IN SITU

place-based **innovation** of
cultural and creative industries
in **non-urban** areas

Methodological guidance on capacity building for innovation and entrepreneurship in non-urban areas

How to conduct training and mentoring

**Funded by
the European Union**

IN SITU

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CREDITS

TITLE*

Methodological guidance on capacity building for innovation and entrepreneurship in non-urban areas (How to conduct training and mentoring)

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Executive Summary

This is a comprehensive Methodological Guide for implementing capacity-building programs focused on innovation and entrepreneurship within the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) in non-urban areas. It draws extensively from the practical experiences in the implementation of the project "**IN SITU: Place-based innovation of cultural and creative industries in non-urban areas**," funded by the Horizon Europe programme of the European Commission.

The Guide begins by defining capacity building, emphasising the critical need for CCIs, and outlining foundational methods. It then delves into the unique specificities and challenges faced by CCIs operating in non-urban settings, identifying key profiles of cultural operators and their particular needs for skill development.

A significant portion of the document is dedicated to training as a core capacity-building method. It addresses the specific requirements for entrepreneurship and innovation training in non-urban CCIs, highlights principles of adult learning ("andragogy"), and explores various interactive and online training methodologies. The document shares insights and practical tips derived from the IN SITU project's training component.

Mentoring and other personalised methods of capacity building are also thoroughly covered. The Guide defines mentoring, detailing the roles of mentors and mentees, and underscores the vital importance of entrepreneurial mentoring for non-urban CCIs. Again, practical tips and experiences from the IN SITU project's mentoring component are integrated.

Finally, the document looks ahead to future trends in developing methodologies for capacity building within non-urban CCIs. It concludes with valuable appendices, including concrete examples of training session outlines and a curated collection of resources. The overarching aim is to provide practical, theory-informed guidance for trainers, mentors, and researchers looking to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in these vital regional economies.

This Methodological Guide is specifically aimed at the following target groups: trainers, facilitators, lecturers, mentors, coaches, and researchers. Its purpose is to provide useful insights and practical guidance for those who wish to conduct similar capacity-building programs for CCIs in other non-urban contexts across Europe.

IN SITU team of the National Academy of Theatre and Film Arts "Kr.Sarafov":

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Introduction

About the IN SITU project and its Labs: Creative collaborative incubators

"**IN SITU: Place-based innovation of cultural and creative industries in non-urban areas**" is a four-year project (2022-2026) involving 13 consortium partners from 12 countries, funded by the Horizon Europe programme of the European Commission (**insituculture.eu**). It 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 Europe.

A core dimension of the IN SITU project is the interlink between research, practice, and policy through place-based IN SITU Labs – hubs for new projects, training, and networking initiatives. The **six IN SITU Labs** are located in non-urban areas in countries situated in the "periphery" of Europe and encompassing countries in both the south and north of Europe:

- Azores archipelago, mid-Atlantic Ocean, Portugal

- Western coastal periphery, Ireland

- West Region, Iceland

- Rauma and Eurajoki, West Coast and Baltic Sea archipelago, Finland

- Valmiera county, Latvia

- Šibenik-Knin County, Croatia

Within these Lab locations, the project identified **12 IN SITU case studies**—real-world examples of cultural and creative initiatives and projects happening within these local contexts—two in each of these six locations, with the following key aspects:[1]

- **Place-based focus:** The case studies are deeply rooted in their specific non-urban locations, considering the unique characteristics, challenges, and opportunities of each place.

- **Real-world examples:** They are not hypothetical scenarios but ongoing or recently completed projects and initiatives undertaken by cultural and creative actors in these regions.

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1   For more information about the IN SITU case studies, see: **https://insituculture.eu/case-study-projects/**

- **Diverse sectors:** The case studies likely span various cultural and creative sectors, reflecting the diversity within these industries in non-urban areas.

- **Participatory monitoring:** The project involves a participatory monitoring process of these case studies, engaging local residents and cultural and creative actors in the analysis of their development and impact.

- **Learning and capacity building:** The case studies serve as learning opportunities, informing the development of training and mentoring programmes aimed at strengthening the organisational capacity of CCIs in these regions.

- **Understanding transformative effects:** A key goal is to understand how these place-based creative responses address local issues and generate transformative effects within their communities.

About the IN SITU capacity-building and skill development programme

An important part of the IN SITU project is the **Capacity-building and Skill Development Programme,** which aims to foster new entrepreneurial social and business models and innovation in these six non-urban areas. This component comprises:

- **A series of training sessions** in the six IN SITU Lab locations for the CCI actors and wider audiences in non-urban areas.

- **Mentoring process** with the 12 identified case studies (projects) in the six Lab locations.

- **Research work** on publications related to key thematic clusters in the field of entrepreneurship, innovation, and related areas.

The training sessions took place between November 2023 and October 2024, in a blended model (both online and in person) in the selected locations, employing an interactive approach. The sessions were conceptualised and conducted by the **National Academy of Theatre and Film Arts "Kr. Sarafov" (NATFIZ)**, Bulgaria, in partnership with the IN SITU Labs and local trainers/instructors. After each training module, feedback was collected from each participant anonymously, and the summarised and analysed results were considered for any next training. The mentoring process started in November 2023 and is ongoing, with a thorough internal feedback that is considered in this document.

The content and structure of this Methodological Guide

This Methodological Guide on how to conduct a similar capacity-building programme (training and mentoring) for innovation and entrepreneurship in non-urban areas is based on our experience throughout the implementation of

this IN SITU project component, as well as additional thorough desk research of online and offline resources. **The document is not country or region specific, but rather outlines basic theoretical concepts, a menu of possible methods and options, lessons learned, and tips**. This Methodological Guide aims to facilitate the replication and broader impact of the capacity-building training sessions and mentoring process conducted. It is written in a style that combines theoretical aspects with an easy-to-understand format making it useful for trainers, training institutions, mentors, coaches, and researchers who wish to conduct similar capacity-building programmes for CCIs in other non-urban contexts in Europe. The **four parts of this Methodological Guide** are:

Part 1: Capacity-building for CCIs: Essence and specificities in non-urban areas. Here we focus on defining capacity building and why it is needed in CCIs, outlining methods of capacity building, identifying the specificities for CCIs in non-urban areas, and describing the profiles of CCIs professionals in these areas, who are the potential target group for such capacity building programmes. We also focus on the principles and phases of a methodology for capacity-building in this field.

Part 2: Training as a capacity-building method: Key methodological aspects. This part includes the needs and specificities of such training for CCIs in non-urban areas, the essence and aspects of training adults ("andragogy"), a "menu" of diverse interactive training methods to choose among, and key aspects of online training, including choices for a Learning Management System. We also share some specific tips and lessons learned in developing and implementing training for CCIs in non-urban areas, deriving from our IN SITU project experience.

Part 3: Mentoring and other personalised methods of capacity-building: Key methodological aspects. In this part, we summarise mentoring and other personalised supporting methods to be used in CCIs in non-urban areas. We also discuss the needs and importance of mentoring of CCIs in non-urban areas and the specificities of mentoring creative entrepreneurs and innovators. In this part, we summarise specific tips in the mentoring process, drawing from our experience within the IN SITU project.

Part 4: Future trends in methodologies for capacity building in CCIs in non-urban areas. Our intention here, based on our IN SITU project experience and additional research, is to highlight key areas of further development of these methodologies and to predict their evolution.

In Appendix 1, we provide **examples, outlines of seven specific training sessions** that we included in the training dimension of the IN SITU project. For each one, we identify: learning objectives, session content and structure, and interactive activities recommended for the session. These session outlines could be used by colleagues who intend to undertake similar training across non-urban areas. The thematic areas are:

- Applying for EU Funding. Financial and Fundraising Opportunities

- Storytelling in two parts:

  — Mastering Audience Engagement: The Power of Storytelling

  — The Future of Interactive Storytelling

- Social and Business Entrepreneurship: How to Expand Internationally?

- Strategic Partnership in two parts:

  — Partnership and Stakeholders' Engagement at the Local Level

  — Fostering Strategic Partnership in Non-urban Areas: International and Local Practices

- Strategic Management and Leadership: Sustainability Aspects

All PPTs and materials for each session are available upon request by contacting the NATFIZ team.

Finally, in **Appendix 2**, we have collected a comprehensive **List of Resources** (easy-to-access, available online methodological materials as well as books, articles, documents and other publications, and websites). These are organised into **seven thematic clusters** that were identified during the IN SITU project as important and needed for CCIs in non-urban areas:

- Applying for EU funding. Financial and fundraising opportunities

- Visual and written storytelling for audience engagement and development

- Innovation in CCIs: Types, specificities, application

- Social and business entrepreneurship in CCIs

- Networking, partnership, collaborative, and strategic alliances in CCIs

- Sustainable strategies (financial, environmental, social)

- General resources about CCIs in non-urban areas

These resources could be used to assist training, mentoring, and other methods of capacity-building for entrepreneurs and innovators in CCIs in non-urban areas across Europe.

This Methodological Guide underscores the critical importance of tailored capacity-building approaches to foster the growth and resilience of Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) within non-urban areas. Continuous monitoring, evaluation, and adaptation of capacity-building efforts is crucial to ensure their long-term effectiveness and impact.
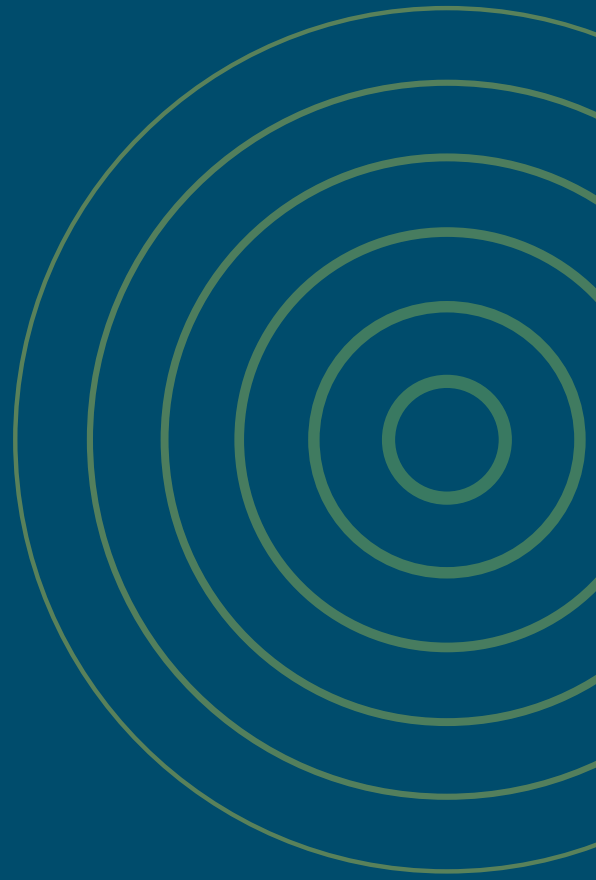
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Capacity-building:
Essence and specificities in the non-urban areas
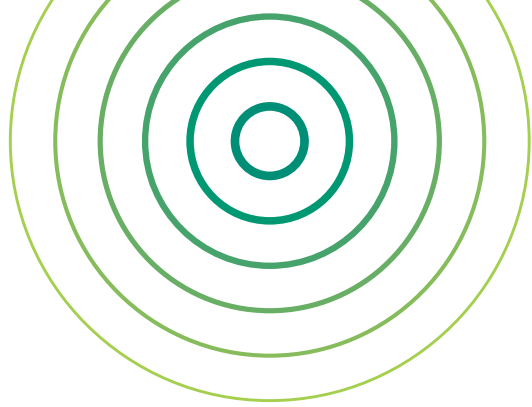
1.1. What is capacity building?

Capacity building is defined as a long-term process and strategy through which individuals, organisations, institutions and societies develop abilities to perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve objectives in a sustainable manner (UNDP, 2015). It is a process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes, and resources that organisations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in a fast-changing world. An essential ingredient in capacity-building is transformation that is generated and sustained over time from within; transformation of this kind goes beyond performing tasks to changing mindsets and attitudes (European Commission, 2020).

Capacity-building within Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) refers to strategies and processes that enhance and strengthen the skills, knowledge, abilities and resources of individuals and organisations involved in the creative sectors to improve their effectiveness and sustainability, foster innovation and collaboration, and help them adapt to new challenges in a rapidly changing environment. It is about empowering them to define their own problems, find solutions and sustainably achieve their own goals. Through mentoring, coaching and other methods, capacity building addresses broader questions of individual/organisational change and learning, expertise building, knowledge, empowerment and participation. Its essential ingredient is the transformation that is generated and sustained over time from within. Capacity building is a **long-term process** and strategy that seeks to strengthen the capacity of all parties involved. Regardless of the target group (practitioners, institutions, or communities), capacity building is seen as **a form of people-centred change** that entails working with groups of individuals to achieve improvements in their working practices, attitudes and relationships.

Even if this concept is usually associated mainly with training, as highlighted above, it goes much beyond that—it **involves fostering a transformation**. In the non-urban areas, the capacity building assists CCIs actors to effectively engage with and leverage cultural assets for local development and social inclusion. According to the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment & Development in Rio de Janeiro,

capacity building encompasses the country's human, scientific, technological, organisational, institutional and resource capabilities. A fundamental goal of capacity building is to enhance the ability to evaluate and address the crucial questions related to policy choices and modes of implementation among development options, based on an understanding of environmental potentials and limits and of needs perceived by the people of the country concerned. (United Nations, 1992, p. 329)

Capacity building is also conceived as a **human resource management strategy**, as it aims at changing people's skills, competences and knowledge and implementing new management tools (Varbanova, 2012). Capacity building initiatives can help individuals, organisations, and communities develop and strengthen the skills, instincts, abilities, processes, and resources they need to survive, adapt, and thrive in a fast-changing world. Capacity building actions take the form of sharing of knowledge, production of tools and materials, training and technical assistance, and mentoring or coaching through actions and initiatives tailored to the specific needs of the beneficiaries (UNESCO, 2013).

The term has most often been used in relation to public institutions and has been widely debated and analysed from a **conceptual point of view in development policy**, which aims to improve the capacity of developing countries' institutions to deliver on their functions (European Parliament, 2017). The term is also often used to refer to **community capacity building**, focusing on learning together, building relationships with communities, fostering collaborative relationships between community members and stakeholders, strengthening governance and on building partnerships. However, recently the concept of capacity building has been applied to various sectors and ecosystems, including the cultural and creative sectors and the ecosystems of which they are a part. The term is used at different levels: at the **organisational leve**l, when it refers to capacity building in a specific organisation and, more often, at the **sectoral level,** when the capacity building is aimed at several organisations and institutions simultaneously, in order to increase their capacity to collaborate, interact and cooperate together (including for sparking innovation and advocate for a common cause).

Capacity building can support cultural and creative actors further develop and strengthen their knowledge, skills and abilities related to, inter alia, artistic and financial planning, entrepreneurial, management and marketing skills, community engagement, international collaboration, the use of technology, self-governance, etc., in order to increase the long-term sustainability of such organisations and of the workers within them (Hess et al., 2018).

Moreover, considering that cultural and creative operators are part of a wider ecosystem that also includes policymakers, financiers, civil society and others, capacity building should be **one of the pillars of any healthy integrated ecosystem supporting cultural and creative practitioners** (European Commission, 2020; Wisdom & Marks, 2016). It is

therefore essential to also strengthen the collective capacities of all actors that are part of this ecosystem. Combined with other tools, ecosystem-wide capacity building can support the development of a common language, understanding and narrative among different actors and help create environments conducive to promoting diversity of cultural and creative expressions.

The **Global Development Research Center** (n.d.) defines the following components of capacity-building:

- **Human resource development.** This refers to the process of equipping individuals with the understanding, skills and access to information, knowledge and training that enables them to perform effectively. This might involve providing training or educational opportunities to enhance artistic, technical, and business skills.

- **Organisational strengthening and collaboration**. This component of the capacity-building is directed towards the elaboration of management structures, processes and procedures, not only within creative organisations but also the management of relationships between them and the whole ecosystem, as well as the three sectors (public, private, and community). CCIs often need assistance in developing structures and systems that support creativity while ensuring financial stability, sustainability, and effective management. Building capacity can often mean improving access to funding, infrastructure, or technology that supports the growth of creative enterprises. It is also important to facilitate connections among different stakeholders in the creative ecosystem at local level, such as artists, producers, distributors, policymakers, and audiences, as a catalyst for driving innovation and collaboration.

- **Institutional and legal framework development and policy advocacy.** Capacity-building also refers to making legal and regulatory changes to enable organisations, institutions and agencies at all levels and in all sectors to enhance their capacities. The efforts here are usually towards strengthening the ability of creative organisations to engage in policy making and advocate for better conditions for CCIs, including intellectual property rights, funding opportunities, and cultural diversity protections.

> **In summary, capacity building in CCIs is a dynamic, coherent and ongoing process of strengthening the skills, knowledge, systems, networks, digital adaptation, and infrastructure of individuals and organisations to improve their effectiveness and sustainability in achieving their goals, as well as to improve supporting policies. It's about empowering them to do their work better, now and in the future, for the sake of communities and society as a whole.**

1.2. Why is capacity-building needed in CCIs?

Capacity-building is crucial for CCIs for several interconnected reasons:

- **Addressing skill gaps and fostering professionalisation.** CCIs often involve a diverse range of skills and competences, from artistic creation to business management and marketing. Capacity building helps individuals and organisations acquire and refine these skills, leading to a more professionalised sector. This includes training in areas like financial literacy, marketing, intellectual property rights, arts management, digital skills, and entrepreneurial and business planning, which are often lacking but are essential for sustainability and growth in the sector.

- **Enhancing innovation and creativity.** Capacity-building initiatives can expose CCI professionals to new technologies, trends, and collaborative opportunities, fostering innovation in their creative processes and in the business models. Workshops, mentorship programmes, and networking events can stimulate the exchange of ideas and best practices, leading to more dynamic and competitive creative outputs. With rapid technological advances and the globalisation of markets, organisations in the CCIs must continuously innovate in order to survive and develop further. Capacity-building helps cultural practitioners stay competitive by equipping them with up-to-date skills, knowledge, and competences.

- **Strengthening business and entrepreneurial capacity.** Many CCI actors, especially micro and small enterprises, often lack the business and economic acumen that is required to scale their operations, access diverse funding, and navigate markets effectively. Capacity building programmes provide them with the necessary entrepreneurial mindset and skills to develop sustainable business models, manage finances, attract investment, and reach wider audiences globally.

- **Fostering collaboration and networking.** Capacity-building initiatives often bring together diverse actors within the CCIs ecosystem, fostering collaboration, partnerships, and the creation of valuable artistic, cultural, business, and entrepreneurial networks. Creative sectors often rely on collaboration across disciplines (e.g., art, technology, science, business). Capacity-building promotes stronger partnerships between creatives, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and other stakeholders. These connections can lead to shared resources, joint projects, and a stronger collective voice for the sector.

- **Adapting to the digital realm.** The rise of digital technologies, tools and platforms has revolutionised the way creative products are produced, distributed, and consumed. Capacity-building helps CCI practitioners to harness these new technologies, use them effectively and stay relevant in the digital age.

- **Widening cultural and social impact, and contributing to economic growth.** CCIs are vital in preserving and promoting cultural heritage, traditions, the uniqueness of a place, diversity, and local identity. By strengthening their capacity, these industries can ensure that their cultural and artistic outputs reach broader audiences and have a wider impact. On the other hand, CCIs are an important part of the economy, contributing to job creation, tourism, and exports. Building capacity can help unlock the potential of creative industries to contribute more to the economic development of a region and/or a country.

- **Strengthening policy and advocacy.** Capacity building can empower CCI stakeholders to better understand policy frameworks, advocate for their needs, and contribute to the development of supportive legislative regulations in the cultural sector. This ensures that the sector's contributions to economic and social development are recognised and fostered at a policy level.

- **Building resilience and sustainability.** Finally, by strengthening the skills, knowledge, and networks within CCIs, capacity building contributes to the overall resilience and sustainability of the sector, enabling it to adapt to challenges and thrive in the long term.

> In summary, CCIs need capacity building programmes to foster professionalisation, catalyse both business and social entrepreneurship, innovate, and use digital technologies. On a macro level, it is important for thriving economically and making a social impact, collaborating and networking to reach wider audiences, and contributing meaningfully to the overall policy development and positive sustainable changes.

1.3. Basic methods of capacity building

Capacity building in the context of CCIs encompasses a variety of methods, among them are training, mentoring, coaching, task forces, and study visits. They play pivotal roles in fostering an environment conducive to creativity and innovation. Each of these methods contributes uniquely to the overall goal of capacity building, addressing different aspects of skill development, economic growth and community engagement.

Training is a fundamental method of capacity building that focuses on imparting specific skills and knowledge to individuals. It refers to structured sessions, designed

to improve specific skills, knowledge and/or competences of the participants. Training programmes can be workshops, seminars, or courses, which can be held in person, online, or in a blended (hybrid) model, both online and offline.

- **Workshops** are great for individuals who need to apply new skills right away, as they focus on active engagement and real-world application.

- **Seminars** are perfect for knowledge sharing or introducing new concepts, but might not necessarily offer the depth of hands-on learning that workshops provide.

- **Other forms of training**, such as lectures or online courses, offer flexibility and can reach larger audiences, but often lack the interactivity and immediate application of skills that workshops provide.

Table 1 provides a summary of differences between workshops, seminars, and other forms of training.

Table 1. Differences between a workshop, seminar, and other forms of training

Criteria	Workshop	Seminar	Other forms of training
Format	Interactive, hands-on	Lecture or presentation-based, could be with interactive elements	Varies (lecture, online course, webinar)
Objective	Skill development, practical application, hands-on experience	Knowledge-sharing, idea exploration	Varies (information, structured learning, etc.)
Duration	A few hours to several days	Consists of sessions, each one is typically 1, 1.5, or 2 hours long	Varies (e.g., 30-45 mins for a lecture, up to several weeks for online courses)
Audience Participation	High, active participation, "learning-by-doing"	Moderate (Q&As, exercises in smaller groups, interactive exercises)	Low to high, depending on the format

Source: Own elaboration

Training programmes need to be tailored to meet the needs of creative professionals, providing them with the tools necessary to navigate the complexities of the CCIs landscape. Training can cover a range of topics, from technical skills (e.g., digital tools, project management, grant writing) to soft skills (e.g., leadership, communication, team building). Some authors highlight the importance of structured training interventions for mentors, which can significantly enhance the effectiveness of mentoring relationships and lead to long-term benefits for mentees (Sarri, 2011). This structured approach can be applied to various training programmes within the CCIs, ensuring that participants acquire relevant skills that align with industry demands. Training as a capacity-building method is discussed in detail in Part 2 of this Methodological Guide.

Mentoring is another key method of capacity building, particularly in creative fields where guidance from experienced professionals can be invaluable. It refers to a specific professional relationship where a more experienced individual (mentor) provides guidance, advice, and support to a less experienced individual (mentee). Mentors offer long-term, personalised advice, often helping the mentee with career development, problem-solving, and navigating challenges. Mentoring allows individuals to learn from others' experiences, benefiting from practical insights and personalised feedback. Research indicates that mentoring relationships can provide significant support to individuals, helping them navigate challenges and develop their creative potential. Mader et al. (2021) emphasise that effective mentoring requires well-designed training programmes for mentors, which can enhance their ability to support mentees in achieving their goals. Mentoring as a capacity-building method is discussed in detail in Part 3 of this Methodological Guide.

Coaching is a capacity-building method that complements training and mentoring by focusing on individual development through personalised guidance. It is a more targeted and goal-oriented relationship than mentoring, where a coach helps an individual or team develop specific skills or achieve particular goals. Coaches typically focus on short-term improvement or goal-setting, often involving regular sessions or feedback loops. Coaching aims to help individuals or teams overcome specific challenges, achieve personal growth, and improve their performance on a defined set of goals. Coaches work closely with creatives to identify their strengths and areas for improvement, facilitating a tailored approach to skill enhancement. The effectiveness of coaching in fostering creativity is supported by the findings of Form et al. (2017), who note that mentoring functions can significantly impact mentees' creative achievements. By providing targeted feedback and encouragement, coaches can help individuals unlock their creative potential and apply it effectively in their work. Coaching as a capacity-building method is discussed in detail in Part 3 of this Methodological Guide.

Task forces are another method of capacity building that can be particularly effective in addressing specific problematic areas and challenges within the CCIs. This method refers

to a group of people assembled to tackle a specific, time-limited task or project. The group is composed of individuals with diverse expertise—usually experts, stakeholders, and professionals in the field who collaborate in order to develop solutions for common issues by bringing different perspectives to solve a particular problem or implement a project by using their diverse skills and competencies. Task forces bring focused, collaborative efforts to address pressing issues, often resulting in innovative solutions and shared ownership of the outcomes. The collaborative nature of task forces allows for the pooling of resources and knowledge, leading to innovative approaches that may not have emerged in isolation. For example, the establishment of creative task forces can facilitate the development of public spaces that encourage artistic expression and community engagement, as highlighted by Bereitschaft (2018). Such initiatives can enhance the visibility and viability of creative activities in non-urban areas.

Examples of task forces in CCIs in a non-urban area:

Rural arts funding task force:

Challenge: Limited access to funding opportunities for artists and cultural organisations in a rural region.

Objective: To identify existing funding sources (local, regional, national), explore alternative funding models (e.g., crowdfunding, financing, donations, sponsorships), and develop strategies to enhance grant writing skills and application success within the local CCI sector.

Possible members: Representatives from local arts councils, individual artists with grant writing experience, community foundation representatives, business leaders interested in arts patronage, and local government officials involved in cultural funding.

Timeline: 3-6 months.

Outcome: A report outlining potential funding and financing sources, conceptualising of a series of grant writing workshops, and recommendations for establishing a local arts fund or improving access to existing funding opportunities.

Rural creative placemaking taskforce:

Challenge: Revitalising a declining rural town centre, periphery of a town, or a public space through arts and cultural activities.

Objective: To brainstorm and implement creative interventions (e.g., public art installations, pop-up events, community murals, adaptive reuse of vacant buildings) that enhance the aesthetic appeal, social interaction, and economic activity of the designated area.

Possible members: Local artists, architects, urban planners (if available), business owners, community organisers, residents, and local government representatives.

Timeline: 9-12 months (potentially with ongoing phases for implementation).

Outcome: Elaboration of a strategy for sustaining arts-led revitalisation efforts implementation of a specific creative placemaking project, and increased community engagement in public spaces.

Study visits provide an experiential learning opportunity that can significantly enhance capacity-building efforts. They present an opportunity for individuals or groups to visit other organisations or regions to learn about their practices, systems, or strategies. Typically, study visits are organised as trips to other places with successful models or experiences in the area of interest. They may include presentations, site tours, or meetings with experts. By visiting successful creative hubs, co-working spaces or cultural institutions, individuals can gain insights into best practices, new ideas, and different innovative approaches that can be adapted to their local contexts. Study visits are a real-world learning experience that can be applied in their own contexts. The exposure to different environments and practices can inspire new ideas and foster a broader understanding of the creative landscape. For instance, study visits to urban creative spaces can inform rural practitioners about effective strategies for engaging their communities and leveraging local resources (Pradnyapasa et al., 2023). This method not only enhances individual knowledge but also strengthens networks among creative professionals.

Examples of a study visit:

Attending a rural arts festival or a cultural event:

Focus: Observing the organisation, programming, community engagement, and economic impact of a successful cultural event in a non-urban setting.

What to observe: Event logistics and management, artistic programming that reflects local culture, volunteer involvement, partnerships with local businesses, audience engagement strategies, and the festival's contribution to the local economy and social cohesion.

Learning outcomes: Understanding the key elements of planning and executing impactful cultural events in rural areas, leveraging local talent and resources.

Visiting a rural arts cooperative or guild:

Focus: Understanding collaborative models for artists and craftspeople, including shared studios, marketing initiatives, cooperative galleries, and collective bargaining power.

What to observe: Governance structures, membership models, shared resource management, marketing and sales strategies (online and physical), community engagement activities, and the impact on individual artists' sustainability.

Learning outcomes: Insights into how artists can pool resources and expertise, navigate the challenges of a dispersed market, and build a supportive creative community.

Peer-to-peer learning is an effective method of sharing knowledge and experiences between counterparts. It is a collaborative approach where individuals with similar levels of knowledge, experience, or roles learn from and with each other through collaboration, discussions and shared experience, instead of relying solely on an instructor or formal materials. These exchanges take place between 'peers' using various methods (online, offline or hybrid) and allow all participants to be a learner. The 'peers' involved must be regarded as credible and trusted professionals with specific knowledge and competences in certain areas of interest. Moreover, the 'peers' are expected to express unbiased opinions. They need to understand the goals and expected outcomes of the process and be willing and empowered to share information,

knowledge, practices and ideas openly. In most cases, peer-to-peer learning is a participant-driven process and can take place formally or informally (UNESCO, 2022). When organised effectively, peer-to-peer learning is a horizontal, mutually engaging process of capacity-building in CCIs, resulting in sharing knowledge, experiences and best practices. Peer learning creates a sense of community and mutual support, allowing participants to learn from the real-world experiences of others in their peer group. It could result in creating networks and strategic alliances in the long term.

This method is particularly effective in fostering a supportive learning environment. Peer learning not only facilitates knowledge transfer but also builds a sense of community among learners. The impact of peer learning transcends geographical barriers and has been shown to cultivate cultural awareness and creativity essential for success in fields such as arts, design, arts management and community engagement (Carlson et al., 2019). Peer learning fosters self-regulated learning skills that are crucial in creative industries. Creative and cultural sectors can leverage peer learning methodologies to heighten participation from local communities, enabling them to contribute to cultural production and innovation (Jin & Forrest, 2019). Moreover, cross-border peer interactions facilitate exploration of culturally specific social dynamics, which can be particularly beneficial in diverse or multicultural settings typical of the creative industries (Wade & Kidd, 2018). For instance, fostering a learning atmosphere that considers and respects cultural backgrounds can enhance collaborative learning outcomes. Furthermore, there is a demonstrated link between peer learning and the development of critical thinking and creative skills essential for CCIs. Institutions employing collaborative learning structures are better positioned to encourage innovation and critical discourse, directly impacting the creative economy in non-urban settings. As such, an inclusive, supportive context for peer learning can promote engagement not only within educational realms but also within local cultural activities (Lang et al., 2016). Ultimately, the integration of peer learning fosters a dynamic interplay of knowledge sharing that is fundamental for stimulating cultural development and creative practices within non-urban contexts. The collaborative frameworks established through peer learning not only enrich individual learning experiences but also contribute significantly to broader community cultural engagement and creative expression.

