



**IN
SITU** place-based **innovation** of
cultural and creative industries
in **non-urban** areas

Cultural mapping and planning

in view of cultural and creative industries
and place-based innovation in European
non-urban regions



Centre for Social Studies
University of Coimbra

Nancy Duxbury

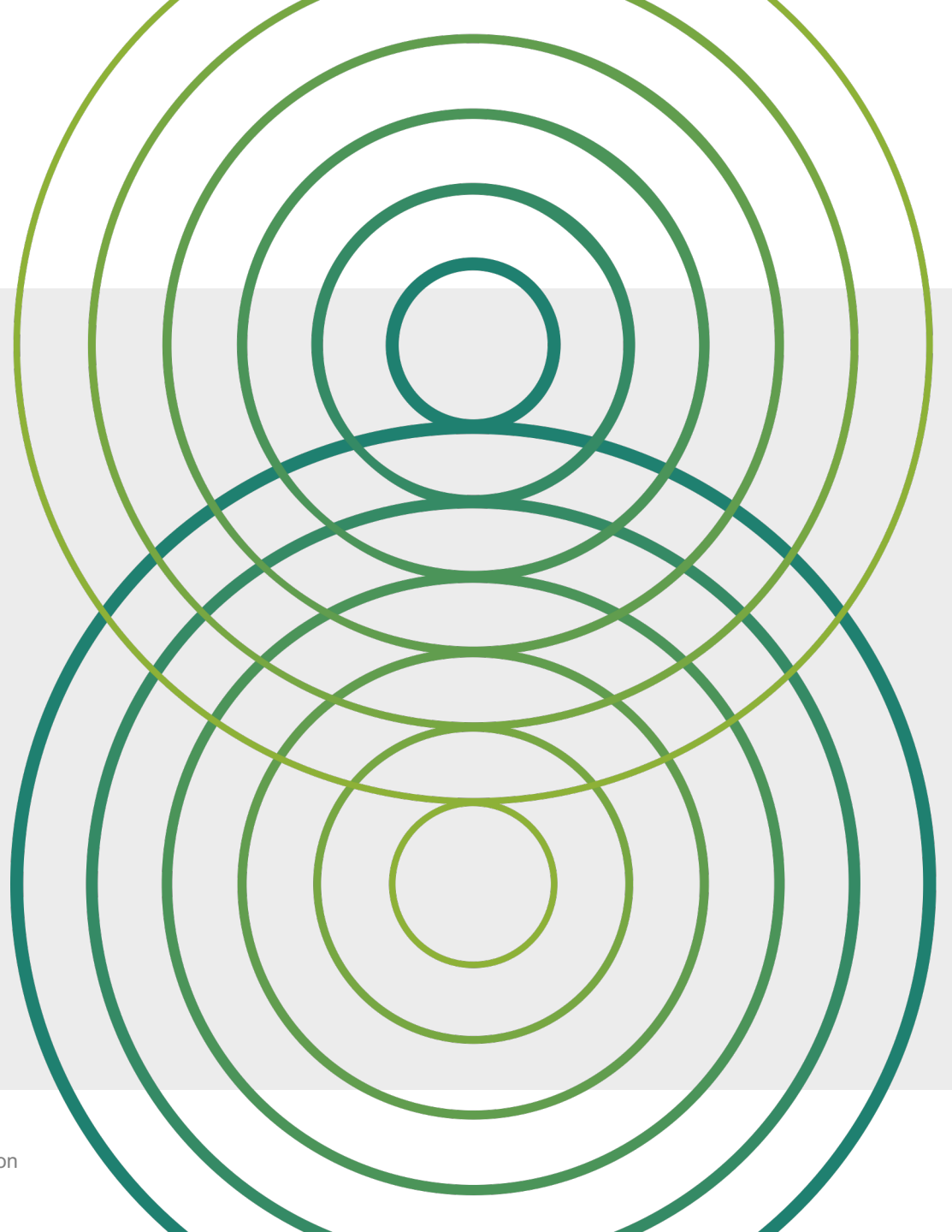
duxbury@ces.uc.pt

11 June 2026 | Cultural planning meeting | Helsinki



**Funded by
the European Union**

The IN SITU project has received funding from the
European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation
programme under the grant agreement no. 101061747.



The context we stepped into

In **non-urban areas**, cultural and creative actors, enterprises, and ecosystems are generally **under-recognized and under-researched**.

