

EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE 2029

KIRUNA

There are cracks in everything.
That's where change begins.

CANDIDATE CITY

MOVEMENT

Boom. Boom.

Every night at 1:30 a.m. you hear a muted explosion in Kiruna. The walls slightly vibrate and the water at your bedside vaguely ripples. It's the magnetic iron-ore heart underneath the city and its heartbeat. The big underground mine detonating a blast every night. For more than 100 years the state-owned mine has provided Sweden and Europe with high quality iron-ore. The city of Kiruna is built on the biggest underground iron-ore mine in the world. But now the city is literally cracking up.

The heartbeat, the blasts underground make cracks appear everywhere. Roads are breaking, the infrastructure of pipes in the ground is deforming and buildings can't withstand the stress of the constant explosions anymore. The only way out is to either close the mine or move the city. The first is not an option, since the iron-ore is indispensable for national and European interest.

So, the city must move. And it's happening right now. Some buildings are picked up on huge trailers, but most of them are demolished. Roads are cut off. The claws of the machines are eating away at the memories and years of life day by day.



A third of our population is being uprooted and has to find new homes. We are faced with piles of bricks and ruins, not an uplifting sight we must admit, and of course it stirs up different feelings. Sorrow for what is lost, but also hope and excitement for the future. The new cityscape with impressive buildings, hotels, cafés and cultural venues are taking shape and gives us possibilities to start anew.

We must be the city with the youngest city centre in Europe, ours was inaugurated in 2022. Shiny and new and surrounded by construction sites as the new city centre continues to grow and a new future is designed.

But how do we find our soul, our character, our culture amidst all this movement? Where do we find ourselves when the dust has settled? We want to make sure we build a vibrant and culturally rich city, where people from all over the world come to have a *fika* with locals. A city where culture leads the societal transformation. This is our story, our movement. This is what we are moving towards and want to share with Europe.

This is why we want to become the European Capital of Culture 2029.



Introduction – General considerations

Q1. Why does Kiruna wish to be European Capital of Culture?

It is clear that Kiruna is facing a time of significant challenges and opportunities. In this dynamic phase with the need of reconciling industrial expansion, the need for the mining industry to become fossil-free in their energy consumption, and extensive urban transformation, **culture needs to play a prominent role.** Through stories, songs, images, artistic expressions, the disruptive and incomprehensible can be made more understandable. Grief, confusion, and anger over what is lost can be shared, and new dreams can grow in the cracks.

In many ways, Kiruna is one of Europe's most contrasting places. It is here, that the Sámi people, the last indigenous people of Europe, have been cultivating the land for centuries. And here, that we now reshape and relocate our city and the concept of Kiruna, resulting in the youngest city centre in Europe. Kiruna is set in an immense natural landscape and is mirrored under the surface by a vast heavy industry mining field. Here, huge reindeer herds roam thousands of kilometres. And it is here, that climate change cuts through the Arctic scenery. Here the sun never sets in summer and never rises in winter. We are at the European frontline of space research and innovation, sending rockets, satellites, and balloons into space. Here, we go far up into space and here we dig deeper into the ground than anywhere else in the world.

Kiruna is never still, never at rest, always on the move and causing cracks to appear deep within and to ripple all the way to the surface. But the movement and the cracks do not only affect walls and roads. They also, metaphorically speaking, rip through our bodies and our society. The movement causes conflicts about the rights of the land, about our sense of self as we are being uprooted and asked to move.

The challenge is also an opportunity. A chance to rebuild our city. Maybe even ourselves. Not as we were, but better. Bolder. And we have an opportunity to capture what makes us unique. All of us. An opportunity to build something bright and colourful through culture that will reverberate with the history of the people who came before, resonate with the people living here now, and attract the people who don't live here – yet.

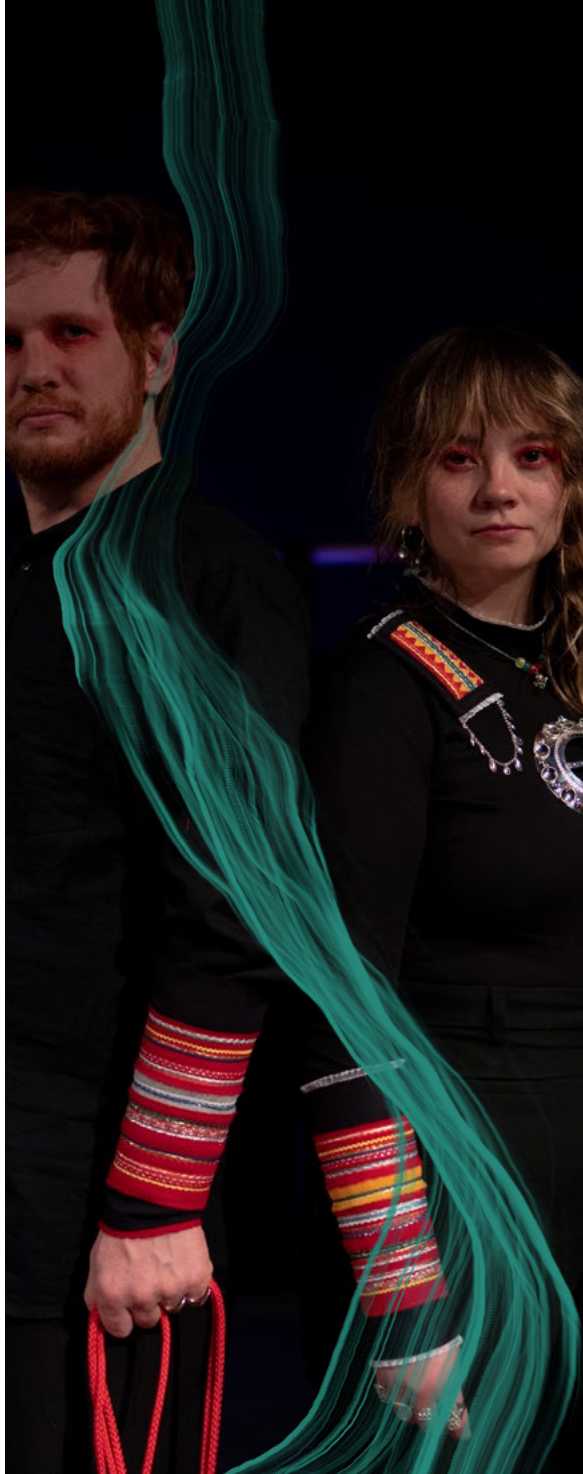
Like many cities in Europe's countryside, we are facing a decreasing population; slowly and steadily we are becoming fewer and fewer people supporting this big urban, industrial and societal transformation. But we need to be more. We have about 1,000 available positions in the job market ranging from nurses, teachers, social workers, engineers, guides. We lack knowledge and competence, hands and feet, in every sector. We need a population growth of about 10% to sustain our wellbeing. We need people, we need each other. This requires a cultural shift. A rebirth if you

will. And becoming European Capital of Culture for 2029 can help us make this cultural shift.

We are resilient, agile and we work hard. We want to fight for this place and for each other, but we need support. This is us reaching out, with all our voices and all our hands for Europe to join us. To acknowledge us and to see that what we bring to Europe in terms of cultural history, nature, research and industry, is worth fighting for. This is a chance to give back, to support, recognise and boost us. We need to make sure we pursue sustainable life with open and inclusive cultural expressions, empathy and balance. This is why we want to become the European Capital of Culture 2029.

Q2. Our plan to involve the surrounding region

Our application for European Capital of Culture involves the city of Kiruna and the whole municipality bearing the same name. The city has a total of about 18,500 inhabitants and within the whole municipality we are around 22,900 people spread out on approximately 19,500 square kilometres of land. Our municipality is as big as all of Slovenia, with just 1% of its population. This gives us plenty of room to roam free, on average 1 sq. km per inhabitant. Kiruna is the only city within the municipality, but we have 53 villages ranging



Det Krävs En By
Giron Sámi Teáhter

from 1 inhabitant to 1,000 inhabitants in the largest village. For us, the process of becoming a European Capital of Culture is relevant for the whole municipality and we include everyone, every village and every reindeer, our 6,000 lakes and mountains in our bid.

The included area, Kiruna Municipality, borders with Finland in the east, Norway in the west and is a central part in Sápmi - the Sámi homeland that stretches across Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. Tornedalsrådet (the Torne River Council), Sametinget (Sámi Council) and our bordering regions and municipalities are all supporting our bid. We agree that this is a sustainable tool to strengthen our bonds and mutual cultural area through Sápmi, the minority cultures and language of Tornedalen and the Navvies (who once laid the railway) as a few examples of what we share culturally.

Our municipality owns less than 1% of the land covering our area, quite unusual in Sweden. The rest is governed and owned by the state and has layers and layers of multiple interests, ranging from land rights for traditional reindeer herding, hunting and fishing rights, building land, industry, mineral-laws, nature reserve protection and interests for outdoor recreational areas. This is of course a big challenge for us, as we are dealing with the need for expansion, a city transformation and historical sites and traditions to respect and sustain. All using the same bits of land, creating tensions and issues. The European Capital of Culture and culture in general can be a unifying force, creating understanding and insight into our shared history and curiosity about our common future.

The Municipality of Kiruna is part of Norrbotten, the Northern Region, an area that includes 14 municipalities and covers almost a fifth of Sweden. Although not directly included in the ECoC area, its 14 municipalities are supporting us. All the municipalities have signed an official letter of support for this bid and the process is already integrated in networks and collaborations.

The 14 municipalities share similar cultural history, political grounds, industrial investments and natural resources. The area is very sparsely populated so we help and take care of each other. We are friends in many battles of the North – the battle to be cultural cities in our own right, not fly-in fly-out industrial towns. Another shared battle is the current industrial transformation into more sustainable production lines and huge investments in mining, steel production and a battery factory in our neighbouring cities as well as the social and cultural challenges that we share. Becoming a European Capital of Culture would be a huge matter not only for Kiruna but will open new collaborations for the whole region, draw international attention, attract visitors and, crucially, new citizens.

If we proceed to the next step of this bidding process, we will intensify collaborations with each organisation, region and municipality who have expressed interest to take part in this cultural journey with us.

Q3. Kiruna's cultural profile

Kiruna is a culturally and ethnically diverse area. This land has been populated by indigenous Sámi people and several minorities Sverigefinnar and Meänkieli-speaking Tornedalians, Kvens, and Lantalaiset – long before we had a city in place. For centuries the Sámi have herded reindeer through this borderless landscape, and still do. Similar deep traditions go for the people settling along the Tornedalen (the Torne River Valley), developing their own cultural area, crafts and expressions. We speak three different official minority languages: Meänkieli, Samiska and Finnish. Meänkieli originates from the Tornedalen, bordering Finland and Norway, and, depending which area they are from or live in, the people there call themselves Kvens, Lantalaiset or Tornedalians. Kiruna has always been a mix of several minority cultures, an integrated part of our cultural heritage.

Geographically Kiruna is located 200 km north of the Arctic circle. The nearest Swedish town (17000 inhabitants) is 150 km away, the nearest Norwegian one; 200 km. This has of course an impact on the cultural identity of the city and citizens. We are sometimes exposed to harsh climate, and we have to rely on and take care of each other. In Kiruna, you learn the power of sharing and being a part of a close societal ecosystem and how to be self-sufficient and independent at the same time.

The city is surrounded by vast Arctic nature. Adventures, big or small, can be found at our doorstep and in everyday life. Nature is something close at heart and easy to access.



Old Kiruna being demolished

To move here you probably have some desire for excitement in you. Kiruna is a big playground if you're into sports and outdoor activities. When the first snow falls usually around October, we are thrilled to jump on our skis and snowmobiles to go to school or work. Just as we are in our endless summer days when the sun never sets, and you feel immortal staying up all night by a river, fighting the mosquitos and trying to catch that Arctic char luring in the rapids.

To understand what we are moving towards, we just take a quick dip into our history. Kiruna, as a city, is a young and multicultural place as people started to move in from all surrounding areas as the mining took off in the late 1800s. The mining company was founded in 1890 and by the year 1900 we had our first city plan. Around this time, the name Kiruna was established, stemming from the Sámi word Gironvarri (ptarmigan mountain, the mountain Kiruna was built on) and in 1948 we got our official city rights. The first child born after the name was announced was a baby girl who was named Kiruna Söderberg. All the women following her bloodline share that name still to this day. The mining industry has always formed our cultural profile, and continues to shape us today, as we are moving our city as a result of it. The mining industry is still the biggest employer in the area.

Hjalmar Lundbohm, the first patron of Kiruna, understood the value of culture when building a solid and sustainable society. From the end of the 1890's until the end of his days, he dedicated himself to Kiruna and laid out the societal foundation we still walk on today. He invited all his artistic friends, the cultural upper class and the hottest artists in Sweden at the time, to infuse the newborn city with art and new expressions

in exhibitions and cultural events. He made sure all the houses were painted in a lovely and bold colour scheme, so the workers would have a warm and bright sight as they turned their back on the mine and took the tram home at the end of the day. Lundbohm initiated an art collection that, thanks to a yearly artist scholarship, provides us with an impressive art collection, one of the biggest of all municipalities in Sweden, and a designated apartment for artists in residence.

Education, associations and social welfare played a big role in the society that Lundbohm built. Still today we have a vibrant scene of leisure and recreation with up to 400 associations covering anything from culture, sports, history, disadvantaged groups, and social organisations for different age categories, located in Kiruna's central area and in the villages in the countryside. Some villages have Folkets hus (community centres), Hembygdsgårdar (meeting places in historical heritage centres) for events and meetings, managed by local associations. Lundbohm encouraged everyone to join in and be a part of the city development. This gave the workers a meaningful and cultivated life both during and after work. That's how the social webbing of Kiruna was spun: with the threads of industry and culture tightly woven together.

Today, Kiruna offers a wide range of cultural expressions and experiences including larger and better-quality productions than you'd expect from a city our size. We have the Giron Sámi Teáhter, a regional theatre of national and international interest, focusing on Sámi culture, and contract with the Tornedalsteatern, producing shows to strengthen Meänkieli and Tornedalian minority cultures. A regional contemporary art museum

was built into our new city hall, Konstmuseet i Norr, opened in 2018. We reversed the way it is usually done. We first built our art museum but still lack a historical one.

A new cultural venue, Aurora Cultural and Congress Center, inaugurated in 2022, offers several stages for different audience sizes, an art gallery, youth house and our main city library with a rich participatory programme. Thanks to these professional venues with good technical equipment and skilled staff to support large events, the city offers high quality exhibitions, dance and theatre shows and music events with national and international artist throughout the whole year. Samegården (cultural centre) offers a small-scale exhibition on Sámi lifestyle and the Sámi craft, duodji, which is a central part of the cultural expression, with both practical and decorative items. Literature, music, art and crafts are strong cultural expressions in our area thanks to both professional institutions, local associations, the School of Culture (after school artistic education for children and youth), as well as individual artists and craftspeople.

As we have several thriving industries apart from the mining today, they are all adding new notes to the city's soundtrack. Both space industry and the well-developed tourism industry give our city an international atmosphere and plenty of European connections and interest. Here, expats and visitors from all over the world come to dig deeper, aim higher or go wider. In the intersections, sparks ignite, ideas are born, and culture grows understanding. The field of tension between agreement and contradiction is where something new and unique arises. Kiruna is a place of many contrasts, a small-town setting with

an international shimmer. A big playground and a hot spot of industrial renewal. Kiruna has plenty of interesting job opportunities. But the best thing; we have a platter of exciting opportunities to take part in after you finish your shift and rounding up your workday. A combination of nature and culture not to be found anywhere else. This is where we start our movement.

Q4. The concept of our programme

OUR CONCEPT IS: MOVEMENT.

We move under the ground, we move on the surface, we move into space. We move with care.

Movement is about our city centre moving three kilometres to the east and the 6,000 citizens – a third of our city's population – being moved with it. Movement is about what we feel every night, as the earth lightly shifts from every blast detonating underground. Movement is about the traditional nomadic lifestyle of the Sámi, moving from settlement to settlement. It is about our colonial history of the Swedish state pushing the minority cultures, already inhabiting the area, to conform to religion, language and regulations. And movement is about feelings, emotions and thoughts moving around, stirred up inside of us and in need for an outlet.

We have had some religious movements in the past like Christian Laestadianism, and strong workers' movements claiming their rights. Movement is our societal collectiveness, a way to find each other in this ongoing process. Now we can see the momentum building up again right now, a civic movement to raise voices and make changes.

The concept of our programme is designed to mirror the multi-dimensional experience of Kiruna. Wherever you turn your gaze, you'll find another layer of Kiruna; below ground, on earth, in space – our programme picks up these elementary but relevant levels and layers of Kiruna as programme lines. We exist, act and connect on all levels and we do it with care. Care for each other, for our minority cultures and for nature. Care for our history and for the future.

The iron-ore that we mine below ground has a huge impact on earth and emissions in space. And the knowledge from space research is constantly bringing new knowledge to earth and what's beneath the surface. The reindeer herders who are experts in their field on earth, can bring knowledge to what is beneath and above. All levels and lines connect, intersect right here where we stand, the focal point; our cultural capital. This is where our movement starts.

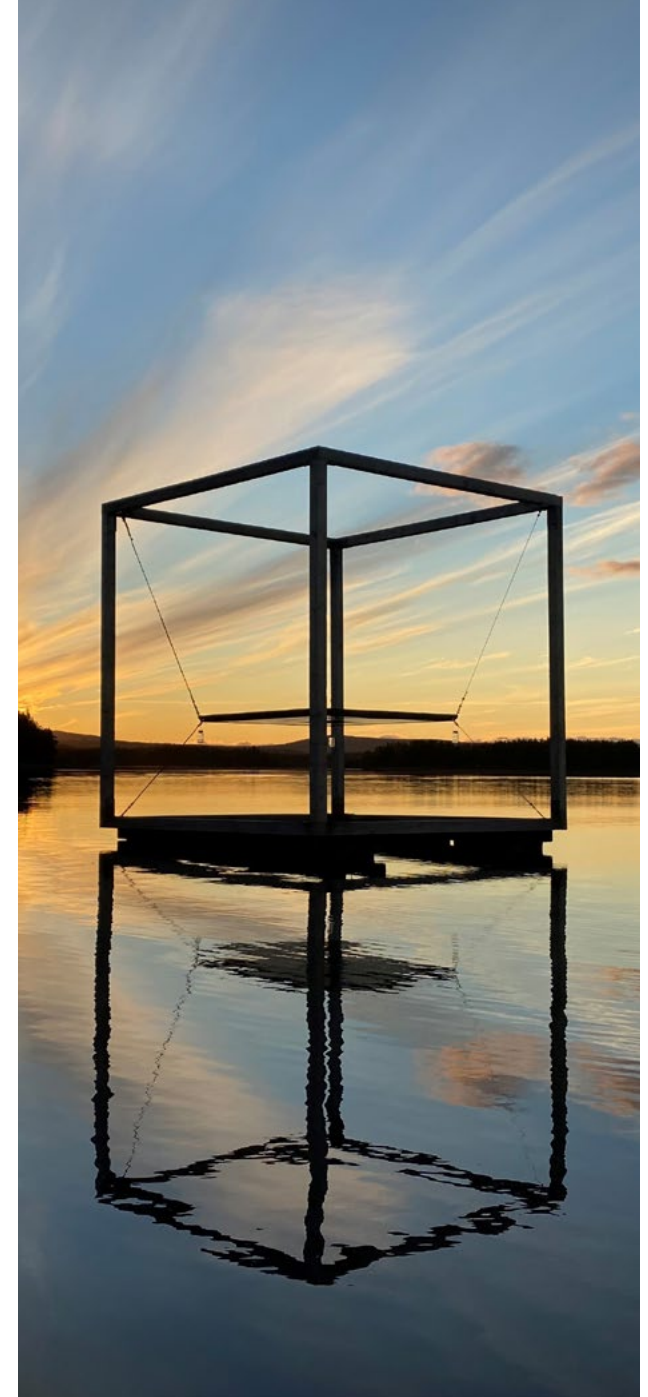
In the 1980's Kiruna was in a recession, and an iconic slogan that still follows us today, was sprayed on a building:

Kiruna dör... slåss (Kiruna is dying... fight)

As the last ever high school graduates of the high school left the building in summer 2023, due to cracks in the building and the need to relocate, a group of art students made a retake of the old message and wrote on the building wall:

Kiruna lever... älska! (Kiruna is alive... love!)