Examples of peer-to-peer learning in CCIs in a non-urban area:

Skill-based exchange circles:

Concept: Regular gatherings where individuals with specific creative skills (e.g., photography, writing, basic coding for websites, social media marketing, grant writing) offer informal lessons, seminars or workshops to others in the group.

Example: A rural arts collective organises monthly meetings. In one session, a photographer teaches basic composition and editing to other members. Next, a writer shares tips on crafting compelling artist statements. Someone with social media savvy might lead a session on using Instagram effectively.

Online peer support forums or groups:

Concept: Utilising digital platforms to connect creatives across a wider non-urban area for discussions, advice, resource sharing, and mutual encouragement.

Example: A private Facebook group or a dedicated online forum allows rural artists to ask for technical help, share information about local opportunities, and celebrate each other's achievements.

Peer-critique and feedback:

- Concept: Small, consistent groups of creatives from different disciplines who regularly share their works-in-progress for constructive feedback and discussion.

- Example: A group consisting of a visual artist, a musician, and a craftsperson meets regularly (e.g., bi-weekly). They present their current projects, discuss challenges, and offer perspectives from their respective fields. This cross-disciplinary feedback can lead to fresh insights and strengthen their individual practices.

Coalition building serves as a valuable capacity-building method in CCIs in non-urban areas. It is a process of bringing together different stakeholders (e.g., organisations, communities, and/or individuals) to work collaboratively toward common goals. CCIs often aim to address complex social issues at a community level, and building strong

coalitions can significantly enhance their ability to achieve sustainable and impactful change. Coalitions are formed to create shared objectives, mobilise resources, and advocate for mutual interests. This can involve regular meetings, joint campaigns, and resource sharing. When organised efficiently, coalition-building fosters collaboration and synergy among diverse stakeholders. Coalition-building enhances the collective influence of CCIs, pooling knowledge, expertise, and resources. It also fosters collaboration and strengthens the capacity of all parties involved.

Examples of coalition building in CCIs in non-urban areas:

- Several small, independent art galleries and studios in neighbouring rural towns might form a network to organise joint exhibitions, share marketing efforts, and attract a wider audience.

- Local historical societies and museums across a county could collaborate on a regional heritage trail, pooling their collections and knowledge to create a more compelling visitor experience.

- Community theatres and music groups from different villages might come together for joint productions or workshops, sharing talent and resources.

- A rural area known for its traditional crafts (e.g., pottery, weaving) could see the formation of a creative cluster where artisans collaborate on sourcing materials, developing new designs, and marketing their products collectively through a shared online platform or cooperative store.

- Local food producers with a strong artisanal focus might partner with designers and marketing professionals to enhance their branding and reach a wider market.

- A coalition of artists and educators could develop and deliver arts workshops in rural schools that lack comprehensive arts programmes.

- Libraries and arts centres in a region might collaborate to host travelling exhibitions and performances, bringing cultural events to underserved communities.

- Local musicians and music teachers could form a network to offer affordable music lessons and ensemble opportunities to young people in several small towns.

Each of these capacity-building methods can be employed individually or in combination, depending on the specific goals of the capacity-building initiative within CCIs. The right method or mix of methods depends on the context, the people involved, and the desired outcomes. By using these approaches, individuals and organisations can strengthen their ability to navigate challenges, enhance performance, and drive sustainable change in their field.

In summary, capacity building in culture and creative industries is a multifaceted process that involves various methods, including training, mentoring, coaching, task forces, study visits, peer-to-peer learning, and coalition-building. Each of these methods contributes to the development of skills, knowledge, and networks that are essential for fostering creativity and innovation. By implementing a combination of these approaches, CCIs professionals and stakeholders can create a supportive environment that empowers individuals and organisations within the CCI, ultimately leading to sustainable growth and cultural enrichment.

1.4. Specificities of capacity-building for CCIs in non-urban areas

Capacity-building for CCIs in non-urban areas is related to specific challenges and opportunities that differ from those in urban settings. These areas often face unique circumstances related to resources, infrastructure, culture, traditions and access to markets, which influence the way capacity-building initiatives are designed and implemented. In Table 2 we summarise the key **specificities of capacity-building for CCIs in non-urban areas** that result from some key challenges and options for solutions through diverse methods that we have identified throughout the IN SITU project experience and additional research.

**Table 2. Specificities of capacity-building for CCIs in non-urban areas:
Key challenges and possible solutions**

Level of access to resources and infrastructure

Challenges	Solutions
• **Limited access to funding:** Non-urban areas often face fewer funding opportunities, with limited access to government grants, private investments, or philanthropic support.	• Facilitate **local funding opportunities** through micro-grants, crowdfunding, or support from national governments and NGOs.
• **Inadequate infrastructure:** Lack of access to key infrastructure like high-speed internet, reliable transportation, or event venues can hinder the development and promotion of creative projects.	• Develop partnerships with urban centres to create **mobile resource units** that bring equipment, technical support, and resources to non-urban areas.
• **Scarcity of technical equipment:** Non-urban areas may not have access to state-of-the-art equipment or technologies that are readily available in urban settings.	• Organise **virtual training programmes** or **webinars** to provide access to knowledge without requiring travel to urban hubs.

Skill gaps and training needs

Challenges	Solutions
• **Limited access to formal education and training:** There may be fewer local institutions offering specialised training in creative fields, arts management, and cultural policy.	• **Mobile training programmes:** Offering local workshops or traveling courses in key creative sectors to build industry-specific skills.
• **Skills mismatch:** The specific skills required in CCIs (e.g., digital marketing, creative entrepreneurship, social innovation, marketing skills) may not be readily available in non-urban areas.	• **Collaboration with educational institutions:** Partnering with universities or online platforms to offer short courses, certificates, or skill-building programmes for non-urban populations.
• **Limited access to mentorship:** Non-urban areas may have fewer experienced professionals or mentors who can guide emerging creative entrepreneurs.	• **Mentoring networks and international projects on mentoring:** Creating virtual or in-person mentoring networks to connect local talent with experienced professionals from urban areas and/or internationally.

Opportunities for market access and promotion

Challenges	Solutions
• **Limited local market demand:** Non-urban areas often have smaller populations and fewer commercial opportunities, making it difficult to sustain creative businesses. • **Lack of visibility:** Non-urban creatives may struggle to promote their work outside their local area due to limited access to diverse conventional media channels, international festivals, and networking events. • **Geographical isolation:** Being far from urban centres means that non-urban creatives may find it difficult to network with potential collaborators, clients, and influencers in the industry.	• **Digital platforms and e-commerce:** Promoting the use of online platforms for e-commerce, digital marketing, and social media to reach global markets. • **Collaborative networks:** Encouraging creative organisations, co-working spaces, and/or regional creative hubs to facilitate collaboration and showcase creative work. • **Organising regional festivals or events:** Establishing local cultural events and festivals to increase the visibility of local creatives and attract tourists or potential investors.

Uniqueness of the cultural and social context

Challenges	Solutions
• **Different cultural norms and values:** Non-urban areas often have unique cultural expressions and traditions, which may not always align with mainstream or global trends in CCIs. • **Possible conservative attitudes:** In some non-urban areas, there may be resistance to adopting new forms of creative contemporary expression, particularly those that challenge traditional norms or values.	• **Community-centric approach and arts education:** Capacity-building efforts should respect and incorporate local culture, traditions, and values while encouraging innovation. This could involve arts education that draws on traditional art forms and integrates them with contemporary techniques. • **Inclusive programmes:** Ensuring that capacity-building initiatives are inclusive and address local social issues (e.g., gender, youth unemployment, rural poverty) to enhance the relevance and impact of CCIs. • **Cultural sensitivity:** When introducing new ideas or methods in CCIs, it's important to frame them within the local context, ensuring that they resonate with local communities and are seen as compatible with existing cultural practices.

Source: Own elaboration

One significant approach to capacity building in these non-urban contexts is the **development of culture and creative tourism initiatives**. Creative tourism can bridge the gap between cultural heritage and contemporary creativity, allowing rural areas to attract tourists while simultaneously cultivating local talent and preserving cultural practices (see Duxbury & Silva, 2000; Duxbury et al., 2021; Remoaldo et al., 2020). This approach promotes local artistic expression and encourages the utilisation of local resources and knowledge, enhancing community cohesion and economic resilience.

The interplay between **intersectoral development and creative industries** is also crucial. Lucia and Segre (2017) stress the importance of integrating cultural, creative, and tourism industries to foster local development. In non-urban areas, building networks and collaborations among local stakeholders (such as artists, local governments, and businesses) can enhance the cultural fabric and economic viability of these regions. Such strategic collaborations enable the formation of clusters around creative activities, which can stimulate local economies and contribute to sustainable development.

One pressing challenge in capacity building in rural areas is the **need for digital integration** to overcome geographical isolation. As depicted by Wu et al. (2022), integrating technology into creative practice can assist in connecting rural creative producers with larger markets and audiences. Additionally, the development of grassroots creative hubs, as discussed by Fahmi et al. (2016), can enable local creatives to collaborate, share resources, and innovate collectively, thereby fostering a more robust creative community in remote areas.

Addressing the specific needs of non-urban areas requires **innovative policy frameworks** that prioritise creativity and cultural development. Nižić et al. (2019) note that creative cities can play a vital role in regional development, underscoring that establishing supportive policies can enhance creative activities in non-urban regions. Policies that facilitate access to funding, education, and resources tailored to local contexts can empower these areas by encouraging entrepreneurship and sustaining local creative industries.

The role of place in nurturing local identity can significantly impact capacity-building strategies. Cultural policies must align with the unique cultural characteristics of non-urban areas, which can lead to more effective engagement with local stakeholders and improve the legitimacy of creative initiatives. Place-based approaches enhance the visibility of local cultures and contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage, thus enriching community narratives and identities.

> **In summary, capacity-building for CCIs in non-urban areas needs to be tailored to local conditions, with a focus on leveraging regional strengths, addressing infrastructure gaps, and creating networks that allow for both local and global connections. By addressing challenges such as limited resources, skill gaps, and market access, capacity-building efforts can empower non-urban creatives to thrive and sustain their cultural industries, contributing both to local economies and broader cultural diversity.**

1.5. Cultural operators in CCIs in non-urban areas: Key profiles and general needs for capacity-building

Cultural operators in non-urban areas work within a unique context shaped by the specific characteristics of their locales. Unlike their urban counterparts, these professionals often navigate environments with distinct social, economic, and infrastructural landscapes. Understanding their profile involves considering their roles, skills, challenges, and the opportunities they leverage. This is important to understand in order to elaborate on tailor-made methodologies for capacity-building that reflect their needs. They engage in a diverse range of activities that contribute to the cultural vibrancy and socio-economic fabric of their communities. Following are some key profiles of cultural professionals in non-urban settings, in a nutshell, and their capacity-building needs. We identified these groups, based on our practical experience in IN SITU project's mentoring and training components. It is important to emphasise that in each location the profiles of cultural operators differ and a thorough needs analysis is required before conceptualising a methodology for capacity-building (see Part 1.6, related to Methodology for capacity-building).

- **Cultural managers, arts administrators and event organisers:** Individuals who manage local arts and cultural organisations, festivals, local exhibitions, and arts events. They play a crucial role in bringing cultural activities to the community and often work with limited resources. Usually, they work in the government and the non-profit sectors. Their needs for capacity-building are in the areas of collaboration and international networking, project writing and applying for grants, marketing management, and attracting and engaging audiences.

- **Creative entrepreneurs and small business owners:** Individuals who start and run an entrepreneurial organisation, with an innovative aspect. They apply creative, business and social skills to develop and market cultural products and

services, with a strong regional identity and community outreach. Their needs for capacity-building are mainly in adapting business models to local conditions and expanding internationally, the ability to run a small creative business, dissemination and marketing of a cultural product or service with diverse methods, managing finances, planning budgets, strategic business planning, scaling operations beyond their local area, and long-term sustainability.

- **Cultural heritage managers:** Professionals involved in the preservation, interpretation, and promotion of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, such as historical sites, museums, folklore, and traditional crafts. They might work for local authorities, museums, libraries, or community organisations. They usually need to improve expertise in curating cultural events or exhibitions, to work with archives and artifacts to preserve them for future generations, to use digital technologies and platforms to share cultural heritage internationally in digital formats, to apply for grants to diverse external sources and to elaborate and implement educational programmes for different target groups in the area.

- **Artists, artisans, and creators:** Visual artists, writers, musicians, performers, and craftspeople who often draw inspiration from the local environment, history, local folklore, and traditions. In many cases they blend traditional and contemporary styles to create unique pieces of art. They may work independently or within small collectives. Many artists in non-urban locations are also "artpreneurs"—they create and at the same time they deal with all supporting processes: promotion, marketing, sales, financing and budgeting, logistics, etc. Local artists and creators primarily need training in international expansion and visibility. This includes understanding the ways for intellectual property protection and securing royalties for their creative works, as well as international market entry models to reach wider audiences and stakeholders. Initiating and running of creative spaces and hubs are also competences they might require to showcase their production outside of the conventional cultural spaces. Digital marketing and e-commerce are also areas that require advancement.

- **Digital creatives:** Graphic designers, video producers and editors, photographers, and other creatives that are proficient in using digital tools in the creative production process. Their capacity-building needs are usually in applying social media marketing, mobile marketing methods, SEO optimisation, online sales, branding and product design, and understanding trends and perspectives in the digital realm. Networking and contacts with other professionals in order to gain exposure to larger creative industries based in urban centres and internationally, in order to monetise their products, is also an often-discussed need.

- **Community arts facilitators:** Individuals who work with local communities to develop and participate in arts and cultural activities, fostering social inclusion

and community building. This could involve leading participatory art workshops or community theatre projects. Their need for capacity-building in many cases are in understanding and applying non-formal education methods, connecting arts with education, cultural diversity, and social cohesion from a practical perspective.

- **Cultural and creative tourism professionals:** Involved in developing and managing tourism initiatives that highlight the cultural assets of the region, contributing to the local economy. The capacity-building efforts for this group are in understanding and applying effective methods for connecting local art with touristic experiences, connecting local uniqueness with global values, and networking and coalition building between tourism agencies and cultural organisations in the region.

To thrive in non-urban settings, cultural professionals often require a broad set of skills that go beyond their core artistic or cultural expertise in order to cope with challenges and grasp opportunities. Table 3 provides a snapshot of the IN SITU experience with the capacity-building component concerning the challenges and opportunities in the non-urban area and, based on that, the general skills and competences that cultural operators need to develop. This is a more focused analysis of the capacity-building specificities outlined in Part 1.2.

Table 3. Challenges and opportunities in CCIs in non-urban areas and needs for building skills and competences

Challenges	**Limited access to funding and resources:** Financial support, infrastructure, and professional development opportunities can be scarce compared to urban centres. **Connectivity issues:** Poor transport infrastructure and limited digital connectivity can hinder networking, access to markets, and professional development. **Smaller markets and audiences:** Reaching a sufficient audience and achieving financial sustainability can be difficult in areas with smaller populations. **Lack of peer networks:** Fewer opportunities for interaction and collaboration with other professionals in their field can lead to isolation. **Perception and recognition:** The value of cultural work may not always be fully recognised or prioritised within the local community or by regional authorities. **Brain Drain:** Younger cultural professionals may be drawn to urban centres for more opportunities, leading to a loss of talent in rural areas. **Over-reliance on volunteers:** Cultural initiatives may heavily depend on volunteers, which can impact sustainability and professionalisation.

Opportunities	• **Strong sense of place and identity:** The rich cultural heritage and distinct identities of rural areas can be a significant source of inspiration and a unique selling point.
	• **Close-knit communities:** Strong community bonds can foster collaboration and local support for cultural initiatives.
	• **Potential for niche tourism:** The unique cultural and natural assets of non-urban areas can attract cultural tourists, providing economic opportunities.
	• **Lower operating costs:** In some cases, the cost of living and operating can be lower than in urban centres.
	• **Opportunities for innovation:** The specific challenges of non-urban areas can spur creative and innovative solutions tailored to the local context.
	• **Growing recognition of rural culture:** There is increasing recognition at regional and European levels of the importance of culture in non-urban areas for social cohesion and local development. Initiatives like the EU Rural Pact and the IN SITU project aim to support cultural and creative industries in these areas.
Skills and competences needed	• **Adaptability and resourcefulness:** Given the often limited resources and infrastructure in non-urban areas, professionals need to be highly adaptable and resourceful in finding solutions and making the most of what is available.
	• **Community engagement and networking:** Building strong relationships within the local community is crucial for collaboration, audience development, and securing support.
	• **Entrepreneurial skills:** Many cultural professionals in non-urban areas operate as freelancers or within small organisations, requiring skills in business planning, marketing, and financial management.
	• **Digital literacy:** Utilising digital tools for communication, promotion, and accessing wider networks is increasingly important, especially in overcoming geographical distances.
	• **Cultural awareness and sensitivity:** A deep understanding and appreciation of the local cultural context is essential for relevant and impactful work.
	• **Project management:** Organising events, managing projects, and coordinating with various stakeholders often falls under their responsibilities.
	• **Advocacy and communication:** Effectively communicating the value of culture and advocating for its support within the local context is often necessary.

Source: Own elaboration

In conclusion, cultural professionals in non-urban areas are a vital force for local development and cultural preservation. Their profile is characterised by a blend of creative talent, entrepreneurial spirit, and strong community engagement, often developed in response to the unique challenges and opportunities of their specific environments. However, they face gaps in terms of access to resources, markets, networks, and modern business, digital and technological skills. Addressing these gaps through capacity-building efforts, targeted training and other methods, and enhancing regional, as well as cross-regional collaboration and networking, while leveraging the inherent strengths of non-urban areas, is crucial for fostering a vibrant and sustainable cultural ecosystem across all regions.

1.6. Methodology for capacity-building for CCIs in non-urban areas: Principles and phases

The development of methodologies for capacity building in CCIs in non-urban areas requires an **approach that is context-specific, participatory, tailor-made, and integrative**. Contemporary research suggests that such methodologies need to incorporate elements of community engagement, heritage-led knowledge exchange, and micro-resilience mechanisms, which are essential to supporting sustainable growth in regions that face unique socio-economic and geographic constraints (Andres & Round, 2015). Such an approach is based on the idea that local cultural assets and traditions can serve as both a foundation and a driver for capacity building. By **engaging diverse local stakeholders**—including community members, cultural practitioners, and decision-makers—in processes that respect local narratives and historical contexts, capacity-building frameworks can empower local creative capabilities. Also, grassroots networks can foster resilience by encouraging **adaptable, bottom-up strategies** and by providing platforms for mutual support and resource sharing among creative practitioners in non-urban areas. Such approaches are effective in countering the resource limitations often experienced in peripheral regions and can lead to sustainable development outcomes by promoting innovation and collaborative problem-solving.

Overall principles of the methodology

Based on our experience with the IN SITU project capacity-building component, we outline several key principles that a well-elaborated methodology for capacity-building for CCIs in non-urban areas needs to comply with:

- **Contextualisation:** Adaptable and responsive to the unique socio-economic, cultural, and geographical characteristics of the non-urban area where it will be applied.

- **Participation and inclusion:** Actively involve diverse local stakeholders, including artists, artisans, cultural organisations, community leaders, and local authorities, not only in the delivery of the training and mentoring but also – in the initial phase of designing of the overall concept.

- **Relevance:** Ensure the content and skills taught are directly relevant to the needs and aspirations of the local creative community and CCIs actors.

- **Accessibility:** Remove barriers to participation in capacity-building events, such as travel time, costs, time constraints, and lack of information.

- **Cultural sensitivity:** Respect and integrate local cultural values, traditions, and knowledge into the sessions.

- **Empowerment:** Aim to empower local creatives to take ownership of their development and contribute to the growth of their local CCI sector.

- **Sustainability:** Focus on building long-term capacity and creating self-sustaining initiatives within the local CCI ecosystem.

Key phases of elaboration of a methodology for capacity-building for CCIs in non-urban areas

Figure 1 provides an overview of the key phases in the process of elaboration of Methodology for capacity-building for CCIs in non-urban areas.

Phase 1: Needs assessment and stakeholder engagement

This first phase focuses on identifying and mapping the existing cultural and creative resources (spaces, organisations, initiatives and other assets) within the non-urban area. The participatory need assessment is a very important step in order to find out what are the needs of the local cultural operators in terms of training, mentoring and other forms of capacity-building and in what specific areas they need further advancement, e.g., business skills, arts marketing, implementation of digital technologies, financing and fundraising, understanding intellectual property, strategic planning, audience development tools or others. This is usually done through qualitative and quantitative

methods—surveys, focus groups, targeted interviews and community consultations. Capacity-building programmes prove to be effective when stakeholders are identified at this first stage, together with their specific roles, interests, and potential contributions to the capacity-building process. It is also advisable to establish a Local Steering Committee, composed of local creatives, community leaders, experts, and relevant authorities to guide and design the implementation of the capacity-building programme.
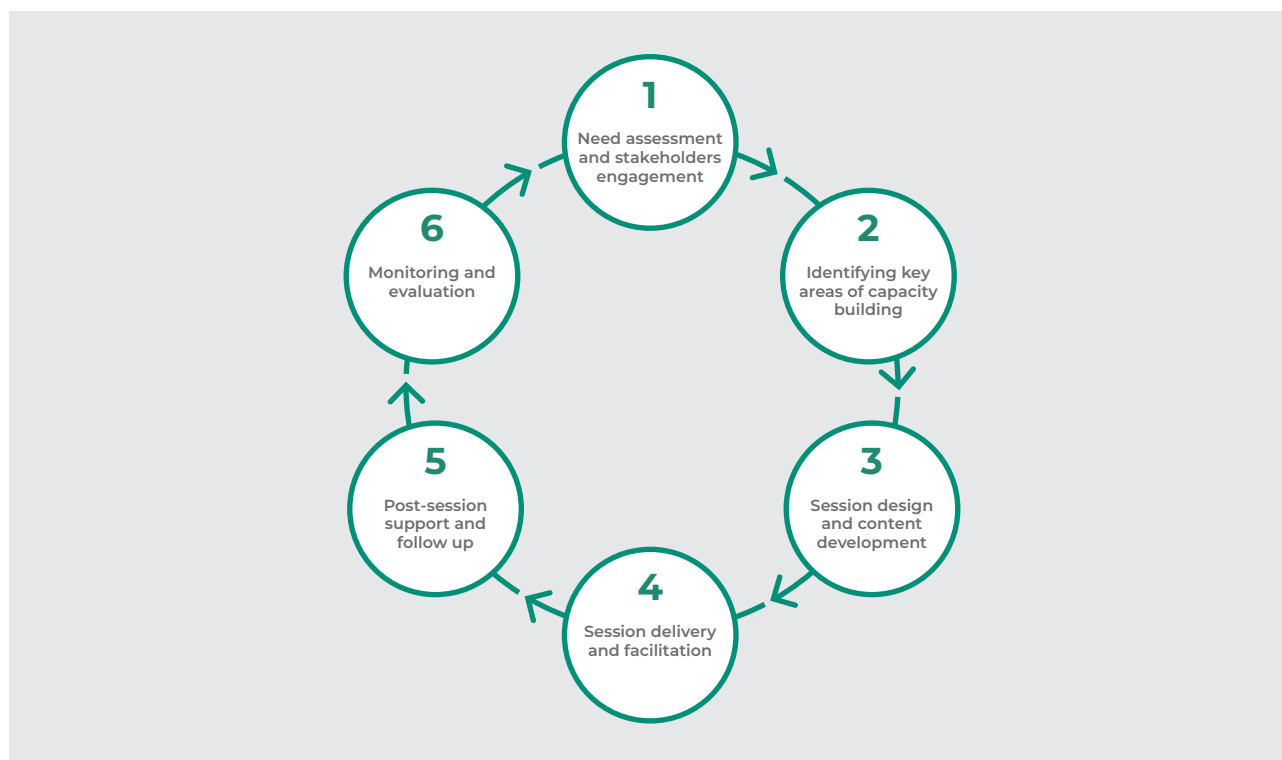
Figure 1. Key phases of the elaboration of a methodology for capacity-building for CCIs in non-urban areas.

Source: Own elaboration

Phase 2: Identify the key topic areas for capacity building

Considering the profiles of CCIs operators and their needs, as well as the specificities of the methodologies in the non-urban areas, here are some examples of thematic clusters that are popular and actual for capacity building in CCIs in non-urban areas that could be used in capacity building methodologies:

Creative entrepreneurship:

- Developing both artistic and managerial skills relevant to local cultural assets.

- Fostering entrepreneurial mindsets.

- Improving the business skills and competences in marketing, finance, management, and exploitation of intellectual property.

- Supporting the creation and implementation of sustainable business models for cultural and creative ventures.

- Promoting digital literacy and the use of technology for the creation, distribution, and marketing of creative products and services.

Cultural management and leadership:

- Strengthening the management and administration of cultural organisations and initiatives.

- Developing leadership skills for cultural development and advocacy at the local level.

- Enhancing skills and competences in project management, including fundraising, and financial sustainability.

- Building capacity for understanding cultural policies and planning and the overall policy development at the local level.

- Understanding the overall ecosystem in which arts and cultural organisations operate.

Financing and fundraising:

- Understanding the diverse sources of external financing and fundraising.

- Analysing pros and cons of using debt and equity financing for an entrepreneurial venture in CCIs.

- Elaborating a fundraising plan for a specific organisation in CCIs.

- Elaborating a creative project to apply to external sources of support.

- Widening the tools and methods for self-generated incomes from core, additional, and peripheral products and services.

Audience development and engagement:

- Elaborating strategies for reaching and engaging local communities and wider audiences.

- Understanding stages and dimensions of audience engagement.

- Developing cultural tourism initiatives that are sensitive to local contexts.

- Utilising digital platforms for audience outreach and participation.

- Fostering cultural education and appreciation.

- Applying strategic digital approach in audience engagement.

Partnership and collaboration:

- Building local, regional, and national cultural networks among cultural and creative actors.

- Facilitating partnerships between CCI organisations, businesses, and other sectors.

- Understanding strategies in partnership and collaboration, including creative clusters, strategic alliances, co-working places, co-productions, and others.

- Promoting knowledge exchange and peer learning in the culture and creative sector.

- Leveraging diaspora networks and international collaborations, where relevant.

Infrastructure and resources:

- Identifying and leveraging existing CCIs infrastructure (e.g., community centres, heritage sites, arts agencies, etc.).

- Elaborating strategies for developing and managing shared creative spaces and hubs at the local level.

- Understanding and utilising local resources, opportunities, and cultural infrastructure.

- Promoting the sustainable use of local materials and resources in creative practices.

Policy and advocacy:

- Building capacity to advocate for the recognition and support of culture and creative industries at the local and regional levels.

- Understanding current cultural policies and frameworks at the local level.

- Understanding the European Commission overall strategy and specific programmes for supporting CCIs.

- Developing strategies and tools for engaging actively with policymakers and decision-makers at the local and European level.

Phase 3: Session design and content development

The curriculum that is the foundation of such methodology needs to be tailored to the identified needs and the specific characteristics of the local CCI landscape. Designing the sessions in modular, and/or cluster formats allows flexibility and caters to different

levels of experience and availability of the participants. It is important to design a programme that focuses on providing practical skills and tools that participants can easily apply to their work. Including interactive tools in methodology, such as studies, real-world examples, and hands-on exercises, makes the training more relevant and engaging. A well-elaborated methodology should also consist of a variety of teaching methods, including workshops, seminars, mentoring, peer-to-peer learning, site visits, and online resources (where applicable and accessible). Utilising local case studies can also enhance relatability. Highlighting success stories from similar communities fosters motivation and inspiration among participants. Language consideration is an important part of the session's design, either in the local language(s), or making sure that the participants understand English well, or providing translation services.

When elaborating the content, it is important to mind the unique characteristics, challenges, and opportunities of these regions. This might include:

- Geographic remoteness and accessibility issues.

- Limited existing infrastructure and resources.

- Potential of the unique cultural heritage and traditions.

- Specific mindset of the local cultural operators.

- Different social dynamics and community structures.

- Opportunities for sustainable and locally rooted development.

Phase 4: Session delivery and facilitation

There are several important areas to keep in mind when delivering the training sessions:

- **Accessible locations and timing:** The choice of accessible venues within the non-urban area and scheduling the sessions at times that minimise disruption to participants' livelihoods could improve the effectiveness. Considering the mobile workshops or decentralised delivery is also a method to increase accessibility.

- **Local facilitators (where possible):** Engaging local experts and practitioners as facilitators and trainers helps in the process of building local capacity and ensuring cultural relevance. Very often, there is also a need to provide training of local trainers and support them throughout the whole process.

- **Experienced external facilitators:** Capacity building methodologies increase their values when bringing in external experts with specific skills and knowledge that are not available locally. When this happens, it is important to ensure they are briefed on the local context and cultural nuances.

- **Interactive and participatory methods:** These methods encourage active participation, knowledge sharing, and networking among participants and help to deliver engaging content.

- **Safe and inclusive spaces:** Fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where participants feel comfortable sharing their experiences and learning from each other facilitates to a great extent the mutual learning and sharing.

- **Logistical support:** The effectiveness of delivering the training depends a lot on providing the necessary logistical support, such as materials, equipment, refreshments, and childcare (if needed), to facilitate participation.

Phase 5: Post-session support and follow-up

In order to be effective, and with a long-term impact, the capacity-building methodology needs to include methods for supporting participants after the training is completed. For example, offering ongoing mentoring, coaching and other personalised methods helps them implement the skills and knowledge gained during the sessions. Facilitating networking events and online platforms to connect participants after the sessions is also an effective method for follow-up. In some cases, it could be of benefit to provide further information about funding opportunities, business development services, legal frameworks, and market access relevant to the local CCIs sector. Encouragement of the formation of local peer support groups and communities of practice could have a long-term effect when done thoroughly.

