

CAST

Process-based

Protocol

*for Community-Driven
Solutions to Enhance
Cultural Accessibility*



**A Step-by-Step Guide to Establish
Community Action Groups Supporting
Culture-Led Development**

Impressum

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Exercise



Example



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Introduction

This process-based protocol has been developed as one of the deliverables of the CAST – Culture trAnSforming communiTies and economies project, a transnational initiative aimed at enhancing social inclusion in the Danube Region by recognising culture as a key driver of a just and green economic transition. CAST approaches cultural accessibility not merely as a technical or regulatory challenge, but as a socially embedded, relational, community-driven process strengthening well-being, skills, and local economic opportunities. Ten countries of the Danube Region were involved, including 14 Project Partners (PPs) and 20 Associated Strategic Partners (ASPs). Pilot actions took place at 11 locations across 10 countries, **demonstrating how culture-led initiatives can improve public spaces, strengthen community ties, and attract visitors and investment. In practice, this enables stakeholders to:**

- * **develop new skills** to become drivers of change in their local areas using the CAST Model's hands-on tools and training;
- * **attract more visitors** by showcasing the rich cultural heritage of the region;
- * **benefit the community** by designing inclusive cultural and tourism services;
- * **boost local economic growth** by attracting more visitors and making the region an attractive place to live and work;
- * **build their networks** by connecting with other providers of cultural services and tourism products;
- * **increase their visibility** as socially responsible service providers.

The aim of this protocol is to provide practical guidance for the preparation, implementation, and monitoring of community-driven pilot actions that enhance cultural accessibility. It translates the principles of the CAST Model into a structured, step-by-step process that supports Project Partners and local stakeholders in navigating complex local ecosystems, engaging diverse actors, and co-developing accessible cultural and tourism solutions. The protocol is therefore primarily intended for the Project Partners responsible for delivering the pilot actions, as well as for associated stakeholders.

Structurally, the protocol is organised as a flexible, sequential guide comprising three main steps: (1) Stakeholder Mapping, (2) the establishment of Community Action Groups (CAGs), and (3) the co-development, implementation, and monitoring of Local Cultural Actions. While these steps build on one another, the protocol allows for contextual adaptation and encourages reflection, learning, and shared ownership rather than the application of fixed solutions.

Background

This process-based protocol has been developed within the framework of the CAST – Culture trAnSforming communiTies and economies project, an initiative aimed at enhancing social inclusion in the Danube Region by recognising culture as a key driver of a just and green economic transition in the EU. CAST approaches culture through community-driven, place-based actions and recognises accessibility not merely as a technical or regulatory issue, but as a social, cultural, and relational process shaped in collaboration with local communities that also **strengthens well-being, skills, and local economic opportunities**. For this purpose, the jointly developed CAST Model provides knowledge and tools to transform local communities through a renewed understanding of culture and its potential.

This is realised in **socially inclusive services and tourism products** co-created by diverse local actors and accessible to people of all ages and abilities. Such initiatives contribute to resilient communities with enhanced well-being, social cohesion, sustainable tourism, and economic development. Within the project, partners will create 11 accessible three-day tourism experiences and connect 11 accessible events as part of the joint Danube Caravan Festival.

CAST's approach necessitated transnational collaboration because of the multifaceted nature of culture, which transcends borders and connects the Danube Region. Only through joint effort can the Model be tested and validated in diverse contexts—from rural to suburban areas, from multicultural to multilingual and multi-religious communities, and from EU Member

States to candidate countries. This ensures its applicability and effectiveness across **different cultural landscapes and economic realities**. This transnational strategy enables the development of a unified framework that remains sensitive to local specificities while supporting transferable knowledge, tools, and methods that communities, cultural professionals, SMEs, and public authorities can adapt.

CAST's distinctiveness lies in its emphasis on a process-oriented implementation model grounded in participatory practice. Building on partners' existing knowledge, the Model operationalises EU values, as well as the objectives of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) and Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) frameworks.

It does so by engaging marginalised groups, disabled people, cultural actors, civil society organisations, and public institutions in inclusive cultural practices that foster employability, innovation, and social responsibility. Training, capacity building, and local pilot actions are integral to the Model. They ensure that communities are not merely users of the framework but active co-creators equipped to implement it effectively and **build lasting cross-sector networks** that contribute to long-term structural change in cultural accessibility.

PROJECT PARTNERS

- * Iskriva, Institute for Development of Local Potentials, Slovenia
- * Public Institute for Culture and Tourism Nice and homely Ivančna Gorica, Slovenia
- * Society and Action Lab, Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design, Hungary
- * Savaria Museum, Hungary
- * Urbasofia SRL, Romania
- * Transylvania Trust Foundation, Romania
- * The Collective Foundation, Bulgaria
- * Koprivnica Križevci County, Croatia
- * City of Kolárovo, Slovakia
- * Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe, Austria
- * NGO Urban Kult, Montenegro
- * Tourism Organisation of Vojvodina, Serbia
- * National Inbound and Domestic Tourism Association of Moldova, Moldova
- * Development Agency of Žepče Ltd., Bosnia and Herzegovina

The CAST project comprises several inter-related deliverables that together constitute the final CAST Model. As the first of these outputs, this protocol provides practical guidance on the preparation and implementation of pilot actions. It also supports partners and local stakeholders in translating the Model's principles into concrete, place-based practices that generate social, cultural, and economic value at the local level.

AIM AND AUDIENCE OF THE PROTOCOL

The aim of this protocol, entitled D.1.2.1 Process-Based Protocol for Community-Driven Solutions to Enhance Cultural Accessibility, is to support PPs in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of community-driven pilot actions that enhance cultural accessibility within diverse local contexts. As the first practice-oriented deliverable of the CAST project, the protocol translates the principles of the CAST Model into concrete, step-by-step guidance that can be applied in real-life cultural, social, and institutional environments. The protocol is designed

to assist partners in navigating complex local ecosystems. It provides structured support for stakeholder mapping, establishing CAGs, and co-developing and implementing place-based cultural actions that ***respond to community needs and aspirations and generate accessible tourism products and cultural services.*** It also integrates a monitoring approach that promotes reflection, learning, and knowledge transfer, ensuring that insights gained through pilot actions contribute to the ongoing development and validation of the CAST Model.

The primary audience for this document is the PPs of the CAST project, who are responsible for designing and delivering the 11 pilot actions across the Danube Region. These partners work closely with a wide range of local stakeholders, including cultural actors, public institutions, civil society organisations, marginalised and disabled communities, SMEs, local service providers, and accessibility experts. Together, they

play a key role in creating inclusive services, attractive destinations, and socially responsible economic activities. The protocol supports them in building inclusive, participatory, and sustainable collaborations that are responsive to local needs and aligned with shared project values and objectives. These collaborations, in turn, lead to accessible tourism products and more accessible places for both residents and visitors.

In addition to PPs, the protocol is also intended to be relevant to ASPs, facilitators, community organisers, researchers, and practitioners involved in community-based cultural initiatives. By offering an adaptable and transferable framework, the protocol aims to serve as a reference beyond the CAST project. It supports other actors seeking to develop inclusive cultural practices through process-oriented, community-driven approaches that ***strengthen social cohesion, enhance quality of life, and contribute to resilient regional economies.***

Structure of the Protocol and Key Considerations

The protocol is structured as a sequential yet flexible guide. Rather than prescribing fixed solutions, it outlines a set of interconnected steps that build on one another, allowing partners to adapt the process to their local contexts while maintaining a shared methodological framework across the CAST project. The protocol is organised into three main steps:

Step 1: Stakeholder Mapping

supports partners in exploring and understanding the local ecosystem of actors who influence, shape, or are affected by cultural accessibility. This step emphasises inclusive and reflective mapping practices that go beyond formal institutions to include informal networks, marginalised groups, and experts with lived experience. By identifying power relations, influence, and potential areas of collaboration or conflict, partners can develop a realistic and ethical foundation for engagement.

Step 2: Community Action Groups (CAGs)

focuses on transforming previously mapped stakeholders into a committed, participatory structure capable of co-creating and implementing pilot actions. This step places particular emphasis on establishing shared values as the ethical and relational basis of collaboration, followed by clarifying roles, skills, and responsibilities. Together, these processes ensure that diversity within the group becomes a strength rather than a source of fragmentation, and that accountability and ownership are distributed transparently in alignment with agreed principles. This leads to concrete outcomes, such as more accessible tourism products and sites.