With our concept Movement, we are calling out: Europe, we are worth loving and fighting for!



Ctrl Alt Del
Poikki Art and Design Camp

1. Contribution to the long-term strategy

Q5+Q7 Kiruna's cultural strategy and how the European Capital of Culture is included

The process of applying for ECoC has already produced a pioneering first! We now have our first ever cultural strategy in place. To be honest, we'd been talking about it amongst ourselves for several years but preparing for our ECoC application gave us the impetus to get it done. The result is a cultural strategy which was approved by the Council's Culture and Education Department on the 26th of October 2023.

It has been a good process for us. Making us more aware and highlighting for ourselves the cultural work and the programmes and activities either being delivered by the Municipal Culture Department or by our partners with financial and other support. But it also shows the gaps we have and the areas where we need to up our game. If we want to create the vibrant new city we need to become, we really need a stronger cultural offer. Both in terms of higher quality, impactful events and to strengthen and support the associational model in our widely dispersed communities. Of course, that's where ECoC can be both our guiding light and our challenging friend.

The strategy gives us a platform to build on. It initially covers the period up to 2026, at which point it will be reviewed annually so that each year

it benefits from a relevant, up to date action plan. It becomes a "living document" driving continuous improvement rather than being a shelf-filler.

Key Features and Objectives

All our main institutions and venues are currently located in Kiruna city and our strategy underlines that all culture programmes and operators should try to find ways and solutions to offer access, inclusion and participation in culture activities, events, and programme throughout our entire municipality. We need to rebalance.

The strategy recognised that offering a rich and varied range of art and culture for everyone under the circumstances of a widely spread population in rural areas can be challenging. It can and must however be done, and requires good planning, foresight, and effective communication. As the strategy clearly underlines, everyone in Kiruna municipality has the right to participate in cultural activities, regardless of age, gender identity, ethnicity, economic circumstances, disabilities, or where they live.

We do have a really important – and quite innovative – way of delivering culture in even the most far-flung places in our huge area. The community and network of Hembygdsförening (Home Village and Heritage Association) is widely established in almost every village. These associations are important cultural bearers and usually manage a

Homestead farm used for meetings, events and cultural activities. We think that Kiruna may well be the first ECoC to have "culture farms"! But we can do even more to build on them and to learn from and share best practice with other places of cultural innovation in Europe.

In terms of its specifics, the strategy mixes a practical way to deliver the two main objectives for the Kiruna Cultural and Education Department, covering 2023-2026.

- Profile and strengthen Kiruna as a culturally rich and association-dense municipality.
- Strengthen and develop cultural cooperation with schools/preschool to increase equality and accessibility for children and young people in Kiruna municipality.

Our cultural strategy also follows the Swedish national cultural policy goals:

- Culture must be a dynamic, challenging and unbound force based on freedom of expression
- Everyone must have the opportunity to participate in cultural life
- Creativity, diversity and artistic quality must characterise society's development

The table below sets out the key challenges and opportunities and how we, the city administration, will organise and deliver against those local objectives and national goals.

Cultural Focus	Challenge/Opportunity	Solution
<p>Museums and meeting points To establish a Historical Museum in Kiruna has been a slow burning dream for decades.</p> <p>We also have a huge archive of images taken by the photographer Borg Mesh (one of the many friends of Hjalmar Lundbohm) that shows the city's development in the beginning of the 1900s.</p>	<p>Already in the 1950s people started donating items and cultural objects to the municipality, building up a collection. Due to a lack of facilities, the collection is mostly in storage and cannot be showed or displayed to the public.</p>	<p>The creation of an exciting new museum in the longer term but using ECoC as an opportunity to find imaginative solutions to the need to display and share some of the material and stories.</p>
<p>Minorities and minority languages Kiruna municipality includes three of the five national minority languages: Sámi, Meänkieli and Finnish</p>	<p>It is important that children and young people belonging to these national minorities get to experience and participate in culture in their own language, and that their culture is also made visible to other children and young people.</p>	<p>Enable more experiences and interactions with national minority cultures through collaboration with professional cultural actors, for example the Tornedalsteatern or the Giron Sámi Teáhter as well as through literature, interactive games and language cafés.</p>
<p>Crafts Crafts from different traditions are strongly culture-bearing in Kiruna</p>	<p>This can be seen in some public environments where craft traditions, as well as design and architecture inspired by these, are clear elements. However, the Culture and Education Board's commitments are few.</p>	<p>A major priority should be to support initiatives around craft traditions.</p>
<p>Makerspace / Creative Hub</p>	<p>In order to maintain sustainable cultural activities and networks, Kiruna needs places for creatives to meet, share and develop together.</p>	<p>Establishing a makerspace / creative hub to promote creative work and collaborations. This would also help to create more possibilities for work in the creative sector (see Q6).</p>
<p>Principle of "at arm's length" artistic freedom</p>	<p>This should be safeguarded, and the role of culture is primarily to be a challenging, independent, and dynamic force that does not serve any overarching societal goals for the public or private sector</p>	<p>Stress the importance of artistic freedom, especially, when the artistic field collaborates or gets funding from the private sector. The private or public funder has no right to interfere in the artistic process, outcome or expression.</p>



Cultural Focus	Challenge/Opportunity	Solution
<p>UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 31 Supporting all children’s right to rest and leisure, to play and recreation adapted to the child’s age and the right to freely participate in cultural and artistic life.</p>	<p>Children and young people must be given the opportunity to experience this in school and preschool, both as an audience and as practitioners.</p> <p>Kiruna municipality has a programme where schools and preschools can take part in professional performing arts. But it could, as the strategy claims, be more collaborative and extended to a better-adapted range of professional performing arts, movies and creative activities in schools and preschools.</p>	<p>A closer collaboration between cultural workers within the municipality, the schools and preschools and the institutions who provide performing arts and creative activities.</p>
<p>School of Culture The School of Culture has recently, as an effect of the city transformation, moved to a new location and now shares facilities with the high school’s art programme.</p>	<p>Making the School of Culture (recreational studies for youth) known to new target groups.</p>	<p>The strategy sets out a plan for the School of Culture to establish a better organisation of music education in primary school. This collaboration is a way to sustain music education and meet the lack of music teachers that Kiruna is currently struggling with.</p>
<p>Library development</p>	<p>To strengthen the young students’ right to a school library</p>	<p>Proposed collaboration between the main public city library in Kiruna and all the local school libraries in the municipality. The proposal is to allocate funds to the main city library with the task of establishing a school library centre. This will include a school librarian, shared media costs, and a shared media inventory so that all students, regardless of school, have access to the same resources.</p>
<p>Youth clubs and schools</p>	<p>To offer a wider range of cultural activities for, and mainly with, young people during holidays, based on their own ideas and choices. Currently the municipality offers summer jobs to all 9th graders, mainly in the Parks and Recreation Department.</p>	<p>Building a closer organisation between the Youth club and school to better coordinate holiday activities. The cultural strategy proposes a wider range of job positions, including film-, and musicmaking as a way to promote the cultural sector as potential future job opportunity.</p>

Links to ECoC

The ambition to become a European Capital of Culture is a long-term investment explicitly included in our cultural strategy and shows that culture is a changemaker in our city transformation. By embarking on this journey, we send the signal to all the citizens, all the businesses and all our industries, that culture is leading the way to a more inclusive and enriched city.

The unanimous decision to bid for the title made by the Municipal Council shows the cultural importance and political direction for the years to come. We stand at a crossroads, in the middle of the industrial and city transformation and we need this cultural boost and European cultural support right now, to become the culturally diverse and rich place we want to be. We stand united and will use the title to channel all the strength we have, to undertake an endeavour of this magnitude. We believe that being awarded with this title, will help us to join together our stakeholders in the private, public, and civic sectors. Becoming the ECoC of 2029, will strengthen the foundation that Kiruna was once built upon. The private and public sectors working hand in hand to provide all citizens with a culturally rich life and fulfilling jobs and careers.

In this context, the cross sectorial work put into the bidding process will be highly valuable, even if Kiruna is not finally selected. It establishes new contacts and new forms of collaboration both within the municipal organisation and with external partners – both national and international. And it connects us much better with Europe, to help us fill the gaps both in our knowledge and in our workforce.

To live in a place of demolition and construction for years is draining and we really need this cultural boost right now. Something positive to make us unite. Where indigenous people share a well preserved and lived cultural heritage with the rest of Europe. Where foreign people share their cultures with us, at the very North of the globe. Where there is space for communication, thoughts, ideas, and art.

Working towards the title year will literally be something tangible that would inspire and bring well needed energy to us citizens and help transform Kiruna into the fantastic city we think it has the potential to become. This will have a long-term cultural, social and economic impact in every office, every lunchroom, and every workshop.

So, our bid for the ECoC title is the start of a movement that will last a long time after 2029. A movement that will be bumpy, unpredictable, change directions and have setbacks along the way. But a movement that will leave traces, create memories and stories. A movement that will create better empathy, understanding and openness in our community. A movement that welcomes Europe to join our journey.

Q6. Strengthening the capacity of the cultural and creative sectors

Here in the Arctic, to survive and thrive you need resilience and creativity. And so, whilst on the face of it we have a quite thin creative and cultural industry sector, that does not tell the full story.

Many artists from a variety of different fields come to Kiruna from far and wide for research and creative inspiration. This has been a constant

feature of our connection with culture and creativity since it was built into our way of life through Hjalmar Lundbohm's inspiration at the start of the 1900s. It is not easy making a living through creative work anywhere in Europe – and Kiruna is no exception. There are a few artists' collectives like Kiruna Konstgille (Art Guild), the Koncentrat collective, and Ateljé Nord, a craft shop owned by a group of artisans/artists who create a range from utensils to unique works of art with an Arctic touch.

In Kiruna there are a few creators who have an income from photography, filmmaking and communication, a sector that is growing quickly, as well as people active in the music industry like the record label Heart of Sound. Some associations like the Rock association Tusen Toner and Kiruna Theatre and Culture Association hire and book visual and performing artists. Crafts, including the Sámi doudji, are also sources of income for some players. The city plans to create a makerspace / creative hub to allow more practitioners of creative fields to have a better starting point, build capacities and cooperate. The connections between the creative sectors, youth clubs and schools with their possibilities for summer jobs in the cultural field will be strengthened as well.

As mentioned before, since Hjalmar Lundbohm's times the city has an apartment that is used year-round for artists residencies. Since 1994 the city gives a grant called Kirunastipendiet of around 3,000 € in cash plus buying another 3,500 € worth of artwork from a selected professional visual artist working in Sweden each year who is also invited to stay in the residence-apartment. Two players who support creatives at Norbotten



Becoming the ECoC for 2029 can strengthen our creative character and nudge the identity of Kiruna from today's heavy industry-oriented city to a creative hot spot

county level across the whole of Northern Sweden are the Resurscentrum för Konst (Visual Artists Support Centre) and Formstark Norrbotten for crafts and design. They help with product development, capacity building, qualification and networking opportunities.

Strengthening the creative sector through the ECoC by expanding international networks, commissioning new work and attracting young people into cultural jobs benefits not only those of us already living here. Hopefully it will also have a positive knock-on effect on our much-needed population growth.

A creative sector that is growing and becoming more visible in the community is filmmaking. Just recently the movie *The Abyss* (Avgrunden, the first ever disaster thriller made in Sweden) was filmed here during 2022 and premiered in Kiruna. Some writers live in the municipality, more come to collect inspiration for their stories, and some of the books are turned into films, like the book *Stolen* (Stöld, a novel by Ann-Helen Leastadius, an author born in Kiruna). *Stolen* was filmed in 2023 in the eastern part of the municipality with a base in the Village of Vittangi. For sure this had an impact both socially and economically in the local community with a temporary increase of 10% in a population of 750 in Vittangi. The municipality wants to develop the sector since there is potential growth and impact also on other fields, not only actors, directors, producers etc., but also

accommodation, transport and other facilities. The municipality and the visitors' board must improve their collaboration to make this sector grow sustainably, so imagines of Kiruna can travel around the globe!

Companies and organisations in Kiruna are currently struggling to find people with the right competencies for their needs. We need more people in every single sector and the political goal is that we need to grow our population by about 10% from today until the year 2030 to maintain our ability to fund our economic and social system.

Bidding for and hopefully becoming the ECoC for 2029, can strengthen our creative character and nudge the identity of Kiruna from today's heavy industry-oriented city to a creative hot spot for artists from all over Europe, Sweden, Sápmi, the Arctic and Kiruna. This will create a more inclusive climate, provide a broader and more diversified job market, and enrich the lives of us who live here. This will bring about in turn a positive effect on our economy and social sector.

The cultural education of our young people is a key priority to invest in in the future. You will have seen the strong focus in the city's cultural strategy, which is continued in our ECoC plans for cultural programming and outreach. We want to develop open minded, creative people who are at ease with whatever the future throws at them and are

also at ease with each other – wherever they are from and whoever they are. A better connection with Europe is a vital component in making this work.

Yet in the fields of education and healthcare, we have real difficulties recruiting and retaining staff. There just aren't enough people to cover the demand and we can also see the tendency of educated teachers and social workers going for a job in industry as the pay is usually much higher. Here we plan to combine the social and education sector with the creative field in a much closer – and we think more innovative – way.

In healthcare, cultural practitioners can contribute by visiting nursing homes and creating activities related to various forms of cultural expression. In schools we can link different subjects with ideas and inspiration from visiting artists and local creatives. Aligned with the curriculum, we can meet the school's requirements, workforce demands, and the needs of cultural practitioners. This would take away some of the excessive workload for teachers and social workers and create job opportunities for artists thus developing long-term links between the sectors. ECoC is really important in creating the energy and momentum to help us do this.

Q8. Foreseen long-term impacts

We answer this question in two parts. A "narrative part" where we explain our passion and ECoC vision to make Kiruna once more the pioneering city it once was and can be again. And a more "practical" description of the specific things that will be in place in 2030 if we succeed, built around

the strategic blocks we set out in Q5. This, in turn, leads us into our plans for monitoring and evaluation in Q9.

Today we are challenged with a declining number of citizens. Too many decide to leave our city and too few decide to move in. A lot of people come to Kiruna for short-term work, or a quick adventure. Kiruna becomes a short, but surely memorable chapter in one's life, but nothing more. Our longer-term vision is that ECoC will change this.

Working towards 2029 with cultural and social impact, we can try to open up and find ways for new residents of Kiruna to meet long-term residents. At the same time, and equally important, focusing on our current citizens, to make sure they are happy with life here. And see a future for themselves. If we, by handling our ECoC title with care, can help to change the declining numbers of citizens into an up-going curve, it will have a huge cultural, social and economic long-term impact of ECoC on our city.

Urban Development

As we described earlier, in terms of urban development, we are in the midst of demolishing big parts of our city and at the same time rebuilding and developing new areas of our cityscape, including moving a great deal of valuable historical and cultural buildings.

Becoming ECoC City will give us the powerful tools and support to make sure we develop this city with cultural values and human, artistic expressions. Something that is so fundamental for a liveable and vibrant society where people feel included, safe, and equal. But something that is

equally so often pushed to the back when budget is on the agenda and the big machines who roam our streets, come first. It's now, and only now, we have the window to infuse the on-going urban planning and development with artistic tools, creative resources, and international knowledge to really finetune this large-scale city transformation from a human and creative perspective. Something we'd like to develop further.

As a part of our ECoC process, we also want to develop the green, blue, white and red plans for our city and municipality. Green for parks and biodiversity, blue for rain and melting snow, white for snow and ice and red for culture and social areas. We want to make use of our surroundings, closeness, and quality of nature by making sure they are ingrained within our urban plan and give us the opportunities to create meeting places around these four areas. Our connection to nature is a huge reason why many of us decide to live at this specific place on earth. So that must be mirrored in the policies and development areas and have a major, sustainable long-term impact.

Cultural traditions will have the space to flourish

Kiruna has a large number of indigenous people and minorities with great cultural knowledge and traditions. We want to enhance and strengthen cultural platforms and provide space for these traditions to exist and also to mix with contemporary artists from all over Europe by creating festivals, workshops, happenings and collaborations. The years leading up to 2029, we wish to develop a better understanding and empathy, open and equal meeting places for different cultural expressions that will give a long-term effect on the cultural identity of our citizens and municipality. We wish for the ECoC process to

be a springboard for the cultural knowledge and creativity of the indigenous people and minorities living here.

Finally, if we are awarded the title, it's not us winning the competition, no. It's us getting ready for the start. It is us jumping into our race gear, pulling off the skins on our skis. Preparing ourselves for four years of hard work and magical outcomes when we set out to push our city in a new creative and artistic direction. If Kiruna becomes the European Capital of Culture in 2029, we truly believe it will change the core values and perception on this sometimes harsh, outlandish industry mentality dominating the scene today. It will send out the signal both locally and internationally, that we are more than the minerals we are mining. We have a cultural history and creative richness worth loving and fighting for.

A place with the newest city centre in Europe and at the same time being one of the oldest inhabited areas in Europe, has the ambition to become a European Capital of Culture. It's amazing and it's innovative. It's our way to survive as a society long beyond 2029, as a cultural, social, and economical sustainable city. We are not the end of the world. We are way beyond.

The Practicalities

Having set out the story of our long-term impacts, here are some practical examples of what Kiruna might look like from 2030 onwards. We have connected them to the strategic framework which we set out in Q5.



LKAB

LKAB

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MAMMOET

MAMMOET

A strengthened Kiruna cultural system

What does 2030 look like?	Features	Type of impact: C = Cultural E = Economic S = Social
More international connections	Links have been developed between Kiruna local artists and national and international creatives	(C, S, E)
Improved facilities for creating and making	We have established a new creative hub for artists and creatives	(C, S, E)
Increased cultural collaborations and job opportunities	Cultural and creative jobs have increased by 20%	(C, S, E)
We wear our culture on our city sleeve!	Experiences and history around the city transformation is displayed and showcased for a public	(C, S)
We have increased immigration and reduced migration	New citizen feel at home and welcome Existing groups see a future here	(C, S, E)
No more missing museum We celebrate our minority culture.	An exciting new museum for local stories including the stories of our minority cultural groups. We have a national stage for the Giron Sámi Teáther	(C, S)

Cultural Development for Young People and Communities

What does 2030 look like?	Features	Type of impact: C = Cultural E = Economic S = Social
Strong collaboration exists between education and artists	A best practice programme is in place for creative and artistic afterschool activities (Fritids in Swedish).	(C, S, E)
We have a great “active ageing” programme	Exciting collaborations between creatives and elderly homes are an established feature	(C, S, E)
The School of Culture is a flourishing feature of our city and region	Kiruna School of Culture offers recreational courses in theatre, music, art, dance, digital making and programming	(C, S, E)
Schools are regularly exposed to culture from all of our communities	All students have experienced a production put up by the Giron Sámi Teáhter and Tornedalsteatern	(C, S, E)
The link between culture and nature is a key feature of Kiruna’s cultural offer	We are combining cultural and nature experiences in imaginative new ways	(C, S)
Culture and designed living environment are early factors into new urban planning and city planning	The artistic perspective is a part of the early planning in every new city development project	(C, S, E)

Q9. Monitoring and evaluation

Building on what we set out in Q8, to measure some of the more emotion-led and experience-based impacts we must set a current point-zero value. For example, we must understand and get points of data involving the current identity of Kiruna.

So, to set out our baseline, we will build on previous surveys carried out by the external research- and creative companies Kairos Future and Brightnest. The municipality is currently re-branding its own communication platform, with a new communication strategy and developing a first time-ever place brand. Prior to this, we've carried out several workshops with the private sector, tourism industry and employers at the city hall, to be able to understand the DNA of the city, current identity and position to build upon. We have the emotions, but we also need the facts.