Phase 6: Monitoring and evaluation

A well-elaborated methodology includes clear indicators that have to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) to track the progress and impact of the capacity-building process. Regular monitoring is important for collecting data during and after the session through feedback forms, participant observation, progress reports and other methods. Such data is important to be both qualitative data (e.g., testimonials, stories), and quantitative data (e.g., number of participants, new initiatives launched as a result of the sessions). The feedback results and analysis need to be well considered to improve future capacity-building initiatives and adapt the methodology as needed.

Mind the timing and the budget as it impacts all phases! These are not just constraints; they are fundamental drivers that shape the entire methodology. Here are some tips on how they impact each phase and what considerations are essential.

Timing

- When creating a project budget, it is important to allow a sufficient amount of time and to allocate budget for each phase, without rushing to complete the process, as this could compromise relationships, trust building and meaningful deliverables.

- Seasonal considerations: Are there peak seasons for local CCIs (e.g., tourism season, harvest festivals) when practitioners are less available for workshops? Or times when they might be more open to engaging? Align the timing to maximise participation.

- Finding and allocating mentors and coaches, both in one-to-one mentoring and group mentoring, also takes a good amount of time and this needs to be considered.

- Communication and advertising of capacity-building sessions usually takes considerably longer in the non-urban areas due to limited social networks, and people living in isolated areas where the internet might be slow or absent.

- Workshop duration and frequency: Shorter, more frequent sessions might be better for practitioners balancing work, or longer, intensive bootcamps. This depends on their availability.

- Frequency of data collection: How often will you collect feedback? Post-session, mid-program, end-of-program, long-term?

Budgetary considerations

- Scope of research: Limited budget means fewer field visits, reliance on remote data collection (phone calls, online surveys if connectivity allows), or smaller focus groups.

- Expertise: Can you afford highly specialised trainers and experienced researchers or will you rely on local volunteers or students? In many cases trainers' fees are the most significant costs.

- Tools: Mind the costs for survey software, transcription services, copyright issues (if relevant), data analysis tools.

- Customisation vs. generic content: A larger budget allows for more tailored content specific to the local context and CCI sub-sectors (e.g., pottery vs. digital art).

- Minimise overhead costs—keep administrative costs low.

- When the budget is tight, very often the evaluation/reflection phase suffers the most. Including for the participatory evaluation and engaging qualified people to lead it is a key success factor, among others.

Leverage Existing Resources:

- Community spaces: Use local community centers, schools, or even individual artists' studios for workshops instead of expensive venues.

- Local talent: Engage successful local CCI practitioners as mentors or trainers, potentially on a pro-bono or stipend basis.

- Volunteers: Recruit community volunteers for logistical support, outreach, or simple data collection.

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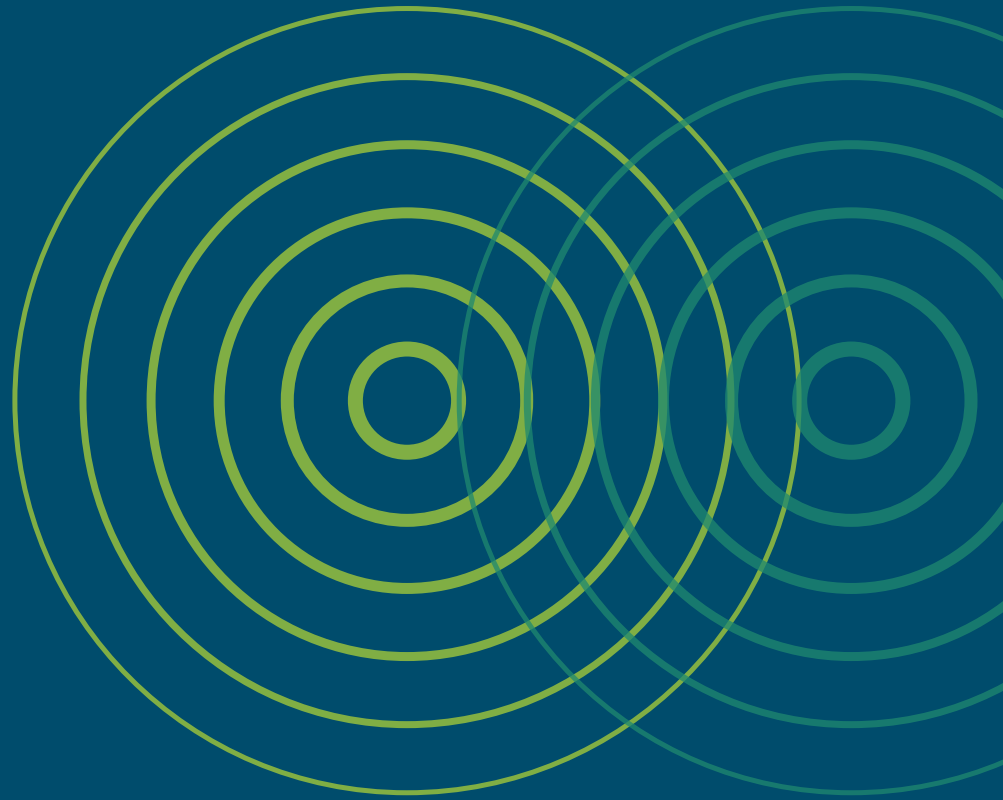
Training as a capacity-building method:

Key methodological aspects

2.1. Needs for training in innovation and entrepreneurship for CCIs in non-urban areas

The development of CCIs in non-urban areas requires training programmes, as part of capacity-building methodologies, that address the unique socio-economic, geographical, and cultural challenges faced by these regions. Non-urban areas sustain distinctive creative processes that, while typically operating on a smaller scale than urban centres, in many cases offer significant potential for innovation and local economic growth (Brouder, 2012). There is a **need to build human capital capable of managing and innovating within local cultural frameworks**, **while also bridging traditional practices with modern market strategies** (Klein et al., 2021). This dual approach calls for tailored training that enhances not only creative and artistic skills but also entrepreneurial competences and digital literacy.

Studies on rural innovation underline the importance of **fostering a creative mindset** that can act as a catalyst for broader socio-economic development in non-urban spaces (Brouder, 2012). Therefore, training initiatives need to emphasise **local expertise and resourcefulness**, as these areas often exhibit dispersed creative activities that primarily serve the local markets (Wolniak & Jonek-Kowalska, 2022). In such contexts, the development of business skills, marketing strategies and tools, financial and budgeting competences and management abilities becomes critically important. Moreover, sustainable models of CCIs require programmes that **integrate historical and cultural identity with modern creative approaches**, as discussed in the literature on creative spaces and local identity (Skivko, 2022).

Training in CCIs for non-urban areas also has to overcome the **challenge of limited access to traditional training resources**. Evidence from research on training for creativity and innovation in small enterprises indicates that competency-based training can significantly improve productivity and the ability to adapt to emerging trends (Dessie & Ademe, 2017). This approach, which emphasises experiential learning and local context, is particularly relevant in rural and peripheral settings. Furthermore, research on the location of creative industries in non-metropolitan contexts suggests that a **detailed understanding of local infrastructure, market orientation, and resource availability is necessary to design effective training curricula**.

An integrated training curriculum should **combine creative thinking, digital literacy, and business management**. For instance, experiential learning methods such as design thinking have been identified as effective pedagogical tools that enhance problem-solving skills and creativity. Huq and Gilbert (2017) illustrate that design thinking can transform entrepreneurship education by fostering a practical approach that aligns well with the operational realities of CCIs. By incorporating these methods, training programmes can stimulate cross-disciplinary innovation, enabling participants to transition their creative ideas into sustainable business ventures.

Physical and virtual collaborative spaces play an essential role in cultivating entrepreneurial ecosystems. Bednář and Danko (2020) demonstrate that **coworking spaces** act as catalysts for entrepreneurial networking and human capital development in creative environments in non-urban settings. The establishment of such collaborative hubs—or the adaptation of virtual platforms when physical spaces are limited—can offer opportunities for mentorship, collective brainstorming, and shared resource access. These ecosystems not only mitigate the isolation often experienced in rural contexts but also facilitate the exchange of ideas between local talent and external collaborators and market actors.

Policy support and regional governance are additional critical factors in implementing training programmes in non-urban CCIs. Sustainable development practices, which involve achieving a balance between economic, cultural, and social pillars, rely on the effective transfer of skills and knowledge to local stakeholders (Klein et al., 2021). Training programmes should be developed collaboratively with local experts and institutions to address both immediate local needs and long-term developmental goals. In addition, social inclusion and creative placemaking necessitate that training initiatives foster community cohesion and empower local cultural practitioners to contribute to local identity formation and economic diversification (Bajestani et al., 2022).

In summary, the need for training in CCIs in non-urban areas requires an integrated approach that extends beyond conventional business or technical skills to include an appreciation and application of local culture, heritage, and innovative practices. Tailored intervention programmes that combine competency-based training, digital literacy, design-thinking, collaborative approach, creative entrepreneurship, and culturally sensitive methodologies offer a promising pathway for empowering local communities and ensuring sustainable development in these regions. This multifaceted approach not only enhances individual capabilities but also strengthens the overall fabric of community-based creative economies.

2.2. Specificity of training in CCIs in non-urban areas

Training in the CCIs in non-urban areas presents unique challenges and opportunities that are distinct from urban settings. The specificity of this training is influenced by various factors, including the socio-economic context, access to resources, and the cultural dynamics of rural communities. In non-urban areas, the **training programmes must be tailored to meet the needs of local populations and cultural professionals** there, which often differ significantly from those in urban environments. This necessitates a deep understanding of the local culture, community values, and the specific creative industries present in these regions (Newman & Saginor, 2016).

IN SITU training in Valnmiera, Latvia, April 2024

One of the primary challenges in delivering training in non-urban areas is the **limited access to training resources and infrastructure**. Non-urban regions often lack the same level of educational facilities, technological tools, and professional networks that urban areas enjoy (Minja et al., 2022). This scarcity can hinder the development of robust training programmes, making it essential for educators and trainers to adopt innovative approaches that leverage existing local resources. For instance, utilising the existing knowledge and experience accumulated in the community centres, local artists, and cultural institutions can provide valuable platforms for training and collaboration (Brion, 2021). Moreover, **the integration of online learning tools** can help bridge the gap in resource availability, allowing learners to access a broader range of educational materials and expertise (Remtulla, 2010).

The **cultural context** of non-urban areas also plays a crucial role in shaping training programmes. Training in CCIs must be culturally responsive, recognising and valuing the unique traditions, practices, and artistic expressions of local communities (Wu, 2015). This involves not only adapting content to reflect local cultural narratives but also **engaging community members** in the design and delivery of training programs. By fostering a sense of ownership and relevance, trainers can enhance motivation and participation among learners (Anderson et al., 2018).

Furthermore, training programmes in non-urban areas should offer **flexible learning options** that cater to diverse learning styles and backgrounds. This might include

hands-on workshops, mentorship opportunities, and peer learning groups that facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration among participants (Minja et al., 2022). Additionally, **recognising the potential of intergenerational learning** can enhance the transfer of skills and knowledge within communities, fostering a more inclusive approach to cultural training (Anderson et al., 2018).

The **economic landscape** of non-urban areas also impacts the training in CCIs. Many non-urban regions rely on specific industries, such as agriculture, tourism, festivals, or local crafts, which can shape the focus of training programmes (Newman & Saginor, 2016). Training initiatives should align with local economic and social opportunities, equipping participants with skills and competences that are directly applicable to the local, but also international job market. It is important to emphasise that the training programmes focusing on entrepreneurship and innovation, both business and social within the creative sector, can empower individuals to start their own ventures, thereby contributing to local economic growth (Minja et al., 2022). This alignment not only enhances the relevance of training but also fosters a sustainable approach to CCIs in non-urban settings.

> **In conclusion, training in culture and creative industries in non-urban areas requires a nuanced understanding of the local context, including cultural, economic, social and demographic factors. By leveraging local resources, adopting culturally responsive practices, and aligning training with community needs, trainers, and facilitators can create effective and impactful programmes that empower individuals and enrich the cultural fabric of non-urban communities. The integration of innovative teaching methods and the engagement of local stakeholders are essential for fostering a vibrant, creative economy in these regions.**

2.3. Training adults ("andragogy"): Key aspects and specificities

Andragogy, the art and science of teaching adults, offers a particularly relevant and effective framework for training in CCIs within non-urban areas. Unlike pedagogy, which focuses on child and youth learning, **andragogy acknowledges the unique characteristics and motivations of adult learners and emphasises self-directed learning, integration of learners' experiences, and problem-centred instruction**, making it particularly well-suited for adult learners in these contexts. Applying its principles can lead to more engaging, relevant, and impactful training programmes in these specific contexts.

IN SITU training in Galway, Ireland, February 2024

Andragogy is characterised by several key aspects and specificities that distinguish it from traditional pedagogy. Adults typically bring a wealth of experience to the learning environment, which can be leveraged to enhance their learning outcomes. This experiential knowledge serves as a critical resource for problem-solving and understanding new concepts (Sandlin et al., 2013). Table 4 provides a summary of the profile of adult learning and characteristics of the training content to adapt to these specificities.

Table 4. Characteristics of adult learners and specificity of content

Characteristics of adult learners	Content specificity for adult learners
• Autonomous, self-directed	• Relevant and applicable to adults' professional life
• Diverse experiences and backgrounds	• Task-oriented, practical
• Diversity of professional profiles	• Encourage active participation and sharing experiences
• Motivated by intrinsic factors	• Assist in navigating through the CCIs ecosystem
• Goal-oriented and focused	• Outcome driven
• Need to know "Why?"	• Problem-centred and solution-focused
• High expectations	• Flexible and adaptable
• Responsible for their training	• Interactive and using multimedia in different formats
• May have time constraints	• Encourage critical thinking

Source: Own elaboration

- Adult learners in non-urban CCIs are often **self-directed and independent**, particularly those who are artists, craftspeople, or entrepreneurs. Training should **respect their autonomy** by offering choices in learning activities, allowing them to set their own goals within the training framework, and encouraging self-assessment.

- The adult trainees usually bring a **wealth of diverse life and professional experiences and backgrounds**. Training should actively tap into this experience through discussions, peer-to-peer learning, and activities that encourage sharing and reflection on past successes and challenges in their creative endeavours. Training activities should be designed to build upon existing knowledge and skills.

- Moreover, the andragogical approach **recognises the diversity among adult learners**, including variations in background, experience, and learning preferences. This diversity necessitates flexible and adaptable teaching strategies that cater to individual needs (LoBuono et al., 2019). For example, in intergenerational technology programmes, allowing older adults to choose what they want to learn **fosters a sense of ownership and relevance**, which is crucial for effective learning (LoBuono et al., 2019).

- The **motivation of adults is usually intrinsic**, related to internal factors like personal satisfaction, professional growth, and the desire to contribute to their community. Training should tap into these intrinsic motivators by highlighting the potential for CCIs to enhance local culture, create economic opportunities, build social capital in their non-urban areas, while also assisting the professional growth of creatives and helping them fulfill their individual goals.

- Another significant aspect of andragogy is the **relevance of learning to adults' personal and professional lives**. Adults are motivated to learn when they perceive that the knowledge or skills being taught will have immediate applicability in their lives (Sandlin et al., 2013). This principle underscores the importance of aligning educational content with the learners' goals and real-world challenges, thereby enhancing motivation and engagement (Holton et al., 2008).

- **Task-oriented practical content** of training modules proves its efficiency. It should be structured around tasks and challenges that learners encounter in their specific non-urban CCIs context (e.g., marketing local crafts online, managing a small cultural event, writing a funding proposal for a rural arts project). Case studies drawn from the local non-urban CCIs context, sharing of personal stories, and collaborative problem-solving exercises can effectively utilise this rich experience base. The adult-oriented training needs to encourage critical thinking and analysis of real-world challenges and potential solutions to problems relevant to the CCIs sector in non-urban areas (e.g., how to increase local engagement in cultural events, how to access funding for rural creative businesses, how to apply to sponsors and foundations, etc.).

- One of the core principles of andragogy is the **emphasis on active participation**. Adult learners are more engaged when they are involved in the planning and evaluation of their learning experiences. This principle is supported by research indicating that active learning strategies, such as collaborative projects and peer-assisted learning, significantly enhance retention and understanding (Hall et al., 2012). The adult learning training programmes need to create opportunities for learners to **share their experiences**, learn from each other, and collectively build knowledge. Discussions, peer feedback, and collaborative activities are crucial.

- The content for adult learners in CCIs needs to acknowledge and respect the diverse creative processes and workflows inherent in different artistic disciplines, to **assist participants in navigating successfully through the CCIs ecosystem**. It is also beneficial if the training modules explore the potential for and management of interdisciplinary creative projects.

> **In summary, *andragogy* is grounded in principles that prioritise the unique characteristics of adult learners, emphasising active participation, relevance, and the utilisation of prior experiences. These principles not only enhance the learning experience but also contribute to the effectiveness of educational programmes designed for adults across various fields. Applying the principles of andragogy, training programmes for CCIs in non-urban areas can be more effective in empowering individuals, strengthening the local cultural ecosystem, and fostering sustainable creative economies. It requires a shift from a traditional teaching model to one that values the experience, autonomy, and practical needs of adult learners within their specific context.**

2.4. Interactive training methods: Importance and types

Interactive training methods for CCIs in non-urban areas play a pivotal role in empowering local cultural operators and fostering sustainable economic and cultural development because they bring theoretical discourses into cultural practices. In rural settings, where access to resources and opportunities is often limited, interactive training approaches can **promote active participation, collaboration, and practical application of knowledge, which are particularly beneficial in adult education.** Involving an interactive component in training can lead to an enriched learning experience, crucial for stimulating entrepreneurial activities within the creative sector. When interactive and collaborative training methods are emphasised, they can lead to significant improvements in the capacities of the trainees to engage productively in creative industries.
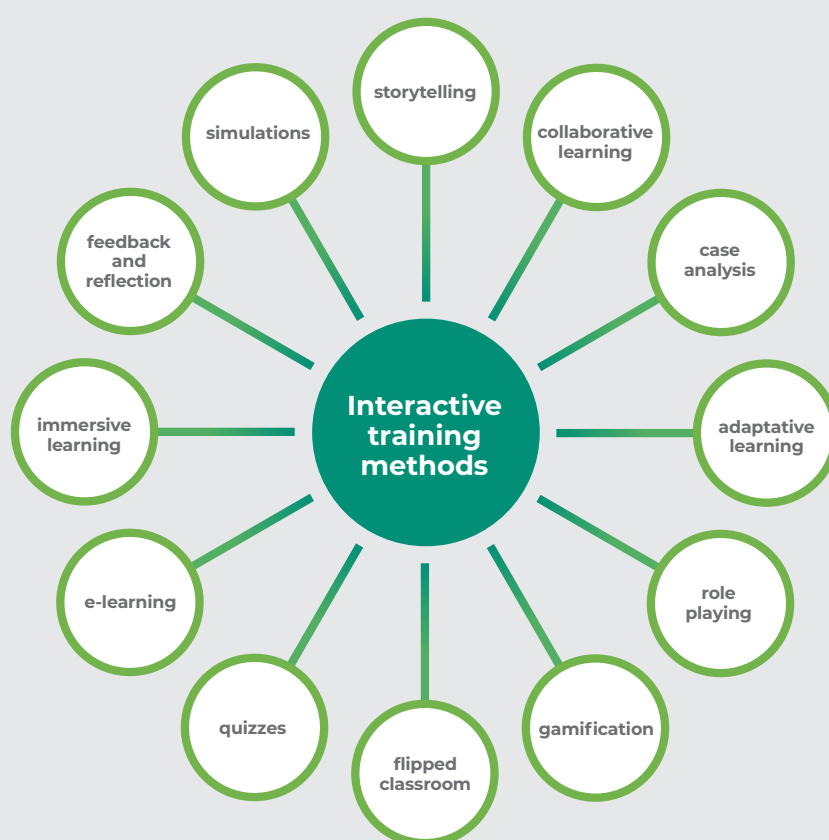
Figure 2. Types of interactive training methods. *Source: Own elaboration*

By embracing diversified approaches that include collaboration, technology integration, and community engagement, these training initiatives can cultivate a robust creative sector that enriches rural economies and lifestyles. Workshops that incorporate interactive elements, such as discussions, hands-on activities, role-playing, case analysis and others, can significantly enhance the learning experience. These sessions allow participants to actively engage with the course/session material and apply their knowledge in practical ways. For example, training programmes that utilise role playing can help learners practice interpersonal skills and develop confidence in their abilities. Interactive training methods, including job shadowing and person-to-person training, are perceived as most effective by participants, leading to improved role clarity and job satisfaction (Jenkins et al., 2018).

The following part of the Methodological Guide outlines various types of interactive training methods that could be used in training in CCIs in non-urban areas (see Figure 2).

- **Storytelling** – **Storytelling as a training method involves using narratives, anecdotes, and personal experiences to convey information, skills, and values to learners. Instead of relying solely on facts, figures, and abstract concepts, storytelling weaves these elements into engaging and memorable narratives**. The inherent nature of storytelling allows for experiential learning, fostering engagement and creativity among participants. As research has shown, narratives can enhance learning outcomes by providing relatable contexts and allowing individuals to connect personally with the material presented (Arief et al., 2022). The application of storytelling as a pedagogical tool has been particularly effective in non-urban settings, where traditional educational resources may be lacking. Storytelling not only facilitates communication but actively involves the audience in the learning process, thereby increasing retention and understanding (Chapple & Montero, 2016). For example, engaging stories can stimulate discussions about significant topics such as environmental sustainability and cultural identity, which are critical in regions that may not have immediate access to urban resources and stimuli. This participatory approach enables individuals to reflect on their experiences and co-create knowledge, fostering a deeper understanding of the creative processes involved in local industries (Arief et al., 2022). Moreover, storytelling aligns well with the essence of the creative industries by promoting critical thinking, imagination, narratives, and emotional intelligence. In addition to enhancing individual creativity, storytelling can contribute to the build-up of creative clusters and other forms of partnership, where local talent and resources are harnessed for collaborative development. Such clusters thrive on shared narratives that define regional identities and foster innovation. Integration of storytelling into the interactive training models in non-urban settings can enhance workforce readiness and employability skills essential for the creative economy

(Wang, 2024). Lastly, as cultural narratives emerge through storytelling, they can enhance the collective identity and labour force capabilities of non-urban areas. This approach not only helps in knowledge transfer but also encourages civic participation and community building, as underscored by Comunian et al. (2013).

- **Case analysis (Case-based learning)** – **Case analysis learning is an educational and training method that involves the in-depth examination of real-world or hypothetical scenarios (cases) to analyse problems and apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations, to understand decision-making processes, and to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.** One of the principal advantages of utilising case analysis in training is its innate ability to transform abstract theoretical concepts into concrete, contextualised knowledge, connected with practice. This approach encourages trainees to dissect various elements, evaluate diverse factors, and consider multiple perspectives, ranging from innovative practices to adaptive policy frameworks, and thereby cultivate practical skills. Case studies are useful in training, because they provide concrete examples of success stories and failures alike. They allow trainees to analyse real-life situations and apply lessons learned directly to their work environments.

  The integration of case analysis into training modules aligns with experiential learning theories, which underscore the importance of learning from direct engagement with real-life challenges. For instance, Maina's (2024) research on experiential knowledge in music education highlights how qualitative case studies can serve as a resource for skill development and creative inspiration. By drawing on similar methodologies, trainers in non-urban regions can simulate environments where learners engage with local case scenarios, thereby promoting an in-depth critical analysis of the interplay between culture and innovation. This approach enables a reflective learning process that can lead to actionable strategies for local cultural entrepreneurs. The incorporation of case analysis within training programmes fosters interdisciplinary integration. In non-urban areas, leveraging localised case studies within a training framework enables practitioners to critically assess available cultural assets and devise innovative strategies that align with local developmental goals. The case study analysis as a training method not only bridges the gap between academic theory and real-world practice but also promotes a dynamic exchange of ideas that is vital for local empowerment and long-term sustainability in the cultural sectors.

- **Adaptive Learning** – **Adaptive learning is an educational approach that uses technology to tailor the learning experience to the individual needs of each student. Instead of a one-size-fits-all curriculum, adaptive learning systems adjust the content, pace, and even the assessment methods based on a student's performance and engagement**. This aspect of adaptive learning is crucial in the dynamic environment in which CCIs operate. Key aspects of

adaptive learning focus on the individualised cognitive engagement of learners, enabling them to acquire relevant skills tailored to their local contexts and cultural dynamics. The ability to adjust group sizes and learning methods according to the participants' feedback is essential. Chen (2020) discusses the significance of cultural psychological motivations in developing successful strategies for cultural products, further demonstrating how adaptable approaches can align better with audience expectations and cultural narratives. This adaptability is vital in maintaining relevance in an ever-evolving field where audience tastes and cultural narratives continuously shift. The establishment of adaptive learning frameworks facilitates the identification of unique community needs, which is critical in non-urban areas where conventional training might fail to resonate with local realities. Adaptive learning encourages local collaboration—engaging community members and stakeholders in the design and implementation of training programmes significantly improves the outcomes. Enhancing the digital skills of local entrepreneurs through adaptive learning frameworks has been particularly effective in improving market access for micro, small, and medium enterprises in rural areas. A participatory action research approach has demonstrated that engaging these enterprises in every stage of digital training fosters a more hands-on and effective learning environment, which is essential for their sustainability and growth in competitive markets (Febrianty et al., 2024).

- **Role-playing exercises** – **A role-playing exercise is an interactive and experiential learning activity where participants assume specific roles and act out scenarios to explore real-life situations, develop skills, and gain insights.** It is a powerful tool used in various fields, including training, education, therapy, and research. Role-playing exercises encourage collaboration and empathy among team members. By stepping into different roles, individuals gain insights into various perspectives within their industry. These methods immerse participants in real-world scenarios, fostering empathy and understanding. In culture and creative industries, these exercises can mirror the challenges faced by professionals. Participants assume different roles, allowing them to view situations from various perspectives. This practice not only enhances problem-solving skills but also promotes collaboration among team members. For non-urban areas, role playing offers a unique advantage. These communities often have tight-knit networks where interpersonal relationships matter deeply. By practicing within this framework, individuals can refine their communication strategies effectively. Moreover, role playing encourages creativity as participants adapt to changing circumstances, which creates memorable learning experiences that traditional methods may lack.

- **World café** – **The World Café method is a structured conversational process designed to foster open and intimate discussion and knowledge sharing within groups of varying sizes. It aims to create a welcoming, café-like atmosphere**

where participants can engage in meaningful dialogue about topics that matter to them. The World Café method encourages collaborative dialogue among diverse stakeholders and can harness local knowledge for collective actions in non-urban areas, which is critical for community development. By facilitating structured discussions, the World Café serves as a platform for knowledge exchange and collective problem-solving, which is essential for fostering innovation within the CCIs. The effectiveness of the World Café method in collaborating with communities has been documented in various studies. For instance, Löhr et al. (2020) discuss the participatory nature of the World Café as a qualitative research method that complements other methodologies, enhancing data collection efforts in community settings. Such methodologies can be particularly beneficial in non-urban areas where participatory engagement is needed to identify local cultural and economic challenges. Additionally, the World Café is noted for its strengths in creating an inclusive environment where participants can share their unique insights and experiences. The participatory and inclusive aspects of World Café lead to authentic conversations around significantly impactful questions for communities. This aspect resonates strongly in non-urban contexts, where such gatherings can also serve to strengthen community bonds and promote social cohesion.

- **Collaborative learning –Collaborative learning is an approach where two or more individuals work together to learn something and unlike individual learning, it emphasises the interaction and contribution of all participants to achieve a shared learning goal.** Collaborative learning methods, such as group projects and workshops, encourage participants to work together to solve problems and share knowledge. This approach fosters teamwork, communication, and critical thinking skills, as learners engage in discussions and collective problem-solving. By working collaboratively, participants can benefit from diverse perspectives and experiences, enriching the learning process. The influence of collaborative learning on cultural and social development in rural regions can be evidenced through the work of Gyasi et al. (2021), who highlight that cross-cultural collaborative learning provides an effective framework for acquiring vital communication and collaboration skills, crucial for addressing the challenges faced in rural contexts. The success of collaborative learning extends beyond academic environments into community empowerment and local cultural engagement. The examples of project-based learning and academic partnerships reveal how collaborative models can successfully bridge the educational divide between urban and rural settings. For example, Leung et al. (2019) detail a multidisciplinary course that facilitated international collaboration among universities, allowing students to engage in culturally rich projects and share insights into global challenges. This experience not only enhanced their practical skills but also fostered intercultural communication and cooperation.

- **Gamification** – **Gamification as a training method involves applying game-design elements and game principles in a non-game training context and it transforms traditional learning experiences into more interactive and enjoyable ones by incorporating elements like points, rewards, avatars, badges, letter boards, etc.** Research has shown that gamification can lead to increased motivation and improved learning outcomes, as it creates a more enjoyable and interactive learning environment. Gamification adds an element of fun to traditional training programmes by incorporating game-like features. Participants are encouraged to compete, collaborate, or complete challenges. They earn points or rewards as they complete challenges, and this fosters a competitive spirit that can enhance motivation and retention.

- **Flipped classroom** – **The flipped classroom model reverses traditional teaching methods by delivering instructional content outside of the classroom, typically through video lectures, while using classroom time for interactive activities and discussions.** This approach allows learners to engage with the material at their own pace and come prepared for collaborative learning experiences during class time. Research indicates that the flipped classroom model can enhance student engagement and improve learning outcomes by promoting active participation and peer interaction. In a flipped classroom, learners are first introduced to theoretical content through pre-class materials such as videos, readings, or digital lectures. This self-paced engagement allows learners in non-urban areas to absorb challenging cultural and creative concepts outside the traditional classroom setting. During in-class sessions, the focus shifts to interactive activities that promote discussion, hands-on projects, and collaborative learning, which are vital for cultivating creative and dialogical competencies (Díaz et al., 2020). Such an environment is particularly advantageous for CCIs where the synthesis of theoretical knowledge with creative expression is critical. Also, this approach aligns well with the requirements of CCIs by fostering creativity, dialogue, and critical problem-solving skills in learners, which are essential for innovation in culturally rich environments (Torres & Blázquez, 2024). The flipped classroom not only nurtures individual creativity but can also stimulate communal engagement by encouraging learners to relate new information to local cultural practices. By integrating context-specific examples and culturally relevant projects, trainers can enhance the relevance of the learning experience for those operating within a rural creative economy (Al-Zahrani, 2015). This approach not only improves learners' creative output but also strengthens their ability to innovate within the cultural framework of their communities. However, while the flipped classroom method has significant benefits, its implementation in non-urban regions faces unique challenges, notably related to access to technology and digital infrastructure. Research has indicated that when technology is integral to the flipped classroom, rural areas may experience obstacles such as limited connectivity and insufficient

technical resources, which can hinder the effectiveness of this approach Therefore, the successful integration of flipped classrooms in non-urban contexts often requires careful adaptation, potentially incorporating blended learning strategies and local resource assessments to ensure that content delivery and interactive sessions remain accessible to all participants.

