify the challenges before implementing the action.

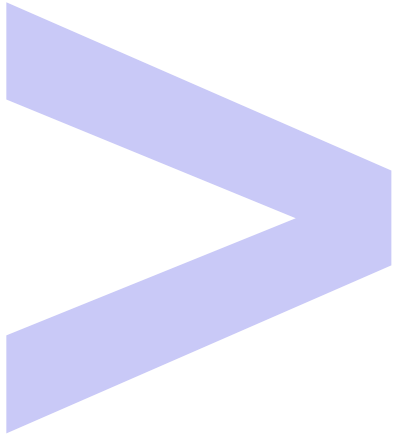
GDPR

No issues considered.

POTENTIAL RISKS

- Risk of CCI stakeholders not having interest in participating in the action and not involving a diversity of entrepreneurs and groups.
- Risk of participants not completing the full programme
- Risk of limited number of ideas which respond to the aims of the accelerator.

In order to mitigate these risks, the Municipality will need to enhance the communication, the promotion of the accelerator and improve the stakeholder engagement by involving key players of the existing innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem.



Based on the details of the Action Plan, the Nicosia HUB-IN Team is defining a monitoring methodology in order to understand and demonstrate progress.

This may include a mix of short-, medium- and long- term indicators, and a mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators, as is most relevant to actions' intended outcomes. In order to avoid duplication, that content is not replicated here but readers are able to see the full details in the project document D5.2 "Adapted Monitoring Methodology" available from the Nicosia HUB-IN Team and to be published via the HUB-IN project's website.



<https://hubin-project.eu>

Branding and Communication of the Nicosia Hub

The branding and communication strategy of the HUB-IN of Nicosia, will mobilise existing communication and dissemination channels of the Municipality of Nicosia, Cyprus Energy Agency, CYENS Centre of Excellence, Nicosia Tourism Board and other stakeholders that will be involved in supporting the implementation of the action plan.

The HUB-IN Nicosia Local Team aims to create a community, engage with the relevant stakeholders and develop synergies that will support the implementation of the branding and communication strategy of the HUB.

The branding and communication strategy will not only support the branding of the HUB and the activities proposed in the action plan, but it will also complement other actions / projects / activities that the Municipality is implementing for the benefit of the HUA, its citizens and stakeholders.

The strategy will have multiple targets from trying to reverse the trends of abandonment, preserve history, foster cultural heritage to attract talent, attract new citizens and businesses, enhance the innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem. The strategy addresses citizens residing in the HUA, businesses, individuals, visitors, tourists, the central government and other stakeholders.

Through the proposed actions, it is expected that the HUB will attract more visitors from the wider area of Nicosia and Cyprus. Thus, it is important to note that the strategy is not

happening in isolation, instead, is adding value to already planned activities/events/schemes that are taking place or planned from the municipality and other stakeholders.

The method for reaching out to stakeholders will depend on the specific target audience as well as on whom we aim to approach and the message we want to revert. Therefore, the tone can be both formal and informal depending on the audience but also at the same time energetic, positive and forward thinking aiming to inspire, be inclusive and engaging to the targeted audiences.

Various existing communication means of the Municipality such as its weekly newsletter, social media, website and mass communication media network will be used for the implementation of the strategy. Where possible, the communication network of the relevant stakeholders will be used for reaching out to the greater community of the city. Partner organisations such as the Cyprus Energy Agency, the CYENS Centre of Excellence, the Nicosia Tourism Board etc, will be supportive and actively promote the city's HUB-In branding and communication strategy.

Words and phrases such as **creativity, openness, engagement, enhancement of the ecosystem, creation of synergies** will be used for the communication of the HUB. Words such as fragmentation, inclusive etc should be avoided when branding the HUB.

INTRODUCING THE HUB TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDERS

ACTIVITY	STAKEHOLDER TARGETED	DESCRIPTION	TIMELINE
Press release	Media and wider public	The municipality main channel will be used to inform the wider public about the actions of the HUB. It is expected that the press release will create a buzz about the HUB and its activities. The press release will be communicated to the local media.	July 2023
Information on municipality website	All relevant stakeholders (Wider audience)	Provide information about the project, the hub, its partners and its actions.	June 2023
Municipality newsletter	Wider public (only those registered to receive the newsletter of the municipality)	Disseminate information about the HUB and its activities.	June 2023
Social Media	Wider public	Utilisation of Municipality's social media aiming to reach out to a greater audience. The municipality's social media channels including, Facebook and Instagram will be used for activating and attracting interest for the HUB.	June 2023
Introductory event	Partners that will be supporting the implementation of the activities of the HUB	An event to present and explain the actions and the aim of the HUB. Discuss and agree on the next steps.	May 2023
Informative meeting	Municipal Council members	Inform the relevant committees of the municipal council about the project, the hub and its actions.	July 2023
Internal meetings	Municipality relevant departments	Meetings to inform the relevant departments of the municipality and better plan the implementation of the actions.	July 2023

The various stakeholders will be informed about the actions through various means that will be used to reach out to them including press announcements, meetings, informative events, emails etc. They will be able to participate by engaging with the municipality and actively contributing to the implementation of the actions that are relevant to them.

