CREATIVE SPIRITS

Operational Implementation Framework (OIF)

Final version

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1. INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

Loulé is close to the North Atlantic Ocean and covers an area the size of 763,12 km². It has excellent accessibilities such as Faro International Airport and highway A2 providing the Municipality of Loulé with a modern road network. The climate is mild throughout the year making the region of the Algarve, in which Loulé is situated, one of the most attractive touristic regions in Europe. The Municipality of Loulé, including the cities of Loulé and Quarteira, is the largest and most populous municipality in the region of Algarve. The whole municipality has about 70.000 inhabitants and the population is increasing.

The Municipality of Loulé has approximately 70.000 inhabitants, 14.900 of which are inhabitants of the city of Loulé. Due to the well-developed infrastructural networks in the region as well as the city's numerous social and cultural networks, Loulé is currently considered as one of Algarve's main urban centres.

In the past the historic centre of the city of Loulé used to be a vibrant area full of commerce, social exchange and local craftsmanship. But over the past years, this area has witnessed a demographic deceleration and now faces the challenges of an aging population. The attractiveness of surrounding cities as well as the difficulty of reaching the new standards of quality of life has caused that many people choose to leave the inner city. Currently about 32% of the houses in the city centre are unoccupied.

Yet despite of the decrease in the inner city's social liveliness, the historic centre has remained a site of economic exchange. Tourism lies at the basis of the economy in Loulé as it is the city's main source of revenue and ensures the creation and retaining of jobs. The city's economy is based on administrative services, both local and national, and financial and proximity commerce due to the market and schools' attractiveness. Most of the employment opportunities in Loulé in the service sector relate to tourism and range from professions in hotels and restaurants to those in real estate, commerce and travel agencies. The tourism sector also branches out into the construction sector resulting in building projects for residential tourism and holiday resorts. Moreover, the commerce and service sector also profit from the development of tourism in the area.

The main address of the city is to restore his economic importance from the past, in order to attract more inhabitants and promote the rehabilitation of historic city centre.

Between 2016 and 2019, Loulé participated in the URBACT Implementation Network 'Creative Spirits'. In this network, nine cities from across Europe worked together to improve the implementation of their strategies for the cultural and creative industries. This document, the Operational Implementation Framework (OIF), is the final local output produced by each of the nine cities. It describes the challenges faced during the implementation of Loulé's strategy, Loulé's approach to overcoming them, and the knowledge gained as a result. The hope is that it will provide a framework for improving the implementation of future projects in Loulé.

2. LOCAL ASSESSMENT OF BASELINE POSITION

The implementation plan was defined in alignment with the vision for the city and the historic city centre.

The main actions where defined in order to improve the uses of the historic city centre and attract craftsmanship. The follow actions are in implantation process:

a. ECOA- Network of spaces for Creativity, workshops and Arts
b. Loulé Design Lab
c. New Artisans Workshop
d. Creation of a Local Pottery
e. Empreita´s House
f. Coppers Craft House
g. Creative Pop Up Store
h. CCI Map Index

The strategic plan is not a closed plan, and will be adapted to the changes the city is facing. For instance, due to the increase in some external factors, like the actual economic development nearby the city, some of the main goals have to be change, namely the housing issue.

The implementation of the strategic plan faces several barriers. One of the barriers is the administrative process to implement the actions. Every plan takes a long time to come out and sometimes this is not compatible to the opportunity for the implementation and for the creative sector.

In order to implement these actions, we faced the following challenges, which we described in the points below.

Ensuring the integrated approach in the delivery of the strategy and their related actions

The approach foreseen in this project is integrated, because it has aspects related to the social, economic, urban, environmental and cultural domains, as well as the actions that are defined in the framework of the action plan.

As we will indicate in the next point of this document (point 3), the action matrix is aligned and in articulation with three instruments of strategic scope of the municipality, namely: Loulé 2020 Strategic Plan, Urban Rehabilitation Action Plan and Creative Loulé.