- Research and policy on cultural work and innovation urban-centric
- Knowledge deficits, data gaps, and “partial glances” of non-urban areas
- No comprehensive knowledge base
- Lack of guidance for policy approaches and support for non-urban-based creative and cultural actors that are **adapted to the unique characteristics of their situations**





IN SITU: Place-based innovation of cultural and creative industries in non-urban areas

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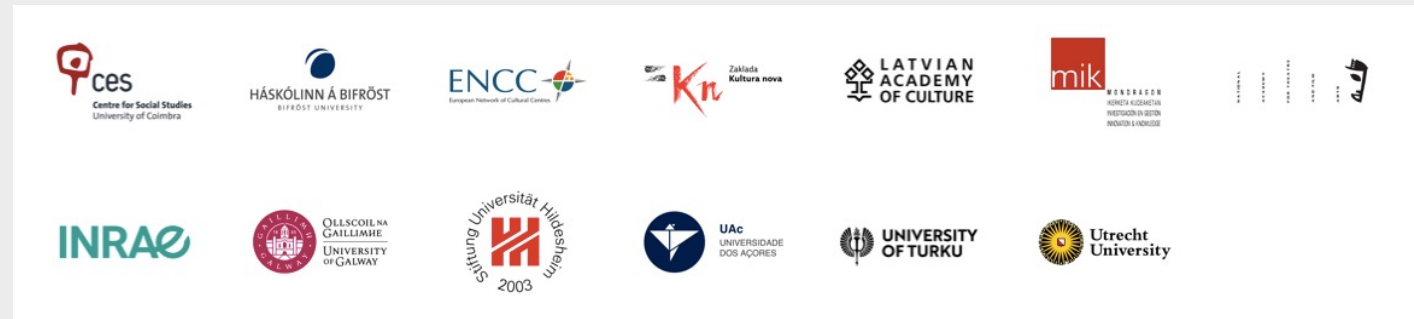
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IN SITU partners



13 Consortium partners from 12 countries

- **Centre for Social Studies (CES)** of the University of Coimbra (Coordinator), Portugal
- **Bifröst University (BIFROST)**, Iceland
- **Kultura Nova Foundation (KNF)**, Croatia
- **Latvian Academy of Culture (LKA)**, Latvia
- **University of Galway (UG)**, Ireland
- **University of the Azores (UAc)**, Portugal
- **University of Turku (UTU)**, Finland
- **European Network of Cultural Centres (ENCC)**, Belgium
- **Mondragon Innovation & Knowledge (MIK)**, Mondragon University, Spain
- **National Academy of Theatre and Film Arts “Kr. Sarafov” (NATFIZ)**, Bulgaria
- **National Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment (INRAE)**, France
- **University of Hildesheim (SUH)**, Germany
- **Utrecht University (UU)**, The Netherlands



Our objectives

The **IN SITU** project aims to better understand the **forms, processes and governance needs** of cultural and creative actors located in non-urban areas of Europe

and

to advance the ability of non-urban cultural/creative actors to act as drivers of innovation, competitiveness and sustainability for the places where they are located.



Three dimensions



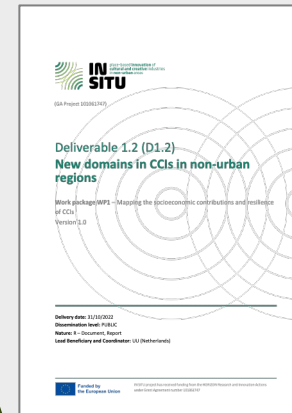
Research
Multidisciplinary
Multi-layered
Community-engaged



Croatia / Kolektiv 48
Repertoar, situated in
Šibenik-Knin County, Croatia



Croatia
/ Udruga kreativnog alternativnog razvoja
kulture 'ATRIBUT'
From the gig to the
audience, situated in
Šibenik-Knin County, Croatia



