

MALTA

Local development

Location

Gozo

Programming period

2014 – 2020

Priority

P6 – Social inclusion & local development

Measure

M19 – LEADER/CLLD

Funding

Total budget 220 376 (EUR)

EAFRD 132 226 (EUR)

National/Regional 44 075 (EUR)

Private / own 29 075 (EUR)

Other 15 000 (EUR)

Project duration

2020 to 2022

Project promoter

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Promoting local development in Gozo by upgrading two heritage buildings to accommodate various forms of cultural and networking events.

Summary

Teatru Astra and the Victoria Local Council are two historic buildings in Victoria, Gozo. CAP funds were used to upgrade the infrastructure of these sites in order to enhance visitor experience and make them capable of hosting a variety of events. In addition, a new approach to multi-event public programming was trialled in the renovated spaces, including a lecture series, conferences and performances, as well as exhibitions of the work of Maltese artists.



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Project Results

The project addressed the need to promote Gozo's cultural heritage and local identity and to boost its tourism offer. The cultural programme was well attended, in contrast to previous events held in Gozo, and there is interest in organising similar offers in the future.

Lessons & Recommendations

- As this was one of the first events to take place in Malta after the COVID-19 restrictions were lifted, it demonstrates the resilience and commitment of local NGOs, councils and communities, having put together a varied, large-scale public programme in the midst of the pandemic.



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Context

Teatru Astra is an historical building located in the centre of Gozo's capital. For 50 years, it was used as a venue for a variety of cultural events, including operettas, plays and film screenings. As people's cultural consumption habits increasingly shifted toward online entertainment, however, Teatru Astra gradually fell into disuse and was in need of refurbishment.

Another historical building in Gozo is the historical town hall of the Victoria Local Council. Dating back to 1733, it was built to house the University of Gozo and the local authorities, but by 2019, it was badly in need of infrastructure investments to improve the facility.

Promoting these historical sites and enriching the local cultural landscape would improve the city's tourism experience and make the island more attractive to visitors during and outside of the peak tourism season.

Objectives

This project aimed to transform two historical sites into modern, accessible and fully equipped venues capable of hosting cultural and networking events that would promote the island.

Activities

This project was co-financed by the LEADER measure and managed by the Gozo Action Group, which aims to develop Gozo's tourism.

At the Teatru Astra site: infrastructure upgrades and general refurbishment in addition to a programming budget for cultural heritage exhibitions and a theatrical performance.

At Victoria Local Council: Infrastructure upgrades and general refurbishment, especially in the 'Banca Giuratale' main hall. Conference equipment (audiovisual equipment, chairs, etc.) and a programming budget for arts exhibitions, concerts, conferences, and a lecture series.

Main results

The project addressed the need to promote Gozo's cultural heritage and local identity and to boost its tourism offer. The cultural programme of events was well attended, in contrast to previous events held in Gozo, and there is interest in organising similar offers in the future.

Key lessons

The success of the cultural offer was due to its innovative theme, the number and diversity of participating artists, the uniqueness of the venues and the duration of the programme (some aspects, such as the exhibition, were available for three weeks).

Funding for arts and heritage programming provides an opportunity to bring local creative and academic communities together to showcase their work, shine a light on local history and identity, and reach new audiences.

As this was one of the first events to take place in Malta after the COVID-19 restrictions were lifted, it demonstrates the resilience and commitment of local NGOs, councils and communities, having put together a varied, large-scale public programme in the midst of the pandemic.

"I believe that this is a best-case example of proper use of EU funds, which have assisted in the regeneration of a public space which was in bad shape. In the process such space was made accessible and reinvented into a new cultural hub the potential of which was tested in the first events organised, and co-currently, a new business undertaking is taking off – which will leverage on the new activity created by the new cultural hub"

Project stakeholder

Additional sources of information

<https://www.identityofanisland.com/>