They are actions that promote the implementation of some of the objectives set forth in these instruments, contributing to the consolidation of the broad vision that is intended for the territory, and where the cultural and creative sector is a structuring and transversal element.

This follow-up work, from the strategy to the action, has been carried out by a working group of technicians and consultants of the municipality, related to the fields of economics, tourism, culture, strategic planning and urban rehabilitation which meets regularly, also with stakeholders, in order to follow the implementation of the strategy and its actions.

Maintaining involvement of local stakeholders and organising decision-making for delivery

Considering the above actions, it should be mentioned that these are essentially developed by the municipality itself with the help of the different agents that are implicated in the actions, namely the incubators of the Loulé Design Lab and the artisans.

This process of involvement, allows us to gauge the degree of concretization of the different actions and the externalities that arise. Considering the fundamental role of these agents there is the concern on the part of the municipality to integrate them and to listen to them, in order to guarantee the respective participation and the good implementation of the strategy.

This monitoring is carried out by the Division of Local Economy and Tourism, namely by the technical staff, that accompanies the implementation of some actions.

In this context, it is also important to highlight the relevance of ULG, which in our case has been affirmed as a relevant and profitable structure in monitoring the strategy in question.

Setting up efficient indicators & monitoring systems to measure performance

Bearing in mind the degree of implementation of some of the actions, as well as their nature (material and immaterial), determining and choosing the matrix of outcome and achievement indicators has been relatively easy. In view of the proposed indicators in section 3 of the implementation plan, indicators have been developed which aim to measure implementation and monitor each action, taking into account in particular their impact on the human resources component and the respective demand .

Considering that the main purpose of these actions is to promote the dynamics of the cultural and creative sector in the historic center, we choose possible indicators that would depicture the supply and demand side and the applied demand for this strategic sector.

Regarding the monitoring system, there is still the need to create a work unit that performs this task of collecting, processing and evaluating the data, in order to understand the measurement of program performance and the strategy implicit in the implementation plan.

Moving from strategy to operational action-plan

This point is particularly relevant in the case of the municipality of Loulé, bearing in mind that the overwhelming majority of the actions are already underway with visible results. This was one of the visible aspects in the visit, that the partners of Urbact Creative Spirits made to Loulé, where it was possible to attest to the degree of implementation of some actions of the strategy.

The monitoring task that is necessary to develop, in order to test the dynamics and effectiveness of the actions foreseen in the strategy, assumes particular relevance.

On the other hand, the municipality is aware that it is now necessary to equip the various stakeholders and agents involved, with the planned actions of tools and mechanisms, such as the development of training actions and workshops, in a variety of areas, to make this project

more competitive and sustainable, in particular with regard to incubators and artisans who carry out their activity in the scope of this project.

In this context, it should be mentioned that this project already presents results that go beyond the historical center of the city of Loulé, bearing in mind the partnership developed between the municipality of Loulé and Ikea (located at the city gates) where, from November 2018 to the moment, a series of products from the Loulé Design Lab and the Workshops, are featured in a exhibition in the Designer Outlet Algarve (integrated in the Mar Shopping complex, owned by IKEA Portugal).

To emphasize that only this way: implementing the actions and doing a follow-up of proximity is that it is possible to make this project a living and winning experience.

3. OUTLINE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION

The strategy is directly linked to three strategic and action planning instruments of the municipality of Loulé: (A) the Loulé Strategic Plan (PEL) 2020, the (B) Loulé Action Plan for Urban Rehabilitation (PARU) and the (C) Loulé Criativo (Creative Loulé) Action Plan.

The first instrument is a municipal scope, the second focuses on the city of Loulé, particularly in the historical and consolidated area of the city and the third instrument is directly related to creative projects (material and immaterial) and has a urban scope.

The responsible entity for this three instruments is the Municipality of Loulé.

The Loulé Strategic Plan (PEL) 2020 and the Loulé Urban Rehabilitation Action Plan (PARU) are aligned with the Algarve Regional Operational Program for the 2020 structural programming period (also known as CRESC 2020).

