Cultural Commons Close By

Driving Urban Transitions

Concept Pitch

The international project Cultural Commons Close By is an innovative research and action initiative exploring how artists and cultural organisations can transform underused buildings, former industrial sites and semi-public spaces into vibrant, inclusive and sustainable cultural commons. It responds to the **Driving Urban Transitions** (DUT) **2026 call, Cross-cutting Topic 1: Adaptive reuse of existing urban structures and spaces, primarily within the Circular Urban Economies** (**CUE**) transition pathway, with a strong connection to the 15-minute City. The project investigates how cultural organisations together with citizens can transform value beyond temporary activation to become long-term stewards of urban spaces, contributing to their continuous adaptation, maintenance and governance.

Across Europe, Cultural Commons Close By brings together artists, cultural organisations, communities, researchers and municipalities to explore how adaptive reuse can create sustainable, inclusive and vibrant cultural spaces. Through real-world pilots, the project investigates different approaches to long-term cultural stewardship, developing a c**omparative Cultural Stewardship Framework** that identifies transferable mechanisms while highlighting and studying local conditions. Guided by the principles of the **New European Bauhaus,** the project envisions a future where cultural and civic actors are not merely temporary users, but active partners in shaping, maintaining and governing urban spaces.

DUT Topics (Cue & 15m)

Aligned with the **Circular Urban Economies** (**CUE**) transition pathway, Cultural Commons Close By explores how adaptive reuse can transform underused buildings and spaces into accessible cultural infrastructure. Through artistic research and community participation, the project promotes circular resource use, heritage preservation and long-term cultural stewardship, strengthening local identity and community ownership.

Aligned with the **15-minute City transition pathway** (**15m**), Cultural Commons Close By explores how adaptive reuse of underused buildings and semi-public spaces can create accessible, inclusive and multifunctional cultural infrastructure close to where people live. Through artistic experimentation and community participation, the project investigates how cultural spaces can strengthen neighbourhood life, social connections and local ownership.

Consortium

Cultural Commons Close By is currently bringing together national clusters in the Netherlands, Türkiye and Sweden, each addressing unique local challenges related to cultural and civic stewardship and adaptive reuse. We are looking for one additional **European partner cluster** (especially in Poland, Hungary Austria, Belgium) with a distinct local challenge to contribute to the comparative research. Ideally, each cluster brings together a concrete pilot site, cultural and community organisations, artists, a research institute and municipal authorities, with private-sector partners where relevant.

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