

# CAN CITIZEN SCIENCE CONTRIBUTE TO THE CH CHALLENGES OF TODAY?

Multiplier event: Leuven, 19 May 2023

## Culture values, participation and co- creation: the UNCHARTED project

Antonella Fresa

[antonella.fresa@photoconsortium.net](mailto:antonella.fresa@photoconsortium.net)

[fresa@promoter.it](mailto:fresa@promoter.it)



# UNCHARTED

## Understanding, Capturing and Fostering the Societal Value of Culture

- UNCHARTED is a four years research and innovation project funded under the Horizon 2020 programme of the EU
- Coordinated by the University of Barcelona, it involves 9 partners, 8 of them are acknowledged academic institutions and Promoter S.r.l., SME successfully active for many years in the sector of cultural heritage communication
- The action runs from 1/2/2020 until 31/1/2024, producing a wide range of research outcomes that are available on the project's website at [www.uncharted-culture.eu](http://www.uncharted-culture.eu)
- **The focus of the research is to study the emergence of values connected with culture, their configuration and the political impulse that these values could deliver to the society**
- **The research is conducted adopting various inclusive methods**

*“ objects and places are not, in themselves, what is important about cultural heritage. They are important because of the meanings and uses that people attach to them and the values they represent.”*

Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society  
Faro Convention, 2005

# Culture values, participation and co-creation

## Three keywords, several complementary actions

- Desk research
- Field work, interviews, encounters
- Debates, workshops, seminars
- Demonstrations

## Expected outcomes

- Analysis, reports and scientific reflections
- Policy recommendations
- Roadmap for cultural policy action
- Plan for a major public event on the societal values of culture

# 1<sup>st</sup> step: analysing the configuration of the values of culture

Key factors and circumstances :

- gender and rising diversity
- urbanisation and social and spatial segregation in cities
- globalisation and digitisation
- neo-liberalism
- the European historical and political experience

The literature analysis contributed to identify **the role that culture played in the past** in the production of social integration in the territory, **and the influence of today** on the transformation of the spatial structuring of social life.

# Problems and contradictions can be provoked by not-resolved tensions

- **Differences** in ethnic, cultural, linguistic, religious and sexual orientations
- Impact of **culture-led urban regeneration** on heritage preservation and on social and spatial segregation
- Transformation of the **sense of belonging** of local communities, due to gentrification and touristification
- Contraposition of **Western cultural values** with other different values that are represented in the Western society
- Effects produced by **digital transformation** in the cultural field
- Role of heritage values in the **construction of identities**

# Emergence and conformation of culture values

Values are the result of valuation practices conducted by different actors.

In depth desk research and wide range of **case studies** have been carried out by the UNCHARTED partners in various social and geographical contexts, aiming to **identify, contextualize, understand, measure and analyse** the **emergence and conformation** of the values of culture from a interdisciplinary, collaborative and pluralistic perspectives.

Some of the most current pressing problems of the European community are taken into account:

- Integration of immigrant populations
- Social cohesion weakened by many crises
- Strengthening the critical capacity of citizenship

# Cultural participation, production and administration

26 case studies were developed within four research fields:

- Cultural participation and engagement in **cultural life and the arts**
- New realms for the creation of cultural value: **television, social media and internet**
- Value configuration in the professional sectors of cultural production and **heritage management**
- Cultural **policy perspectives** on cultural value

Researchers, experts and stakeholders who have engaged in the case studies and in the co-creation activities carried out in the project, agreed on the importance of adopting a **pragmatic view** of values as opposed to essentialist positions.

A clear understanding of the various representations of recognised **diversity and new marks** is necessary to be able to face potential tensions among public and private partners.