From the hierarchical point of view, the PEL 2020 corresponds to an instrument that can be considered of superior hierarchy, both by the territorial scale and by the sectorial range that is associated to it. The Loulé PARU, because it is an instrument that is directly linked to the historical and consolidated area of the city of Loulé (urban scale) can be considered an instrument of inferior hierarchy. Loulé Criativo has a focus on the historic city particularly in what concerns to the development of a set of projects linked with the field of creativity and the traditional arts and crafts and it's also considered an instrument of inferior hierarchy.

Nevertheless, this three instruments have strategic common points and are fully integrated and linked between them.

In the context of the three instruments, the entity that has a central role in the implementation of the strategy and its projects and actions is the Municipality of Loulé. In the specific case of Loulé Rehabilitation Action Plan (PARU) the governance model that was defined promotes the articulation between public and private investments in order to promote proximity between the agents.

During the implementation of the actions there was a need to make adaptations in order to minimize risks and overcome some of the barriers that we were facing.

One of the barriers that we can mention was the lack of human resources to drive the Loulé Design Lab, so there is a need to continuously attract more projects and make strategic partnerships with other similar projects, and sign protocols with some institutions (for example University).

Other barriers encountered are the time it takes for actions to be implemented due to the length of legal administrative processes, particularly in relation to the urban planning and licensing component.

These are some of the main risks and barriers to the implementation of actions.

4. RESPONSE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

Challenge Nr. 1. Ensuring the integrated approach in the delivery of the strategy and their related actions

What this Challenge "looks like" in your city – how it presents itself in practice, what is the exact nature of the problem to be overcome? Include the specific barriers/blockers/problems that you experience or that you worked on in your local situation as part of the network (i.e. to what will you apply your capability/methods?)

We had to do an internal work of alignment and articulation between strategic instruments available in the municipality, at different scales, seeking to built a holistic vision that is the purpose for the historical center of the city, which we desire to be more vibrant, attractive and creative, seeking to attract more resident population and more economic agents.

Considering the independence between the rehabilitation of the public space and the regeneration of the buildings, and taking into account the necessary timings, for physical intervention in these two dimensions, it is necessary to promote a more integrated approach between both domains. This would ensure that the historic center would be a truly rehabilitated and attractive space.

In spite of the existence of national support mechanisms for urban rehabilitation, it is clear that they do not have the desired impact, in particular as regards demand from potential investors.

Where do you need to develop (new) capability/capacity? Where will you use existing capability?

It is necessary to activate the mechanisms provided for by law in terms of public action for the acquisition of properties that are vacant and that arent good for the image of urban public space.

At the moment the municipality has specific teams with knowledge of these matters that are working in the field (rehabilitate public space) and provide information to potential investors who want to use existing financing mechanisms, like the IFFRU (financial instrument designed for national level).

What are the success factors for this Challenge (more specific than just "overcome this challenge")? What will success mean, in terms of changes to your implementation ability and

practice? How will you know how far you have travelled, in terms of improving your Implementation practice?

It is necessary to ensure strong communication and articulation between the various sectors / departments of the municipality, strengthening interconnection.

The progressive implementation of actions that are announced in the plan has a positive impact in the field, since the different agents are verifying the realization.

-> Challenge Nr. 2. Maintaining involvement of local stakeholders and organising decision-making for delivery

What this Challenge "looks like" in your city – how it presents itself in practice, what is the exact nature of the problem to be overcome? Include the specific barriers/blockers/problems that you experience or that you worked on in your local situation as part of the network (i.e. to what will you apply your capability/methods?)

Overall there has been a process of articulation between the various actors. Nevertheless, there is some difficulty in integrating some owners.

Where do you need to develop (new) capability/capacity? Where will you use existing capability?

Promote greater negotiation capacity and develop spaces of relationship between owners and potential investors who want to invest in the historical center.

What are the success factors for this Challenge (more specific than just "overcome this challenge")? What will success mean, in terms of changes to your implementation ability and practice? How will you know how far you have travelled, in terms of improving your Implementation practice?