Who Will Do The Work?

Luleå University of Technology, LTU, has a satellite hub in Kiruna with several courses carried out at Masters and PhD level, mainly in the space-oriented field. But for ECoC we would like to develop new and different links between the academia and our city. Relationships and dialogue with professors in the design department at LTU have already been established and will be developed further during the second part of the bid process if we proceed.

The Faculty of Arts and Department of Culture and Media Studies at Umeå University, also has strong links to Kiruna, with one of the teaching professors

publishing Kiruna – City as Ideology in 2009, focusing on gender, power structures and cultural diversity. Our aim is to develop collaborations with both universities for research and evaluation before, along the way and after 2029.

LTU is also in the process of trying to secure funding from Swedish authorities. The focus of this is called People Powered Transformation and will focus on societal transformation, deeply embedded problems and culture and designed living environment in Northern Sweden. If this application succeeds, we see several touchpoints and crossover agendas over the next few years. They will focus on strengthening creative and design-oriented work and processes and will help us measure Kiruna's transition to a softer, more creative and cultural city.

The Arctic Design Centre is a brand-new hub for design, art and creativity and was set up in 2023. It will be a hub and meeting place for the design and creative industry in Northern Sweden and we have already established communication and relationships to develop further during 2024 for evaluation and monitoring of the ECoC process.

Finally, we are also planning on using an external monitoring consultant for independent and objective evaluation of our process, work and expected outcomes.

What We Will Measure

Some of the initial points that we want to monitor and evaluate are listed in the table below, and this will connect with the measurement of our long-term impacts as set out in Q8.

When?

During 2024 we plan to pull together the information from the existing surveys and set out a baseline framework and key indicators – cultural, economic and social.

In 2025, should our application succeed, we will put the evaluation consortium in place, agree the indicators and carry out the first baseline survey.

In 2027 we will carry out our "mid-term" survey, showing and sharing our findings, progress made since 2025 and reviewing the progress Kiruna has made towards our key goals.

In 2029 we will undertake our main measurement exercise, with results being shared via a post-ECoC conference in spring 2030. Ideally, we would also like to do some further measurement in 2031.

Links With Other ECoCs

We are aware that our neighbours from Bodo and Oulu are both doing very interesting evaluation exercises. We have already made contact and have seen that we have many challenges and aspirations in common here in the Arctic. Starting a process to connect three major studies of the ECoC journey in our very specific part of Europe is very exciting to us. Culture in the cold: a study of three ECoC cities from the North of Europe.

Stakeholder group	What Kiruna 2029 brings	Information needed	How to connect with each group and their interests	Data sources
Local citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More opportunities for cultural connection - Improved quality of life, well-being and life Citizen satisfaction - Better connection to minority cultures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information about Kiruna 2029 events - Opportunities for local involvement - Better links between education and culture - Views of young people - Sámi and Tornedalian culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus groups and workshops - Kiruna 2029 website, social media - Local media - Municipal social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interviews - Local and social media reviews - Specific surveys to gain qualitative information
Cultural professionals and institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved cultural audience, appreciation, reputation - Cultural (European) connections - More jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities to deliver 2029 exhibitions, shows and events - Capacity-building: professional, social, infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involvement in Kiruna 2029 working groups - Open calls - Stakeholder meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Audience numbers, demographic and views - Focus groups on artistic and cultural development - Increased networks
Governments (local, regional, and national)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effects of culture on municipal and regional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cost-benefit analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Periodic reports. - Media analysis. - Strategic development plans which link to culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public documents and information (e.g. statistics). - Interviews and surveys at local/regional level with politicians
The European Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achievement by Kiruna 2029 of the ECoC objectives - Protect ECoC brand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of the achievement of the objectives against EU framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Periodic reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation meetings
Kiruna 2029	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring the effectiveness and reputation of the work and resources invested 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing review of objectives, goals and ability to deliver success factors set out for Kiruna 2029 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular reports against baseline indicators - Internal vs external perceptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social audit assessments through engagement key stakeholders
Local businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased demand for products and services - More recruits to their businesses and better retention levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business opportunities associated with Kiruna 2029 - Recruitment and retention data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business trend analyses - Staff surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Publicly available information (e.g. economic analyses) - Interviews and surveys with managers and staff - Business Club 2029



Fra...

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Vi Är Ej Maskiner

7-23

2. Cultural and artistic content

Q10. Artistic Vision and Strategy

We want to strengthen Kiruna as a culturally rich municipality, with a strong cultural identity in Europe and pride of what we are and what we offer: our stories, our traditions and our Arctic take on contemporary challenges and art.


Through creativity and curiosity, we want to reinforce our cultural expressions. By using local materials and traditional knowledge we can cultivate what we have, and learn what others have to share with Kiruna. We want artists from Europe to mix with us, to create professional collaborations and outcomes for a broad audience and to broaden our minds. With Kiruna 2029 we want to create long-lasting networks, systems and collaborations way beyond 2029. We want local and international artists and creators to work in Kiruna and to meet colleagues from all over the world.

Our Artistic Vision

Our artistic vision and strategy is to share our strong and captivating mix of Arctic and industrial narrative with Europe through creative experiences. With care.

With care means that we do it by caring for each other, for future generations, for nature and by involving all our senses. Inviting everyone to touch the galaxies above during a light festival. Hear

the magnetic iron-ore heartbeat in the beats of a contemporary ballet. Taste the midnight sun while enjoying an international food event. Smell the machines crumbling memories in the new historical museum. See the reindeers dance along the mountain while listening to Sámi storytelling. Taste the snowflakes melting on your lips on an art walk. Smell the fire and the coffee boiling along the flames during the Ark festival. Feel the berries and wet moss at your fingertips as you pick them at summer solstice. Hear the cracks of the lake settling and freezing to ice at Kultura Kiruna. See the northern lights sway and dazzle you at the opening ceremony. We are burning to share all this with an international audience, and to offer these experiences to our local citizens.



*Taste the snowflakes
melting on your lips*

We want to lift issues around the city transformation, on climate change, rural communities, the right of land. And through creative methods and artistic outlets we want to touch upon everything that both creates cracks and conflicts within ourselves and in our society and also the joy, love and care we have for each other, for our city and our community. We want to develop a warmer social climate, more

playfulness and artistic quality – with care. We see the cracks appearing everywhere and we'll use the movement as opening for something new, vibrant and colourful to take place. Our concept is Movement. We want to move people, below ground, on earth and in space, with care. And so will our programme. Culture moves people and moves Europe. That is our motivation and our driver to make our artistic vision come true.

Our Programme Strategy

Our strategy is that whenever you'll visit us, there'll be an event going on, a cultural site to visit or sensorial experience to be had, regardless the time of year. Just like Kiruna itself, we mix contrasting elements. A few projects will be large-scale for big audiences, others exclusively for you to explore on your own in private. Some will go down deep and some high above. Some will last all year and some just for a day. But they will always appeal to your senses to connect and create a movement in you.

For our ECoC programme we will produce a mix of intimate, finetuned, rural, urban, mobile and temporary experiences and events and balance it with the infinite spheres of the sky and worlds below. We will bring out some of our already existing cultural events and expressions and blend it with a European dimension. We intend to further develop our programme and do Open calls during

2024 to develop our artistic content if we get the chance to proceed to the next phase of the ECoC process. Learning from previous ECoC cities, we also understand the importance of keeping the programme open for new things to develop during the years leading up to 2029.

Through our artistic programme we'll explore and connect artistic output with nature, senses, research, learning, innovation, industry, history, minority and indigenous culture. We invite Europe to be a part of our Arctic world and everyday cultural life, just as we are a part of Europe's.

Q11. Outline and structure of the cultural and artistic programme

The programme lines that structure Kiruna 2029's cultural and artistic offer are:

BELOW GROUND ON EARTH IN SPACE

Looking rather simple and obvious, the three lines reveal their many layers of meaning and content upon closer investigation. What lies underneath the surface, buried deep underground? What is visible on earth, tangible in our surrounding? And what lingers in the infinite void above us in space?

We will use the three programme lines Below Ground, On Earth and In Space to tell our story and multiple dimensions with care. Some projects will solely focus on one dimension, while others incorporate all of them as themes. We will develop projects to be experienced from up above, allowing you to experience space in creative ways.

We will use nature as a stage on the surface, a natural platform and room for artistic experiences. And there are also interesting locations for events below ground, like the visitors' mine.

When we unpack our programme lines from different thematic angles, we reveal layer after layer of how they wrap around Kiruna. They become dimensions of time, where 'Below Ground' is what's behind us, the history, our heritage and roots. 'On Earth' is the present, where we stand in this moment in time and 'In Space' is what lies ahead of us, the future, hopes and dreams. The lines connect to our ancestors before us, the people of today and future generations. They relate to what is happening with our city: The old city, currently being demolished and crumbling into landfill below. The new city coming to life at the surface, and the plans for the city yet to be, full of life and new memories that are still in the space of imagination.

We use the programme lines as layers of the human mind; the subconscious deep within, the consciousness at the surface and our imagination of what is above and beyond. The Sámi culture brings in mythological perspectives linking the programme lines to parallel worlds we can only imagine, of magical spirits living underground, amongst us and above us. And we see the lines as different state of elements, like snow falling from the sky, landing and freezing to ice on earth, and melting to water trickling underground.

Below Ground, On Earth and In Space mirror our natural resources of valuable minerals, built up over thousands of years below us, vast irreplaceable Arctic landscape free to roam on earth, and natural phenomena like northern lights

and midnight sun in space. The programme lines naturally also refer to our mining industry, tourism industry and space industry and we see them mirrored through academia and research: we do research in fossil-free mining below ground, on climate change on earth and on life on Mars in space. In our programme we explore what happens when you cross-pollinate an artist and a scientist.

From where we stand, our cultural journey to become a European Capital of Culture takes off in all directions; below us, amongst us and above us. Designed to cater for our senses, all done with care.

And talking of care, we want to provide a specific opportunity for young people to lead and develop a major part of the programme, very much in line with the key priority in Q2 of our Cultural Strategy (Q5). As a learning point from Bodö 2024 we want to build a similar **Youth platform** and reference group for Youth in cooperation with the organisation Youth2030 Movement. We are going to build on an existing project **Youth Up North** to do this.

Not only will there be decision-making about programme elements for children and youth, but it will also promote jobs in culture, build capacities to implement their own ideas for the community, support local young artist, and to accompany young people who are on the verge of taking the step to becoming an artist. One of the activities will be the **Dream Summer Job** where the platform connects artists like choreographers, directors, composers and create summer job opportunities as a dancer, musician and actor during a summer in Kiruna and perform at retirement homes, in the city and tourist huts in the mountains.

Finally, to structure our program throughout the year, we want to counterbalance seasonality. With our three main events, we avoid the existing peak seasons of visitors in Kiruna. We align our program with the traditional Snow Festival as our opening in the beginning of the year, followed by creative and cultural blossoms when the snow is just about gone and the midnight sun is beaming in May/June, then lightening up the year with Kultura Kiruna Festival during November dusk.

Artistic and creative projects in our programme

THE HUMAN MACHINE is the name of our opening, mid-season and closing show. A show in three chapters, linking to our programme lines Below Ground, On Earth and In Space. A coherent story if you manage to see all three, but equally powerful each one on its own, a standalone trilogy. In an elaborate outdoor show, you'll hear the sound of hundreds of reindeer flowing down the mountain, the joy and sorrow of jojk echoing through the night. The sound and fire-sparks of welders and miners hammering their way below ground. The magnetic iron-ore heartbeats pounding. Visuals of dancing drone-formations above you, sparkling space full of hopes and dreams for the future and life out there. Combining the cultural heritage of Sámi, Sverigefinnar, Tornedalians, Kvens and Lantalajset with choreographed machines, tractors and drones, an industrial ballet.

Working with national, international and local professionals, together with local and regional communities of choirs, musicians and dancers, we'll be able to highlight the specific contrasts

of Kiruna, the past and the present. The light and the dark, the height and the depth, the humans and the machines. We'll tell the story of the once wild animals and the Sámi following the herd, tightly working together for survival. The first findings of minerals, how the iron-ore became a reason to build a city and for people to settle. The hard winters and the difficulties to grow crops in our poor soil. The love and immortality of never-ending summer days. The hard labour of making way for a railway. The flourishing society. Fast forward. The demolished places and fading memories of today. The cityscape and borders redrawn. The positive energy and hope for the future and new beginnings. We do it together, we move a city and build a new community together. We all become a part of the Human Machine. A show full of sparkling colours, where we can all fit in and share the movement with care.

Kiruna is a very different place in summer to winter – the polar opposite, in fact. To experience the three parts of the Human Machine at different times of the year, will create three completely different memories: seeing it in stone cold winter, endless midnight sun or dusky autumn. Rather than using all the magic on the one big opening, we spread it out over three events. We believe this will suit the specific conditions of Kiruna best. Giving visitors and locals a chance to experience a memorable show during different times of the year, will keep the momentum all year long, and reach out the visitors. And potentially make them want to come back to Kiruna again and again and again.

HUMAN MACHINE CHAPTER 1, OPENING SHOW – JANUARY/FEBRUARY, SNOW CELEBRATION.

The Human Machine – Chapter 1 will happen in combination with The Snow Festival, a yearly event since 1986 that celebrates snow, ice, cold and darkness in the Arctic. The snow sculpturing competition is the main and a world-famous attraction. Working with snow and ice to create arenas for culture is exciting and challenging as it depends on the weather, the cold sets limits on how long people can be outside and we will use both indoor and outdoor locations, using the contrast of raging raw cold and soothing soft warmth.

To start our ECoC year with this event will make a strong impact on our cultural realm and present an opportunity for a revival, perhaps a new twist and energy of the festival. The artistic dimensions will go beyond the current format of the festival and add new expressions of poetry carved in ice, lights, projections, ski- and snowboard performances in vertical slopes and bring back the Snow Theatre. We'll link the programme and narrative of the opening show to the richness of our minority cultures, heritage and roots and give the spectators a contemporary and modern show with artistic excellence. Building on an existing event, we'll strengthen local culture, make use of our unique knowledge and materials and add innovative, creative and sensorial experiences with artists from around the world for the Kiruna ECoC 2029 opening.

HUMAN MACHINE CHAPTER 2 MAY/ JUNE - MID SEASON SHOW, MIDNIGHT SUN CELEBRATION

In May/June the city does not look its best. We're honest enough to say it and capable enough to do something about it. The snow has just about melted, and rubbish hidden under the snow now appears. The little green leaves and fighting flowers take their time waking up from hibernation. This is the right time to roll out a colourful project with dance, music, art and video creation to add new life to our community! The first days of midnight sun happen in late May, and we'll celebrate this return with a bright, vivid and multi-artistic Chapter 2 of the Human Machine.

We'll also make use of this time of the year for touring around the municipality with cultural events popping up in rural areas and collaborate with schools. Bringing cultural experiences closer to people. Our travelling library, the Book Bus, plays a major role as a cultural meeting place in the villages. We'll develop this for further mobile artistic experiences with performing arts, food, author's visits, art and exhibitions.

HUMAN MACHINE CHAPTER 3, NOVEMBER - END SHOW, KULTURA KIRUNA CELEBRATION

Kultura Kiruna is a non-profit cultural festival appealing to a broad audience with the goal for Kiruna to become a city with an high artistic ambition and to provide a vibrant cultural offer in the municipality. Kultura Kiruna provides work for local cultural practitioners, and involves schools and cultural associations to anchor

the experience and cultural events in the local community. For ECoC and in the long-term the goal is to create a wider national and international interest for the festival, by inviting and collaborating with European artists, whilst staying true to the strong traditions of storytelling and the roots in Kiruna, Norrbotten and Sápmi. For 2029, the Kultura Kiruna will be the last chapter of the Human Machine, where we follow our dreams into the future and continue our shared journey for Kiruna. A place full of culture, movement and care.

Below Ground

Demolition Art

Taking care of and reusing parts of the demolished material broken into pieces and fractions to create new art installations and artworks, is one of the foundations in the Demolition Art project. By using the waste material, we will create new artistic objects and outcomes focusing on the memories, moments and movements within us, as the physical world is changing. Who decides what is worth keeping, what has a cultural value for the future to preserve? Once the buildings are gone, the ground and area are transformed into **City Mine Parks** for some years, until it finally becomes an industrial area not suitable for public use anymore. The Demolition Art project is about creating mental and physical space for what is lost, for grief, new beginnings and hope, contemplation and reflection. An artistic language to communicate, talk about and understand the complex dimensions and feelings of a city transformation and re-location, both during the demolition process, but also as artistic remnants at the City Mine Parks.

Underground Culture

The visitors' mine is located a few hundred meters below ground, inside the LKAB iron-ore mine. You can learn about the mining history and process and get close to the huge mining machines and vehicles. It's a fantastic place for cultural events during our ECoC year, giving us the chance to develop events, shows and performances in a very unique setting. Come hear a **symphonic orchestra** perform deep within the mountain, the sound echoing in the winding tunnels below or a **rock concert** banging on the iron covered walls. Experience the dance performance **Behind the Gates**, telling the stories of women in industry in the mid 2000s, looking at the demography, mentality and gender structures in Kiruna when the mining company actively started hiring women at the beginning of the millennium. Could the women actually pull off the same heavy workload as men? What did these women have to put up with? In this performance, created by dancer Moa Autio and circus artists Mikkel Hobbitz, the stories of different women working in the industry are embodied through the dancers, stories of trusting your co-workers with your life, creating strong bonds, independence and strength.

Kiruna Museum

A historical museum in Kiruna will gather the rich history of our city, municipality, minority groups and serve as a memory bank for our city transformation. A place to share our cultural and industrial history with a local community, new generations, and visitors from all over the world, who always ask about the history of our municipality and the city transformation. Today, we have no place to show to inquisitive tourists, no place to display and preserve our cultural treasures. The only way to share our story is



Kusinerna
Giron Sámi Teáhter

A place full creativity and culture and care

to talk about it and point to websites for more information. It's just not enough for the magnitude of this transformation and rich cultural history. As a digital extension of the museum, we'll develop a virtual and augmented reality experience as you walk through the old city, demolished sites and cultural points. A historical museum that will showcase the currently mothballed historical archive is high on the agenda to carry on the legacy of our ECoC into the future.

On Earth

Arctic Art Park

One of the main things we'll start off with for our Arctic Art Park is the **Pathfinder project**, working with the local community of associations, businesses, Sámi villages, local and national authorities, to restore trails, build wooden paths over marsh areas, gates in and out of fenced reindeer sections, and make sure a few paths are accessible for wheelchairs and walkers. Small steps for us, huge ones for our mobility impaired communities.

We have plenty of historical sites, trails and old settlements of Sámi people, Kvens, Tornedalians and Lantalajset spread around our municipality. These sites are mostly unmarked. With our Pathfinder project, we'll be able to convey information and knowledge about these sites and make sure they are preserved and respected, both with physical and digital tools suitable for the site.

Once we've got the trails ramped up, we'll roll out the **Arctic Art Park**, making our municipality one big creative field with new **contemporary art installations**, artistically **designed campfires** and **wind shelters**, **digital soundwalks** and **virtual music and dance** experiences. The aim is to give people several reasons to go out, take a walk with a friend, run, hike, ski and explore new art in their surroundings. The Arctic Art Park will be supported by a digital platform, showing shorter and longer trails, enabling you to make your own Arctic Art Trail, connecting mountain huts, restaurants, cafés, points of interest and businesses along the way.

Today we widely lack signposts for our network of trails. Expats, visitors and new citizens struggle to find their way around in nature. With the help of digital and physical maps and signposts, you'll be able to explore the current and new artworks all over our municipality on your own or with a guide. The Arctic Art Park will become reason to travel north and experience the nature in Kiruna in an artistic way, opening up for business to rent out gear, do guided tours or offer cultural experiences. This is also an opportunity to collaborate with Bodö 2024 and Oulu 2026, creating a larger transnational Arctic Art Park together.

