

## Detailed programme

### Day 1. Monday, 11 May 2026

#### Setting the stage: understanding the context and challenges

Conference Venue: [Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences \(Cēsu Street 4, Valmiera\)](#)

Time	Session details
9:00 - 9:30	<b>Registration &amp; coffee</b>
9:30 - 10:00	<p><b>Welcome and opening</b> <i>Room C129</i></p> <p>Speakers: <b>Rūta Muktupāvela</b> (Advisor on Cultural Policy to the Minister for Culture of Latvia and Professor at the Latvian Academy of Culture), <b>Agnese Davidsons</b> (Rector of the Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences), <b>Agnese Lāce</b> (Latvian Minister for Culture of Latvia [<i>video message</i>]), and <b>Nancy Duxbury</b> (Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra, Portugal)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Ieva Zemite</b> (Latvian Academy of Culture, Latvia)</p>
10:00 - 10:45	<p><b>Plenary session</b> <i>Room C129</i></p> <p><b>Unpacking the IN SITU legacy: Research, capacity-building, and policy</b></p> <p>Speakers: <b>Nancy Duxbury</b> (Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra, Portugal), <b>Lidia Varbanova</b> (National Academy of Theatre and Film Arts “Kr. Sarafov”, Bulgaria), <b>André Torre</b> (National Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment, France), and <b>Helena Walther</b> (University of Hildesheim, Germany)</p> <p>Moderator: Paola Di Nunzio (Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra, Portugal)</p>
10:45 - 11:15	<b>Coffee break</b>
11:15 - 12:00	<p><b>Keynote speech</b> <i>Room C129</i></p> <p><b>‘All that is old is new again’: Place-Based Innovation and Value Creation in the Age of AI</b></p> <p>Speaker: <b>Susan Luckman</b> (Adelaide University, Australia)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Nancy Duxbury</b> (Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra, Portugal)</p>

Time	Session details
12:00 - 13:00	<p><b>Plenary session</b> Room C129</p> <p><b>The power of connection: Strengthening rural creators through collective action</b></p> <p>Speakers: <b>Michaela Charisi</b> (European Network of Cultural Centres, Belgium), <b>Ella Overkleeft</b> (Rural Radicals, The Netherlands), <b>Henk Keizer</b> (AREA Network, Denmark), <b>Marta Lozano Molano</b> (Wazo coop, Spain), and <b>Sabīne Vandāna</b> (Valmiera County Manor Network, Latvia)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Sílvia Silva</b> (Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra, Portugal)</p>
13:00 - 14:30	<p><b>Lunch break</b></p>
14:30 - 16:00	<p><b>Concurrent thematic sessions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>Session - Policy and planning frameworks for non-urban development</b> Room C114</p> <p><i>Cultural and creative industries in peripheral policy frameworks: the case of Poland</i>, <b>Jaroslav Dzialek</b>, <b>Monika Murzyn-Kupisz</b>, and <b>Arkadiusz Kocaj</b> (Institute of Geography and Spatial Management, Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland)</p> <p><i>West Iceland Regional Plan of Action</i>, <b>Sigursteinn Sigurðsson</b> (West Iceland Regional Office, Iceland)</p> <p><i>Culture Forward: Culture as Civic Infrastructure in the Sierra Nevada</i>, <b>Eliza Tudor</b>, (Nevada County Arts Council, USA)</p> <p><i>From Policy to Transforming Communities through longitudinal arts investment</i>, <b>Katie Lowry</b> and <b>Peter Prendergast</b> (The Arts Council of Ireland, and Cork County Council Library and Arts Service, Ireland)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Erna Kaaber</b> (Bifröst University, Iceland)</p> </li> <li> <p><b>Session - Inclusion, gender and intersectional agency</b> Room C129</p> <p><i>A Systematic Literature Review on Cultural Inequalities</i>, <b>Flora Maravalhas</b>, <b>Pedro Borrego</b>, <b>Ana Lúcia Romão</b>, <b>Bernardo Valente</b>, <b>Sandra Firmino</b>, <b>José Soares Neves</b>, and <b>Luís Manuel Baptista</b> (Public Administration at the Institute of Social and Political Sciences, Universidade de Lisboa, Portugal)</p> <p><i>Inclusion through Culture: Cultural and Creative Industries in the Borderland Parts of Croatia's Lika Region</i>, <b>Ena Bašić</b> and <b>Jaka Primorac</b> (Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar, Institute for Development and International Relations, Croatia)</p> <p><i>Place-Based Innovation Through Gender Lenses: CCIs as Tools for Post-Disaster Recovery in Norcia</i>, <b>Naomi Camardella</b> and <b>Mara Carando</b> (University for Foreigners of Perugia, Italy)</p> </li> </ul>