- ✓ *Ensure strong municipal leadership that promotes spaces for dialogue and debate on the dynamics of the historic center;*
- ✓ *Strengthen the relationship of the municipality with potential investors;*
- ✓ *Ensure continuity of Urbact Local Group (ULG).*

-> Challenge Nr. 3. Setting up efficient indicators and monitoring systems to ensure performance

What this Challenge "looks like" in your city – how it presents itself in practice, what is the exact nature of the problem to be overcome? Include the specific barriers/blockers/problems

that you experience or that you worked on in your local situation as part of the network (i.e. to what will you apply your capability/methods?)

The municipality does not have a specific department to monitor local policies, but in the context of each department, some actions are beginning to be taken in order to initiate a work of analysis and observation of the dynamics of the territory. Particularly we can mention the case of the Observatory of Territory and the Environment, a recent initiative of the municipality, and developed based on European funding sources, via the regional OP of the Algarve, where it is sought to monitor some structuring indicators of municipal scale.

On the other hand, in the Loulé 2025 Strategic Program, a structure of performance indicators is also envisaged, which essentially seeks to measure the implementation of a broad range of actions on the ground, based on physical indicators.

Taking into account some of this knowledge and the involvement of elements of this working group in the above mentioned tasks, it was possible, with some ease, to create a matrix of achievement and result indicators that are included in the implementation plan and that try to test the validity of the various actions, in particular as regards their impact.

Where do you need to develop (new) capability/capacity? Where will you use existing capability?

The capacity we deem necessary to be acquired in this context is essentially in the allocation and implementation of transversality, when performing the monitoring task.

This is a relevant work but it will only be possible to develop if all the agents and technicians of the municipality understand their relevance to the good management of the territory and the actions planned.

What are the success factors for this Challenge (more specific than just "overcome this challenge")? What will success mean, in terms of changes to your implementation ability and practice? How will you know how far you have travelled, in terms of improving your Implementation practice?

It would be useful to promote training and capacity building of the managers and technicians for this purpose, with the objectif that the results obtained will reflect in the municipal dynamics and that will serve as a basis for the strategic definition and prioritization of the municipality.

-> Challenge Nr. 4. Moving from strategy to operational action-plan

What this Challenge "looks like" in your city – how it presents itself in practice, what is the exact nature of the problem to be overcome? Include the specific barriers/blockers/problems

that you experience or that you worked on in your local situation as part of the network (i.e. to what will you apply your capability/methods?)

Until the present moment it has been possible to implement some of the listed actions, namely: Loulé Design Lab, Creation of a Local Pottery, Empreita´s House, Coppers Craft House and Creative Pop Up Store. The implementation of ECOA- Network of spaces for Creativity, workshops and Arts will be soon. These actions contributes for the progressive mobilization of different partners and the creation of an ecosystem around creativity.

Where do you need to develop (new) capability/capacity? Where will you use existing capability?

There is a progressive implementation of the actions included in the action plan. It is verified that the municipality should also develop competences regarding the approach of the monitoring of the intervention strategy, namely in what refers to the design of the indicators to be identified within the framework of this strategy.

What are the success factors for this Challenge (more specific than just "overcome this challenge")? What will success mean, in terms of changes to your implementation ability and practice? How will you know how far you have travelled, in terms of improving your Implementation practice?

Given that some of the actions will not be implemented by the end of the Urbact program, it will be relevant to ensure, for the success of this instrument, that the monitoring process of this strategy is ensured.

-> Challenge Nr. 5. Enhancing funding of urban policies by exploring financial inovation~

What this Challenge "looks like" in your city – how it presents itself in practice, what is the exact nature of the problem to be overcome? Include the specific barriers/blockers/problems that you experience or that you worked on in your local situation as part of the network (i.e. to what will you apply your capability/methods?)

In the case of the municipality of Loulé, the European financing perspective is divided into two areas: public and private.

In the public domain, and for the purpose of urban rehabilitation, the municipality resorts to the regional PO Algarve 2020 where it contracted a set of funds that have allowed to rehabilitate some historical assets and patrimoniais in the city, as it is the case of the Palace Gama Lobos and also the Solar da Música Nova.