Along our improved trails, we'll develop sites specially for campfires and wind shelters. Some close to the city, with easy access and serving as a daytrip, while others tucked away further from the urban setting. Together with the national creative

studio ArkNat, Sámi and Tornedalian craftspeople, artists, international architects and architect students, we'll design and build site-specific wind shelters, each with an individual story and expression, suitable for spending a night under the stars. Enhancing and enriching the surrounding nature, they will create a unique experience for visitors and locals.

Árran is the Sámi word for a fireplace. Through this project we'll explore the social bonds created by an artistically designed fireplace. The different árran will be designed to help spark conversations, create memories together and sharing stories around the fire. We predict that the Árran will have a specific use for date nights, as the dating scene in Kiruna usually involves some kind of outdoor setting. Our árran made with care could potentially be very important for matchmaking and spark love in Kiruna.

Together with the involved community and authorities, a few strategic mountains will be selected for the **Peak Art** project, giving you an artistic reward when making it up the mountain. Not always possible to place a physical object at the top, we'll use both digital media and physical interventions for this land art project, connecting the surroundings, specific history, location and art. The group of national and international visual artists and sculptors, coworking under the name **Heavy Magnetite Art**, will once again produce sculptures made of iron-ore and ice, connecting and exploring local materials with artistic expressions, creating unique art pieces for our Arctic Art Park.



Solar Egg
Riksbyggen

Indeed, nature is our playground, but sometimes you just need that extra help of a designed setting to spark new playful adventures and games. Welcome to **Natural Play**, gently designed sites using nature's own materials, settings and twirls. Set up to ignite your imagination, these are playful sites you'll want to hang out with kids and friends all day long, year-round. With artists, cultural operators and architects we'll create natural settings focusing on stories from our traditional cultures and languages.

Jojk is a musical expression in the Sámi culture, a way of (mostly) wordless sounding. A jojk is connected to a place, a person or a moment. We will develop the jojk project to help spread awareness and knowledge of this cultural expression and share the tradition with international musicians. As a jojk is closely linked to nature, we'll use geo-tagging and an app enabling you to experience a jojk at a specific location in nature. We also want to team up with the Sámi Dance Centre, for filmed dance performances to be experienced at specific locations in nature. All you need is a mobile and headphones to experience the digital artwork ranging from jojk, dance and poetry at the tagged location all over the municipality. This is also a way we'll be able to deliver audio guided walks for our cultural sites in multiple languages.

In 2022, when the whole city centre in Kiruna re-opened in a new location, a big art project was carried out with citizens and the internationally oriented creative group of **Artscape**. Six big walls within Kiruna were chosen to design a mural and paint the memories of Kiruna, told by locals. Over 100 memories and stories about Kiruna artistically

transformed into largescale murals, now literally allowing a walk down memory lane. This project was hugely popular amongst citizens and created a shared feeling of pride. For our ECoC year, we will develop this concept further and do a **Rural Community Artscape Edition**. By collaborating with locals, schools and artists we create interactions, spread out the artistic work through out the municipality making an artistic connection between the urban and rural artwork.

With all of the creative projects in our Arctic Art Park, we build a solid cultural structure of digital and physical experiences to be used all year round, regardless of the weather, as an individual or in a group. Arctic Art Park connects people with culture and nature in creative ways, long beyond our ECoC year.

Live Like A Local

Today we have a shortage of housing and accommodation in Kiruna, a hindrance for companies and the public sector to grow. Through our ECoC programme, we'll explore and offer creative solutions to short- and long-term living, for visitors and citizens, sometimes challenging the idea of a set home, but always offering a chance to live like a local.

In collaboration with the association Kiruna Växer we'll look at the possibility of developing **Tiny Homes**; temporary, creative, mobile accommodation at the foot of our local Luossavaara mountain, our skiing hill. With this project we aim to create a community of small-scale homes, compact living, attracting target groups of adventurous individuals who value 360° access to nature literally at their doorstep.

The second direction for the Tiny Homes project is to involve the local community in a much wider sense. We have plenty of private properties big enough for placing a Tiny Home in their backyard. Delivering solutions for private people to offer accommodation on their property opens options for local community engagement, with visitors and locals interacting. Whether for a few days or a longer stay. Perhaps for a trial period until you decide to stay in Kiruna permanently or move on. Here we'll incorporate the build-your-own-house-movement of Egnahemsfabriken, established in the southwest of Sweden. By offering classes, courses and building camps, the private property owner can be part of a **builder's community**, and build a Tiny Home, to be placed on their premises.

The **Ark** is a very popular and common winter accommodation when you go ice-fishing on a lake in winter. The ark is pulled behind a snowmobile and folds out wherever you want to stay for the night. Inside you make it cosy with gas heating, lanterns, fold out bed and a latch in the floor so you can have your creature comforts in the roaring storm and still do some ice-fishing sitting in the toasty heat inside the ark. The arks are all unique and handmade. This local activity and product is something we'll develop into an artistic project with local craftspeople and artists, producing specially designed **ECoC Arks** to be used over the year and beyond for events.

Lavvú is the Sámi word for a traditional tent, a kind of tipi. The sizes ranges from accommodating two people to big tents for events. Inside, you either sleep on mats or reindeer skins directly on the floor or on a raised camping bed. To create temporary large- scale solutions for

accommodation during our ECoC year, we will develop **Lavvú camps**, possible to set up anywhere on a flat surface and creating a local, personal and memorable glamping experience. An innovative way to scale up a traditional way of living and still keep the authentic feel. Additionally, we'll investigate transforming a large, unused hangar into a creative indoor campground, together with Kiruna Växer.

Arctic Nature Get Together

The homestead farm in Jukkasjärvi is a well-preserved historical site of Sámi and Tornedalians and there is a wonderful museum and collection of cultural items. The association running the farm has already set up a collaboration with the Tornedalsteatern and the Giron Sámi Teáhter, to produce an open-air play to be seen for the first time in summer 2024. With the natural setting of the farm as a backdrop and the Torne River floating by as a natural stage décor, the audience will hear the stories of traditions, hard work and how love aspired between youngsters, connecting the Sámi and Tornedalian cultures for centuries. For Kiruna 2029 we aim for the open-air theatre to tour around, performing at all the homestead farms in the municipality, linking historical narratives with current themes and settings, bringing culture to new audiences and rural communities.

Kiruna 2029 proudly presents: Free Vertical, a performing arts experience for both the skier and the spectator in the vertical. The aim of the project is to create a unique intersection between outdoor life, sports, culture and film with snowboarding, freeskiing, choreography and projection as the main components. A dance performance set together by choreographer Fanny Kivimäki, with

specifically composed music, colour-coded costumes and tasteful lighting. People who may not usually seek out cultural events will have the chance to experience a cultural event right at their local ski slopes. This will be a collaboration with skiers and dancers from other European countries like Poland, our fellow ECoC country, for cultural and creative exchanges.

As the last bits of snow are melting in May/June, we are in big need of some creative flair, as the urban spaces look rather grey and dull before the greenery goes into full bloom again. It does not help that parts of our new city centre are still under construction and our public spaces lack art and creative elements. To bring in artistic work and playfulness, we will establish five spots in the city centre for contemporary and temporary art during our snow-free months. The project we call Kiruna Art Fair will establish a system of yearly open calls for artists to have their art showcased. This project will also be set up as a collaboration with schools, giving students an opportunity to meet professional artists and create their own public art piece to be presented at the art fair.

On a calm section of the Torne River, just opposite the Icehotel in Jukkasjärvi, an artist and design duo have created a floating structure, the framework of a cube, with a hanging inner platform suspended from the upper corners. This is Poikki Art and Design Camp, a space used for open-air exhibitions and performances. In wintertime, the cube is frozen into the ice, making it possible to go for a closer look. For the ECoC programme the artist duo will develop this unique setting of natural elements and invite international artists to use the cube for performances, art and design projects related to our concept Movement.



Clock tower
Kultura22

The **Ark Festival** will take place in springtime, combining our outdoor tradition of ice-fishing with added cultural expressions as music, food and dance bringing cultural experiences to new audiences and rural places. Apart from being able to bring your own ark, the ECoC Arks will be used as accommodation during the festival.

A Taste of Culture

In Kiruna we have a landscape full of ingredients that has formed our connection to nature, foraging, way of cooking and our traditional dishes. We have access to Arctic charr, reindeer, moose, ptarmigan, blueberries, lingonberries, cloudberries and all sorts of edible plants, leaves and flowers. This is something worth sharing with an international audience. We need to pass on traditional dishes and way of cooking to new and younger generations locally, knowledge that tends to get lost as the decades go by. By working with cultural operators, chefs and food artists we present to you the taste of culture: **Take a Bite at Nature**. Artistic and creative eating experiences, cooking classes, traveling food truck and a dive into our rich knowledge of how to take care of nature, make use of what nature's offering, with care for the future.

ArcTistic Residence

Leading up to our ECoC year, we will organise new locations and set-ups for creatives to come for residencies to dive into our culture and nature. Apart from the existing Artist's Apartment that we currently offer in the city, we'll also develop sites around the municipality together with our tourist organisation Kiruna Lapland and their many members. Within our municipality we have several mountain huts managed by the Swedish Tourist Association. Together we'll develop artists'

residencies at these huts, for new projects and site-specific art. We urge all residents to offer some artistic experience for the local audience and visitors. The people coming to stay at the huts will be able to do artistic hikes, soundwalks, see work in progress and artworks carried out with and within breathtaking nature by the residing artist.

Culture Knocks On Your Door

This is a theatre-oriented project where the audience receives a visit at their doorstep, and a unique, personal theatre experience right in their own house. Each performance will be different, as the setting and audience will change each time, calling for the actors to adapt to the situation. The line between the private and the production will blur, and the spectator will become a part of the narrative and setting. A way to open up, reach out and spread culture to those who may not easily get to a venue but gladly open their door and offer a cup of coffee to a small theatre company.

The Giron Sámi Teáhter and the Tornedalsteatern have the mission to promote the minority language and culture in their field. This project will be held in different languages and especially promoting our minority languages Sámi, Meänkieli and Finnish, giving the audience a possibility to take part in culture in their own language. The Giron Sámi Teáhter and the Tornedalsteatern will create together with practitioners, independent groups and institutions from other minority cultures of Europe, collaborate with local amateur groups and be part of the **Dream Summer Job**. A project where young people get to work with professionals in the creative and cultural industry during summer. This will be a way to encourage children and youths to learn a minority

language, to use and practice it as a natural part of our lives – a way to show that despite our different pronunciations, we are quite the same underneath.

Kiruna The Game

Together with game developers, residents and historians, we will explore and develop different games that highlight Kiruna, the urban transition and our rich history and culture. From simple variants – memory games and deck of cards, easy to bring along as a souvenir of Kiruna – to more advanced strategic board games where the players build the new Kiruna and balance different interests. For the younger ones, a Kiruna game that highlights nature, culture and history. A board game to play at home and as a pedagogic tool in schools. Going for the **digital gaming experience**, we lean towards the structure of a Pokémon-Go system. The players must find the hidden treasures, solve riddles and tasks. A game that will take you outdoors on a cultural adventure in a fun, educational and creative way, while boosting your health.

Global Indigenous Art by Konstmuseet i Norr

A world-renowned artist, based in the village Övre Soppero in Kiruna municipality, **Britta Marakatt-Labba** is a storyteller working with fabric, needles and thread. As she addresses the history and mythology of the Sámi she is always alert to the conditions of indigenous people. Climate change, which is rampant in the Arctic region, is at the core of her recent work. In addition to being a celebrated artist, Marakatt-Labba is a community leader who since the 1970s has been part of indigenous struggles. Leading up to 2029, Konstmuseet i Norr will develop a network of art institutions focusing on indigenous and other

marginalised groups in Norway, Finland, Canada, Brazil, Taiwan, Australia and New Zealand, to collaborate on a series of exhibitions and seminars dealing with land and water-based livelihoods.

Kultural Kafé and Cultural Buddies

The Kultura Kafé and Cultural Buddies are conceived to create an inclusive environment for languages, cultures and ideas to mix and merge. The Kultura Kafé will pop-up at local coffeeshops, homesteads and outdoor fireplaces, allowing to share a typical Swedish fika moment with new and old friends in an open-minded space. The Cultural Buddies will be a part of our volunteering programme, creating local ambassadors for bringing new audiences and individuals to artistic and contemporary events. Collaborating with the municipal relocation guide and culturally oriented associations, the Cultural Buddies programme will be a way to explore and socialise at the same time. A way to prevent isolation, create a social comfort zone and a community of locals and expats.

ECoC Village Platform

As a way to include all the 50 plus villages in our ECoC, we'll create a physical structure, an iconic platform serving as a temporary cultural meeting place, public square, stage and exhibition space. Working closely with the community members and artists, each village will have their own ECoC Village Platform, to showcase local artists, culture and create gatherings throughout the year. These platforms can be used for music, art, performances and communication locally, creating a recognisable ECoC feature in each village.

In Space

Third Planet From The Sun

As a new pedestrian and bike path will be built and finished 2028, connecting the city centre with the Swedish Institute for Space Physics. We'll use this opportunity to create an artistic and educational project to be incorporated in the already planned infrastructure. Together with the research institute, responsible departments, authorities and creatives, we'll connect researchers and artists to develop artworks to be placed and experienced along the new pathway. By connecting science and art, you'll get in contact with research, findings and knowledge in new, inspiring and innovative ways. Strengthening Kiruna as the European Space Capital we really are.

Light up Space

When the period of never-ending midnight sun is starting to fade, it doesn't take long before the dark hours take over. We want to fill the gap between summer sun and winter white using light as a medium for artistic expression.

Collaborating with light-artists and collectives in Sweden and Europe, we'll develop a project to deliver events, happenings and installations for shorter and longer periods, all aiming at exciting people to go outside and ignite bright feelings to endure the darkest of days. By involving schools and artistic lighting designers, we can add colour, messages and images to the dark spaces in our rural and urban environment.

One particular project will be the **Ski in Colour**, where parts of our slopes for downhill skiing and sections of our cross-country tracks will have a change of colour scheme to the existing

lights. Colours have a huge effect on us, what hue surrounds us can set the tone of feelings and mental state, creating smiles and joy as you enjoy nature and fresh air. By working with colour experts and designers, we can create worlds covered in magical colours that push people off the couch scrolling and taking a walk outside. We will create a system and routine of how to change the colours of the lights, so that staff at the Technical Department or a contracted association easily can set it up every year and it becomes a permanent system.

Close to our city centre we have two old mining towers, old monuments of historical times in grey smooth concrete. They have become new landmarks as the city relocated just a stone throw away from them. A new walkway passing by the towers will open in 2024, connecting a residential area with the new city centre. Rather than standing in darkness as two monoliths, we will use the surface to project stories, messages and art onto them. We will get the technical gear and installations in place to continue having a yearly lightshow and artists showing their take on **Art at the Towers**.

The magnificent Aurora, Northern light, can be seen from early September, as soon as it's dark enough for the lights to appear across the sky in the evenings. But because it's not always there, and for cloudy days, we will create a spot where you can always experience an artistic take on the artificial Northern light, sit back and enjoy the ArcTificial Aurora for a moment. Another project lifting your gaze is the **drone project**. Using current and new techniques with a heap of **choreographed drones**, you'll be able to experience a show and event where stories and

tales about the sky, mythological beings and the Sámi constellations are delivered in innovative sets above you.

Kiruna Soundscape

An important artefact saved from the old centre is the 26 metres tall clocktower. Previously placed on top of the old city hall, but now brought down to ground level and placed on the new City Hall square. A friendly, well-known memory to all citizens of Kiruna, welcomes you. At the top of the tower, 23 bells ring a melody at 9 a.m., 12, 3 and 6 p.m. every day. The bells can be programmed to play different melodies, and the Kiruna Soundscape project will offer composers a chance to create new pieces to be performed and heard during 2029. What is the sound of Kiruna? How can the tonality of our new city be transformed into signature melodies? We invite international musicians to use the urban audio space and set the new tones for Kiruna.

Arctic film

The Arctic Light Film Festival is a yearly event running for over 30 years in Kiruna. The association delivers world class films and events during a movie-packed week in November. For our ECoC the festival organisation wants to go beyond their usual movie experience and deliver movie date-nights in ECoC Arks, using a snow wall as an outdoor cinema and drive-ins for snowmobiles, in both rural and urban setting. They also want to build knowledge and competence in filmmaking, directing and the film industry by collaborating with other major institutes for talks, lectures, workshops, camps and education around Arctic and Sámi filmmaking. As mentioned in our cultural strategy, Kiruna is a hot topic and scenery in the national and international film industry,

something we'll make use of much more for our ECoC development.

Creative hub

This is a plan we describe in Q6, a place where practitioners of creative fields can come to start up, meet, build capacities and develop together. A place where creative competence can flourish and enable collaborations between the creative sector, private sector, youth clubs and schools. A creative hub is part of the cultural strategy, something we need in Kiruna to maintain sustainable cultural activities and networks. This hub will be the meeting place in Kiruna for residencies, national and international creatives and artists so they can evolve and collaborate between cultural areas and expressions. This is where some of the magic will happen, new cultural seeds will be planted and grow leading to the ECoC year, and then be well rooted and a part of the cultural structure in Kiruna.

Q12. Combining local heritage and traditional art forms with new, innovative and experimental cultural expressions

Building up towards our ECoC year, Kiruna 2029 wants to set a new cultural standard by highlighting the artistic quality and diversity that we can gain, create, and take part in in Kiruna. With new artistic expressions and international dimensions, we aim to build competence in the audience, young and old, to join the cultural life and experiences more often. By incorporating "new" expressions, like sound and light arts or gaming and mixing them with our incredible range of natural materials and traditional culture,

we'll reach out to a wider audience, individuals unfamiliar, or not so used to culture, to join in and be part of the culture activities that will come their way.

In Kiruna, we have an unexpected and highly valuable mix of traditional crafts and materials, new ideas and technological opportunities. For example, to use our **iron ore** as an artistic material for the Heavy Magnetite Art project or **drones** used for reindeer herding as an **airborne artistic show** against a starlit backdrop. We also make use of our rich **outdoor communities** to deliver a spectacular winter show with Free Vertical, where skiers and snowboarders **are choreographed** in beautiful structures, formations and flying over big jumps, coming down a hill lit in different colors and to the sound of specifically produced music and soundscapes. We will use our local materials as universal language and let craft, food, music and art become the cultural glue and channels to communicate cultural heritage in new and contemporary ways to a local and European audience. Our project **Behind the Gates** e.g. tells the story of women in industry through the decades in a performance of contemporary dance while A Taste of Culture reinvents traditional culinary experiences in innovative ways.

We have plenty of unusual materials close at hand, like reindeer antlers and fur, wood, magnetite, snow and ice. We also have a rich knowledge of crafts and **duodji, traditional Sámi crafts**. Cultural traditions, from all our minority groups, have enormous value but are sometimes difficult to pass on to new generations or even to make known outside of the minority community. One of the most internationally renowned Sámi artists in our programme is **Britta Marakatt-Labba**.

She uses traditional needle work and textile art to stitch paintings showing very **current themes** like climate change and indigenous struggles.

We will invite a broad range of artists to mix **traditional materials and techniques** with temporary media like ice and snow and **contemporary media of augmented, virtual and mixed reality**, fusing new artistic expressions. Soundwalks, artwalks, art installations, dance, music and **jojk** and events happening at very remote sites can use geo-tags to be located and become geographically relatable.

Today, society has moved towards a **digital everyday life**, where we experience and interact more through our mobile devices. For us living in rural and sparsely populated areas, this creates opportunities to live, work, connect and take part in cultural life and **produce art and showcase** it to the world at large. For our ECoC year, **digital experiences** will play a big role in delivering artistic quality projects to our big community and to an international audience. But also, with the help of the European Capital of Culture, we can re-establish physical meeting places where the communities can gather, share cultural experiences and **co-create with artists** to carry cultural heritage, traditions, and history forward into the future. It's a way to rekindle the desire to participate in our community and in culture, something we have leaned on over generations to live in this, for many, remote and harsh outposts.