Step 3: Local Cultural Actions

guides partners through the co-development, implementation, and monitoring of place-based cultural activities. Co-development prioritises collective design, lived experience, and contextual knowledge, while implementation focuses on testing ideas in real-world settings through public events and participatory formats. Monitoring is embedded throughout this step as a reflective, learning-oriented practice that documents processes, challenges, and outcomes to inform local improvement and the further development of the CAST Model.

When applying this protocol, several overarching considerations should be kept in mind as guiding principles:

- * **Local communities** are neither homogeneous nor static; they are shaped by different histories, power relations, and access barriers that require context-sensitive approaches.
- * **Accessibility challenges** cannot be addressed through one-size-fits-all solutions, but must be understood as social, cultural, and relational processes.
- * **Building trust, care, and long-term engagement** is often more important than producing rapid outputs, particularly when working with marginalised or disabled communities.
- * **Meaningful participation** requires time, adequate resources, and fair compensation, and potential conflicts or resistance should be seen not as failures but as signals of underlying structural tensions that deserve attention and reflection.

These considerations are grounded in insights from interviews and pilot experiences within the CAST project, which highlighted the importance of process sensitivity, transparency, and shared ownership. Accordingly, *the protocol should be read not as a checklist to be completed, but as a living guide that supports learning, adaptation, and collaboration across diverse local contexts.*

It also contributes to a shared, transnational understanding of inclusive cultural accessibility that supports community development and generates economic opportunities.



STEP 1:

Stakeholder Mapping

Stakeholder mapping is the foundational first step of the process-based protocol. Its main aim is to develop a clear understanding of the local ecosystem in which the pilot action will take place, including the actors who influence, shape, or are affected by cultural accessibility. This step supports PPs in identifying relevant stakeholders beyond formal institutions, such as informal networks, marginalised and disabled communities, and experts with lived experience. It helps ensure that pilot actions are grounded in local realities and designed in an inclusive and ethical manner. By exploring power relations, interests, and potential areas of collaboration or tension, partners can plan engagement more strategically and avoid reinforcing existing exclusions. The insights gained through this step provide the basis for forming CAGs (Step 2) and building meaningful, context-sensitive collaborations (Step 3) throughout the pilot process, resulting in accessible tourism products, events, and cultural sites.

Stakeholder mapping is not a purely administrative task but a foundational, reflective process. Before mapping begins, partners are encouraged to undertake an initial “zero step” that includes:

- * collecting available local data and statistics (demographics, disability prevalence, cultural participation),
- * reviewing existing policy documents, strategies, and accessibility plans,
- * reflecting on who is usually visible and who is systematically excluded from decision-making processes.

This “zero step” supports a more nuanced understanding of the local ecosystem and helps avoid reproducing existing power imbalances.

STAKEHOLDER EXPLORATION

The stakeholder exploration phase aims to identify the full ecosystem of actors that influence, shape, or are affected by cultural accessibility in the local context. This includes not only formal institutions and organisations but also informal networks, community leaders, and experts with lived experience.

The goal is not to limit the number of stakeholders early on, but to map broadly and inclusively, recognising that actors with limited visibility may hold crucial knowledge, trust, or relational power within the community. Exploring should be approached as a collective exercise, ideally involving multiple perspectives within the core team to surface blind spots and assumptions.



EXERCISE 1

As a first step, gather your core team and identify as many stakeholders as possible within the categories below. As you do so, follow these guidelines:

- * Be as specific as possible (write down the exact names of organisations and professionals, etc.).
- * Write the name of each organisation on a separate coloured Post-it note, using a different colour for each category (Communities, Resources, Accessibility, and Communication).
- * Recognise that this discussion may expand widely at this stage, and that this breadth is necessary to build your Community Action Group later.





| Field | Stakeholder | Type | Role in the project |
|------------------------|-------------|---|---|
| 1 – Communities | | Informal networks, grassroots collectives | Provide local knowledge, lived experience, and existing trust networks; help to reach community members, mobilise participation, and provide feedback on the project's relevance and impact |
| | | Cultural and religious groups | Offer cultural, ethical, and value-based perspectives; support culturally sensitive design and implementation, and help ensure the project aligns with community norms and traditions |
| | | NGOs, civil society organisations | Act as implementation partners, advocates, or intermediaries; contribute expertise, organisational capacity, and access to specific target groups |
| | | Schools, universities, training centres | Provide educational spaces, participants, and professional knowledge; support learning activities, research, training, and long-term capacity building |
| | | | |



| Field | Stakeholder | Type | Role in the project |
|----------------------|-------------|--|---|
| 2 – Resources | | Government bodies, public institutions | Provide legitimacy, regulatory support, public infrastructure, or funding; enable alignment with public policies and ensure institutional sustainability |
| | | Private donors, philanthropists | Offer financial resources or in-kind support; enable flexibility, innovation, and the scaling of project activities |
| | | Potential corporate partners (CSR) | Contribute funding, services, expertise, or visibility through corporate social responsibility initiatives; support partnerships between the private sector and the community |
| | | Universities, institutions, independent experts | Provide research-based knowledge, evaluation, mentoring, or expert advice; support evidence-based design and impact assessment |
| | | Companies and service providers: accommodation providers, restaurants, museums, visitor experiences, tourism sites, tourism boards | Contribute services that will be part of the tourism product; represent a promotion and sales channel for the tourism product |



| Field | Stakeholder | Type | Role in the project |
|--------------------------|-------------|--|--|
| 3 – Accessibility | | Marginalised communities | Serve as primary beneficiaries and co-creators; inform the project through lived experience and help identify barriers, needs, and priorities |
| | | Disabled communities | Contribute user perspectives on accessibility and inclusion; ensure the project design, communication, and implementation are accessible and inclusive |
| | | Carers, personal assistants, social workers, and other support providers | Support participation by enabling access, communication, and sustained engagement; provide insight into interdependent access needs and everyday constraints |
| | | NGOs supporting marginalised/ disabled communities | Act as advocates and mediators; provide expertise on inclusion, safeguard interests, and support outreach to underrepresented groups |
| | | Accessibility experts | Advise on inclusive design, accessibility standards, and best practices; help identify and remove physical, digital, and social barriers |



| Field | Stakeholder | Type | Role in the project |
|--------------------------|-------------|---|---|
| 4 – Communication | | Local newspapers | Increase local visibility and public awareness; support community engagement and transparency through local storytelling |
| | | Radio stations, television broadcasters | Amplify messages to broader audiences; support public outreach, legitimacy, and awareness at regional or national level |
| | | Online platforms | Enable digital communication, participation, and dissemination; support engagement, documentation, and long-term visibility |
| | | Influencers | Reach specific target audiences through personal credibility and networks; increase engagement, visibility, and public interest |



| Field | Stakeholder | Type | Role in the project |
|------------------------------|-------------|---|---|
| 5 - Cultural Practice | | Cultural institutions and venues (museums, theatres, libraries, cultural centres, independent spaces) | Provide physical and organisational settings for cultural actions; enable testing and implementation of accessible formats |
| | | Artists, cultural practitioners, and curators (independent or institutionally affiliated) | Co-create and implement cultural content and formats; translate accessibility principles and lived experience into concrete artistic and cultural practices; contribute creative expertise |
| | | Cultural mediators, facilitators | Bridge communities, cultural actors, and institutions; support inclusive participation, dialogue, and co-creation processes |
| | | Access service providers (sign language interpreters, audio describers, captioning services, translators) | Operationalise accessibility during cultural actions; enable meaningful participation across sensory, cognitive, and linguistic dimensions; support compliance with accessibility standards in practice |

Finally, mark your Post-it notes (with the stakeholder names) as follows:

★ use a star to indicate those

- * who hold formal decision-making power within the ecosystem, and
- * who may have informal influence (such as community leaders, activists, or trusted elders);
- * activists, trusted elders).

! use an exclamation mark to highlight

- * potential areas of alignment or partnership, as well as
- * potential bridging actors who can connect communities and institutions;

? use a question mark to indicate

- * where resistance, conflict, or misunderstanding may arise.

STAKEHOLDER PRIORITISATION

Prioritising stakeholders helps turn your initial stakeholder list into a workable and sustainable collaboration structure. This step does not assess stakeholders based on importance or value, but on **their current role, relevance, and level of involvement in relation to your planned pilot action**. This exercise also encourages partners to reflect on who holds decision-making power, who bears the consequences of actions, and who requires stronger inclusion to ensure ethical and effective outcomes.