**Policy and planning
recommendations**
Culture
Innovation
Rural and regional development



**Capacity
building**
Workshops
Mentorship



Research to date

Three levels of activity



Macro-research reports

Deliverable 1.1 (D1.1)¹ Socioeconomic contributions and spillovers of CCIs in non-urban regions Work package WP5 – Mapping the socio-economic contributions and resilience of CCIs Version 1.0	Deliverable 1.2 (D1.2) New domains in CCIs in non-urban regions Work package WP5 – Mapping the socio-economic contributions and resilience of CCIs Version 1.0	Deliverable 1.3 (D1.3) Socioeconomic resilience and pathways for growth Work package WP5 – Mapping the socio-economic contributions and resilience of CCIs Version 1.0	Deliverable 2.1 (D2.1) Drivers of innovation of CCIs located in non-urban areas Work package WP5 – Innovation and Transformation of CCIs Version 1.0
Deliverable 3.2 (D3.2) Case studies Work package WP5 – From good planning: Assessing needs, supporting and benefitting of CCIs Version 1.0 Delivery date: 23/11/2023 Dissemination level: PUBLIC Nature: Report Lead Beneficiary and Coordinator: INCC (Belgium)	Deliverable 5.5 (D5.5) Gender dimension of CCIs in non-urban areas Work package WP5 – Innovation and Culture Policy Projects Version 1.0 Delivery date: 09/12/2023 Dissemination level: PUBLIC Nature: N - Scientific report Lead Beneficiary and Coordinator: ICI (University of Münster, Germany)	Deliverable 5.1 (D5.1) State of policies and S3s on innovation in non-urban areas Work package WP5 – Innovation and Culture Policy Version 1.0 Delivery date: 09/12/2023 Dissemination level: PUBLIC Nature: N - Scientific report Lead Beneficiary and Coordinator: INMA (France)	Deliverable 5.2 (D5.2) State of cultural policies for non-urban areas Work package WP5 – Innovation and Culture Policy Version 1.0 Delivery date: 03/01/2024 Dissemination level: PUBLIC Nature: N - Report Lead Beneficiary and Coordinator: ICH

Community-Engaged Research actions in the Labs



Case studies

- Social Issues
- Placemaking
- Tourism
- CCI internal challenges

COMMUNITY-ENGAGED RESEARCH (CER)

Community-Engaged Research (CER) is an approach to research that creates space for communities, community members and community-based organizations to work in collaborative partnerships with academic researchers.

For a project to be considered community-engaged, university-based researchers must be committed to approaching each stage of the research process as part of an ongoing relationship-building process with the community they are working with.

DEVELOPING A COMMUNITY-ENGAGED RESEARCHER PROJECT

1. Identifying values and needs of the community
Objective: Determine your focus and research questions.
2. Finding opportunities for collaboration
Objective: Identify potential partners and invite them to collaborate.
3. Cultivating information to engage knowledge as community-identified issues
Objective: Choose research methods and collect data.
4. Making sense of the data together
Objective: Data analysis.
5. Dissemination and reflection
Objective: Knowledge sharing and mobilization.

Source: Community Research Handbook, 13th - Simon Fraser University, 2015, p. 14

SPEAK OUT! GORT

You are invited to a Speak Out session hosted by UrbanLab Gateway where citizens present key issues and concerns about local development and discuss the future of Gort and the wider region. The Speak Out serve to identify place-based problems and explore solutions through creative practice. Let's hear what you think so we can use creativity engage in making a better place! Share your thoughts, if you wish to present, contact UrbanLab Gateway via email at urbanlab@universityofgalway.ie

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 2023
10:30 AM - 2:00 PM

VENUE:
LADY GREGORY HOTEL
100 Years Room
Lady Gregory Hotel
Ennis Road, Gort
County Galway
H51 XG2N

Register via [Eventbrite.ie](https://www.eventbrite.ie)

[instituteculture.eu](https://www.instituteculture.eu)

IN SITU Labs

- Azores archipelago, Portugal
- Western coastal periphery, Ireland
- West Region, Iceland
- Rauma and Eurajoki, West Coast and Baltic Sea archipelago, Finland
- Valmiera county, Latvia
- Šibenik-Knin county, Croatia

OUR GEOGRAPHIC CONTEXTS
6 NON-URBAN AREAS, EUROPE
“PERIPHERIES”



IN SITU case studies

Creative responses to local issues



Iceland / Kruss ehf

The Icelandic Santas come from the Valleys (íslensku jólasveinarnir koma úr Dölunum), in West region, Iceland



ÝMI - X

Óætt í einu húsaríði heildar

Iceland / Creatrix ehf

CREATRIX RYMI - X, situated in West region, Iceland



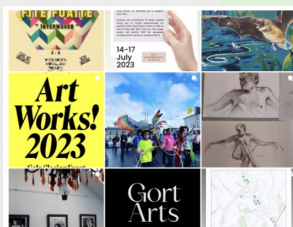
Finland / Maija Esko

Footprint of a Giant (Jättiläisen jalanjälki), situated in Rauma and Eurajoki municipalities, Finland



Finland / Niko Tiainen Co.