Our programme aims to promote quality, artistic renewal and innovation and at the same time encourage a living cultural heritage that is preserved, lived and carried on through generations.



Kusinerna
Giron Sámi Teáhter

Q13. How the city involved and will involve local artists and cultural organisations in Kiruna 2029

For the development of a concept and programme for Kiruna 2029 we set up a concept group including different genders, ages, geographical representation, cultural backgrounds and cultural fields. We understand why the questions about involvement of artists and involvement of citizens and civic society are in two different chapters. However, in our case you will find quite a few crossovers. We often do not make a clear cut between those who create professionally and non-professionally. This is why our concept group consists of artists and people from cultural institutions but also from cultural associations and minority groups – and sometimes even both in one person.

The concept group's task has been to fine-tune the concept title, the cultural and artistic outline and artistic vision of the programme. If we proceed to the next stage, they will continue to form the final programme.

We've also invited all the associations for open meetings and offered individual meetings on request. We've been in dialogue with all the major artistic and creative institutions and involved them in this work. Some have added to the overall text and others have been more involved in the artistic programme. Conversations with local cultural institutions, organisation and association working within our municipality will continue to be carried out during next year if we proceed to the next phase. In that case, to reach more individual artists we plan for an open call for projects to include in the final programme. For this we'll use existing networks and organisations for spreading and sharing the possibility to participate in this process.

Local cultural associations and partners

Ateljé nord
Tusen Toner
Kiruna Sameförening
Norrbottnens museum
Arctic light film festival
Föreningen Kirunas Rötter
Kiruna Amatörteatern
Kiruna Folkdanslag
Tornedalsteatern
Heart of sound
Bokfestivalen
Spill
Ripan
Kaalasvuoma hembygdsförening
Konstfrämjandet Norrbotten
Tidningsföreningen i Kiruna
Parraka Folkets hus förening
Vittangi Folkets hus förening
Kuoksu Hembygdsförening
Suijavaara intresseförening
Idivuoma fritidsförening
Tuollavaara byaförening
Pessinki Sameförening
Konstmuseet i Norr
Xale Yi barnfestival
Library Kulturskolan
Koncentrat

Dansklacken
Kiruna filmstudio
Giron Sámi Teáhter
Poiki Art and Design Camp
Vittangi hembygdsförening
Parraka Hembygdsförening
Norrbottnens Föreningsarkiv
Piilijärvi Samfällighetsförening
Kurravaara Hembygdsförening
Jukkasjärvi Folkets hus förening
Karesuando Hembygdsförening
Abisko intresseförening och idrottsklubb
Övre Sopper hembygdsförening
Kvenlandsförbundet/Kveenimaayhistys
Snöfestivalen
Kultura Kiruna
Kiruna konstgille
Kiruna Konstkollektiv
Kiruna Accordion Club
Duojáríid ja dáiddáriid
Spelföreningen Sällskapet
Loy Krathong Festival
Kören Sångvännerna
Kiruna sameförening
Kirunafestivalen
Saivomuotka IK
Duoddaras Finländarnas klubb
Icehotel

Filmpool Nord
Nutti Sami Siida
SODA spelförening
Lainio hembygds-gille
Soppero sameförening
Kiruna Forskarförening

This is how we plan to involve local artists and organisations in implementing the cultural programme

Do a "village tour", visit all the main villages and gather artists and creative workers living outside of the city in different cluster areas, west, north and east. This way we include all the smaller villages and make sure the programme has a rural perspective and voice of the whole community. Creating an equal opportunity for people living in the countryside to get involved and support the programme.

All the local and regional major cultural institutions will be a part of implementing the programme, such as the Giron Sámi Teáhter, Tornedalsteatern, Konstmuseet I Norr, Konstfrämjandet i Norrbotten, Norrbottens Museum and Norrbottens Theatre, Norrbottens Music and BD Pop, who will be the main organisers for some of the artistic projects as they have the capacities and daily practice to deliver large parts of the programme.

Open calls for projects on the local, national and international level will give more local artists and institutions to get involved in the implementation. It also opens options for international cooperations and joint applications between local and national or international players. We plan to keep an open door for project ideas as long as possible.

The organisation and creative leaders at the Giron Sámi Teáhter will involve a larger Sámi community and artists more in depth. Through curated meetings, workshops and dialogues they want to make sure this work is imbedded and supported in the artistic network and make sure the narrative and cultural expressions are coming from and are made by Sámi artists and creatives.

We will gather associations and professionals from the same field like film/photo, theatre, dance, visual art, music, literature, duodji and so on for joint planning. This will strengthen each strand, allow better flow of ideas and give us a chance to focus on a shared artistic expression and implementation of the programme. Here we'll collaborate with main organisations and ambassadors to reach out to the right target group and individuals in each field.



Opferm...

3. European dimension

Q14 a/b. Our take on contributing to Europe's cultural diversity; how we tackle European issues and promote common aspects of European cultures and heritage

Oh, well. What's another Arctic, northern ECoC city? After all, I suppose it would be frightfully cold, and lonesome, and completely... Completely wonderful!

That's what Cinderella would say if she looked through her window and longingly laid her eyes on Kiruna.

For us in the Arctic, the general idea is that Europe is something far away. Doesn't concern us too much. When we travel abroad, south of Scandinavia, we say "I go to Europe on vacation". Stating that we don't make the connection that we already ARE in Europe to begin with. Where we live, far from the power structures, the EU is just not around much. We don't feel particularly European. Or do we?

Looking closer at the issues we celebrate or struggle with, it becomes clear that this feeling does not entirely match the reality about our connection to Europe. The European Capital of Culture is a chance to develop this conviction that we are in fact Europe ourselves. It's true that we're neither the heart of Europe nor central in Europe.

But we are Arctic Europe, the top end of Europe. Edgy, on its northern frontline. This is the identity and image we want to strengthen, and shout out to Europe: Up here, look up. This too is Europe.

Europe's viral topics are ours, too. To what point do we exploit natural resources? Who has the right of land? How do we rebuild our cities under the European Green Deal? And what about our much-needed immigration? How do we transform our heavy industry with more sustainable energy? What is our take on cultural diversity that we bring to the European table? With the last indigenous people in Europe transcending national borders as well as our minority languages and cultures.

As becomes very clear very quickly, we share a lot of issues and themes with other cities and regions in Europe. For all these shared themes we want to make use of existing and new connections and relationships to show people in Europe who we are through collaborations and exchanges – adding our Arctic point of view. Opening doors to wider scenes, new cultural terrain and strengthening the European bond through culture.

It's Only Natural

Key themes:

Climate change

Right of land

Nature and natural resources

Indigenous oppression and culture

We became central in situations when raw material became vital, e.g. in wartimes. After WWII, when Europe was in shatters, Kiruna was still intact and the raw material coming from here played a big role in rebuilding Europe as we see it today. Still today an important contributor to the European wealth. With our big mining industry now starting the shift from fossil-fuel to fossil-free production, we have a big impact on the European Green Deal.

Our knowledge on nature is something we can share with other Europeans, to better protect and create a relationship with nature wherever in Europe we live. This will also have a big impact on the European Green Deal. In Sweden we still have our unique "freedom to roam", our allemansrätt. It gives us permission to walk, pick berries and flowers, pitch a tent and make a fire almost anywhere we want in nature. Nature here is free and public. We learn how to take care of nature, how to behave in nature from a very early age – something that many in Europe ought to

learn. The Sámi and minorities in our area have an even deeper relationship to nature and knowledge way beyond schoolbooks. For example, in Sámi culture, you always ask nature for permission before pitching a tent or gathering stones to arrange a ring for your fire, a humble way to say nature is setting the rules for human behaviour.

We think it is these values that an ECoC up here in this vast nature can share with Europe. For example, in the artistic Wind Shelters and Peak Art projects, we'll make use of traditional knowledge and expressions. Living so closely knit to nature, some of us for recreation and some of us for livelihood, climate change is real and intense. We are dependent on every season – all eight of them as we have it from the Sámi calendar. Reindeer herders struggles to operate as they traditionally used to, knowledge passed down through generations of how to care for the animals and land is difficult to follow, as conditions are changing so dramatically.

In Abisko, a village 70km west of Kiruna, we have a big science research station; Swedish Polar Research Secretariat, that has been collecting data and carrying out climate related research since 1913. Our second research station is located in the high alpine terrain focusing on glaciers and climate. Our area is a part of the cooling box of the earth, keeping the climate level and cool in Europe. Right now, we are heating up rapidly. If the temperature varies by 5°C it might not seem like a huge deal. But when the temperature goes from -2°C to +3°C it's the difference in precipitation from snow to water, causing huge disturbance in the eco-system for us.

Soon, we are the only area in Europe with fresh, new snow. Not snow coming from snow-cans or preserved under tarps from previous years. But light, fluffy, clean snow falling from the sky. The third research station is the Swedish Institute of Space Physics, carrying out various research projects in the realm of space innovation. All research stations are feeding Europe with new data and knowledge about the arctic situation. During our ECoC process we want to explore the combination of science and art to make both climate and space research more accessible with cultural methods. Our ArcTistic Residence programme among others will issue calls for projects that combine these disciplines. Being a central location within Sápmi, we carry the culture of the last European indigenous people. This is a matter not only for Kiruna, but for all people of Europe. We all need understanding and knowledge about their strong culture, history and way of life today – about the Sámi and our smaller minority groups of Kvens, Tornedalians and Lantalajset, who all experienced oppression and colonialism. The universal theme of indigenous people, the rights, the struggles, the cultural expression and connection to other indigenous people worldwide is something we keep as a strong theme throughout our bid. Situations and current issues amongst minorities, is a topic that Konstmuseet I Norr will largely focus on to produce an exhibition and collaboration with the internationally renowned artist Britta Marakatt Labba. The homestead in Jukkasjärvi, an important location in both Sámi and Tornedalian culture, will produce open air plays in collaboration with The Tornedalsteatern and the Giron Sámi Teáhter, to let the narrative of our ancestors come alive under the Arctic midnight sun.

Freedom To Be

Key themes:

Democracy

Freedom of speech

Racism, nationalism and xenophobia

Sweden in the NATO

War in Ukraine

Radicalisation, polarisation, terrorism are happening all over Europe and need to be addressed. Xenophobic and nationalist parties are growing everywhere, sending messages of closing borders and only caring for ourselves, instead of joining and seeing Europe – within the global reality – as one. Democracy has even become a politically sensitive word. Democracy that has been a given, a right taken for granted. But if not taken care of and protected, will crumble and disassemble.

Here in Sweden, often thought of as a model of tolerance, our Freedom of Speech is put under pressure, as Sweden is dealing with radical groups provoking social discord and undermining democracy. This has huge consequences in our international relationships and view of Sweden. To create a safe, open and creative meeting place, we develop the project Kultura Kafé, a melting pot for locals and expats, languages and cultures, where curious minds can have a fika and connect in a creative environment. The artistic project Árran will focus on democratic and open places to light an open-air fire in nature, serving as places for people to bond, share a moment, create mutual memories, understanding and foster democracy.

We want to rebuild and use the ECoC process as a way of finding each other, connecting with each other and caring for democracy with each other. Cutting cultural funds – a risk we see happening all over Europe when times get rough – is the opposite of helpful in this situation. ECoC is a chance to show the importance of culture as an investment, especially in difficult times. This is why it's highly important for us to establish a Creative Hub for local artists and creatives to have a shared space for their artistic work, shared projects and better network as well as the opportunities for international and national artist to come for residencies in Kiruna.

Through the project Youth Up North (introduced in Q11 and described in more detail in Q19), we will create bridges and connections especially for young people to connect to European themes and European youth networks on their terms, as they focus on developing participation models for young people in rural areas. This will pave the way for local youths to have a closer connection to other European youths.

The war in Ukraine is redefining the field of European defence and peacebuilding. Sweden entered NATO, breaking our neutrality for the first time ever. Kiruna as a part of the Arctic and with our natural resources, is potentially at risk at being targeted. The defence in Sweden is currently being rebuilt and the old military base in Kiruna is now being armed again. Suddenly, Kiruna does not feel so far away from Europe and the international community anymore. To be honest, we would much rather prefer to get closer to Europe through culture, art and ECoC.



Andreas Welin
Artscape

City transformation

Key themes

Designed living environments

Community culture

Culture and education

Culture for elderly

Rebuilding the city

Make place for memories

First the good news. Through New European Bauhaus we are a part of the project Visions in the North (Visioner i Norr) run by ArkDes, our Art and Design National Authority. City planners and architects, artists and designers looked at how to transform an old mining area into new public space. They worked under the motto “what was lost in the city transformation”, building on ideas of re-using materials and re-using old buildings and including a historical museum for memories and the past. During 2024, we embark on the second stage of the project and will now develop some of the concepts further. As we do so, we want to find out more from other, New Bauhaus inspired, partners across Europe but especially in ECoC land.

And that leads us to the less good news. We need to avoid falling into the trap of producing new, grand buildings, and a clinical, cold approach to major redevelopment. Potentially we are pushing away local culture, associations, artists and community groups. Associations in the cultural sector are in danger of losing their facilities, workshops, rehearsal studios. Some voices in the cultural community are voicing discontent with this new commercial take on culture offered in the new city centre. Established yearly events, festivals and arrangements all have to change their

budgets, routines and logistics to adapt to the new circumstances.

We see this as a crucial and common issue right across Europe. Plenty of cities are transforming parts of their cityscape from partly industrial areas to business or apartment areas. Gentrification is pushing up rents, pushing out the informal, grass roots and creative communities. We want to use the ECoC process to help to provide a positive influence so that creative and people-centred placemaking is brought into the heart of our redevelopment process. Learning from other about how to ensure that space is given for art. That meeting places, creativity and an open environment where people feel welcome and happy are the most important goals for our city transformation.

That’s the kind of transformation that works whether you are in the frozen north or in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Q14 c. Kiruna’s partnerships with cultural operators and cities around Europe

As mentioned in previous questions, our cultural connection and identity with the European scene needs to be strengthened. We’ll strongly focus on our European links and engage in wider European networks, exchanges and projects. A step in that direction is to participate in our first conference in the Culture Next network 2024. Culture Next connects us with 37 European cities including those who have or haven’t been designated as ECoC and we expect to learn from their experience as well as find cooperation partners

for our projects. Although Kiruna, to some extent, has an international vibe, we need to get out of our comfort zone and better explore the European smorgasbord, to use a Swedish expression.

The European Space University for Earth and Humanity (UNIVERSEH) is an excellent channel for contacts connected to Space Engineering at the Technical University of Luleå, and six other universities in Europe namely Toulouse, Düsseldorf, Krakow, Luxemburg, Rome and Namur. Potential partners for our projects Third Planet from the Sun and Art in Space.

Seeing the specifics and conditions of Kiruna, our focus is to connect with cities dealing with similar issues to be able to share, exchange and learn. Cities dealing with rebuilding their city centre, connecting to our city transformation, like many cities around Europe who try smaller scale regeneration of their city centres with the principle of the New European Bauhaus. Cities with major heavy industries, relating to our mining like Katowice in Poland. Cities located and surrounded by nature, dealing with climate change and structures for sustainable tourism and promoting local and minority cultures, like Oulu in Finland and Bodø in Norway. Or like Larnaca in Cyprus, where we have established contact and are finding similarities in our experiences of being located on the outskirts of Europe although at opposite ends. We also want to connect to rural places around Europe with similar issues of finding enough doctors and teachers like Veszprém or Bourges. Another example is Nova Gorica, who is connected to its neighbouring country Italy just like us bordering Finland and sharing traditions and language culture as well as language issues.

We, of course, also see the need to engage with cities different from us, to paint the big multicultural picture of Europe and finding common ground in artistic expressions.

One of our twin cities is Narvik, in Norway, and we share plenty of cultural context and history. A shared story that both cities will develop further in a mutual project, is the history of the Navvies and the railway connecting our cities. The railway is called Malmbanan in Swedish, an iron-ore railway that runs through breathtaking landscape with hand carved tunnels and deep fjords. Here we have plenty of stories to bring out to Europe and historical sites to develop along the way.

Giron Sámi Teáhter, Tornedalsteatern, Konstmuseet i Norr, Konstfrämjandet and the Snow Festival all have their own international artistic networks and shared projects. Being a part of the ECoC process, the organisations will have the opportunity to strengthen and deepen the European dimension and collaborations.

Paint the big multicultural picture of Europe

The Torne Valley Council cooperates with Frankfurt an der Oder and Slubicher, a German and a Polish city separated by the Oder River. This applies to Happaranda in Sweden and Tornio in Finland, which are located on either side of the Torne River. We want to build on this collaboration and work with culture as a unifying force between countries in Europe.

Q15. Our overall strategy to attract the interest of the European and international public

The overall strategy is to develop our very own combination, our unique blend of culture and nature for people from all over Europe who have never thought of the Arctic in a cultural way. And for those who have never thought of culture the Arctic way.

Today Kiruna offers authentic and unique nature experiences for both tranquillity seekers and adrenalin junkies from near and far. Wrongly expressed, some label our vast natural landscape as “the last untouched wilderness in Europe”. We say it’s not true, it’s not untouched as people have been walking, using and caring for this land for centuries already. But it’s true that we still have unexploited nature and large areas with no mobile reception where you can go for days without meeting any human.

Kiruna is already a well-established tourist destination all year around, mainly to outdoor and nature tourism. In winter we have tour operators and high-end guest coming to experience the aurora, northern light, go dogsledding, ski-touring with guides and visit the Icehotel. In summer, it’s the midnight sun and endless nights being the main attraction along with hiking, biking, kayaking and fishing.

Lately we’ve also experienced a new group: demolition tourism, because of our city’s transformation. The latter has also attracted higher educational collaboration, as design, architecture, and city development. An example is the collaboration with the Politecnico di Torino,

who use Kiruna as a model in the course named “Architectural Design Theory”. Kiruna is a part of a strategy game reflecting on the social and political implications of design. This is a way to reach out to a special interest European and international public.

Our tourism sector is one of our baseline industries and our Destination Management Organisation, Kiruna Lapland, is run by about 100 members operating within our municipality. Together they welcome over 500 000 overnight guests every year to our municipality. Our 6,000 lakes, the highest mountain in Sweden, the Kungleden hiking trail, the Lappporten (the gate to Lapland) the Icehotel, the underground Mining Visitor Centre, the Sámi Centre and Aurora Sky Station are all different attractions and reasons why to travel to Kiruna and the list goes on.

During 2023-2026 Kiruna Lapland is participating in the Arctic Europe Tourism Cluster project, financed among others by the EU programme Interreg Aurora. It includes cross-border cooperation within the cooperation platform Visit Arctic Europe together with tourism companies from Northern Norway and Finnish Lapland. The project’s goal is to build a more resilient and regenerative tourism, to meet rapid changes and future expectations and benefit the tourism industry, local communities and visitors in Arctic Europe. Excellent preparation for 2029 and the ramp-up years to welcome international audiences sustainably.

Kiruna Lapland has a strong focus on sustainable tourism and has developed criteria and standards for their members to adapt to, in order to be called an Arctic Sustainable Destination.

Our way to deliver a sustainable experience in Kiruna, is an important part of the strategy to attract an international public. The new element will be to add the cultural experience within the natural, very close to nature. And that will make Kiruna as an ECoC an innovative destination as well as a good story for media and coverage of sustainable tourism.

As the numbers of visitors in Kiruna are already quite high, we plan to develop new innovative ways to fit all guests and accommodate the expected increase in visitors if we are awarded the title. Even though we currently have a new hotel under construction and in the years to come, we'll open two new hotels in Kiruna, we still need more accommodation – and we want to offer unusual ways that are closer to our local lifestyle. Using our local and traditional ways of sleeping in Sámi tents, called lávvu and the ark (explained in Q10), we can create larger landscapes of temporary, pop-up accommodation at the most remote but also urban places. We want to use our local way of living as a strategy to attract a European interest, both as **artistic and creative accommodation** but also as venues where to experience culture, like the **Ark festival**.