- **Quizzes – Quizzes are a widely used and versatile training method that can serve various purposes within a learning programme. They involve presenting learners with a series of questions to assess their understanding, reinforce learning, and provide feedback**. These methods not only enhance engagement but also serve as an efficient assessment tool within workshops and educational programmes related to cultural industries. The successful application of innovative teaching strategies that include quizzes has been shown to improve participants' engagement and understanding in various fields, supporting the broader recognition of active learning strategies in enhancing comprehension and application of complex concepts in real-world scenarios. There are different types of quizzes that could be used—multiple-choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, image-based, or scenario-based. The quizzes could be incorporated in the training process in the pre-assessment phase, during the modules, or for a summative assessment at the end.

- **Simulation-based training – Simulation-based learning involves using realistic scenarios and interactive tools to mimic real-world situations relevant to the work of CCIs. This allows learners to practice skills, make decisions, and receive feedback in a safe and controlled environment without putting real clients or communities at risk**. Simulation-based training is a powerful interactive method that allows learners to practice skills in a controlled environment. This method is particularly valuable in fields, such as healthcare, aviation, and emergency response, where real-life scenarios can be replicated without the associated risks. By engaging in simulations, learners can apply theoretical knowledge in practical situations, leading to better retention and understanding. This method is effective, because creators can test new ideas, workflows, and technologies without the risks associated with real-world productions or projects. Examples in CCIs include: trying out different filming techniques in a virtual environment before a costly shoot, a museum curator could virtually arrange exhibitions, a fashion designer could see their designs on virtual models and in different virtual environments, virtual stages and audiences could provide a safe space for actors, musicians, and dancers to practice and receive feedback.

- **Feedback and reflection – Feedback and reflection are not stand-alone training methods in the same way as simulation or role-playing, but rather crucial and integral components that significantly enhance the effectiveness of any training approach.** They act as powerful catalysts for learning, skill development,

and behavioural change. Providing opportunities for feedback and reflection is crucial in interactive training methods. Reflective practices in experiential learning encourage learners to critically assess their actions and outcomes. By incorporating structured feedback mechanisms, trainers can support learners in identifying areas for growth and development, ultimately enhancing their skills and competences. This reflective process fosters a culture of continuous improvement and self-directed learning.

Benefits of interactive training methods

Interactive training methods **bring a fresh perspective** to learning. They **engage participants** in ways traditional lectures cannot. This engagement leads to better retention of information. This is particularly important in non-urban settings where participants might have varied levels of prior knowledge and learning styles. Such methods **foster collaboration** among trainees. When individuals work together, they share ideas and build on each other's strengths. This teamwork is vital in culture and creative industries, where innovation thrives on diverse inputs.

Another benefit is the feeling of a **greater sense of ownership** over the shared information when individuals are actively involved in the learning process, which can translate to increased commitment and participation in further activities. Interactive

IN SITU training in Rauma, Finland November 2023

learning methods can **make learning more enjoyable and fun to do**, fostering a positive attitude. This can be crucial when training subjects that are more difficult to be understood by the practitioners, e.g., strategic management, cultural policy, environmental sustainability, and others.

interactive training **creates real-world scenarios** that prepare individuals for actual challenges they might face in non-urban settings. Also, these methods can **cater to different learning styles** (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) by incorporating a variety of activities, making the training more accessible and effective for a wider range of participants' profiles in non-urban communities. Active participation and successful completion of interactive exercises can **boost participants' confidence** and can help identify and nurture potential leaders within the community.

By simulating situations specific to their environment, learners feel more confident when applying what they've learned. These approaches also **allow for immediate feedback**. Participants can adjust their understanding or skills right away, enhancing the learning experience significantly.

In conclusion, interactive training methods are vital for creating engaging and effective learning experiences. Techniques such as peer learning, simulation-based training, e-learning, immersive learning, collaborative learning, interactive workshops, feedback mechanisms, gamification, and the flipped classroom model all contribute to enhancing learner engagement and knowledge retention. By employing these methods, trainers can better meet the needs of adult learners and facilitate meaningful learning outcomes. These methods cater to different learning styles, making education more accessible and effective for everyone involved.

2.5. Online training: Types, examples, technological choice, and tips

The implementation of online training methods for CCIs in non-urban areas presents both unique opportunities and challenges. The shift toward digital learning platforms has gained momentum, particularly highlighted during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Online training can significantly enhance training accessibility in remote regions by circumventing geographical barriers and offering flexible, self-paced learning environments (Deichakivska et al., 2024).

The **motivations for adopting online training** are multifaceted. These include the elimination of extensive travel distances, enhanced work-life balance through scheduling flexibility, and the availability of diverse training content that may not be physically accessible (Deichakivska et al., 2024). The transition to remote learning modes necessitates structured preparation and planning phases, using platforms like Google Classroom and blended learning approaches that integrate online and face-to-face elements. This adaptability has proven essential in rural communities where traditional educational infrastructures are less robust.

Moreover, **online education offers significant advantages in enhancing engagement and communication among learners and instructors**, which is vital for fostering creativity within CCIs. Deichakivska et al. (2024) emphasised that digital platforms facilitate interaction, thus promoting a collaborative environment even in isolated areas. However, challenges such as unstable internet connectivity and the requirement for learners to adopt self-directed learning behaviours remain critical considerations in the successful implementation of these training modalities. The impacts of digitisation have been observed not only in training and education, but also in the broader scope of economic development within CCIs, as digital platforms enable the rise of creative clusters, also in less urbanised locations. Additionally, the evolution of creative industries in rural areas necessitates collaboration among universities, enterprises, and local communities to establish training programmes that are contextually relevant and sustainable (Duxbury, 2020).

Pros and cons of online, offline, and hybrid training models

When conceptualising training in CCIs in non-urban areas, it is important to consider the key method of training—online, offline, or hybrid/blended (a combination between the two). Table 5 outlines the pros and cons of online, offline, and hybrid training models. Each of these approaches has distinct advantages and disadvantages that can significantly impact the learning experience.

Table 5. Pros and cons of online, offline, and hybrid training models

Type of training	Pros	Cons
Online	**Flexibility and accessibility:** When pre-recorded, allows learners to access materials anytime and anywhere, accommodating diverse schedules and learning paces. **Cost effectiveness:** Often reduces costs associated with travel, accommodation, and physical materials. **Diverse learning resources:** Can offer a wide range of multimedia resources, including videos, interactive quizzes, and discussion forums.	**Social isolation:** Although live online interaction can counter social isolation, using only pre-recorded materials can lead to feelings of disconnection, which may negatively impact mental health and motivation. **Technical challenges:** Requires reliable internet access and familiarity with technology, which is sometimes lacking. **Limited hands-on experience:** For some disciplines, online training could be insufficient for developing practical competencies and skills.
Offline	**Direct interaction between participants:** Training provides opportunities for face-to-face interaction, fostering collaboration, networking, and immediate feedback. **Structured learning environment:** Useful for learners who prefer direct supervision and immediate feedback. **Hands-on practice:** Allows for practical, hands-on experiences that are essential in fields requiring skill development.	**Inflexibility** (fixed schedules): Typically requires learners to adhere to a fixed schedule and location, which may not accommodate the diverse needs of all participants, particularly adult learners with multiple responsibilities. **Higher costs:** Can incur significant costs related to facilities, materials, and travel, which may limit accessibility for some learners. **Limited reach:** May not be feasible for geographically dispersed learners, potentially excluding individuals who cannot travel to training locations.

Hybrid (blended)	**Combined approach:** Combines the flexibility of online learning with the interpersonal benefits of offline training.	**Complexity in implementation:** Designing and managing hybrid training programmes can be challenging, requiring careful coordination of online and offline components to ensure a seamless learning experience.
	Enhanced engagement: Can cater to different learning styles and preferences, potentially increasing overall engagement and retention of information.	**Resource intensive:** May demand more resources in terms of technology, training materials, and instructor preparation.
	Adaptability: Can be adjusted based on learner feedback and evolving educational needs, allowing for a more responsive approach to training.	**Inconsistent experiences:** Learners may have varying experiences based on their access to technology and participation in offline components, leading to potential disparities in learning outcomes.

Source: Own elaboration

In summary, online training offers flexibility and cost-effectiveness but may lead to social isolation and technical issues. Offline training provides direct interaction and hands-on experience, but lacks flexibility and can be costly. Hybrid/blended training seeks to combine the strengths of both approaches, though it requires careful planning and resource allocation. Understanding these pros and cons is crucial for trainers and organisations in CCIs to design effective training programmes that meet the diverse needs of learners and enhance their capacity.

Types and methods of online training

Given the specific context of CCIs in non-urban areas, the types and methods of online training need to be particularly attuned to the unique challenges and opportunities of these regions, some of them, as discussed previously, are the limited access to physical training centres, the need to connect geographically dispersed practitioners, and the importance of leveraging local cultural assets. Here are the common types and methods of online training:

Asynchronous learning – This refers to learning that occurs at different times for instructors and trainees. It provides flexibility as learners can access materials and complete activities at their own pace and on their own schedules. Here are some examples of asynchronous learning to choose from:

- **Pre-recorded video lectures.** Instructors create and share lecture videos that trainees can watch anytime.

- **Online discussion forums.** Trainees and instructors can participate in discussions by posting and responding to messages at their convenience.

IN SITU training in Galway, Ireland, February 2024

- **Video tutorials.** They offer flexibility, letting learners progress at their own pace while diving deep into specific skills or tools relevant to entrepreneurship in non-urban areas.

- **Self-paced modules**. The learning content is broken down into modules that trainees can work through at their own speed.

- **Assigned readings.** Trainees complete readings and related assignments based on a set schedule but on their own time.

- **Online quizzes and assessments.** Trainees complete quizzes and tests within a given timeframe, but at their preferred time.

- **Collaborative documents and wikis.** Trainees can contribute to shared documents or wikis over an extended period.

Synchronised learning – This refers to learning that happens in real-time, with instructors and trainees interacting simultaneously, even though they are in different locations. It aims to replicate the experience of a traditional classroom but in a virtual environment. Here are some common examples of synchronous online learning:

- **Live video conferencing:** Using platforms like Zoom, Google Meet, or Microsoft Teams for live lectures, discussions, and presentations.

- **Live webinars:** Online seminars where instructors present information in real-time, and participants can ask questions.

- **Virtual workshops/seminars happening in a "virtual classroom":** Online learning environments with features like interactive whiteboards, breakout rooms for group work, and polling.

- **Live-streamed lectures:** Instructors deliver lectures that are broadcast live online.

- **Live chat:** Real-time text-based discussions between instructors and trainees or among trainees.

Mobile Learning (m-learning) – This refers to short, easily digestible content delivered on mobile devices like smartphones and tablets via mobile apps or mobile-friendly platforms, catering to individuals who may primarily access the internet through their phones at any time, anywhere. This is particularly relevant in areas with limited broadband infrastructure. It shifts away from traditional classroom-based or even desktop-bound e-learning, offering a more flexible and accessible approach to employee development. Here is a breakdown of mobile learning as a training method:

- **Learning on the go:** M-learning delivers educational content and training programmes via mobile devices, allowing learners to access materials and engage in learning activities at their convenience, whether during commutes, breaks, or in the field.

- **Bite-sized content:** Often utilises microlearning principles, breaking down large topics into smaller, easily digestible modules suitable for mobile consumption.

- **Multi-format delivery:** Can include various content formats optimised for mobile, such as short videos, interactive quizzes, audio podcasts, infographics, and gamified modules.

- **Just-in-time learning:** Provides access to information and support exactly when and where it's needed, aiding performance and problem-solving in real-world situations.

Examples of online training methods for CCIs in non-urban areas

Some specific examples of online training for CCIs in non-urban areas that could motivate and inspire you to use online technologies for different training sessions:

- **Collaborative online project with a regional focus:** A group of learners developing a digital marketing campaign for a local cultural event.

- **An online live session on collaborative grant writing for arts projects in rural areas could connect artists and cultural managers from various villages.**

- **Webinar series featuring local experts and policymakers:** Inviting regional CCI leaders, policymakers, and funding representatives to share insights and answer questions in live online sessions.

- **E-commerce and Online Sales:** Training on setting up and managing online shops (e.g., Shopify, Etsy), processing payments, and managing shipping.

- **Blended learning:** Online modules on digital storytelling could be followed by a hands-on workshop at a regional cultural centre where participants create their own local narratives.

- **Adaptive learning tailored to creative disciplines:** An online platform for craftspeople in a region could offer different learning paths for pottery, weaving, or woodworking, adjusting based on the learner's chosen craft and experience.

- **Collaborative eLearning focused on regional projects:** An online workspace where local musicians, filmmakers, and storytellers can collaborate on a project showcasing the region's heritage.

- **Mobile learning:** Short video tutorials on using social media to promote local cultural events, accessible on smartphones.

- **Video case studies:** Showcasing how CCI practitioners in similar non-urban settings have successfully navigated challenges and leveraged opportunities.

- **Online resource libraries with region-specific Information:** Curated collections of guides, templates, and resources relevant to funding opportunities, local regulations, and branding and marketing strategies for CCIs in non-urban contexts.

- **Online portfolio development workshops:** Guiding CCI practitioners in creating effective online portfolios to showcase their work to a wider audience, emphasising the unique cultural elements of their region.

Online interactivity and immersive learning experiences

The rise of technology has led to the development of various e-learning platforms that incorporate interactive elements. Interactive e-learning methods, such as quizzes, discussion forums, and multimedia presentations, can enhance learner engagement and motivation, making the learning experience more dynamic and effective. Immersive learning experiences, such as virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), provide learners with engaging and interactive environments that enhance understanding and retention. Parong and Mayer (2018) suggest that incorporating generative learning activities within VR lessons can improve learner motivation and self-efficacy. These immersive technologies allow learners to explore complex concepts in a hands-on manner, making learning more engaging and applicable to real-world contexts. Moreover, VR training fosters creativity. Participants can experiment with different artistic techniques or design concepts in real-time. The freedom to make mistakes without repercussions encourages risk-taking, essential for growth in creative fields. Virtual reality training immerses learners in realistic scenarios. This technology provides a safe space to practice skills without the pressure of real-world consequences. It's particularly useful for hands-on disciplines like art restoration or event management.

Participant in IN SITU training session on AR, Galway, Ireland, February 2024

Examples of online interactivity and immersive learning in CCI training:

Virtual Reality (VR):

- **Film and theatre:** VR simulations of film sets or theatrical stages for directing, cinematography, and stage design training.

- **Museum studies:** Virtual tours of museums and historical sites, allowing learners to study artifacts and exhibition layouts remotely. VR can also simulate the handling and conservation of delicate artifacts.

- **Game design:** Immersive environments for practicing level design and experiencing gameplay from the player's perspective.

- **Cultural heritage:** VR reconstructions of historical sites or lost artifacts for educational purposes and preservation.

Augmented Reality (AR):

- **Performing arts:** AR overlays that provide performers with real-time information or interactive elements during rehearsals or performances.

- **Museums and galleries:** AR apps that provide additional information or interactive experiences when users point their devices at exhibits.

Interactive online platforms:

- **E-learning modules** with interactive quizzes, drag-and-drop exercises, and branching scenarios related to art history, media studies, or cultural management.

- **Online forums and discussion boards** for learners to share ideas, critique each other's work, and collaborate on projects.

- **Collaborative digital workspaces** where learners can co-create digital art, music, or multimedia projects in real time.

- **Interactive storytelling platforms** that allow aspiring writers or game developers to create and test narrative choices.

Tips when considering online training for CCIs in non-urban areas

In this section we share a few key tips when considering online training for CCIs in non-urban areas. They result from our experience in handling training in entrepreneurship and innovation in six non-urban locations across Europe, as identified in the introduction (see Figure 3).
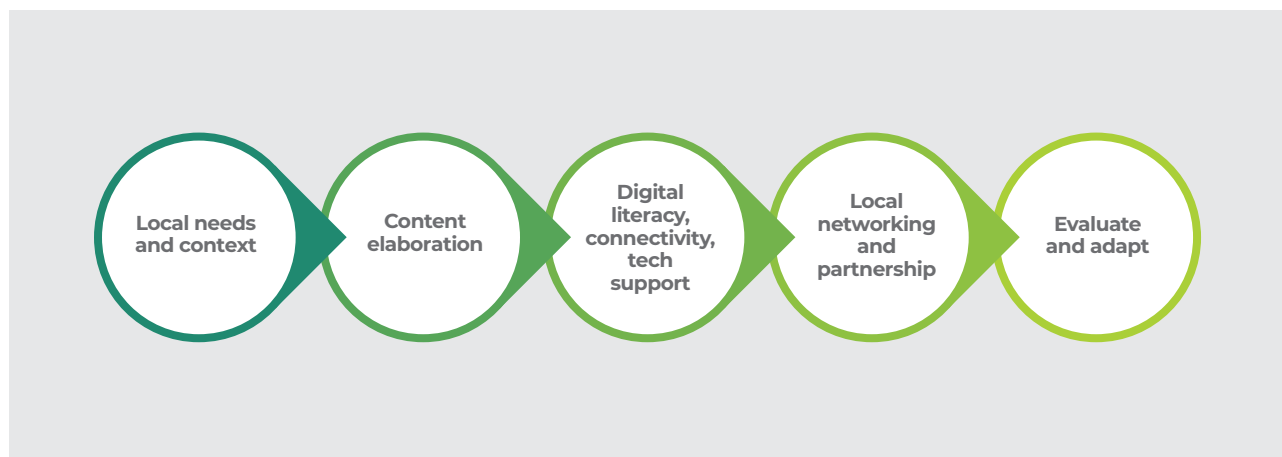
Figure 3. Tips for effective online training in CCIs in non-urban areas.
Source: Own elaboration

- **Understand the specific local needs and context.** The first step is to research the branches of CCIs that are prevalent in the non-urban area and to understand their specific challenges and opportunities (e.g., crafts, heritage, performing arts, digital media). It is important to conduct initial surveys or targeted interviews to determine what are the skill and competence gaps within the local CCIs community.

- **Design relevant and engaging content.** The content needs to be adapted to local needs. It is always very effective to use case studies, examples, and scenarios relevant to the experiences of CCIs in non-urban areas. Highlight successful local initiatives and address specific regional challenges. When designing the content, consider the actionable skills that participants can easily apply to their work, such as online marketing, branding, e-commerce, digital storytelling, grant writing, or intellectual property management. The incorporation of interactive elements such as discussion forums, quizzes, Q&A sessions, group projects, and peer-to-peer learning activities, makes the online training engaging and useful. It is efficient if the training content is mixed with mentorship and coaching, as it provides a more personalised approach to the development of specific projects and organisations in the region. Consider in what way you could convey the content online—how to design the presentation part and the interactive part, depending on the specific topics to be included in the training.

- **Consider digital literacy and connectivity challenges.** A successful training programme planned online requires research in advance the reliability and speed of internet access in the targeted area. Have a "Plan B"—consider offering downloadable resources, asynchronous learning options, or blended approaches with some offline components if connectivity appears to be a major barrier. Design training modules accessible to individuals with different levels of digital skills. Offer introductory modules on basic digital literacy if needed. Offer an "orientation session" one or two weeks before starting the online training so that participants can try various tools and practice in advance. Provide clear instructions and user-friendly interfaces. In case the internet access is limited, consider using platforms and tools that are less data-intensive. Focus on audio-based content, text-based materials, and optimised video formats because learners are motivated and attracted to visuals.

- **Provide ongoing technical support and resources.** Online training requires offering technical support and ensuring participants can access it if they encounter difficulties with the online platform or tools. The efficiency of online training increases when instructors provide further learning materials that participants can refer to after the training. Further sustainability also could be secured by creation of a network of participants in the training modules to facilitate ongoing learning, support and collaboration.

- **Use online space for networking**. It is important to connect the training with an online space where participants can connect, share ideas, collaborate, and build relationships. Organising virtual networking events also helps, for example, hosting online meetings, webinars, or virtual conferences to encourage interaction and the formation of professional connections. The power of networking increases if the online approach is mixed with offline in-person gatherings or workshops to strengthen relationships and build local networks.

- **Consider partnership options.** It is very important to collaborate with the local cultural organisations, arts councils, business support organisations, and community development groups in the non-urban area to reach a wider audience and leverage local experience. The involvement of universities and academies in the training is very important as they could provide instructors/trainers, as well as technical support for the online training, and plenty of resources for delivering the content. The involvement of local experts as trainers/instructors provides relevant insights of the local context and builds credibility of the training sessions

- **Evaluate and adapt.** In order to understand the effectiveness of the online training, it is important to implement online surveys, feedback forms, and discussion prompts to understand what is working well and what needs improvement. Monitoring the impact of the training on participants' skills, businesses, and

careers also provides an understanding how the training practically helps for their professional development. Based on feedback and outcomes from the online training, be prepared to adjust the training content, delivery methods, and support systems to better meet the evolving needs of the CCI community in non-urban areas.

Tips for choosing the right technology for the online training:

- Ensure the Learning Management System (LMS) and course content are fully responsive and easy to navigate on mobile devices, as individuals use more and more smartphones and/or tablets.

- Consider a platform that has a user-friendly, intuitive interface that requires minimal technical expertise for both instructors and learners.

- Consider the pricing models and look for cost-effective solutions or those with flexible subscription plans, especially if working with limited budgets.

- Look for a platform that offers options for offline content access (downloadable materials) and asynchronous learning that minimises bandwidth usage (e.g., optimised video compression, text-based alternatives).

Choosing the best **Learning Management System (LMS)** for online training in CCIs in non-urban areas requires focusing on factors like low bandwidth accessibility, mobile-friendliness, affordability, and features relevant to creative fields. Here's a breakdown of some top contenders and key considerations:

Examples of Learning Management System (LMS) platforms, with features potentially suitable for training in non-urban areas:

ATutor: A free and open-source LMS for education, used to develop and manage online courses and to create and distribute interoperable eLearning content.

Blackboard Learn: A free online LMS platform for instructors to engage with their trainees anywhere, anytime, with an interactive eLearning platform that fits the needs of the trainees. Allows you to post and update course materials, interact with trainees, promote collaboration, and assess and improve performance, all from one place.

Canvas: A popular LMS known for its user-friendly interface and mobile app. It allows for offline access to some content.

Chamilo: A free LMS that allows you to create individual classes and/or a virtual campus for your learning management system training and designed for ease of use and speed.

Coursify.me: Offers a free plan and easy course creation, with customisation options and integration with platforms like YouTube and Vimeo.

GoSkills: An LMS platform adequate for businesses of all sizes (not entirely free) that incorporates elements of gamification to encourage friendly competition among your participants and supports all kinds of content and files to ensure the content remains engaging.

LearnWorlds: Strong focus on engaging learning experiences with interactive videos, supports various multimedia, options for building a course website, different pricing tiers with potential discounts for NGOs.

Moodle: A very popular open-source LMS that is highly customisable, free and can be self-hosted, potentially offering more control over bandwidth and costs. It supports downloadable resources and various activity types.

MyiCourse: A free LMS for trainers, allowing you to establish a virtual institution where you can publish or even sell educational content.

SC Training (formerly EdApp): Focuses on microlearning, mobile-first design with a strong mobile app and offers a free plan for up to 10 users, with a library of editable courses and AI translation tools.

SanaLabs: An AI company pioneering the next generation of knowledge tools trusted by innovators and market leaders.

Teachable: Focuses mainly on marketing and sales tools alongside course creation.

Thinkific: Known for its ease of use, especially for beginners, mobile-friendly, supports various content types and offers a free plan with core features.

TrainerCentral: Offers built-in virtual classrooms and pricing based on the learner's location, potentially making it more affordable in some regions. It also claims to support low-bandwidth connectivity.

When choosing the most appropriate Learning Management System, consider the following:

- What are your training objectives?

- What are the trainees' needs, profile and characteristics?

- How many online trainees do you envisage?

- What is the course content and structure and how could it be delivered online?

- What are the possible technical constraints (internet access, devices)?

- What is your budget?

- What kind of essential features are you looking for (e.g., offline access, mobile-friendliness, affordability) versus "nice-to-have" features?

Once you have answers to these questions, research and compare platforms: Explore the LMS options mentioned above and others, focusing on their features, pricing, and user reviews (especially regarding mobile access and ease of use). Take advantage of free trials or demos—most LMS platforms offer free trials. Test the platform with your content and on different devices to see if it meets your needs. Before a full rollout, conduct pilot tests with a small group of users in the target non-urban areas to identify any technical challenges and gather feedback. Ensure all content and platforms adhere to accessibility guidelines to cater to learners with disabilities. Finally, ensure the platform offers adequate support for both instructors and learners, especially in areas where digital literacy might vary.

By carefully evaluating these factors and exploring the recommended LMS platforms, you can choose the best technology to deliver effective and accessible online training for CCIs in non-urban areas.

2.6. IN SITU project: The training component

The training component of the IN SITU capacity-building programme aimed to enable CCIs in non-urban regions across Europe to advance and become drivers of innovation, entrepreneurship, competitiveness, and sustainability. During a one-year period (September 2023 to September 2024), we organised a series of interactive group workshops and seminars, as well as individual mentoring sessions in the IN SITU Labs, located in six non-urban regions of Europe: **Azores archipelago, mid-Atlantic Ocean**, Portugal; **Western coastal periphery**, Ireland; **West Region**, Iceland; **Rauma and Eurajoki, West Coast and Baltic Sea archipelago**, Finland; **Valmiera County**, Latvia; and **Šibenik-Knin County**, Croatia.

The **training methodology** focused on two or three days training—workshops or a seminar for local CCIs actors in the respective region and other target groups, in a hybrid/blended format, both online and offline. The training was combined with a public presentation of the IN SITU project for a wider outreach, and on-site visits and mentoring sessions for the identified case studies in these regions (see Part 3 of this Methodological Guide). An important part of the methodology was the involvement of local trainers and experts, together with the team of the National Academy of Theatre and Film Arts (NATFIZ), the local IN SITU Lab partners, and some of the consortium partners.

Topics, locations, and dates of the training workshops and seminars

The **training topics** were elaborated based on a thorough initial research among the local CCIs, artists and arts entrepreneurs, and corresponded to the priorities of these regions. As a result, we identified six key thematic clusters where training is needed to build capacities in the sector:

- Applying for EU Funding. Financial and fundraising opportunities.

- Networking and partnership, building coalitions at the local level. Engaging stakeholders, strategic alliances in CCIs. New creative spaces.

- Audience engagement and development. Visual and written storytelling.

- Applying digital technologies in CCIs practices. Digital marketing. Collective trademarking.

- Sustainability in CCIs: Strategic management and entrepreneurship: sustainability aspects. Eco-sustainable management. Cultural leadership.

- Social and business entrepreneurship in CCIs, considering a place-based approach.

Figure 4 provides **an overview of the workshops and seminars held in the six non-urban locations**. The titles, locations, and dates of the training were as follows:

- How can artists and creatives be more entrepreneurial and innovative in non-urban areas? – Rauma, Finland, 31 October – 2 November 2023.

- Elevate your innovative and creative potential in non-urban areas! Master the art of fundraising, using creative technologies, building strategic alliances – Galway, Ireland, 22–23 February 2024.

- Grow your innovative and creative potential in non-urban Areas! – Valmiera, Latvia: 24–26 April 2024.

- Unlock your brand potential: Empowering West Iceland's creatives and entrepreneurs – Borgarnes, Iceland, 30–31 May 2024.

- Collaborate & innovate: Boosting creative potential in the Azores! – Ponta Delgada, São Miguel Island, Azores, Portugal, 3–5 July 2024.

- Cooperation for sustainability: Strengthening capacities of local actors – Sibenik, Croatia, 30 September – 1 October 2024.
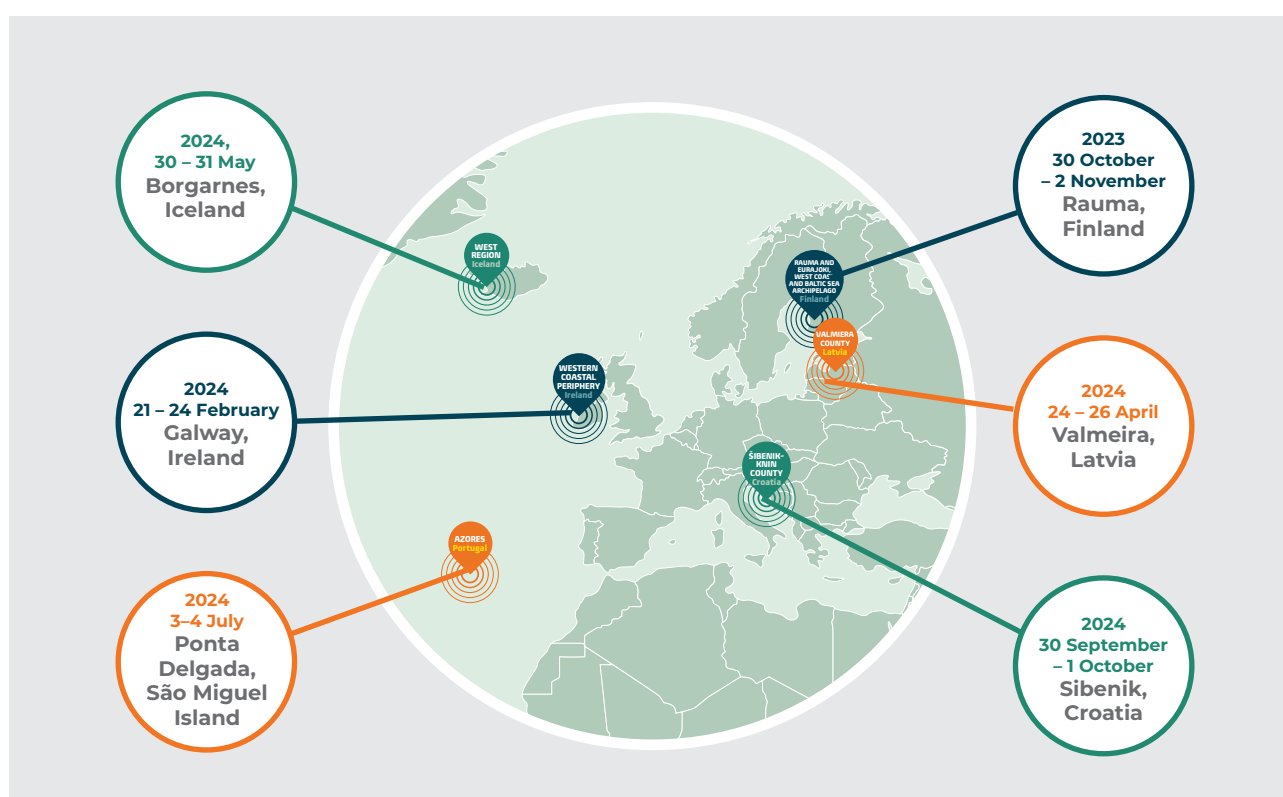
Figure 4. Locations and dates of the training workshops and seminars in IN SITU project

The methods of training included: presentations on specific topics, analysis of case studies, discussions of theoretical discourses and their practical implementation, role-playing exercises, discussions in smaller groups, short videos and analysis, and others. The training sessions were held in **a hybrid/blended model:** both online and offline in the selected locations. A mentorship process was also held in parallel before and after the training, both online and on-site, to assist the 12 identified case studies in the six Lab locations (see Part 3 of this Methodological Guide). After each training session, feedback was collected by the participants anonymously. The results were summarised and analysed to be considered for every next training workshop or seminar.

