

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

(To be filled in and uploaded as deliverable in the Portal Grant Management System, at the due date foreseen in the system.

 Please provide one sheet per event (one event = one workpackage = one lump sum).)

PROJECT	
Participant:	1- BI-CO – BIBLIOTECA DI CONCESIO 2- MKK – Mestna knjižnica Kranj 3- BLCS – Biblioteca Lúcio Craveiro da Silva 4- TRINEC -Knihovna Třinec
PIC number:	[101249687]
Project name and acronym:	[ART CONNECTING PEOPLE] — [ART-CONNECTING-PPL]

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	[1]
Event name:	[KICK-OFF MEETING + ART GAME NIGHT]
Type:	[WORKSHOP, TRAINING]
In situ/online:	[in-situ]
Location:	[ITALY, [CONCESIO]
Date(s):	[5-6-7 March 2026]
Website(s) (if any):	https://www.facebook.com/reel/2405256369990373 https://www.instagram.com/reel/DVo8UOwDPz4/?igsh=a3hxaigxZWNIcHh0
Participants	
TARGET GROUP	Mainly delegations of librarians and coordinators from the partners' organizations, but the game night event included the local audience (families, young adults, seniors) as well
Female:	58
Male:	66
Non-binary:	
From country 1 [ITALY]:	119
From country 2 [SLOVENIA]:	2
From country 3 [CZECH REPUBLIC]:	2
From country 4 [PORTUGAL]:	1

Total number of participants:	124	From total number of countries:	4
-------------------------------	-----	---------------------------------	---

Description
Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

The first international event of Art Connecting People took place in Concesio and Brescia, Italy, from 5 to 7 March 2026. The event was conceived not only as the formal kick-off of the project, but also as the first practical demonstration of its methodology, bringing together librarians and project coordinators from Italy, Portugal, Slovenia and the Czech Republic, together with local citizens, volunteers and community organisations. The programme combined partnership building, participatory workshops, inclusive artistic activities, cultural visits, public engagement and operational planning.

The first part of the event was dedicated to welcoming the international delegations and creating the conditions for effective transnational cooperation. A walk through Brescia and an institutional dinner offered participants the opportunity to become familiar with the local context, while also building personal and professional relationships among the partners. This informal dimension was considered important for establishing mutual trust and a common working environment before the implementation of the project activities.

A central part of the programme was devoted to the relationship between libraries, art and social inclusion. At BICO – Concesio Public Library, participants took part in the “Build Your Own Handmade Bookmark” workshop organised together with Cooperativa Sociale Futura. Librarians, volunteers, international participants and users of the cooperative, including people with disabilities, worked together around the same tables using accessible craft materials. The activity provided a concrete example of how artistic creation can be organised as an inclusive and shared experience, rather than as a separate activity for specific target groups. The discussion focused in particular on accessibility, equal participation, the removal of barriers to cultural participation and the possibility of using simple artistic activities to create interaction among people with different backgrounds and abilities.

The event also included a Design Thinking workshop dedicated to the role of libraries as community spaces and to the identification and engagement of underrepresented groups. Participants worked on a community profile, a library self-assessment exercise and an Ansoff-type matrix for identifying priority target groups. Among the concrete topics discussed were: who currently uses the library and who remains underrepresented; which social groups are more difficult to reach; what barriers may prevent people from taking part in library activities; how libraries can become more welcoming and inclusive; which community resources and partnerships can be mobilised; and which participatory tools can be used to involve citizens more actively in cultural programming.

The didactic session also addressed the concept of socially engaged arts and the specific role that public libraries can play in this field. Discussion touched on libraries as safe spaces for expression, interdisciplinary collaboration between libraries, artists, educators and social actors, community-centred programming, cultural accessibility and the potential of artistic practices to foster dialogue around contemporary issues. Particular attention was given to the engagement of marginalised groups, including migrants, senior citizens and people with disabilities, and to the need to design activities that enable different members of the community to participate on equal terms.

The cultural programme further explored the relationship between art, interpretation and local identity through a guided visit connected with Pope Paul VI and the Collezione Paolo VI – Contemporary Art Museum. This part of the event introduced a complementary perspective on art: not only art as collective production, but also art as a means of interpreting society, human experience and cultural identity. The partners discussed how museums, libraries and other local cultural organisations can cooperate in making contemporary art more accessible to wider audiences.