# Tensions between public and private partners

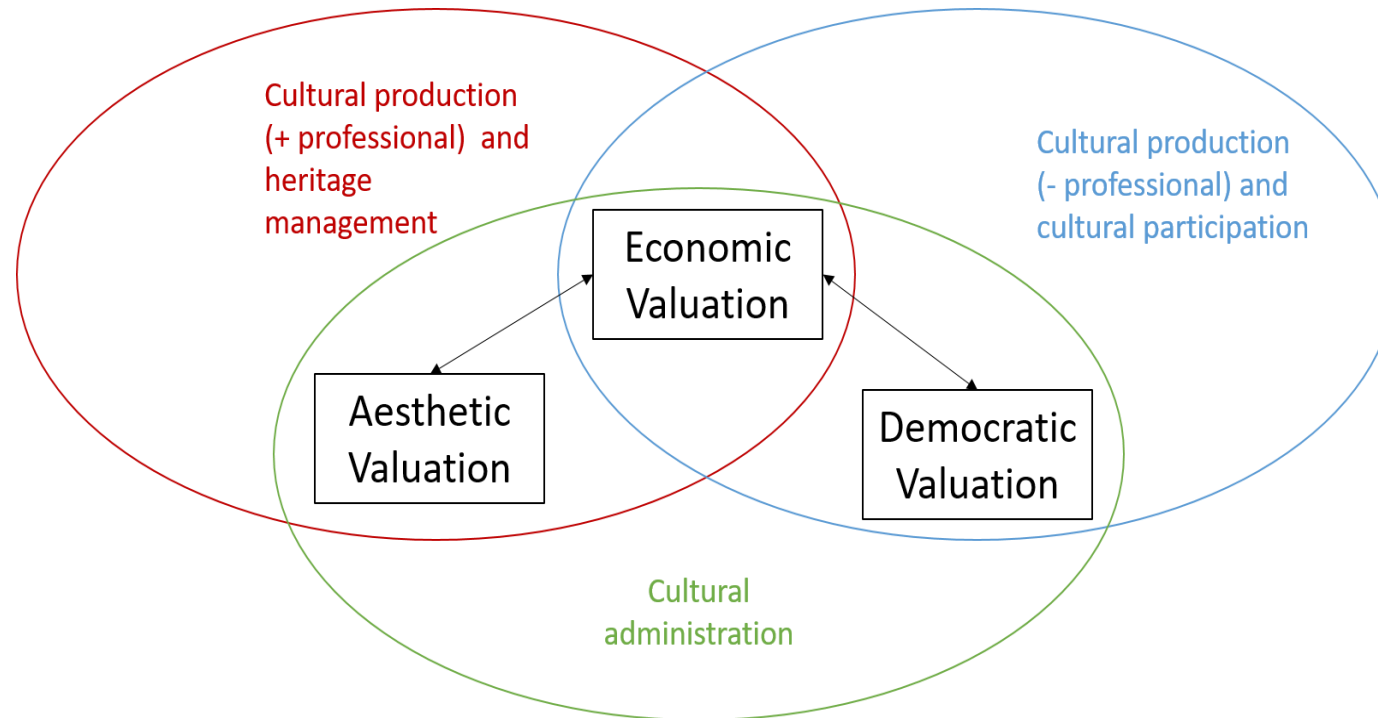
Some evidences emerged in the case studies, at various levels:

- At **product** level, the historical significance of cultural intervention can be stressed by public partners, while private partners can value more hedonism
- At **organisation** level participation can be at the core of the valuation for public partners, while financial sustainability can be at the core for private partners
- At **societal** level, urban regeneration can be the driver for the public partner, while economic return is the driver for private partners

Within the same level:

- consequences of **power imbalances**
- democracy, participation and social valuation gain protagonism vs questions of economic sustainability

# Articulation of the tensions between economic, social and aesthetic valuations



# Co-creation

In the co-design of new cultural products, a sound **understanding of the background conditions** where the future implementation is expected to take place is needed:

- Who are the actors (e.g.: requirements and desires, skills)
- Which is the contexts of reference (e.g.: limitations and potentials of the surrounding environment, aspirations of stakeholders and local communities, political situation)

Furthermore, each **stage of development** needs to take into account **multiple visions**:

- At the creative and design phase
- At the start of the action
- At the implementation stage

