

## Highlights from

### IN SITU Webinar #2, “How can CCI innovation ecosystems be fostered in non-urban areas?”, 30 October 2023

Programme/list of speakers: <https://insituculture.eu/in-situ-webinar-series-focus-on-webinar-2/>

Recording of Webinar #2: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c5eTCoa0G\\_s&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c5eTCoa0G_s&t=1s)

*IN SITU: Place-based innovation of cultural and creative industries in non-urban areas* is a four-year project funded by the European Union’s Horizon Europe research and innovation programme (Grant Agreement no. 101061747) that combines research and experimental actions to advance the innovation-related practices, capacities, and potential of cultural and creative industries (CCIs) based in non-urban areas of the EU countries.

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*Webinar #2 notes were compiled by Claudia Carvalho, November 2023.*

#### **FOCUS**

Key points and interconnections relating to the title of the webinar which can inform IN SITU and associated initiatives.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

- **Nancy Duxbury (CES) | IN SITU** project presentation and the Webinar series

#### **PROJECTS AND INITIAL INSIGHTS PRESENTED**

**Claudia de Luca, IT**

**University of Bologna - RURITAGE: Heritage for Rural Regeneration** |

<https://www.ruritage.eu>

RURITAGE:

- (approach to innovation ecosystems in non-urban areas)
- 45 months



- aim: how cultural and natural heritage can emerge as a driver of sustainable development and competitiveness; work on systemic innovation areas (pilgrimage, rural food, migration, art and festival, resilience and landscape)
- 6 + 12 case studies (6 as replicators)
- a multistakeholder approach - to change policy frameworks and goal; to help inform research; to inform and empower communities; to support the creation of new business models on services and products
- innovation happens in physical places where people meet
- results: cycling and walking routes improved, accessibility in sites; new hot-spots; festival and arts exhibitions, events to support immigrant inclusion; improve accessibility to cultural routes, among others + innovation ecosystem that was able to have its own additional funding
- lessons learned: new skills and local abilities to be included, need to recreate the link between heritage and attractiveness, innovation happens in places, no defined border of the rural innovation ecosystem, need for cooperation beyond administrative boundaries
- building from RURITAGE, new project: RURACTIVE - What are the physical and spatial boundaries of innovation ecosystems?
- how to define boundaries? It can be a valley, a river, etc., but fundings are very specific and based on geographical and demographic boundaries. Permeability? Is there a way to define these boundaries and make them more flexible and not so much fragmented?
- mechanics of the project? Advise: re-use existing places, recover building and build up on existing function, two or three main entities and stakeholders with whom you can collaborate

**Louise Weir, IR**

**University of Galway – FLIARA: Female-Led Innovation in Agriculture and Rural Areas** | <https://fliara.eu/>

- looking at it through the lens of women - where are women in this innovation ecosystem?
- barriers to women for access to education, land, resources, capital and finance
- 15 partners across 10 countries starting January 2023
- what innovation systems can do?
  - get key actors in those spaces where innovation happens
  - empower women at the stage where they are, heighten visibility
  - combine futures research and case study methods
  - network building and policy benchmarking
  - co-create a conceptual framework
- outcomes: policy proposal that are gender centered, practical tools supporting women-led innovation

- starting point: lack of gender equality and accessibility, need for aggregated data, mapping the challenges and possibilities, different motivations according to life-situations and what needs individuals have (innovation journey)
- 20 case studies with interviews with 200 interviews with women
- community of practice network and visibility

**Milene Tessarin, NL**

**Utrecht University** – Creative occupations and innovation in EU-non-urban regions (work conducted within **the IN SITU project**) | <https://insituculture.eu/>