We are in no state to compete with the largest venues and big-scale events in Europe. Also, dealing with the aftermath of Covid, our strategy is not to gather masses of people tightly squeezed together. But quite the opposite. We know who we are, and we stay true to our identity: an Arctic, industrial and creative small-scale nature city. We will deliver experiences according to our size and capacity. What we offer to a European and international audience, is the intimate, the exclusive and the personal. Invite guests as

friends, to be a part of our Arctic lifestyle. This is something that we believe will appeal to an international public.

Q16. Links to designated European Capitals of Culture and other candidate cities

The first contact, and naturally so since it was the last ECoC in Sweden, is to **Umeå 2014** where we have established a close exchange with former CEO Fredrik Lindegren. He has been supportive in dialogue but also visited Kiruna and met the steering group, politicians, the concept group and shared his insights at an open meeting with citizens. This is very valuable, and Fredrik will assist with knowledge during the process going forward.

We have also established close contacts with **Bodø 2024** in Norway which came quite easy since we share a very similar habitat up here in the North of Europe and the Arctic. From Bodø we have had a lot of information about the bidding process itself, the ways to engage with young people. Bodø inspired us to let part of the programme be organised by young people.

We also want to learn from the way the team integrates Sámi and minority culture into the programme (as they do for the opening) and how they process the oppression of the Sámi for example through their project Juovssaheaddji – The Return Driver about the witch hunts in the 17th century to which Sámi shamans fell victim. We are planning to visit the opening to get some first-hand experience on what it feels like to be the European Capital of Culture with an Arctic winter opening.

With **Oulu 2026** in Finland, we are in close exchange about different themes we share. One is Oulu's reputation as a hard tech-city which we relate to with our heavy industry and mining image. A Cultural Climate Change, as Oulu is proposing, would be healthy for us as well. We are also cooperating on issues of climate change and will deepen the relations on combining art and technology with their knowledge and expertise. Together with Karasjok and Koutokeino in Norway, we are also part of the funding application to Nordisk Kulturfond, initiated by Oulu, as a part of their Borderless Sámi Culture programme line and to strengthen our Nordic networks within Sápmi.

Also in Finland, we'd like to develop a connection with **Turku (2011 ECoC)**. We know that Turku celebrates its 800th birthday in 2029. We understand, too, that the city's highly regarded museum service is building a new museum. We'd like to pick up some tips about how to develop our historic museum as well as finding ways to share the 2029 connection.

We want to share what **Bad Ischl/Salzkammergut 2024** has learned about developing a new cultural geography for rural areas, and their history as a salt mining area in the midst of beautiful nature. We see connections with their "Vereine" – the associations which are such an important part of cultural and community life – like ours - and which also grew from mining communities. From **Tartu 2024** we'd like to find out more about how South Estonian rural culture has been reflected in the programme. And also, whether the impressive Finno-Ugric exhibition in the National Museum can inspire us in our presentation of minority/ indigenous culture and craft.

By the time we were ready to contact them, the **candidate cities in Poland 2029** had already gone through their preselection phase. After their announcement we concentrated on the shortlisted cities Bielsko-Biała, Katowice, Kołobrzeg, and Lublin. Since one of these cities will be our direct partner city if we are designated, we plan to develop our strongest ECoC connection to the Polish partners. For the moment, learning from already designated ECoC makes more sense, but towards the year 2029 the Polish ECoC city will be closer related to the Swedish ECoC city than any two other cities in Europe.

Bielsko-Biała is set in a border area close to the Czech and Slovak borders just as we are with Finland and Norway – and just as Bielsko we don't share the same language with our neighbours. As mentioned before with **Katowice** we share the industrial city background. Their project Between Arts & Crafts could be an excellent exchange project with our approach to crafts including our planned creative hub. **Kołobrzeg** and their Regeneration concept comes very close to what is happening in our city right now and we will further exchange on concrete possibilities to work together on projects of urban regeneration. Finally, **Lublin** is out for a Re:Union and the way the world looks right now, we have to be careful not to drift any further apart in Europe and beyond. Although Lublin is focussing on Eastern Europe we are planning on cooperating on themes like democracy and how to remain open for dialogue with different social and value "bubbles".

We have had some exchange with **Veszprém 2023** and were enthusiastic about their experience with significantly increased numbers in students applying at their university and especially of resident doctors' applications at the local hospital which in previous years they struggled with. Similar

struggles with attracting doctors, young talents and skilled labour we also share with candidate city **Bourges 2028** who told us that their setting in the countryside leads to brain drain and jeopardised services. And we thought everything was swell for cities at the heart of France. With another French candidate city **Rouen 2028**, we share the similar situation of a waterway, the river Seine connecting and dividing a city and stretch of land, just like our Torne River, that cuts through our entire municipality and all the way out to the Finnish border. If both of our cities are to proceed, we plan on developing an artistic project focusing on the natural resources we can make use of in our urban landscapes as a shared artistic field.

The already designated city in Czech Republic, **České Budějovice 2028** appeals to us with their concept Permaculture and the Care, Connect, Create-approach which has a lot in common with our wish to move with care below ground, on earth and in space.

Through our contact with Cypriot candidate city Larnaca 2030, it was clear that our cities connect by Larnaca's current situation of transforming parts of their city from industrial to public spaces and our city transformation. With Limassol 2030 candidate in Cyprus, we share questions of urban transformation as well: How to make citizens not spectators of the changes but active co-creators who raise their voice for their city.

Kiruna and Uppsala, as Swedish candidate cities have had continuous dialogue with each other during the preparatory phase. Together we have formed an agreement whereby we commit to cooperation, regardless of the competition outcomes.





4. Outreach

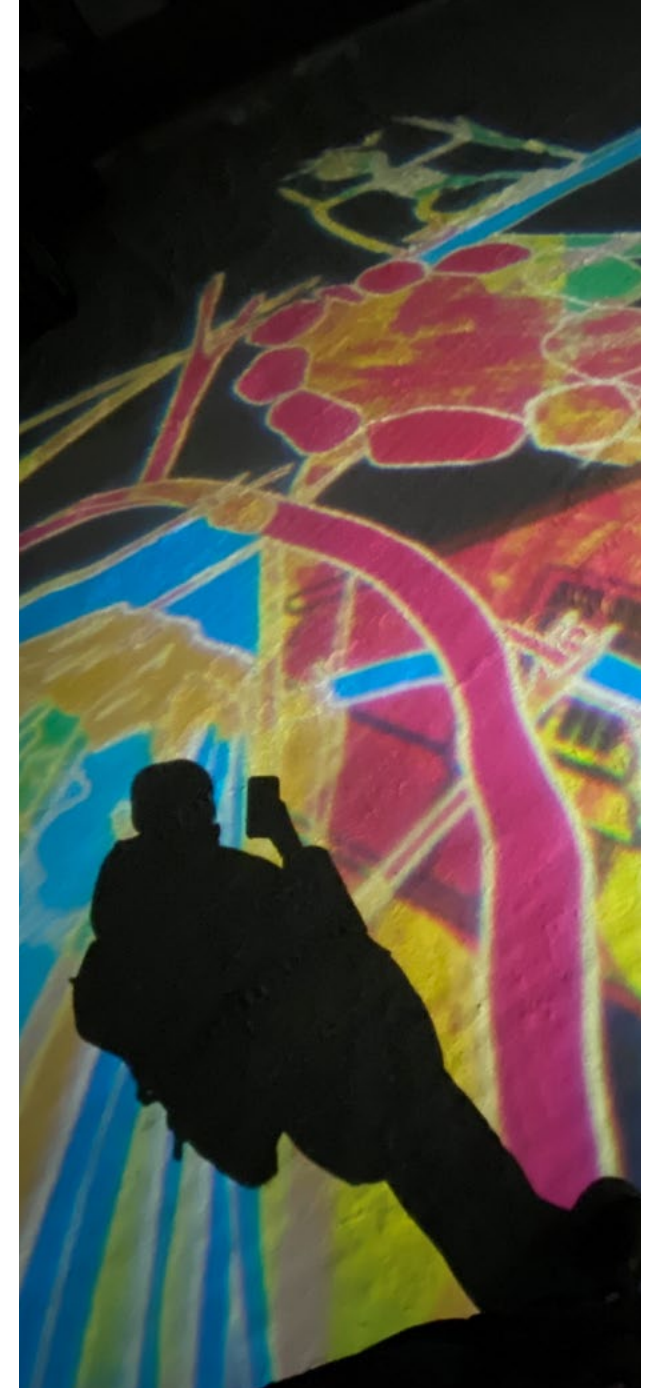
Q17. Involvement of the local population and civil society

The key feature of “civil society” in our part of the world is the number of associations which involve people in culture, sports and history, support disadvantaged groups, and provide social activities for people of all ages. You can find around 400 associations and Kiruna’s associational life today is a strong engine for activities, meeting opportunities and events throughout the municipality, and above all in the countryside and in the villages. Most citizens in Kiruna are involved in several associations. Through ECoC, we want to strengthen this and see it grow even stronger. After the pandemic, association life has taken a small step back. But with the major boost of an exciting ECoC that is anchored through association life, we can rekindle the much-needed energy, joy and importance they bring to our community.

Whilst developing the application, these associations have been invited to open meetings, they have received information at smaller gatherings or at meetings with our team. Associations have also been invited to submit requests and thoughts about “dream projects” they would like to implement, large or small, running up to and during the ECoC year.

Kiruna 2029 wants to strengthen and build sustainable relationships and structures with associational life so that it will grow and flourish long after the ECoC year. Kiruna’s founder, Hjalmar Lundbohm was clear that culture, public education and associational life were important to build a society where people want to thrive. As we have set out previously in this application, his is a legacy for us to live up to.

And, given the sheer size of our area, we need to go mobile! Not just for the programme we plan, but to meet the locals and the association in their own arenas so they get involved in the planning and the implementation leading to the ECoC year. Our team has been available for conversations and reflections at various events where lots of people attend, like at the Kiruna centre’s one year anniversary and during our new autumn festival *Kultura Kiruna 2023*. It has been a way to show what ECoC is about, why Kiruna is applying, and how people can participate. This has been an opportunity to meet expectations, thoughts and fears. We continue doing exactly that, in a more mobile way, like hitchhiking with the mobile library (The Book Bus) that’s touring the municipality.



Light Art
Kären-Ann Hurri

Mobility is an essential element of our artistic and cultural ECoC projects like **Edible Nature, Artscape, Open-Air Play and Culture Knocks on Your Door**. Associations can then serve as the on-site hosts and organisers in the villages. We will work to highlight existing cultural and meeting places throughout our area and create new ones along the way.

We recognise the need to extend and build on the process of annual cultural grants for the 30 plus associations which currently receive grants for cultural activities. We propose to invest in additional and larger grants for cultural activities and projects that relate to the aims of the ECoC programme. What is done must also be made more visible through improved marketing.

For example, we will develop a grant specifically for young people in the context of our **Youth Platform** to create projects designed for their age group. The application process will be straightforward and user-friendly. The municipality already has a digital grant system in place where associations and private individuals can apply, and which can be used to manage and process the grant applications for the ECoC project.

Associations will also be fully involved in major events and festivals in ECoC serving as creators, hosts, ambassadors, volunteers, and organisers. Associations and citizens will be invited to participate as extras or performers for our larger events. Amateurs and professionals will meet and collaborate to create, for example our **ArcTistic Residence** where they can share workshop spaces. This will provide a foundation for growth and participation. Schools and preschools will be invited to participate, both as spectators and in the

creative process. As we describe further in Q19, children are important; they will grow up in Kiruna during the process and can therefore participate in shaping society alongside adults so they can take over when they are ready.

Our ambition for Kiruna 2029 is for everyone to find something to take part in. There will be meeting places and events where you participate when it suits you e.g. in the **Soundwalks and Jojk** or the **Arctic Art Park**. Where the threshold is low and can provide new experiences like the **Floating Exhibitions**. Through dialogue and cooperation with the associations we will create a cultural calendar that appeals to many and makes it easy for everyone to participate.

Our year-round programme of festivals will receive support to enable them to be part of a European Capital of Culture year. Not business as usual, but stronger, more creative and more international. Already dialogue has been started and will be continued on how they can best be supported, developed, and implement new ambitious content during the ECoC ramp up years.

Q18. Opportunities for marginalised and disadvantaged groups

As we indicated in Q17, our associational model is the key route to engaging with local people on their own terms and in places where they feel supported and valued. This is no exception for people who face disadvantage for whatever reason. We want to use the ECoC opportunity to strengthen our ability to be culturally inclusive. Let's face it, when you are dealing with the kind of city transformation we are engaged in, it's often

those least able to cope with the change who are hardest hit by it. Just like in the pandemic. We need to use the challenge of ECoC to help us to up our game.

To create opportunities for participation of marginalised and disadvantaged groups we engage in dialogue with the councils established in the municipality, **the Accessibility Council, the Public Health Council, the Minority Language Council, the Pensioners' Council and the Youth Council**. Through these different councils, we can highlight and raise issues that affect them in order to find ways to meet the different needs that exist and link them to Kiruna 2029's cultural activities. All these councils are also an important part of the marketing and ambassadorship for what we want to achieve with our ECoC process, together we create opportunities and activities for everyone! The municipality also has a Public Health Strategist that helps us connect statistics, research and first-hand dialogues with different user groups, so that we can put the different pieces together and get a broader picture of who needs more help and what their barriers are. This helps us target efforts, build trust and find solutions to enable more people to participate in cultural life and in the events offered during the ECoC. These "support councils" will be consulted on questions regarding programme development and event logistics to make sure we take account of those with the biggest barriers to access and participation.

Currently, the Minority Language Council handles project applications related to minority languages. Our plan is to open a **project grant for activities** connecting the minority languages with the ECoC and expand their activities beyond their own communities.

In Kiruna, we have many high-income earners and only a small proportion of socio-economically vulnerable people. This creates a big gap and the most economically deprived area in the city is right next to the strongest one. It has been shown through various studies that those who are weakest socio-economically tend to drift further away from cultural life. Those who are marginalised tend to live in the villages, be elderly and dependent on local transport for getting around, hence they find it difficult to get to the cultural events that take place in the city. Some of the solutions we described in Q17 are there for very important in order to make sure we include groups of vulnerable people in projects like the **Ark Festival, the Floating Exhibitions, Light up Space and Artscape** and deliver high quality cultural experiences in outskirts villages.

This may seem a little upside down for outsiders, but a group that feels so excluded that they tend to leave after an average of two years are the expats. Highly educated people who struggle with the language barrier, but also with our Swedish tendency of rather keeping our circles closed. And in a loosely populated area like ours not finding friends and not fitting in can lead to a high degree of marginalisation. During the project, we will, with the help of **reference groups and the municipality's Relocation guide** (Inflyttningsvärd), find ways for new residents to get to know Kiruna and establish connections in their new place we hope they will call home. They can learn about Kiruna's culture and understand it, creating forums where they can meet potential friends or get involved in community associations so that they feel involved and included in society. **Kiruna ambassadors** of different ages can be involved as **Cultural Buddies** to those who move here to form groups

attending cultural events like **Artscape** or join the cultural ski tour planned for **Kultura Kiruna**. The same applies to creating a reception structure for migrants and refugees who come to Kiruna. Facilitating their participation in the events and cultural activities for Kiruna 2029 and the ramp up years is what exceeds the tasks faced by the city administration. Projects like the **Soundwalks** or the **Arctic Art Park** or the **Behind the Gates** dance performance are all activities that help newcomers understand where they have come to and what the perks of living in Arctic Kiruna are.


After 2029 this has the potential to become standard practice within the recruitment process for new employees. Our idea of **Cultural Buddies** will be a way to prevent isolation, create a social comfort zone right where Kiruna's new heart beats for culture. We need competence from Europe, and we want them to call Kiruna their home and stay for the long-term because they like it here, not just as a short career step.

Q19. Our overall strategy for audience development and the links to education and schools

As in much of Europe, here it is mostly middle-aged and older women who are already interested in culture who visit the cultural events on offer. They go to theatre performances, art exhibitions and author talks. The hardest nut to crack is to get the majority of people to leave the couch and show up, which probably is an international situation!

Certain events are successfully aimed at a specific target group and then well visited, often when it's

something from a local artist. Cinema, which is available for all ages, is more universally popular. And we do have events that attract a younger audience, such as the Kiruna Festival in summer. Kultura Kiruna is a new autumn festival working hard to broaden its program so that there will be something during the festival that appeals to several different target groups. Fun fact: Most of our events and shows take place during the work week since many leave for cabins and camps in nature during the weekend. And that's where they will stumble upon sculptures of iron-ore in the landscape from our project **Heavy Magnetide Art** or artistically designed fireplaces or the quirky **Ark Festival**.



Exciting cultural program can encourage people to leave their couch

Most of our main venues today are located in Kiruna city, but in the villages, there are events happening, too. Not so much performing arts but other types of community activities. We explained in Q17 how we would like to build our associational model, taking more culture to the villages and out in nature, and reaching people who might never have been to a cultural event. We also want to find more ways for the people living in the villages to participate in happenings that take place in the city.

In line with our approach in Q17, the key to audience development for Kiruna is to use our established networks and build them stronger. And where we don't have any, we will develop them with those who are missing out at the moment. Developing digital tools, better transportation to

and from the events and a stronger and more exciting cultural program can encourage people to leave their couch and take part in the cultural life. We want to show the audience that culture can be much more than what they expect. We also aim for people take part in Sámi and Tornedalian cultural expressions and make them known to a wider community and audience.

Motivating the Macho Man!

Kiruna can be perceived as a rather macho city. A place where culture among certain groups is perceived as something strange, difficult and ridiculous. We want to change that. Culture is for everyone and a key group that we want to involve more as an audience is our so called "macho men". We want to invite them to take part in culture and appreciate it, and who knows, maybe be the ones on stage later on! We call it "stealth education".

By reaching out to them through their interests, which often includes the forest, hunting, fishing and snowmobiling, we "stealthily" add culture, art, and history to their world through projects like **Floating Exhibitions, Third Planet from the Sun,** or invite them to become co-creators in our project **Wind Shelters.**

The young people that drive an A-traktor (a slow-moving vehicle that is allowed to be driven from age 15) is also a group of people we want to attract as new audiences. The A-traktor culture is growing in Sweden, particularly in the North. Not everyone appreciates this culture and thinks that they should even be allowed on the streets. But we want to change that mindset and involve the young drivers during cultural events. As an example, during *Kultura Kiruna 2023* they helped

preparing the culture walk and put out 400 ice lanterns along the way, and one of them stood on the back of his A-traktor and played music during the walk, by-passers loved it!

Another way of "stealth education" is to motivate every conference being held in Kiruna to book a culture activity or programme as a lunch event, cultural break or as a social activity after the conference. A way to make adults have culture at work, like we have culture in the school's programme. Adults also need guidance on how to take part in the cultural offer, and a way to make more culture workers have jobs in Kiruna. To make the most use of all the conferences held in Kiruna, we suggest making all conferences, partly or completely, open for a general public, to allow for new competence and research to be shared with a wider audience and shared locally.

Schools and Young People

As we indicated in Q5 about our Cultural Strategy and in the Artistic Programme, the cultural development of young people is a major strategic goal. We want to help them become rounded, resilient young people who know and appreciate the entirety of their culture, and who are creative and flexible.

For students, there is a **central student council** where we can meet and ask how they want to be involved into our Youth Platform, and then work together to develop a model that suits their needs for influence and participation. There are also student councils and student unions at the municipal high school and at the Space High School (a private school specialising in space education) - and those are the two secondary schools we have, one municipal and one private, both located in Kiruna

city. In Kiruna municipality there are 16 primary schools, of which 12 are municipal and two are Sámi schools. Six schools are located in villages. Most primary schools with pre-school classes and grades 1-6 also have after-school centres on the same premises. After-school centres are places where more culture can take place through workshops or guided activities, as set out in both our cultural strategy and our long-term vision.

Preschools or other educational care have good geographical distribution both in Kiruna centre and in the municipality's larger villages. There are 28 preschools, of which 22 are municipal and two are run by the Sámi school board.

Through creative school projects (Skapande skola project) and the established cultural activities in schools and preschools, children and students currently encounter performing arts and other cultural expressions, which will be further developed during the ECoC project.