For every training (workshop or seminar) the following **preparatory and follow-up internal workflow** was completed (in partnership between NATFIZ and the respective IN SITU Lab teams in the six locations):

Before the training

- Elaboration of press news text for the forthcoming workshop/seminar (long and short versions for social media) and dissemination of information.

- Organising the venue for the training, including technical aspects for online participation.

- Sending registration form to potential participants.

- Elaboration of the full programme: sessions' structure, content, interactive methods, and bios of all presenters.

- Sending emails to all registered participants with the programme and the logistics of the training.

After the training

- Feedback form after the training and dissemination among participants. Summarising results.

- Providing certificates for attendance to the participants (upon request).

- Elaboration and sending a list of resources for further reading for all participants in the training, and for all sessions.

- Elaboration of press news text with results from the workshop/seminar (long and short versions for social media) and dissemination of information.

- The feedback provided by the participants in all IN SITU training sessions was very positive, especially concerning the content of the training and the actual topics that assists artistic and cultural practices, the balanced mix between theory and practice, the professionalism of the facilitators and speakers, the interactivity of the training sessions, and the opportunity for networking and sharing during the sessions.

2.7. Tips for training in CCIs in non-urban areas

Our experience in the IN SITU project helped us formulate key lessons learned and share these with our colleagues who are planning to also organise training sessions in CCIs in non-urban areas. In this section, we summarise these key tips that could help to elaborate and undertake a training session for CCIs that emphasises the importance of adaptability, community engagement, resource utilisation, and innovative approaches to foster the growth of creative sectors outside urban areas.

One significant lesson learned is the **necessity of elaborating tailored training programmes that reflect local needs and cultural contexts.** The conceptualisation of the training requires a thoughtful and adaptable approach that reflects the local context. Another critical aspect involves **leveraging local resources and assets**. **Networking and collaboration** play vital roles in the success of these training initiatives— training programmes should incorporate elements that facilitate networking, such as workshops or local creative fairs that allow individuals to showcase their work and connect with potential collaborators. Additionally, **understanding the impact of technology** is essential. Training programmes should equip participants with digital skills and knowledge about using technology to enhance their creative capabilities, market their products, and connect with wider audiences.

Moreover, the training curriculum for CCIs must address the **balance between social aspects and market demands**. Training should incorporate entrepreneurial skills that prepare individuals to navigate the creative economy more effectively. The **emotional and relational aspects of mentoring and training** are also important, as the individual experiences of trainees in creative industries highlight the need for robust support systems. Training programmes that facilitate peer support, community-building efforts and are connected with mentorship can create a nurturing environment that enables individuals to thrive.

Here are some specific tips that could help you develop effective and impactful training programmes for CCIs in non-urban areas:

Understanding the local ecosystem

- **Conduct a thorough needs assessment:** Before designing any training, deeply understand the specific skills gaps and needs within the local culture and creative sector. Talk to practitioners, organisations, and community leaders. What are the in-demand skills? What are the barriers to professional development? What is lacking in terms of their capacities and competences to run successfully their projects and organisations?

- **Identify existing resources and assets:** Recognise and leverage the existing cultural assets, traditions, and expertise within the non-urban area where you plan to

undertake the training. Ask the question: How can local artisans, artists, and creative entrepreneurs contribute to the training? What are there underutilised spaces, community centres, or unconventional spaces that could serve as training venues?

- **Tailor content to the local context:** Ensure the training content is relevant to the specific cultural landscape, artistic practices, traditions, and economic realities of the region. Generic urban-centric training might not resonate or be directly applicable.

Designing and delivering the training

- **Embrace hybrid and flexible formats:** Consider a blend of in-person workshops, online modules, webinars, and mentorship to overcome geographical limitations and cater to different learning styles and schedules.

- **Utilise local venues and spaces:** Partner with community centres, libraries, arts organisations, or even unconventional spaces to host in-person training sessions, making them accessible and familiar to participants.

- **Focus on practical, hands-on skills:** Emphasise skill-based training that provides tangible outcomes and immediate applicability for participants in their local context. This could include workshops on specific artistic techniques, digital marketing for creatives, grant writing for local arts initiatives, or community arts project management.

IN SITU Training Azores, Ponta Delgada - July 2025

- **Incorporate peer learning and networking:** Design opportunities for participants to connect, share experiences, and build a supportive network. This is particularly important in non-urban areas where professional isolation can be a challenge.

- **Bring in external expertise strategically:** While leveraging local knowledge is crucial, don't hesitate to bring in specialised trainers or experts from outside the region for specific topics or to provide fresh perspectives. Consider virtual guest speakers or intensive short-term workshops.

- **Keep costs accessible:** Be mindful of the financial constraints often faced by individuals and organisations in non-urban areas. Explore options for subsidised training fees, scholarships, or in-kind contributions.

- **Offer follow-up support and mentorship:** Training shouldn't be a one-off event. Provide ongoing support through mentorship programmes, resource sharing, or alumni networks to help participants implement their newly acquired skills.

Focusing on relevant skills

- **Digital literacy and online presence:** Equip participants with the skills to navigate the digital landscape effectively, including building websites, using social media for promotion, engaging in e-commerce, and utilising online collaboration tools.

- **Community engagement and outreach:** Train participants in how to connect their creative work with the local community, develop participatory projects, and build audiences within their region.

- **Small business and entrepreneurial skills:** For those looking to build sustainable creative careers, offer training in areas like business planning, marketing, financial management, and legal considerations specific to the creative sector.

- **Grant writing and fundraising:** Provide guidance on identifying funding opportunities relevant to non-urban arts and culture and developing compelling grant proposals.

- **Cultural heritage preservation and promotion:** If relevant to the region, offer training in documenting, preserving, and promoting local cultural heritage through contemporary creative practices.

Building sustainability after the training

- **Train the trainers:** Invest in developing local individuals to become trainers and facilitators, ensuring the long-term capacity for skills development within the community.

- **Foster partnerships:** Collaborate with local government agencies, educational institutions, community organisations, and businesses to pool resources and create more comprehensive training opportunities.

- **Build peer support local networks:** Training can be a great opportunity to foster connections among future CCI practitioners in the area. Encourage continuous networking and the development of peer support systems that can continue long after the training concludes. This can be particularly valuable in less densely populated areas where professional isolation might be a concern.

- **Offer ongoing mentorship:** Recognise that the learning journey continues after the initial training. Explore options for providing ongoing mentorship, supervision, or communities of practice to support practitioners as they implement their CCI skills in their local areas.

- **Evaluate and adapt:** Regularly assess the effectiveness of your training programmes and adapt them based on feedback and the evolving needs of the local culture and creative sector.

In summary, training in CCIs in non-urban areas is effective when focusing on practical, hands-on learning relevant to the local context, emphasises on community engagement and collaboration, utilises accessible low-tech methods, uses engaging and participatory methods and builds on existing knowledge and skills of participants. Focusing on the specific needs and opportunities of the CCis in non-urban areas and employing creative and adaptable training methodologies, could empower individuals and strengthen the sector within these vibrant communities.
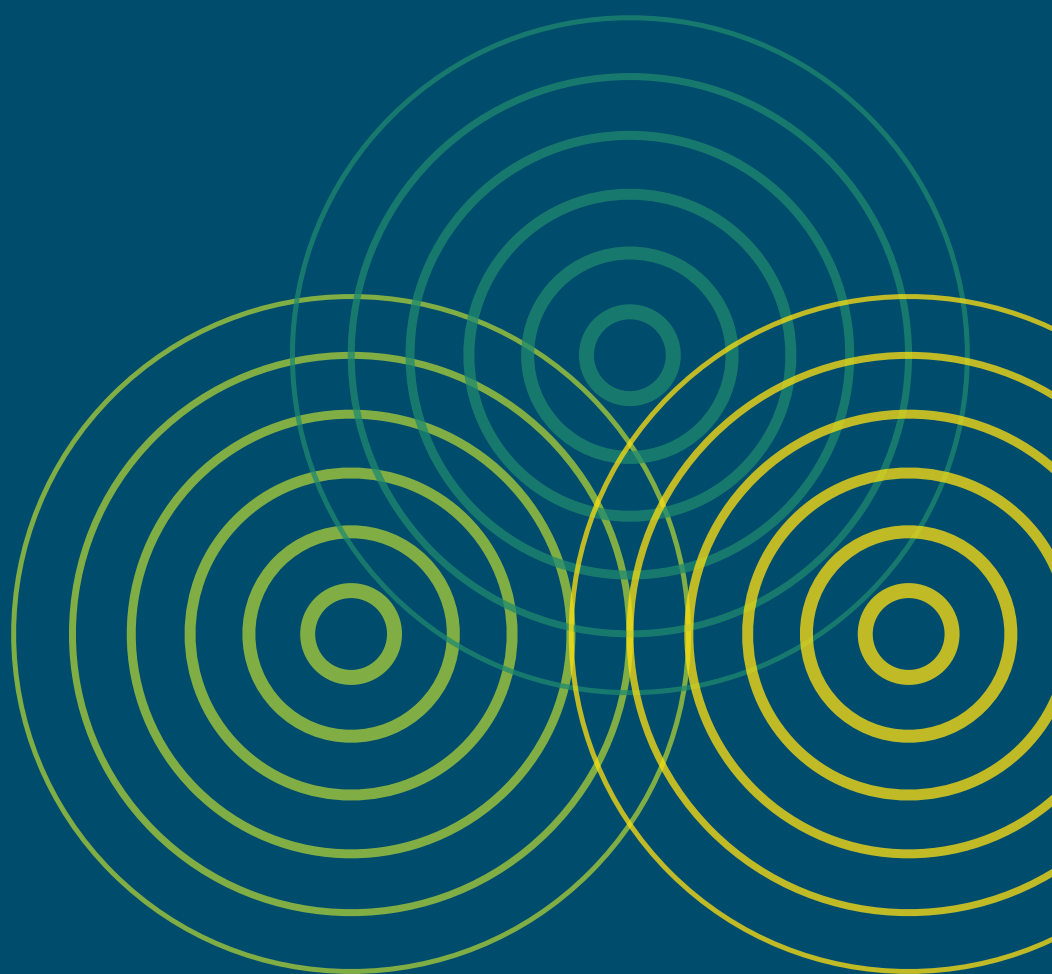
3

Mentoring and other personalised methods of capacity-building:
Key methodological aspects
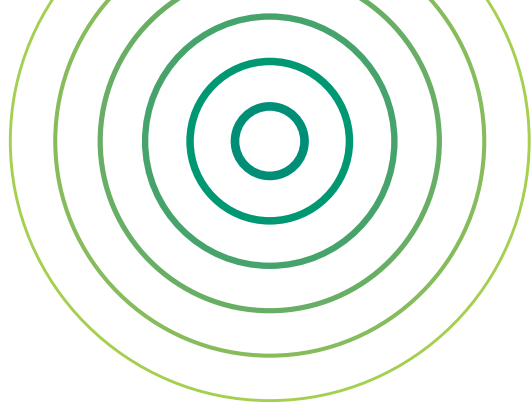
3.1. What is mentoring? The mentor, the mentee, and the phases in the mentoring process

In today's context of lifelong learning and continuous improvement of skills and competences to leverage the rapid technological development, mentoring and other personalised supporting methods can create manifold positive impacts related to entrepreneurship and innovation, growth and motivation, productivity and engagement, expanding professional networks, and creating opportunities for cooperation and know-how exchange. Mentoring can be found not only in tailored mentorship programmes offered in various sectors, including the CCIs, but also in its informal format of mentoring relationships outside organised programmes. In its nature, mentoring is a two-way interactive process, during which the more experienced professional (mentor) and the less experienced one (mentee) exchange knowledge, resources and perspectives in their professional and sometimes personal growth.

Mentoring as a concept dates back from ancient times to Homer's epic poem, "The Odyssey". In the story, when Odysseus leaves for the Trojan War, he entrusts the care and guidance of his son, Telemachus, to a trusted friend named Mentor who guided him through life by sharing knowledge, experience, and advice. This ancient story highlights the core idea of a more experienced and knowledgeable figure guiding a less experienced one, a concept that has resonated through centuries and continues to be valuable in personal and professional development.

Mentoring is centred around the special relationship between the mentor and the mentee, focusing on building a partnership and confidential relationship that aims at discovering talents and building capacities and skills. Mentoring is a development-oriented learning process that places the person in the centre rather than focusing on concrete tasks. It can comprise some elements from counselling, networking and coaching but is a distinctive development technique. While mentoring refers to a process in which a more experienced professional assists less experienced individuals, coaching is a form of assistance related to an individual's job-specific tasks, skills, competences, or capabilities. The mentoring and other personalised supporting methods can be adopted and used in the different CCIs in various contexts, especially in non-urban areas where the local contexts and specifics and tailored learning

approaches can stimulate entrepreneurship and innovation, changing the cultural landscape of respective regions.

In the process of choosing an appropriate and best-suited supportive technique for capacity-building in the CCIs in non-urban areas, it is worth exploring **the place of mentoring among different learning methods for the sectors of the CCIs** and the regional context. An in-depth perspective of mentoring is given by Renshaw (2009), who explores in-depth mentoring in the music sector through reflective and reflexive perspectives. He provides a working distinction among the different learning methods (see Table 6). His work appears to be a valuable contribution to understanding how mentoring can effectively support the artistic, professional, and personal growth of individuals within the music industry.

Table 6. Definitions of the different learning methods in the music sector

Buddying	Shadowing
Buddying is an informal, friendly 'confessional' process in which experiences and insights are shared. It offers low-level support with little sense of progression and is generally only short-term, assisting a transition to a new job or new role.	A job role can be 'shadowed' by a musician with an interest in learning about the role, without necessarily aspiring to do that particular job. The reasons for wishing to gain experience through shadowing and observation need to be clear and understood prior to the activity taking place. Shadowing might take the form of peer-to-peer 'conversation' about their shared observation of practice. This could develop into a continuing professional peer relationship – i.e., peer mentoring.
Counselling	**Advising**
At the centre of counselling lies a conversation about personal development issues that arise from professional practice.	Advising constitutes a conversation about professional issues that arise from practice in a specific context (e.g., career orientation, possible new directions for the future, professional development opportunities, new networks and partnerships, marketing, budgeting).

Tutoring

Tutoring is an intentional, goal-oriented activity aimed at fostering the understanding and learning of knowledge through the process of questioning, critical dialogue.

Instructing

Instructing comprises a didactic form of imparting and passing on specialist knowledge and skills with little scope for dialogue – i.e., a mechanistic model of transmitting knowledge.

Facilitating

Facilitating is a dynamic, non-directive way of generating a conversation aimed at enabling or empowering a person(s) to take responsibility for their own learning and practice.

Coaching

Coaching is an enabling process aimed at enhancing learning and development with the intention of improving performance in a specific aspect of practice. It has a short-term focus with an emphasis on immediate micro issues. (E.g., how can I improve my performance in this particular area? How can I strengthen my workshop practice? What are the most appropriate ways of making my team work together more effectively?).

Mentoring

Mentoring is a more developmental process, including elements of coaching, facilitating and counselling, aimed at sharing knowledge and encouraging individual development. It has a longer-term focus designed to foster personal growth and to help an individual place their artistic, personal and professional development in a wider cultural, social and educational context (e.g., why am I doing what I do? How do I perceive my musical identity? In what ways does this impact my professional life and work? Where am I going? What determines my long-term goals?).

Source: Renshaw (2009, pp. 62–63). The Framework for Mentoring was developed for the Prince Claus Conservatory in Groningen.

In the capacity-building process, it is advisable to apply different learning methods depending on the profile of the trainees/mentees and the expected learning outcomes. In the long term, mentoring can be considered as a method that offers shared learning and growth, focusing entirely on the personal and professional needs of the mentee as a complete priority. This makes mentoring a beneficial method of support for emerging artists and CCI entrepreneurs.

Characteristics, functions, and benefits of the mentor

The relationship between a mentor and a mentee is unique and depends on the person's expertise, characteristics and attitude toward the mentoring process. The mentor is the role model and professional figure from whom the mentee learns and encourages an innovative approach to the mentee's work. Renshaw (2009, p. 57) determines the skills and qualities needed to be a mentor: a positive attitude, flexibility, open-mindedness, non-judgmental, questioning and active listening, sensitivity to the needs of others, ability to diagnose the 'real' problem, and a sense of humour and enthusiasm. Mentors can be prominent professionals with sufficient contributions in the given field, willing to share their knowledge and experiences with less-experienced professionals. Mentoring can be considered as a process towards building a professional identity (Jyrämä & Känd, 2023), which contributes to adopting knowledge related to professional practices and norms.

Some of the **functions of the mentors** (Kisić & Jevtić, 2023) are:

- to create a relationship based on mutual confidence;

- to provide constant development support for a given period;

- to guide the mentee through the phases of professional and personal development;

- to help the mentee analyse their capacities, skills, and resources;

- to convey to the mentee important knowledge and information; and

- to offer new perspectives and constructive feedback.

From a psychological perspective, mentors' functions can include role modelling, acceptance and confirmation, counselling and friendship (Kram, 1983), so the mentee may develop a sense of competence, effectiveness, and confidence within the mentoring process. To be successful, the mentors should be ready to personalise their guidelines for each mentee, especially in the CCIs, a one-size-fits-all approach to learning cannot be effective. Mentors should offer insight rather than advice, listen without judgment, foster critical thinking and questioning of assumptions, and help mentees see new perspectives (Expert Panel, 2025). Mentors also have the responsibility to provide a safe space for discussion while creating opportunities for mentees to figure out their own potential through maintaining the balance between sharing and questioning.

In terms of learning methods, the most prominent are verbal exchanges such as discussions and sharing of knowledge and also encouragement, suggestions, comments, and advice (St-Jean & Audet, 2009) that mentors can provide from their professional and personal experience to the mentees. Mentors should consider long-term vision, emotions, and behavioural patterns in guiding the mentees to unlock

confidence and lasting transformation. Strong communication, active listening, and finding the correct words in guiding the mentee are in the centre of a successful mentoring process.

Key strategies that the mentor can employ in building the mentoring relationship include understanding the mentee's hopes, fears, and expectations, establishing an agreement on the style of intervention, recognising that mentoring has the potential to transform both partners and seeking feedback from the mentee about the status of the relationship. The benefits for the mentor in this relationship also vary for each individual. In any case, the mentor can receive personal satisfaction by contributing to the mentee's development, improving their perspectives and strengthening their professional position. Mentoring is a mutual learning process, so the mentor may go through personal or professional transformation while articulating their experience and knowledge in the conversation with the mentee.

Motivations and benefits of the mentee

Similarly, the mentee has different motivations to start the mentorship process. In general, the mentee is the person who needs support from a mentor and is willing to improve their knowledge and skills and receive advice. While mentees are responsible for their learning and development, the mentors support the process. Hence, the mentees should be open to new ways of working and exploration, willing to try new things and ready for change. They need to understand their motives, strengths, and development needs, define their goals, and agree with the aim of the mentoring relationship. During the mentoring process, the mentee should share background information, be prepared to act upon the mentor's advice, seek advice and frequent contact, and take advantage of the opportunities provided and create their personal and professional development plan.

The benefits for the mentee in this process are many, including a better insight into their capacities and strengths, knowledge to formulate goals for their personal and professional development, opportunities for reflection, planning and self-analysis, acquiring life skills and knowledge, an extended network, etc. For the less-experienced individuals, mentoring can be an effective way for understanding and engaging within the context in which they are working (Renshaw, 2009). In this way, mentees can strengthen their conviction and understanding of their profession, practice, and learning.

The mentoring relationship, even though unique, should be an honest interaction between a proven professional and a person who seeks guidance and knowledge expansion, over a clearly determined period. Mentoring is an asymmetrical relationship, guided by the needs, expectations and goals of the mentee. Hence, a clear understanding of the roles, precisely defined expectations, and a long-term

commitment of both mentor and mentee are needed for a quality mentoring relationship. Kisić and Jevtić (2023, p. 19) provide a few examples of well-defined **r**ules of the mentoring process encompassing respect for each other, discretion, defining undesirable topics, formalities about communication outside meetings, and setting up joint rules.

Phases in the mentoring process

Mentoring is a relatively long process of building trust and mutual respect between the mentor and the mentee. The mentoring relationship can be described in four phases, which make it easier to be coordinated and monitored within the capacity-building efforts. The **four phases of mentoring** (Kram, 1983, p. 614) are:

1. the **initial** phase, during which the pairing is established

2. the **cultivation** phase, during which the functions provided are expended

3. the **separation** phase, during that time the relationship is altered by structural changes in the organisational contexts or by psychological changes within the individuals

4. the **redefinition** phase, during which the relationship evolves a new form or ends entirely.

Mentoring encloses many opportunities for the professional and personal development of both mentors and mentees. However, **thoughtful preparation** is needed to make the mentoring process successful. Crucial moments in this process are: pairing suitable mentors with their mentees, placing boundaries of interactions, creating a clear agenda and goals, among others. Perhaps, the most challenging phase of the mentoring process is the pairing. Based on research and evaluation of mentoring in various contexts, it appears that mentoring cannot be forced (Bierema & Merriam, 2002). The pairing should not be random but based on the pre-existing "chemistry" and commitment among the parties—the perspectives of building mutual respect, trust, and comfort among the mentor and mentee within the time.

All phases of mentoring should be well-considered to produce a successful outcome at the end of the process. Here the role of mentorship coordinators/organisers is central in pair-matching that reflects the specific profile of the mentees, facilitating the process to ensure open sharing and strong relationship among the parties, putting efforts for a good and appropriate end of this relationship and creating conditions for evolving the mentoring relationship into a new form that settle both parties in the process. The mentorship relationship should be based on several important preconditions related to trust, mutual respect, honesty, openness, and a desire for learning and development.

3.2. The needs and importance of entrepreneurial mentoring in the CCIs in non-urban areas

Mentoring in CCIs has a significant role in the development of the cultural and creative sectors with different intensities and opportunities. The professionals in these sectors need a broad range of skills, and artistic and management competences to carry out their work, which cannot be fully covered and developed in the framework of formal education. Most often, practitioners in the CCIs learn from their work and mistakes until they build stable organisations. Here comes the role of mentorship as an integral process of the career development of the professionals in the CCIs when they need to overcome some limitations from formal education, transfer successfully to the labour market or start their own business. Mentoring practices in the CCIs can be a good fit for building the capacity of the CCI workers and organisations but they are still not fully incorporated into professional practices and are relatively rare compared to other economic sectors (Ateca-Amestoy, 2023, p. 31). Because of the fragmented CCI sectors with a large number of freelancers and small- and medium-sized organisations, the mentorship relationship should be focused on entrepreneurship, networking, management and soft skills, planning, fundraising, audience development, decision-making and using new technologies. Moreover, mentoring can be an accompanying process in the development of new and innovative CCI businesses of entrepreneurs who have already received seed funding for their ideas.

According to the European Commission's Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (n.d.), the most pressing topics for CCIs are: access to finance, intellectual property rights, sustainability, and digitalisation. The mentoring process can address these challenges, especially when the mentor and the mentee operate in the same sector and cultural context. The mentors in CCIs can support their mentees in finding suitable funding programmes and financial instruments for CCI start-ups, create opportunities for the mentees to access financial networks, or provide support for gaining financial management and communication skills and attitudes. In the context of digitalisation, the mentors support the mentees in gaining knowledge and first-hand advice on intellectual property rights in the digital realm, application of artificial intelligence, cloud computing, immersive virtual reality, and blockchain technologies.

Mentoring can have a crucial role in fostering entrepreneurship and innovation in non-urban areas. Even though these regions can offer unique cultural traditions and heritage sites, they often face distinctive challenges related to limited access to resources, poor networking opportunities and lack of avenues for growth and sustainability, which may hinder innovation in CCIs. By sharing their knowledge and experiences, mentors can bridge these gaps and encourage CCI entrepreneurs to think outside the box and navigate various obstacles of the rural settings. By emphasising

local cultural identity, the mentorship in non-urban areas may stimulate authentic business practices combining tradition and innovation, locality and digitalisation, cultural heritage and new technologies.

Mentoring can be considered through various **categories**, such as formal vs. informal mentoring, through electronic formats or dedicated platforms, including mentoring schemes offering networking and group meetings. Mentoring can be a beneficial choice for cultural and creative workers and conducted on a one-to-one or one-to-many basis, peer mentoring, or collaboration in informal communities of practice (see Table 7).

Table 7. Different mentoring models in the CCIs sectors

One-on-one mentoring	Group mentoring
One-on-one mentoring is the traditional form of mentoring, in which the mentor provides personalised guidance, support and advice tailored to the specific needs and goals of the mentee. This relationship is more intimate and allow deep discussions, open sharing and building professional identity of the mentee	Group mentoring takes the format of a mentor who guides several mentees simultaneously. The benefits of group mentoring are in creating a rich environment of diverse perspectives and fostering fellowship among the mentees.
Peer mentoring	**E-mentoring**
The peer mentoring model is also very suitable for CCI sectors, as it allows the mentees in similar career stages to learn from each other, exchange know-how and ideas and develop collaborative projects. This form of mentoring can create a sense of community among emerging CCI professionals and stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship through mutual learning.	This form of mentoring comes with many positives such as flexibility and accessibility and challenges related to the use of technologies, building virtual relationships and fostering trust and mutual respect. E-mentoring allows mentors to connect with their mentees through video calls, webinars, social networks, breaking geographical barriers and reaching CCI professionals in non-urban areas.

In the CCIs, the mentor should have a longer experience in the respective sector, so they can act as a neutral observer of the career development of the mentee and create a reality-based learning situation. The mentors in CCI sectors should possess certain qualities that can contribute to building the learning environment, such as credibility and experience in the particular sector, so they can transfer their personal, artistic and professional skills to the mentee, willing to adopt a listening and supportive role by overcoming their ego, status and authority, having empathy and interpersonal skills and the ability to be self-reflective and self-aware, being open and non-judgmental in relation the mentee's individual and professional context (Renshaw, 2009).

The **mentor's functions with CCIs in non-urban areas** are unique due to the specificities of the context and the mindset of the mentees. Here is a breakdown of their key functions:

- **Bridging geographical and professional isolation.** Non-urban creative practitioners often experience isolation from industry hubs, networks, and peers. Mentors can act as a vital link, providing connection and reducing feelings of being cut off. Mentors with urban or broader connections can also introduce mentees to valuable networks, opportunities, and resources that might otherwise be inaccessible. By providing support and guidance, mentors can help retain creative talent within non-urban areas, fostering local growth and preventing a migration to urban centres for career advancement.

- **Navigating the specificities of the local context.** Mentors need to be familiar with the non-urban area so that they can help mentees understand and navigate the unique cultural nuances, traditions, and audiences within their region. They can guide the mentees towards local funding bodies, community initiatives, collaborative possibilities, and unique regional assets that can be leveraged for creative work. Mentors can offer advice to creative entrepreneurs on how to tailor creative products and services to resonate with local tastes and needs, ensuring relevance and sustainability.

- **Fostering community engagement and collaboration.** Mentors can facilitate connections between creative individuals and local businesses, organisations, and community groups, fostering collaborations that benefit both the creative sector and the wider community. By supporting individual growth and connections, mentors contribute to the development of a more vibrant and interconnected local creative scene. Mentors can help in advocating for the importance of arts and culture within the local community, helping to raise awareness and secure support.

- **Addressing resource limitations and infrastructure challenges.** Mentors can help mentees identify resourceful and innovative ways to overcome the limitations of the non-urban areas in terms of resources and infrastructure. They can also guide mentees in effectively using online platforms to connect

with wider audiences and supporters, and market their work, overcoming geographical barriers. Mentors can advise on building resilient and sustainable creative practices that are adapted to the specific economic and environmental realities of non-urban areas.

- **Building confidence and resilience in a less formalised environment.** The often less structured and sometimes less recognised nature of creative work in non-urban areas can be challenging, this is why mentors offer crucial emotional support and validation. Mentors can help mentees connect with other local creatives, building a sense of community and shared identity that combats isolation and strengthens resilience.

Mentoring in the CCIs can be delivered for different purposes depending on the **professional environment in which the mentee is situated.** For instance, mentoring programmes for university students are available in many universities to ensure the smooth transition of the CCI students into the labour market. Mentoring is one of the methods used to improve the individual performance of students and exists in different formal schemes involving mentors from the university staff, mentors from the professional field or peer-to-peer mentoring (students supporting freshmen).