Time	Session details
	<p><i>Clapping into Being: Hijra performances and the Creation of Social Space on Non-Urban Bangladesh</i>, <b>Zobaida Nasreen</b> (University of Dhaka, Bangladesh)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Nevena Dobрева</b> (National Academy of Theatre and Film Arts “Kr. Sarafov”, Bulgaria)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Session - Heritage, local knowledge and collaborative stewardship</b> Room C217</li> </ul> <p><i>From Historical Castle to Living Cultural Ecosystem: Artistic Place-based Innovation in a Non-urban European Context</i>, <b>Mahmoud Saleh Mohammadi</b> and <b>Sofie Renap</b> (Spazio Nour, Italy/Belgium)</p> <p><i>Values-based Heritage Re-imagination and Interpretation. The Case of the Beļava Manor House</i>, <b>Ilze Vanaga</b> (NGO "Dēms", Latvia)</p> <p><i>The Manor Network as a Catalyst for Community Collaboration and Sustainable Heritage Management in Valmiera County</i>, <b>Sabīne Vandāna</b> (Valmiermuiža Association of Culture, Latvia)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Ilona Kunda</b> (Latvian Academy of Culture, Latvia)</p>
16:00 - 16:15	<b>Coffee break</b>
16:15 - 17:30	<p><b>Plenary session</b> Room C129</p> <p><b>Culture in action: Practical lessons from non-urban creative practices</b></p> <p>Speakers: <b>Michaela Charisi</b> (European Network of Cultural Centres, Belgium), <b>Mark Justin Rainey</b> (University of Galway, Ireland), <b>Jorge Gallardo</b> (Be.Time, Spain), <b>Milica Milović</b> (Magnet, Serbia), <b>Dorien Jongasma</b> (Imágenes y Palabras, Spain), and <b>Marta Vētra</b> (LAUX, Latvia)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Oleksandra Nenko</b> (University of Turku, Finland)</p>
18:00 – 22:00	<p><b>Evening with dinner and mingling</b> at <a href="#">Valmiera Theatre (Lāčplēša Street 4, Valmiera)</a>.</p> <p><b>Short presentation of Valmiera county &amp; Mayor’s greetings.</b></p>

## Day 2. Tuesday, 12 May 2026

### *From knowledge to action: translating research findings into strategies*

Conference Venue: [Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences \(Cēsu Street 4, Valmiera\)](#)

Time	Session details
9:30 - 11:00	<p><b>Plenary session</b> <i>Room C129</i></p> <p><b><i>Vibrancies at the European peripheries: Cultural sprouts from the IN SITU Labs</i></b></p> <p>Speakers: <b>Erna Kaaber</b> (Bifröst University, Iceland), <b>Mark Rainey</b> (University of Galway, Ireland), <b>Daniela Soares</b> and <b>Isabel Soares de Albergaria</b>, (University of the Azores, Portugal), <b>Oleksandra Nenko</b> and <b>Katriina Siivonen</b> (University of Turku, Finland), <b>Ieva Zemīte</b> (Latvian Academy of Culture, Latvia), and <b>Antonija Letinić</b> (Kultura Nova Foundation, Croatia)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Paola Di Nunzio</b> (Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra, Portugal)</p>
11:00 - 11:30	<p><b>Coffee break</b></p>
11:30 - 13:00	<p><b>Concurrent thematic sessions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b><i>Session - Interweaving agriculture, culture, and bioregional innovation</i></b> <i>Room C129</i></p> <p><i>Exploring contemporary agricultural art initiatives in Austria, <b>Karin Heinschink</b> and <b>Ingrid Machold</b> (Federal Institute of Agricultural Economics, Rural and Mountain Research – BAB, Austria)</i></p> <p><i>Agriculture meets River Lore: Agri- and Culture Project at River Uskelanjoki, Finland, <b>Elina Tuomarila</b> (John Nurminen Foundation, Finland)</i></p> <p><i>The interrelation between built heritage and agriculture for sustainable preservation: the case study of the village of Velika Hoča/Hoçë e Madhe in Kosovo, <b>Sabrina Salis</b> and <b>Ylber Veseli</b> (OSCE, Kosovo)</i></p> <p><i>Bioregion as an innovative form of public-private cooperation for the preservation of local culture, <b>Dace Kaufmane</b>, <b>Līga Paula</b>, and <b>Amanda Lejniece</b> (University of Life Sciences and Technologies, Latvia)</i></p> <p>Moderator: <b>Katriina Siivonen</b> (University of Turku and Finland Futures Research Centre, Finland)</p> </li> </ul>