By the end of this exercise, you should be able to identify which stakeholders are essential to your pilot. We strongly recommend that you reach out to these stakeholders (if you have not already) and seek to involve them in your Community Action Group and, consequently, in the exercises of Step 2.



EXERCISE 2

Use the notes collected during the mapping exercise and arrange them into three categories: (1) Highly Involved, (2) Involved, and (3) Minimally Involved. The criteria and supporting questions below will help you prioritise your stakeholders.

Arrange your notes on a large sheet of paper with concentric circles (Fig 1), keeping in mind:

- * that all mapped stakeholders should be at least minimally involved in your work to ensure sustainability and meaningful collaboration;
- * that you are carrying out this exercise to inform realistic planning of engagement, communication, and resource allocation;
- * that your prioritisation reflects the current state and scope of your pilot, which means
- * that you can review it over time and adapt it as relationships evolve.

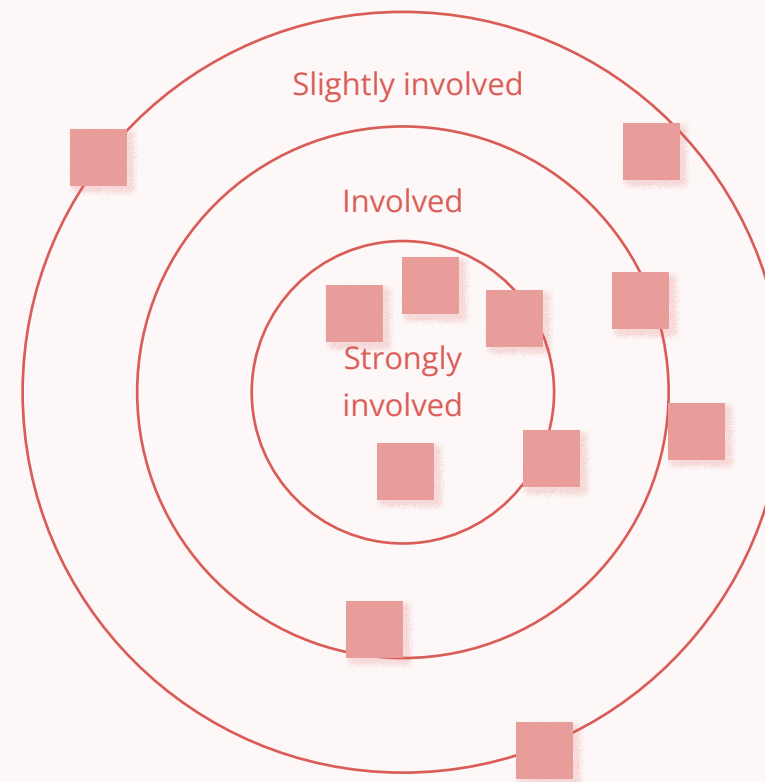


Fig 1. Example of filling up with the mapped stakeholders.

CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS:

1. *Strongly Involved* (Essential Actors):

Use this category if the stakeholder is critical to the functioning of your pilot. Ask:

- * Does our pilot depend on this stakeholder's active participation or decision-making?
- * Is this stakeholder directly affected by the pilot's outcomes?
- * Does this stakeholder provide key resources (e.g., accessibility expertise, community access, permissions, funding)?
- * Would the pilot fail, be unsafe, or be incomplete without their involvement?
- * Do they represent the primary target group (e.g., disabled communities, marginalised groups)?

If your answer is mostly yes, classify the stakeholder as *Strongly Involved*.

2. *Involved* (Supportive but Not Critical Actors):

Use this category for stakeholders who contribute meaningfully but are not indispensable. Ask:

- * Can this stakeholder offer valuable support, knowledge, feedback, or resources?
- * Will they help improve the quality, inclusion, or reach of the pilot, but the project could still run without them?
- * Are they secondary target groups, supportive institutions, or bridging actors?
- * Is their participation beneficial but not required on a day-to-day or operational basis?

If your answer is mostly yes: classify the stakeholder as *Involved*.

3. *Minimally Involved* (Occasional Actors):

Use this category for stakeholders with limited or indirect relevance. Ask:

- * Are they only tangentially connected to the pilot's topic or outcomes?
- * Do they influence the broader environment but not the pilot itself?
- * Is their involvement useful only at specific moments (e.g., communication, consultation, optional support)?
- * Would the pilot still run smoothly if they were not engaged?

If your answer is mostly yes: classify the stakeholder as *Minimally Involved*.

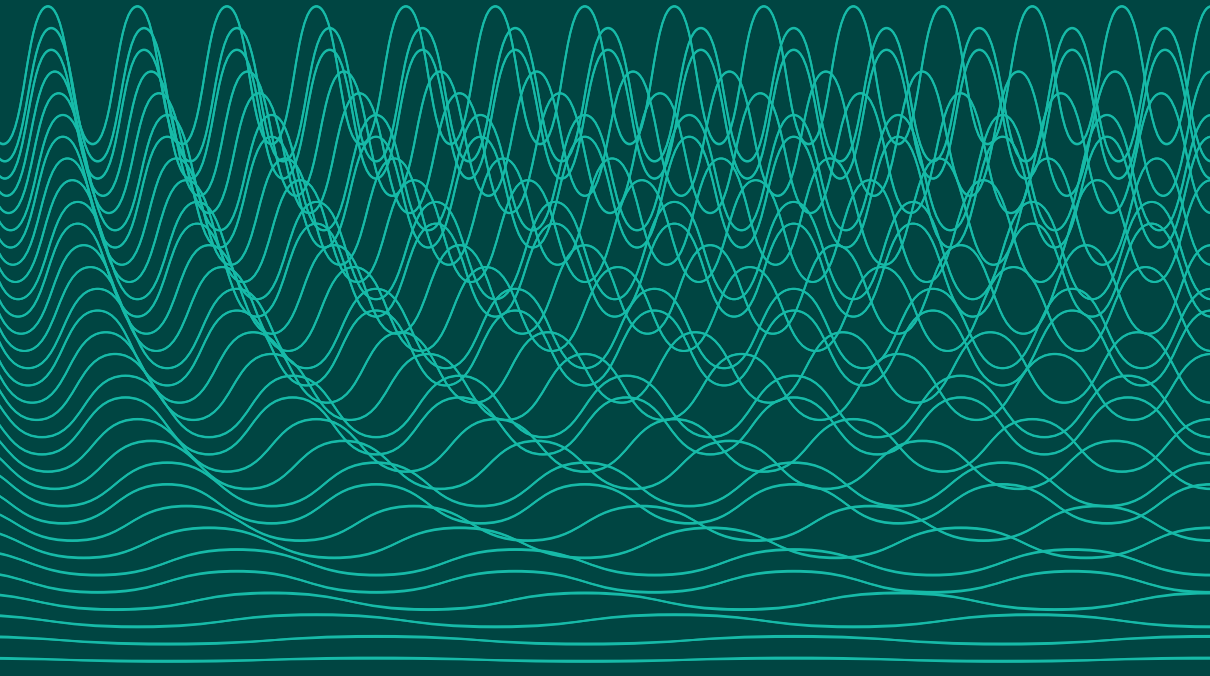
+ *Optional Step:* *Influence vs. Interest Positioning*

To refine the categories, you may also ask:

- * How much interest does the stakeholder have in the pilot?
- * How much influence or power do they hold over its success?

Stakeholders with *high interest and high influence* typically belong in the *Strongly Involved* category, while those with *low influence and low interest* fit the *Minimally Involved* category.

STEP 2:



Community Action Groups

Community Action Groups (CAGs) form the core participatory structures of the CAST pilot actions. Their strength lies not only in diverse representation but also in a shared value base that guides collaboration, decision-making, and conflict resolution. They bring together key stakeholders identified during the stakeholder-mapping process to collaborate in designing, implementing, and reflecting on Local Cultural Actions. CAGs are intentionally diverse, uniting institutional actors, cultural practitioners, civil society organisations, companies, and representatives of marginalised and disabled communities to ensure that multiple perspectives and forms of knowledge inform the pilot process.

The purpose of Step 2 is to transform the mapped network of stakeholders into a committed, functional group with shared ownership of the pilot action. This step focuses on establishing a common foundation for collaboration by articulating shared values (Exercise 3) and a mission statement (Exercise 4), as well as clarifying roles, skills, and responsibilities (Exercise 5) within the group. This creates the conditions for transparent decision-making, balanced participation, and long-term engagement.

Community Action Groups play a key role in translating the principles of cultural accessibility and inclusion into concrete, community-driven practice, resulting in accessible cultural services, sites, and tourism products.