Mentoring can be offered within the organisational bias or provided by the community in practice, which supports the overall capacity building and professionalisation of CCI organisations in the context of changing conditions of labour, economy and technology. In the field of entrepreneurship and innovation, mentoring support may vary based on the type of entrepreneurs, personality traits, their decision-making style and stage of development (Memon et al., 2015). Saiz (2023) outlines three types of mentoring of entrepreneurs in CCIs based on the objective—personal, professional, or business development of the entrepreneur. The benefits that Saiz connects to entrepreneurship mentoring are:

- Improved skills of the entrepreneur;

- The mentor's ability to advise and show the entrepreneur new perspectives;

- Assisting the entrepreneur in creating their contact networks;

- Receiving support for emotional intelligence and confidence development;

- Helping the entrepreneur learn to create methods and strategies; and

- Assuring motivation and harmony.

Mentoring novice entrepreneurs in CCI can improve their success rates. Usually, the CCI entrepreneurs need extensive support rather than acquiring experience through trial-and-error processes. Often entrepreneurs rely on their networks for

getting advice on major decisions. Due to limited time and lack of colleagues in the early stages of the SME establishment, the CCI entrepreneur's existing network can support confidence development, provide different opinions and perspectives and create opportunities for reflection.

E-mentoring is an effective option for CCI professionals in non-urban areas, however, the online interactions require more time availability and flexibility for both mentors and mentees. Bierema and Merriam (2002) define it as

> *a computer-mediated, mutually beneficial relationship between a mentor and a protégé which provides learning, advising, encouraging, promoting, and modelling, that is often boundaryless, egalitarian, and qualitatively different than traditional face-to-face mentoring.* (p. 214)

E-mentoring allows for increased geographical reach, especially in matching mentoring pairs. E-mentoring can have all forms of traditional face-to-face mentoring—between peers, one-to-one, one-to-many, etc. but the nature of the online mentoring relations may be different when it comes to quality given the mediated environment (Verbolen et al., 2023). E-mentoring overcomes geographical and time constraints as it provides flexibility for scheduling meetings but this relates to many difficulties—a lack of intimacy if the mentor and mentee never met in person, constraints in building mutual trust and confidence, miscommunication or late answering, challenges with digital privacy, technical problems, online fatigue and slower bonding. Hence, more efforts are required by both parties to establish and maintain an e-mentoring relationship.

The identified **challenges in the mentoring schemes in the creative industries**, according to Gannon et al. (2022), are:

- **The concept of mentoring can be misunderstood**: Especially, when the mentee sees the mentoring as free consultancy or services, which does not fit the ethos of the mentoring schemes.

- **Recruitment and attraction of mentors and mentees**: Encompassing issues related to recruitment of sufficient number of mentors, and their opportunities to dedicate time and commitment to the programme, or building appropriate selection criteria for the mentees.

- **Sustaining engagement and commitment**: When the mentees struggle to commit to a regular schedule, or have difficulties in managing conflicting and changing priorities in their professional and personal lives.

- **Bespoke mentor and mentee match**: When the mentoring scheme experiences challenges in securing mentors from backgrounds that match those of the mentees due to social inequalities in the CCIs.

- **Administrative and logistical difficulties**: They may affect all parties—mentors, mentees and organisers of the mentoring scheme in the different stages of recruitment, selection, training, mentoring and evaluation.

- **Sustaining continuity**: This challenge relates to mentoring relationships and the mentoring schemes themselves. Because of busy schedules, mentoring may struggle unless coordinators encourage activity, the contact and momentum or many mentoring schemes take a "hands-off" approach and neglect a good ending and closure of mentoring relationships.

- **Funding**: This may be a crucial challenge for the establishment and continuation of the mentoring scheme in CCIs, depending on the existing funding schemes and their priorities.

> In summary, entrepreneurial mentoring in non-urban CCIs is crucial for overcoming isolation, navigating local specificities and resource limitations, fostering community connections, building resilience, and ultimately enabling the sustainable growth and success of creative ventures in these often-underserved areas. The mentorship process should be very thoughtful in the preparation, implementation, and follow-up phases.The unique cultural and geographic contexts of the CCI professionals can be an opportunity or a challenge for the mentors to build a strong and beneficial relationship that can maximise the positive learning outcomes for both parties.

3.3. IN SITU project: The mentoring component

The mentoring component of the IN SITU project is part of the capacity-building dimension and aimed at assisting the identified 12 case studies (projects) in the six IN SITU Labs locations (as explained in the Introduction). The mentoring process started in November 2023 and is ongoing. The mentors are experts from the IN SITU consortium organisations and the local Labs. Each identified case study (project) has two or three mentors, a combination of local and international ones, to provide diverse perspectives. The mentors and mentees met every second or third month for a mentoring session of around 1.5 hours, mainly online, but also on the spot (in some of the cases). Figure 5 summarises the phases of implementation of the mentoring process.
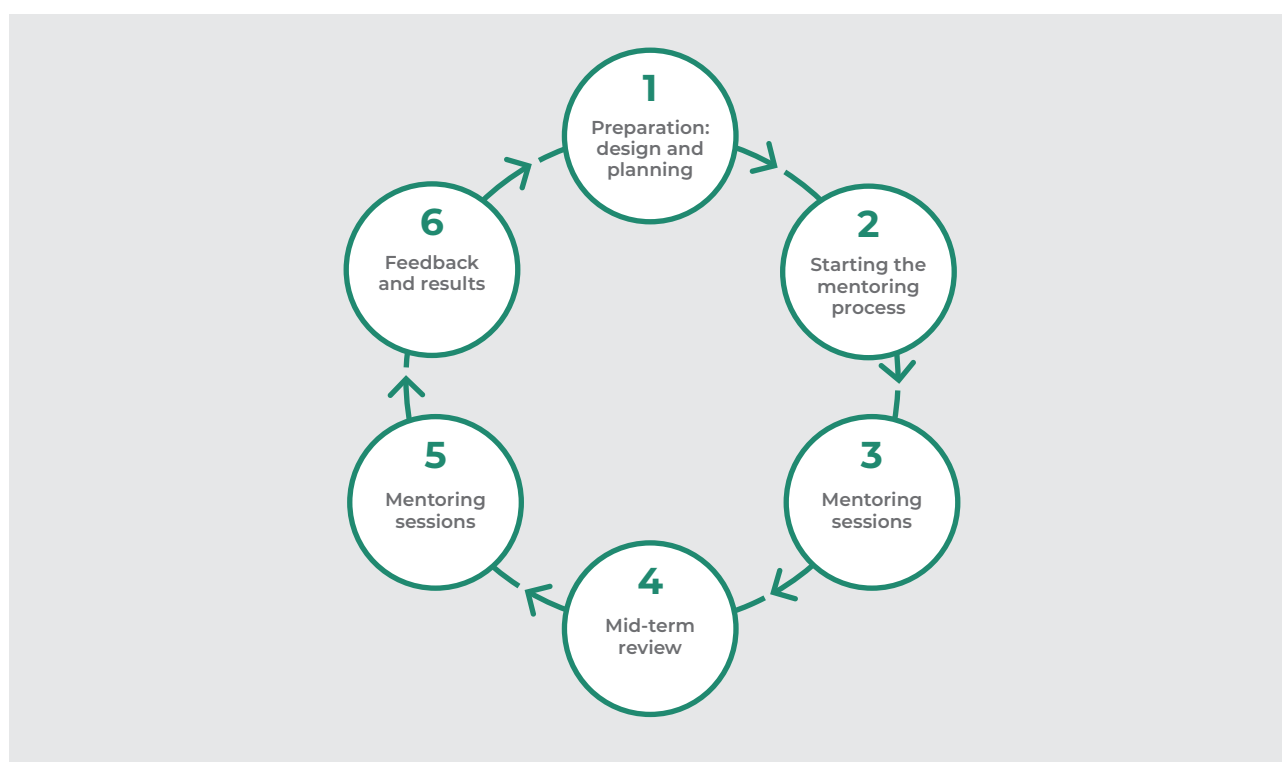
Figure 5. Phases in the IN SITU mentoring process.

Source: Own elaboration

In the preparatory process, and before starting the mentoring sessions, a thorough **documentation** was elaborated and held in archives to ensure that the mentoring process is monitored well:

- **Mentoring Letters of Agreement,** signed between the mentee and the mentors. These letters contain:

  — **Purpose and goals:** stating clearly what the mentoring relationship aims to achieve and the specific goals the mentee wants to work towards.

— **Roles and responsibilities:** outlining what is expected of both the mentor and the mentee, including preparation for meetings, communication styles, and commitment levels.

— **Meeting schedule and format:** stating how often and for how long the mentoring sessions will be held, and whether they will be in person, online, or a combination.

— **Confidentiality:** establishing the understanding from both sides that the discussions will be kept private and any exceptions to this.

— **Communication guidelines:** setting the expectations for how and when the mentor and mentee will communicate outside of scheduled meetings.

— **Review and termination:** describing how the relationship's progress will be reviewed and the conditions under which the agreement can be modified or ended.

- **Mentoring template for each session**. This template contains sections to help structure the conversation and track progress as well as to ensure accountability. Here's a brief overview of what the template contains:

  — **Date and time** when the session took place.

  — **Goals and topics** of the session, identified by the mentee.

  — **Key discussion points:** notes on the key issues and topics, questions, and insights that emerged during the conversation.

  — **Actions agreed upon:** a list of specific actions and a "to-do" list that both the mentor and mentee have agreed to undertake before the next session.

  — **Resources/support needed by the mentee:** identification of any publications, resources, contacts, or other support that the mentee needs to move forward and how the mentor could help.

  — **Mentor and mentee reflections:** a space to provide constructive feedback, takeaways, any progress made, and any shift in the thinking and actions of the mentee.

  — **Next steps:** agenda items for the next session, and the date/time to be held.

Ethical aspects and confidentiality

During the whole mentoring process, the IN SITU project considered seriously the key ethical aspects, and here is a breakdown:

- **Cultural sensitivity and local context:** Understanding local norms, avoiding imposing an "urban-centric" model by the mentors, valuing local knowledge, experience, and traditions.

- **Confidentiality and trust:** Maintaining strict confidentiality regarding personal or professional information shared by the mentee is paramount to building and preserving trust within the local ecosystem.

- **Transparency and honesty:** Maintaining open and honest communication about progress, challenges, and limitations, providing constructive feedback that is sensitive to the local context.

- **Clear boundaries and expectations:** Defining clearly the mentor's role and the boundaries of the mentoring relationship, providing realistic guidance by the mentor and avoiding creating unrealistic expectations about rapid success or external interventions.

- **Supporting and empowering atmosphere:** Making sure that the mentoring session is in a "risk-free" environment and both sides share openly their concerns, viewpoints, problems, and solutions.

- **Sustainability and long-term impact within the local ecosystem:** Aiming to build long-term resilience and sustainability of the mentee's creative practice or organisation within the local context.

- **Respect for local identity and traditions:** Encouraging ethical and respectful engagement with local heritage, providing advice that is related to local culture and communities.

Key issues discussed during the mentoring sessions

A summary of the key themes that were discussed so far between the mentees and mentors in the IN SITU project capacity-building component are shared below. These themes are based on the needs, identified by the mentees (due to confidentiality issues, the list is a summary, without specific references to case studies or project leaders):

- **Developing a strategic plan for the organisation:** Elaboration of mission, vision, SWOT analysis, and long-term objectives.

- **Funding and fundraising:** Potential sources of external funding from diverse sources, opportunities for self-generated incomes, elaboration of a creative project, and applying for government and foundation support.

- **Internationalisation of the project/organisation and expansion beyond borders:** Challenges and opportunities, diverse market and entry strategies, strategic partnership internationally, and sustainability.

- **Marketing management**, including: branding strategy and visual identity, creating effective content for social media, and diverse channels of communication with audiences.

- **Working with young people:** Using non-formal learning methodologies, strategies for engagement and creating platforms both online and offline to involve youth in remote areas.

- **Effective management of resources:** Technological, physical, human, financial, reputational, and balancing the creative talents with a commitment to a flexible and adaptive planning and utilisation of resources.

- **Local partnership and engaging stakeholders:** Involving touristic agencies, educational institutions, businesses, technological companies, and others for cross-pollination and cross-disciplinary collaborations.

- **Effective methods of communication with the local government:** Methods of lobbying and advocacy, working with local media and decision-makers for putting culture on the local political agenda, and achieving long-term goals.

> **In summary, the mentoring process, as part of the IN SITU project, is a tailored, collaborative, and capacity-building approach designed to empower local creative actors and organisations. We were aware that it is a locally sensitive, goal-oriented partnership that leverages the experience of mentors to guide and empower CCI practitioners in the targeted non-urban areas, helping them to overcome specific challenges and thrive within their unique regional context.**

3.4. Tips for mentoring of CCIs in non-urban areas

Our experience with the IN SITU project mentoring process in CCIs in non-urban areas has provided valuable insights and lessons learned that could assist further those who plan to undertake similar endeavours.

Firstly, mentoring efforts should focus **on building networks that encourage collaboration among local creatives**, allowing them to share knowledge and resources. Mentorship is usually a one-to-one process, but the **multiplication effect** is crucial so that the mentoring result spreads across the small artistic community in the non-urban area. Engagement with the community not only enriches the mentoring relationship but also enhances the relevance of creative outputs to the local context.

Adaptability in mentoring strategies is also a vital lesson for success in non-urban areas—mentorship programmes must be flexible enough to respond to changing circumstances. This includes topics related to addressing the emerging industry trends, integrating technology for remote learning options, and ensuring that local creatives are equipped with the skills necessary to thrive in a digital economy. It is important that **mentors learn in advance about the local assets, challenges, opportunities, and trends**, so that they can guide the mentees

effectively throughout the process. Successful mentoring programmes in non-urban areas should emphasise **entrepreneurial skills and innovation as critical components of the training process**. Mentors should focus on instilling a mindset of creativity and entrepreneurship in their mentees, preparing them for both local and global markets.

Here are some **tips to make your mentoring relationships work efficiently in non-urban CCI contexts:**

Understanding the local landscape:

- **Immerse yourself in the local ecosystem.** Before you even begin mentoring, take the time to deeply understand the specific cultural and creative landscape of the non-urban area. What are the dominant art forms? Are there strong local traditions? What kind of creative businesses exist? What are the key venues, organisations, and networks (formal and informal)? This localised knowledge will make your guidance with your mentees much more relevant.

- **Identify unique opportunities and challenges**. Non-urban areas often have distinct advantages like strong community bonds, unique local inspiration, and potentially lower operating costs. However, they might also face challenges such as limited access to funding, smaller markets, fewer networking opportunities, and potential isolation. Be aware of these before starting to guide your mentees.

- **Recognise the importance of place**. The sense of place and the sense of belonging is often deeply intertwined with the culture and creative work produced in non-urban areas. Encourage your mentees to explore how their location can inform and enrich their practice.

Building connections and networks:

- **Facilitate local networking**. Actively help your mentees connect with other creatives, cultural organisations, and potential collaborators within the region and outside of it. This might involve introductions, suggesting local events or workshops, or even helping to organise informal gatherings. Your experience from outside the region could help a lot in expanding their connections and networks internationally. If it is relevant, explore opportunities to connect your mentees with resources, networks, and markets in more urban centres. This could involve virtual introductions, suggesting relevant online platforms, or even planning occasional joint events or exhibitions.

- **Leverage digital tools**. In areas with potentially limited physical interaction, digital platforms become crucial. Encourage your mentees to build a strong online presence, utilise social media effectively, and explore online marketplaces or collaborative platforms. Help them to learn about possible online business models to generate higher revenues for their initiatives and organisations, considering the global market.

Tailoring your mentoring approach:

- **Embrace the "Generalist" reality.** In smaller creative scenes, individuals often wear many hats and have multiple responsibilities when running their non-profit organisation or cultural project. Be prepared to offer guidance on a broader range of skills, from artistic practice, marketing, and community engagement to fundraising, budgeting and business models.

- **Focus on sustainability and resilience.** Find a moment in your mentoring process to discuss with the mentees strategies for building sustainable creative careers or organisations within the specific economic and social context of the non-urban area. This might include discussing strategic management and planning, diverse income streams, community-based funding models, or collaborations with sharing resources.

- **Champion local identity.** Encourage your mentees to embrace and celebrate the unique cultural identity of their region in their work. This can be a powerful differentiator and a source of authentic creative expression. Motivate them to contribute to the branding of the region/place and its international visibility. This can motivate them to be proud of what they have in their place, and share it with the world.

- **Be patient and persistent.** Developing a creative organisation or building a career in CCIs in a non-urban place can sometimes take much more time and effort due to the factors mentioned earlier. Be prepared to not see immediate results of your mentoring, but to have a strategic approach and patience, offering consistent support and encouragement to your mentees.

Specific areas to address in the mentorship process:

- **Access to resources**. Help your mentees identify, understand, and navigate local funding opportunities, grant programmes specifically for regional and local arts, and potential in-kind support from local businesses or organisations. During the mentoring session, raise the topic of alternative fundraising and financing, especially the one based on innovation and "thinking outside of the box."

- **Audience development.** Brainstorm with your mentees strategies for reaching local audiences and potentially expanding beyond the immediate area through online platforms or targeted outreach. Familiarise them with options for using digital technologies to go beyond the specific region/place and have a global outreach.

- **Community engagement.** Explore how your mentees connect their creative work with the local community, and suggest ways to foster a sense of belonging and mutual support. This could involve workshops, public art projects, charitable events, or collaborations with local schools or community groups.

- **Professional development.** Discuss opportunities for ongoing learning and skill development of your mentees, regardless of their age. This direction might involve participation in online courses, continuing the mentorship process with other international experts, or occasional travel to targeted workshops or conferences.

Ultimately, successful mentoring in this context requires a blend of understanding the unique local dynamics, fostering strong connections, and tailoring your guidance to the specific needs and aspirations of your mentees within their non-urban environment, while considering the international context. Your role is not just to impart knowledge but also to be a connector, a cheerleader, and a guide who understands the particular rhythms and possibilities of creating and thriving outside of major urban centres.
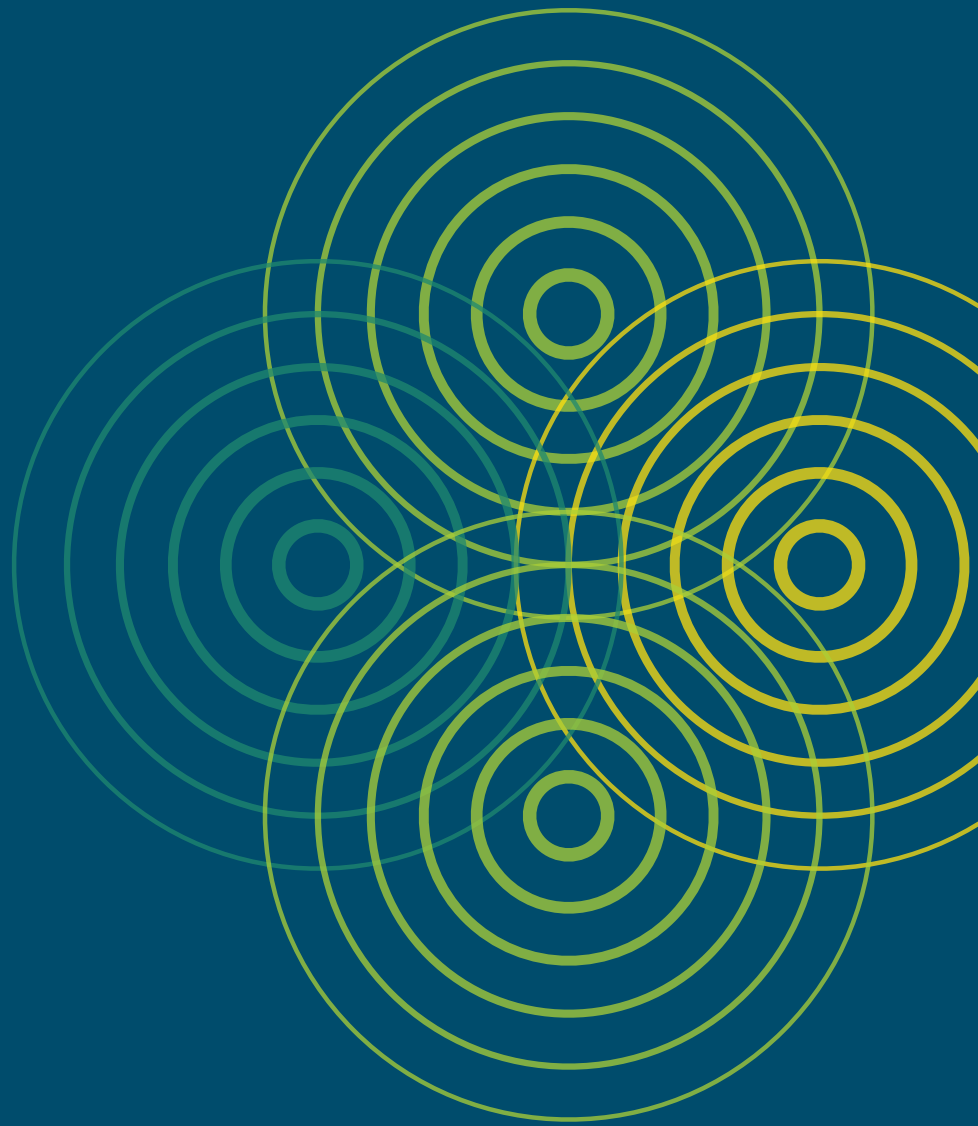
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Future trends
in developing
methodologies for
capacity building
in CCIs in
non-urban areas
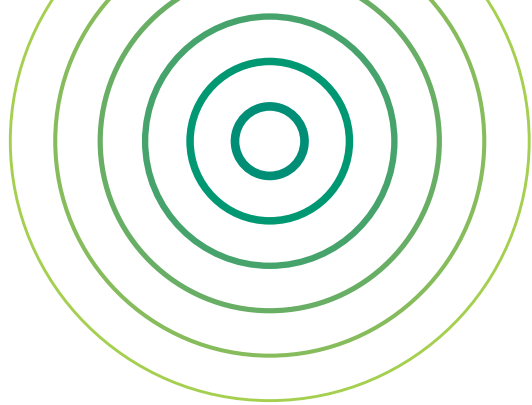
Future methodologies for capacity building of CCIs in non-urban areas are expected to evolve through innovative, context-specific approaches that emphasise community engagement, cross-sector collaboration, and the integration of digital and cluster-led strategies. These methodologies are increasingly recognised as necessary to address the unique social, economic, and infrastructural challenges in non-urban settings. The future trends in capacity building for CCIs in non-urban areas are increasingly influenced by emerging methodologies, technological adaptation, and the recalibration of traditional cultural resources to fit contemporary economic and social paradigms. In the context of rural and low-density regions, capacity building is not simply a replication of urban strategies but, as noted in the previous chapters, requires a tailored approach that accounts for local heritage, community dynamics, and the distinct economic structures found outside metropolitan areas (Silva et al., 2023). As these isolated regions strive to cultivate their unique artistic, cultural, social, and economic landscapes, effective capacity-building programmes will play an increasingly vital role in nurturing local talent, fostering innovation, motivating social and business entrepreneurship, and building sustainable ecosystems.

Based on our experience with the IN SITU project's capacity-building activities and initiatives, here are some key trends and directions we can anticipate (see Figure 6).

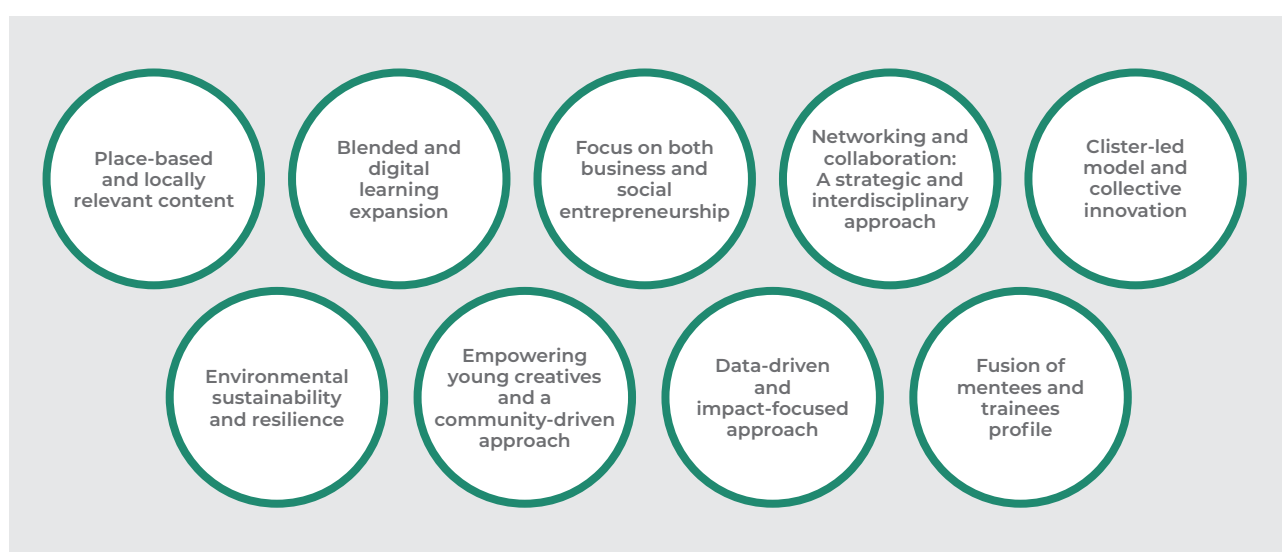**Figure 6.** Key trends in capacity-building in CCIs in non-urban areas. *Source: Own elaboration*

Place-based and locally relevant content

Capacity-building programmes tend to move away from the generic content of training and focus on content that directly addresses the specific needs, local cultural resources and assets, and social and economic realities of specific non-urban areas. Researchers have noted that the development of creative talent in non-urban areas requires curricula that are sensitive to local cultural heritage, community needs, and economic realities (Silva et al., 2023). Creative industries in non-urban areas necessitate training models that not only impart technical and entrepreneurial skills but also value local identity and social capital. Similarly, White (2010) indicates that creative activity in rural regions often arises from unique cultural practices that demand specialised support and training frameworks to leverage these community-specific assets. Training increasingly focuses on connections and correlations between the local heritage and traditions, with contemporary innovative practices. Another trend is that training initiatives involve more local communities in the design of the content and methods of training, as well as in the delivery process, to ensure a good sense of ownership and sense of belonging. Such an approach greatly encourages the motivation and participation of cultural actors to actively attend such training initiatives. Training initiatives are tailored to the cultural identities of non-urban areas and are directed towards developing skills and competences that cater to niche and local markets that have unique distinctiveness. We tend to see in the future a rise of highly localised training programmes that are deeply rooted in artistic practices and the socio-economic context of non-urban areas.

Blended and digital learning expansion

Addressing the often-limited digital infrastructure in non-urban areas, training now includes basic and advanced digital literacy, online marketing, e-commerce, and the use of digital tools for the creation and distribution of creative products. As supported by studies addressing the integration of education, community involvement, and innovative technology in rural development, strategies that combine local knowledge with modern digital solutions have shown promise in enhancing the adaptability and sustainability of rural creative industries (Yu et al., 2024). This digital integration not only supports the development of creative skills but also facilitates market connections, knowledge transfer, and effective community empowerment. The remote learning and hybrid models certainly have a future—the online platforms, webinars, virtual networking events, and blended learning approaches are becoming increasingly common, allowing wider access to training resources, overcoming geographical barriers, and offering flexible learning opportunities. These models maximise the reach and impact. Training for creatives is starting to incorporate emerging technologies like virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), especially

concerning audience engagement and the development of innovative cultural products and experiences. The trend of blending digital tools with personalised human interaction to overcome geographical barriers and enhance the mentoring experience will also continue.

Focus on both business and social entrepreneurship

There is an increasing emphasis on entrepreneurial training and mentoring as a pathway for fostering creative industries outside metropolitan contexts. Matetskaya (2015) highlights the importance of educational programmes designed for creative entrepreneurs, noting that such programmes must integrate practical skill development with an understanding of market dynamics. A key focus of capacity-building programmes in the future will continue to be the understanding of how individuals and organisations in the non-urban areas can elaborate and apply sustainable business models, both online and offline. As in these locations, the business growth does not provide immediate results, or even sometimes is not possible, the impact on social entrepreneurship and recognising the social and community-building role of culture in the entrepreneurial process, is of utmost importance. The training programmes will continue to include modules on alternative financing and fundraising for emerging creative organisations and startups, beyond the traditional state-subsidised system of grants, such as crowdfunding, sponsorship, debt financing, equity investments, and developing diverse self-generating revenue activities. Also, the role of culture and the arts in addressing social challenges, promoting community cohesion, and enhancing well-being in non-urban areas will continue to be emphasised in the capacity-building programmes so that the practitioners are equipped with skills in participatory art, cultural democracy, and using their artistic creativity for social impact and connection with solving social problems.

Networking and collaboration: A strategic and interdisciplinary approach

Capacity building in non-urban areas can be greatly enhanced by designing dynamic and participatory knowledge exchange processes. Such approaches enable local stakeholders to both contribute to and benefit from shared strategic frameworks, thereby fostering community-led regeneration processes (Åberg et al., 2024). The collaborative model of mentorship increases popularity, as it is designed to ensure that mentoring extends beyond traditional one-to-one relationships and efficiently addresses business challenges through combined resources and shared knowledge (Rosyadi & Haryanto, 2019). Such multi-stakeholder models can serve as a robust empowerment strategy by simultaneously addressing aspects of financial management, product innovation, and market connectivity.

Training programmes will continue to be designed to foster connections and collaborations among cultural and creative practitioners and local stakeholders of all types—businesses, tourism agencies, educational organisations, touristic agencies, technological sector, environmental organisations, among others. Such an interdisciplinary collaboration helps immensely for breaking down silos and fostering holistic approaches to local development. Interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral mentoring has a future as it fosters "thinking outside of the box" and cross-fertilising experiences between mentees and mentors from different fields.

An important aspect is the growing recognition of the need to align capacity-building efforts with broader cultural and regional development policies. For increasing opportunities and access to resources, the capacity-building programmes are also directed towards building connections to regional and national networks. Strategic collaboration in the arts and creative industries sector is becoming very important for securing sustainability with collective efforts, for example, the development of creative clusters, strategic alliances, co-productions, co-working spaces, and others. These collaborations foster resource pooling, the mutual adaptation of best practices across sectors, and the combined leverage of public policy with grassroots initiatives. This integrated strategy is essential for addressing the complex challenges faced in non-urban contexts where resources are limited and economic diversification is crucial.

