



## KORRALDUS

Narva

26.09.2018.a nr 818-k

### **Euroopa kultuuripealinna 2024 taotluse esitamine**

#### **1. Asjaolud ja menetluse käik**

Narva Linnavalitsuse 07.02.2018. a korraldusega nr 122-k „Narva linna kandideerimine Euroopa kultuuripealinnaks aastaks 2024“ otsustati, et Narva linn kandideerib Euroopa kultuuripealinnaks aastaks 2024. Euroopa kultuuripealinnade liikumine on Euroopa suurim kultuuriprojekt, mille traditsioon ulatub juba 30. aasta taha. Kui algselt oli kultuuripealinnade liikumise fookuses peamiselt Euroopa kultuuriline rikkus ja mitmekesisus, siis tänased ambitsioonid on palju laiemad: mitmekesistada linna majandusprofiili, tegeleda linna maine, identiteedi ja jätkusuutlikkuse küsimustega, suurendada linna atraktiivsust nii kohalike elanike kui turistide jaoks, suurendada sotsiaalset kaasatust ja koostööd, arendada linnaruumi.

2018. a veebruaris-märtsis korraldati hankemenetlust, mille eesmärgiks oli Narva linna Euroopa kultuuripealinna 2024 tiitlile eeltaotluse koostamine ja pakkumuse väljatöötamine. Hankemenetluse võitjaks tunnustati Shiftworks OÜ, kes kooskõlas riigihanke tingimustega koostas vastavad dokumendid ning esitas Narva Linnavalitsusele. Euroopa kultuuripealinna 2024 kandideerimiseks tuleb hiljemalt 01. oktoobriks 2018. a esitada Kultuuriministeriumile koostatud taotlus.

#### **2. Õiguslikud alused**

Vastavalt kohaliku omavalitsuse korralduse seaduse § 30 lõike 1 punkti 3 kohaselt linnavalitsus lahendab ja korraldab kohaliku elu küsimusi, mis ei kuulu volikogu pädevusse.

#### **3. Otsus**

Esitada Euroopa kultuuripealinna 2024 kandideerimise taotlus (lisatud) kooskõlas Euroopa kultuuripealinna 2024 programmi tingimustega.

#### **4. Rakendussätted**

- 4.1 Korraldus jõustub seadusega sätestatud korras.
- 4.2 Korraldust võib vaidlustada Tartu Halduskohtu Jõhvi kohtumajas 30 päeva jooksul korralduse teatavakstegemise päevast arvates.

Tarmo Tammiste  
Linnapea

Ants Liimets  
Linnasekretär

# NARVA2024

**Preselection Questionnaire  
For the European Capital of Culture for 2024**

*#narvaisnext*

## 0. Introduction – General considerations (max. 3 pages)

### 0.1. Why does your city wish to take part in the competition for the title of European Capital of Culture?

Narva is a city of contrasts, a city that has time and again lost and rebuilt its identity. The location on Estonia's northeastern frontier, along the banks of the rapid river dividing and uniting North and East, is the key to Narva's past and present. Residing on the fault line between the tectonic plates of world's civilizations, Narva features a medieval castle that looks like a fairytale illustration, juxtaposed with thousands of square meters of post-apocalyptic industrial legacy that is Kreenholm Factory. Narva also used to be the 'Baroque pearl of the Baltic Sea' before mutating into something similar to Cold War era Berlin with its prefab Soviet Khrushchyovkas.

The collapse of the former soviet plan-economy industries resulted in substantial unemployment and social problems including drug abuse and an HIV-epidemic (the highest rate of HIV in the EU). The collapsed value system left behind a void that the Estonian government failed to fill and that instead has been fed by the Russian state-controlled media. Thus the proportion of people in vulnerable social situations in Narva is considerably higher than in the rest of Estonia. In addition to the social issues the identity of the population is fragile because of the nationality issue – less than half of the population are Estonian citizens, a little more than one third are citizens of the Russian Federation and 14% are stateless holders of the so-called "alien passport". Only about 4% of Narva population are ethnic Estonians. Also due to the situation that Narva is predominantly Russian-speaking, the city and its people have felt isolated from the rest of Estonia, where Estonian is the only official language. It's as if Narva has a split personality – you will hear Russian spoken ubiquitously, whereas the written language of street names and advertising is mostly Estonian.

The public debate in the capital city of Tallinn doesn't reach Narva, the only news and issues reaching beyond Narva to the rest of Estonia are concerning crime and economic decline. So, in a way the whole of Narva has been marginalized and isolated in the Estonian context through the isolation mindset, while the truly vulnerable social groups even more so due to the added handicap of missing language skills. Narva and the region also have the highest gender pay gap in Estonia (itself the highest in the EU). The acceptance of LGBT people and people of other races/refugees/immigrants is considerably lower than in the rest of Estonia and the EU – partly explainable through the influence of the value system presented in the Russian state-controlled TV, still widely the main source of information and entertainment for people in Narva. Arts offer a chance to address these personal and societal taboos.

After Russian annexation of Crimea and invasion of Eastern Ukraine, international media flocked to Narva in search for a similar scenario here, producing stories under the headline "Is Narva next?". Even though most of them didn't find any proof for their hypothesis the negative publicity had its impact on the image of the city. Becoming a European Capital of Culture, Narva would have a unique opportunity to turn the scaremongering "Is Narva next?" into a provocative and brave "Narva is next ..." and fill it with unexpected positive content.

Narva is a work in progress, a dreamlike post-industrial city filled with promises and purposes for an age yet to come. With the ECoC bid, the city has decided to reframe itself not as a fragile geopolitical time-bomb, but as Estonia's next big success story, a creative hotspot, making the most of the advantages of being a border city between Russian and European cultures. Given its unique history, post-soviet quirks, geopolitical location and plenty of space for radical improvement, Narva might be one of the most important European Capitals of Culture of all times. Narva would be a living proof that ECoC title is not an award for past achievements, but rather a catalyst for major positive change.

## **0.2. Does your city plan to involve its surrounding area? Explain this choice.**

As no man is an island, no city can tackle the challenges alone in isolation from its environment. Narva has clearly understood both the vastness of the task at hand as well as the potential that lies in building strong partnerships with its neighbours. For this reason, Narva has partnered with entire region of Virumaa, administratively consisting counties of Ida-Virumaa (Eastern Virumaa) and Lääne-Virumaa (Western Virumaa). Narva is working closely together with Union of Ida-Virumaa County Municipalities and Union of Lääne-Viru County Municipalities. It has signed cooperation agreements which involve all municipalities of the two counties - 8 in Ida-Virumaa and 8 in Lääne-Virumaa, total of 16 municipalities. With the signed agreement, all municipalities in the region have stated their willingness to work for the common goal and shared principles, and contribute in preparing an inclusive programme for the ECoC 2024. In a separate agreement, Narva has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Rakvere - cultural, economic and administrative centre of Lääne-Virumaa. Rakvere, one of the previous candidate cities of ECoC 2011, has joined Narva's candidacy to bring together the historic region of Virumaa as a whole and build stronger links within the region, but also with other parts of Estonia and Europe. Programme development workshops and discussions have been taken place in Narva and Rakvere, involving cultural and civil society operators from both sides.

## **0.3. Explain briefly the overall cultural profile of your city.**

Narva has a vibrant cultural life just waiting to be discovered by the rest of the world. Narva's cultural profile is multi-layered, bringing together a wide network of municipal cultural and education institutions as well as grass-root level initiatives. Even though Narva is relatively unknown even to Estonians, there has been a major change recently in awareness and visibility of Narva on national cultural scene. In January 2018, Narva announced its decision to apply for the title of European Capital of Culture. Within couple of months following the announcement to apply, series of brand new cultural events and also traditional festivals were announced and brought to life, including the first Baltic Sun music festival (July 2018), Kremli Ööbikud Theatre performance (August 2018), which eventually proved to be an all-time biggest theatre production success in Estonian theatre history with 24,000 tickets sold and raving reviews, Narva Opera Days (September 2018), and the first Station Narva international music and city festival (September 2018). Summer of 2018 will go down in the history of Narva's cultural life as a real turning point, where the city's cultural endeavours received a positive nudge by the prospect of European Capital of Culture and a real ambitious upgrade to strive for more, to grow and reach new audiences.

City of Narva has 10 municipal cultural institutions, including six arts and music schools, Cultural Centre Rugodiv, Central Library of Narva, Narva City Symphony Orchestra and Narva Sports Centre. Children and youth have also access to cultural and creative activities at municipal schools and Narva Youth Centre. In the field of heritage, Narva Museum is a foundation established by the City of Narva and Estonian Government. Narva Museum operates the old castle complex, thus making it one of the top museums in terms of visitor numbers (more than 70 000 visitors annually). The museum has become a vibrant tourist attraction and destination for family tourism. Part of the museum is being currently renovated, which will create even more opportunities to offer state-of-the-art visitor experience.

Narva has very strong traditions in creating opportunities for children and youth to take part in the cultural activities at municipal cultural schools, clubs, youth centres and organisations. By 2018, there are 5125 students enrolled in municipal cultural extracurricular schools. City provides very low rates for participation fees and free-of-charge for children and youth from disadvantaged groups.

There are many private cultural and creative initiatives and organisations operating in the city, also initiatives by other institutions in Estonia. In addition to two existing professional theaters, in 2017, Vaba Lava started a construction to open a new theatre centre in Narva. The centre will be opened in 2018 with a 220-seats theatre hall. Narva Creative Incubator Foundation has received funding to establish a new visual multimedia centre OBJEKT in Narva. One of the key players for internationalisation and mobility is Narva Art Residency, which has already created links with many cultural institutions in Europe and hosted artists from across the world.

#### **0.4 Explain the concept of the programme which would be launched if the city is designated as European Capital of Culture.**

Narva2024 is drawing its energy from the poetic metaphor of the Narva river - the ever changing powerful force of nature, that separates the two shores as a natural border which can be overcome by a bridge connecting people, identities, arts forms, disciplines and destinies. River flows through the programme as the colourful and at times tragic history, the source of energy that determined first trade and then the industrial development as the core of the city, the inevitable change that keeps happening and that the people and the city have to adapt to. Border symbolises the contradictions and conflicts but also the overlaps and diversity, the gray area that is the source of inspiration and intrigue. Bridge brings everything and everyone together - local, national, and global, creates networks and new connections across countries and disciplines.

Narva2024 will explore the identities shaped and scattered by the river and build a bridge to a new narrative for the city and the region. Narva is next ... story written by its people.

Narva2024 is the next gateway for talent, arts, innovation and ideas. The concept builds on the local diversity, connects it with Estonian and international talent to become the brave next hub for cultures, nationalities and disciplines. Confidently rooted in its rich history and diverse cultures, yet dynamic, agile and flexible to enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century, where digitalisation and automation will lead to further disruptions in the job market and new forms of economy.

Narva2024 is next to Russia - a link for cultural diplomacy and a tool to connect Europe and Russia in a unique way via the Russian-speaking community at the border of EU. Narva2024 will offer new opportunities to forward-thinking and progressive Russians to experience European values and cooperate with Europe.

## 1. Contribution to the long-term strategy

### 1.1. Describe the cultural strategy that is in place in your city at the time of the application, including the plans for sustaining the cultural activities beyond the year of the title?

#### General overview

Narva might have been out of Estonians radar, but it has had rich cultural life throughout the history. *"As in the past, Narva remains a melting pot for nations, periods and cultures, old and new. This is what makes the town so special. The 13th century castle, a beautiful baroque Town Hall, the best preserved system of historic defence building (bastions) in Europe, once Europe's largest and excellent example of British industrial architecture – Kreehholm Manufacture complex, and much, much more. Narva is the easternmost point of the European Union and the only location in Estonia that offers an unobstructed view of Estonia's neighbour Russia. Narva castle on the one bank of the river and Ivangorod fortress on the other bank, form a unique architectural ensemble. Visitors can choose from varieties of concerts, festivals and open-air shows that take place on the territory of the Narva castle and also in the town."* (tourism.narva.ee)

Narva is the third largest city in Estonia with the population of 58,610 inhabitants. The population has been decreasing constantly since the Estonia re-gained its independence, in 1993 the population was 83,000 inhabitants.

In terms of different ethnic groups, 83% of inhabitants are Russian, 4% are Estonians, 2% Ukrainians, 2% Belarusians, others 9%. 48% of Narva's inhabitants have Estonian citizenship, 36% have Russian citizenship, 14% have undetermined citizenship (they have permanent living permission, but they have not acquired Estonian nor any other citizenship), 2% are citizens of other countries.