Today, there is a shortage of teachers and educators, so cultural creators can be involved in parts of the aesthetic subjects during the project. This would create an innovative synergy where teachers can focus on their areas of expertise. And at the same time, cultural creators can use their expertise to conduct educational cultural lessons linked to the educational curriculum (Läroplan in Swedish) in music, dance, art, photography, crafts and film. For some students, alternative teaching methods may work better than regular classroom instruction.

The School of Culture (Kulturskolan), the youth meeting places (Ungdomens hus), and youth consultants is how we can collaborate with young

people. Involving them in creating experiences, cultural exchanges with other young people in Europe, and to incorporate projects and experiences that they dream of for Kiruna.

We will also use our youth consultants who collaborate with the social department and the labour market unit to reach young people who are not currently participating in other activities or education. Through these networks, we will be able to reach less engaged groups of young people.

And, as we described in Q11, our plan is to develop a youth platform through the Youth Council where young people have their say in community life. As we described earlier, we want to build on a planned project called **Youth Up North** to be our major youth connection vehicle. As this platform develops, it can manage a project grant programme for ECoC activities for young people, decide on events and activities for young people and even gain work experience through the **Dream Summer Job** project.

Youth consultants also collaborate with the social department and the labour market unit to reach young people who are not currently participating in other activities or education. Through these networks, we can try to reach less engaged groups.

Generation gap, let's get together!

Some generations ago, most of one's family would live close by. Today we tend to move around more, not all children have the chance to meet their grandparents, and the elderly can live far from younger relatives. At the same time, communication and staying in touch has never

been so easy as it is with social media and phones with internet access. Despite this, more and more people feel lonely and excluded from social life. We want to highlight the cultural heritage of living as a community, togetherness and helping each other again. It can be scary to go to a cultural event on your own or for the first time. So, as mentioned in Q18 for some of the vulnerable groups, we make offers to "bring a friend" or to apply as a **Cultural Buddy**, even a Cultural Buddy across generations – Gen Z goes Boomers! We create cultural carpooling or why not let **Culture knock on your Door?**

The fact that knowledge has been passed on from generation to generation by a learning-by-example-principle can be applied to bring new audiences to culture. Ambassadors of all ages who survive culture and live to tell the tale can share their experiences, bring friends and family.

Association and councils as we mentioned in Q17 and Q18 will be helpful in this, but in this we also use the Consultant for the Elderly who works on activities in care facilities or at home in collaboration with social services. There are also senior citizens' associations that bring together older individuals who can be active in groups or on their own.

We want to implement cultural events and activities for elderly people where they are located. If they cannot leave the senior housing, for example, culture must come to them. For the elderly who can get to a local venue, we want to organise similar events where older people can mix and enjoy culture together with the younger – Gen Z and Boomers mix and match.

In these meetings, the elderly can pass on knowledge through stories or projects that capture their experience. The younger ones can add their skills and views. This could involve putting on performances, teaching new technology on various platforms, having the elderly interview the young or vice versa, or conducting workshops together in different cultural forms. By introducing a structure for cultural summer jobs for young people as described for Youth Up North above, they can share their work and tour around the municipality to perform for different groups.

Culture is part of the public health work in Kiruna, and according to a survey Kiruna municipality carried out almost 30% said they feel lonely, young and old.

Culture is a way to get together, let's do it!



5. Management

Q20. City budget for culture

Year	Annual budget for culture	% of the total annual budget in the city
2023	3 925 000	2.6%
2022	4 690 000	3.3%
2021	4 570 000	3.3%
2020	3 305 000	2.4%
2029	3 248 000	2.5%

The budgets for 2021 and 2022 are considerably higher than the other years since the additional money was needed to get the newly built Aurora Culture & Convention Centre up and running. Aurora additionally includes the Youth House, the public library, the artists' guild and the Riksteater association. 2023 we went back to the average level of cultural spending with an increase compared to 2020.

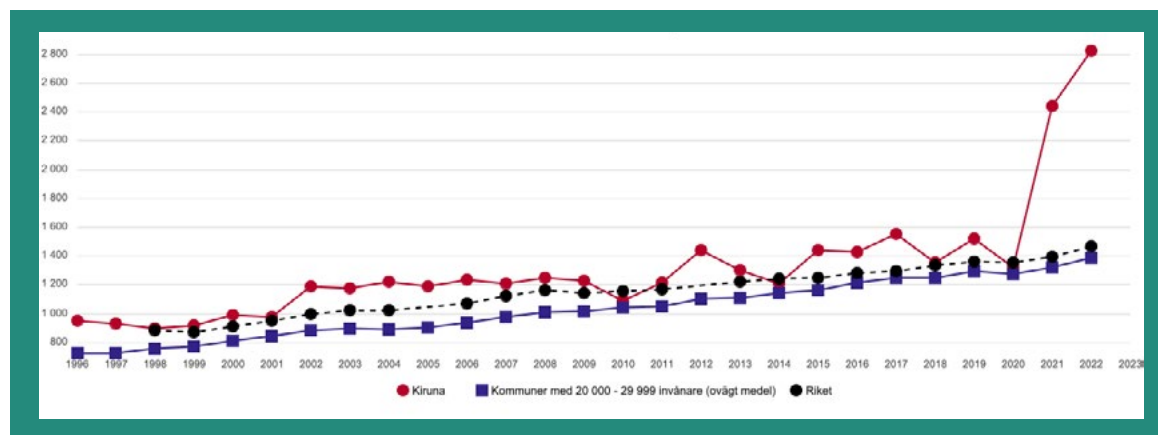
Q21. Plans to use the cultural budget to finance the ECoC

We see the European Capital of Culture as a strategic step on the way to reaching the long-term goals set in our cultural strategy. We will not reduce any existing cultural funding, but we will re-direct about 10% of the cultural budget towards the ECoC and make sure the cultural projects carried out have an ECoC focus and are a part of the ECoC programme.



Gruvarbetaren
Thomas Qvarsebo

Q22. Intended spending from the overall annual budget on culture after 2029



The budget for culture has increased over the last five years (with 2021 and 2022 being exceptions because of Aurora). The primary aim after the European Capital of Culture year is being able to sustain comparably high levels of cultural activity long term. This could partly be achieved by index-regulating the cultural budget.

This diagram shows the spending for cultural activity per citizen in Swedish currency (948 SEK \approx 85 € / 727 SEK \approx 65 €). The red line is Kiruna municipality, the grey line is the average spending per citizen in comparable municipalities, and the black line is the nationwide average.

Q23. Overall operating budget

Total income to cover operating expenditure (in euros)	From the public sector (in euros)	From the public sector (in %)	From the private sector (in euro)	From the private sector (in %)
15 000 000	11 700 000	78%	3 300 000	22%

The political will is strong, but the finances of the municipality are a bit stretched because of the city transformation. The private sector's contribution might seem high by comparison but is realistic (see Q26).

Q24. Income from the public sector to cover operating expenditure

Income from the public sector to cover operation expenditure	In euros	vtin %
National government	7 500 000	65%
City	1 800 000	15%
Region	1 350 000	12%
EU	900 000	8%
Total	11 550 000	100%

Q25. Public finance authorities' commitments to cover operating expenditure

On 15 May 2023 the city council voted in favour of applying for the 2029 ECoC title. There is a common agreement to earmark 1.8 m € to the ECoC project. We also anticipate additional in-kind contributions from the city through secondments and other support.

The Region of Norrbotten is supporting our bid, also financially. However, they will not make a decision on how they will co-fund Kiruna 2029 until the Swedish ECoC has been announced.

The National Government has not yet announced their financial contribution to the ECoC. Kiruna municipality assumes that the National Government will support the ECoC to a similar extent as they did for Umeå 2014. Meetings with the national authority in charge, Kulturrådet, have been carried out jointly with the city of Uppsala, to discuss the national support, the cities' need for funding, structure and support.

Q26. Fundraising from private sponsors

We are aware that the percentage of private funding is unusually high in our overall budget and that you might raise your eyebrows reading this. We understand your concern and hope that this far into our bid-book we have made it clear that our industries and city are tightly knit and that we are in this city transformation and big societal change together. In the process to become a European Capital of Culture, we rely on each

other. We need both, the financial muscles and support, and the artistic freedom and creative city development on the other.

Overall Kiruna has a very strong private sector. Our unemployment rate is about 1% and this is actually a problem for us, since it shows how difficult it is for companies to grow and hire new staff locally. All our major industries, mining, tourism and space, are all in need to expand and have excellent turnover. Still, we lack the knowhow and skills needed for further development and about 1,000 jobs are available on the labour market. This is why the ambition to become the next ECoC for 2029, is widely welcomed and supported throughout the private sector. Our partners see the benefits and potential to attract new national and international staff, with the help of the ECoC energy, momentum, and legacy. By supporting Kiruna 2029, they also see a structured and long-term way to support the community, show social responsibility and retain their current staff. This is why the private sector plays a big part in our total ECoC budget. However, sponsors cannot not interfere with the artistic output, and naturally we must safeguard the creative process and freedom of artistic expression.

The private sector in Kiruna is already today quite well represented in funding cultural events and all bigger cultural events in Kiruna have private investors and sponsors. Some of these events have the vision to grow and go more international for the years to come and become a strong part of our ECoC programme and structure. Here the strategy is to collaborate with the current event organisers, to make sure their private funding will increase accordingly with a mutual and shared ambition for Kiruna 2029.

Since the Swedish ECoC will represent our country towards the outside world, we intend to approach national companies who are not present in Kiruna as sponsors if we get designated. We think that the European dimension of our Arctic and industrial narrative can be an incentive for national and international companies with operations in Sweden to be part of the ECoC 2029.

Because our story is so closely linked to our industrial heritage, we structure our programme lines in easy-to-understand layers, connected to our major industries in Kiruna. This makes it easy and natural to see how each sector will be interested in funding and supporting projects revolving around their specific field. Some of the projects will be developed together with the private financier, like for instance the space sector, relating creative projects to their research and technologies. A strategy how a specific business will be presented in connection with the ECoC marketing and communication locally, nationally and internationally, will also be an important incentive to ensure private funding.



The private sector will be able to participate and support the ECoC in different ways tailored to their business. For example, during winter and with snow and ice-related projects, we'll need skilled tractor and machine drivers. This will be a way to contribute much appreciated hours of labour as in-kind contribution to the project. Offering services, tools and knowhow or helping with accommodation, transportation and food will be ways for smaller companies to support the project on their terms and expertise.

After all, we're not that many citizens in Kiruna, you always know someone who knows someone that can help out with whatever is needed. Up here we learn to help each other, this is the general mentality and the social network we rely on. If the city is awarded the European Capital of Culture, it's a matter to everyone and we will do this together. Regardless your income or career position, in the public or the private sector.

The children, the nature, the future

Q27. Breakdown of the operating expenditure

Programme expenditure (in euros)	Programme expenditure (in %)	Promotion and marketing (in euros)	Promotion and marketing (in %)	Wages, overhead and administration (in euros)	Wages, overhead and administration (in %)	Evaluation (in euros)	Evaluation (in %)	Total of the operation expenditure (in euros)
10 050 000	67%	1 050 000	7%	3 750 000	25%	150 000	1%	15 000 000

Budgets for wages, overhead and administration are high, because wages in Sweden are generally high and especially in Kiruna, where the industry pays well. All other sectors need to follow their wages and keep up with the market competition. Although our city is quite petite in the history of ECoCs we still need a solid organisation to cover all positions and tasks. Our budget for wages, overhead and administration is calculated on a total of 10 full-time positions over the years in the organisation (some seconded and some newly hired) with an increase of resources and part-time jobs the closer we get to 2029.

Q28. Q29. Budget for capital expenditure

The official announcement that we have to move our city to maintain our underground mining, came in 2004. From that date, the city council and mining company LKAB have been collaborating and debating about how it will be done and where we will relocate the new city centre? LKAB is a state-owned, high profit company. We move our city because of the continuous mining, and LKAB acts according to the following consequences.

We have no funding coming from the EU, state or region to pay for the city transformation. It's all done by resources from the mining company and the city council. The extensive contract between the city council and LKAB stated that LKAB must reimburse the city council for everything happening because of the mining; new housing, new properties, infrastructure, moving buildings, demolition and so on.

Over the years LKAB has given the council money, and the city council has taken on the responsibility for most of the new infrastructure programs and projects, including the risk of inflation, increase of interest, increased material costs and depreciation of all new investments. About ten years ago the three first stages of the city transformation became visible to a general public, and in the last five years the construction sites and projects have intensified.

In the last five years we've built a new (and demolished much of the old) city centre, demolished and newly built residential areas, roads, city hall, fire station, high school, city hotel, cultural venues, and library. In the next years, we'll see e.g. a new swimming hall, city park, relocation of all public art, a new hospital and a bus- and train station. All

the capital expenditures and infrastructure projects happening in Kiruna will happen regardless of ECoC. So, nothing happens because of Kiruna 2029, but everything happens with Kiruna 2029. The European Capital of Culture is needed to add a human centred design, cultural city development and creative placemaking to our transformation process. We need the ECoC to add the artistic, the playful, the creative and the human touch to our shiny and new cityscape.

Because of this very special situation in Kiruna, we are unable to break down the income from the public sector to cover capital expenditure in an easy and clear table. It's a very complex situation, where the private and public sector intertwine, collaborate, debate and share the process, budget and workload side by side.

Q30. Fundraising from Union funds for capital expenditure

As we have been handling the world's first city move during the last 20 years, we are not in the routine of applying for EU funds or get their support. We have some minor EU projects revolving around infrastructure for electrical cars,

new fibre-optic cables in rural areas and capacity building. During 2023 we took part in the North Sweden Green Deal project organised by the Region of Norrbotten, as well as Visions in the North, a part of the New European Bauhaus. We are not dependent on EU funds for our ongoing city transformation.

Q31. New cultural infrastructure to be used in the framework of Kiruna 2029

All our city centers cultural infrastructure is in fact new. But in connection to our plans for Kiruna 2029 it is our aim to set up a new historical museum combined with a Creative Hub in one of these new infrastructures. We lack a local historical museum, a place to share our city's transformation story and preserve memories that might get lost in the relocation blur.

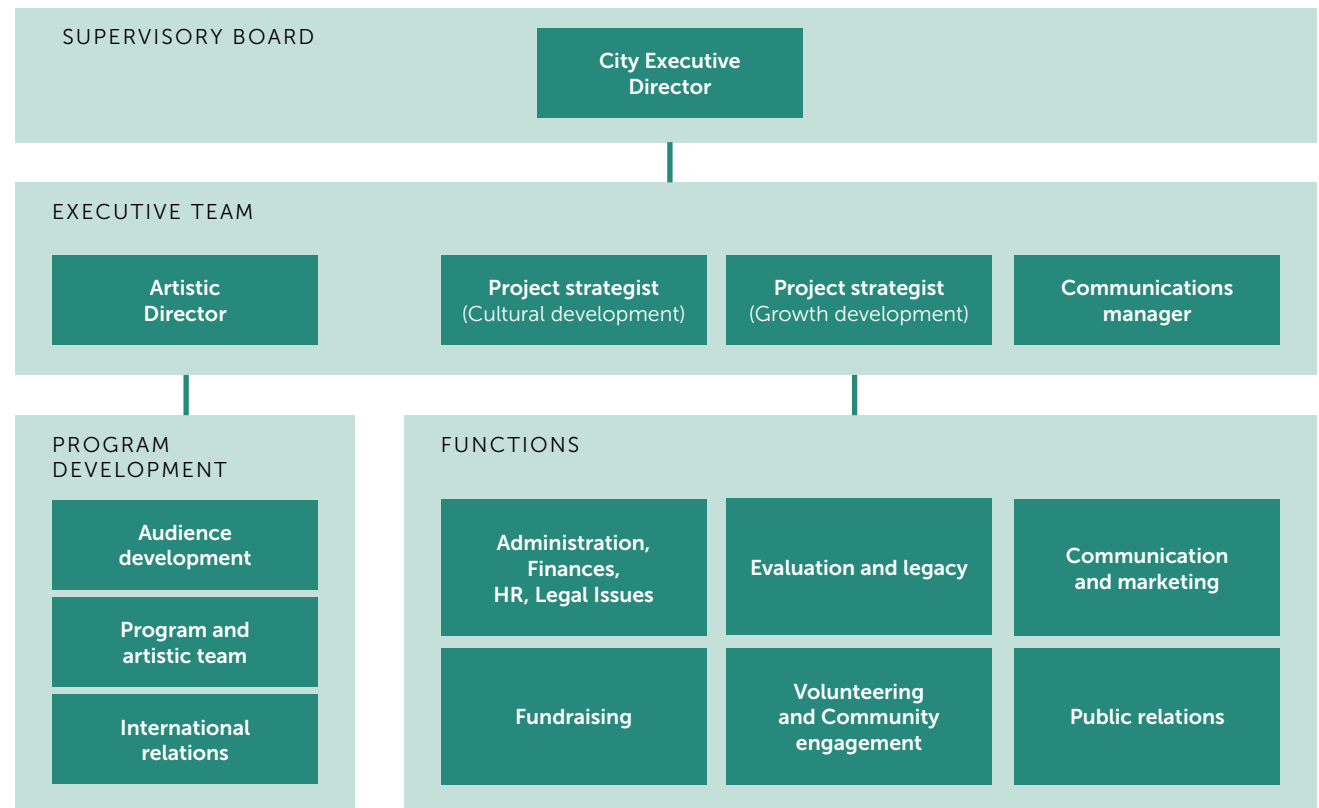
Also, the creative industries have pushed their need for a shared space for years. Now we'll use the momentum of the ECoC process to kickstart these projects again, and make sure to realise them for 2029. This will create a legacy for our European Capital of Culture. The process of finding an appropriate property and creating a shared vision for the outcome of the transformation has already started within the city council as a part of the New European Bauhaus project Visions of the North.

Q32. Planned governance and delivery structure

Organisational structure

We have learned from previous ECoC cities that creating an organisation within our city council is a solid way to make sure we can benefit from the processes and relationships long after 2029 and continue to strengthen the structures and networks we'll develop over the years. So that's what we'll do. To create a long-term legacy for our ECoC process, the city of Kiruna will integrate the ECoC organisation into our existing municipal structure. The Executive Team will report to the City Executive Director and the Supervisory Board.

The organisation will be established immediately if the designation falls to Kiruna. The Kiruna 2029 organisation will be built starting with the municipality strategists for culture and growth. The municipality will apply for regional and governmental grants, sponsorship money, apply for grants from private foundations and run European projects with the support from the EU. When the organisation is established, an open call will be announced to nominate an Artistic Director.