Cluster-led model and collective innovation

Another significant trend in the development of methodologies for capacity-building in CCIs is the cluster-led model that promotes collective innovation and collaborative growth within creative sectors. This model organises practitioners in clusters and they benefit from shared expertise in design, production, management, and marketing (Lommerse et al., 2011). This model not only facilitates the transfer of tacit knowledge among creative professionals but also creates an ecosystem for continuous mentoring and support. The cluster-led approach is especially relevant in non-urban areas as it compensates for the sparse distribution of individual expertise by fostering a networked collaborative environment encompassing local institutions, businesses, and community organisations.

Environmental sustainability and resilience

Training and mentoring will increasingly integrate principles of environmental sustainability, promoting eco-friendly creative practices and the use of local, sustainable resources. Building resilience within the cultural and creative sector to adapt to economic shifts, climate change, and other challenges will continue

to be a key focus. Given the unique vulnerabilities of non-urban CCIs, training and mentoring increasingly focus on building resilience and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances.

Empowering young creatives and a community-driven approach

Specific attention will be paid to training and mentoring programmes that nurture the talents of young people in non-urban areas, providing them with skills and opportunities to build careers locally. Capacity-building initiatives will explore strategies to retain creative talent within these regions, contributing to local economic and cultural vitality. Another emerging trend involves community-based training initiatives that leverage local stakeholders and institutions. For example, Munro (2016) illustrates how creative entrepreneurs in rural Scotland have embraced grassroots capacity-building approaches, which prioritise mutual support, local market-building, and community-driven training programmes. Such initiatives not only foster skill development but also promote social cohesion and local identity. This integrated strategy—combining formal education with community networks—has shown promise in empowering rural creatives to transform their cultural assets into sustainable economic ventures. Such community-driven methodologies support the notion that a bottom-up approach, where capacity building is closely linked with local heritage and collective identity, can provide a foundation for sustainable economic revitalisation.

Guiding CCIs in non-urban areas to leverage their creative practices for social and community benefit will also be of particular importance. This is why mentors with expertise in community engagement, social enterprise, and cultural development will be needed to help CCIs design and implement projects that address local needs, promote cultural preservation, and contribute to the vitality of their regions.

Data-driven and impact-focused approaches

There is a growing need for robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks to measure the impact of capacity-building initiatives on the ground. Data analytics will continue to be used to identify effective strategies, tailor programmes, and demonstrate the value of investing in culture and the arts in non-urban areas. Utilising data and evaluation to improve the effectiveness of mentoring programmes and employing tools and metrics to track the progress of mentees, to measure the impact of mentoring on their growth and on the broader CCI ecosystem in non-urban areas, will need refining and better usability in the future.

Fusion of mentees and trainees profiles

Finally, it is important that mentorship programmes target both emerging and experienced cultural managers, entrepreneurs and leaders in non-urban areas, equipping them with the strategic thinking, management skills, and networks needed to drive the sector forward. Also, the intergenerational mentoring and training assists in connecting younger creatives with seasoned professionals who can offer invaluable experience is particularly important in preserving traditional crafts and cultural knowledge, ensuring that essential skills are passed down to the next generation.

In summary, mentoring and training methodologies for CCIs in non-urban areas will continue to be localised and context-specific, embedded as a core component of broader capacity-building programmes, providing sustained, individualised support to participants in a networking and collaborative context. By embracing these future trends, mentoring and training can continue to be a powerful part of capacity building programmes as a catalyst for the growth, innovation, and resilience of CCIs in the unique and valuable contexts of non-urban areas.

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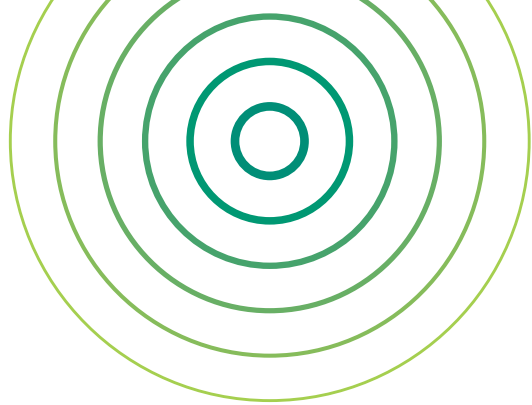
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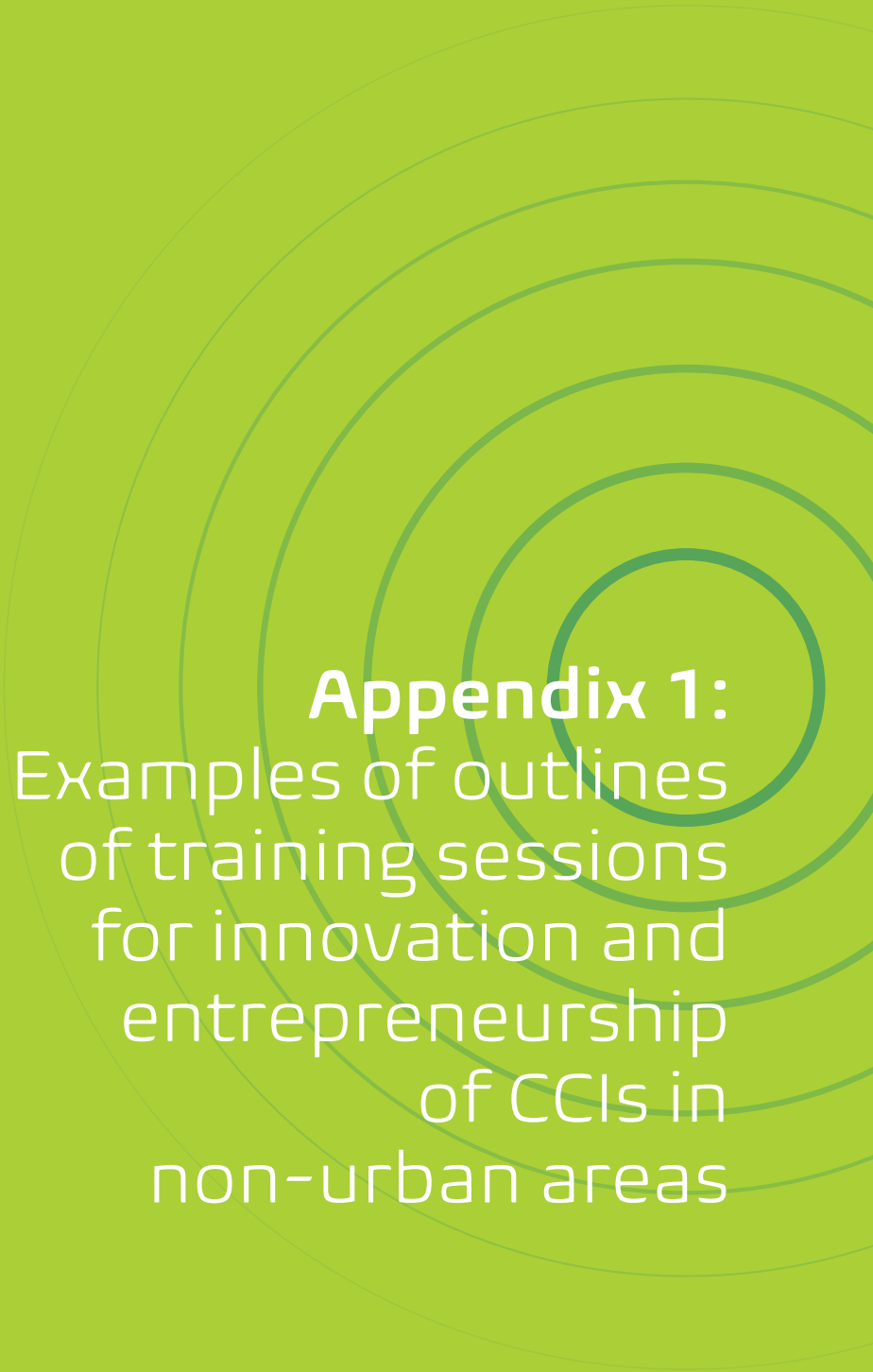
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Appendix 1:
Examples of outlines of training sessions for innovation and entrepreneurship of CCIs in non-urban areas

The rationale

The following examples of training sessions for capacity building of CCIs in non-urban areas are extracted from the accumulated experience during the implementation of **IN SITU project**. An important part of the project was to conceptualise and deliver training sessions, based on the six identified thematic clusters. The sessions were held in the period November 2023 to September 2024 in each of the six **Lab regions related to the IN SITU project** (listed in the Introduction).

The identified **training topics** correspond to the previously researched needs of the CCI actors in these regions—to improve the entrepreneurial and innovative capacities of artists living and working in non-urban areas in these regions, to unlock new possibilities for collaboration, and partnership, elaborating models for social and business entrepreneurship and income generation, learning about storytelling as a way to widen access and audiences, seeking ways to improve funding opportunities and apply to EU programmes in CCIs. The six **thematic clusters** around which the IN SITU training sessions were held are described in the Introduction to this Methodological Guide, and in the next section where resources are collected to facilitate trainers for future similar seminars and workshops. This part of the IN SITU project sought to secure a multiplication effect of the conducted capacity-building training, consulting, and mentoring sessions.

Target audiences for the training sessions

The IN SITU seminars and workshops focused on the following target audiences that correspond to the identified profiles of cultural operators in CCIs in non-urban areas in part 1.5. of the Methodological Guide:

Primary:

- **Local CCIs practitioners:** This group includes artists, designers, craftspeople, performers, writers, digital media creators, and individuals running small creative businesses in non-urban areas. They usually attend such seminars to gain new

skills, knowledge about business and social development, cultural marketing, audience engagement, funding opportunities, and networking possibilities relevant to their specific fields in a non-urban setting.

- **Cultural entrepreneurs and individuals interested in starting a creative business:** These seminars can also attract people who already run an entrepreneurial venture in a non-urban area (business or social) or are considering launching a CCI-related venture. They are looking for a structured knowledge and sharing of ideas to increase their capacity and skills for successful entrepreneurial practices.

Secondary:

- **Regional and local policymakers and public administrators.** These individuals are interested in understanding how CCIs can contribute to the economic, social, and cultural development of their non-urban areas. Seminars can provide insights into policy frameworks, funding mechanisms, and strategies for supporting the growth of the creative sector in their region.

- **Community leaders and stakeholders.** They are involved in local community development, such as representatives from cultural organisations, heritage groups, tourism boards, and educational institutions. They are usually interested in links between CCIs and their areas, cross-sectoral innovation potential, and how CCIs can enhance the cultural vibrancy, social cohesion, and attractiveness of their areas.

- **Educators, students and researchers.** This group consists of academics and practitioners involved in arts, culture, and creative fields. They attend such sessions to share knowledge, learn about the specific challenges and opportunities in non-urban CCI ecosystems, and potentially form research collaborations and improve teaching methodologies.

We considered, based on experience, that an efficient number of the group for the training sessions: around 15–20 participants offline and another 15–25 participants online.

In Tables 8 to 14 we share seven examples of training sessions for capacity-building in CCIs in non-urban areas that we have approbated and they could be used by trainers in similar circumstances.

Table 8. Example of training session for capacity-building in CCIs in non-urban areas: Applying for EU funding

Session title	Applying for EU funding. Financial and fundraising opportunities
Session duration	1 hour 30 min.
Main objective	The main objective of the session is to increase the target group's knowledge in financial and fundraising opportunities from diverse sources (e.g., crowdfinancing/crowdfunding, angel investors, bank loans, foundations, government programmes and others). A special focus is paid on the European Union programmes in arts, culture and creative industries: opportunities, requirements, and tips for the elaboration of a successful project.
Learning objectives	**The session aims to provide answers to the following questions:** • What do we mean by the terms "financing and fundraising"? • What is the difference between debt and equity instruments? • How to use crowdfunding opportunities? • What are the criteria of foundations for social entrepreneurship to support a project? • What are the key principles when applying to EC funding programmes? • What to consider when elaborating a project for applying to EC funding programmes: lessons learned. **The session supports participants in:** • Understanding diverse external sources of financing and fundraising • Learning about the criteria of external equity and debt financing. • Learning about examples of financing and fundraising for small-scale enterprises in diverse countries. • Exploring options to apply for EC funding. • Learning how to elaborate a successful collaborative project at a European level.
Session content and activities	**Part 1:** Opening the session, presentation of participants (5 min.). **Part 2:** Presentation by the facilitator/moderator: diverse sources of external and internal incomes for an arts organisation, EU programmes and tools in CCIs sector: opportunities, tips, and lessons learned. (25 min.)

Part 3: Interactivity: group work on "So You Need Money Tool" and Guide and exploring EU programme opportunities. Pros and cons in applying for EU funding, sharing experiences and examples. The groups can also discuss applying at the local level options. Each member shares experiences and lessons learned. (20 min.)

Part 4: Sharing in a bigger group some of the outcomes. Each group reports briefly about their key findings to the bigger group/ Discussion with Q/As and comments. (10 min.)

Part 5: Interactivity: group work: Brainstorming and sharing on innovative and non-conventional approaches for fundraising in the arts and creative industries in non-urban areas. The groups generate ideas on how to raise funds at a local level for a creative project ("thinking outside of the box" exercise). Each participant provides ideas and shares experiences. There is one "rapporteur" in each group. After that, each group reports briefly about their key findings to the bigger group. Discussion with Q/As and comments. (20 min.)

Part 6: Sharing in a bigger group some of the ideas and closing the session. (10 min.)

Table 9.   Example of training session for capacity-building in CCIs in non-urban areas: Storytelling Part 1

Session title	Storytelling Part 1: Mastering Audience Engagement: The Power of Storytelling
Session duration	1 hour 30 min.
Main objective	The main objective of the session is to increase the participants' knowledge in storytelling and its diverse applications in professional life as well as to help them acquire the necessary skills in structuring a good story and using it to achieve specific goals.
Learning objectives	**The session aims to provide answers to the following questions:** • What do we mean with the term "story"? • What is the use of storytelling in professional life? • Which are the characteristics of a good story? • How can we become better storytellers? • How can we engage our audience? **The session supports participants in:** • Exploring the impact a story has on our minds, behaviour, attitude, and biochemistry. • Learn how to use stories as a method of persuasion. • Learn how to structure a story. • Learn how to tailor a story to fit their specific needs.
Session content and activities	**Part 1:** Opening—introduction of participants and presenter (5 min.) **Part 2:** Introduction—emphasising the importance of audience communication in any activity: business, arts and nonprofits. Outlining the primary objectives of the session—to provide participants with the skills to leverage storytelling in their communication efforts and training them in employing a 5-step structure to craft concise narratives. (5 min.) **Part 3:** How to use a story as an effective tool in persuasion and why stories have such an impact on us? Why do we remember stories better than facts; how does our biochemistry change when we consume stories; can our brain really create a plot even from abstract stimuli? (10 min.)

Exercise 1: Visual imagination booster—Participants will connect images and text. The exercise aims to determine whether the images will affect the majority of the participants in the same way and whether these pictures will suggest any possible plots. Discussion on the results will follow. (10 min.)

Part 4: What is a story?—the meaning of the word "story" in various contexts; the patterns of the story according to Joseph Campbell's "hero's journey" (5 min.)

Part 5: How to use stories in professional life—in branding and marketing; for self, project, or product presentation; to attract supporters, create experiences, etc. (10 min.)

Part 6: Practical tips on storytelling and introduction of five-step story structure. (5 min.)

Exercise 2: Training the five-step story structure—for each of the five steps, the participants have to choose phrases from a pool prepared by the presenter, then use them as "building blocks" to create a short story. Presentation of 3 of the stories and discussion. (10 min.)

Part 7: How to improve yourself as a storyteller—what qualities the good storyteller has to cultivate, what are the important questions one has to ask themselves when creating a story; the importance of the words, clarity, and truth. (10 min.)

Part 8: Some features of the good story. (3 min.)

Exercise 3: the participants have to write a story on their own, based on three photos. It could be personal, brand, product, or project story. Presentation of three of the stories and discussion. (15 min.)

Part 9: Conclusion—the importance of interactivity and how to choose the right medium to tell a story—transition to session 2 of the workshop (2 min.)

Table 10. Example of training session for capacity-building in CCIs in non-urban areas: Storytelling

Session title	Storytelling Part 2: The Future of Interactive Storytelling
Session duration	1 hour 30 min.
Main objective	The main objective of the session is to increase the target group's knowledge of immersive technologies such as VR, AR, and MR, as well as to help them acquire the necessary skills to apply these technologies in their creative and entrepreneurial projects.
Learning objectives	**The session aims to provide answers to the following questions (examples):** • What do we mean with the term "XR"? • How is technology shaping the future of storytelling? • What is the role of XR in storytelling? • What is the use of AR in enhancing real-world experiences? • How can AI be utilised as a tool for storytelling and visualisations? • How do you build a virtual environment with limited resources? • How do you use digital overlays to enhance physical objects or locations with AR? • How can you develop interactive MR experiences that seamlessly blend the real with the virtual? **The session supports participants in:** • Understanding the fundamental concepts and differences between VR, AR, and MR. • Explore the potential applications of immersive technologies in various fields such as art, education, and business. • Learn how to conceptualise and design immersive experiences that can engage and captivate audiences. • Learn to identify opportunities for innovation within their own projects and industries using immersive tech. • Learn how to effectively utilise tools and platforms for developing VR, AR, and MR content, ensuring they can bring their visions to life.
Session content and activities	**Part 1:** Introduction to immersive technologies—presentation by the moderator/facilitator. (30 min.) Objective: Introduce participants to the fundamentals of VR, AR, and MR, highlighting their potential as a tool for creative expression.

Part 2: Interactive workshop: Ideation and storyboarding (30 min.)

Objective: Guide participants through the process of brainstorming and storyboarding for their immersive storytelling projects using AI image and 3D object generation.

Part 3: Hands-on demonstration and prototyping (30 min.)

Objective: Offer a practical demonstration of tools for creating immersive content and guide participants in beginning their prototyping process using online tools.

Interactive exercises:

- Understanding 3D scanning for world building.
- Using AI to generate imagery.
- Using AI to generate 3D models.
- Utilising accessible online resources for generating basic AR applications.

Table 11. Example of training session for capacity-building in CCIs in non-urban areas: Social and business entrepreneurship

Session title	**Social and business entrepreneurship: How to expand internationally?**
Session duration	1 hour 30 min.
Main objective	The main objective of the session is to increase the target group's knowledge in business and social entrepreneurship, to provide examples from different countries about implementing diverse sustainable models in the arts, culture, and creative industries, especially international entry modes and strategies.
Learning objectives	**The session aims to provide answers to the following questions:** • What do we mean by the term "entrepreneurship in the arts" and what are the phases of the entrepreneurial process in the arts? • What are the profiles and mindsets of arts entrepreneurs? • What are possible online and offline business models in the arts? • What is the difference between social and business entrepreneurship? • How to use the social business model canvas and how it helps? • What are the strategies to expand internationally and what are the motivations of arts entrepreneurs? **The session supports participants in:** • Understanding the theory and practice of social and business entrepreneurship in the arts. • Learning about examples from different countries on the implementation of social and business entrepreneurial models when expanding internationally. • Exploring options to run arts enterprises in a sustainable mode. • Learning how to implement the business model canvas in the field of social entrepreneurship in the arts.
Session content and structure	**Part 1:** Opening of the session: introduction of participants. (5 min.) **Part 2:** Presentation by the moderators/presenters, accompanied by short videos and images during the presentation. (25 min.) **Part 3:** Interactive work in smaller groups (breakout rooms) on the implementation of the Social or Business Model canvas for a specific organisation in arts, culture, and creative industries, and options for international expansion: pros and cons. (45 min.) **Part 4:** Brief feedback from each group and discussion in a bigger group. (15 min.)

Table 12. **Example of training session for capacity-building in CCIs in non-urban areas: Partnership and stakeholders' engagement at the local level**

Session title	**Partnership and Stakeholders' Engagement at the Local Level**
Session duration	1 hour 30 min.
Main objective	The main objective of the session is to increase the target group's knowledge on partnership and stakeholders' engagement at local level as well as to help them acquire the necessary practical examples on how to identify stakeholders and potential partners.
Learning objectives	**The session aims to provide answers to the following questions (examples):** • What do we mean by the terms "partners and stakeholders"? • How to identify them? • What is the role of our organisation in partnerships? • How do you build a sustainable partnership? • Building partnerships – practical steps • How to draft a stakeholders' map • Examples of stakeholder analysis in a non-profit organisation **The session supports participants in:** • Understanding the importance of networking • Explore the possibilities within the broader region • Learn how to lead a project • Learn to identify possible stakeholders • Learn how to organise and motivate people in a CCIs project
Session content and activities	**Part 1:** • Building partnerships among small cultural organisations in non-urban areas. How to do it? A step-by-step guide on how to build such partnerships. (20 min.) • Working with stakeholders. Stakeholders for small artists in non-urban areas can vary depending on the specific context and goals of the artists. How do we identify common stakeholders? (20 min.) • Project management in CCIs in non-urban areas—specificities and challenges (25 min.) **Part 2:** Interactive "roleplay" (breakout rooms) interactive exercise: Elevator pitch to identify common goals and convince possible partners. (20 min.) **Part 3**: Q&A and closing. (5 min.)

Table 13. Examples of training sessions for capacity-building in CCIs in non-urban areas: Fostering strategic partnership

| Session title	Fostering strategic partnership in non-urban areas: International and local practices
Session duration	1 hour 30 min.
Main objective	The main objective of the session is to increase the participants' knowledge on diverse opportunities for strategic partnership in the culture and creative industries, as well as to help them acquire the necessary skills to build diverse collaborative strategies and work in coalitions.
Learning objectives	**The session aims to provide answers to the following questions (examples):** • What are the essence and key elements of a "strategic approach" in CCIs and why is it important? • What are the differences in strategies in the business and the non-profit sectors? • What is a strategic alliance, and what are the different types of alliances in the sector of arts and culture? • What is the essence and types of creative clusters, hubs, coworking spaces, creative districts, and other forms of strategic collaboration? • How to work in a collaborative mode? **The session supports participants in:** • Understanding diverse collaborative forms of partnership in CCIs. • Explore examples from different countries and share experiences. • Learn some tips on partnership involvement in diverse strategic partnership options.
Session content and activities	**Part 1:** Presentation on the basics and needs for a strategic approach in CCIs, differences between the business and the nonprofit world, examples from different corners of the world (by the presenter). (20 min.) **Part 2:** Interactive exercise in groups: Types and examples of collaborative strategies and their implementation in CCIs**:** creative clusters, hubs, creative spaces, creative districts, and other models of strategic alliance: definitions. Pros and cons of using some of these collaborative strategies in the arts and creative industries at the local level. (40 min.) **Part 3:** Presentation of results in a bigger group. Q/As, comments and discussion. (20 min.)

Table 14. Example of training session for capacity-building in CCIs in non-urban areas: Strategic management and leadership

Session title	Strategic management and leadership: Sustainability aspects
Session duration	1 hour 30 min.
Main objective	The main objective of the session is to increase the target group's knowledge on the theoretical discourses and practices in strategic management in the arts, to outline key aspects of leadership and to emphasise on strategies that are related to sustainable development from an environmental viewpoint.
Learning objectives	**The session aims to provide answers to the following questions:** • What is "strategic management" and why is it so important and needed in the arts sector? • What is the structure and content of a strategic plan for an art organisation? • What are the different strategies in the arts, culture, and creative industries and how could they be applied? • What is "cultural leadership" and how is it connected with strategic management? • In what way could environmental sustainability be connected with strategic planning? **The session supports participants in:** • Understanding the phases of the strategic management process. • Explore diverse examples of strategies in the arts and culture sector. • Learn to elaborate a strategic plan. • Pay attention to environmental aspects in the arts management practices.
Session content and activities	**Part 1**: Opening of the session, presenting the participants. (5 min.) **Part 2**: Presentation of the facilitator/moderator: PPTs, examples, short videos. (20 min.) **Part 3**: Group work: Identifying the mission, external analysis and strategic direction for a specific organisation—elaboration of a "mini strategic plan." (40 min.) **Part 4**: Sharing results in a bigger group. (20 min.) **Part 5**: Closing the session: Reflections and comments. (5 min.)

Appendix 2:
Collection of resources for capacity-building for innovation and entrepreneurship in non-urban areas
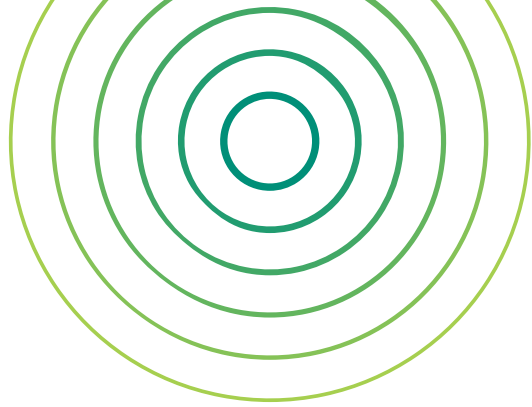
One of the key goals of this section of the Methodological Guide is to provide a comprehensive and structured list of resources that could be used to assist training, mentoring and other methods of capacity-building for CCIs in non-urban areas across Europe. The resources are split into "primary" and "secondary" as follows:

Primary resources. These are easy-to-access, available online methodological materials, e.g., toolkits, handbooks, videos, podcasts, modules, guides, and "how to…" types of publications. These resources could be directly used, or adapted to a specific training module/session/workshop. There is also a brief explanation of the content of each resource.

Secondary resources. Here we have included books, articles, documents, and other publications, as well as relevant websites. These resources are useful for further reading and could assist the trainers, mentors, and learners to dive deeper into these subject matters. Most of them are freely available online.

The resources are grouped around six key topics (see Figure 7), reflecting the identified thematic clusters. We have also added a group of "general resources" on CCIs in non-urban areas. These topics are identified as a result of a thorough needs analysis, as part of the IN SITU project, in the six non-urban locations across Europe.

The geographical scope of resources is mainly related to EU countries, the "broader" Europe, and also internationally. The language of resources is English. All links were last accessed on 19 May 2025.

Figure 7. The six thematic clusters for collecting resources. *Source: Own elaboration*

1. **Applying for EU Funding. Financial and fundraising opportunities (crowdfunding, loans, equity instruments, other alternative methods).**

Primary

Business Finland (n.d.). *EU funding playbook*. **https://eufundingplaybook.fi**

An interactive guide, aiming to help applicants orient among the European Commission's calls for proposals to find the best "match" with their ideas. It provides practical tools for understanding the EU funding landscape, information on different EU funding programmes, advice on how to identify suitable funding opportunities, case studies and examples.

Creatives Unite (n.d.). *So you need money*. **https://creativesunite.eu/synm/**

This tool is designed to help cultural and creative professionals and organisations find funding sources. It provides a tailored overview of different financing options at regional, national, and even private sector levels, and information on EU funding programmes. By answering a few questions, users can get a personalised list of potential funding opportunities relevant to their needs. The tool also includes a repository of useful resources and case studies.

Crowdfunding for Culture: https://www.crowdfunding4culture.eu/

This platform serves as a European information hub dedicated to crowdfunding within the cultural and creative sectors (CCS). It facilitates the connection between creative professionals and organisations with crowdfunding, by identifying, analysing and publicising the best practice in Europe's crowdfunding market in relation to the cultural and creative sectors.

Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (n.d.). *CultureEU funding guide*. European Commission. **https://culture.ec.europa.eu/funding/cultureu-funding-guide**

With this interactive guide, the European Commission aims to ease access to the funding opportunities available for the cultural and creative sectors across all the funding sources of the European Union available in 2021-2027. The guide aims to simplify the often complex landscape of EU funding by offering a single entry point to various EU programs and initiatives that support the culture and creative sector and includes information on other relevant EU funds, outside of the Creative Europe programme.

Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (n.d.). *Guide on crowdfunding*. **European Commission. https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/access-finance/guide-crowdfunding_en**

The guide for small businesses explains what crowdfunding is and how to use it. It offers information for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) on different types of crowdfunding and gives practical tips on how to access it, as well as relevant regulations within the European Union.

Gaggiotti, G. & Gianoncelli A. (2024, September). *The 5 Ws of impact investing*. **The European Impact Investigating Consortium position paper. https://www.impacteurope.net/insights/5-ws-impact-investing**

A useful guide to dive into venture philanthropy and impact investing—what it is about, why it is important, who are the key players, and how it is evolving. It aims to provide

a clear and concise introduction to impact investing for those new to the concept or seeking a structured understanding of its fundamental aspects.

ICAEW (2015). *Creatives industries – routes to finance*. **https://www.icaew.com/-/media/corporate/files/technical/corporate-finance/corporate-finance-faculty/creative-industries/creative-industries-routes-to-finance.ashx**

This guide outlines the forms of funding used in arts and creative industries and examines funding opportunities from traditional sources and non-traditional ones. It also includes useful tips and advice. Ideal for all cultural and creative organisations and freelancers.

On the Move (n.d.). A list of funding guides for mobility of artists and creative workers. https://on-the-move.org/resources/funding

An interactive tool that includes over 60 national and regional mobility funding guides for artists in different countries. There are more than 2000 grants, scholarships, residencies, and other opportunities included in the searchable database.

Verkami (2023, November). *A practical guide: Crowdfunding for CCI projects in the South Mediterranean Region*. INVESTMED project. **https://south.euneighbours.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/INVESTMED-CrowdfundingReport_printed.pdf**

The guide briefly explains different kinds of crowdfunding, focusing on reward crowdfunding, and explains which companies are more suited to the approach and at what stage. It then runs through a step-by-step guide on how to launch a campaign, communication tips to grow the community, and advice on pitching the rewards to encourage more people to donate.

Secondary

Abbing, H. (2002). *Why are artists poor?: The exceptional economy of the arts*. Amsterdam University Press. **http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt45kdz4**

Aly-Tovar, R., Bacache-Beauvallet, M., Bourreau, M. & Moreau, F. (2020). Why would artists favor free streaming? *Journal of Cultural Economics, 44*, 255–280. **https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10824-019-09358-z**

Baumol, W. & Bowen, W. (1966). *Performing arts: The economic dilemma*. Twentieth Century Fund.

