

GUIDELINES

General guidelines applicable to all cultural event clusters:

- Alignment with the “Liepāja 2027” Artistic Programme – the project concept must be based on the guidelines of the “Liepāja 2027” artistic programme (un)rest – European Dream, Port Paradox, New Eyes, Deliberate Moderation, and Creative Foresight. The (un)rest programme guidelines are available here: [\(un\)rest programme guidelines](#)
- Full-cycle project implementation – the organiser must deliver the complete implementation of the project, including marketing activities (from concept development to technical realisation), provision of necessary props and technical support, payment of fees to artists and other participants, conclusion of contracts, and fulfilment of catering, hospitality, and accommodation requirements (where applicable);
- Coordination with the Foundation – following the signing of the contract and during the project planning phase, the organiser must coordinate the artistic and practical content with the Artistic Director of the “Liepāja 2027” Foundation. The Foundation is entitled to request amendments or clarifications if the programme does not comply with the values and objectives of the European Capital of Culture;
- Use of visual identity – the visual identity must be incorporated into scenography (where applicable) and publicity materials (visual identity guidelines are available here: <http://Liepaja2027.lv/grafiskais-standarts>);
- Sustainability and accessibility – the project must reflect the principles of sustainability and accessibility;
- International cooperation – the organiser must engage in international cooperation with foreign professionals, authors, artists, and/or organisations within the project;
- Representation of the European cultural space – the project must represent the European cultural space and its values.

1. “Liepāja – European Capital of Culture 2027” Opening Events In the South Kurzeme region – Aizpute

Event date: **22 January 2027, from 17:00 to 22:00**
Event venue: **Aizpute, South Kurzeme Municipality**
Available co-funding: **€18,000**

On 22 January 2027, regional opening events for the “Liepāja – European Capital of Culture 2027” programme will take place in the South Kurzeme and Kuldīga regions, leading up the main opening events in Liepāja on 23 January.

The opening event in Aizpute is scheduled for 22 January 2027, from 17:00 to 22:00. Applicants are invited to develop and implement an artistic concept for a unified programme of events in Aizpute.

This programme must reflect not only the identity of Aizpute, but also that of the entire South Kurzeme region. It is essential to clearly emphasise both the European dimension and the symbolic significance of the opening ceremony.

Guidelines:

- events must prioritise a sense of community and encourage active visitor involvement;
- all events must be free of charge;
- artistic content must be closely linked to the character of the town and region (sense of place), the Liepāja 2027 (un)rest concept, and the programme’s thematic lines;
- the town’s environment should be integrated into the concept, allowing the location to shape the form and content of the event;
- the content must create a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment, ensuring accessibility for diverse groups within society.

Objectives and Tasks:

- to develop a high-quality artistic concept for the programme’s opening event in South Kurzeme, reflecting the identity of both Aizpute and the South Kurzeme region, the artistic vision of the (un)rest programme, and a clear European dimension;
- to implement a series of culturally important events of high artistic quality that are accessible to all;
- to foster a sense of connection and belonging to South Kurzeme, the European cultural space, and its values;
- to create a festive and welcoming atmosphere for the town, the region, and all visitors, ensuring the successful and technically high-quality delivery of the event.

2. “Liepāja – European Capital of Culture 2027” Opening Ceremony Stage

Event date: **23 January 2027, from 20:30 to 03:00**

Event venue: **Liepāja, car park by Rose Square**

Available co-financing: **€80,000**

On 23 January 2027, the opening events of the “Liepāja – European Capital of Culture 2027” programme will take place in the city of Liepāja. Throughout the day, the (un)rest Land programme will unfold across multiple locations, culminating in a grand opening concert-performance in the city centre at 19:00.

Following the culmination of the opening ceremony, guests will be welcome to continue the celebrations by exploring Liepāja’s cultural and entertainment scene in venues open to the public during the event – ranging from leisure and dining establishments to urban spaces – the car park by Rose Square. On this evening, the city will transform into a living cultural map, where music, artistic performances, light, dance, and conversation fuse into a single festive experience – from major cultural institutions to small gems of alternative art. This January weekend, Liepāja is expected to welcome more than 20,000 visitors from Latvia and Europe, representing a wide and diverse audience: children, senior citizens, local residents, foreign tourists, young families, cultural professionals, and enthusiasts.

Applicants are invited to participate in the competition for the festival stage at the opening celebrations of “Liepāja – European Capital of Culture 2027”, which will serve as a non-stop programme venue from 20:30 to 03:00. The concept for the festival stage is envisioned as a contemporary entertainment programme, drawing on the guidelines of the Liepāja 2027 artistic programme (un)rest – European Dream, Port Paradox, New Eyes, Deliberate Moderation, Creative Foresight – and strongly affirming both the European dimension and the symbolic significance of the opening ceremony.