INFORMING, CONTRIBUTING AND TAKING PART TO HUB'S ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY	STAKEHOLDER TARGETED	DESCRIPTION	TIMELINE
Invitation / email	Targeted to specific affected stakeholders already being identified - artists, creatives and craftsmen, CYENS, local shop union, residents unions, etc	Raise awareness of the HUB, and its actions. Provide them with information about its actions, informing them about the importance of their active participation and how they can get involved.	June 2023
Press release	Targeted to specific affected stakeholders already being identified	Communicating the actions and the scope of the HUB.	June 2023
Internal meetings	Municipality relevant departments	To keep them updated and engaged. These meetings can take place every 3 months and the participants will be updated on the HUB-In and the actions.	June 2023 - end of the project
Meetings with the committee	Core team	This meeting will take place every 4 months for informing, updating, planning and exchanging ideas about the HUB activities. This activity will enhance collaboration and networking between the participants.	June 2023 - end of the project
Meetings Setting the Digital Stage (Action 1)	All groups identified in the action description	The focus of these meetings and interactions will be the implementation of the action with the involvement of the relevant stakeholders. Presentations about the Geotool and the Digital Twin of the city of Nicosia will help to set up the stage for this action. Create synergies with other projects that are relevant.	July 2023 - January 2024



INFORMING, CONTRIBUTING AND TAKING PART TO HUB'S ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY	STAKEHOLDER TARGETED	DESCRIPTION	TIMELINE
Heritage walks and their twins (Action 2)	All groups identified in the action description	<p>The focus of these meetings and interactions will be the implementation of the action with the involvement of the relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>The meeting will also include more general updates about the project and the HUB as well as its overall objectives. The action will also support the creation of the walks and their promotion.</p> <p>It will be an opportunity to engage with various stakeholders and “walk the route” with them.</p>	September 2023 - February 2024
Activations of the Hub: Interacting and Engaging (Action 3)	All groups identified in the action description	<p>The focus of these meetings and interactions will be the implementation of the action with the involvement of the relevant stakeholders. This action calls for engagement of a wider grassroots group.</p> <p>The activity will include the creation of the ambassadors network and introduce them to core activities of the municipality in an effort to engage, interact and involve them as ambassadors.</p>	October 2023 - March 2024
Creation of a CCI startup acceleration programme (Action 4)	All groups identified in the action description	<p>The focus of these meetings and interactions will be the implementation of the action with the involvement of the relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>The innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem of the city will be more involved in this action and thus an activity will be to engage and inform the relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>The activity will also involve the creation of the accelerator programme, informing the teams and organising a closing event to showcase the results of the acceleration.</p>	July 2023 – March 2024

The proposed activities and actions will help the promotion of the values of our HUB- In Place as were identified through the co-creation workshop that took place for the HUB-In project. The values are:

- Nicosia historic centre as a catalyst for **URBAN CULTURE** | museum, street culture, theatre, multi-ethnicity groups, creative shops etc.

- Nicosia historic centre as a **TRANSFORMATIVE** place | entrepreneurship, innovation, incentives to locals, new businesses, attract more visitors etc.
- Nicosia historic centre through **EMOTIONS** and **HERITAGE** | feel like home, happy, sense of smell, paradise, magical atmosphere, traditional craftsmanship, local shops, memory/ nostalgia, unique architecture
- Nicosia historic centre **OPEN** and **ACCESSIBLE** | bicycles, mobility, green spaces, yard, orchards in the old town, jasmine, cats, dogs.

PROMOTING THE VALUES OF THE HUB

Action	VALUE PROMOTED	MAIN BRAND OBJECTIVE TARGETED	DESCRIPTION
Setting the Digital Stage (Action 1)	Catalyst for urban culture, transformative place, the historic centre through emotions and heritage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Highlight architectural heritage, traditions and history 2. Showcase cultural and artistic offer 3. Promote opportunities for entrepreneurs 	Promote awareness of the HUA among visitors, preserve the history and cultural heritage and promote synergies between the relevant stakeholders.
Heritage walks and their twins (Action 2)	Catalyst for urban culture, transformative place, the historic centre through emotions and heritage, open and accessible	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Highlight architectural heritage, traditions and history 2. Showcase cultural and artistic offer 	Support the preservation of tangible and intangible assets of the historic centre, promote digital transformation, and engage with a wider audience
Activations of the Hub: Interacting and Engaging (Action 3)	Catalyst for urban culture, transformative place, the historic centre through emotions and heritage, open and accessible	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Highlight architectural heritage, traditions and history 2. Showcase cultural and artistic offer 3. Promote opportunities for entrepreneurs 	Create more collaborations, more activations, attract more visitors in the HUA, enhance the character of the city
Creation of a CCI startup acceleration programme (Action 4)	Catalyst for urban Culture, Transformative place, open and accessible historic centre	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Promote opportunities for entrepreneurs 	Support entrepreneurship, highlight the challenges and present solutions, find new ways of collaboration

HUB-IN



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