- examined cultural and creative occupations (CCOs) in non-urban regions in EU countries
- still strong focus on urban agglomerations
- have to pay attention to other forms of innovation - trademarks as complementary methods (more soft innovation - relate to entrepreneur activities and not just high-tech industry - creative workers as the focus - symbolic knowledge and not technical only)
- look at occupations - look at what workers do (creative solutions - designers, among others) and not where they work
- other types of proximity besides the geographical one (cognitive and organisational)
- data: occupation (LFS and CCO); innovation (EUIPO and REGPAT); Regions (NUTS 2, intermediate and rural); period (2011-2019)
- results: CCOs at intermediate level; trademarks and patents more in rural, CCO - rural regions 65.2% are made of women (boosting of cultural and creative jobs is associated with more women as workers in these creative occupations); in rural areas, CCOs can support innovation through trademarks; patents and trademarks should be combined by policymakers

**Tim Wojan, USA**

**National Science Foundation**

- there is no such thing as an undesigned process
- decision - *ad hoc* or part of a structured creative process
- design can be the bridge between non-rational process and the rational value
- hypothesis: products that tap into non-rational inputs will be more innovative
- innovation is a process nearer to art than to economics
- look for silly ideas that are not normally combined but that result in innovation
- design enables to look at imagination through a structured creative process
- firms that have integrated design have grown faster than others

- information needs to be collected about grassroots design and its connection with grassroots innovation
- ecosystem for non-rural areas - need for design thinking for tapping out to imagination
- innovation that recognises non-rational thinking and products that are more related to humans

**Rocío Nogales, ES**

**EMES Network on social innovation and social enterprise**, “Culture and the arts social enterprises in non-urban areas” | <https://emes.net>

- EMES has been around for 20 years - related to social enterprises and the social and solidarity economy and third sector
- connections between social enterprises, culture and the arts and rural areas
- social innovation - organisations that combine social mission (with relevance to the environment), economic model sustained over time and governance structure and participation (normally created by a collective of citizens)
- different schools of thought (social economy-EMES and social business initiative, earned income, social innovation)
- social enterprise as a bridging concept - a new way of doing things from citizens, convergence between the cooperatives and the non-profit organisations (more concerned about sustainability and independence)
- SE rooted in the social economy/third sector: STATE (redistribution), MARKET (private companies, RECIPROCITY (community)
- social enterprises ecosystem: capacity to self-organise, visibility and recognition, research/education and skill development, resources
- arts and culture at a crossroads: cultural sector as epitome of where we find ourselves - bring a transformative aim and approach transition issues, proximity policy making and participation - learning for communitarian political thoughts (culture as a new common)
- rural areas as a possibility for us to connect with many things we already knew
- characteristics of culture and artistic SE: multi-goal, multi-activity, multi-stakeholder, articulation of different plural voices in public space, collaboration and cooperation and replication is based on support to new initiatives and adapting them to new environments, implementation of a participatory governance, experiment based on/agreed upon values (the commons, critical thinking), embedded in the territories (main protagonists) and that activates many local actors and institutions, agents (pride of belonging, resignification in inhabitants)

## GENERAL DISCUSSION/QUESTIONS/WRAP-UP

- In what sense the RURITAGE is going to be alive?
  - stay in contact with partners
  - formally establishing an entity - still under discussion
  - a new network with a website
  - making a conference
- Why are current models of innovation so incapable of doing that? The territory is a critical player and we need a knowledge on the territory - slow deep innovation for sustainability
- New rurals moving to rural environments among the women? Newcomers that need to be captured in the project
- Rural or non-urban - not homogenous
- Different awareness of different innovations
- How can innovation be fostered in non-urban areas:
  - design thinking workshops
  - enabling collective design implemented and evaluated initiatives
  - economic plurality
  - communitarian approach
  - participatory action research
  - tracking the local capacity and not only generic proposal for the regions (keep track of the regions - look at the indicators of the regions)
  - unpack culture and what are the other dimensions of sustainability
  - engaging the youth in these dialogues and narratives
  - other values that not have an economic metric
  - narrative of the “rural self”

## CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT WEBINAR(S)

- **Nancy Duxbury (CES) | IN SITU**