Mapsion International Projection Mapping Festival, in Rauma and Eurajoki municipalities, Finland



Ireland / Gort Arts

Art in Gort (Art Inse Guaire), in Western coastal region, Ireland



Ireland / Shane O'Malley Artist

The Voice of Youth (Guth na Hóige), in Western coastal region, Ireland



Latvia / SIA LAUX

The garden as functional decorative resource in the formation of the LAUX community, in Valmiera County, Latvia



Latvia / Valmiera county manor network - Valmieras novada muižu tīkls

Valmiera county manor network, situated in Valmiera County, Latvia



Croatia / Kolektiv 4B

Repertoar, situated in Šibenik-Knin County, Croatia

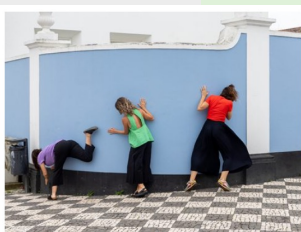


Croatia / Udruga kreativnog alternativnog razvoja kulture 'ATRIBUT'

From the gig to the audience, situated in Šibenik-Knin County, Croatia



Portugal / Advogado do Diabo, Lda
WORK IN PROGRESS, situated in Azores archipelago, Portugal



Portugal / anda&fala associação cultural

Transmalhar, situated in the Azores archipelago, Portugal



IN SITU Podcasts



Place-based creativity from the ground up

(Conceptual contexts)

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(Conceptual contexts)

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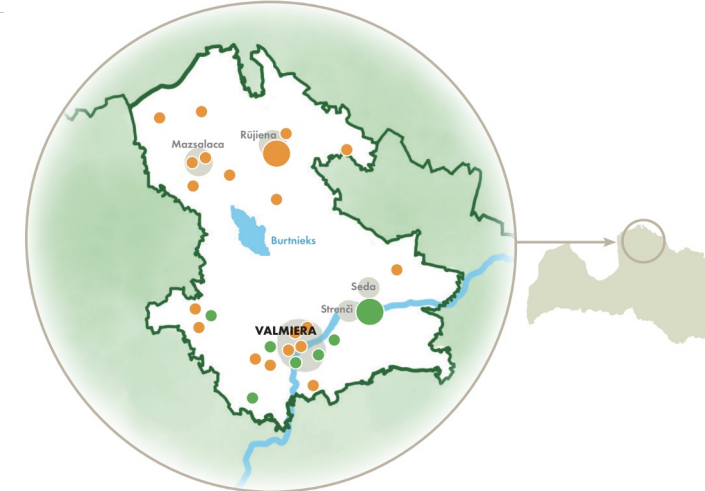
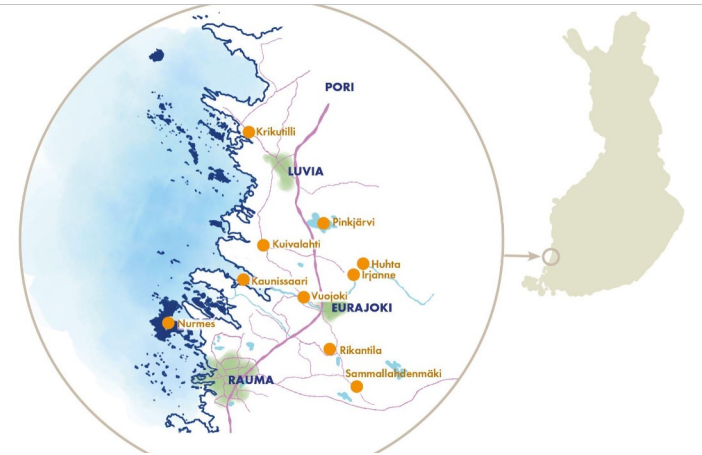
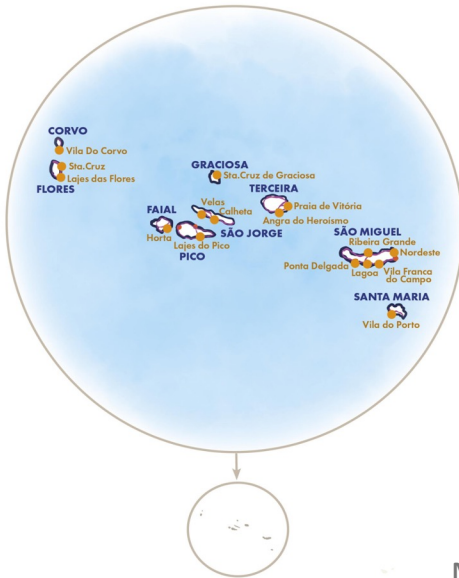


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Non-urban areas

Non-urban areas incorporate rural and remote locations as well as towns, villages, and small cities that may serve as regional hubs for broader territories.