Time	Session details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>Session - Living Traditions: Craft, music, local knowledge and sustainability</b> Room C114</p> <p><i>Revitalisation of Heritage Wool and Wool Crafts to Promote Sustainability in Lapland - Outcomes of Wool Innovation Project, <b>Minna Kovero, Elina Luiro, and Tanya Kravtsov</b> (University of Lapland, Finland)</i></p> <p><i>Weaving with the Trees - Place-based Explorations into Sustainable Wool Craft Practice, <b>Tanya Kravtsov</b> and <b>Minna Kovero</b> (University of Lapland, Finland)</i></p> <p><i>Making A Scene: Using Gaelic “traditional social knowledge” to grow creative communities for the future, <b>Rhona NicDhùghaill</b> (University of Stirling, Scotland)</i></p> <p>Moderator: <b>Lidia Varbanova</b> (National Academy of Theatre and Film Arts “Kr. Sarafov”, Bulgaria)</p> </li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>Session - Place-based learning and living laboratories</b> Room C217</p> <p><i>Inequalities and territorial asymmetries in cultural access and participation in Portugal, <b>Bernardo Valente, Pedro Borrego, Ana Lúcia Romão, Flora Maravalhas, Sandra Firmino, Luís Manuel Baptista, and José Soares Neves</b> (Centre for Public Administration and Public Policies - CAPP, Institute of Social and Political Sciences, Universidade de Lisboa - ISCSP-ULisboa; Centre for Research and Studies in Sociology – Iscte, University Institute of Lisbon - CIES-Iscte, Portugal)</i></p> <p><i>Territory Schools and Community Activation for the Revitalization of Mountain Cultural Landscapes in Asturias, <b>Jean-François Alberghi, Paloma Sánchez-Broch, Pablo López Gómez, and Margarita Fernández Mier</b> (University of Oviedo, Spain)</i></p> <p><i>Fostering Innovation and Collaboration through Place-Based Learning at the Turaida Museum Reserve, <b>Leonarda Kestere-Klavina</b> (Turaida Museum Reserve, Latvia)</i></p> <p><i>Design-Build as Place-Based Innovation: Creating New Experiences through Temporary Interventions in Valmiera, <b>Dina Suhanova</b> (Art Academy of Latvia, Institute of Contemporary Art, Design and Architecture, Latvia)</i></p> <p>Moderator: <b>Andris Klepers</b> (Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences, Latvia)</p> </li> </ul>
13:00 - 14:00	<b>Lunch break</b>