In 2017, the unemployment rate in Estonia was 5.8%, in Narva the rate was 8.45% and in Ida-Virumaa 12.4%. Narva's and the region's economy has largely been based on oil-shale mining and textile industry, which will face heavy challenges in light of new renewable energy sources and overall competitiveness. The average monthly salary in Narva was 889 Eur in 2017, which is considerably lower than Estonian average of 1321 Eur. This all creates a context in which culture and creativity need to bring positive change.

#### Cultural strategy

The existing Narva city development strategy for 2008-2021 presents a vision of a city which offers enabling environment for well-being of its citizens as well as attractiveness for visitors and investors. The city is annually updating the strategy and the updated version is currently being discussed by the

City Council. In that draft version, the strategy includes number of new directions based on the preparations for the ECoC title. According to the document, the aim of the city by 2024 is to carry a European Capital of Culture title as a international meeting place of different cultures, where the catalyst for positive change is its rich and diverse cultural life, entrepreneurial mindset of its people, and environment where creativity can flourish. The draft strategy also introduces number of horizontal measures and includes culture and creative industries across other areas, including the business development, tourism promotion and social affairs.

The existing Narva culture and sports development strategy for 2015-2022 presents a comprehensive set of strategic goals to support the development of cultural and sports activities. The city has positioned culture and sport as one of the key factors for creating conducive living and working environment. The four main goals include facilitating access to culture and heritage to encourage creativity of its citizens, providing high-quality cultural and sport services and infrastructure, and improving the sustainability of the cultural and sports sector by balancing traditions with innovation, building on regional and international partnerships and supporting bottom-up initiatives and community activities. As one of the tools to raise the cultural profile of Narva, the strategy includes the city's ambition to apply for the ECoC title.

As a key part of the ECoC application process, Narva has launched a complete overhaul of its cultural and creative strategy. The process was officially launched by the decision of the City Council to prepare a new comprehensive Narva Cultural Strategy 2030, which covers both culture, creative industries, sports and all other related fields. The new cultural strategy has been already drafted and discussed with key stakeholders. The process will continue in parallel to preparation of the final ECoC application and will be adopted by the City Council prior to the final application in 2019.

The reason for the new strategy is many-fold. Firstly, the existing strategy did not cover the year 2024 and the following years. Secondly, the existing strategy focused primarily on cultural and sports sectors and did not encompass the full range of related areas and cross-over impacts of culture and creativity. Thirdly, with the decision to apply for the ECoC title, Narva has included much more ambitious plan for the city. The new cultural strategy addresses all those aspects.

Narva Cultural Strategy 2030 sets a vision not merely for the cultural sector, but for the entire city. The aim is to create a human and nature friendly living environment, which places culture, creativity, entrepreneurship and healthy lifestyle in the centre of development. Narva as a border city is a unique meeting place, where diversity and openness is seen as a strength, not a weakness. People in Narva are actively engaged in cultural and sports activities, both as creators and participants. Culture and creativity needs to be tightly linked with business development and innovation, to make Narva more competitive and attractive regional hub.

To achieve its vision, Narva needs to be:

- Ambitious: thinking big, acting big, ready to take risks and ready to succeed.
- Engaging: strong city is based on strong communities, local people taking initiative and feeling the ownership, valuing the local traditions and place-specific initiatives.
- Innovative: being open to new solutions and experimentation, using culture and creativity to offer solutions to social, economic and environmental challenges.

- Connected: culture and sports are not stand-alone sectors, they are closely connected and integrated to all related areas of development in the city.
- Open: building strong partnerships within the region, with rest of Estonia, in Europe and in neighbouring Russia.

The draft strategy includes seven goals:

1. Supporting active and diverse cultural life, which values both traditions and innovative approaches.
2. Creating favourable conditions for being engaged in sports, both in professional sports as well as sports for all.
3. Supporting grass-roots activities, engaging communities, encouraging private initiative, and putting in place transparent and inclusive decision making processes.
4. Developing city's physical infrastructure and urban planning to support creativity, healthy lifestyle and lowering of ecological footprint.
5. Encouraging creative entrepreneurship and creative cross-overs for innovative solutions in other fields.
6. Promoting city as a tourism destination and developing high-quality tourism services and infrastructure.
7. Internationalisation of city's cultural and creative life, and building strong links with partners in the region and across Europe.

Each of the goals includes performance indicators and set of measures and programmes to implement the strategy. The draft strategy will cover years leading to the ECoC title and six following years. The aim is to sustain the impact achieved by the ECoC. Narva is contributing large part of its annual budget to culture and sports. In 2017, the cultural and sports budget amounted to 12% of the city's total budget, in addition, culture and sports received funding through other parts of city's budget, including city infrastructure, education, business development and tourism. Narva will continue investing into culture and creativity and with expected cultural, social and economic impact of the ECoC, financing of culture will be seen more as investment that triggers positive change in other fields. The ECoC title will lead to increased participation and financing by the private sector, which will further diversify Narva's cultural life in years following to the ECoC. In 2019, the City Council will adopt a detailed action plan together with the cultural strategy that will include planned activities for sustaining the ECoC impact and build upon those results.

**1.2. Describe the city's plans to strengthen the capacity of the cultural and creative sectors, including through the development of long term links between these sectors and the economic and social sectors in your city.**

The draft Narva Cultural Strategy 2030 presents wide-range of proposals to strengthen the capacity of cultural and creative sectors (including sports) for each of the strategic directions. The key measures include following:

1. Active and diverse cultural life:



- Supporting the activities of cultural operators despite of their legal status, including programming, infrastructure and technical equipment.
- Launching a large-scale capacity building and training programme for cultural managers.
- Supporting networking and involvement in regional and international partnerships, including support for international co-productions, residencies, mobility and exchange programs.
- Facilitating access for children and youth to participate in cultural activities, art and music schools and non-formal education programmes.
- Implementing city-wide audience development strategy and training cultural organisations in drafting their individual audience engagement plans.

## 2. Favourable conditions for sports and healthy lifestyle:

- Supporting the activities of sport organisations despite of their legal status, including events and competitions, infrastructure and technical equipment.
- Launching a large-scale capacity building and training programme for sport managers, including sport schools, clubs, event organisers and organisations.
- Supporting networking and involvement in regional and international partnerships.

## 3. Community involvement:

- Supporting grass-root initiatives through training programmes, awareness-raising initiatives and funding programs.
- Implementing open, transparent and inclusive decision making process to encourage civic participation and active involvement of all key stakeholders.
- Creating better conditions for motivating and involving volunteers and private contributors in cultural and sports projects and processes, offering volunteers additional programmes and trainings.
- Introducing participatory budgeting to engage citizens more directly to decision making and allowing cultural operators to be more directly linked with the wider population.
- Facilitating equal opportunities and access to all people, including people with special needs, training cultural and sports managers in matters related to dealing with service development and working with people with special needs.

## 4. Urban landscape:

- Aligning city's general urban development plan with the aims of the cultural strategy to create a physical environment that supports creativity, healthy living and entrepreneurship.
- Developing Narva's creative milieu, which includes necessary infrastructure for culture and sports, open air areas, parks and green areas, bicycling roads, etc.
- Enriching the urban landscape with public art.
- Working closely with private owners to improve the overall appearance of the city by investing into residential buildings and developing old industrial spaces.

## 5. Creative industries and cross-overs:

- Integrating culture and creativity in all related city strategies and development plans, including tourism development, education and social affairs, business development, urban infrastructure, etc.
- Launching a creative industries awareness raising and development programme in cooperation with creative incubator and Creative Estonia, carrying out detailed mapping of creative industries and related fields in Narva, organising workshops, hackathons, trainings, creative economy academy programme, networking between creative sectors as well as with other sectors (energy, industry, forestry, etc).
- Joining a regional film fund to attract international film crews to shoot in Narva and in the region, support the development of audiovisual service cluster to offer high-quality service for those projects.

#### 6. Tourism development:

- Promoting and marketing Narva as a attractive tourism destination and working with other municipalities in the region to offer joint packages and programmes.
- Working with tourism sector to increase available tourist service capacity, including accommodation, catering, programming, etc.
- Capacity building to increase the service quality of the tourism sector, including customer service, language skills, promotion materials, international quality standards, etc.

#### 7. Partnerships and internationalisation:

- Linking local cultural operators with national and international networks, associations, clusters and programmes, supporting internationalisation and cross-border initiatives.
- Cooperation with other European Capitals of Culture and cities across Europe that share similar challenges and conditions as Narva to offer solutions for others.
- Organising press-tours and international visits for experts and journalists to match-make them with local partners.

The reasons for engaging entire Virumaa go far beyond the question of scope and resources. On one hand, municipalities in Ida-Virumaa share many similar problems as Narva. Ida-Virumaa as whole is an industrial region, influenced by similar environmental, societal and economic challenges. According to Statistics Estonia, 19% of inhabitants of Ida-Virumaa are ethnically Estonian, 73% Russian and 8% other nationalities (in Narva, 4% are Estonian, 83% Russian and 13% other). The region has considerably lower average salary (997 euros per month) compared to the Estonian average (1221 euros). In 2017, the registered unemployment rate in Estonia was 5.8%, in Ida-Virumaa the rate was 12.4% and in Narva 8.5%. Ida-Virumaa has already number of cooperation initiatives, including joint tourism development and marketing strategy. As isolation is one of the key themes the Narva2024 wants to address, we have decided to engage also Lääne-Virumaa. While the two counties are historically and economically closely linked, the cultural and societal cooperation has been very limited. Building strong partnerships with the neighbouring region is a first step for Narva and Ida-Virumaa to engage closer with rest of Estonia.

Throughout the strategy and the ECoC programme, the key aspect is capacity building of all key stakeholders, in particular the cultural managers, organisers, staff of public institutions and civil society representatives. The main focus areas include strategic management of arts and culture, audience development and engagement strategies, internationalisation and networking, use of new technologies and design thinking principles, creative industries and new business models, and language skills. The capacity building programmes will be organised in cooperation with national agencies (e.g. Unemployment Insurance Fund) and higher education institutions (including Tartu University's Narva College) as part of wider life-long learning initiative.

### **1.3. How is the European Capital of Culture action included in this strategy?**

ECoC action is streamlined throughout city's strategic vision. On one hand, ECoC is brought as a strategic direction in both the Narva's draft city strategy as well as the Narva Cultural Strategy 2030. On the other hand, the aims of the ECoC and its planned impact go far beyond city's cultural strategy. Narva sees the ECoC application process and later bearing the title as a key ingredient in its mission to make the city culturally more vibrant, socially more cohesive, and economically more competitive place to live, work and visit.

More specifically, the ECoC action will contribute directly into following key areas:

- Enriching Narva's cultural life and strengthening links with cultural operators across the region and country.
- Capacity building for local and regional cultural operators to better manage cultural and creative processes.
- Internationalising Narva and building stronger cross-border links and networks with Europe and Russia.
- Developing new audiences and activating local population in cultural participation.
- Raising awareness about Narva and the possibilities it offers for citizens, investors and visitors.
- Mapping city's cultural and creative sectors and supporting creative industries initiatives and spillovers.
- Helping Narva to become true meeting place and creative hub for local, Estonian, European and Russian professionals.
- Marketing Narva and Virumaa as attractive tourist destination and developing necessary tourism service.

The decision to apply for the ECoC title has already in a very short time brought along significant positive changes in many of the above-mentioned areas. It has resulted in unprecedented level of engagement of local population and cultural professionals, which in turn has increased trust and cooperation between the community and policy-makers. It has also raised Narva's profile throughout the Estonia - the positive media coverage has supported cultural operators to bring productions to Narva with great success (summer theatre production "Kremlis ööbikud" was attended by staggering 24,000 people). Tourist numbers are rapidly growing. Only in the first three months in 2018, the number of tourists to Ida-Virumaa increased 23% (compared to 6% of national growth).

In this process, the stakes are high not only culturally, but also for the future position of Narva at large. The ECoC process has initiated a positive change in the society, both within Narva and in the entire Estonian society. The ECoC candidacy and its impact so far has been seen as a critical factor for integrating Narva closer with rest of Estonia and Europe. The frequency of high-level visits to Narva, highlighting Narva and Ida-Virumaa as one of the government priorities and even the symbolic act of the Estonian President to move her offices temporarily to Narva in August 2018 have all resulted in change in attitudes for the local population, who, for many years after Estonia regained its independence, have felt isolated and neglected. The ECoC candidacy has given Narva a new breathing and new shared goal, and we are ready to work hard to realise the hopes and expectations the process has raised.