Guidelines:

- the programme begins on 23 January 2027 at 20:30, following the opening concert-performance (scheduled from 19:00 to 19:40);
- the organiser must ensure free access to the event;

- applicants are invited to create a concept featuring contemporary and relevant music within an entertainment-focused programme;
- the programme must be suitable for a broad target audience: young people, adults, senior citizens, visitors, and local residents;
- the project must reflect sustainability and accessibility principles, with particular attention to environmental considerations, public engagement, and inclusive cultural experiences for diverse social groups.

Objectives and Tasks:

- to create a unified city-wide cultural experience that reflects Liepāja's creative spirit and the ambition of the European Capital of Culture;
- to bring the spirit of (un)rest to life in Liepāja's urban environment, transforming the city into a single, living stage;
- to promote Liepāja's recognition in Latvia and Europe by offering a diverse, accessible, and authentic cultural experience, creating a festive atmosphere for the city and every visitor;
- to ensure broad public involvement by creating a festival open to various social groups, fostering a sense of belonging to Liepāja and Europe.

3. Europe Day (2027)

Event date: **9 May 2027**

Event venue: **Liepāja (satellite events in South Kurzeme, Kuldīga)**

Available co-funding: **€25,000**

On 9 May, Europe Day is celebrated across the Land of (un)rest, establishing a tradition of marking this date as a declaration of our belonging to Europe. During the celebrations in Liepāja, South Kurzeme, Kuldīga and their surrounding areas, a shared European narrative will take shape through discussions, masterclasses and various participatory events, with a particular focus on the city's multicultural environment and its communities.

The Europe Day events will highlight Liepāja's role both as a European Capital of Culture and as a venue for European Union celebrations. The programme should actively involve non-governmental organisations and socially engaged citizens, triggering open discussions on the importance of Liepāja and the region within Europe, shared values, opportunities – both realised and untapped – and the development of civic participation.

The aim is to establish a shared tradition of celebrating Europe Day, strengthening civic awareness and a sense of belonging to the European community, and continuing the dialogue on our place in Europe's future.

Guidelines:

- the conceptual vision should build on previous Europe Day events to ensure continuity with previous years and a unified theme;
- the event must include the sail exhibition from the 2024 sailing campaign, and add newly created sails (sail fabric is available for acquiring from the Liepāja 2027);
- the event must take place on 9 May 2027 in Liepāja, with satellite events in South Kurzeme and Kuldīga, providing free, high-quality, inclusive and artistically valuable content for local residents;
- the event must be designed to encourage active involvement, enabling visitors to become participants rather than observers;
- The Europe Day event must foster a sense of belonging both locally (neighbourhood, town, region) and more broadly (country, Europe).

Objectives and Tasks:

- to develop a Europe Day 2027 concept that establishes a new tradition in Liepāja and the region, emphasising European and human values;
- to organise the Europe Day 2027 events in Liepāja, South Kurzeme and Kuldīga;
- to ensure a high-quality, accessible cultural event that fosters a sense of belonging to the region and to Europe, creating a festive atmosphere for the city, the municipality, and every visitor.

4. Science Fiction Writing Residency as Part of the Nordic Solstice Programme

Event dates: **14–20 June 2027**

Event venue: **Liepāja**

Available co-funding: **€15,000**

“**Sun Punk Castle**” has all the potential to become a major interdisciplinary gathering of art and science in Liepāja and the South Kurzeme region. Conceived as a hybrid between a solstice celebration and a contemporary cultural event – a *Sozialgesamtkunstwerk* – it is dedicated to those fascinated by the intimate, most enduring and most significant exoplanetary relationship we have on Earth: our relationship with the Sun, and the role it plays in shaping a sustainable future.

Under the guidance of Andrew Gryf Paterson, Liepāja 2027 curator and activist, the event will bring together authors, artists, hacker-makers, scientists, musicians, designers and thinkers. Talks by invited guest speakers and musical performances will accompany innovative, practice-based activities in the spirit of **DIY** (do it yourself) and **DIWO** (do it with others). These activities will take place both at the residency in Aizpute and in the centre of Liepāja – at the Sun Punk (solarpunk) Castle – from 14 to 20 June 2027, leading up to the summer solstice. Literary movements such as solarpunk and hopepunk will meet social design. Solarpunk is a literary, artistic and social movement closely linked to hopepunk; it visualises, describes and shapes a sustainable future in harmony with nature and community.