The public dimension of the event was particularly visible during the Art Game Night hosted by BICO. After an informal dinner at the library, the venue was opened to citizens of different ages, including families, young people, adults and older residents. Participants could freely join gaming tables with the support of volunteers, with particular attention to games related to

art and creativity. The activity demonstrated the potential of board games and role-playing as low-threshold tools for community engagement, intergenerational interaction and socialisation, while also strengthening the role of the library as an open social and cultural meeting place.

During the event, broader issues connected with the objectives of Art Connecting People were also discussed, including social inclusion, gender equality, accessibility of cultural activities, dialogue among people with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, civic participation and the use of contemporary art as a tool for critical reflection on current social issues. These themes were not treated only theoretically but were linked to the concrete activities experienced during the meeting and to the future local actions that each partner will implement in its own territory.

The final session was devoted to project implementation and to the adaptation of the common methodology to the different local contexts. Partners reviewed forthcoming activities, responsibilities, deadlines, administrative and reporting requirements, and discussed how the approaches tested in Concesio could be transferred without simply reproducing the same activities. Particular attention was paid to the common principles to be maintained across the partnership: inclusion, co-creation, user-centred design, accessible art mediation, community participation and cooperation with local stakeholders

Conclusions of the first event

The first international event established the methodological and operational framework for the implementation of Art Connecting People. The partners agreed on a shared approach in which contemporary art will be used as a practical tool to bring different groups of citizens together, foster interaction between library users and people who are less represented in library activities, and stimulate reflection on relevant social issues.

A common structure for the three local activity cycles was defined. In each cycle, partners will involve a specific secondary target group not through activities designed exclusively for that group, but through mixed activities aimed at creating interaction with other citizens and library users. This will allow the partners to test different engagement approaches in their local contexts and subsequently exchange observations, results and feedback at transnational level.

The partnership also agreed that each of the three cycles should use a different form of art, selected according to the characteristics of the target group, the local context and the artistic expertise available. Partners were encouraged, where appropriate, to develop forms of artistic expression that are visible in or connected with public space, such as murals, stickers, landscape art or performative art. The artistic outputs will not be conceived only as creative products, but as instruments for raising awareness of a relevant contemporary issue, which may include, for example, sustainability, war, gender equality, inclusion, artificial intelligence, democracy or discrimination. The topic may vary from one cycle to another.

For the first cycle, the partners agreed to focus on people aged over 65, adults in working life or people who have recently retired. This group was identified as a comparatively accessible target with which to begin testing the methodology and the capacity of libraries to connect different generations and groups of users.

For the second cycle, the partners agreed to focus on people who may experience forms of social stigma or exclusion, including, according to the different local contexts, people undergoing rehabilitation, homeless people, people with a migratory background and people with special needs. The objective will again be to involve them in shared activities together with other members of the community rather than creating separate initiatives.

The event therefore resulted in a common framework combining target-group engagement, artistic co-creation and awareness-raising, while leaving each partner sufficient flexibility to select the most appropriate artistic language and social theme for its territory. This balance between a shared methodology and local adaptation will make it possible to compare experiences across the partnership while responding to different community needs.

The partners also agreed on the timetable for the next transnational meetings: 8–10 October 2026 in Kranj, Slovenia; 10–12 March 2027 in Braga, Portugal; and a final meeting in Třinec, Czech Republic, provisionally planned for the first week of June 2027, with the exact dates still to be confirmed. These meetings will provide opportunities to review the implementation

of the local cycles, exchange feedback on the engagement of the selected target groups and progressively refine the shared methodology.

Executive summary

The kick-off of Art Connecting People was designed as more than an administrative launch. Over three days, the Municipality of Concesio and BICO – Concesio Public Library hosted an international delegation and local citizens in a programme combining relationship building, inclusive art-making, participatory reflection, cultural mediation, public gaming and operational planning. The event translated the project's core idea into practice: libraries can act as democratic community hubs and art can become a common language through which people meet, create, interpret and discuss contemporary life.

Participants at a glance

Total	Women	Men	Countries represented
124	58 (46.8%)	66 (53.2%)	Italy 118 Slovenia 2 Czech Republic 2 Portugal 1 IT/Argentina 1

1. Project and event context

Art Connecting People is a CERV Networks of Towns project coordinated by the Municipality of Concesio. Its general objective is to empower public libraries to become dynamic catalysts for civic engagement, using contemporary art to foster critical thinking and social dialogue. The partnership brings together public libraries from Italy, Portugal, Slovenia and the Czech Republic and combines local experimentation with international peer learning. The Concesio kick-off was therefore conceived as an experiential mobility. Visiting librarians were not only introduced to project management requirements, but were invited to take part in practices that embodied the project methodology and to observe how the host library works with local partners and citizens.