**1.4. If your city is awarded the title of European Capital of Culture, what do you think would be the long-term cultural, social and economic impact on the city (including in terms of urban development)?**

ECoC process contributes to all seven cultural and creative development pillars, for which the city has developed KPIs (key performance indicators) to assess the short, medium and long-term impact on city's development. While the final list of KPIs are still in development and they will be adopted together with the final Cultural Strategy 2030, the initial list includes the following:

1. Active and diverse cultural life:

- Increased number, quality and diversity of cultural events and projects, including co-productions within and outside of Estonia.
- Increased cultural participation rate
- More children and youth are involved in cultural and creative activities through schools, extra-curricular activities and cultural organisations
- Cultural operators and managers have better skills and competences

2. Favourable conditions for sports and healthy lifestyle:

- Increased number of sporting events and facilities, more people involved in sport activities
- More children and youth are involved in sport-related activities through schools, extra-curricular activities and cultural organisations
- Sport operators and managers have better skills and competences

3. Community involvement:

- Increased transparency and involvement of local population and cultural operators in decision-making processes
- Increased funding for private initiatives, more grass-root activities in the field of culture
- Increased number of volunteers and private sector partners in cultural activities

4. Urban landscape:

- Better infrastructure for cultural, creative and sporting activities
- Number of rehabilitated industrial spaces and improved residential buildings
- More art in public places

#### 5. Creative industries and cross-overs:

- Number of cultural and creative companies, share of employment and contribution to local economy
- Number of crossover projects between creative industries and other fields.
- Cultural and creative professionals have better skills and competences in business model development and innovation processes

#### 6. Tourism development:

- Increased number of visitors and over-night stays
- Increased tourism offer in Narva including accommodation and catering
- Increased visibility of Narva in national and international media
- Increased satisfaction rates with the tourism offer quality
- Better connections with other parts of Estonia and Russia, faster connection times and frequency

#### 7. Partnerships and internationalisation:

- Increased number of partners and cooperation projects (including mobility, exchange and co-production) in neighbouring municipalities, rest of Estonia and across Europe and Russia
- Local cultural operators are better involved in international networks, clusters and projects

ECoC process boosts the extent of those impacts and improves sustainability of those changes as it spans over a longer period of time. The most significant added value of ECoC will be in the areas of involvement of local communities (bringing people closer to decision making process by applying transparent and open planning procedures), visibility and attractiveness of the city (leading to more visitors and improved tourism offer quality), internationalisation and partnerships (more cooperation projects across borders), and economic impact (increased number of creative companies and cross-over projects to other sectors). In 2012, Estonian Ministry of Culture carried out a study on the direct economic impact of cultural and sport events to local economy. According to the study, on average, every 1 euro in the budget of a festival generates 4 euros direct economic benefit to the local economy. The impact of ECoC to local businesses and service providers will be crucial for further investment and sustainable growth. ECoC will help the city to mainstream culture as a key development factors throughout Narva's strategy.

We have been carefully studying the experience from previous cultural capitals (e.g. Liverpool, Mons, Tallinn, Pilsen, to name only few) in terms of their assessment of impact. We believe, that the key lesson from previous ECoCs is to have clear focus areas to maximise the impact on city's cultural, social and economic life. We have decided to avoid putting quantity over quality in terms of programming and setting priority areas.

#### **1.5. Outline briefly the plans for monitoring and evaluation.**

Based on the set Key Performance Indicators (to be finalised by final Bid-Book), the monitoring and evaluation will be carried out throughout the process in an transparent, open and inclusive manner to inform all the stakeholders, build trust and lay groundwork for sustainability strategy in the years following the ECoC.

Narva2024 will be managed by a separate judicial institution (foundation), which will be created specifically for that purpose. The city will invite representatives from other regional partners, central government as well as international experts to form a supervisory board responsible for overseeing the management of the process. We have already studied many impact assessment and evaluation reports from previous ECoCs, which will be the basis for setting up the monitoring and evaluation system.

The monitoring and evaluation of the artistic programme will be carried out with the help of artistic committee, which will include cultural professionals on local, regional, national and international level.

We are planning to build monitoring and evaluation modules in the process right from the start. We will work with universities and research institutions (e.g. Tartu University Narva College, University of Tallinn, Estonian Economic Research Institute, Creative Estonia, Estonian Business School, etc.) to prepare impact assessment methodology that would look both at the quantitative as well as qualitative data. It is crucial for us to evaluate not only economic impact, but also cultural and social impact of the ECoC. Narva2024 could be a great source for academic studies in culture, creative industries, urban planning, identities and minorities, tourism, political science, etc.

## 2. Cultural and artistic content

### 2.1. What is the artistic vision and strategy for the cultural programme of the year?

The backbone of Narva2024 artistic vision is the Narva river - the ever changing powerful force of nature, that separates the two shores as a natural border which can be overcome by a bridge connecting people, identities, arts forms, disciplines and destinies.

**River** flows through the programme as the colourful and at times tragic history, the source of energy that determined first trade and then the industrial development as the core of the city, the inevitable change that keeps happening and that the people and the city have to adapt to. It will be used as a storytelling vehicle for all segments of the programming dealing with history, industrial heritage and change but also simple daily life. Living with the river is symbolic for tackling life challenges: it requires people to cooperate in order to harness the power of nature, reach personal growth, bring life and food. Quite like the struggle of creating artistic content itself. On a practical level river Narva will play a major part as the programming venue starting from small scale community activities like collecting the stories of Narva fishermen up to large-scale installations and international events also reflecting the trading history, the industrial heritage, embracing different disciplines of arts.

**Border** symbolises the contradictions and conflicts but also the overlaps and diversity, the gray area that is the source of inspiration and intrigue. Border is a powerful metaphor for the complicated history of Narva and the identities of its people today, the fragility of a status quo, the tensions, reconciliation and resolution. The geopolitical meaning of the border will be explored artistically, the

challenges it poses and opportunities it opens not just in politics and daily lives of people but also for artistic creation. The overlapping and contradicting identities created by the border location offer a rich material for social arts. E.g. the community of Narva “Venice” lives with and by the border and is a fascinating partner for artistic co-creation or intervention projects. The two castles on each side of the river/border offer a strong visual reminder of the history of conflict and an opportunity to be used as spectacular venues for high-level events. In addition to the very visible EU-Russia border there seems to be an invisible mental border between Narva and the rest of Virumaa and Estonia at times that is worth exploring through artistic research. Borders between different nationalities are best embodied by the language barrier/border. Border as a title also opens uncharted territories for exploration serving as a hook for international arts projects that can dive deep into borders in any sense. From borders to borderless.

Narva2024 will bring more Europe to the EU-Russia border, as well as offer a cultural diplomacy and exchange tool for Europe and Russia as a unique Russian-speaking community at the edge of EU. This is an opportunity for Europe to build closer cultural collaboration ties with Russian artistic and creative communities, embracing the cultural wealth of their roots and traditions, yet placing them firmly within the European value system. At the same time, it will offer opportunities for forward-thinking and progressive Russians to collaborate with Europe.

**Bridge** brings everything and everyone together - local, national, and global, creates networks and new connections across countries and disciplines and helps to overcome differences. Bridge is also an important part of the daily lives of people in Narva with a lively cross-border traffic today and even more so in the past, when workers used to cross the footbridge from Ivangorod to come to work at the Kreenholm factory. Bridge will include all programme parts that connect artists and communities, different disciplines, countries and regions. Bridge is also a storytelling tool for programme elements that aim to overcome the language gap - one of the major issues between Narva and the rest of Estonia. But bridge is also used to mark the potential personal journey of community members going through hard times towards a more positive outlook via engaging with arts. (One of the most active NGOs in this field in Narva is called “Uus Sild” - new bridge.) The connecting ability of the bridge is the core of all collaboration projects. Additionally, bridges across the river Narva but also others in the region can themselves become arts venues.

With the ECoC title Narva will become a gateway for talent, arts, innovation and ideas. Serving as an open hub for cultures, nationalities and disciplines to meet and collaborate, Narva will be joining the dots and connecting geographical, cultural as well as sectoral ties, acting as a bridge in the widest sense.

The city will accumulate knowledge and networks that allow it to reinvent itself as an innovative engine - confidently rooted in its rich history and diverse cultures, yet dynamic, agile and flexible to enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century, where digitalisation and automation will lead to further disruptions in the job market and new forms of economy.

### **Narva2024 vision is to be a connector and an engine for opportunities**

With this project Narva aims to position itself as one of the bravest new creative hubs in Europe. A collaboration hub between East and West, between Europe and Russia, proving that creativity and

diversity, if nourished well, can turn around a pattern of decline in society – bringing together arts and innovation, entrepreneurial thinking and creative collaborations and thus constantly create more opportunities.

### **Strengthening the national and international cooperation**

The foundation of the programming is valuing the local subcultures and communities. National and international programme creators will join the programme with the condition of cooperating with local and regional partners and including regional artistic content. Capacity building and knowledge sharing is a goal in itself in all programming. The programme will be a two-way street: not only encouraging events and projects from outside to Narva and the region, but also encouraging local organizations to export and expand. Most of the companies and organizations in the sector still see their market just in a limited region, ECoC will help them see the whole country, but also international markets as a potential for growth. Local partners for national and international organisations and creators can be artists but also communities, schools, vulnerable social groups etc as long as the cooperation leads to long term meaningful co-creation.

### **Creating networks**

The programme strategy will attract national and international artistic organisations, yet combine it with local and regional partners and artistic content. It will reach out to networks, hubs and programmes to ensure closer ties to European organizations and initiatives, including strategic international partners, eg. former ECoC cities, European cultural organizations, Russian, especially St Petersburg’s cultural organizations, twin cities, Swedish partners (the special Swedish connection). The programme will tap into the best knowledge and networks available in Estonian creative sector, including key national partners, e.g. Saaremaa Opera Festival, Järvi Academy, Nargen Festival, Black Nights Film Festival, Tallinn Music Week, Jazzkaar Festival, Tallinn Fashion Week, Tallinn Design Festival, Tallinn Architecture Biennial, Simple Session, Street Food festival, Estonian Song Festival in 2024 and others. The programme will provide help to local organisations and companies to be part of a variety of European cooperation frameworks (Erasmus, Creative Europe, European Media Programme, Music Moves Europe programme and others).

### **Creating a sustainable engine for opportunities and building a legacy of social capital**

The programming will encourage sustainability in the sector by introducing process based thinking, not only projects and events. Founding of hubs, residences and development centers will be encouraged to generate collaborations, mobility, exchange and new projects:

- Creative Hubs - Establishing creative hubs that systematically accumulate knowledge and competence, would be essential to the region’s development. Together with Vaba Lava theatre, a creative industries hub “Object” will open up at the former Baltijets Factory (Narva, Linda 2). A visitor center at Kreenholm Factory (250 000 m2 former textile factory) will open up in 2019, there have been ideas to set up a creative hub in territory of Kreenholm as well to create an environment for creative companies - the kick-off of these two projects would have huge impact. Potential partners and networks they could benefit



from: Trans Europa Halles, European Creative Hubs Network, European Creative Business Network, Impact Hub, Green Hub, potential partners in the region: Skorohod in St. Petersburg, CCI Fabrika in Moscow, Kaapelitehdäs in Finland etc.

- Residency programmes - Narva Art Residency has already proven the kind of impact that regular international programming and residents, who spend longer time in Narva city amongst its inhabitants, can have. In addition to their arts programming, by living their daily lives and interacting with the locals, these residents already visibly change the social patterns and create more openness to new ideas and types of people. More programmes like this will be welcomed and existing ones empowered.
- Cultural and Creative Sectors' Development Centres - In collaboration of the key Estonian sectoral organizations, it would be important to set up activities and local teams to also secure sectoral development. Potential partners include: Estonian Film Institute, Music Estonia, Estonian Design Centre, Estonian Centre for Architecture, Estonian Theatre Agency, etc, but also interdisciplinary organizations and creative industries platforms like Creative Estonia and Creative Narva.
- Estonia's success story as a digital nation will be used for the benefit of Narva's development – the start-up community, eg. e-Residency, e-Governance, creative industries export strategies.

## **2.2. Give a general overview of the structure of your cultural programme, including the range and diversity of the activities/main events that will mark the year.**

The goal of the programme structure is to diversify and strengthen cultural life, to connect local organizations to national and international networks and initiatives and to set up an engine that will systematically create more opportunities.