We are seeking organisations with experience in organising events in the field of fiction and/or philosophical writing to develop a science-fiction writing residency as part of this art & design programme activities. This residency will welcome both experienced authors and genre rookies, diversifying sci-fi literary and philosophical events in Latvia and the region. The residency will bring together 15-30 authors to explore what the future might look like if humanity succeeds in addressing today’s major challenges – focusing on sustainability, human impact on the environment, and combating climate change and pollution. Participants will imagine futures shaped by solar energy, renewable resources, and post-capitalist DIY practices, creating optimistic visions that reject doomerism. The results of the residency will be presented to the public on 19 June in the form of readings and performances during the Sun Punk Castle celebrations. This will introduce broader public to innovative forms of writing, allow them to meet the authors, and replace destructive, dystopian narratives with optimistic, action-inspiring ideas during this sunniest time of the year.

Guidelines:

- the organiser must ensure the full project implementation cycle: at least three writing masterclasses during the residency programme from 14-20 June 2027 for 15-30 participants, including both new and experienced authors; a public programme of performances and readings of at least three (3) hours on 19 June 2027;
- project communication must be developed in collaboration with the Liepāja 2027 Foundation and the curator of the Sun Punk Castle project;
- the organiser must provide accommodation for residents and suitable workshop spaces, in consultation with the Foundation and the curator. As part of community practice, residency participants are invited to meet artists and designers in a shared outdoor kitchen and in discussion sessions organised by Liepāja 2027;

- public events must be suitable for a wide audience; accessibility for an international audience will be considered an advantage;
- the project application must describe the principles and criteria for selecting participants;
- the project's content and delivery must promote a safe, inclusive and respectful environment.

Objectives and Tasks:

- to promote and develop science fiction writing skills among professionals and students by organising writing masterclasses;
- to interpret optimistic solarpunk futures in an artistically high-quality manner, strengthening public understanding of ecology and sustainability through the synergy of art and science; organise a programme of public lectures and performances within the conceptual framework of Sun Punk Castle;
- to promote interest in writing, reading and sustainability among a diverse local and international audience, establishing the programme as a significant environmental and cultural event.

5. Environmental Awareness and Public Participation Event as Part of the Nordic Solstice Programme

Event date: **20 June 2027, from 10:00 to 18:00**

Event venue: **Liepāja, outdoors, around the natural ecosystem**

Available co-funding: **€30,000**

The Nordic Solstice Festival is a series of events under “Liepāja – European Capital of Culture 2027” that celebrates and strengthens Latvian traditions, while renewing our relationship with the natural world. As part of this festival, we invite the creation of a public programme dedicated to environmental awareness, nature conservation, and the exploration of Latvia’s diverse ecosystems. The aim is to bring people closer to the wilderness, restore a sense of belonging to the earth, and inspire a deeper understanding of nature as the foundation of culture, identity and future wellbeing.

Natural ecosystems – meadows, forests, bogs, water bodies and coastal landscapes – are biologically rich yet fragile environments. They shape not only the Latvian landscape but also its cultural memory, traditional knowledge and seasonal rituals.

Latvian Midsummer traditions, rooted for generations in the rhythms of nature, reflect an understanding of the environment as a living, worthy and interdependent system. Within this programme, ecosystems are not treated as objects of study but as cultural and ecological assets, places where human experience, knowledge and creativity have evolved over centuries. The event seeks to highlight the shared responsibility of society to protect these environments for future generations.

The programme should combine environmental education, cultural heritage, practical experience, and an accessible public offering, resulting in an event that is content- grounded, aesthetically engaging and socially meaningful. Through lectures, masterclasses, guided explorations and creative activities, visitors will be encouraged to learn, participate and reconnect with the natural world.

Guidelines:

- the project must create a cohesive public programme within the city of Liepāja on 20 June 2027, from 10:00 to 18:00, combining the exploration of natural ecosystems with public education, participation and cultural-historical context;

- the programme should highlight a specific natural ecosystem as an ecological and cultural-historical asset, emphasising its role in biodiversity, landscape formation and traditional ways of life.
- activities may include traditional nature management practices, sustainable use of wild resources, seasonal knowledge, and reflections of nature in oral, musical, performative or contemporary cultural forms;
- it is desirable for the project to include practical and exploratory activities related to traditional nature management practices, the exploration and sustainable use of wild resources, an understanding of seasonal rhythms and natural cycles, and the reflection of nature's presence in culture – in oral, musical, performative or contemporary forms;
- the project must appeal to diverse audiences – families, young people, local communities, nature enthusiasts, cultural visitors, and international guests — with content accessible in Latvian and English;
- activities must be closely linked to the chosen location, reflecting its scenic, ecological and cultural-historical context. Environmentally friendly solutions must be ensured in infrastructure, materials, visitor flow, waste management and site restoration;
- an interdisciplinary approach is encouraged, combining environmental awareness with craftsmanship, music, oral traditions, movement or contemporary artistic interpretation to create a multi-layered, emotionally filled experience.