Time	Session details
14:00 - 15:30	<p><b>Concurrent thematic sessions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>Session - Culture as core infrastructure: Health, employment, and civic resilience</b> Room C217</p> <p><i>Generational leadership exit as a small cultural &amp; creative ecosystem concern, <b>Ali FitzGibbon</b> (Queen's University Belfast, Ireland)</i></p> <p><i>Addressing Rural Challenges by Connecting the Culture and Health Sectors and Policies: Lessons Learned from Implementing the Arts-on-Prescription Model in Cēsis municipality (Latvia), <b>Inga Surgunte</b> and <b>Baiba Tjarve</b> (Latvian Academy of Culture, Latvia)</i></p> <p><i>Supporting Regenerative Tourism Cultural Entrepreneurs, <b>Milton Almeida</b> (Royal Roads University, and Centre for Social Studies University of Coimbra, Canada/Portugal)</i></p> <p>Moderator: <b>Antonija Letinić</b> (Kultura Nova Foundation, Croatia)</p> </li> <li> <p><b>Session - Sustaining artistic presence and social cohesion</b> Room C114</p> <p><i>Municipal Artist-Employment Projects in Finland: A Decade of Initiatives and Their Impacts, <b>Anne Lehtelä</b> (Independent artist and Specialist in artists' working conditions at the Finnish Arts and Culture Agency, Finland)</i></p> <p><i>Film festivals as places-based innovation practices: evidence from two grassroots initiatives in peripheral Italy, <b>Caterina Francesca Ottobrini</b> and <b>Mariia Samareva</b> (EURICSE, GSSI - Gran Sasso Science Institute, Italy)</i></p> <p><i>Rooted Innovation vs. Transient Placement: A Comparative Study of Cultural Interventions in Non-Urban Croatia, <b>Antonia Kuzmanić</b> and <b>Dunja Bovan</b> (ROOM 100, House Collective, Croatia)</i></p> <p>Moderator: <b>Ieva Zemīte</b> (Latvian Academy of Culture, Latvia)</p> </li> <li> <p><b>Session - Narratives of place: Memory, senses, and intangible heritage</b> Room C129</p> <p><i>Relearning Place(s): Creative and Sustainable Innovation in Non-Urban Territories, <b>António Oliveira</b>, Mekelle University Ethiopian Institute of Technology - EIT-M School of Architecture and Urban Planning, Ethiopia.</i></p> <p><i>KONSERVE: Regenerating non-urban culture through intangible cultural heritage, <b>Zülâl Fazlıoğlu Akin</b> and <b>Alise Katrina Pundure</b> (The Ohio State University, USA)</i></p> </li> </ul>

Time	Session details
	<p><i>Rural dramaturgies: thinking alternative stories of rural place in Haren and the former Limburg mining area</i>, <b>Vivi Focquet</b>, <b>Leontien Allemeersch</b>, and <b>Ewoud Vermote</b> (Kunstenplatform PLAN B, Belgium)</p> <p><i>Reclaiming the Cosmos: Fostering a Connection to the Night Sky in the Scottish Highlands and Islands</i>, <b>Bailee Allen</b> (The Glasgow School of Art, Scotland)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Oleksandra Nenko</b> (University of Turku, Finland)</p>
15:45 - 18:00	<b>Study visits</b>  <u>Option 1</u> : Cultural heritage / Valmiera museum  <u>Option 2</u> : Contemporary art / KURTUVE art space  <u>Option 3</u> : Creative industries / Future Innovation quarter  <u>Option 4</u> : Rural culture / Valmiermuiža manor
19:00 - 21:30	<b>Concert and dinner</b> at <a href="#">Valmiera Cultural centre, Riga Street 10, Valmiera</a>

## Day 3. Wednesday, 13 May 2026

### Looking ahead: defining pathways forward

Conference Venue: [Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences \(Cēsu Street 4, Valmiera\)](#)

Time	Session details
9:30 - 10:30	<p><b>Plenary session</b> <i>Room C129</i></p> <p><b>Capacity building for the future: Tools and strategies for creative innovation in non-urban areas</b></p> <p>Speakers: <b>Nevena Dobрева</b> (National Academy of Theatre and Film Arts “Kr. Sarafov”, Bulgaria), <b>Jude Ortiz</b> (Algoma University, Canada), <b>Antonija Letinić</b> (Kultura Nova Foundation, Croatia), and <b>Ilona Asare</b> (Latvian Academy of Culture, Latvia)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Daniela Soares</b> (University of the Azores, Portugal)</p>
10:30 - 11:00	<p><b>Coffee break</b></p>
11:00 - 12:30	<p><b>Concurrent thematic sessions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>Session - Technology, gaming, placemaking and rural innovation</b> <i>Room C129</i></p> <p><i>Gamified Eco-Trails and Child-led Innovation: The “BÖLEKTAU” Case as a Transferable Model for Non-Urban Cultural and Creative Placemaking</i>, <b>Irina Kharitonova</b> and <b>Alexandra Kharitonova</b> (Public Foundation “Creative &amp; Innovation Institute”, Kazakhstan)</p> <p><i>From Cherry Orchards to Digital Studios: Cross-Sectoral Partnerships Driving Place-Based Innovation in Rural Portugal</i>, <b>Luís Leça</b>, <b>Mariana Salvado</b>, and <b>Matilde Caria</b> (INOVA+, Innovation Services, S.A; Fundão Municipality, Portugal)</p> <p><i>Digital Creativity Against Depopulation: Video Games and Cultural Industries as Drivers of Regional Resilience in Rural Portugal</i>, <b>Mariana Salvado</b>, <b>Luís Leça</b>, and <b>Matilde Caria</b> (Fundão Municipality; INOVA+, Innovation Services, Portugal)</p> <p><i>Digital media and the semiotics of place in the rural creative economy</i>, <b>Simon McKerrell</b> (Glasgow Caledonian University, Scotland)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Maria Batle</b> (Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra, Portugal)</p> </li> </ul>