The programme outline will be formed within a three-layer set-up:

- Centrally organized productions, projects and partnerships, that the Narva2024 organization will produce and promote itself.
- Programme applications to be received within an Open Call for projects, ideally twice a year, starting from 2020 until the end of 2023.
- An on-going Open Call for smaller scale community projects that will encourage grass roots initiatives, neighbourhood festivals and sub-culture events.

These layers will be supported throughout by capacity building programme, including trainings, mentorship programs, workshops, networking, audience development strategy development, etc.

### **Emphasis on partnerships with local organisations**

Narva2024 will put in place a clear condition for all projects that come from outside the Virumaa region to collaborate with local and regional partners and include regional artistic content. The

collaboration needs to start ideally from concept development phase, including the local partners already in an early phase, not only buying local service from them. These partnerships can also be widely interdisciplinary, e.g. a film production company partnering up with a regional start-up, a festival partnering up with companies from the tourist sector to set-up a festival strategy, aimed at tourists.

While we are aware of the challenges of this condition - there is a limited number of active cultural organizations in the region and they will not be able to collaborate with everyone, and there is a language barrier in some of the cases that will slow down the process - we still strongly believe that as the goal of Narva2024 is to strengthen the local cultural sector and all of its related industries, our priority is to make sure that the knowledge and capacity building will accumulate and stay in the region – making the ECoC process a kick-start and a real upgrade for regional stakeholders to become the connectors for ideas and innovation for years to come.

To facilitate the process of finding partners in the region, Narva2024 organization will take it as their task to map out organizations and companies in the regions, who to suggest as partners. There will also be an online form available for local organizations and companies to add their info for partnerships.

### **Upgrading the existing with innovation**

The foundation of the programming is valuing the local subcultures and communities and strengthening the local and regional cultural life. Yet, to push the region towards a real upgrade in quality and capacity, new formats, innovation and wider collaborations and partnerships are needed. Each and every project will need to describe how exactly do they plan on highlighting local cultural richness and local talent in their programming as well as, instead of competing with the existing initiatives, it adds value and strengthens the local.

Narva 2024 project will aim to encourage innovation in the type of collaborations across sectors and industries (film with literature, music with technology etc.) as well as innovation in forms of marketing and communication. Arts organizations will be encouraged to think how to use Estonia's success story as a digital nation to enhance local and regional life and to add to the creative networks' fabric. For example, e-Residency programme can be put to work to encourage global companies in setting up their businesses within Estonia (thus within the EU legislation), or Estonia's globally successful ride share company Taxify will be encouraged to be more active in Ida-Virumaa as the amount of cultural events and thus tourism increases, thus offering a needed contemporary cashless service for the market.

So far a great deal of the cultural life in the region has been organized and initiated by the municipality. The project aims of course to strengthen the competences for municipalities and cultural workers as well, but it is determined to offer equal opportunities to private sector initiatives, subcultures and creative businesses. Promoting the entrepreneurial spirit in the region is a priority and strengthening dynamic, agile and ambitious companies to drive their vision further, is a must.

The project will also aim to diversify funding sources for cultural and creative sectors:

- public-private partnerships (Theatre Centre Vaba Lava, Aleksander Church, festivals);
- crowdfunding platforms;
- private sector sponsorship (mainly related to better skills and knowledge how to attract sponsors);
- co-funding between partners and stakeholders;
- European funding tools, so far not much used in the region.

### **Types of events:**

The types of events involve projects and initiatives on different levels: community and neighbourhoods, local and regional, national, European, Russian, flagship events. The programme areas include all cultural and creative sectors (music, film, visual arts, performing arts, design, architecture, literature, heritage, media), but also related areas (creative industries, tourism, social affairs, education, etc.). The programme decision-making is upon an artistic committee, consisting of regional, national, as well as international experts. When it comes to community projects, a format of simple questionnaire in combination of a face-to-face interview will be conducted. The press and media projects will be evaluated by a dedicated round-table of specialists and in collaboration with Tartu University and The Baltic Film and Media school in Tallinn.

### **Means of evaluation**

During the final composition of the Narva2024 programme, following criteria for evaluation will be used, among others:

- Quality and diversity of artistic vision;
- Local partners involved
- Capacity to deliver projects;
- Capacity building and education;
- Long-term effect for Narva and the region, sustainability;
- Creating opportunities;
- Balance of traditions vs innovation;
- European and wider international dimension;
- Accessibility and inclusion of/co-creation with vulnerable and disadvantaged groups
- Diversity of funding (public, private, crowdfunding etc.)

### **2.3. Explain succinctly how the cultural programme will combine local cultural heritage and traditional art forms with new, innovative and experimental cultural expressions?**

As Narva is a cultural melting pot, it is no wonder that there are large number of national cultural associations. Narva is a city in Estonia where minority is the majority. The city's history has dictated the fabric of its diverse identities and cultures. In Narva, there are 26 actively working national cultural associations, including those representing different cultural expressions from Russia, Belarus, Inger-Finns, Polish, Tatars, Jewish, Uzbeks, and many others.

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quality and capacity, new formats, innovation and wider collaborations and partnerships are needed.

### **Preserving, analyzing, celebrating and innovating**

The question of identity is the key, yet the most sensitive issue. The challenge and the uniqueness for the programming of Narva2024 is to celebrate Narva's roots and the ethnic groups, and to build a secure platform where everyone's uniqueness can be valued. Some of these minority groups have felt isolated in Estonia through decades. Narva2024 aims to enhance inclusion through culture and self-expression, empowering the communities and celebrating them as valued members of the society in Estonia and in Europe.

Promoting community culture will be a special target within the programme strategy, including:

- national minority groups and organisations
- дача cottages and Narva "Venice" - a unique subculture of green spaces and cottages in deserted soviet garages
- backyard life of hrustchovkas - the soviet blocks of houses that form largest parts of apartment areas in Narva have unique communal spaces in the backyard greenery with kids playgrounds and benches for the elderly. Encouraging neighbourhood activities and citizens initiatives would add to their social life

Highlighting Narva's history and openly discussing the layers of identity:

- Digging deeper in history - creating a connection to history beyond 1945 (from where the personal history and memory of current Narva residents begins) to the medieval era. (the castle, bastions, Swedish past, the Hanseatic era trade routes)
- Encouraging open discussion on the matter of identity. The "who are we" question, as 30+% of people in Narva are citizens of Russian Federation, 14% stateless "alien passport" holders.
- Storytelling will be built into the whole Narva2024 media and communication strategy - aiming to identify lost stories that portray history through individuals, families, architecture, literature and arts (e.g. VR tours of the destroyed Narva Old Town).

The history, heritage and cultural diversity will boldly be put into focus with the help of contemporary formats and innovation. Here are some examples of disruptive new formats that are already taking off:

**Theatre Center Vaba Lava** - the soon to be opened centre for contemporary theatre will be the centrepiece of performing arts and start building up a high level international network from December 2018. They will bring in new formats and national/international programming, but will also include the local Ilmarine theatre as well as hobby theatres from the region. The formats that they offer range from imported plays, co-productions and offering the space for local content.

**Narva Art Residency** - since 2015 residencies for international artists who interact and cooperate with local communities, explore the identities and different topics and find an artistic expression for the results. The residency is developing to include and mix different disciplines. Some of the contemporary exhibitions there, like Maria Kapajeva's (visual artist from Narva, now based in

London) exhibition “Kreenholm: work in progress” was namely dealing with the history of Kreenholm, bringing the stories into contemporary surroundings and new audiences.

**Viru Film Fund** - Narva and Ida-Virumaa will increase the funding to the regional film rebate scheme and attract more high profile international productions. The film industry has already started to discover the spectacular locations of Ida-Virumaa. The region through the lense of contemporary filmmakers has a huge potential.

**Baltic Film and Media School** - VR tour in Narva old town. An interdisciplinary study of developing identities led by the BFM teaching staff, including field work of students in Narva, to result in a variety of outcomes from artistic expression to research papers to digital applications.

**Narva Museum** - Narva Museum and cultural heritage. The medieval castle of Narva is one of the most remarkable historic sites in Estonia that has a potential to draw great international attention through smart programming. Museum is a bridge to history for a disrupted community. Through innovative projects and stories can be taken outside the museum walls, creating an interactive storytelling platform.

**Ida-Viru Entrepreneurship Centre and the Tourism Cluster** - Combining digital tools - apps and mobile friendly services to make travelling the region easier

#### **2.4. How has the city involved, or how does it plan to involve, local artists and cultural organisations in the conception and implementation of the cultural programme?**

Building strong local communities, including cultural and creative community, is one of the cornerstones for Narva’s cultural strategy. Never before has the local cultural scene witnessed such an active engagement activity as with the preparation of the ECoC bid. Starting from January 2018, when Narva announced its decision to apply for the ECoC, constant meetings and roundtables with cultural organizations, artists and stakeholders have taken place. The process that has led to the application, has been built around the ideas and input that have come out of these meetings. In addition to the dedicated meetings, we have also had volunteers with questionnaires at cultural events and the website [www.narva2024.eu](http://www.narva2024.eu) has had an open form for ideas. This is to make sure that none of the potential target groups would be left out.

As Narva2024 is an endeavour that is by and for the people of Narva and Virumaa, it is absolutely essential that the content and the goal of the project reflects their needs and aspirations. The sectors and individuals that have been included in discussions:

- Cultural workers of all municipalities in Virumaa region
- Municipality-funded culture organisations (museums, orchestras, choirs, libraries etc.), collectives and artists in Virumaa region
- Minority groups, NGO’s and associations of ethnic minorities
- Private sector festivals, culture organizations, culture venues
- Creative enterprises and related companies
- Schools and the education sector

- Performers and artists
- Service sector companies

Altogether nearly 70 cultural professionals and cultural sector representatives have taken part in contributing to the concept of this application. In parallel, there is also ongoing consultation process for the wider Narva Cultural Strategy 2030 with number of public meetings and roundtables already taken place and public reviewing process is planned for autumn 2018. Further inclusion is planned while preparing for the Bid Book. Transparency and openness are essential to the success of the process. Therefore, in the second phase of application, Narva2024 will launch a open platform to collect ideas for programme and initiatives for 2024 and preceeding years, to allow all interested parties to submit their proposals and subsequently take an ownership of the programme.

The local and regional cultural professionals are also central in implementation of the Narva2024 programme. The programme will include activities, programmes and initiatives from all cultural and creative fields, therefore we will use the capacity, knowhow and existing networks of local cultural operators to connect them with European partners.

As one of the key aims of the ECoC 2024 is to strengthen the capacity of local cultural sector and thus sustain the impact over longer period of time, Narva2024 will apply a programming principle where all projects from outside of the region need to involve at least one local partner in implementation process. This will support networking and peer-to-peer learning between locals and outside partners.

### 3. European dimension

#### 3.1. Give a general outline of the activities foreseen in view of:

- **Promoting the cultural diversity of Europe, intercultural dialogue and greater mutual understanding between European citizens;**
- **Highlighting the common aspects of European cultures, heritage and history, as well as European integration and current European themes;**
- **Featuring European artists, cooperation with operators and cities in different countries, and transnational partnerships.**

Narva is in a unique position to act as a bridge between different cultures, including a meeting place between Estonia, Europe and Russia. The challenges Narva is facing are being tackled by many other places in Europe, therefore Narva wants to boldly and openly initiate a European level discussion on matters related to the central concept of the bid.

We have worked closely with embassies from number of European countries as well as with cultural institutions. The aim is to support internationalisation of the local cultural scene and open up gateways for local cultural operators to be more engaged in European level networks and clusters.

Narva2024 will tackle the issue of media freedoms. As majority of population is regularly in the media space controlled by Russian state authorities, the European Union and European values in general are being constantly challenged. The programme will address this in terms of capacity building programmes, awareness raising initiatives, increasing visibility of the EU action, conveying the key principles of the European project through multi-layered programming.

Most importantly, Narva2024 will also put a focus on organising and facilitating international mobility, exchange and residency programmes. In particular, Narva Art Residency is inviting artists around the world to collaborate with each other and the surrounding city landscape, Theatre Centre Vaba Lava will be organising international theatre festival, which will be the meeting place and opportunity to launch co-productions between Estonian, European and Russian theatre professionals.