Objectives and Tasks:

- to promote public understanding of natural ecosystems as biologically valuable, culturally significant and protected components of the landscape;
- to revitalise traditional knowledge and practices related to the interaction between humans and nature, emphasising their importance in the context of a modern sustainable lifestyle, and promoting a respectful attitude towards the environment as the foundation of culture and life;
- to create a high-quality, accessible and educational programme that integrates environmental knowledge, cultural heritage, practical experience and community participation;
- to strengthen public responsibility for nature conservation, encouraging informed and sustainable attitudes towards ecosystems and resources;
- to attract a diverse local and international audience, establishing the programme as a significant environmental and cultural event within the Liepāja 2027 framework.

6. Programme of Traditional Northern Wellbeing Practices as Part of the Nordic Solstice Programme

Event dates: **25–27 June 2027**

Event venue: **South Kurzeme Municipality, Baltic Sea coast**

Available co-financing: **€60,000**

The Nordic Solstice is a series of events under “Liepāja – European Capital of Culture 2027” that celebrates and strengthens Latvian traditions. As part of this series, we invite you to implement a project dedicated to physical, nature-based and tradition-rooted well-being practices, with a particular focus on sauna culture as a vital element of the intangible cultural heritage of the Baltic and Northern Europe.

In this part of Europe, sauna culture is far more than a form of relaxation or health care. It is a multi-layered cultural space where the body, nature, community and inherited knowledge meet. It is a synergy with plants, water, heat, seasonal rhythms, and the search for inner balance.

Within Latvian and broader Nordic traditions, these practices are closely tied to the cycles of nature, especially the summer solstice, a moment of ripeness, transition and renewal. In this context, the

sauna becomes a ritual environment – a place where individuals consciously experience their connection with nature, their own bodies and the wider community.

The aim of the project is to create a contemporary, internationally relevant programme that explores the significance of sauna culture and other traditional well-being practices today, combining cultural heritage with modern interpretations, cross-border dialogue and public participation.

Guidelines:

- the project must create an artistically and thematically cohesive festival programme lasting two to three days in 2027, between 25 and 27 June, in the South Kurzeme region on the Baltic Sea coast, as part of the Nordic Solstice programme;
- the programme must highlight the sauna tradition as a form of interaction between culture, bodily experience and nature, emphasising: the use of medicinal and aromatic plants, the transmission of seasonal knowledge, bathing culture and bodily practices, and the sauna as a social, symbolic and ritual space;
- the project must include international cooperation, particularly with partners from the Baltic and Nordic countries, fostering dialogue between different sauna and wellness traditions and their contemporary interpretations;
- the programme should preferably include diverse participatory formats, such as individual and group sauna experiences, workshops on harvesting, gathering and using plants, lectures and discussions on bodily practices, traditions and natural rhythms and musical, performative or contemporary art events;
- the programme must be closely linked to the specific location, respecting the coastal landscape, seasonal rhythms and the ecological sensitivity of the environment. Environmentally friendly solutions must be ensured in infrastructure, materials, visitor flow management and site conservation;
- the project must be accessible to a wide audience, with clear communication in Latvian and English, and transparent information on participation, accessibility and safety. Free activities for the broad public are desirable.

Objectives and Tasks:

- to promote Latvian sauna traditions and related knowledge in a modern, accessible and internationally understandable form;
- to develop international cooperation among practitioners of wellness, sauna culture and contemporary cultural practices from different countries;
- to create a high-quality, multi-layered and site-specific programme that brings together physical experience, nature, tradition and contemporary cultural expression;
- to strengthen understanding of sauna culture as a community practice, a natural cycle and an element of intangible heritage;
- to encourage the organisation of sustainable and environmentally responsible events, respecting the coastal environment;
- to attract a diverse local and international audience – local residents, sauna enthusiasts, families, cultural tourists and foreign visitors – establishing the programme as a significant Midsummer event.

