



EUROPEAN CAPITAL
OF CULTURE

Matera
European Capital of Culture 2019

First Monitoring Meeting

Report by the Monitoring and Advisory Panel

Brussels
October 2016

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Introduction

This report follows the meeting¹ in Brussels on 12 October 2016, between Matera, one of the two European Capitals of Culture (ECOC) in 2019, and the monitoring and advisory panel (the "panel"). Matera was selected in May 2015;² its bid-book is available on the Matera-Basilicata 2019 website.³ There was an informal meeting between Matera and the panel on 16 September 2015. This was the first formal monitoring meeting.

The report is addressed to the Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation (the "Foundation") and will be published on the European Commission's website.⁴

Attendance

The panel members:

- Sylvia Amann and Cristina Farinha, appointed by the European Parliament 2015-2017
- Jiří Suchánek and Tamás Szalay, appointed by the Council of the European Union 2016-2018
- Ulrich Fuchs (Chair) and Dr Suzana Žilić Fišer, appointed by the European Commission 2014-2016
- Dr Elisabeth Vitouch, nominated by the Committee of the Regions 2016-2018

For Matera-Basilicata 2019:

- Aurelia Sole, President of the Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation
- Angelo Tortorelli, Vice-President of the Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation
- Paolo Verri, Director of the Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation
- Simone Tani, economic adviser to the Prime Minister
- Rossella Tarantino, Development and Relations Manager of the Matera-Basilicata 2019 Foundation

Also in attendance were observers from the European Commission (Directorate-General Education and Culture).

Report from Matera-Basilicata 2019 and discussion

The Matera-Basilicata Foundation 2019 submitted a detailed report in advance of the meeting. The report outlined changes made to the governance structure, developments regarding the cultural programme and a summary of human and financial resources. It also looked ahead to 2017 and detailed the intermediate steps to be taken.

At the meeting, the Matera-Basilicata 2019 delegation made a presentation which included the following points:

¹ In line with Article 10 of Decision 1622/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1476455600669&uri=CELEX:32006D1622>.

² https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/sites/creative-europe/files/files/ecoc-2019-report-italy_en.pdf

³ <http://www.matera-basilicata2019.it/en/archivi/news/550-the-bid-book-of-matera-2019-is-on-line.html>

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/capitals-culture_en

- The Mayor sent his greetings to the panel but was unable to attend for health reasons. The President of the Region also apologised for his absence due to previous institutional commitments. Both express their full support of the project.
- The late appointment of the Chairwoman of the Foundation, Aurelia Sole, in February 2016 caused delays in the evolution of the project but the team is optimistic about making up for lost time.
- A Scientific Committee has been appointed with high-profiled members to help secure the legacy of the Matera-Basilicata 2019 project.
- Regarding the staffing of the Foundation, two calls are currently open for the positions of senior administrative and cultural managers (until 31 October 2016). New contracts have been signed to secure the positions of full-time staff until 2020.
- The Chamber of Commerce of Matera is working hard to render the city an attractive place for investment and to strengthen its relationship with the business community. It is collaborating closely with the regional and national chambers of commerce.
- The national government sees Matera as a national priority and a model for development and innovation for the cities in Southern Italy. The relationship with the government has been strengthened with the appointment of Simone Tani, who has the dual function of informing the Prime Minister of the evolution of the selected projects and of facilitating coordination with national ministries and agencies.
- With regard to the budget, the Foundation's position has been bolstered by the allocation of government funds. Through a new decree on cultural goods and cultural heritage, Matera-Basilicata 2019 has been granted 28 MM €. Of this, 11 MM € will go to implementing the bid-book and 17 MM € will be dedicated to infrastructure projects.
- Fund-raising calls have not yet been opened due to a problem over the logo. Sponsorship bids will be launched in January 2017, with the support of the national government. The Foundation is looking to obtain 14% of the budget from the private sector.
- Improving the accessibility of Matera is a priority on the infrastructure front and the transport projects are on schedule. On-going work is being done to connect Matera to the closest airport, Bari, in just over half an hour and to reduce journey time by train.
- Work has accelerated on the programme side. The two pillar projects – Open Design School and the I-DEA – have made good progress. The Foundation launched the Open Design School in 2016 and organised an inter-disciplinary workshop in the autumn attracting national and international artists and cultural operators from an array of different fields. The workshop was designed to develop ideas for the innovative performing arts venue and will be very instrumental in the development of Matera-Basilicata 2019.
- Work on capacity-building with local artists began in 2016. The first two workshops were held with the attendance of 400 individuals from local and regional cultural industries.
- Investment has begun on the citizen dimension with the projects Gardentopia and Lumen, the volunteering process as well as the New Year celebrations.
- In terms of communications, Matera 2019 is working closely with the national broadcaster RAI and together they produced a radio event Materadio. Work has