In each pilot action, the Community Action Group is convened and facilitated by the responsible CAST Project Partner, who acts as the group's coordinator throughout the process. This role is not neutral or external but relational and connective: the CAST Project Partner ensures continuity between the project-level framework, the shared knowledge and methodological principles of CAST, and the specific realities, needs, and dynamics of the local context. As facilitator, the Project Partner representative supports inclusive participation, safeguards agreed values and processes, and enables communication and feedback flows between the Community Action Group, the wider CAST partnership, and knowledge providers. The facilitator role thus functions as a liaison, translating project objectives into locally meaningful practice. It also ensures that insights, challenges, and learning emerging from the pilot action are fed back into the transnational development of the CAST Model.

SHARED VALUES: ESTABLISHING A COMMON FOUNDATION

The establishment of your Community Action Group brings together stakeholders with diverse backgrounds, roles, interests, and levels of power. While this diversity is a key strength of the CAST approach, it also requires a shared foundation to support effective collaboration. The purpose of the Shared Values exercise is to identify the core values and principles that unite CAG members.

Through collective reflection and dialogue, participants explore what inclusion, accessibility, culture, responsibility, and collaboration mean in their local context. Rather than assuming alignment, the process creates space to clarify expectations, surface differences, and agree on shared values that will guide cooperation throughout the pilot action.



EXERCISE 3

First, bring your Community Action Group members together and ask each person to write down as many values as they can on their own. Use the following cards to guide their thinking.

While working, each participant should follow these guidelines:

- * Write each value on a separate Post-it.
- * A value can be a single word, a short phrase, or a drawing.
- * Keep it short — no more than 10–15 minutes.

Afterwards, each member should share their values by reading their Post-it notes aloud. Collect all the Post-it notes on a large sheet of paper, grouping together identical or similar values mentioned by multiple participants. Place the most frequently repeated values at the top and the least frequent at the bottom. This allows you to visualise the group's most important values. After completing the grouping, you can review the values again in case anything has been overlooked.



| | |
|---|--|
| <p>What does meaningful participation look like beyond simply “being invited”?</p> | <p>What behaviours help build trust within the group?</p> |
| <p>How do we want to involve people with lived experience in decision-making?</p> | <p>What behaviours would show that our values are being lived, not just stated?</p> |
| <p>How do we want to work together despite different roles, power positions, or institutional backgrounds?</p> | <p>How do we avoid extractive or tokenistic participation?</p> |
| <p>How do we want to handle disagreements or conflicting interests?</p> | <p>What does success look like beyond measurable outputs?</p> |

MISSION STATEMENT: DEFINING A COMMON PURPOSE

Building on the identified shared values, the next step is to jointly articulate a mission statement for the Community Action Group. The mission statement defines the purpose and direction of the pilot action by setting out what the CAG aims to achieve and how it intends to work together.

Formulating a shared mission at an early stage fosters trust, ownership, and long-term commitment within the group. It provides a clear point of reference for decision-making, collaboration, and conflict resolution, ensuring that the pilot action remains aligned with CAST's objectives and grounded in a community-driven understanding of local cultural accessibility.

While developing the mission statement, follow these guidelines:

- * The mission statement should be **action-oriented**. It is not a slogan, a vision statement, or a funding text, but a practical reference for joint work.
- * **It should answer:** (1) Who are you serving? (2) What product or service are you providing, and how does it help? (3) Why are you different from others?
- * It should be **short and clear**.
- * It should reflect the **shared values** identified by the group.
- * It should be **grounded in the local context and community needs**.
- * It should support **collective responsibility and collaboration** rather than individual roles.
- * It can **evolve over time** as the pilot action develops and learning emerges.

Example of a Community Action Group mission statement:

“Our Community Action Group works together to identify and reduce barriers to cultural access in our local context by co-designing and testing inclusive cultural actions (sites, products, and events) with people who experience exclusion. We commit to shared decision-making, mutual learning, and care-based collaboration, ensuring that lived experience, professional knowledge, and institutional responsibility are equally valued throughout the pilot process.”





EXERCISE 4

Bring your Community Action Group members together and invite them to reflect collectively on the following questions:

What concrete change do we want this pilot action to create in relation to cultural accessibility in our local context?

What core purpose do we want to address even if we are not paid for it?

Who should primarily benefit from this work, and why?

Who is this work not primarily intended for, and why?

How do we commit to working together as a group?

What do we do that others do not — or do differently?

What shared responsibilities do we have towards the communities involved?

What principles should guide our decisions when interests or priorities differ?

What do we want to be known for — and what do we never want to be known for?

After discussing these topics with your CAG members, articulate a shared mission statement, answering the following questions:

Who are you serving through your pilot?

What product or service are you providing or developing, and how does it help?

Who will use this product or service?

How will you ensure the product or service achieves sufficient market reach?

What makes your product or service stand out?

ROLES, SKILLS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES: FROM MISSION TO COLLECTIVE ACTION

Once shared values have been established, the next essential step in forming a Community Action Group is to clarify how collaboration will take place in practice. While values define how the group wants to work together, roles, skills, and responsibilities determine who does what and with what capacities in the pilot project. This step translates shared principles into an operational structure that enables effective, transparent, and accountable action.

This exercise supports your CAG in identifying the skills, knowledge, and resources already present within the group, as well as any gaps that may require additional support or partnerships. It invites participants to reflect not only on formal roles or institutional positions, but also on lived experience, informal competencies, and contextual knowledge that are

crucial to community-driven and inclusive pilot actions. By making these capacities visible, the group can build on its diversity as a strength rather than treating it as a challenge.

The agreement reached through this process is not intended as a rigid hierarchy, but as a flexible and revisitable framework that can evolve as the pilot project develops.

It provides a clear reference point for coordination, decision-making, and conflict resolution, enabling the CAG to move from planning to implementation with confidence, mutual trust, and a shared sense of responsibility.





EXERCISE 5

When listing and agreeing on roles, responsibilities, and skills (using the canvas below), the Community Action Group should pay particular attention to the following aspects:

Facilitation and coordination

(convening meetings, supporting inclusive participation, maintaining continuity between the CAST framework and the local process, and acting as a liaison with project-level partners).

Community outreach and engagement

(reaching out to target communities, building trust, supporting participation, and communicating community needs back into the process).

Accessibility expertise and support

(identifying access barriers, advising on inclusive formats, and supporting accessible implementation in practice).

Cultural practice and implementation

(co-designing and delivering cultural actions, including adapting formats to different access needs).

Communication and documentation

(ensuring transparent communication and documentation of processes and learning, and that communication outputs themselves are accessible).

Sustainability, value creation, and exploitation

(translating process-based learning and co-created insights into sustainable outcomes such as services, products, or experiences; considering long-term ownership, maintenance, and scalability; identifying potential users, partners, and revenue or support models; and ensuring that social and accessibility values remain embedded in future use).