7. Contemporary Circus Programme as Part of “No More Heavy Metal” Festival

Event date: **3 July 2027**

Event location: **the “Liepājas Metalurgs” steel plant site**, Eksporta Street and the adjacent area between Naglu Street and the hangar at Eksporta Street 3 / the building at Trīs skursteņu Street 5

Available co-financing: **€50,000**

The former “Liepājas Metalurģs” steel plant site is being opened to the public to reveal the social and ecological impact of heavy industry through the lens of history, and to highlight the principles of the New European Bauhaus – sustainable, beautiful and together – in contemporary practice. As part of Liepāja – European Capital of Culture 2027, this once-closed industrial territory will host a music, circus and street-art festival in July 2027, welcoming young people, families and visitors of all ages to explore the area, learn how 19th- and 20th – century industry shaped the planet’s metabolism, and re-imagine the city’s industrial heritage through artistic experience. From heavy past to easy-going future.

During the first weekend of July, the plant site and the central street of the Liepāja Special Economic Zone will be transformed into a dance floor, performance arena and open-air stage, where circus, dance and world-class electronic music will bring to life the stories of steelworkers and local residents who shaped this restricted access district for generations.

Guidelines:

- the organiser must ensure the full implementation of the contemporary circus programme – including performances, props, technical equipment (sound, lighting and other requirements), transport, catering, hospitality and accommodation for artists and producers. This activity will be carried out in collaboration with the event organiser, the Liepāja 2027 Foundation;
- the circus programme must take place on Saturday, 3 July 2027, offering at least four free, open-air performances throughout the day;
- the content must create a safe, inclusive and respectful environment, ensuring accessibility for diverse groups within society;
- the programme content must be family-friendly, easily understandable and accessible to audiences of all ages and cognitive abilities. Audience participation is desirable and encouraged;
- the content must reflect the values of the New European Bauhaus – where aesthetics meet ecology and social inclusion – creating an experience that is beautiful, sustainable and accessible to everyone.

Objectives and Tasks:

- to transform the industrial space into an emotionally accessible experience: using the language of contemporary circus to make a historically heavy, closed factory environment open and welcoming to the widest possible public;
- to interpret industrial heritage through movement: symbolically expressing the transition from factory mechanics to a more human, light and sustainable future;
- foster community participation: engaging festival visitors in shared experiences through the interactivity of circus art, embodying the New Bauhaus principle of togetherness;
- to ensure high-quality culture is accessible to everyone: offering artistically strong content that is universally understandable and engaging, dissolving the boundary between “elitist art” and playful, inclusive entertainment.

8. Art and Community Engagement Programme as Part of “No More Heavy Metal” Festival

Event date: **3 July 2027**

Event location: **the “Liepājas Metalurģs” steel plant site**, Eksporta Street and the adjacent area between Naglu Street and the hangar at Eksporta Street 3 / the building at Trīs skursteņu Street 5

Available co-financing: **€50,000**

The former “Liepājas Metalurģs” steel plant site is being opened to the public to reveal the social and ecological impact of heavy industry through the lens of history, and to highlight the principles of the New European Bauhaus – sustainable, beautiful and together – in contemporary practice. With Liepāja – European Capital of Culture 2027 as a driving force, this once-closed industrial territory will host a music, circus and street-art festival in July 2027, inviting young people, families

and visitors of all ages to explore the area, learn how 19th and 20th – century industry shaped the planet’s metabolism, and re-imagine the city’s industrial heritage through artistic experience. From heavy past to easy-going future.

During the first weekend of July, the plant site and the central street of the Liepāja SEZ will be transformed into a dance floor, performance arena and open-air stage, where circus, dance and world-class electronic music will bring to life the stories of steelworkers and local residents who shaped this restricted access district for generations.

A collaboratively created large-scale installation will serve as the festival’s unifying gesture – a monumental artwork symbolising the transformation of the factory and the community’s role in shaping what comes next. Alongside it, a practical sustainability zone will invite visitors to experiment with recycled materials, learn about eco-friendly practices and contribute to a shared vision of a greener future.

Guidelines:

- the organiser must ensure the full implementation of the project;
- deliver the creation and exhibition of several large-scale artworks in the open-air festival area and the adjacent hangar hosting the evening music programme. This includes transportation of installation or/and materials, dismantling and all required personnel and resources;
- provide a practical sustainability zone featuring stands on sustainable materials and products, plus creative workshops introducing recycled materials and environmentally friendly practices;
- set-up period: 28 June 2027 at 17:00 to 3 July 2027 at 10:00
- dismantling period: 4 July 2027 at 06:00 to 5 July 2027 at 23:00
- the activity is being carried out in collaboration with the event organiser, “Liepāja 2027 Foundation”;
- the practical sustainability zone must operate on Saturday, 3 July 2027, from 11:00 to 20:00;
- large-scale artworks must be accessible for interaction and display from Friday, 2 July 2027 at 17:00 until 4 July at 06:00;
- the content must promote a safe, inclusive and respectful environment;
- the content must be family-friendly, accessible and understandable to all ages and cognitive abilities. Public engagement in the programme’s activities is mandatory.