also begun on regional broadcasting, in partnership with TRM, in order to increase the visibility of the project regionally in Basilicata.

- Collaboration with former ECOC cities has been strengthened, including with Donostia San Sebastian, Tallinn and Wroclaw. Matera 2019 is working on a joint project to develop a communications network of former ECOC cities to work on capacity building, communications and fund-raising.
- Matera 2019 has worked closely with Plovdiv and both cities had a fruitful five-day exchange in Matera in July 2016, during which approaches for collaboration were discussed and a joint newsletter was launched.
- The Foundation is working with other short-listed Italian candidates who participated in the 2019 ECOC bid to help them take advantage of the opportunity.

Discussion

During the subsequent discussion, the panel sought clarification on a number of issues and offered experience and advice. The following topics were addressed:

- The panel showed serious concern about the governance structure and sought an explanation regarding the interaction between the different governing bodies. The Foundation explained the role of the different bodies; the Board of Directors has a strategic role and controls the funds; the Supervisory Board has a technical role and is composed by technicians who offer advice on legal and administrative aspects; the Scientific Committee is dedicated to ensuring the quality and legacy of the project.
- The panel expressed their worry over the lack of clarity in the decision-making process. It emphasised the need to make the governance structure as streamlined as possible so key decisions can be taken quickly and effectively. It also urged that individual responsibilities should be clearly outlined.
- The panel sought an explanation on the delay of new appointments, in particular why there had not been an open call for senior positions in May or June 2016 as initially envisaged. The Chairwoman explained that the Foundation had been forced to wait for a cash flow which came later than anticipated.
- The panel inquired about infrastructure, and more specifically about whether the projects would be finished on time for 2019. The Matera 2019 team stressed the importance of seeing infrastructure in a long-term lens in terms of city development, rather than in a short-term optic. Plans for more than 100 projects have been drawn up, many of which are underway.
- The panel asked about the prizes for sponsorship and how the interest of potential sponsors would be captured. The Matera-Basilicata 2019 team are elaborating a marketing plan which will offer visibility to sponsors and are confident that the project will be attractive to key regional and national companies.
- A clarification regarding the distribution of projects between in-house and partners was sought. The Foundation envisaged that it would do 20-25% of the projects itself; 50-60% would be run by partners; and the remainder by cultural organisations at a national level. The panel agreed that these were reasonable estimates.
- Regarding the European dimension, the panel asked about collaboration with Plovdiv. Following a first meeting focused on capacity building in July, the

Matera-Basilicata team will travel to Plovdiv at the end of 2016 to develop joint projects including the Balkan and Bread Routes.

- The panel described the developments on the Open Design School as 'promising' and inquired about future plans for the school. On the basis of the pilot project which took place in the form of a workshop, a master plan will be elaborated to launch the school. The area around the school will also be developed, not for mass tourism but as a place for develop quality cultural productions at a local and national level.
- The panel closed by saying that it wished to send its best regards to the Mayor and urged the Foundation to inform the panel of developments regarding the governance structure in January 2017.

The panel opinion

The panel welcomes the explanations on the development of the programme and the progress made on certain aspects of the project.

The panel expresses serious concern, however, at the governance structure which continues to be extremely unclear and overly complex, hindering the overall progress of the project. It is disappointed that the Foundation has failed to take up the recommendations provided after the visit of the panel's delegation in March 2016 and hopes that the Foundation will act quickly to remedy the situation.