Block, J. H., Colombo, M. G., Cumming, D. J. & Vismara, S. (2018). New players in entrepreneurial finance and why they are there. *Small Business Economics, 50*(2), 239–250. **https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11187-016-9826-6**

Borrup, T. (2006). *The creative community builder's handbook: How to transform communities using local assets, art, and culture*. Fieldstone Alliance.

Cicchiello, A. F., Gallo, S. & Monferrà, S. (2022). Mapping crowdfunding in cultural and creative industries: A conceptual and empirical overview. *European Management Review*, *19*(1), 22–37. **https://doi.org/10.1111/emre.12510**

Conraths, B., & Smidt, H. (2005). *The funding of university-based research and innovation in Europe. An exploratory study.* European University Association asbl. **https://www.eua.eu/downloads/publications/the%20funding%20of%20university-based%20research%20and%20innovation%20in%20europe%20an%20exploratory%20study.pdf**

Di Novo, S., Fazio, G., Sapsed, J. & Siepel, J. (2022). Starving the golden goose? Access to finance for innovators in the creative industries. *Journal of Cultural Economics, 46,* 345–386. **https://doi.org/10.1007/s10824-022-09448-5**

European Commission (2018, May 30). *Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing the Creative Europe programme (2021 to 2027) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1295/2013* (COM (2019) 366 Final). **https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2018%3A366%3AFIN**

European Commission – Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (2024). *Horizon Europe strategic plan 2025-2027*. Publications Office of the European Union. **https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/092911**

Handke, C. & Dalla Chiesa, C. (2022). The art of crowdfunding arts and innovation: The cultural economic perspective. *Journal of Cultural Economics*, *46*, 249–284. **https://doi.org/10.1007/s10824-022-09444-9**

Handke, C. W., Quintais, J. & Bodó, B. (2018). Truce in the copyright war? The pros and cons of copyright compensation systems for digital use. *Review of Economic Research on Copyright Issues, 15*(2), 23–56.

Horowitz, N. (2007). *Art of the deal: Contemporary art in a global, financial market*. Princeton University Press.

Klamer, A. (1996). *The value of culture: On the relationship between economics and arts*. Amsterdam University Press.

Kolb, B. M. (2006). *Tourism marketing for cities and towns: Using branding and events to attract tourism*. Elsevier/Butterworth-Heinemann.

Kolb, B. M. (2015). *Entrepreneurship for the creative and cultural industries.* Routledge.

Kübler, R., Seifert, R. & Kandziora, M. (2021). Content valuation strategies for digital subscription platforms. *Journal of Cultural Economics, 45*, 295–326. **https://doi.org/10.1007/s10824-020-09391-3**

O'Dair, M. & Owen, R. (2019). Financing new creative enterprise through blockchain technology: Opportunities and policy implications. *Strategic Change, 28*(1), 9–17. **https://doi.org/10.1002/jsc.2242**

O'Neil, K. M. (2008). Bringing art to market: The diversity of pricing styles in a local art market. *Poetics, 36*(1), 94–113.

Patrickson, B. (2021). What do blockchain technologies imply for digital creative industries? *Creativity and Innovation Management, 30*(3), 585–595. **https://doi.org/10.1111/caim.12456**

Phillips, R. (2004). Artful business: Using the arts for community economic development. *Community Development Journal, 39*(2), 112–122.

Pinnock, A. (2024). *Funding the arts: Politics, economics and their interplay in public policy.* Routledge.

Rushton, M. (2023). *The moral foundations of public funding for the arts.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Santagata, W. (2002). Cultural districts, property rights and sustainable economic growth. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *1*(26), 9–23.

Scott, A. J. (2006). Creative cities: Conceptual issues and policy questions. *Journal of Urban Affairs, 28*(1), 1–17.

Smith, C. (2013). *Art marketing 101: An artist's guide to creating a successful business.* ArtNetwork.

Sonora Beam, L. (2008). *The creative entrepreneur: A DIY visual guidebook for making business ideas real.* Quarry Books.

van Haaften-Schick, L. & Whitaker, A. (2022). From the artist's contract to the blockchain ledger: New forms of artists' funding using equity and resale royalties. *Journal of Cultural Economics, 46,* 287–315. **https://doi.org/10.1007/s10824-022-09445-8**

Wright, M., Walmsley, B. & Simmons, E. (2023). *Fundraising in the creative and cultural industries: Leading effective fundraising strategies.* Routledge.

Zarlenga, M. I., Ulldemolins, J. R. & Morato, A. R. (2016). Cultural clusters and social interaction dynamics: The case of Barcelona. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, *23*(3), 422–440.

2. Visual and written storytelling for audience engagement and development

Primary

AONTAS (2022). *Storytelling for connecting communities handbook*. https://www.aontas.com/assets/resources/Information/StorytellingforConnectingCommunitiesHandbookFINAL.pdf

This handbook is designed to equip adult and community educators with skills and knowledge to promote empathy and social cohesion in their local communities through storytelling. This storytelling training is built on research and evidence-based methodologies that demonstrate how the process of telling and sharing stories help us make sense of the world in a way that connects and resonates with others.

Baines, A. D. (2020). *Storytelling guide*. The Practice Space. https://www.practice-space.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/storytelling-guide-opt.pdf

The toolkit contains guiding principles for storytelling, background reading on how storytelling can foster inclusion and equity, storytelling templates, storytelling practice activities, activity and project ideas involving stories, storytelling project planner and rubric, and how to start a podcast.

Call – Communication and Advocacy Learning Lab (2022). *About storytelling: Handbook for NGOs capacity building*. https://www.fecongd.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/CALL-About-Storytelling-Handbook-For-NGOS-Capacity-Building.pdf

The handbook includes storytelling techniques, methods, tools, and exercises that will assist in identifying impactful personal/motivational stories, advocacy/communication campaigns; collecting relevant and powerful stories of other people that could be used in your campaigns, etc.

Christiano, A., Sheehan, M., Parater, L. & McAlone, C. (2023, September 25). *Storytelling in the wild: A guide for culture-shifting storytelling in natural settings*. UNHCR Innovation. https://www.unhcr.org/innovation/storytelling-in-the-wild-a-guide-for-culture-shifting-storytelling-in-natural-settings/

This guide explains how stories shape our organisational culture, our ways of collaborating alongside communities, and alternative visions to how the humanitarian sector could be. It is a step to better understanding how we might begin building the worlds and cultures through storytelling and tell stories that celebrate inclusive work.

Erhart, A. (2021, November 29). *Marketing storytelling: How to craft stories that sell and build your brand* [Video]. YouTube. **https://youtu.be/guMfpGwZrZc?si=-t9qf605H-smfJLH**

Why does storytelling work? How to use it? How to make stories that can sell products/ services?

Museum Strategy Consultancy (n.d.). *4 practical examples of audience engagement to strengthen the relationship with the audience through digital storytelling.* **https://www.museumstrategy.org/en/fattorec-audience-engagement-storytelling-and-culture/**

This short blog provides examples of how cultural entities can consolidate relationships with their audiences through storytelling and, in particular, through the telling of their collections.

Qureshi, H. (2024, August 1). *The art of visual storytelling: Engaging audiences through design.* LinkedIn. **https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/art-visual-storytelling-engaging-audiences-through-design-qureshi-yq3nf/**

This short blog explains visual storytelling as an essential tool for communicating ideas, emotions, and narratives in a way that resonates with audiences. It elaborates some key elements and strategies to effectively engage audiences through design.

Webflow (2021, December 6). *Interactive storytelling and how it increases user engagement | Hannah Springett* [Video]. YouTube. **https://youtu.be/N5Zni4x_1qg?si=jbT5O69jaGOWH2PR**

How global publishers, including Red Bull, Vogue, Wired, and other Condé Nast brands are improving user engagement across their branded content and editorial pages using a variety of no-code platforms.

Secondary

Battenfield, J. (2009). *The artist's guide: How to make a living doing what you love.* Grand Central Publishing.

Brown, A. S. & Ratzkin, R. (2011). *Making sense of audience engagement. Volume 1.* The San Francisco Foundation. **https://wolfbrown.com/wp-content/uploads/Making_Sense_of_Audience_Engagement.pdf**

Cooke, P. (2012). *Telling your story in the age of brands and social media.* BakerBooks. **https://gospelpublishing.com/store/Item_Data/downloads/031033_preview.pdf**

Crawford, T. (2010). *Legal guide for the visual artist*. Allworth.

Gallo, C. (2016). *The storyteller's secret: From TED speakers to business legends, why some ideas catch on and others don't*. St. Martin's Press.

Handley, A. (2014). *Everybody writes: Your go-to guide to creating ridiculously good content*. Wiley.

Heath, C. & Heath, D. (2007). *Made to stick: Why some ideas survive and others die*. Random House.

Kelsall, H. (2019). *The creative's guide to starting a business: How to turn your talent into a career*. Little, Brown Book Group.

Kleon, A. (2014). *Show your work!: 10 ways to share your creativity and get discovered*. Algonquin Books.

Lafley, A. G. & Martin, R. (2013). *Playing to win: How strategy really works*. Harvard Business Review Press.

Loktionova, M. (2023, January 26). Brand storytelling: The definitive 2024 guide (with examples). Semrush. **https://www.semrush.com/blog/definitive-guide-to-brand-storytelling/**

McGloin, B. (2022, September 28). Narrative structure: The hero's journey. Knowadays. **https://knowadays.com/blog/narrative-structure-the-heros-journey**

McKee, R. & Fryer, T. (2018). *Storynomics: Story-driven marketing in the post-advertising world*. Hachette Books.

Miller, D. (2017). *Building a StoryBrand: Clarify your message so customers will listen*. HarperCollins Leadership.

Radice, S. (2014). Designing for participation within cultural heritage: Participatory practices and audience engagement in heritage experience processes. Doctoral dissertation, Politecnico di Milano, Italy. **https://hdl.handle.net/10589/89798**

Refat, M. (2024, March 23). *The art of digital storytelling: Strategy to engaging your audience online* [Post]. LinkedIn. **https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/art-digital-storytelling-strategy-engaging-your-audience-refat-xjtue/**

Sachs, J. (2012). *Winning the story wars: Why those who tell (and live) the best stories will rule the future*. Harvard Business Review Press.

Schmalstieg, D. & Hollerer, T. (2016). *Augmented reality: Principles and practice*. Addison-Wesley.

Storr, W. (2020). *The science of storytelling: Why stories make us human, and how to tell them better*. ABRAMS.

Szilas, N., Axelrad, M. & Richle, U. (2012). Propositions for innovative forms of digital interactive storytelling based on narrative theories and practices. In Z. Pan, A. D. Cheok, W. Müller, M. Chang & M. Zhang (Eds.), *Transactions on edutainment VII. Lecture notes in computer science, Vol. 7145.* Springer. **https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-29050-3_15**

Watson, T. (2021, August 26). Arts and culture VR/AR: Using augmented & virtual reality to increase cultural awareness. Skywell Software. **https://skywell.software/blog/augmented-virtual-reality-to-increase-cultural-awareness/**

Wheeler, K. (2021). *Sensing stories—a series of invitations.* **https://www.katharinewheeler.com/_files/ugd/3f5e93_2f131cbef967462882b30bba894aa378.pdf**

3. Innovations in CCIs: Types, specificities, application in non-urban areas

Primary

Down, L. (2024, April 5). Art innovation: Embracing new tools in the world of creativity. *Arts, Artists, Artwork.* **https://artsartistsartwork.com/art-innovation-embracing-new-tools-in-the-world-of-creativity/**

The blog provides an overview of the history of innovations in the arts, the use of AI in the art world, and the ethical landscape of using AI.

European Social Fund (n.d.) *Toolkit for supporting social innovation with the European Social Investment Funds.* **https://www.latitudeconsulting.eu/images/toolkit_innovatie.pdf**

This toolkit is designed to help actors conceptualise and operationalise their ambitions in terms of supporting social innovation. It contains not only "procedures" but also knowledge concerning social innovation—background information, principles, strategies, project guidance, capacity building, staffing, and implementation.

IETM & La Belle Ouvrage (Eds.). (2013). *Everyday innovators: Innovative work practices in the cultural sector.* **IETM.** **https://www.ietm.org/en/node/2039**

This publication brings up practical examples of innovative work organisation practices in the cultural sector in Europe. It is based on hands-on case studies. It aims at providing cultural professionals with new elements of reflection and action to consider, and perhaps positively shift, their work habits.

Ministry of Investment, Regional Development and Informatization of Slovak Republic (2021). *Handbook on social innovation and good practice projects in the area of social innovation.* https://mirri.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Handbook-on-Social-Innovation_27062021.pdf

The handbook defines main areas of social innovations, key notions and terms, and includes examples of good practice in the area of social innovations in Slovakia and abroad. It also shows more efficient options for financing projects that can change the quality of life in the society.

NetZeroCities (n.d.). *Social innovation toolkit.* https://netzerocities.app/_content/files/knowledge/3121/social_innovation_toolkit_compressed.pdf

This toolkit aims to help cities integrate social innovation in their path towards climate neutrality. It provides tools that allow for a human-centered approach to transition projects and offers a process to engage diverse actors in this mission.

United Nations Innovation Network (2020). *The UN innovation toolkit.* https://www.uninnovation.network/innovation-toolkit

This toolkit includes 21 tools, step-by-step directions, worksheets, case studies, references, and a self-assessment which provides a diagnosis on every user's innovation strengths and areas for improvement.

Secondary

AEA Consulting (2016, October). *From life-to-digital. Understanding the impact of digital developments in theatre on audiences, production and distribution.* https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/From_Live_to_Digital_OCT2016.pdf

Aldazabal, J., Hernandez, E., Prieto, J. Cortinovis, N., Tessarin, M. & Garcia, X. (2024, March 22). *Drivers of innovation of CCIs located in non-urban areas* (Version 2.0). Deliverable 2.1, IN SITU project. https://insituculture.eu/resource/drivers-or-innovation-of-ccis-located-in-non-urban-areas-deliverable-2-1-d2-1/

Baregheh, A., Rowley, J. & Sambrook, S. (2009). Towards a multidisciplinary definition of innovation. *Management Decision, 47*(8), 1323–1339. https://doi.org/10.1108/00251740910984578

Bezegova, E., Ledgard, M. A., Molemaker, R.-J., Oberc, B. P. & Vigkos, A. (2017). *Virtual reality and its potential for Europe.* ECORYS. https://ec.europa.eu/futurium/en/system/files/ged/vr_ecosystem_eu_report_0.pdf

Miles, I. & Green, L. (2008). *Hidden innovation in the creative industries*. NESTA. **https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/hidden_innovation_creative_industries_report.pdf**

Myler, L. (2015, June 24). Innovation is problem solving… and a whole lot more. *Forbes.* **https://www.forbes.com/sites/larrymyler/2014/06/13/innovation-is-problem-solving-and-a-whole-lot-more/**

Pellegrin-Boucher, E. & Roy, P. (Eds) (2020). *Innovation in the cultural and creative industries.* Wiley-ISTE. **https://www.wiley.com/en-us/**

Recinos, A. (2021, December 13). Does arts & culture lead to innovation? Tessitura Network. **https://www.tessitura.com/items/articles/thought-lead**

Rodriguez Echavarria, K. & Samaroudi, M. (2019, April 4). 3D printing is quietly transforming an unexpected industry: Museums. *Fast Company.* **https://www.fastcompany.com/90328532/3d-printing-is-quietly-transforming-an-unexpected-industry-museums**

Satell, G. (2017, June 21). The 4 types of innovation and the problems they solve. *Harvard Business Review.* **https://hbr.org/2017/06/the-4-types-of-innovation-and-the-problems-they-solve**

Taylor, S. P. (2017). What is innovation? A study of the definitions, academic models and applicability of innovation to an example of social housing in England. *Open Journal of Social Sciences, 5*, 128–146. **https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation?paperid=80628**

White, J. (2023). *Innovation in the arts: Concepts, theories, and practice*s. Routledge.

4. Social and business entrepreneurship, considering a place-based approach

Primary

Artspire (2011). *The profitable artist: A handbook for all artists in the performing, literary, and visual arts.* Allworth.

This is a comprehensive guide for artists across various disciplines seeking to build sustainable and profitable careers. Based on extensive experience in training artists, the book offers a "best practices" approach to career planning and organisation.

Beckman, G. (2021). *The new arts entrepreneur: Navigating the arts ecologies.* Routledge. **https://www.academia.edu/104496550/The_New_Arts_Entrepreneur**

This book is designed as a pedagogical tool for arts entrepreneurship educators and students. It takes an "arts-first" approach, integrating entrepreneurial concepts and newly developed tools to help arts students see themselves as entrepreneurial leaders rather than simply struggling entrepreneurs.

Cultuur+Ondernemen (2020, May). *Entrepreneurship route: Increase your chances in 8 steps: Business guide for artists and creatives.* **https://www.cultuur-ondernemen. nl/storage/media/ALG-20210322-CO-Business-Guide-2020-EN.pdf**

This tool is for artists and creative entrepreneurs. It aims to help them find their professional identity and build a stable foundation for this identity by developing a business model. The guide also gives tips on how to negotiate and what sources of financing might suit you best. Case studies are integrated throughout the toolkit to give you inspiration.

NESTA (n.d.). *The creative enterprise toolkit* (2 ed.). NESTA. **https://www.nesta.org. uk/documents/1874/creative_enterprise_toolkit_english_online.pdf**

This toolkit gives you a framework to develop a business plan by exploring your idea and creating a business model that suits your hopes and motivations.

Parrish, D. (2013). *Designing your creative business: A toolkit for creative entrepreneurs.* T-Shirts and Suits Ltd. **https://www.davidparrish.com/product/designing-creative-businesss-toolkit/**

This toolkit encompasses a range of practical tools, frameworks, and guidance to help creative individuals and businesses plan, manage, and grow their ventures. It also helps to understand the competitive advantage of a creative business and how to create a feasible business strategy.

Rodriguez, J. (2016). *To sell or not to sell. An introduction to business models (innovation) for arts and cultural organisations.* **IETM. https://www.ietm.org/en/system/files/publications/ietm_business-models_2016.pdf**

This toolkit explains everything you need to know about business modelling and business model innovation in the cultural and creative sectors. It also provides you with some inspirational stories from the sectors.

Social Business Model Canvas: https://www.socialbusinessmodelcanvas.com/

This is a tool for creating a solid business model around your social enterprise. It's also

a collaborative tool that helps you communicate different business models with your stakeholders and brainstorm new ones.

Stonkutė, E., Stonkus, D., Espinosa, J. G., Rentería, M. C., Rosca, M., Ciobanu, R., Bicec, I. & Dragotoiu, M. (Eds.). (n.d.). *Handbook: Cultural entrepreneurship*. CULTURE team. **https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/toolbox_tool_download-file-3550/Handbook_Cultural%20Entrepreneurship_compressed.pdf**

This publication offers an overview of the most important concepts related to cultural entrepreneurship in general and cultural entrepreneurship education and training. It also presents some fundamental elements to be used to empower young immigrants and youth workers with cultural entrepreneurship intelligence and mindset development, and improve the knowledge of youth entities in theory and practice in cultural entrepreneurship mindset and creativity.

The Enterprise Center (2023). *Creative business toolkit*. **https://theenterprisecenter.com/initiatives/creative-business-toolkit**

This toolkit includes resources related to the business topics where our community of arts entrepreneurs most often request guidance: starting your business, financing your business, growing your business, marketing your business, business accounting, and legal considerations for your business.

Varbanova, L. (2016). *International entrepreneurship in the arts*. Routledge.

This handbook provides a comprehensive theoretical framework and practical guidance for artists, arts managers, and students looking to expand their creative ventures beyond domestic borders. It is a ready-to-use material for classes on diverse subjects of entrepreneurship in the arts in an international context, from idea generation to various models of international expansion. It contains case studies and assignments for class discussion and individual work.

Secondary

Andrews, R. (2020). *Arts entrepreneurship: Creating a new venture in the arts.* Routledge. **https://www.routledge.com/Arts-Entrepreneurship-Creating-a-New-Venture-in-the-Arts/Andrews/p/book/9781138889743**

Artsper. (2023, April 25). Art and internationalization: How and why you have to go global. Artsper. **https://partners.artsper.com/blog/art-and-internationalization-how-and-why-you-have-to-go-global**

Azadi, A. (2023). *How to succeed as an entrepreneur in culture and creative industries: A starter guide*. Culture and Creative Industries Denmark. **https://een.ec.europa.eu/blog/how-succeed-entrepreneur-cultural-and-creative-industries-starters-guide**

Borin, E., Innerhofer, E. & Pechlander, H. (2018). *Entrepreneurship in culture and creative industries: Perspectives from companies and regions.* Springer.

Bridge, C. & Jennings, C. (2021, January 5). Developing a new open space in your downtown community? Stantec. **https://www.stantec.com/en/ideas/content/blog/2021/developing-a-new-open-space-in-your-downtown-community-5-key-ideas-to-consider**

Brooks, A. C. (2009). *Social entrepreneurship: A modern approach to social value creation*. Pearson Prentice Hall.

Caves, R. E. (2000). *Creative industries: Contracts between art and commerce*. Harvard University Press.

Courage, C. (Ed.). (2020). Section 4: Arts, artists and placemaking. In C. Courage, T. Borrup, M. R. Jackson, K. Legge, A. Mckeown, L. Platt & J. Schupbach (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of placemaking*. (pp. 219–300). Routledge.

Eglite, Z. (2022). Creative people, industries and places in small cities and rural areas. *Culture Crossroads, 21*, 7–20. **https://www.culturecrossroads.lv/index.php/cc/article/view/267**

Eikhof, D. R. & Haunschild, A. (2006). Lifestyle meets market: Bohemian entrepreneurs in creative industries. *Creativity & Innovation Management, 15*(3), 234–241.

Elmes, M. B., Jiusto, S., Whiteman, G., Hersh, R. & Guthey, G. T. (2012). Teaching social entrepreneurship and innovation from the perspective of place and place making. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, *11*(4), 533–554.

Hill, I., Manning, L. & Frost, R. (2021). Rural arts entrepreneurs' placemaking: How 'entrepreneurial placemaking' explains rural creative hub evolution during COVID-19 lockdown. *Local Economy, 36*(7–8), 627–649. **https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/02690942221083838**

Innerhofer, E., Pechlaner, H. & Borin, E. (Eds.). (2017). *Entrepreneurship in culture and creative industries: Perspectives from companies and regions.* Springer.

Jiménez-Marín, G., Rodríguez, A. L., García, M. T. & Martín, J. G. (2022). *Entrepreneurship for rural start-ups lessons and guidance for new venture creation*. Routledge.

Khaire, M. (2017). *Culture and commerce: The value of entrepreneurship in creative industries*. Stanford University Press.

Klamer, A. (2011). Cultural entrepreneurship. *The Review of Austrian Economics, 24*, 141–156. **https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11138-011-0144-6**

Kobersmith. K. (2021, April 14). How four rural towns are building vibrant communities through the tools of creative placemaking. *The Daily Yonder*. **https://dailyyonder.com/how-four-rural-towns-are-building-vibrant-communities-through-the-tools of-creative-placemaking/2021/04/14**

Lang, R., Fink, M. & Kibler, E. (2014). Understanding place-based entrepreneurship in rural Central Europe: A comparative institutional analysis. *International Small Business Journal*, *32*(2), 204–227.

Loots, E., Neiva, M., Carvalho, L. & Lavanga, M. (2021). The entrepreneurial ecosystem of cultural and creative industries in Porto: A sub-ecosystem approach. *Growth and Change, 52*(2), 641–662. **https://doi.org/10.1111/grow.12434**

Luckman, S. (2018). Craft entrepreneurialism and sustainable scale: Resistance to and disavowal of the creative industries as champions of capitalist growth. *Cultural Trends*, *27*(5), 313–326. **https://doi.org/10.1080/09548963.2018.1534574**

MAPSI (2016, January). *Managing art projects with societal impact: Study book for students, stakeholders and researchers*. (Sibelius Academy Research Report Publications, no. 17). Unigrafia Oy. **https://issuu.com/mapsiproject/docs/mapsi_study_book**

Martin, R. L. & Osberg, S. (2007). Social entrepreneurship: The case for definition. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, *5*(2), 29–39. **https://ssir.org/articles/entry/social_entrepreneurship_the_case_for_definition**

Matarasso, F. (1997). *Use or ornament? The social impact of participation in the arts*. Comedia. **https://arestlessart.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/1997-use-or-ornament.pdf**

Nicodemus, A. G. (2014). Small is beautiful: Creative placemaking in rural communities. *GIA Reader, 25*(2), **https://metrisarts.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/GIA-Reader-25-2_Nicodemus.pdf**

Piber, M. (Ed.). (2020). *Management, participation and entrepreneurship in the cultural and creative secto*r. Springer.

Placemaking Handbook. (n.d.). Home [YouTube channel]. YouTube. **https://www.youtube.com/@placemakinghandbook572/featured**

Thorsteinsson, B., Lund, K. A., Johannesson, G. T. & Johannesdottir, G. R. (Eds.). (2023). *Mobilities on the margins: Creative processes of place-making*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Tonelli, M. (Ed.). (2023). *Cases on arts entrepreneurship*. Edward Elgar Publishing. **https://www.e-elgar.com/shop/gbp/cases-on-arts-entrepreneurship-9781802209297.html**

van Meerkerk, E. (2022). The cultural entrepreneurship scorecard: An instrument for assessing cultural institutions. *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society*, *52*(4), 231–248. **https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1063292 1.2022.2030270**

Wells, J. & Shane, R. (2025). Creative social entrepreneurship curriculum development: A case for democratising arts administration education. *Artivate, a Journal of Entrepreneurship in the Arts*, 13. **https://artivate.org/index.php/artivate/article/view/215**

Wheeler, K. (2021). *Embers handbook*. **https://www.katharinewheeler.com/_files/ugd/3f5e93_4df5ff41c9514adcaf45484db3bf8337.pdf**

5. Networking, partnership, collaborative and strategic alliances in CCIs at the local level. Understanding and applying regional and local cultural policies.

Primary

British Council (2015). *Creative HubKit: Made by hubs for emerging hubs*. **https://arts.britishcouncil.org/resources/creative-hubkit**

This is a free toolkit for people looking to set up a hub. It includes best practice examples and tried and tested approaches from some of the most successful hubs in the UK and Europe. It gives you the tools you'll need to map out the design and purpose of your own hub while understanding the invaluable role that your community plays in its success.

Creative Hubs Academy (2020). *Creative hubs leader's toolkit*. **https://creativeconomy.britishcouncil.org/media/resources/Creative_Hub_Leaders_Toolkit.pdf**

The toolkit is a practical guide designed to support leaders of creative hubs, whether they are emerging or well-established. Developed through a global program in partnership with Nesta and Hivos, it offers 15 interconnected tools to help hub leaders on how they lead, connect, and build their hubs.

Iacob, R. (2021, March). *Local networks: (A guide to) reimagining the work of cultural organisa*tions. ENCC. **https://encc.eu/articles/local-networks-a-guide-to-reimagining-the-work-of-cultural-organisations**

The guide offers a framework and practical advice for cultural organisations to strengthen their engagement and impact within their local communities. It answers the questions: What do we mean by socially connected culture? How do we define local networks? What are their limits and what are the triggers of change?

Kooperativa Platform (2018). *Connecting through culture: About the work of regional platforms.* **https://platforma-kooperativa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Kooperativa_Connecting-through-Culture_10-years-of-Kooperativa.pdf**

In 2017 Kooperativa, with its members, completed the first pilot programme of Exchange and Collaboration in the SEE based on peer-to-peer evaluation and horizontal decision-making. The present document reflects on the implementation of this programme and underlines the importance of creating space for dialogue on the European and international levels.

Kooperativa Platform (2022). *Source book 1. How to build networks and why? From resilience towards sustainability.* **https://platforma-kooperativa.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/SourceBook_digitalno.pdf**

This is an evidence-based publication gathering and articulating knowledge on innovative bottom-up models of organisation. It serves as a practical guide and foundational text for understanding the principles and benefits of building strong networks, particularly within the context of fostering resilience and achieving long-term sustainability.

Kooperativa Platform (2024). *Source book 2. Weaving spaces.* **https://platforma-kooperativa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/SB_II_web.pdf**

This publication gathers and articulates knowledge on innovative bottom-up models of creating spaces where diverse values and esthetics could be exercised and practised in six in-depth experiences from six countries: Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo.

Visible Network Labs (n.d.). *Our guides.* **https://visiblenetworklabs.com/guides/**

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6. Sustainability in CCIs: Financial, environmental, and social aspects. Strategic management and entrepreneurship: sustainability aspects.

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This publication offers practical and actionable advice for individuals and organisations within the arts and culture sector to reduce their environmental impact. The tips would likely be relevant across various artistic disciplines and cultural practices within the European context and potentially beyond.

ELIA (2022). *Environmental sustainability: Eco-guidelines for networks.* SHIFT project. **https://shift-culture.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/SHIFT_Eco-Guidelines_ Environmental-Sustainability.pdf**

This is a tailor-made guidelines for cultural network-organisations with the aim to cover all major areas of their environmental impact, including operations, policies, activities, and governance specific to the context of networks. It is a key resource stemming

from the SHIFT project, a collaborative effort focused on promoting environmental sustainability within cultural networks.

INCULTUM Training Resources: https://incultum.eu/incultum-training-portal/

INCULTUM explores the potential of marginal and peripheral areas when managed by local communities and stakeholders. The Local Training part targets local stakeholders and communities, public administrators, tourism professionals, and cultural managers. There are references to the local training activities that have been developed in the course of the INCULTUM Pilots. INCULTUM was financed by the EC Horizon 2020 programme (2020-2024).

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The book presents a sequential approach to planning in an arts organisation, providing a glance on the content of a strategic plan, a discussion on the process of developing a plan, the steps to be taken, people to be involved, and suggests the way the plan should be put together.

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This guide aims to inspire and encourage cultural centres to take up an active role in working with children and young people on the issues of environmental sustainability. It provides a framework and practical recommendations for children's cultural centers to integrate environmental, social, and economic sustainability principles into their operations, programming, and overall mission.

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This textbook provides a framework and practical guidance for applying strategic management principles specifically within the context of arts and cultural organisations. It contains case studies and assignments and aims to equip educators, trainers, arts managers, leaders, and students with the knowledge and tools necessary to navigate the complexities of the cultural sector and lead their organisations effectively towards their mission through strategic planning and action.

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