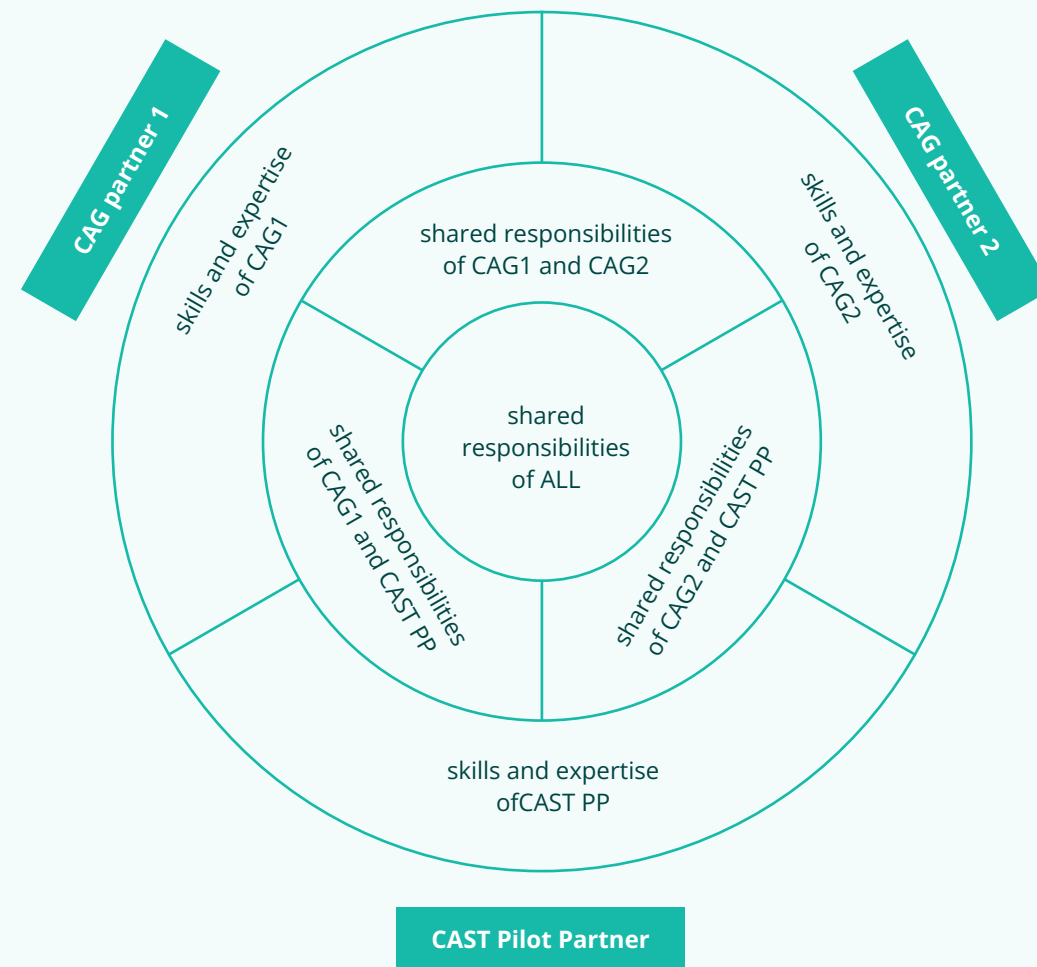
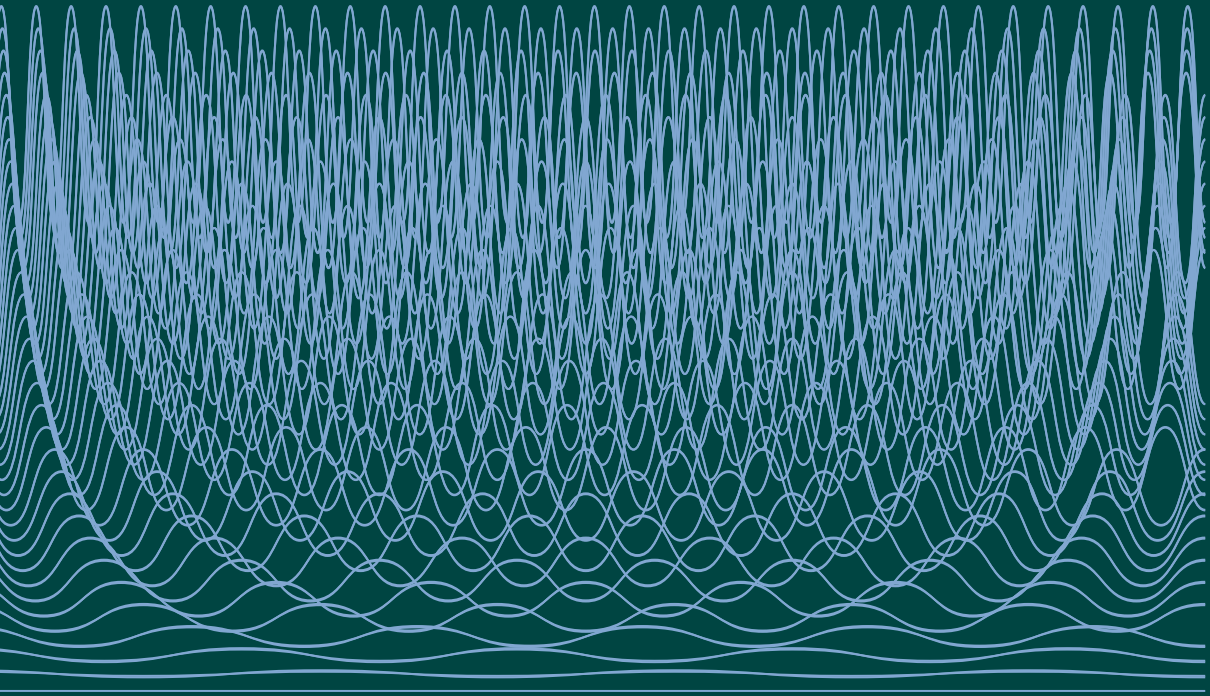


Fig 2. Responsibility canvas

STEP 3:



Local Cultural Actions

Step 3 focuses on designing and implementing Local Cultural Actions that lay the groundwork for the pilot projects. Building on the stakeholder mapping in Step 1 and the Community Action Groups established in Step 2, this phase translates the mission statement and collaborative structures into concrete cultural activities. These actions are a vital and integral part of the pilot action, as these key events within the CAG help co-develop the joint outcomes of Special Objective 2 (SO2) of CAST project (tourism products, accessible events, and more accessible sites).

Local Cultural Actions are co-developed by CAG members, local communities, and Project Partners, prioritising lived experience, situated knowledge, and collective learning over predefined solutions. Through public events, workshops, and small-scale interventions, these actions help activate local communities, surface accessibility needs, gather feedback, build trust, and invite participants into participatory co-creation processes. They create spaces where inclusion and accessibility are discussed, tested, and experienced in practice.

Implementation is understood as an iterative and flexible process that allows for adaptation in response to community feedback and emerging insights. Monitoring accompanies these actions as a supportive learning tool, capturing experiences, challenges, and practical know-how in a structured way. Together, these preparatory cultural actions provide essential insights and relationships that inform the design of the pilot projects and ensure they are grounded in local realities, community ownership, and a shared understanding of cultural accessibility.

Within Step 3, two main types of Local Cultural Actions are outlined:

- a. public gatherings focused on discussion, visibility, and mapping, with the aim of informing, raising awareness, mapping needs, building trust, and validating findings in the earlier stages of pilot development; and
- b. participatory formats dedicated to co-design and co-creation workshops, aimed at supporting co-design, ideation, prototyping, testing, and validating solutions, and at actively involving communities in shaping future pilot actions and developing their concrete outcomes: accessible tourism products, events, and sites.

Please note that pilot partners are required to implement at least two Local Cultural Actions during the preparation phase (October 2025 through September 2026) and three during the implementation phase (April 2026 through September 2027) of the pilots. These gatherings should not be understood as isolated events, but as interconnected moments within a broader participatory process that supports situating the pilot in its local context, engaging diverse

audiences, validating insights, and communicating progress and outcomes.

To ensure consistent planning and delivery across pilots, knowledge provider partners provide continuous guidance to Pilot Partners. In addition, another dedicated deliverable of CAST (D1.1.1. Training pack for CAST Capacity Building Academy on culture-based resilient communities) is under development, offering practical guidance on preparation, facilitation, and accessibility considerations for each format.

Accessibility must be embedded in the design and facilitation of participatory formats from the outset, rather than addressed as an afterthought. This includes considering physical, sensory, cognitive, digital, and social accessibility when selecting venues, structuring activities, and choosing communication tools. To support meaningful engagement, partners are encouraged to allow for flexible timing, multiple modes of participation (e.g. verbal, visual, tactile, written, or mediated), and adaptable formats that respond to diverse access needs and varying energy levels.

SITUATING LOCAL CULTURAL ACTIONS

First, the Community Action Group needs to decide which type of Local Cultural Action to implement. To do so, follow the preparation template, addressing the following questions:

WHAT

- * What is the main objective of your pilot activity?
- * What will be the concrete outcomes you will work on: tourism product, site accessibility, events?
- * What kind of change do you want to generate?

WHERE

- * Where are you going to implement the pilot project?
- * What are the main conditions, advantages and limitations of the environment?

WHO

- * Who are the main target groups of your pilot?
- * Whom do you want to involve?
- * What are their main characteristics?
- * What are their main motivations?
- * What knowledge do you miss about the target group(s)?

HOW

- * Based on the previously collected aspects: How might you reach the goal of your pilot?
- * What kind of local cultural event could serve you the best, developing your pilot project?
- * What are the most essential elements of the preparation where you want to connect with local communities?