2. Day 1 - Welcome and partnership building

The first day included a walk through Brescia followed by a formal dinner with representatives of the host municipality. The programme introduced participants to the territory, local culture and food while creating an informal environment for relationship building. This was important to the project's transnational approach, which treats mobility not only as institutional coordination but as the creation of a professional community based on trust and mutual knowledge.

3. Day 2 - Inclusive art-making at BICO



Shared bookmark-making workshop at BICO.



One of the handmade bookmarks produced during the activity.

The second day began with the “Build Your Own Handmade Bookmark” workshop organised with Cooperativa Sociale Futura. Librarians, volunteers and users of the cooperative, including people with disabilities, worked around the same tables using accessible craft materials and tools. The activity was intentionally organised as a common creative experience rather than a separate programme for a specific group.

This format demonstrated a central project principle: inclusion can be embedded in ordinary cultural activities when they are designed for shared participation. Art functioned as a low-threshold language that enabled interaction without requiring specialist skills, while the shared task created opportunities for cooperation between participants with different backgrounds and abilities.

4. Design Thinking - understanding communities and library practices

The creative activity was followed by a facilitated Design Thinking workshop. Participants developed a brief community profile, completed a library self-assessment and used an Ansoff-type matrix to position marginalised target groups according to the library’s interest in involving them and the perceived ease of engagement.

The workshop transformed broad concepts such as inclusion and participation into operational questions: who uses the library, who remains underrepresented, what strengths can be leveraged, what barriers exist and which participatory tools can help libraries respond. The exercises established a common analytical framework that partners can reuse during local activities and compare during later mobilities.

5. Art, local heritage and the Paolo VI Collection

The afternoon programme included a guided cultural visit linked to Pope Paul VI, born in Concesio, and to the Collezione Paolo VI – Contemporary Art Museum. The visit connected the project with a local cultural legacy in which art is understood as a means of interpreting the world, human experience and faith. It complemented the morning workshop by moving from art as collective production to art as interpretation, symbolism and mediation.

6. Art Game Night - an open and intergenerational library

After an informal pizza dinner, BICO hosted a large game night open to the public. Citizens could enter freely, choose games and play in groups, supported by volunteers who explained rules and recommended suitable titles. Within the Art Connecting People framework, particular emphasis was placed on art-related games.

Families, young people, adults, older residents and visiting librarians shared the same spaces and tables. The evening was therefore both a public event and a peer-learning demonstration of BICO's established use of board games and role-play as engagement tools. The practice showed how gaming can lower barriers to participation, create spontaneous intergenerational interaction and reinforce the library as a social and cultural meeting place.

7. Day 3 - Operational alignment and next steps

The final morning focused on the next phases of implementation. Partners reviewed forthcoming activities, clarified roles and deadlines, aligned on administrative and reporting requirements and discussed how the common methodology would be adapted to their different local contexts. The goal was not to reproduce Concesio's activities identically, but to transfer principles such as inclusion, co-creation, user-centred design, accessible art mediation and community participation.

8. Peer-learning and transferable practices

Practice	Learning value	Transfer potential
Inclusive bookmark workshop	Co-creation across abilities and roles	Accessible mixed-group creative workshops
Design Thinking	Community profiling and self-assessment	Common tools for needs analysis and participatory planning
Paolo VI visit	Art mediation linked to local identity	Library-museum and local cultural partnerships
Art Game Night	Gaming as intergenerational engagement	Board-game and role-play formats for community-building
Operational meeting	Shared implementation framework	Clear responsibilities and comparability across project cycles

9. Main results and contribution to project objectives

- Established the human and operational foundations of the transnational partnership.
- Introduced a shared methodology for community analysis and participatory planning.
- Demonstrated inclusive artistic co-creation involving people with disabilities on equal terms.
- Transferred practical engagement approaches based on board games, role-play and collaboration with volunteers.
- Connected the international mobility with direct local community participation rather than a closed professional meeting.
- Concluded with clearer responsibilities, reporting expectations and next steps for all partners.

The kick-off contributed directly to the project objective of empowering libraries as catalysts for civic engagement. It showed that art can connect people through making, interpreting, playing and discussing, and that accessible, replicable practices can generate meaningful encounters when deliberately designed around participation.

10. Visual documentation



Participants and users of Cooperativa Sociale Futura after the shared activity.