Narva2024 is planning to cooperate with other ECoC cities and with European cultural organisations to find common themes and launch joint platforms to tackle those key issues in a structured manner, bringing together policy makers, cultural operators, private enterprises, and academia. The central themes from Narva which have European dimension include the issue of minorities, disrupted histories and their interpretation, identity and social cohesion, social and economic rehabilitation through culture and creativity, and question of media influence. For example, in the field of heritage, history and interpretation of history, Narva2024 is planning to work together with Network of European Museum Organisation, to use Narva as a European platform to share and develop tools in approaching the delicate work of museums in the areas of contested histories.

### **3.2. Can you explain your overall strategy to attract the interest of a broad European and international public?**

Narva2024 will put in place a detailed communication plan to reach the visibility and communication goals set during the process. We have already included in our core-team the International Communication Manager of ECoC Tallinn2011 and Estonian EU Presidency International Communications Adviser. Key themes for international communication messages (detailed messages will be further developed at the next stage) include:

#### **Transforming scaremongering headlines into natural curiosity**

Narva has attracted an extensive international media interest especially since 2014 due to its specific location right at the border of EU/NATO and Russia and its predominantly Russian-speaking population of whom about one third are Russian citizens. After Russia annexed Crimea and invaded Eastern Ukraine international media started flocking to Narva in search for a similar scenario here, producing stories under the headline “Is Narva next?”. Even though most of them didn’t find any proof for their hypothesis the negative publicity had its impact on the image of the city. However, it also created more visibility and attention than any other Eastern European town of the same size could claim for itself. All this has been aided by the spectacular visual location on the river that creates the natural border between Estonia and Russia with the impressive symbolism of the two ancient castles on both sides of the river – visualizing the “clash of civilizations”. This organic interest offers Narva2024 a unique opportunity to rephrase the scaremongering “Is Narva next?” into a provocative and brave “Narva is next ...” and fill it with unexpected positive content.

### **Unexpected intrigue for international artists**

This pre-existing attention and interest is intriguing not just for media but also for artists and creative people from all over Europe and beyond. The challenges of engaging with a community with multilayered and contradicting identities and the borderline location should by itself attract cutting-edge high profile artists from all over the world. Narva2024 will use the positive momentum to build up high-level international events in the years leading to the title and help existing international events in the region to develop a stronger artistic profile. To name just few examples:

- In urban culture and music Station Narva festival (taking place in September 2018 for the first time) will offer a platform for high-level international interdisciplinary cooperation.
- Narva Art Residency with a track record of international residents will be the anchor for mostly visual arts projects but move towards a more interdisciplinary approach within the coming years.
- Jõhvi Ballet Festival – a traditional international dance event can use the ECoC title to attract high profile curators and performers as well as international audiences.
- Narva Opera Days – the only opera event in the region can attract more international talent from Europe and Russia. Especially the St Petersburg opera scene is vibrant, high level and very eager to use this opportunity to reach out towards Europe.
- Narva Marathon – in cooperation of the organizers of Tallinn Marathon Narva will develop an international running event embracing the most spectacular track along the river/EU border to the seaside of the Baltic Sea.
- Film – Narva and Ida-Virumaa will increase the funding to the regional film rebate scheme and attract more high profile international productions. The film industry has already started to discover the spectacular locations.
- Narva Museum and cultural heritage. The medieval castle of Narva is one of the most remarkable historic sites in Estonia that has a potential to draw great international attention through smart programming. Its proximity to Ivangorod castle on the opposite shore of the Narva river creates a unique complex for heritage enthusiasts and experts across the world. There is an idea to connect with other museums tackling similar issues as Narva (disruption, destruction, borders, multi-ethnicity, etc.) and together with international museum organisations (e.g. Network of European Museum Organisations, ICOM) launch a Europe-wide discussion on exploring difficult histories in current political and social climate.
- Vaba Lava – the soon to be opened centre for contemporary theatre will be the centrepiece of performing arts and start building up a high-level international network from 2018.

### **From Clash of Civilizations to building a bridge**

Due to its location just 130 km from the cultural metropolis St. Petersburg, Narva has a unique opportunity to attract producers, artists and curators from the most vibrant Russian city to cooperate and co-create with artists from Narva, Estonia and Europe. The creative sector of St. Petersburg has a longstanding tradition and interest in Narva and rest of Ida-Virumaa and has already expressed strong and specific interest in co-productions and long-term cooperation. There is a very clear appreciation of the value of collaborations instead of staging ready-made productions in all fields of arts – classical and contemporary music, visual arts, cinema, theatre, etc. Narva2024 can offer a new platform for this kind of multi-layer cooperation that will empower and enable local



artists and arts organizations, local communities and open new communication channels between Narva, Estonia, St. Petersburg, Russia and Europe. The experience of co-creation will enhance the mutual understanding within the region and thus contribute to peace and prosperity.

### **The Scandinavian/Hanseatic link**

As a former “almost-second-capital” of the Swedish Empire and a busy Hanseatic trading port, Narva has strong historical ties to the Northern Europe that can and have to be rediscovered. The strong Swedish history is already attracting visitors and investors from Sweden and will be extended to contemporary cultural ties also within the ECoC network. Narva2024 will use the international Hanseatic network to promote the ECoC year by attending all the upcoming International Hanseatic Days in various member cities of the network. It remains to be seen if an international Hanseatic event in Narva can be added to the calendar of the network. Narva2024 team was already present at the Hanseatic Days in Warnemünde in June 2018.

### **3.3. To what extent do you plan to develop links between your cultural programme and the cultural programme of other cities holding the European Capital of Culture title?**

Narva has already started to build up a network with other ECoCs in 2018. The mayor of Narva had a visit and meeting with the mayor of Leeuwarden in July to learn from the experience of preparation and discuss possible cooperation. City officials of Narva participated at the ECoC network conference in Kaunas in May. The Nordic Council of Ministers organised a seminar about the ECoC experiences of Nordic cities (Stavanger, Turku, Umea) in Narva in June and at the Opinion Festival (Arvamusfestival) in Paide in August. City officials and Narva2024 team members have also visited and established contacts with Valletta2018.

Austria, the co-host of ECoC 2024, has been involved in activities in Narva already, including the launch of candidacy. Narva2024 is in close contact with the Austrian embassy in Estonia and following the Austrian competition closely. We are looking at the programmes of the upcoming ECoCs to identify common topic, problems and issues to make a cooperation meaningful and sustainable. Tallinn 2011 team members are actively consulting Narva 2024 as well as developing arts projects in Narva in the preparation years while tapping into the experience of Estonia’s first ECoC. A close connection to Turku 2011 team has been established via the Nordic network.

Narva as a city is facing many similar challenges as other designated ECoCs, foremost Kaunas, that has developed artistic tools to deal with issues of passive civil society and European identity of its citizens. In the next phase of programme development we will engage in more detailed cooperation ideas with Kaunas.

We are looking into issues like disrupted history, border, minorities, diversity, identity, post-industrial decline, brain drain, aging society, isolation and mapping projects and programmes of upcoming ECoCs to develop joint actions to address these issues through artistic interventions.

## 4. Outreach

### 4.1. Explain how the local population and your civil society have been involved in the preparation of the application and will participate in the implementation of the year.

The preparation of the ECoC bid has seen an unprecedented involvement of civil society in Narva. Until recently the city has involved mainly municipal arts organisations in discussions about cultural strategy and funding. With the ECoC bid, a targeted effort has been made to involve and include private initiatives and find new connection points and common interest between the sectors. A new approach was taken with presence in public spaces - the local culture in Narva prefers face-to-face communication on city squares and at public events - an approach not used before to engage with the community apart from political campaigns.

Since the idea to bid for the ECoC title first occurred, the lead group immediately started to engage with the local population and civil society to make sure the idea resonates with the people and helps to solve real problems. The ECoC working group members have held around 50 public meetings (town hall meetings, roundtables, debates and workshops) to discuss the ideas on Narva2024, thus engaging with about 1000 people from high-schools, colleges, arts organisations, entrepreneurs, local and regional media to the many ethnic societies of Narva. A similar approach was taken in the whole Virumaa region, foremost in the town Rakvere (the administrative centre of Lääne-Virumaa), reaching about 500 people.

A group of young volunteers, organised around the youth organisation Vita Tiim has been the core force of public presence. The volunteers have been actively collecting feedback forms on topics that move the citizens of Narva and the region beyond Narva most at all public outdoor events throughout spring and summer 2018 reaching more than 5000 people face-to-face at 12 events. The feedback and suggestion forms have been collected in Narva and the region, altogether 492 forms have been filled out, received and analysed. There is also an online questionnaire on the website of Narva2024 for everyone to fill in about things that make people proud, issues that need to be solved and ideas on how to contribute. The Narva2024 Facebook page is receiving feedback and ideas from the grassroots level and people have started to use the #Narvaisnext and #Narva2024 actively.

The poll conducted by Norstat in August 2018 showed that 75% of respondents in Narva and Virumaa are aware of the ECoC candidacy while the support for the title is even higher at 85%. A representative sample of 500 people was polled. The knowledge of and support for Narva2024 is considerably higher among people aged 51+ (89%) and lower among people under 25 (62%). People in Narva and Ida-Virumaa county are slightly more aware and supportive of the idea than Lääne-Virumaa. Among the reasons in support of the candidacy many respondents refer to the rich historic heritage and cultural diversity that Narva should be proud of and share with the rest of Estonia and Europe. A strong motivation is to better connect Narva with rest of Estonia and Europe.

The civil society in Narva and the region is currently not as developed as in other parts of Estonia. (Tallinn 2011 emphasized the development of civil society and the city has seen a major development in this area since 2011.) Therefore empowering and strengthening the civil society is

one of the main tasks and goals of the ECoC initiative. The main tool for participation during the preparation years will be via partnerships, the volunteers network, the hospitality programme and increasingly frequent arts events that include local people in different production roles. The ECoC umbrella offers a unique opportunity for the region to bring together different sectors that have not been cooperating so far – tourism, arts venues, businesses, employment offices, schools, health and social services and municipalities. The cross-sector and cross-region cooperation will be a built in condition for successful project funding by the ECoC.

#### **4.2. Explain how you intend to create opportunities for participation of marginalised and disadvantaged groups.**

The civic role of arts has shifted from widening access to education and community projects, to engaging communities in creating content that reflects social, environmental and economic issues. Narva2024 offers a unique opportunity for the city and citizens to redefine and rewrite their narratives and identity that has been hit hard by the historic political changes in the 1990s. The ECoC initiative is also a chance to showcase the approach of “giving something back” – by receiving public funding the ECoC programme will take a particular responsibility for everyday creativity and cultural democracy. “Giving back to the community” is however not just an ethical question but also an opportunity to find new sources of creative inspiration.

Narva’s population lost not only jobs in the industry but also their identity and pride of being the pioneers of the Soviet working class. Finding themselves in a “new” country in the again independent Estonia (of which’ pre-WWII existence they had no knowledge) threw the people into an unexpected role of “occupiers” in a country where they had considered themselves the working class avant-garde. Narva had been destroyed by the Soviet Army completely in the WWII, the pre-war population deported and replaced by immigrants from all over Soviet Union, who didn’t have knowledge or a personal memory of the pre-war town. For them the glory of Narva was equal to rebuilding the city from the ashes of the war according to the soviet model. Kristina Kallas, director of Narva College of Tartu University has pointed out that “Narva2024 offers an opportunity to create an original narrative of Narva instead of the borrowed narratives used since 1990s.”

Narva2024 will encourage outreach and community immersion by a funding model of projects that rewards sustainable and long-term outreach and community engagement from all applicants. This approach is not only a new and untested method in Narva and the region but rather also a piloting opportunity for Estonia’s arts funding. This approach will create a win-win situation – members of the most vulnerable communities will develop new skills and confidence, find new paths of life while artists will reach new innovative ideas and artistic expression by interacting and working with communities and groups that have remained outside of their usual peer groups and audiences. In order to reach the vulnerable communities Narva2024 will cooperate with social services, criminal rehabilitation officers, unemployment offices, health services and housing estates. A key task is finding a common language – most people in the vulnerable social groups and their caregivers speak and understand only Russian. So the Estonian and international arts community will need to bridge the language gap – a two-way street that will offer a chance to grow for all participants.

Challenges:

- Co-production with communities requires particular skills and additional training for the producers and curators, which has not been available practice in the region or in Estonia so far.
- Engaging with the local communities requires bridging the language barrier (from the Estonian and international arts community).
- The marginalized and vulnerable groups are “hidden” and stigmatized.
- A new approach to arts funding needs to be explained without previous local examples to prove the positive results and long-term effect.
- The stakeholders of the vulnerable communities see their basic needs as more pressing issues than abstract arts activities. “Zachem eto nam?” (“Why do we need it?”)
- Austerity of imagination.