In the private sector, also with a focus on urban regeneration, a financial mechanism has been created, awarded by the European Commission, which enables individuals to access financial loans on a concessional basis.

The barriers to the proper implementation of this process, are that some individuals are still unaware of the benefits of this financing instrument, despite the divulgation and, the process itself, between individuals and banks, which is somewhat complex and time-consuming.

Where do you need to develop (new) capability/capacity? Where will you use existing capability?

In this context it would also be interesting to promote the creation of conditions for obtaining Community funding also for the field of creativity and culture, in line with what is happening for urban rehabilitation

What are the success factors for this Challenge (more specific than just "overcome this challenge")? What will success mean, in terms of changes to your implementation ability and practice? How will you know how far you have travelled, in terms of improving your Implementation practice?

Promote greater communication and dissemination of European funding perspectives for the private and public domain.

5. LEARNING JOURNEY

LUBLIN

The Lublin CSM occurred in October 2017 and was the first meeting in the second phase. The local of the intervention is a retail street, who has the same problems that in Loulé.

In Lublin it was important to visit the old typography, similar to some that exists in our territory, which served as a space for the promotion of knowledge transfer and also for holding workshops. It is a space that has been recovered and refurbished for the local community.

KAUNAS

The Street art festival of Kaunas is also an outstanding practice of the city. Street art is becoming an increasingly popular form of art, and the city of Kaunas has also discovered that professional street artists can work on dilapidated buildings. Wall paintings are an interesting way to make the streets livelier and bring art within everyone's reach. During the festival professional artists are creating large format drawings on building walls, considering the life of the area and its community, issues and ideas. The educational part of the festival involves teaching, open discussions and helping inhabitants get acquainted with urban, architectural and street art topics.

As a further good practice, Kaunas Biennial, a biannual contemporary art event in Kaunas since 1997 which exhibits textile work. The Biennial is organized by the Lithuanian Artists Association together with Vilnius Art Academy Kaunas Faculty of Arts and Textile Artists' Guild.

The local of the meeting was in an incubation space who provides spaces for artists and makers. This was an interesting example to show to Loulé, also to implement our Loulé Design Lab, who has spaces for the makers and designers.

IBI

As Ibi, Loulé also have some hard interventions, at the same time has soft and training interventions.

For instance, the 5th action of the strategy - industrial heritage regeneration - includes soft (training in traditional jobs, marketing actions) and hard (renovation of the traditional building of the Payà Factory) measures typically carried out by different departments of the municipality. Therefore, a strong cooperation is needed between the soft and hard departments in order to implement this complex action effectively.

Though Ibi still needs to foster more efficient cross-department collaboration in order to improve the three approaches (social, economic and environmental) of integration during implementation, the Municipality already has shown successful cooperation between departments and integrated implementation of projects thanks to their cooperative working culture.

In IBI CSM, there was a presentation about the experience of Alicante in urban rehabilitation. That was inspiring to Loulé. The intervention area of the project is in the city centre. Now, the

Municipality intends to acquire a building to rehabilitate and create a contemporary art centre in a part of the city centre that needs a new life. Is intention that the input of the public and also private investment creates a new interest for the rehabilitation of other spaces.

RAVENNA

The Municipality of Loulé has, in certain aspects, common issues with Ravenna, since is a city with the same distance to the coast.

The main issues learned with Ravenna was the need of integration of different actors/partners looking for the development in the same area. The learning is to bring and to involve the several Municipality departments, local stakeholders and together bring the ideas for the development of the area.

Ravenna shows to Loulé how they conduct the local process to develop the Darsenna area, with a long participatory process. Loulé has learned how to involve the stakeholders in the construction and the implementation process.

Also, the communication between ULG members from Loulé to ULG members from Ravenna and other partners had inspired them to create a network between the two cities to work in contemporary art. With that input, the local artists prepare an exhibition of their works to show during Loulé CSM.

SOFIA

During Sofia CSM it was presented a masterclass about indicators, who was important to measure the implementation plans.