After discussing the previous topics, decide which types of activities to implement, bearing in mind that you have several options, such as:

These examples are indicative and not exhaustive. Community Action Groups are encouraged to adapt, combine, or resequence activities based on the local context, access needs, and emerging insights. For this reason, hold

a dedicated brainstorming session with your CAG to discuss WHAT? – WHO? – WHERE? – HOW? and to situate your upcoming Local Cultural Actions so that they best support the preparation of your pilot projects.

| Primary intention | First activity (opening action) | Second activity (follow-up) | What this sequence supports |
|--|---|--|---|
| Mapping needs and validation | Public gathering focused on data collection and community needs mapping | Public gathering to present and validate findings with participants | Shared understanding, legitimacy, and accuracy of identified needs |
| Awareness and trust-building | Public gathering raising awareness of cultural accessibility | Participatory workshop to identify barriers, needs, and priorities | Engagement of new audiences and transition from awareness to action |
| Broad engagement to focused co-creation | Public cultural event (exhibition, performance, walk, screening) | Smaller co-creation session with selected stakeholders | Inclusion of diverse voices followed by deeper collaborative work |
| Lived experience-driven design | Mapping-oriented public gathering collecting stories and lived experiences | Co-design workshop shaping pilot solutions: accessible tourism products, events, and cultural sites | Translation of lived experience into concrete pilot concepts: accessible tourism products, events, and cultural sites |
| Network activation | Informal public gathering (café discussion, neighbourhood meeting) | Structured participatory design workshop | Identification of contributors and clarification of next steps |
| Iterative co-design and testing | Co-design workshop to generate solution ideas | Participatory workshop to test and reflect on prototypes of accessible tourism products, events, and cultural sites | Iterative learning and refinement of pilot interventions: accessible tourism products, events, and cultural sites |
| Targeted outreach | Outreach-focused public gathering with marginalised or disabled communities | Mixed-stakeholder workshop involving institutions and cultural actors | Alignment between community needs and institutional practice |
| Storytelling to action | Storytelling-based public gathering surfacing lived experience | Co-design workshop translating narratives into pilot objectives describing developed accessible tourism products, events, and cultural sites | Grounding pilot actions in narratives and local meaning |

IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC GATHERINGS

Within the CAST framework, public gatherings serve to open up the pilot process to wider audiences and play a key role in situating the pilot in its local context, validating it, and communicating work on cultural accessibility. These gatherings typically support public discussion, visibility, early-stage mapping, and feedback, and may also lay the groundwork for more targeted participatory formats.

Public gatherings are conducted through a shared set of standard formats that ensure methodological consistency across pilots while allowing adaptation to the local context, access needs, and emerging insights. Depending on the purpose and phase of the pilot, partners may select and combine the following public gathering formats:

| Format | Main purpose | Typical contribution to the pilot process | Primary target groups | Expected outcomes supporting accessible services | Typical tools and methods |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|
| Inclusive Dialogue/ Roundtable | Facilitate open exchange, build a shared understanding of cultural accessibility, and identify priorities | Informing/ situating | Community members, policymakers, business owners, and cultural managers | Shared priorities and key messages, stakeholder alignment, potential partnerships, and follow-up actions | Moderated discussions, small-group dialogues, and empathy mapping |
| Thematic Site Visit/Walkshop | Combine on-site observation with reflection and dialogue, and support a situated understanding of accessibility | Informing/ situating | Professionals, students, accessibility experts, cultural and tourism operators | On-site evidence of accessibility barriers and opportunities, mapped observations, prioritised issues, and quick-win ideas | Guided walks, photo documentation, on-site interviews, and observation grids |
| Informal Community Gathering (Café discussion/ Neighbourhood meeting) | Activate local networks, build trust, and create low-threshold entry points for engagement around cultural accessibility | Informing/ situating | Local residents, informal community leaders, grassroots groups, and marginalised or underrepresented community members | Identification of potential contributors and allies, initial mapping of interests and concerns, and increased trust and willingness to engage in further activities | Facilitated open conversation, small-group discussions, and mapping interests and connections |
| Storytelling-Based Public Gathering | Surface lived experience, narratives, and local meanings related to culture and accessibility | Informing/ situating | Community members, people with lived experience of exclusion or disability, cultural actors, and local storytellers | Shared narratives and experiential insights, a deeper understanding of access barriers and enablers, and a narrative grounding for subsequent co-design activities | Story circles, guided storytelling prompts, audio or video recording (with consent), visual storytelling, and narrative mapping |
| Community Showcase/Open House | Present pilot ideas or progress, raise awareness, and invite public feedback | Prototyping/ testing | Community members, policymakers, cultural managers, visitors, and the general public | Increased visibility and community buy-in, light-touch feedback, new contacts, and expressions of interest | Exhibitions or poster panels, demo tables, QR surveys, dot-voting, comment cards, and short presentations |
| Local Investment Forum/Pitch Event | Present and validate pilot proposals with institutional and economic stakeholders | Validation/ investment planning | Investors, local authorities, business associations, and the media | Feedback on feasibility and investment readiness, networking opportunities, expressions of interest, and next steps | Short presentations, Q&A panels, networking sessions, project one-pagers, and short videos |

IMPLEMENTING PARTICIPATORY FORMATS

Participatory formats are a core element of the CAST process-based approach and are intentionally designed as part of a **participatory design journey**. This journey is structured around four interrelated stages — **empathising, defining, ideating, and prototyping/testing** — that build on one another to support the development of meaningful, experience-based pilot actions. While the four stages form a coherent and cumulative framework, community involvement can begin meaningfully at any of these stages, depending on local contexts, capacities, and priorities. Some partners may choose to engage primarily in empathising and situating activities, while others may focus on co-creation, or on testing and validation. Full involvement across all stages is possible, but it requires significant time, trust, and organisational capacity from participating communities and partners.

Across the different stages, participatory formats provide structured spaces for co-design, collective learning, and the translation of lived experience into concrete pilot concepts. These formats may include ideation workshops, living labs, guided walks, focus groups, and other hands-on activities that actively involve community members, people with lived experience, cultural actors, and institutional stakeholders.

Importantly, participatory formats are not conceived as consultation exercises. Regardless of the stage at which communities enter the process, these formats are intended to support **shared authorship, collective problem framing, and joint decision-making** throughout the pilot preparation phase. This ensures that lived experience meaningfully shapes both the direction and the content of future cultural actions.

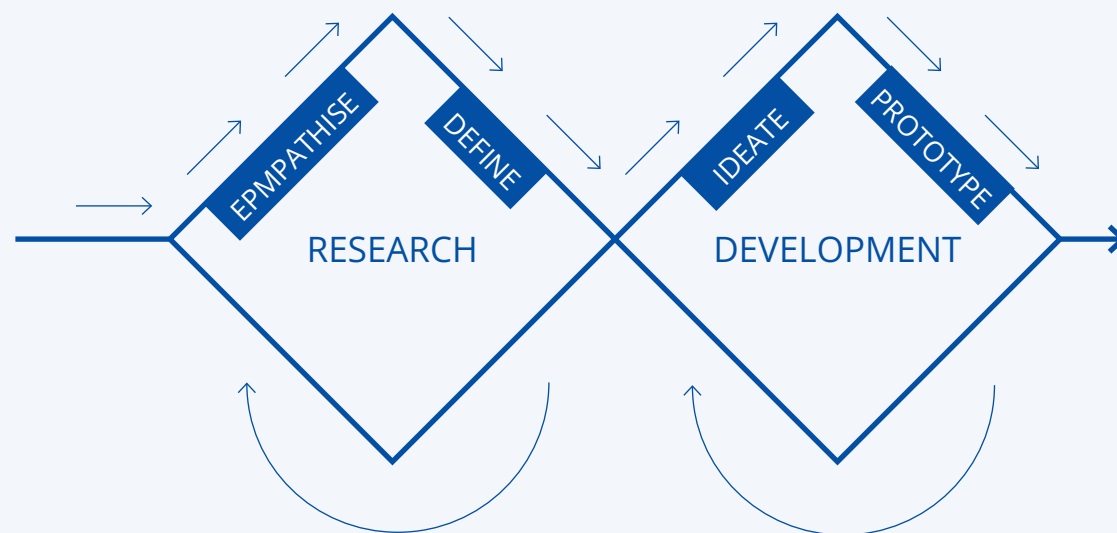


Fig 3. Design process — Double Diamond (British Design Council, 2005).

