

BODY AND SOUL: 300 YEARS OF MONTEVIDEO



AGENDA 2030 - SDGs



CULTURE 21 ACTIONS - COMMITMENTS

1. CULTURAL RIGHTS
2. HERITAGE, DIVERSITY AND CREATIVITY
6. CULTURE, EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION
9. GOVERNANCE OF CULTURE

EMPOWERMENT, CROSS-SECTORIAL, BOTTOM-UP,
PARTICIPATION, CITIZENSHIP, EQUITY, INTERCULTURAL,
DIVERSITY, CREATIVE INDUSTRIES, JOBS



1. Montevideo and culture

Montevideo is home to (2023 census data) 1,302,954 people in an area of 200 km². It was the eighth most visited city in Latin America by foreigners in 2013 and contributes almost 50% of the national GDP. Montevideo is home to 3.6 % of the country's migrant population and was ranked as the city with the best quality of life in Latin America (2006).

Thanks to its bay, it has a natural harbour, the main one in Uruguay and key to the commercial activity of the Mercosur countries. As a member of the Rockefeller Foundation's Resilient Cities Network, Montevideo identified social, economic and territorial inequity; urban sprawl; and environmental sustainability among its main challenges in its Resilience Strategy.

Montevideo has had a sustained public cultural policy for more than 30 years, which is in line with the five-year strategic planning (2020 - 2025) of this departmental government. Montevideo also works to integrate cultural expression as a basic dimension of human life.

THE PROJECT SEEKS TO DEEPEN LOCAL PUBLIC CULTURAL POLICY, GUIDED BY DEMOCRATISATION, DECENTRALISATION, PARTICIPATION, DIVERSITY, EQUALITY, ACCESSIBILITY, INCLUSION, COEXISTENCE, WHILE INTEGRATING A GENDER PERSPECTIVE.



2. Objectives and implementation of the project

2.1. Main goal and specific objectives

The celebration of the 300 years of Montevideo seeks to deepen Montevideo's public cultural policy guided by the principles of democratisation, decentralisation, participation, diversity, equality, accessibility, inclusion, coexistence, while integrating the gender perspective, through the promotion and knowledge of its founding history and the contribution of its migrant populations. The specific objectives are:

- » Integrating cultural expressiveness as a basic dimension of human life.
- » Contributing to the reflection of the diversity of society through knowledge of its history and identity.
- » Promoting the national and international projection of Montevideo's cultural activity, as a core heritage of its foundation and identity.
- » Encouraging local development and the development of creative industries in particular, through the plurality of activities proposed.
- » Deepening citizen participation through the broadest possible involvement of all representative sectors of civil society.
- » Contributing to global agreements and agendas linked to sustainable development, including the cultural dimension as a backbone in their acceleration.



2.2. Development of the project

The project's work agenda was created jointly and in a participatory manner with the different local actors, for the commemoration of its third centenary. This agenda was outlined through a participatory process with citizens, social organisations and academia. Thematic commissions were formed as spaces open to participation in which actions to be developed between 2022 and 2025 were exchanged under four axes: science, culture and innovation; migration, communities and coexistence; diversity, equity and rights; and children, youth and opportunities. For example, in the thematic commission on migration, communities and coexistence, the project for the elaboration of a guide of procedures aimed at migrants with the objective of facilitating their integration in the city stands out.

Among other actions, 40 shows took place on 20 January 2024, free of charge and outdoors, with the presence of more than 600 Uruguayan artists on five stages distributed throughout the city centre, with the participation of more than 250,000 people.

As part of the agenda of commemorations of the 300 Years of Montevideo, a delegation from the Government of the Republic of Angola visited the city to strengthen ties, cooperation and twinning between the cities of Angola and Montevideo. They also had special participation in the main artistic and musical expression of the Afro-descendant community, which is the Desfile de Llamadas, in the traditional neighbourhoods of the Afro-descendant community.

The proposals also include competitions such as "Celebrá tu barrio" (Celebrate your neighbourhood), in which citizens are invited to suggest activities related to the promotion, memory and celebrations; competitive funds; exhibitions such as the Children's Biennial of Plastic Arts and the Young Contemporary Art Festival; narratives, such as the Dioramas - 300 years of Montevideo in 12 fragments; a touring theater production; publications, development of digital platforms and acknowledgements.