For the ULG During the meeting, it was interesting to know how the different stakeholders will use an public space in the garden the middle of the city. The use of a space for cultural associations and the integration of the stakeholders in the utilization of the space is an interesting lesson for the Loulé.

The creative city festival named "Desassossego dos Arcos" (Unrest from the Arches) that was organized for September 2018 has some inspiration in the utilization of public spaces, namely streets with arches, where some associations and artists show their woks.

WATERFORD

In Waterford we have learned that these kinds of urban-based creative development processes to be truly effective must be based on long, participatory and inclusive approaches, like initiatives such as SPRAOI, Waterfall Walls and Winterval.

These three examples demonstrate the relevant role of local actors in the dynamization of events that directly stimulate the city and the public space.

Starting from our reality, this approach may help us to rethink the event policy development model, which is particularly centralized in the municipality and its resources.

On the other hand, we see that the development of these initiatives mobilizes a very significant part of the community.

MARIBOR

Maribor was a very nice surprise, in general, the city and the municipality demonstrate a good cultural and creative dynamic, and the examples we have show show that this dynamic contributes to the issues of the city's urban recovery and to bring the community closer to the city.

The bench project is interesting, and can be some kind of kick off, to start the dynamics between public and private sectors, working together in cultural and artistic projects, that will be part and used by the community.

It was very useful to see the how the creative and cultural sector (public and private) work in Maribor, how they tackle some challenges and problems, and try find innovative and participated solutions, to be alive and kicking.

UNEXPECTED EVENTS

One example of how the Loulé Criativo ecosystem is running and getting the interest of other entities is that the big retail shop near IKEA invites Loulé Criativo artisans and designers to show their work in the shop windows of this space. That was an initiative which envolves people of the project to do their best in a short period of time.

6. Synthesis

During the Criative Spirits project, the municipality of Loulé was able to implement the great majority of the actions that were presented, namely:

- the rehabilitation of Palacio Gama Lobos, wich is the heart of Loulé Criativo Project, and a base for creative tourism workshops and courses, training in creative industries, start up incubators for creative industries, creative residencies;

- the rehabilitation of an old pottery, where two pottery workshops currently operate;

- the rehabilitation of Solar da Música Nova, the headquarters of Loulé Conservatory of Music, and operates a Municipal Auditorium and the Loulé Music Band;

- organization of various workshops and trainings, in the various workshops located in the Historical Center;- A criação do Loulé Design lab, where about two dozen creatives are incubated;

- creation of the Pop Up Store, where incubators and artisans can exhibit and sell their work;

- stimulation of and complementing private investment through the qualification of collective

spaces and buildings;

- extension of the dynamic of urban rehabilitation to all the city of Loulé, through the experience

All this actions permited to work with the community, and the Creative Spirits project gave us new tools of to manage some issues and problems.

Some of the actions that were planned to implement aren´t implemented yet, they need more time to maturate, do the projects or deal with administrative processes:

. promoting a green park – urban and agricultural park, near the city.

- to have artists in the artists' residence all year round;

- a sustainable use of resources with a particular focus on energy efficiency, public mobility, and the development of green areas;

Also, one of the actions linked to the making of the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) map index are not completed yet.

The most important thing we learn was the learning process itself. On the implementation process, we face several issues, namely the difficult to measure indicators, due to the lack of human resources, who are the same to implement and to measure.

Also, we learn the implementation plan is a "work in progress", that one action implicates others and the necessary involvement with stakeholders.

We believe that the creation of an informal multidisciplinary team within the municipality, with technicians from Tourism, Culture and Heritage, Urbanism, Planning and Economic Activities departments, who jointly outlined this project and its various phases of implementation. This workgroup, who has different and complementary qualifications, meets regularly, to evaluate the project's and to develop the various necessary outputs, directly related to Urbact Creative Spirits and others. This working group is also responsible for the organization and dynamisation of the Urbact Local Group (ULG) and promotes regular meetings with its various members, as well as the local community, an indispensable stakeholder in the whole process.

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