Time	Session details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>Session - Strategic agency: Funding, protecting, and collaborating rural cultural spaces</b> Room C114</p> <p><i>Rural Arts Organizations: Adaptive Hubs of Cross-Sector Collaboration</i>, <b>Sarah Ayers</b> (Flyover Art, USA)</p> <p><i>From Cultural Practice to Community Resilience: A Decade of Place-Based Innovation in Rural Latvia</i>, <b>Zane Matesoviča</b> (British Council Latvia, United Kingdom/Latvia)</p> <p><i>Staying Power: Creating and Protecting Cultural Spaces in Valmiera, Latvia</i>, <b>Matthew Richter</b> (Cultural.Space, Scotland/USA)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Carolina Castaldi</b> (Utrecht University, The Netherlands)</p> </li> <li> <p><b>Session - Social infrastructure and place-based rural strategies</b> Room C217</p> <p><i>The impact of social economy and the Third sector on a cultural base local development in Italian inner areas</i>, <b>Carlo D'Angelo</b> (University of Molise, Italy)</p> <p><i>NGO Islands of Selonia. Smart regional strategy for the Sēlija historical land</i>, <b>Daina Alužāne, Ieva Jātniece, Inga Krekele, Jānis Dzimtais, and Santa Šmite</b> (Association Community Cooperation Network "The Islands of Selonia", Latvia)</p> <p><i>Catholic church as important actor in keeping and cultivating creative place in Latgale (example of Balvi region)</i>, <b>Juris Vuguls, and Erika Vugule</b> (Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies, Faculty of Economics and Social Development, Institute of Humanitarian and Social Sciences, Latvia)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Isabel Soares de Albergaria</b> (University of the Azores, Portugal)</p> </li> </ul>
12:30 - 13:30	<b>Lunch break</b>
13:30 - 14:30	<p><b>Plenary session</b> Room C129</p> <p><b>Where is innovation coming from? Rethinking place-based creativity through a non-urban lens</b></p> <p>Speakers: <b>Tim Wojan</b> (Massive Data Institute, United States of America), <b>Carolina Castaldi</b> (Utrecht University, The Netherlands)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Tongjing Wang</b> (National Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment, France)</p>

Time	Session details
14:30 - 15:30	<p><b>Plenary session</b> <i>Room C129</i></p> <p><b><i>Shaping future policies: EU policy frameworks for non-urban creative ecosystems</i></b></p> <p>Speakers: <b>Ruth Artiles Valero</b> (European Network of Cultural Centres, Belgium), <b>Helena Walther</b> (University of Hildesheim, Germany), <b>Maryline Filippi</b> (National Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment, France)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Erna Kaaber</b> (Bifröst University, Iceland)</p>
15:30 - 16:00	<p><b>Coffee break</b></p>
16:00 - 17:00	<p><b>Plenary session</b> <i>Room C129</i></p> <p><b><i>Closing considerations and future directions</i></b></p> <p>Speakers: <b>Nancy Duxbury</b> (Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra, Portugal), <b>Baiba Tjarve</b> (Latvian Academy of Culture, Latvia), <b>Susan Luckman</b> (Adelaide University, Australia)</p> <p>Moderator: <b>Sílvia Silva</b> (Centre for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra, Portugal)</p>