#### Solutions:

- Identifying all marginalized communities and the access points to these in cooperation with social services, schools, healthcare institutions, police, etc. (E.g. NGO Uus Sild /Estonian for New Bridge/ is an established and experienced partner in this field.)
- We will build on the existing work done in Europe regarding artistic intervention, we will strengthen European network on artistic intervention for social issues and plan to organise European conference, working groups and trainings on artistic intervention.
- A substantial effort in capacity building needs to be done: networking, international exchange and leadership programmes, training, support and networks for artists, producers and curators co-producing projects with communities.
- Participate continuously with the full spectrum of the society – from retired workers to people with learning disabilities to drug addicts and former felons and prisoners in local everyday programmes of arts organisations.
- Collaborative creative process will help to activate marginalized communities. Starting with small scale but sustainable interventions we can make cases to prove the point.
- By initiating and enabling conversations about important matters in the communities and using arts to explore solutions we can also encourage active citizenship and enhance democracy.
- To address the issues of most importance to the communities a deep partnership with public and private sector is needed. Art organisations can act as connectors in partnership with social and commercial sector and public authorities.
- Residencies within the vulnerable communities.
- Provide guidance and tools for boards of arts organisations to support them in considering what the civic role might mean for the organization.
- An in depth approach to the engagement with and inclusion of local and vulnerable communities would require the allocation of several board member positions to the respective representatives. This practice will be piloted through the ECoC foundation board as a role model for other arts organisations.

People are central to the practice of arts organisations – Narva2024 will encourage and incentivise work with communities and integrating this into the artistic programmes. ECoC will act as a stable bridge to and between the communities and towards a more fulfilled life on an individual level.

#### **4.3. Explain your overall strategy for audience development, and in particular the link with education and the participation of schools.**

The audience development strategy of ECoC cannot be successful if the audience development strategy of individual arts organisations is not effective. These have to support each other - ECoC will contribute to and guide the audience development strategies of local arts organisations and create its own tools for audience engagement. Collaborative creative process is the key to audience building and to activating communities.

Based on the research conducted in the preparation of the application and experience of arts organisers in Narva and the region the access to culture has a high threshold and is related to many challenges. The major hurdles to culture consumption are finances, accessibility, lack of time and interest. People are preoccupied with daily survival and don't consider themselves as potential audience members for high arts. There is no habit and tradition of attending high-end cultural events as there is no opera house or philharmonic concert hall in Narva, nor an art gallery of international level. Narva has been feeling culturally isolated from the rest of Estonia in all the post-1991 (restoration of Estonia's independence) because of its distinct language barrier and the post-soviet identity crises. Professional culture in Estonia is predominantly being presented and performed in Estonian language and thus excludes Russian-speakers due to the language skills as well as lack of information in channels that are accessible to the potential audience. There is no one-stop-shop for information about arts events and as people in Narva get lots of their information from Russian media the local events are not part of the conversation.

The isolation however is a two-way-street – the Virumaa region and the rest of Estonia have little information about news in general and arts events in particular taking place in Narva and around.

Narva 2024 project is facing several major challenges of audience development:

- Language (with 96% Russian speakers the new audiences in Narva have to be approached in Russian)
- Lack of habits of culture consumption and creation
- “Culture is expensive and a waste of money”-attitude
- “Culture should be provided by the state, so should be free” - attitude
- Lack of participation
- Accessibility for people with special needs
- Narva is isolated and mentally “far away” from and for the rest of Estonia

ECoC will give the local young people a chance to expand and rephrase the definition of culture for themselves. In years of preparation for the title year Narva2024 will build up a large network of volunteers, involving all age groups but focusing on schools and youth foremost through a variety of activities that include content creation and cooperation. (e.g.. develop a community radio station managed by the young people.) Beyond direct work with and of students, schools serve as entry points to the wider communities via families as well as venues for community activities. Young people will be included into the governance of the ECoC foundation through the creation of youth advisory board.

International and Estonian artists will be encouraged to create multi-genre arts productions with the schools, art schools and youth organisations of Narva and the region also involving different ethnic communities. The teachers and head teachers of art schools could act as powerful multipliers and messengers, however they need empowerment through more financial acknowledgement of their work and better skills. Capacity building measures will be included in the strategy.

Mapping and addressing the accessibility issues throughout arts organisations and public spaces, establishing accessibility as a condition for successful project proposals. The preparation years offer opportunities to include especially young people from Narva and the region in productions and events outside of Narva to create a habit and expectation for arts participation.

The production by Tartu Uus Teater in August 2018 “Kremlisöövikud” in Narva, Kreenholm can serve as a showcase and model for a successful effort in audience building. With an audience of more than 24 000 people, it has brought more public to Narva from other parts of Estonia than any other event in history. By engaging locals as artists, production team, contractors and volunteers, the performance created an incentive for the family members and friends of the local crew to overcome the barrier of the unknown and experience the performance. This has also created a sense of pride and prestige within the local community and a sense of belonging to the wider Estonian creative community.

Several smaller arts organisations in Narva have experimented with performing concerts in shopping centres and hospital, so there is some experience in bringing arts to where the potential audiences are. This can be expanded and value added by international arts organisations as well. In addition, digital disruption has so far left the arts audiences in Narva and Virumaa untouched. This sector offers a range of possibilities to reach out to new young audiences and create a meaningful connection to fringe communities via digital spaces that they frequent.

## 5. Management

### A. FINANCE

#### A1. City budget for culture

- What has been the annual budget for culture in the city over the last 5 years (excluding expenditure for the present European Capital of Culture application)?

| Year | Annual budget for culture in the city (in euros) | Annual budget for culture in the city (in % of total annual budget for the city) |
|------|--|--|
| n-4  | 7,991,742  | 10,6%  |
| n-3  | 8,331,067  | 11,5%  |
| n-2  | 8,533,083  | 12,6%  |

|         |           |       |
|---------|-----------|-------|
| n-1     | 9,136,384 | 12,3% |
| Current | 9,834,998 | 11,2% |

The annual budget for culture in Narva includes operating costs, personnel costs, project costs and capital investments in the field of culture and sports, both for municipal cultural and sports institutions as well as support for private organisations. It does not include financing for related fields, including tourism projects, education, social affairs or business development. The financing for culture has been steadily increasing from the city budget. The share of cultural budget from the overall budget fluctuates, because of the large-scale investments can increase the overall budget in some years more than the growth of the cultural budget.

- In case the city is planning to use funds from its annual budget for culture to finance the European Capital of Culture project, please indicate this amount starting from the year of submission of the bid until the European Capital of Culture year.

The central principle of Narva in organising the ECoC process is to avoid delivering the ECoC at the expense of its annual cultural funding, but to invest and attract additional funding to deliver added value to its cultural, social and economic development. However, it is also natural that city's cultural institutions and non-governmental organisations will link their basic activities to some extent with the aims and objectives of the ECoC programme, therefore there will be natural overlapping of annual cultural activities (and thus annual cultural budgeting) and ECoC cultural programming (and thus budgeting for ECoC). In this case, we have included a certain percent of the annual cultural funding to the overall funding of the ECoC, but the funding will not be centralised to the the managing authority of the Narva2024, but will continue to be directly distributed to cultural institutions and operators. The exact distribution of funds will be presented with the final Bid Book, but the initial outline of the funds that will be used for ECoC from the annual budget are listed below:

| Year         | Funds for ECoC from annual budget (Eur) |
|--------------|---|
| 2019         | 100,000                                 |
| 2020         | 150,000                                 |
| 2021         | 200,000                                 |
| 2022         | 250,000                                 |
| 2023         | 300,000                                 |
| 2024         | 500,000                                 |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>1,500,000</b>                        |

- Which amount of the overall annual budget does the city intend to spend for culture after the European Capital of Culture year (in euros and in % of the overall annual budget)?

City of Narva spends considerably high share of its budget for culture and culture-related activities. While the exact planned amounts will be presented with the final Bid Book, the city intends to continue financing culture in the same proportion as leading to the ECoC title, around 11-12% of the total budget. Assuming an average increase of 5% of cultural budget, the total cultural and sports funding in 2025 is projected at 13,838,830 Eur. This does not include additional funding for tourism, basic education and creative industries related activities not capital investment from other budgetary areas.

## A2. Operating budget for the title year

### Income to cover operating expenditure:

- Please explain the overall operating budget (i.e. funds that are specifically set aside to cover operational expenditure). The budget shall cover the preparation phase, the year of the title, the evaluation and provisions for the legacy activities. Please also fill in the table below.

| Total income to cover operating expenditure (in euros) | From the public sector (euros) | From the public sector (%) | From the private sector (euros) | From the private sector (%) |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 20,000,000   | 18,800,000                     | 94%                        | 1,200,000                       | 6%                          |

### Income from the public sector:

- What is the breakdown of the income to be received from the public sector to cover operating expenditure? Please fill in the table below:

| Income from the public sector to cover operating expenditure                      | in euros   | %    |
|---|------------|------|
| national government (based on Government's decision from August 2018)             | 10,000,000 | 50%  |
| city of Narva   | 7,000,000  | 35%  |
| region (participating municipalities from Lääne-Viru and Ida-Viru regions)        | 1,000,000  | 5%   |
| EU (with exception of the Melina Mercouri Prize, i.e. Creative Europe Programmes) | 500,000    | 2.5% |
| Other (other national and international agencies, including embassies)            | 300,000    | 1.5% |
| Total   | 18,800,000 | 94%  |





|            |                 |                 |               |                 |               |                |              |             |
|------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| UR)        | expenditure (%) | marketing (EUR) | marketing (%) | and admin (EUR) | and admin (%) | specify) (EUR) | specify) (%) | expenditure |
| 14,000,000 | 70%             | 3,600,000       | 18%           | 2,400,000       | 12%           | 0              | 0            | 20,000,000  |

#### A4. Budget for capital expenditure:

- What is the breakdown of the income to be received from the public sector to cover capital expenditure in connection with the title year? Please fill in the table below:

| Income from the public sector to cover capital expenditure | in euros   | %    |
|--|------------|------|
| National Government  | 1,740,000  | 4.9  |
| City   | 7,245,000  | 20   |
| Region   | 0          | 0    |
| EU (with exception of the Melina Mercouri Prize)           | 27,500,000 | 75.1 |
| Other  | 0          | 0    |
| Total  | 36,485,000 | 100  |

This table includes known projects or planned projects, which have initial financial calculations completed. In addition to these funds for capital expenditure, there are number of private initiatives that will be co-financed by the public funds, but the financial planning for those projects are currently underway.

- Have the public finance authorities (city, region, State) already voted on or made financial commitments to cover capital expenditure? If not, when will they do so?

The city and regional partners will make financial commitments during the presentation of final Bid Book.

- What is your fund raising strategy to seek financial support from Union programmes/funds to cover capital expenditure?

The fund raising strategy from EU programmes and Structural Funds will be elaborated in detail once the final list of capital expenditure is prepared in the course of Bid Book development, but this will be one of the key focus for the capacity building activities within the ECoC project. There will be number of trainings and workshops designed to help applicants in applying to European funds. Also, the focus on building and facilitating networks across borders will help to link local cultural operators with European partners, thus creating opportunities to participate in cross-border projects as partners.

- If appropriate, please insert a table here that specifies which amounts will be spent for new cultural infrastructure to be used in the framework of the title year.

The detailed amounts are currently in planning phase, the list of capital expenditure will be prepared by the final Bid Book. Some of the infrastructural investment include:

- New park dedicated to Estonia's centennial 1.89 Mio Eur
- Renovation of historical town hall, town hall square (7.17 Mio Eur) and Stockholm square (I stage, 1.11 Mio Eur)
- A network of bicycle lanes within Narva, and between Narva and Narva-Jõesuu 7.47 Mio Eur
- Renovation and development of Narva Museum in the castle 7.78 Mio Eur
- Renovation of the yacht marina 0.2 Mio Eur
- Reconstruction of the city's bus and railway station 1.9 Mio Eur

The renovation of Theatre Centre Vaba Lava together with creative incubator and partial rehabilitation of Kreenholm industrial complex will be further developed for the final Bid Book.

## B. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

B1. Please give an outline of the intended governance and delivery structure for the implementation of the European Capital of Culture year

Narva2024 will be managed by a separate judicial institution - **foundation**, which will be created specifically for that purpose. The city will invite representatives from other regional partners, central government as well as international experts to form a **supervisory board** responsible for overseeing the management of the process. The structure will include an **artistic council**, formed of experts and artists on local, national and international level and a **youth advisory board**.