Objectives and Tasks:

- to interpret industrial heritage through contemporary visual art – creating large-scale works that reflect the history of the area and visualise its transition towards a sustainable, smart future;
- to democratise the experience of art and design – offering visually striking and practical content that is accessible to a general public, dissolving barriers between viewer and artwork;
- to promote ecological awareness and agency – using the sustainability zone to introduce circular-economy principles and provide practical tools for environmentally responsible living;
- to bring the principle of ‘togetherness’ to life – make sure that visitors participate directly in creative processes and workshops, fostering a sense of belonging and shared responsibility;
- to transform an industrial-scale space into a people-friendly environment – using installations, artworks and interactive displays to reimagine the historically heavy atmosphere of “Metalurgs” as an inspiring public space.

9. Festival of Gastronomy and Social Gathering “At the Happy Table” – Gastronomy Programme

Event date: **28 August 2027**

Event venue: **Liepāja Peter’s Market Square, Liepāja**

Available co-funding: **€10,000**

“Liepāja – European Capital of Culture 2027” invites chefs, gastronomic visionaries and creative teams to submit proposals for the gastronomy programme part of the Festival “At the Happy Table”. We are seeking creative minds capable of developing innovative, locally sourced recipes that honour the traditions of celebrating the earth’s bounty while revealing everyday produce in a fresh, inspiring light.

The aim of Festival “At the Happy Table” is to bring back to life the culture of shared dining as a cornerstone of social well-being and socialising. At the heart of the gastronomic programme is a creative approach to seasonal vegetables, roots and fruits, offering visitors the chance to purchase unique dishes created for this particular shared dining occasion. This shared feast becomes a moment to gather around a long dining table, experiencing the power of community, emotional well-being and social conversation through authentic flavours.

The programme will be implemented in close collaboration with professionals, local farmers and residents. Through cooking demonstrations and tastings, visitors will discover the full flavour potential of the harvest season – creating an environment where sustainable mindset meets exceptional culinary experience.

Guidelines:

- gastronomic activities must form an integral part of the event, present throughout the festival and clearly linked to the harvest-festival and shared-dining concept;
- the gastronomy programme must directly engage with local farmers, home producers, market traders and culinary practitioners, enriching the content and authenticity of the harvest celebration;
- the gastronomy programme must be accessible to people on lower incomes, and must ensure accessibility for people with disabilities and an international audience;
- the implementation must follow sustainable practices, particularly the use of seasonal produce, waste reduction and mindful resource consumption;
- the event “At the Happy Table” must take place on 28 August 2027 from 11:00 to 16:00 in the surroundings of Liepāja Peter’s Market, in compliance with the regulations of the Republic of Latvia and international standards;
- the central element – the shared “Happy Table” – is provided by Liepāja 2027 Foundation; the organiser must adapt their programme and food-service approach to this setting; construction costs for the table must not be included in the project budget;
- the organiser must provide opportunities for Liepāja 2027 partners and supporters to participate in the gastronomy programme or its communication;
- if the project anticipates revenue from project services (participation fees, ticket sales, etc.), any financial surplus will be distributed proportionally to the investment of each party.

Objectives and Tasks:

- to highlight the social, cultural and health significance of food, positioning gastronomy as a catalyst for well-being and community connection;
- to promote creative approaches to local goods, making new recipes and cooking methods that include the use of root vegetables, vegetables and fruit in inventive ways;
- to strengthen the market environment as a social space, where food becomes the foundation for chats, social exchange and togetherness;
- to foster a culture of shared meals and cooking in Liepāja, reinforcing social gathering traditions and emotional well-being;
- to promote sustainable mindset by using seasonal produce, reducing food waste and encouraging mindful attitude towards resources;
- to ensure an accessible and inclusive gastronomy programme, reaching diverse audiences, including people on lower incomes, people with disabilities and international visitors.