Maps developed by Mollu Heino in collaboration with the IN SITU Lab teams.

Cultural and creative industries

In the IN SITU project's scope, this includes **cultural and creative industry enterprises, the arts, and heritage-related initiatives**, which together form **cultural and creative ecosystems** within and across territories.

(Some IN SITU research also examined **cultural and creative occupations**)



... Culture-making matters

Understand the layers of narrative, myth, and memory that continue to animate daily life

Culture-making is a strategy for cultural resilience

Recognize the evolving role of culture in a place shaped by outflow, return, and reinvention



Culture is used to anchor a sense of belonging in a fast-changing world

Culture is a connective tissue – expressive and necessary

Cultural expressions serve as acts of remembrance and renewal – quiet actions with great depth

“Place-based innovation”

- Patents
- Trademarks
- Collective trademarks
- Reflexive monitoring of **creative approaches to local issues**
(IN SITU case studies)
- LEADER and S3 **policy and funding analyses**

+ *imagination*

A broad, inclusive definition of **innovation** that includes **social, cultural, and territorial dimensions** is needed to capture the many types of innovation in non-urban areas, valuing **social and organisational change, community engagement, and cross-sectoral experimentation** rather than technological disruption alone.

“Place-based innovation”

Localizing / embedding –
the importance of **place**



São Miguel Island,
Azores, Portugal

Cultural production does not occur aspatially, what is produced, how it is produced and by whom relates directly to the place they inhabit. ... As such, **culture and creativity are place based entities**. This embeddedness results from how creatives use their environs (be it inspiration, geographic remove, reflection) as an **active agent of production**.

(Collins and Cunningham, 2017)



Children's Festival, Šibenik, Croatia

Dialogue 2.0 by Niko Tiainen,
Mapsion International
Projection Mapping Festival,
Finland





Guth na Hóige, Ireland



"Community anchors culture" Transmalhar, Azores, Portugal





Work in ~~Pro~~ Progress

Still film from the opening
credits of *Work in
Progress*, featuring Maria
João Gouveia, Azores



Laux - Creative Farmers/
Community Garden,
Latvia



Lutanjärvi lake, Footprint of a Giant, Maija Esko, Finland (Photo: Maija Esko)

Cultural mapping of IN SITU

Led by University of Galway in
collaboration with IN SITU Lab partners



To build a baseline understanding of the CCI ecosystems in the six IN SITU Lab regions

1

Two inventories:

1. an inventory of CCIs (based on NACE codes)
2. an inventory of events, festivals, and organisations in each region

Many cultural actors not captured
in NACE codes!

2

A series of focus groups involving creative practitioners, cultural producers, and policymakers in each region.

These provided space for participants to **reflect on**:

- the **current status of each creative and cultural ecosystem**
- its **strengths and weaknesses**
- its **inspiring and motivating elements**, and
- to **collectively imagine potential futures**

+ Flexibility for individual Labs to add additional, locally meaningful approaches

3

The IN SITU Labs do this through a dual practice: they generate thorough inventories of creative and cultural industries using standardised classifications (NACE codes, employment data, institutional counts) whilst engaging communities in participatory mapping exercises that facilitate a surfacing of emotional geographies, mythic attachments, remembered histories, and aspirational futures. Neither register is adequate by itself. The stories, if presented as unconnected to the economic data, will not provide insight into how culture serves as an infrastructure and instrument for identity formation and orientation; similarly, the stories, if presented as unconnected to the data, will not support policy intervention or resource deployment. But taken together as both figure and ground, that is, figuratively speaking, they represent the kind of cartography that makes visible what traditional research perspectives and metrics overlook, producing both new place-based knowledge and cultural scripts for community transformation.

W. F. Garrett-Petts, Foreword

Situating culture: Exploring culture and creativity beyond the city

Nancy Duxbury
Patrick Collins
Mark Justin Rainey
(EDS.)