The principles for setting up the legal body will be guaranteeing that the organisation is

- de-politicized and decentralised (organisation has necessary independence for organisational and artistic matters)
- open to partners (involves local, regional, national and international partners)
- transparent (processes are run in open and responsible manner)
- diversity (to ensure a balance in terms of gender, ethnic background, social group etc.)

## C. CONTINGENCY PLANNING

C1. What are the main strengths and weaknesses of your project? How are you planning to overcome weaknesses identified?

The main strengths of the Narva2024 include:

- Unique story, unique position, unique location of Narva, which would allow Narva2024 to address issues that no other ECoC has addressed in similar way;
- Strong commitment of the City of Narva and wide support from public and key partners within the city;

- Established network of and areas of common interest from all municipalities in Ida-Viru and Lääne-Viru regions;
- Very close interaction of strategic goals and priorities with aims and objectives of ECoC title, the candidacy process fits perfectly to Narva's development model and supports the recent efforts;
- Added value of all other supportive initiatives from local, regional, national and international level to support Narva and Ida-Viru region, all different initiatives;
- Incredibly active and diverse cultural scene, both in terms of cultural institutions and municipal initiatives, as well as non-governmental and private initiatives;
- Balance between traditional approaches and valuing tangible and intangible heritage on one hand and on the other hand new and innovative cultural and creative activities, including subcultures, street art, etc.;
- High level of children and youth involvement in cultural activities, wide range of accessible opportunities for children and youth to take part in cultural education and clubs;
- Cultural diplomacy as a key tool for Narva's cultural development, bringing together East and West, Estonia and Europe and Russia;
- And finally, the urgency, not only for Narva nor Estonia, but for Europe as a whole. The international political, economic and social climate has worsened in the years following Ukrainian crisis and Narva has been seen as a test ground. For us, we see Narva as a possible test ground for European-wide solutions, therefore what happens in Narva impacts not only people in Narva, but the entire Europe.

The contingency plan is based on the risk assessment analysis of the Narva Cultural Strategy. The strategy identified following risks:

- Financial and economic risks. These risks are connected with potential worsening of economic climate, both on city level, national level, European level or globally. This could impact directly the city's and government's capacity to fulfil the financial obligations in the way described in the application and city's cultural strategy. In addition, major economic changes in local industries, including technological changes and new environmental standards, could impact the local employers in a negative way. To overcome the risks, all plans and financial prognosis of ECoC 2024 are made conservatively, the key criteria is sustainability of initiatives and activities. It is important to set clear priorities with high impact to the overall goals and objectives of ECoC. The city works very closely with the national government to ensure the Ida-Viru region remains one of the priority areas for national development and investment, including support for regional cohesion in the next EU Structural Funds period. The technological change needs to be seen not as a threat, but rather as an opportunity, which is why this will be one of the central themes in creative economy and innovation strand of the Narva2024 programme.
- Operational and personnel risks. These risks are connected with finding and retaining highly skilled employees for the development of the cultural and creative scenes in Narva, also to find people with capabilities to run professionally Narva2024 throughout the implementation process. One of the priorities of Narva2024 is capacity building and life-long learning, we plan to cooperate with relevant national authorities to provide free of charge trainings and development programs. It is also crucial to guarantee the high-quality

management of the entire process, which will be achieved through implementing transparent and open methods and involving external expertise if and when necessary.

- Risks associated with international relations. As a border city, Narva is directly influenced by the relations between Estonia, Europe and Russia. International crisis can have a negative influence on the cross-border cooperation opportunities, also it can negatively impact number of tourists and visitors from Russia. While there is little that Narva can do to influence these relations, culture has been often the last life-line for cooperation if nothing else works. Narva builds links with diverse cooperation networks with partners across Europe and therefore limits the negative impact of being dependent only on one direction cooperation. We have developed a detailed communication plan to reach audiences across Europe.
- Risks associated with connections. Narva, due to its location, is very much interested in fast, high-quality and reliable transport links with Tallinn, other towns in Estonia, Europe, St. Petersburg and rest of Russia. In case of changes in bus or train connections, the opportunities in reaching other centres could worsen, which in turn has a negative influence on number of visitors. We work together with number of public and private service providers to create favourable conditions to develop fast links with rest of Estonia and world, including fast railway service connecting Narva with Tallinn and its airport, smooth border crossing to allow more visitors to and from Russia, good roads and bus connections.

During the final preparation of the Bid Book, there will be detailed risk assessment plan with risk management action plan with detailed risk assessment matrix.

#### **D. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION**

D1. Please provide with an outline of the city's intended marketing and communication strategy for the European Capital of Culture year.

Narva is at the verge of reinventing itself and the communication strategy has to provide a way to explain and facilitate these changes locally, regionally and internationally. The artistic concept around Narva river, border and bridge will be used as a storytelling tool and backbone of the new narrative leading towards the intriguing conclusion: Narva is next... - the blanks yet to be filled.

##### **Current state of play**

Narva is in a special situation in terms of communications and media landscape due to the almost monolingual local media recipients. 96% Russian-speaking, the people of Narva are using a mix of very local Russian-language media, Estonian Russian-language media (online and radio) and state-sponsored TV channels of the Russian Federation, thus living more or less in a parallel media environment compared to the rest of Estonia or even the Virumaa region. This poses a challenge when communicating to and with the local communities and requires a new strategy to create a cohesive communication reality.

Messages from Narva to the rest of Estonia have to pass a special filter and Narva often feels like an alien place if viewed through the lens of Estonian mainstream media – a town that doesn't really

look familiar, often a source for negative news. Only the public broadcaster ERR has a permanent correspondent in Narva, other news outlets rely on occasional visits and thus lack in depth knowledge and coverage.

Internationally, Narva has become a symbol for the dangerous ambitions of the current Kremlin regime abroad. Especially after the annexation of Crimea in 2014 the international media has published hundreds of stories about Narva asking the alarmist question “Is Narva next?” Narva stands as a location for stories of post-industrial decline, HIV, influence of Russian state-sponsored media, ethnic discrimination, contradictory identities and questionable loyalty. However the interest of international media for Narva is considerable and the potential enormous within and beyond EU.

## **Aims**

The preparation for the ECoC year offers a chance to change all the above described shortcomings and negative connotations. With a smart strategy the curiosity and attention that naturally occurs with the title can be directed towards new meanings and connections and a change of narratives.

Locally the aim is to make sure that people of Narva own the ECoC project and its narrative, find a new identity, feel more connected to Estonia and Europe and embrace this initiative as a new beginning for the city as well as a new opportunity for themselves personally as active, creative and responsible citizens. The ECoC title will help people in Narva feel more valued and more European.

For the region and wider Estonia, the aim is to reconnect it with Narva, to decrease the mistrust and isolation by feeding curiosity and creating new connections. The task will be to create new and open-minded interest, develop new local spokespersons and channels for Narva in Estonian media and change the image of Narva in Estonian media into an interesting and intriguing Estonian city, not a “far away dangerous planet”.

For the nearby St. Petersburg region, the aim is to open up Estonia and Europe for the progressive Russians via Narva – a Russian-speaking European town. Through arts and culture we can communicate openness and democratic values by offering a long-term sustainable cooperation and co-creation platform. People in Russia will see and experience how their compatriots live inside the EU. The communication should also aim to restore the historic interest of St Petersburg tourists for Narva and the region.

For Europe, the aim of communication is to change the image and narrative of Narva from being a visual backdrop for the “clash of civilizations” to a genuine meeting place, an intriguing melting pot of patchwork identities, a laboratory of positive change.

## **Target audiences, messages, channels, partners**

### **Target audience 1: Local communities**

The engagement with the local communities has started from the very beginning of the candidacy. The main message for the local community has been and will remain: “Narva 2024 is your own

project.” The messaging aims to boost the identity and pride of the communities, a sense of belonging to Narva, Estonia and Europe. “Narva deserves it”, “Narva is interesting and intriguing”, “Narva can contribute to the cultural life and identity of the region, Estonia and Europe”, “Narva can be proud of its past and create its future”. The other main narrative is aiming to boost citizens’ initiative for regeneration – “we are responsible for our city”, “ECoC is a tool and a chance for economic renewal”, “entrepreneurial citizens can use the title to create new small businesses”, “the end of industrial era opens new opportunities”. The third narrative is aimed at openness, inclusion and tolerance - “only an open-minded community can embrace newcomers and benefit from the diversity”, “everybody has something valuable to offer to the society”.

In the preparation phase of the bid we have focused on engaging with the community and encouraging everyone to share their ideas, worries and hopes. This has taken place via face-to-face meetings, volunteers’ interactions at public events, questionnaires at public places and online. We communicate via local media, social media (website, FB, Instagram), always providing content in Estonian and Russian languages.

The visual marketing materials (large banners, flags, stickers, T-shirts, tent at events) have been present and distributed at all public events in the region since May 2018.

The kick-off event to announce the candidacy on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2018 resulted in a considerable change of mood among the local population. The presence of the president of Estonia Kersti Kaljulaid at the event had a strong impact on the self-image of Narva. The event and attention created a basis for people to start believing in the idea and start dreaming.

Channels: in addition to Narva2024 own channels, local newspapers, newsletters, local radio and online channels we will engage with local communities via their social media channels and public events. Local businesses (like shopping centres) are eager to lend their space for communication and marketing. For the preparation years an extensive hospitality programme is another communication tool with the local businesses. Town-hall meetings, sports events, school events will be used for face-to-face communications. Local multipliers and micro-influencers will be engaged on new media platforms to reach different segments and generations of the community. A local youth community radio will be developed to fulfill several tasks: reach the young audience, develop skills and entrepreneurship, enhance media literacy within the confusing media environment. Content creators’ workshops and residencies will bring together and create collaboration networks and learning opportunities for local communicators with international influencers.

Local newspapers, newsletters, radio and TV journalists have been eagerly and critically following the process and are important partners for the candidacy and the preparations. The preparation process has been transparent and accessible for local media and we will continue to do so.

## **Target audience 2: Communities in Virumaa region**

Narva 2024 volunteers’ team has been present at public events in Virumaa region throughout the summer. The regional initiative has come from the municipalities to start with and needs to be transported to the communities for them to identify with the ECoC idea and see the benefit of it. For

the region the main message is to overcome internal competition and lack of cooperation and instead embrace this opportunity that offers a synergy between flagship events in the whole region and enables to reach a new level of cooperation. Under the ECoC umbrella there is a chance to develop a regional brand that includes both counties (Ida-Virumaa, Lääne-Virumaa) as one cultural region. The population of the region is very diverse from more rural Estonian-speakers in the West to the more industrial Russian-speakers in the East. All these different groups within the region need custom-made messages and channels to reach them. Local and regional media channels will be engaged in both main languages, local spokespeople sourced and developed, the volunteers' network (targeting schools and youth as a priority) will be developed across the region to create a more cohesive view of the process and the ECoC identity and to be engaged as multipliers and influencers locally. The tourism marketing and brand development together with the hospitality programme will be used as a communication tool for regional businesses. Programme development tools for the ECoC year will help to reach more grassroots civic and cultural organisations and communities across the region.

### **Target audience 3: Estonian general public**

For many Estonians Narva and the region are still an undiscovered territory and not an obvious travel destination. The campaigns in mainstream and social media will aim to change this. The target audience in the rest of Estonia is culturally interested curious people, both native Estonians as well as people with Russian-speaking roots (f. Ex. about 40% of inhabitants of Tallinn). Narva2024 offers a chance to create a joint cultural and communication sphere for these two separate communities. The main messages are "Narva deserves the title", "Narva is interesting and worth to discover", "Virumaa is one diverse historic region".

The process so far and the decision to bid for the title has already created a lot of positive attention towards Narva in the rest of Estonia. The "early adapters" in arts have started to discover the region and Narva for themselves and serve as multipliers and influencers through their arts projects and social media presence. The national media has started to pay more attention to the region. (The announcement event of the candidacy itself created a positive avalanche of news and interest.) Now the aim is to keep the momentum with further flow of content and positive news. Known public figures have "discovered" their personal Narva connection or history – this can be used in social media campaigns to rebuild a sense of belonging. The circle of spokespersons will be widened to include well-known arts figures, local mavericks, "ordinary" people with interesting personal stories.