| Design stage | Format | Main purpose | Typical contribution to the pilot process | Primary target groups | Expected outcomes supporting accessible services | Typical tools and methods |
|-----------------------------|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| Empathising | Public cultural event (exhibition, performance, walk, screening) — lived experience-driven | Surface lived experience, narratives, and embodied knowledge through cultural expression | Grounding the process in lived experience; building shared emotional and experiential understanding | Community members, people with lived experience, cultural actors, and the wider public | Shared experiential insights; narrative material informing pilot focus; increased empathy and awareness | Curated exhibitions, performances, guided walks, screenings, facilitated dialogue, and reflective prompts |
| Empathising Defining | Focus Groups/ Thematic Working Groups | Gather in-depth feedback, perspectives, or validation from specific groups on defined topics related to accessibility or pilot concepts | Structuring and contextualising lived experience; identifying key issues and tensions | Homogeneous or mixed groups such as disabled people, carers, youth, seniors, professionals, and service providers | Qualitative insights; user perspectives and needs; validation points for refining pilot actions | Semi-structured discussion guides, facilitated small-group discussions, feedback forms, and participatory prioritisation |
| Defining | Lived experience-driven co-design/ narrative translation workshop | Translate lived experience and narratives into concrete pilot objectives, concepts, or design criteria | Collective problem framing; defining what needs to change and why | People with lived experience, Community Action Group members, designers, cultural practitioners, and institutional actors | Pilot objectives grounded in lived experience; design principles; prototype ideas reflecting real access needs | Narrative mapping, story-to-design exercises, co-creation canvases, prototyping tools, and facilitated reflection |
| Ideating | Participatory co-design workshop | Co-create ideas and solutions for pilot actions by translating identified needs and insights into concrete concepts | Generation of concrete pilot concepts responding to identified needs | Community Action Group members, people with lived experience, cultural practitioners, NGOs, SMEs, and municipal staff | Draft pilot action concepts; initial accessibility improvement ideas; shared understanding of design directions; agreed next steps for prototyping | Co-design exercises, group mapping, design sprints, visual facilitation, storytelling, and Lego Serious Play |
| Prototyping | Community Lab/ Living Lab Session | Experiment with and test pilot elements or services in real-life or near-real-life conditions | Iterative testing, refinement, and validation of pilot actions | Local residents, people with lived experience, cultural operators, designers, and service providers | Tested prototypes of accessible services; documented learning; user feedback; agreed improvement and iteration steps | Service design canvas, rapid prototyping, observation, feedback rounds, and user journey testing |
| Prototyping | Focus Groups/ Thematic Working Groups (later phase) | Validate concepts, prototypes, or decisions | Feedback and refinement before pilot implementation | Same or expanded stakeholder groups | Validation points; finalised services ready for market reach; refinement insights; increased ownership | Feedback tools, facilitated reflection, and prioritisation exercises |

Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring and reporting are integral to the implementation of Local Cultural Actions within the CAST process-based approach. Rather than functioning as a control mechanism, monitoring is conceived as a **learning-oriented, reflective practice** that documents how participatory processes unfold in real contexts, how accessibility is negotiated in practice, and what forms of knowledge, tensions, and solutions emerge through community-driven cultural action.

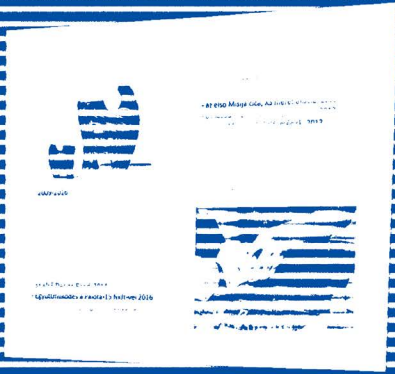
The primary purpose of monitoring is threefold:

- * to support **local learning and adaptation** within Community Action Groups,
- * to generate **qualitative, practice-based evidence** for the further development and validation of the CAST Model, and
- * to enable **knowledge transfer** across pilot locations by documenting concrete experiences, challenges, tools, and outcomes.

Monitoring accompanies public gatherings and participatory formats as a parallel layer, embedded within implementation rather than added at a later stage. The aim is not exhaustiveness but meaningful, well-curated documentation that supports reflection and learning. Monitoring focuses not only on what happened, but on:

- * how it happened,
- * who was involved,
- * what enabled or hindered participation, and
- * what this means for cultural accessibility in the given local context.

Experiences, insights, tensions, and emerging ideas should be captured through accessible and ethical documentation methods such as **reflective notes, visual records, audio recordings, or participant feedback tools. All documentation must be based on informed consent.** This documentation supports learning within the Community Action Group, informs the further development of pilot actions, and contributes qualitative data to the CAST monitoring framework. It also ensures that participatory processes are recognised not only for their outcomes but also for their role in shaping inclusive, community-driven cultural practice.



WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM PILOT PARTNERS

Monitoring and reporting are mandatory elements of the pilot implementation. Each Local Cultural Action (public gathering or participatory format) should be accompanied by structured documentation and reflection, following the principles laid out below.

1. Monitoring during implementation

Partners are expected to observe and document events with attention to:

- * participation dynamics (who participated, who did not, and why),
- * accessibility measures implemented and their effectiveness,
- * emerging needs, tensions, or conflicts,
- * moments of learning, surprise, or shifts in perspective,
- * how lived experience influenced discussion, design, or decision-making.

Monitoring is a shared responsibility coordinated by the local pilot partner. Monitoring activities may be carried out by internal contributors (Community Action Group members, representatives of the pilot partner, facilitators, researchers, educators, or students — where relevant) and/or external contributors (involved community members, event participants, visiting CAST partners, or knowledge providers) who attended the event and have lived experience of it. Monitoring should be conducted in an ethical and accessible manner, based on informed consent and avoiding extractive or intrusive documentation practices.



2. Documentation Tools and Methods

Partners are encouraged to combine multiple documentation methods, depending on the context and access needs, such as:

SHORT REFLECTIVE NOTES OR DIARIES (before/during/after the event) are useful for capturing expectations, immediate impressions, and subsequent reflections on what changed through the event. They are best used by CAG members, facilitators, pilot partner staff, researchers, or students as a low-effort tool that supports continuity and learning throughout the process.

PARTICIPATORY OBSERVATION TEMPLATE help to structure observations of participation dynamics, accessibility, interactions, and decision-making without interrupting the flow of the event. They are most suitable for facilitators, researchers, educators, students, or visiting CAST partners who can adopt a more detached observer role while remaining sensitive to the context.

VISUAL DOCUMENTATION (photos taken with consent, sketches, and maps) supports the recording of spatial conditions, interactions, and atmospheres that are difficult to capture in writing. It may be produced by pilot partner representatives, facilitators, students, or community members, provided that consent and accessibility considerations are ensured.

AUDIO OR VIDEO RECORDINGS (with consent) enable the preservation of participants' voices, narratives, and discussions in their own words and are particularly valuable for capturing lived experience and storytelling. They are best used selectively by facilitators, researchers, or pilot partner staff, and in some cases by participants themselves when they wish to share their perspectives directly.

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK TOOLS (open questions, short surveys, collective reflection) enable participants to express their experiences, views, and suggestions in an accessible and structured manner, either individually or collectively. They are particularly suitable for event participants, community members, and CAG members, with support from facilitators to ensure inclusivity.

QUOTES, STORIES, OR NARRATIVE FRAGMENTS capturing lived experience help to translate individual experiences into qualitative insights that can inform design, reflection, and storytelling beyond the local context. They may be gathered by facilitators, CAG members, researchers, or visiting CAST partners, and often emerge from conversations, storytelling formats, or feedback moments.

3. Reporting and submission

For each implemented Local Cultural Action, partners are required to submit:

- * one completed Event & Monitoring Report Form (see the guiding questions below), and
- * supporting documentation (photographs, materials, short reflections, and outputs).

These reports serve as the primary input for qualitative analysis by knowledge providers, as well as for comparative learning across pilot locations and the development of CAST case studies and transferable tools.

3. Event & Monitoring Report Form

This form should be completed following each Local Cultural Action (public gathering or participatory format), based on inputs from the application of one (or ideally more) of the documentation tools and methods outlined above (such as reflective notes, observations, feedback tools, etc.).