10. Festival of Gastronomy and Social Gathering “At the Happy Table” – Social Gathering Programme

Event date: **28 August 2027**

Event venue: **Liepāja Peter’s Market Square, Liepāja**

Available co-funding: **€20,000**

“Liepāja – European Capital of Culture 2027” invites chefs, gastronomic visionaries and creative teams to submit proposals for the gastronomy programme part of the Festival “At the Happy Table”. We are seeking creative minds capable of developing innovative, locally sourced recipes that honour the traditions of celebrating the earth’s bounty while revealing everyday produce in a fresh, inspiring light.

The Festival “At the Happy Table” is an event that brings together the people of Liepāja and city guests, reviving the tradition of the shared table and the market environment as a pop-up venue for chats, conversations and stories, filling the air with the community spirit. It will be a collection of heartfelt, creative and socially meaningful activities that will inspire a revival of everyday socialising and an experience of the power of being together.

We are seeking idea creators and organisers who can design and lead meaningful, open and inclusive conversational activities. These will form one of the key experiences of the festival – the programme’s cornerstone – bridging the community and inviting participants to engage in valuable and exciting social gathering and chats around the shared Happy Table. We welcome proposals that foster mutual understanding, the exchange of stories and the revival of shared-dining culture, using thoughtful co-creation methods, ethical approaches and experience working with diverse communities.

The event will encourage conversations between people of different generations, nationalities and backgrounds, highlighting the importance of shared meals for emotional well-being and social cohesion. This “Happy Table” will create an environment where dialogue emerges naturally in the bustle of the market, while setting the table together, tasting dishes or sharing memories. This atmosphere will encourage people to open up, listen and participate in conversations that strengthen social bonds and revive the often-forgotten culture of communal dining. The programme will also promote sustainable mindset, introducing planet-friendly eating habits and co-creating solutions for the conscious use of resources.

Guidelines:

- The organiser must ensure the full implementation of the project – developing ideas for engagement activities and ensuring their delivery as part of the Gastronomy Festival “At the Happy Table”. The activity will be carried out in collaboration with the event organiser, the Foundation Liepāja 2027;
- “At the Happy Table” event must take place on 28 August 2027 from 11:00 to 16:00 in the Liepāja Peter’s Market area, in compliance with the regulations of the Republic of Latvia and international standards;
- the central element – the shared “Happy Table” – is provided by Liepāja 2027 Foundation; the organiser must adapt their programme and food-service approach to this setting; construction costs for the table must not be included in the project budget;
- conversation activities must foster a safe, inclusive and respectful environment, enabling participants to engage freely and comfortably in dialogue;
- the event must be accessible to people on lower incomes and must ensure accessibility for people with disabilities and an international audience.

Objectives and Tasks:

- to revive the culture social gathering through the shared tables and everyday conversation in Liepāja, fostering mutual understanding and inclusive community. To create a conversation

programme that is meaningful in both content and social impact, strengthening emotional well-being and promoting open dialogue between different social groups;

- to make sure that general public are involved in content creation, using ethical co-creation methods and storytelling tools;
 - to promote intercultural dialogue between local and international communities, highlighting the culinary and conversational traditions of different cultures;
 - to support the integration of local and international visitors, introducing them to diverse eating and communication traditions;
 - to strengthen the market environment as a social space where conversations, stories and a sense of community naturally emerge;
 - to advocate for sustainable mindset by introducing planet-friendly eating habits and the conscious use of resources.
-

11. Reading Programme for Children during Poetry Days (2027)

Event dates: **September 2027, as part of Poetry Days**

Event venue: **Liepāja**

Available co-funding: **€25,000**

As part of the “Liepāja – European Capital of Culture 2027” programme, in September 2027, we invite proposals for a public reading programme for children to be held during Poetry Days. The programme should promote reading as a lively, creative and experience-based process, transforming poetry into something children can feel, hear, move with and create themselves.

The programme is based on the idea of reading as a discovery – not something forced on you, but a joy, a game and a means of learning as natural part of a child’s everyday life. It calls for environments and events where text becomes an adventure, and poetry becomes a bridge between language, imagination and exploration.

In this context, poetry is understood as a unique literary form that allows language to move, resonate and invite presence. It offers children the chance to encounter text not only through reading, but also through listening, performing, playing and inventing.

The aim is to develop approaches in which literature steps beyond its usual formats and meets children in environments that feel familiar and exciting – in the urban landscape, in nature, and within the community.