### **Target audience 4: St. Petersburg area**

Narva and the region used to be a well-known holiday destination for people from St. Petersburg, there are many family connections and a positive historic connotation. The main message for St. Petersburg region is "Rediscover Narva – the closest European town". The campaigns will aim at curious and open-minded people, arts communities, also sub-cultures and minorities, young entrepreneurial communities to encourage them to create new personal connections and experience a Russian-speaking town within the European value-system. St. Petersburg online and print media will be engaged through special press trips to events (like Station Narva festival in the run-up years). Social media (incl. VK.com) will be used to reach specific communities. The major



advantage of Narva is the availability of skilled communicators and spokespeople in Russian language.

### **Target audience 5: European/international audience**

For European and international audiences the challenge is to change the focus from Narva as a potential conflict zone towards Narva as the next creative hotspot. From “is Narva next?” to “Narva is next!”. The start of the candidacy has already resulted in some shift of focus with in depth positive stories about the change been published in Finland (Helsingin Sanomat, YLE), Germany (Deutschlandradio, BR, NDR) and the Economist. The genuine interest of the international media due to the strategic importance of Narva gives Narva2024 a unique start platform for delivering the new messages: “Narva is the next creative hotspot at the edge of Europe”, “Transforming the post-industrial decline into a promised city of hipsters (as formulated in Helsingin Sanomat)”, “Intriguing mix of identities as inspiration for creative minds”, “A place worth visiting”, “EU is changing its citizens’ lives for the better.”

Narva has a unique visibility potential compared to previous ECoCs and will help to communicate the importance of the EU to citizens in all member states as an example of how the EU helps to improve cohesion between East and West and do so even within an ethnically complicated post-communist community.

As part of preparations ECoC 2024 will create a new international brand for Narva and Virumaa region based on the message of transformation.

The main target countries for the ECoC campaigns are Finland, Sweden, Germany, France, UK, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland. The Brussels EU-affiliated media is a focus in itself and enables an outreach to the audiences in all member states. Mainstream media and the traditional writers/broadcasters of ECoC-topics will be engaged through already existing networks based on the experience of Tallinn 2011 and the Narva-coverage so far. Social media EU-wide and internationally will be approached through Narva2024 own channels, participating artists and arts networks, influencers within specific niche groups. The travel industry and press will be targeted in cooperation with regional and national tourism development organisations through joint campaigns, press trips and coordinated messaging. Content creators on all platforms (bloggers, vloggers, instagram influencers etc) will be engaged in long term cooperation and residency formats to immerse beyond a short one-time visit but rather to connect with the local community in depth thus building a true bridge.

### **D2. How does the city plan to highlight that the European Capital of Culture is an action of the European Union?**

Narva2024 will be a unique opportunity to communicate European presence and values in the strategically important yet politically vulnerable region. EU can be truly visible in a region that at best is at the receiving end of mixed messages about its values and intentions (via Russian state-controlled media channels, widely used in Narva, the European values are being systematically undermined). The stakes are high and the chance to put an unambiguous stamp on the city and

region stating “This is Europe” - truly unique and symbolic. Arts and culture are the most effective tools of resilience - politically not vulnerable, psychologically subtle, human approach.

Narva has received considerable EU funding for infrastructure development (thereof 30 Mio Eur for the new water purification plant and sewerage system - sic! the complete municipal budget of Narva for 2018 is 51 Mio Eur), however these have not touched the hearts and minds of people to shift the identity towards being part of Europe. The ECoC idea has already created a positive change in that respect.

In 2024, Estonia will celebrate 20 years of EU membership. This will create a natural reason for special events dedicated to EU nationwide and the ECoC title holder would be a logical focal point for these. The specific programme will be developed in cooperation with the European Commission and the government of Estonia.

As many EU embassies and the EU Commission are already active in Narva, the ECoC umbrella will be a chance to enhance the cooperation, presence and messaging. The programming will be following the core values of Europe and thus be the most effective communication tool for the EU in Narva and the region.

## 6. Capacity to deliver

### **6.1. Please confirm and supply evidence that you have broad and strong political support and a sustainable commitment from the relevant local, regional and national public authorities.**

The ECoC application process has been a clear example of a shared commitment from all local political stakeholders (including coalition and opposition), regional partners and national authorities. The basis for Narva's application process is the decision by the City Council with no votes against the process. In parallel, the City Council has also initiated the update of the Narva Cultural Strategy 2030. The organising committee of Narva2024 has met with representatives of all related political parties, both on local and national level, to establish strong support for the process regardless of the political preferences. The members of opposition have been regularly attending the preparation meetings and contributed with their ideas and recommendations. ECoC bid has seen as unifying factor in Narva, which has the potential to bring together different political players and other members of society.

There is also a strong commitment from all other municipalities in Lääne-Virumaa and Ida-Virumaa, including the central town of Lääne-Virumaa - Rakvere. Narva has signed Memorandum of Understanding with all other municipalities, which confirms a clear desire to contribute as an entire region to the success of ECoC 2024.

On the national level, supporting Ida-Virumaa is one of the government's key priorities. It has adopted a special Ida-Virumaa development programme to increase the investment into the region and raise its competitiveness. The government has also adopted clear principles for co-financing the ECoC 2024 winner, creating solid basis for budgetary planning for the process.

**6.2. Please confirm and provide evidence that your city has or will have adequate and viable infrastructure to host the title. To do that, please answer the following questions:**

**- Explain briefly how the European Capital of Culture will make use of and develop the city's cultural infrastructure.**

Across Narva and the region, existing cultural infrastructure is very diverse. There are museums, dedicated concert halls, smaller scale venues for cosy happenings, art residences, along with a host of “alternative” venues, which are currently used for events somewhat sporadically, but have great potential to turn into full-on culture hubs.

The biggest dedicated concert halls are located in the biggest cities of the region: Narva, Jõhvi and Rakvere, and include, among others: in Narva - the Geneva Concert Hall and the recently renovated Rugodiv Cultural Center, in Jõhvi - a fully outfitted Jõhvi Concert Hall, and in Rakvere - the Rakvere Theater and Conference Center.

The region is also awash with museums, among which the biggest are the Narva castle (the most visited tourist attraction of Ida-Viru region), and the Mining Museum in Kohtla Nõmme, celebrating the legacy of coal mining and energy production. As over the last few years, Ida-Viru region has been branding itself as an “adventure land”, there are a number of attractions for the strong-willed, such as for example the ingenious Kiviõli Adventure Center that turned a 40m tall mound of refuse material from the coal burning industry into an all-year-round adventure center, featuring ski slopes and paragliding.

All of the above are used as venues for most diverse events, depending on the needs of the organisers. For example, while functioning as a museum, the Mining Museum is also home to one of the most popular music festivals in Ida-Viru, called “Mägedede hääl”, while the Narva College of Tartu University, given its architecture and technological build-out, is one of the region’s most popular conference locations.

In addition to the above mentioned “heavy-hitters”, the region is full of both smaller-scale venues, ranging from round-the-clock music club, a legendary underground culture institution Ro-Ro, to the tranquil Ontika manor, and outdoor locations, such as Narva’s Dahlberg stage or Toila Oru’s singing grounds.

On the other hand, there are also a number of venues that have not been able to illustrate their full potential just yet, but are on their way there, above all the uniquely designed Aleksander Church in Narva, fitting some 3000 people in its main hall, and the larger-than-life Kreenholm manufacturing complex, that was just recently home to a sold-out performance of “Kremlin’s nightingales”, attracting some 24,000 people to the city, and has had a surge in its use as a backdrop for cultural product over the last few years.

All these combined provide for a very diverse infrastructure, able to accommodate events of pretty much any volume or complexity. For more detailed information on the Narva region’s tourist infrastructure, please see [idaviru.ee](http://idaviru.ee).

**- What are the city's assets in terms of accessibility (regional, national and international transport)?**

Considering the region's industrial background and geopolitical location as a transit region between Europe and Russia, accessibility has always been a priority. The road network is well developed and maintained, railroad infrastructure is being constantly modernized, the whole northern shore is dotted with marinas and small ports culminating in an international privately owned Sillamäe port, which specializes on oil and goods processing, but also has infrastructure in place to accept ferries and passenger vessels. Narva also has an aircraft landing strip right next to its municipal border, with its development stated as one of the priorities on the regional level, considering the growing number of international business connections, especially due to the development of regional industrial parks.

In recent time, connectivity has had a boost due to the growing numbers of visitors to the region. Passenger train traffic has grown four-fold over the last few years, with passenger numbers growing in the Tallinn-Narva direction by 111% just over the span of last year. With the recent addition of an express line between Tallinn and Narva, travel time between the two cities has shrunk to just over two hours - now one can get from downtown Narva to Tallinn airport in 2 hours 4 minutes, and it is set to shrink still with railroad infrastructure developments planned in the next two years.

Road network is under constant development. Within Narva, the city's main thoroughfare - Tallinn street - has been renovated in summer 2017, with its last stretch being renovated currently. The overhaul of second most important transit artery in Narva - Kerese road - is currently in design phase and scheduled for completion in 2022, funded through the European Union's TEN-T program. In Sillamäe, multilevel intersections have been designed and built over last two years, to accommodate the growth of the flow of goods to and from Sillamäe port.

Narva is also rather well connected with St Petersburg. There are more than 12 bus routes a day between the two cities with the travel destination of around 3 hours 50 minutes. The car ride takes around 2 hours 30 minutes.

**- What is the city's absorption capacity in terms of tourists' accommodation?**

The number of tourist has recently been rapidly growing. The number of overnight stays in Narva jumped from 39,908 (in 2016) to 47,463 (in 2017). Similar tendency has been witnessed across Ida-Virumaa region. The number of tourist in Ida-Virumaa increased 23% in the first three months of 2018, but only 6% for Estonia as a whole. Number of Russian tourist increased 31%, Finnish tourist 10% and Estonian tourist 20%.

Currently, the Ida-Virumaa region has over 70 hotels with the capacity to accommodate over 4,100 people, of which around 360 people can be accommodated within Narva municipal boundary, and around 1050 more in the radius of 15 km around Narva, mostly in the famous resort town of Narva-Jõesuu just north of Narva.

While the capacity is lower than Estonia's summer capital Pärnu, it is comparable to, for example, Tartu region, which currently has the capacity to accommodate around 4,300 people. The main reason behind the low capacity numbers is that Narva and the region have only recently started attracting large numbers of visitors and the infrastructure has not yet had enough time to catch up with the rising demand. The number of nights spent in Ida-Virumaa has grown by 23% over last year, while in one of Estonia's most popular tourist destinations - Pärnu - the number of hotel stays has actually decreased by 1%, and in Tartu region grown by only 6%.

Not surprisingly, there is a growing interest to build more hotels in Narva and the surrounding area. At this moment, there are plans to expand one of the most popular SPA hotels of Estonia - Noorus SPA, located some 14 km from Narva, in the resort town of Narva-Jõesuu, and in Narva itself plans for a new hotel that would accommodate some 250 guests and will be located right next to the Vaba Lava theater complex, are in the works. In addition, there are also a couple of boutique hotels that have either gotten permission to build already, or are in the design stage. In addition to all of the above, Narva and the region has a wide selection of apartments and private houses, available to rent through services like Hotels.com and AirBnB, as well as opportunities for accommodating people traveling on a budget at school dorms and the other similar places.

**6.3. In terms of cultural, urban and tourism infrastructure what are the projects (including renovation projects) that your city plans to carry out in connection with the European Capital of Culture action between now and the year of the title?**

The detailed list of cultural, urban and tourism infrastructure development plans in connection to ECoC will be elaborated for the final Bid Book, but the City of Narva has included a number of objects in its budget strategy. The objects connected to cultural, urban and tourism infrastructure that City is currently planning or envisioning include municipal infrastructure, projects financed or co-financed by the central government, private investment initiatives which require city's support as well as projects funded by the EU Structural Funds. The indicative list includes, among others, following projects:

- New park dedicated to Estonia's centennial;
- Renovation of historical town hall, town hall square and Stockholm square (I stage);
- A network of bicycle lanes within Narva, and between Narva and Narva-Jõesuu;
- Construction of Estonian Academy of Security Science's Narva College together with a public pool;
- Construction of State High School and renovation of two municipal high schools;
- Renovation and development of Narva Museum in the castle;
- Renovation of the yacht marina;
- Reconstruction of the city's bus and railway station;
- Renovation of Theatre Centre Vaba Lava together with creative incubator;
- Partial rehabilitation of Kreenholm industrial complex.

**We invite you all to Narva to discover its treasures and experience its unique vibe. Narva is changing. Narva is happening. Narva is ready to become a European Capital of Culture in 2024. Narva is next...**