The panel would like to draw the attention of the Board on the need for clarification on the roles, functions, division of labour, responsibilities and hierarchical relationships among the diverse entities and posts proposed in the organisational chart. It stresses that the greater the number of committees exist, the more complicated the organisation of the project becomes. There is a need for simplification to facilitate the decision-making process. The panel suggests studying the organigrams of past ECOCs in order to find a suitable model to replicate.

The panel would like to remind the Matera-Basilicata 2019 team of the urgency of filling key vacancies. With senior positions still vacant, the project is incurring serious delays. The panel still has some concerns regarding the potential overlapping roles of artistic director and cultural manager.

With regard to the programme, the panel is pleased with the progress made on a number of projects in line with the bid-book, including I-DEA and the Open Design School, and the new and innovative approach shown. The panel is confident that the latter project will be well developed with the return of Joseph Grima and welcomes infrastructural investment in culture. However, the panel is worried about the impact of the initial delay in designing the governance structure and the over-complexity that the latter may have on the further development of the content of Matera-Basilicata 2019. The panel has some concerns about the team focusing on current activities more than on the preparation of the ECOC year.

The panel welcomes the strong support of the national government to the project and the deployment of an external team of experts who will support local technicians.

Furthermore, the panel believes that the budget of the project is solid and the distribution of the budget between programming, marketing and wages strikes a good balance. However, plans for private funding perhaps need to be more realistic.

The panel recommendations

- The panel recommends simplifying the governance structure of the Matera-Basilicata 2019 project as soon as possible. Roles and duties of individuals and their hierarchical relationships should be clearly defined to facilitate operations and decision-making processes. The panel suggests studying organigrams of former ECOCs as potential models to be used.
- The panel suggests that the new organigram should strengthen the role of the Chairwoman of the Foundation to reinforce her responsibility to make clear decisions.
- The panel urges the Foundation to fill senior management positions as soon as possible to avoid further delays that might jeopardise the preparations of the year. The panel reminds the Foundation of the importance of appointing an administrative manager and a cultural manager who can put the project on the right course and ensure the coherence of the whole package. The panel suggests that at least one member of the Scientific Committee should be present in the selection of the senior managerial positions.
- The panel recommends re-evaluating the roles of artistic director and cultural manager in order to avoid a clash of responsibilities. The panel does not see any sense in nominating an "artistic director for activities outside the bid-book".
- Additionally the panel would like to see a plan for staffing up until the ECOC-year.
- The panel urges the Foundation to broaden its focus on the development of mid-term projects. The panel recommends that the Foundation draws up a list of concrete and achievable milestones for 2017, which should be submitted to the panel by the end of January 2017.
- With regard to infrastructure, the panel recommends the elaboration of a milestone schedule for key infrastructure projects for 2017-2019 to ensure that they are all operational in time for the ECOC year. The panel would appreciate receiving this milestone document by the end of January 2017.
- On the programming side, the panel would like to get, by the end of January 2017, clear milestones regarding the next steps in programme delivery for the years 2017-2019, clearly making a step from the conception to implementation and production phase.
- With regard to the logo, the panel recommends that the new design makes clear reference to the European Commission.
- The panel suggest that Matera (and all ECOC cities) regularly publish a public progress report on their websites.
- The panel reminds the Foundation of the need to engage civil society and to harness their willingness to participate and suggests their inclusion in the organigram, re-activating their role and fully integrating them in the governance structure on the Board of Trustees.

Next steps

The panel would appreciate to be informed by the end of January 2017 on the updated model of governance adopted by the Foundation. This should include the specific duties and responsibilities associated with each position. The panel would like to be informed of the newly appointed senior management team by the same date.

In light of the panel's ongoing concerns over governance, the panel would like another opportunity to discuss the progress of the project in the summer of 2017. The format of this meeting – either a visit by a few panel members or an informal meeting in Brussels – shall be decided upon at a later date.

The panel thanks the Matera Basilicata 2019 delegation for their report and the open discussion. It looks forward to developments of the ECOC in the coming year.