1. BASICS

| | |
|--|---|
| Pilot organisation: | Format (as listed in the protocol): |
| CAG organisations (involved partners): | Language: |
| Location: | Monitoring tools used (e.g.: short notes by CAG members, surveys by community members, etc.): |
| Date: | |

2. PARTICIPANTS

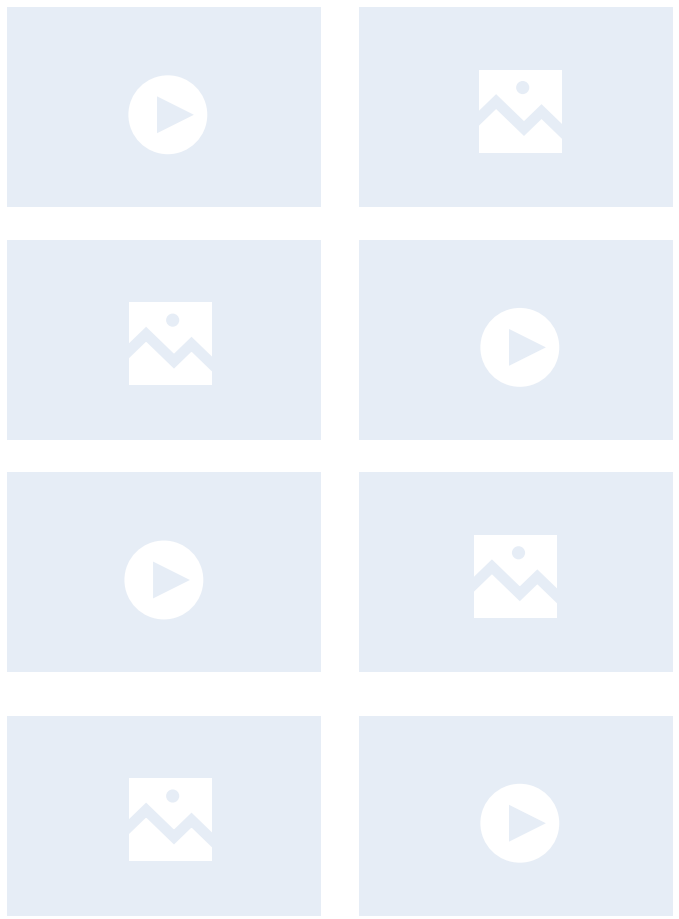
| Involved partners, organisations, and communities | Number of participants | Detailed profile |
|---|------------------------|--|
| <i>Be as specific as possible. Use separate lines for different participant groups (e.g. children aged X-X, older people, local business owners, etc.).</i> | ... | <i>Explain the main characteristics, motivations, needs, and challenges of each group.</i> |
| ... | ... | ... |
| ... | ... | ... |
| ... | ... | ... |

3. TEXT BASED REPORT (Answer all questions, approx. 300 words per topic)

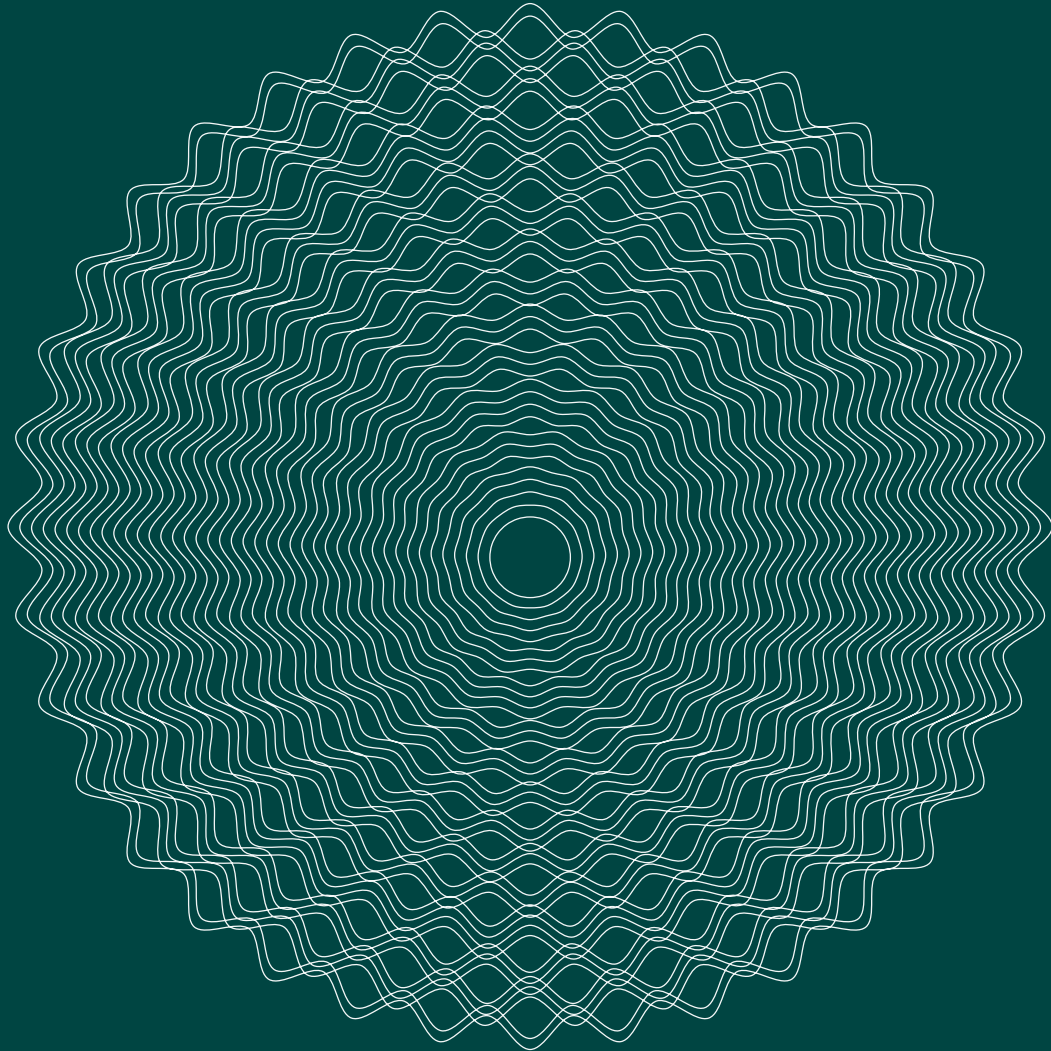
| |
|---|
| <p>CONTEXT — Please explain the main purpose of this event within the pilot process (e.g. mapping needs, raising awareness, co-design, testing, validation). What key need or question did it seek to address?</p> |
| <p>PARTICIPATION — Were any key groups absent? How would you describe the participation dynamics (e.g. active, hesitant, uneven, strongly engaged)? Were any barriers to participation observed or reported?</p> |
| <p>ACCESSIBILITY IN PRACTICE — What aspects of the format or facilitation supported meaningful participation? Where did the process prove challenging or fragile?</p> |
| <p>PROCESS & FACILITATION — What aspects of the format or facilitation supported meaningful participation? Where did the process feel challenging or fragile?</p> |
| <p>KEY LEARNING & OUTCOMES — What were the two to three most important insights or learning moments — for you and for the external professionals and CAG members involved? Did anything surprise the organisers or participants? What concrete outcomes emerged (ideas, priorities, connections, decisions)?</p> |
| <p>CHALLENGES — What were the main challenges encountered? Who did they involve? Are any of these still unresolved?</p> |
| <p>NEXT STEPS & ADAPTATION — How will this event inform the next steps of the pilot? What would you do differently in future?</p> |

4. VISUAL MATERIALS

Please upload visual documentation to your reporting folder — ideally high-quality photographs taken by professional photographers or videographers.



Conclusion



TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE, COMMUNITY- DRIVEN CULTURAL ACCESSIBILITY

This process-based protocol provides a practical and adaptable framework for developing community-driven solutions that enhance cultural accessibility and promote economic development through culture-led, place-based action. By structuring the process around stakeholder mapping, Community Action Groups (CAGs), and Local Cultural Actions, the protocol supports Project Partners (PPs) in translating shared values and principles into concrete, locally grounded outcomes.

The protocol emphasises participation as a structured process rather than a one-off activity. It foregrounds the role of lived experience, shared values, and clearly defined responsibilities in shaping inclusive collaboration and ethical decision-making. CAGs function as the central

mechanism through which diverse actors can jointly design, implement, and reflect on cultural actions that respond to real access needs. The protocol also positions Local Cultural Actions as iterative learning spaces in which ideas can be tested, refined, and validated in practice. Through embedded monitoring and reflective documentation, partners are encouraged to capture not only outcomes but also process-related insights that inform adaptation at the local level and contribute to the further development of the CAST Model.

Read as a flexible guide rather than as a prescriptive manual, the protocol enables partners and communities to navigate complexity, respond to local conditions, and co-create accessible cultural services, events, and tourism products. This supports the long-term integration of cultural accessibility into community development and sustainable regional economies.