Guidelines:

- the project must create a cohesive programme open to public, artistically and thematically blended for Poetry Days, offering primary-school-aged children an engaging and inspiring reading experience.
- The programme must focus on the child’s relationship with text – where reading, listening, movement, play and creativity complement one another.
- The project should:
 - create outdoor or open-air reading experiences that spark curiosity and encourage children to return to reading;
 - actively engage children by giving them opportunities to listen, read, move, play and create;
 - seek creative and contemporary ways of making poetry vivid, understandable and emotionally accessible;
 - use the urban environment as an integral part of the programme, allowing the location to shape the form and content of the event;

- create diverse formats, such as readings, performative activities, workshops, interactive installations or other participatory forms;
 - the programme should preferably include an international dimension, integrating poetry in different languages, foreign authors or interdisciplinary collaborations that broaden children’s understanding of literary and cultural diversity;
 - the programme must be inclusive, accessible and positive, creating an environment in which children feel safe, engaged and inspired to participate.

Objectives and Tasks:

- to inspire children to read, fostering a long-term interest in reading as a joyful daily practice;
- to develop creative and contemporary approaches to literary experience for young audiences;
- to boost community engagement by creating a shared and participatory cultural experience;
- to promote an understanding of poetry as a living, diverse and accessible form of expression.

12. Youth Forum “Future Institute”

Event date: **27 November 2027**

Event venue: **Liepāja, Great Amber Concert Hall**

Available co-funding: **€50,000**

“Future Institute” is a platform bringing together young people active in the creative sectors of Latvia and Europe, as well as participants in the Liepāja 2027 youth programme. The “Future Institute” will be shaped and enjoyed by the young people themselves. As we look toward Liepāja 2027, we want to move away from “for the youth” and move toward “by the youth”. This is a call to create an environment where intellectual (un)rest meets practical action. As part of the “Future Institute”, we are bringing together a heavy-hitting lineup of European and Latvian talent – think researchers and tech pioneers alongside poets and filmmakers – to mentor, challenge, and co-create with the next generation. This is about more than just inspiration; it’s about giving young people the tools and the platform to take ownership of their work and drive the cultural conversation forward.

We are looking for open-minded organisations to help us deliver the grand finale of our European Capital of Culture year: the Youth Forum “Future Institute”. This isn’t a standard conference. It’s a joint engine. We need organisers who understand the nuance of youth engagement – partners who don’t just “manage” people, but who facilitate meaningful, ethical, and high-impact collaboration. If you know how to bridge the local with the international and can turn the Great Amber Concert Hall into a launchpad for new perspectives, we want to hear from you. On 27 November 2027, we won’t just be closing a chapter. The forum’s programme will be developed together with the Liepāja 2027 team. The event will be setting the stage for a professional legacy that continues long after the fireworks fade and the Year has moved on.

Guidelines:

- the project must ensure the active involvement of the Liepāja 2027 youth-programme community in developing the “Future Institute” forum. The project description must include a detailed outline of collaboration methods, ethical considerations, and the organisers’ previous experience working with young people;
 - The closing events of the Youth Forum “Future Institute” must take place on 27 November 2027 at the Great Amber Concert Hall, in compliance with the regulations of the Republic of Latvia and international standards;
 - the organisers must coordinate the content and programme of the “Future Institute” Youth Forum with the artistic director and project manager of the Liepāja 2027 Foundation. As the main

closing event of Liepāja – European Capital of Culture 2027, the Foundation may request amendments or clarifications to the programme;

- the organiser must ensure the full implementation of the project, including marketing activities, and must coordinate the timing of public events and communication with the Foundation in a timely manner;
- the organiser must provide a potential platform for Liepāja 2027 partners and supporters;
- events must be accessible to people with disabilities and an international audience.

Objectives and Tasks:

- to develop a programme of high artistic and content quality for the Youth Forum “Future Institute”, highlighting young people’s ability to participate in cultural processes, promoting international thinking, and creating an environment for professional exchange between creative-sector representatives in Latvia and Europe;
- to ensure meaningful youth participation in the development of the forum’s content, using well-considered collaboration methods, ethical approaches and the organisers’ professional experience in youth work. This includes boosting young people’s self-confidence, skills and capacity to become co-creators in the cultural environment, and enhancing the competence of Liepāja’s youth community through collaboration with professional organisers and creative-industry practitioners;
- to create a platform for dialogue between local and international youth audiences, advocating for European cultural values, the role of Latvian culture within them, and young people’s ability to build sustainable professional relationships even beyond the European Capital of Culture year;
- to ensure an accessible and inclusive environment that reaches young people with diverse abilities and needs, people on lower incomes and people with disabilities, and creating an open and multi-layered cultural space.

On behalf of the Foundation:

Inta Šoriņa, Chair of the Board
Baiba Bartkeviča, Board Member
Kristīne Liepa-Prese, Board Member

This document has been signed with a secure electronic signature and contains a time stamp.