# Participation

The last phase of the UNCHARTED action is focused on experiments and demonstrations carried out in various geographical and social contexts, referred as 'control cases':

- Cultural strategic planning (at local level with the case of Volterra, at national and EU levels)
- Culture-led urban regeneration (Barcelona, 8th District of Budapest, city of Porto)
- Cultural information systems (Portuguese Cultural Practices, Information systems in French national cultural administration, process of accreditation of regional museums in the Emilia Romagna region)

To plan this work a protocol for the implementation of the participation of stakeholders in the work has been designed

# Protocol of implementation

Key elements of the protocol adopted in the implementation of the UNCHARTED control cases, to set the scenario of work for the participatory actions:

- Which are the inclusive methods to be adopted (e.g. co-creation, citizen science, co-managing)
- Financial and human resources
- Territorial dimension (e.g. local, inter-organisational, regional, national, international)
- Evaluation methodology (e.g. degree of formality, rational elaboration, publicity, salience)
- Plurality of actors and their categorisation (e.g. public services, political bodies, civil society, NGOs, academic sphere, professionals, private sector, **citizens**)
- Governance of the dynamics associated with the adopted inclusive methods
- Safe and share calendar of the action
- Assessment of the benefits of using inclusive methods (e.g. reducing valuation tensions)

# The case of Volterra



# The city of Volterra

- The case study upon which the research is focused is **Volterra**, an historic city located **in the heart of Tuscany** in the province of Pisa.
- Volterra is a good example of how the city has managed to keep the cultural ferment generated by its past both alive and pulsating, reinterpreting it on a par with current conditions and opportunities, maintain an authentic cultural dimension.
- Within this framework, it is possible to trace some structural dimensions which in our opinion characterize the relationship between **territory and culture** as key to innovation and development.

# Three dimensions of the case of Volterra

The work in the context of Volterra focuses on the three dimensions:

- **SOCIAL - Total institutions (psychiatric hospital and prison)**
- **ECONOMIC - Traditional economic activities (alabaster craft and the saline industry)**
- **POLICY - Candidature of Volterra for the Italian competition and nomination for First City of Culture in Tuscany**





**Psychiatric Hospital**



**Theatre in prison**



**Alabaster craft**

*Photo Courtesy of Municipality of Volterra*

# The candidature of Volterra as capital city of culture

The case of Volterra will study and demonstrate how the competition for the Italian City of Culture, carried out at the national level in 2021, named 'Human Regeneration', represented the occasion for the city to reflect on the impact that culture values can generate at social and economic levels, expanding from the cultural dimension to many other areas of the civic life.

The high level of the candidature of Volterra during the national competition, and the deep participatory approach implemented for the development of such candidature, brought the Tuscany Region to establish a new regional programme named 'Regional Capital of Culture' in 2022.

A wide participation was promoted by the Municipal Administration in the construction of the Human Regeneration project for the candidacy of the city and for the structuring of the Volterra 22 programme.

# Volterra 22

The nomination of Volterra as 'First Tuscany City of Culture' has given the opportunity to the city of Volterra to deploy a very rich programme of events, addressing cultural, social and economic dimensions.

Through participation of stakeholders and citizens, UNCHARTED is investigating the impact of Volterra 22 on the territory and how the experience has been able to empower the value of the regional dimension of culture.



*Logo of Volterra First Tuscany City of Culture - Courtesy of Municipality of Volterra*

# Next steps

- The results of the control cases will be available in Autumn 2023 and a public event is planned to take place in Volterra, hosted by the Municipality
- By the beginning of 2024 the UNCHARTED Book that presents practices, outcomes and experiences gathered along the whole project life-time, the full set of Policy Briefs, the Roadmap for cultural policy action and the Plan for a major public event on the societal values of culture will be shared
- Stay tuned and follow UNCHARTED online at  
[www.uncharted-culture.eu](http://www.uncharted-culture.eu)  
[www.digitalmeetsculture.net/projects/uncharted-culture-blog/](http://www.digitalmeetsculture.net/projects/uncharted-culture-blog/)

Thank you for your attention