Q33. Strengths, weaknesses and mitigation plans

	European and international connections	Economic situation	Accessibility and infrastructure	City transformation	Community involvement /participation	Administrative know-how
Strengths	Our industries, mining, tourism, space are all internationally connected.	There is good municipal, regional and state support for cultural events	Well known tourism destination and well organised tourism sector	International media and visitors are following our unique city transformation	A strong, engaged and multifaceted culture and leisure life Culture is significant for local people	Learning from nearby Bodö and Oulu, future ECoC cities and Umeå 2014
	People from all over the world work here	Large private sector, already supporting a lot of culture events	Good airport, train connection and accessible by road Public transport in the municipality is good	Culture as a development tool enables us to synergise with Transformation project	Geographical location gives us unique and contrasting climate with experiences throughout the year	A small municipality enables interfaces within the municipality and externally for agile decisions and communications
	Open for collaborations and networking At the moment mostly in the Northern part of Europe and the Arctic region	As in next column, linking ECoC to city transformation brings additional value and urgency to our project	Reliable infrastructure both in the city and a "soft" community infrastructure in the rural areas	New districts will give more cultural and community ownership and filled with meetings, opportunities for new memories	Kiruna is a place for the indigenous Sami people, Tornedalians, Kvens and Lantalaïset, Swedish Finns and Kiruna residents new and old	Good basic infrastructure for culture and a cultural strategy in place
	Opportunity to build on the extensive international connections of our minority cultural colleagues	Well organised and trusting relations between private and public sectors			Good and established networks of cultural practitioners. Kiruna is close, intimate and based on flexible and trusting relationships	Long traditions of festivals and event collaboration between public and private sector

Topic	European and international connections	Economic situation	Accessibility and infrastructure	City transformation	Community involvement /participation	Administrative know-how
Weaknesses	International people who come for work tend to stay less than two years with little sense of feeling included in the local community and culture	A lot of fly-in fly-out workers leading to fewer taxpayers to support municipality services like culture	Kiruna could be considered far from everything, in feelings and in distance Low amount of flights and trains, high price	Strained economic situation in the municipality given need to deliver city transformation	Extensive area and the long distances can make it hard to participate in the cultural life far from where people live	Lack of skills supply in all sectors Kiruna has up to 1000 vacancies.
	People in Kiruna do not often see themselves as "citizens of Europe"	Need to secure sufficient funding from a lot of partners, public and private ones	National interests colliding on land issues	A city transformation as ongoing in Kiruna has never been done before, we are the first	Difficult to reach everyone, can make certain groups, individuals, associations or cultural actors feel excluded	ECoC stretches over an election period which could mean a political shift in the municipality
		Shortages of accommodation and housing	Lack of higher cultural education and professional art leading to a shortage of cultural professionals	Old towns and memories are disappearing that we must preserve and document for posterity	The definition of "culture" is broad in Kiruna Needs to be better explained to make more feel included	Decision makers not sufficiently aware of the impact of culture as a tool for building sustainable communities
Overcoming weaknesses	Start engaging more in international networks and collaborations Start small and build from there	Adapt the programme to Kiruna's specific conditions and DNA Be realistic yet innovative at the same time	Plans for improving cultural education and supporting young people especially	Use cultural programmes/events to let all voices be heard	Create opportunities for as many as possible to be included in terms of the project, meetings, open calls, associational life	Show how cultural projects can make positive impacts in society, collect information and make ECoC projects visible
	Bring a more European dimension to Kiruna through communication and the city's atmosphere Position the culture of Kiruna in more international contexts.	Early dialogues and regular communication regarding programme and budget with private and public partners to ensure confidence is maintained	Collaborate with tourism and business organisations to lobby for improved infrastructure for transportation	It's a team effort to get the job done We build on the saying: it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a whole community to transform a city!	Cultural infrastructure will be developed and updated and more structured so it is more strongly anchored and expanded	Include both government and opposition in the Board to secure strong political engagement through the project.

Marketing and communication

Q34. Outline of the intended marketing and communication strategy

Movement is the story we want to tell Europe with our European Capital of Culture. The story of how we move below ground, on earth and in space with care. Since recently, since endless times. We invite people from all over Europe and beyond to be mesmerised by hearing the enchanting, tragic, hilarious and magic Arctic, industrial, Tornedalians, and Sámi stories.

The Arctic is nature – but the Arctic is also culture and cultures, a part of European cultural diversity yet to be explored. The combinations and contrasts are unique and create a lasting impression on anyone who has ever made their way up here. We call upon the adventurous and the ones reluctant to leave their comfort zones, upon the city travellers and the nature diggers, upon the Midnight sun bathers and Nordic foodies in search of new tastes. We have something for you that you cannot find anywhere else.

With our ECoC marketing we are not just advertising a product. We are advertising a life. Come as a guest, stay as a friend. In this respect, this is not a marketing strategy – but a survival strategy. A joyful one, don't worry.

Our aim is to show Kiruna as an awesome place to visit for nature and culture and a place worth visiting and worth considering as a home base. The trend that started during Covid is still unbroken: Many people leave the larger cities and

seek a different way of life, one where community and sustainable living play a big role and offer cultural experiences all along. In Kiruna in 2029 you've come to the right place!

Our local and regional communication strategy puts emphasis on strengthening the European identity and further integration of our northern region into Europe. This strategy will be declared successful when the cultural events are supported by the inhabitants of Kiruna and surrounding region, when they start saying "we, here in Arctic Europe", and when Kiruna is viewed internationally as a city relevant to the European cultural and natural landscape.

In Q17 we describe how our associations are the backbone of social and cultural life in our area. The borders between communication, outreach, involvement, co-creation and ambassadorship are permeable. This allows Kiruna 2029 to be co-carried by the citizens and communicated locally and regionally by word of mouth, through experiences and volunteer activities. Phase 1 of the communication post-designation will be addressed towards local and regional audiences, providing such experiences and messages to be spread around and offering "tourism" activities for Kiruna's citizens to attract local ambassadors.

As local and regional communication channels we see the municipality's direct communication access to the 400 associations, but also reaching citizens via Kiruna municipality's own newspaper, website and social media. Immediate communication steps include creating visible digital locations and social media channels for the Kiruna 2029 project. Together with the Kiruna Lapland visitors board a joint and open-source

calendar for all activities and events in Kiruna municipality has been re-launched in 2023. This will be an important communication tool for the ECoC programme.

Reaching out to the world

We have quite a few visitors each year, and of course we want to share this spectacular place with as many as possible. However, our goal is to tell our stories to outsiders and instill in ourselves a greater sense of belonging to the European family. This cannot be achieved by blindly importing visitors. We would like to do our marketing and communication with care. With care towards our communities, our visitors and our nature.

Our strongest communication and marketing partner is the well-versed Kiruna Lapland, our destination management organisation. Sustainability is a big topic for our tourism industry. Kiruna Lapland helps local companies in the tourism sector to become more sustainable and achieve a certification called Sustainable Arctic Destination 2.0. With more people in Europe becoming aware of their impacts when travelling, it is an important element of communication to show potential visitors that we do everything to insure a low-impact visit. As mentioned in Q15, Kiruna Lapland is also participating in the Interreg project Arctic Europe Tourism Cluster that aims at making tourism more beneficial towards communities and lighter on nature. The project running until 2026 can become the perfect preparation for Kiruna to host the ECoC 2029.

Cooperation is key in Kiruna

For a place like ours cooperating closely with all partners is essential. With a small marketing budget, we cannot expect to reach millions of European potential visitors – but Kiruna Lapland and the national and regional partners Swedish Lapland and Visit Sweden can.

With our destination management partners we'll focus on the existing target markets: DACH (Germany, Austria, Switzerland), France, UK, BeNeLux, and the US. Through our connections to European networks like Culture Next and fellow ECoCs we will also aim at including our partner country Poland as well as helping our tourism partners expand their communication network with the help of the French European Capital of Culture for 2028 and the Belgian ECoC for 2030. A close marketing and PR exchange in both directions with the cities of 2028, 2029 and 2030 by sharing channels, messages and press contacts seems a good way of making European friends and getting the work done.

Kiruna Lapland have set up a workforce with companies interested in developing summer and autumn season products for a stronger all-year around offer especially towards an international market. Programming, tourism marketing, cultural marketing, volunteering, outreach, sponsoring and PR all must go hand-in-hand to create maximum impact. For the best ever experience of an ECoC in movement. With care.

Q35. How we highlight the European Capital of Culture as an action of the European Union

Showing ECoC as a relevant project of the European Union will have a two-way effect: It shows Europe that ECoC is an action of the EU, and it shows Europe that Kiruna and the Arctic cultures are a relevant part of Europe.

We will play on the strengths of both brands, of Kiruna 2029 and the European Capital of Culture as a brand of the European Union. This brand has been enriched over the past 38 years by dozens of cities carrying out this largest European cultural project. Each had to find their own way of highlighting and communicating Europe and the EU, finding their European dimension. We aim to latch onto the collective brand of European Capital of Culture, and then highlight the uniqueness of Kiruna as a feature for all. This will ensure we stay true to the core of the project without making the brand of ECoC too uniform.

The EU logo will appear on all communication materials and the opening ceremony will be a particular moment to highlight Kiruna 2029 as bearer of a title bestowed by the European Union. The Commissioner for Culture and their team, the representatives of the DG EAC, and the Swedish EU representatives will be invited to attend and officially open the Kiruna 2029 year. This includes some of the past, present and designated ECoC title holders as well as the designated partner city in Poland.



Local craft
Vittangi Hembygdsgråd

6. Capacity to deliver

Q36. Confirmation of political support and sustainable commitment from the public authorities

The municipal council took a formal and unanimous decision on 15 May 2023 to support and proceed with an application for European Capital of Culture. All political representatives are aware of how the city transformation impacts social cohesion and the wellbeing of people in Kiruna. The commitment to the ECoC application is therefore not simply lip-service but seen as a means to counterbalance the cultural and social challenges Kiruna is struggling with.

We have letters of support by the Region of Norrbotten and the Association of Local and Regional Authorities Norrbotten's Municipalities.

The Swedish National government is supporting all candidates by commissioning Kulturrådet, the National Cultural Council to lead the Swedish candidates through the preselection and selection phases.

Additionally, we are supported by public and semi-public authorities and entities

Tornedalsrådet
Länsstyrelsen Norrbotten
Länsstyrelsen Västerbotten
Haparanda Stad
Älvsbyns kommun
Norrbottens kommunala kultursamordnare
LTU Business Network
Youth 2030 Movement
EISCAT Science Association
Konstmuseet i norr
BD Pop
Kiruna Växer
Kiruna Lapland
Swedish Space Corporation

Q37. Infrastructure to host the European Capital of Culture

As Kiruna is rebuilding, we have several new venues in place. These include the city hall Kristallen and the regional art museum, the new culture and conference arena Aurora, including the city library, Kiruna art hall and Ungdomens hus (youth house) which opened in 2022. In 2023 the new secondary school and the School of Culture opened its doors. These are all new, up and running and we will use the ECoC process to build a functional structure for better use and make them more known to the public and visitors as venues for culture in everyday life.

Out in the open we have the new square between these buildings mentioned above and the new city park that will be built within the new city centre. The park will be a green and white bridge connecting the new secondary school and swimming hall to the centre. Places where people can meet and socialise. These indoor and outdoor arenas will be the hub for many of the cultural programmes, such as The Human Machine, our opening, mid-season and closing show. We will work to get a better structure for using these places and make them more welcoming and easier to find your way to.

All the public art sculptures that will be affected by the city transformation will be moved, most of them to the new city park but some are planned for other places in the new city and in some of the planned roundabouts. This should be done for 2029. In the city transformation a big job is to work with cultural values and public art and to save them from demolition and find them "new homes". This is a way to make people in Kiruna recognise the new city centre that is being built. But it's also a way to highlight them afresh, make people and visitors aware of the magnificent art and culture we have, and get them to take part more as we explained in Outreach.

In 2029 most of the 41 cultural buildings will have been moved to their new places. In 2025 Kiruna Church will be moved and placed in the area next to the entrance to the city park.

Leading to the ECoC year all these cultural buildings, venues, historical places, and art will be made accessible and visual in art walks, city transformation walks, and historical walks. This will connect the places and lead you to new ones to explore. People can also take part in the cultural happenings throughout the year whenever it suits them. As mentioned in the programme and in our cultural strategy a historical museum and Creative hub is something we will strive to come true as an ECoC legacy. The museum can be the spider in the web that sets you on your cultural adventure in Kiruna. An adventure that should be easy to access for everyone in their own level of adventurous participation. Maps and digital tools for more information will guide them on their way!

If we stick to adventure, we turn the eyes towards the mountain Luossavaara, Kiruna's intown ski-slope. Here our business association Kiruna Växer is conducting a feasibility study for the development of the mountain as an outdoor culture and sports venue. Within this constellation, there is the possibility of developing temporary, mobile accommodation solutions such as arks, lavvús and mobile homes in an artistic and creative way to be used for large events. This is also the place for our project Free vertical, an outdoor performance in a vertical direction. In many of the villages there are homesteads/ cultural farms, and in the countryside there are mountain lodges and other tourism businesses that offer accommodation. During ECoC, we want to develop these for more cultural activities. For

example, for the Open Air Play at the homesteads or for ArcTistic Residence as we mention in Q11.

The old mining area next to the city centre is planned to be developed at the far end of the city park. The area has been examined in a project called Visions in the North and now a feasibility study is being carried out. Hopefully the new historical museum can be placed in the old buildings still in this area. In that area two old mining pit heads enthroned as industrial heritage landmark and can be used for artistic projects, like Art at the Towers, something we can do even if the area is not completely finished.

Kiruna's assets in terms of accessibility

By Air

The 1.5 h flight from Stockholm to Kiruna is operated by SAS and Norwegian and runs both ways about 2-4 times a day depending on the season. There is a direct flight twice a week from Düsseldorf between February and March by Eurowings. Kiruna airport is located 10 minutes from the city centre, 10 minutes from the Icehotel in Jukkasjärvi and 1h from Abisko by car.

By train

There are two train departures from Stockholm per day which take approximately 16 hours travel time to Kiruna. These trains continue to Abisko, Björkliden and Riksgränsen, then onwards to Narvik in Norway. There are also direct trains from other destinations like Luleå, Boden and Gällivare in Swedish Lapland.

The temporary train station is located on Kiruna Malmbangård along the E10 north, about two kilometres from the city centre. There are free shuttle buses between the bus station in the old city centre, the new city centre and the railway station, in connection with all train arrivals and departures. The bus drives every day, all year round.

By bus

The main bus station is located in the old city centre. Arrive here by bus from other destinations in Swedish Lapland or take the bus to other parts of Kiruna municipality. For example Jukkasjärvi, Nikkaluokta, Vittangi, Karesuando, Abisko, Björkliden or Riksgränsen.

City transportation

In the city of Kiruna, it's easy getting around by bus, bike, kick-bikes or walking – the whole city is about 7 km long and 2 km wide. Or why not using a spark for getting around in winter! Spark (translates to "kick" in English) is what we call the invention of a chair on two rails, perfect for swooshing up and down wintry streets, balancing with one foot on one rail and kicking speed with the other.

Tourists' accommodation capacity

The absorption capacity in Kiruna municipality from 2025 is good. We are used to tourists who come to us in the winter season as well as in summer. Depending on the time of year and including the Icehotel our capacity lies at 1,599 rooms (of which 751 near Kiruna centre) and 4,511 beds (of which 2,257 near Kiruna centre).

Most visitors come in March/April and in July. So we see best availability for larger events in January (in combination with Kiruna Snow Festival), May (still high season in the mountain areas), June, September – when the Northern Lights return – through to the beginning of December prior to the 13th when we celebrate the traditional Lucia Day and the Icehotel usually opens for the season.

Q38. Our special story about infrastructure projects

The city transformation is an ongoing story being written and playing out as we speak. Perhaps the world's largest and most gradual city move. How can we express this project of the century in a list or table of infrastructure projects?

At this stage there is so much going on, so many projects connected to the city transformation. Some big, some small and all of them involving many different partners and stakeholders and affecting a lot of people. Some projects are done ahead of schedule, others take longer. We are not holding our breath, because this is a long-term transformation and will take its time.

What we can say is that in 2029 we will be looking at a new city skyline for Kiruna!

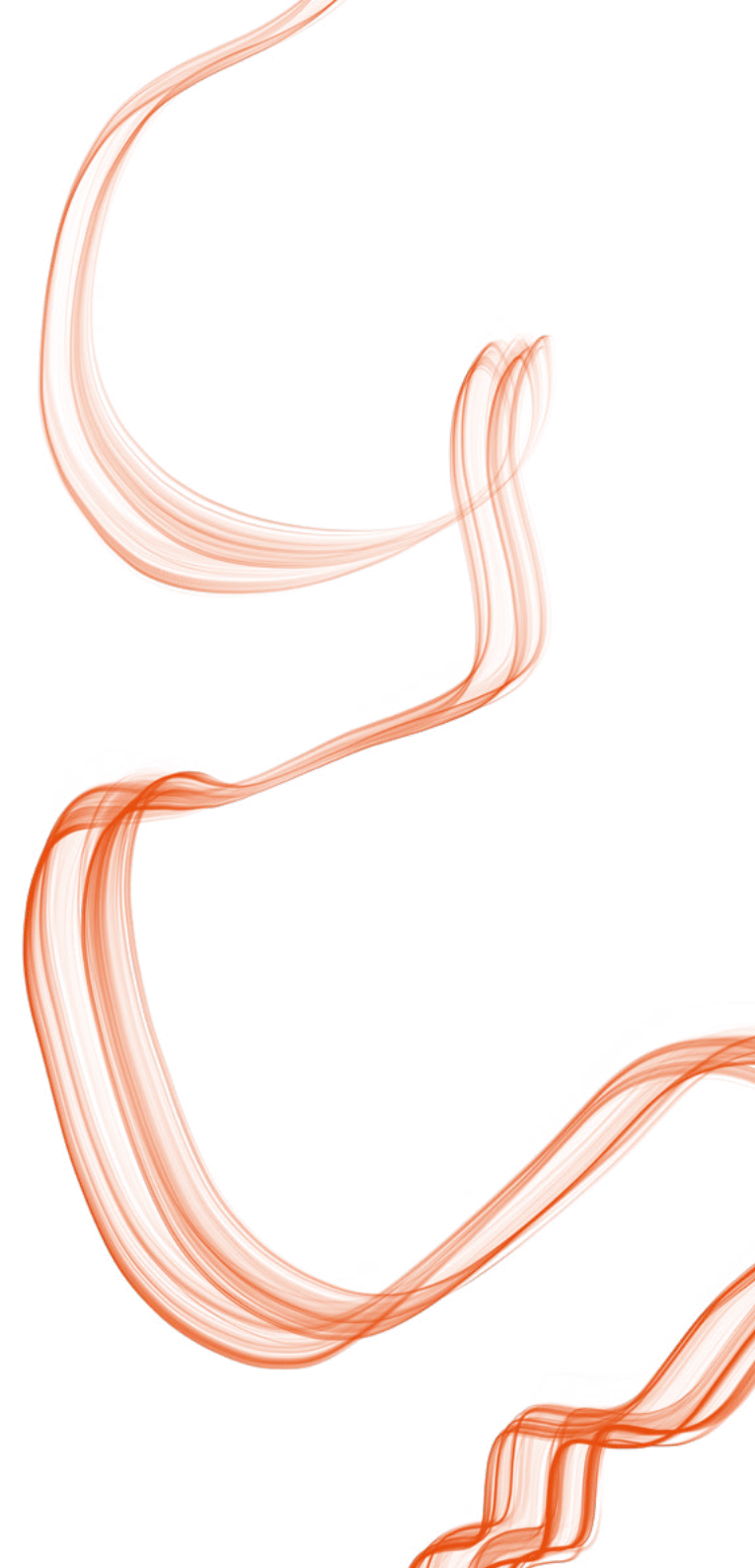
At the site of the old city centre, there will be a park called CityMine Park (Gruvstadsparken) for some years, until it will be fenced off and become part of the mining area. A stretch of land where the cracks grow 11 centimetres a day, slowly creeping towards the buildings still on the solid side of the fence. Kiruna has stretched out in its new city plan, bending around the mine that is always mumbling in the distance. The demolition

of the old town will be next to completed by 2029 and in the new city centre, most of the planned buildings will be standing proud and tall. A new hotel will be up and running by 2025 and another is on the way to be built near the airport.

There will be a city park full of art and places to meet, relax and socialise. The new swimming hall that opens in 2024 will feature some of the mementos of the beloved old one, among them the biggest mosaic wall to have ever been moved.

The new hospital and the bus and train station will still be under construction in 2029, since the new location for the travel centre has not yet been decided. But it will be close to the city centre, so it is easy to access the city. As the city is moving further away from the mine, the demolition lines are eating away at the old town. Some of the city will be still temporarily available to the citizens as a park, but slowly the land will be taken over by the mine.

And in one of the new or old buildings there will be a museum telling the story of courageous people in an Arctic town moving a whole city, going below ground to dig iron-ore, working on earth to lay thousands of kilometres of railway lines, looking up into space at the northern lights. And making this place their home. With care.





Kiruna lever...älska! (Kiruna lives...love!)
Old secondary school

IMPRINT

Thanks to everyone that helped us in any way to make this bid-book happen and special thanks to Sparbanken Nord and Region Norrbotten for your support.

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Printed

Folkungagatan Produktion AB, Stockholm 2023



We are the movement