International delegation outside BICO - Concesio Public Library.



Hands-on collaboration during the creative workshop.



Creative work around a shared table in the library.

ANNEX 1 - OFFICIAL EVENT AGENDA

The agenda below is reproduced from the official event programme. Additional activities actually implemented, including the walk through Brescia, are described in the main report narrative.

kick off

**ART
CONNECTING
PEOPLE**

biblioteca di
CONCESIO
5 - 6 - 7
MARZO

ART

THURSDAY 5 MARCH

20.00 Dinner with the mayor at the Restaurant DÙ de la Contrada, Brescia

FRIDAY 6 MARCH

9.00 Kick-off meeting opening at Bico, Concesio Public Library

9.30 Ice Breaking - BYO (Build-your-own) Handmade Bookmark with the cooperativa sociale Futura

11.15 Coffee Break

11.30 Design Thinking workshop: Target groups and need analysis

13.15 Lunch at the Library

14.30 Guided tour at the Collezione Paolo VI - Contemporary Art Museum

16.00 Free time - heading back to accommodation or sightseeing

19.00 Pizza at the library

20.30 Art-game night: open public event

SATURDAY 7 MARCH

9.30 Guided tour to BICO and Photography Workshop

10.30 Q&A, setting-up next steps

12.00 Greetings



MESTNA *knjižnica* KRANJ



Co-funded by
the European Union

ANNEX 2 - DIDACTIC MATERIALS USED DURING THE DESIGN THINKING WORKSHOP

The Role of Libraries in Socially Engaged Arts

Socially Engaged Arts represent a fascinating and complex territory where aesthetics meet ethics, and art becomes a tool to explore the boundaries of social change. These practices challenge us to rethink the roles of the artist, the audience, and communities, opening a fertile space for connection, dialogue, and transformation.

Socially Engaged Arts offer a concrete response to the significant challenges of our time—from social justice to community cohesion, from mental health to inclusion—generating processes that center on participation and cultural democracy.

They remind us that art is not a luxury, but a universal language capable of creating new collective narratives, imagining alternative futures, and generating spaces where diverse people can recognize and engage with one another. These practices invite us to slow down, listen, and co-create.

Thus, they are a powerful tool to inspire change, strengthen communities, and develop innovative solutions in response to the most urgent social challenges.

In recent years, socially engaged arts have emerged as powerful tools for fostering community dialogue and addressing pressing contemporary issues such as social justice, migration, environmental sustainability, and mental health. Libraries, as accessible and inclusive public spaces, are uniquely positioned to cultivate these artistic practices and promote meaningful engagement among diverse community members.

1. Safe Spaces for Expression

Libraries serve as neutral ground where individuals from various backgrounds can come together without judgment. This environment encourages open dialogue, allowing community members to express their thoughts, feelings, and experiences related to significant societal challenges. By hosting workshops, discussions, and artistic activities, libraries can empower participants to share their voices and engage with contemporary issues through creative expression.

2. Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Socially engaged arts often thrive at the intersection of various disciplines, including visual arts, literature, performance, and social sciences. Libraries can act as hubs for collaboration, bringing together artists, educators, social workers, and community leaders to create innovative programs. This interdisciplinary approach not only enriches the artistic experience but also enhances the understanding of complex issues, as participants draw from multiple perspectives and expertise.

3. Community-Centered Programming

By actively involving the community in the planning and execution of art projects, libraries can ensure that the initiatives reflect the specific needs and interests of their patrons. This participatory model fosters a sense of ownership and pride among community members, encouraging them to engage more deeply with the art and the issues it addresses. Libraries can host community art projects, exhibitions, and performances that resonate with local experiences, making art a relatable and impactful medium for change.

4. Educational Opportunities

Libraries are inherently educational spaces that promote lifelong learning. By integrating socially engaged arts into their programming, libraries can offer workshops and events that not only teach artistic skills but also facilitate critical discussions around contemporary issues. For instance, art-based activities can serve as a springboard for conversations about cultural identity, social equity, or environmental responsibility, fostering informed and engaged citizens.

5. Building Empathy and Understanding

Art has the unique ability to foster empathy by allowing individuals to see the world through others' perspectives. Libraries can utilize socially engaged arts to create immersive experiences that challenge preconceived notions and biases. By exploring diverse narratives through art, patrons can develop a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding social issues, ultimately promoting compassion and solidarity within the community.

