

**Call:** COS-TOUR-2015-3-04

**Title of the project: Promoting International Tourism for Culture and Heritage Van Gogh Europe**

**Acronym:** *PITCH VGE*

**Project duration and start date:** 18 months, started on 1 March 2016

**Short description of project:**

To increase the international tourism demand for and tourism flows to Van Gogh locations in Europe by:

1. Stimulating European visitors of Van Gogh locations to visit multiple Van Gogh locations through cross-promotion, cross-selling and the dissemination of information on the 'European Van Gogh Route'. Focused on France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Germany and Italy.
2. Joint market development targeting intercontinental markets: Japan, China and US. Mainly focused on developing transnational European tours and year round tourism flows.

Main objectives:

1. More transnational tours to locations in the Netherlands, Belgium and France and relevant other countries
2. Valorization of the Van Gogh heritage leading to increased income for heritage locations and museums to ensure their future existence and relevance.
3. Dispersal of visitors in time and space resulting in:
  - An extended tourism season and higher visitor numbers and occupation rates in the shoulder seasons
  - Enhanced competitiveness and sustainable tourism growth in rural Van Gogh regions
4. Increased market visibility of the transnational Van Gogh tourism product

Work packages:

1. Market research: qualitative research focussed on the various European and intercontinental market segments to develop transnational tourism packages and provide input for promotion and sales strategies.

*Coordinating partner: NHTV*

2. Transnational product and market development:
  - Development of transnational Van Gogh packages for the European market
  - Development of transnational van Gogh packages for Intercontinental markets
  - Development and execution of trade and sales campaigns (trade shows, site inspections, sales missions) focused on European and intercontinental markets
  - Development and execution of press strategy in order to facilitate tourism media (travel stories, trip itineraries, press travels)

*Coordinating partner: Projekt 2508*

3. Development of information material and guidelines:
  - Development and dissemination of information and marketing materials focused on transnational packages and cross selling
  - Communication handbook and toolkit to promote visibility and standardization of Van Gogh Europe locations, landmarks and information

*Coordinating partner: RBT KAN*

4. Knowledge development Van Gogh locations, SME's and tourism bureaus by means of e-learning modules on transnational tourism packages and local tourism offer. Focus on enhancing the tourism experience and cross selling opportunities.

*Coordinating partner: Visit Brabant*

5. Project coordination

*Coordinating partner: Visit Brabant*

## **Expected results**

However, the tourism potential of Van Gogh is not yet fully taken advantage of. The large majority of tourists currently visit only one Van Gogh location, even when they are fascinated by his work. Combination or repeat visits to other locations, especially transnationally, are rarely made due to a lack of knowledge of the individual offers and the absence of a transnational Van Gogh tourism product

Therefore PITCH-VGE will:

**1. Define and analyse interests and expectation of 5 EU and 3 Intercontinental target markets** in order to develop an innovative offer that maximises the existing potential of the Van Gogh heritage.

**2. Develop, market and promote at least 8 attractive and tailored transnational Van Gogh tourism offers** that:

- Promote Europe as one destination based on common European Van Gogh heritage and promote the various European Van Gogh regions as unique destinations based on their specific and complementary characteristics;
- Stimulate year round tourism and higher visitor numbers and occupation rates in the shoulder seasons by distributing visitor flows in time and space by targeting tour operators in the EU and intercontinental markets;
- Promote sustainable economic growth in partner regions, and particularly in more remote regions, by:
  - a) Providing opportunities for more remote locations with currently less visitors to become part of transnational tourism packages;
  - b) Generating additional and new tourism flows to Van Gogh regions which will benefit regional economies;
  - c) Generating more special interest visitors that spend about 2 times more than the 'average' tourists;
  - d) Working together with local SME's and cultural organisations on marketing and product promotion.
- Promote sustainable tourism development by
  - a) generating synergy with local SMEs and (culture / heritage) organisations;
  - b) raising awareness among SMEs of the importance of sustainable practices;
  - c) prioritising, selecting and working with tourism services providers that work on the basis of sustainable practices (e.g. companies with green tourism or SRE certificates and by including sustainable transport – e.g. high speed train – into the packages).

**3) Facilitate cross selling of the regional Van Gogh offer**

by providing comprehensive and practical information on the Van Gogh offer to both visitors and tourism businesses and cultural heritage organisations to:

- Increase market visibility of the transnational Van Gogh tourism product

- Optimise economic impact of current tourism flows
- Achieve a more holistic tourism experience and awareness of the Van Gogh heritage among visitors hereby fostering a greater sense of European identity.

With these efforts of the PITCH-VGE project we expect to unlock the full potential of the Van Gogh heritage and increase current visitor numbers **with 2% within the project's lifespan and by 10% in 2018**

Based on the current 1.259.000 visitors per year this leads to:

**+25,180 visitors (+2%) by the end of the project in 2017**

**(+125,900) visitors (+10%) in 2018,**

Leading to additional direct net expenses of approximately

**1.3 million euros in 2017**

**6.6 million euros in 2018**

#### **Lead partner/coordinator:**

VisitBrabant (The Netherlands)

#### **Partners:**

Nationale Hogeschool voor Toerisme en Verkeer NHTV (The Netherlands)

Provincie Noord-Brabant (The Netherlands)

Regional Bureau voor Toerisme Knooppunt Arnhem Nijmegen RBTKAN (The Netherlands)

Office de Tourisme de Mons (Belgium)

Pole Muséal Mons (Belgium)

Office de Tourisme Saint Rémy de Provence (France)

Projekt 2508 (Germany)

#### **Co-partners:**

Visit Paris (France)

Musee Estrine St. Remy-de-Provence (France)

Auberge Ravoux Auvers-sur-Oise (France)

Office de Tourisme Auvers-sur-Oise (France)

Van Gogh Drenthe (The Netherlands)

Van Gogh Brabant (The Netherlands)

Van Goghuis Zundert, Van Gogh Village Nuenen, Van Goghkerk Etten-Leur, Vincents Tekenlokaal Tilburg, Het Noordbrabants Museum (The Netherlands)

Kröller Müller Museum Otterloo (The Netherlands)

Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (The Netherlands)

#### **Contact:**

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