Cultural mapping – insights

Knowledge development / base + Platform for connecting

What

- Both tangible and intangible aspects important
- Quantitative and qualitative dimensions
- Platform for collective discussion
- SWOT
- Perspectives, attachments, issues, aspirations

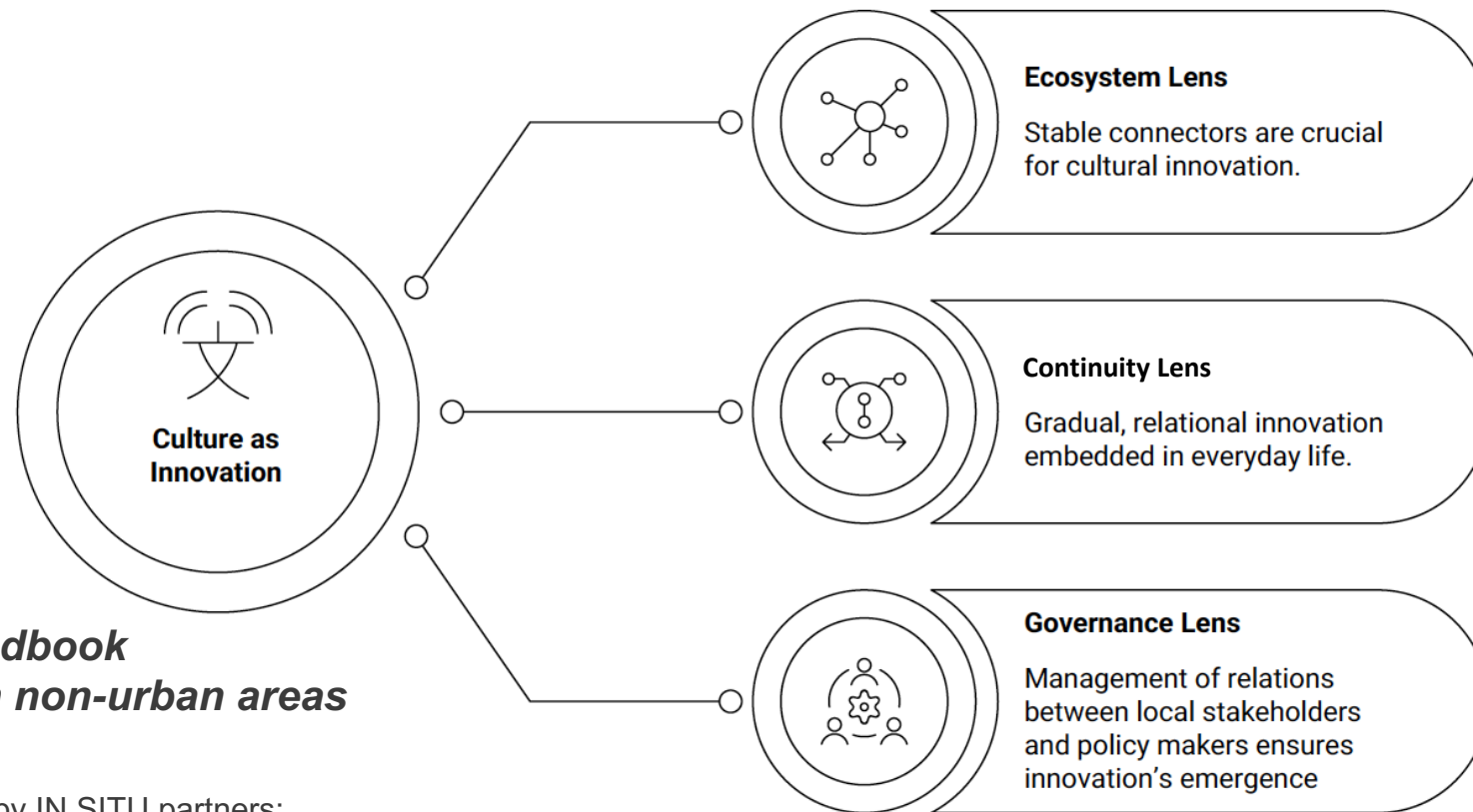
How

- Common categories with flexibility for local understandings / meaningful approaches
- Participative approaches central
- Multilayered
- (later on) Collective timeline of change (past–present–future)



Cultural planning – insights

Culture's Role in Non-Urban Innovation



From projects to infrastructures of coordination

“Which local anchors make it possible for cultural activity to accumulate into long-term value, and what would it take to stabilise them?”

Continuity as a precondition for innovation

“Trust, participation, and social cohesion are cumulative. They are produced through repetition, predictability, and learning over time.”

“more relational and participatory policy models and for evaluation frameworks that fit process-based work”

“building arrangements through which **local experience** can be retained, compared, discussed, and used to adjust policy while work is still unfolding”

Policy handbook for CCIs in non-urban areas

June 2026

Co-developed by IN SITU partners:

University of Hildesheim (SUH), Germany

National Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment (INRAE), France