THE AGENDA OF THE PROJECT WAS CREATED THROUGH A PARTICIPATORY PROCESS WITH CITIZENS, SOCIAL ORGANISATIONS AND ACADEMIA.



There will also be a series of activities, such as the “Month of Afro-descendants” (July), where the Afro Festival will be held at the Antel Arena facilities and will include numerous free proposals to promote the contribution of the Afro-descendant community to our city. It will include an exhibition of Afro-descendant artists, a fair of Afro-descendant women’s enterprises and Afro-descendant religion, as well as several conferences with international guests. The festival will also feature a musical line-up of local and international artists of different genres.

3. Impacts

3.1. Direct impacts

The multiplicity of activities - festivals, workshops, competitions, circuits and exhibitions - promote the development of creative and cultural industries, tourism and innovation. For example, the festival that took place in January 2024 consisted of 40 free access shows, with more than 600 Uruguayan artists on five stages distributed throughout the city centre, with the participation of more than 250,000 people. This involved the work of around 2000 people. In addition, it mobilised both external and internal tourism. This and other mentioned proposals included in the project - Afro Month and Festival, Day of the Squares, Heritage of the Neighbourhoods - also encourage tourist activity throughout the year, offering visitors a varied and sustained cultural and recreational offer.

The celebration of the 300 years of Montevideo, in turn, integrates the Maggiolo Fund: a competitive fund that promotes high quality research in all areas of knowledge that contribute to addressing local problems. This edition of the fund will contain a line on the commemoration of the 300 years, seeking the presentation of projects that address the history, architecture, social movements, migration, gender and ethnic-racial issues, cultural and artistic expressions or education of the city.



The project's activities are implemented in all the city's neighbourhoods, promoting the decentralisation of culture and its access in its broadest sense. It should be noted that the vast majority of these proposals are free of charge. The symbolic value of rethinking Montevideo from the vindication of memory, of its history, is also to deepen in the reflection of its own values, understanding the city as a dynamic agent of change, in constant construction. This implies that the activities include transversal perspectives of current global agendas such as gender equality, environmental justice, inclusion and diversity, among others.

3.2. Evaluation

The impact of the project is expected to be evaluated through: the participation in the different proposals to be developed until 2025; the number of neighbourhoods or spaces in which they were carried out, thus measuring cultural decentralisation in the territory; the number of people and/or organisations that take part in the elaboration of the proposals, thus evaluating participation; the number of people involved in the work teams to make the proposals possible (Montevideo government officials, external suppliers, among others), while also taking into account aspects linked to equal representation, among other dimensions.

3.3. Key factors

The key factors for the success of this project are:

- Engagement with citizens at various stages of the project.
- Engagement with civil society organisations and academia, among other actors.
- Promotion of cultural industries, tourism and scientific communities, involving them in festivals, competitive funds, etc.
- Decentralisation: directly impacting on access and democratisation of culture.

3.4. Continuity

The project integrates a local public cultural policy that has been sustained for more than three decades. It is also contextually adjusted to the five-year strategic planning (2020 - 2025) of the departmental government, and to the commemoration of the 300th anniversary of the beginning of its founding process. It is a cultural policy that is subject to the approval and annual accountability of the Montevideo legislature.

The celebration of the 300 years of Montevideo contributes to the consolidation of this cultural public policy and its principles, which are characterised by continuity, trajectory and appropriation by the citizens. Therefore, it is understood that it would be unavoidable to continue working along the same strategic line.



**ACTIVITIES ARE IMPLEMENTED IN ALL THE CITY'S NEIGHBOURHOODS,
PROMOTING CULTURE DECENTRALISATION AND ACCESS IN ITS
BROADEST SPECTRUM.**

4. More information

Montevideo was a candidate for the sixth UCLG – Mexico City – Culture 21 International Award (November 2023 – March 2024). The jury for the award drew up its final report in June 2024, and requested that the Committee on Culture promote this project as one of the good practices to be implemented through Agenda 21 for culture.

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