6. Accessibility and Inclusivity

As public institutions, libraries are committed to inclusivity, ensuring that all community members have access to resources and opportunities for engagement. Socially engaged arts initiatives can be designed to accommodate individuals from various backgrounds, including marginalized groups such as immigrants, seniors, or people with disabilities. By providing accessible artistic programs, libraries can break down barriers and invite all members of the community to participate in the conversation.

This is the perfect introduction of the Art connecting people project that moves throughout the field of the socially engaged arts using creativity as a tool to create strong bonds among people in a community.

Guiding questions

- **HOW TO ENGAGE PEOPLE IN THE LIBRARY?**
- **HOW TO ENGAGE MARGINALIZED PEOPLE IN THE LIBRARY?**
- **HOW TO MAKE PEOPLE TALK, MERGE AND COOPERATE?**

Activity 1 - Create a brief community profile of your own community

A. Who are the community members?

- **Age Distribution:** The community has a mix of children, working-age adults, and seniors, with a significant portion being retirees.
- **Ethnic Composition:** The community is diverse, including various ethnic groups, with a notable presence of immigrants.
- **Educational Attainment:** Many residents have at least a high school diploma, with a growing number pursuing higher education.
- **Income Levels:** There is a range of income levels, from low-income households to middle-class families, with some affluent areas.
- **Household Types:** The community includes single-parent families, multi-generational households, and individual residents living alone.
- **Who are the key groups within the community?**

B. What are the community's needs and challenges?

- **Access to Healthcare:** Many residents struggle to access affordable healthcare services and lack health insurance.
- **Employment Opportunities:** There is a high unemployment rate, with limited job opportunities in the local area.
- **Affordable Housing:** Rising housing costs are making it difficult for families to find affordable living arrangements.
- **Educational Resources:** Schools may lack adequate funding, leading to overcrowded classrooms and limited extracurricular activities.
- **Transportation:** Many residents face challenges with public transportation, making it difficult to reach jobs, schools, and services.
- **What are the most significant challenges in their daily lives?**

C. What resources and services are available?

- **Public Libraries:** Local libraries offer a range of programs, workshops, and resources for all ages.
- **Community Centers:** These centers provide recreational activities, support services, and spaces for community events.
- **Healthcare Facilities:** There are clinics and hospitals that offer basic healthcare, although availability may vary.
- **Nonprofit Organizations:** Several nonprofits focus on social services, food assistance, and youth programs.
- **Educational Institutions:** Local schools and colleges provide educational resources and vocational training opportunities.
- **How accessible are these resources to different segments of the population?**

D. What are the community's strengths and assets?

- **Active Community Organizations:** Numerous local groups are dedicated to improving the community through advocacy and support.
- **Cultural Diversity:** The community's rich cultural heritage fosters creativity and innovation through various cultural events and festivals.
- **Engaged Residents:** Many residents are actively involved in local governance and community initiatives, promoting civic engagement.

- Natural Resources: Parks, green spaces, and local farms contribute to the community's quality of life and promote sustainability.
- Skilled Workforce: The community has a talented population with expertise in various fields, including healthcare, education, and arts.
- What skills, talents, or resources can be leveraged for community development?

E. How do community members communicate and engage?

- Social Media: Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are popular for sharing information and organizing events.
- Community Meetings: Regular town hall meetings facilitate face-to-face communication and foster community involvement.
- Local Newspapers: Print and online publications provide news and updates relevant to community members.
- Neighborhood Groups: Informal gatherings and neighborhood associations create spaces for residents to discuss issues and collaborate.
- Email Newsletters: Local organizations often send out newsletters to keep residents informed about events, initiatives, and resources.
- How do residents typically engage with one another and with local organizations?

Activity 2 - Library self-assessment survey

1. What do you consider the greatest strengths of your library in serving the community?

- Please provide specific examples of programs that highlight these strengths.
- Please choose three characteristics of the library as a space.

2. In what areas do you feel your library could improve to better meet the needs of our patrons?

- Consider services, resources, or community engagement efforts.

3. How effectively do you believe your library fosters a welcoming and inclusive environment for all community members?

- What initiatives or practices support this, and where could we do better?

4. What feedback have you received from patrons about their experiences in your library?

- Please share any comments, suggestions, or concerns that have been expressed.

5. How do you envision your library evolving to address the changing needs of the community in the next few years?

- What new services, programs, or partnerships do you think we should consider?

Activity 3 - Ansoff Matrix

Choose and select your "preferred" target group of marginalized people, putting them in the right quadrant based on your interest and ease in engaging with them.

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).