



EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF INNOVATION

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ideas to life



European Capital of Innovation Awards APPLICATION (PART B)

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COVER PAGE

PROJECT	
Project number	SEP-210692417
Acronym:	The Cluj Way
Title:	Innovation, The Cluj Way
Coordinator contact:	Oana Buzatu, MUNICIPIUL CLUJ-NAPOCA

PARTICIPANT		
Name	Short name	Country
MUNICIPIUL CLUJ-NAPOCA	CLUJ-NAPOCA	Romania

Size of the city (km ²)	179.5 km ²
City population	324,960 inhabitants (municipality)
Municipal annual budget (EUR)	€ 310 mil.



SUMMARY

Summary (max 2000 characters)

Cluj-Napoca (or simply, Cluj) is the unofficial capital of Transylvania, and the second-largest city in Romania, with a metropolitan population of half a million citizens. The accelerated development path that brought it into the ranks of the top European cities in terms of dynamism, friendliness attractiveness stems from a unique governance approach to the city as a platform for its vibrant ecosystem.

Witnessing the electric, contagious energy and cohesion of Cluj today, it is difficult to imagine the city even 15 years ago. What was a grey, rigid, segregational city tributary to top-down thinking, started to transform under the most important vector of systemic change: the courage to shed the layer of political stiffness historically embedded in Eastern European local governance and to start talking about **policy, not politics**. Through collaboration and trust, we have radically innovated the city governance structure and development policies to become **one of the most attractive new social, cultural and technological hubs Europe**. The people of Cluj are the fuel of this transformation, actively shaping the city into a platform for innovation. 96% of our citizens are happy to live in Cluj-Napoca, the friendliest city in Europe towards foreigners.

We have been the Heart of Transylvania for over 2000 years and we have always innovated where it truly mattered: in bringing people together towards common goals and building on the ideas, aspirations and tireless energy of the local ecosystem. Our own way is perhaps best reflected in the famous recipe called **Varză a la Cluj (Cabbage, the Cluj Way)**, a 15th century melting pot of tastes democratically enjoyed by all citizens regardless of status or background. And today, Cluj is evermore the **celebration of multiculturalism, togetherness and world-class competitiveness** that has leapfrogged ahead in the very recent past.

It is now our privilege to share **the Cluj Way** with the rest of the world.



1. AWARD CRITERION: EXPERIMENTING

Describe the innovative concepts, processes, tools, and governance models your city is implementing as a test-bed for innovation. Explain how your city is mainstreaming these innovative practices into the urban processes.

The Cluj Way is a **real, tangible trust-based ecosystem**, underpinned by the joint aspiration of pursuing economic, social, environmental and cultural wealth for all. We work through our challenges together, and this cooperation is reflected at all levels of city policy: from the overall development strategy to sectorial policies, new governance structures acting like catalysts, and bottom-up self-organizing initiatives – all having a [Platform in Cluj \(link to Annex\)](#).

- **Governance, citizenship and participatory urban development**

We continuously learn, improve and mainstream our successful innovations. Born with a debate on the topic of regenerating the Railway Park in 2017, the [Civic Imagination and Innovation Center \(CIIC\)](#) has evolved now into the main instrument for **participatory decision-making** at urban development level.



All investments of public interest are subjected to public debates in the CIIC, such as the future 46-hectare East Park (Feb. 2020) or the Morii Channel (Oct. 2019 – pictured left). CIIC is now a best practice example which has been awarded the **Public Participation Award** (April 2019) and the **Public Sector Innovation and Quality prize** (Oct. 2019).

Started spontaneously as an informal meeting of local authorities with the expats in Cluj, the [Meet the Mayor initiative](#) is now a public annual gathering in which anyone can directly share ideas or problems with the Mayor. In October 2019, more than 300 people brought their own contribution, expectations and experiences to the innovation hotspot that is Cluj-Napoca.



- **Digital innovation, data science, robotics and e-health**

Cluj is known as the tech hub of Romania, with over 1,800 IT companies and the most dynamic start-up landscape, a city of clusters in IT, creative industries, food, energy, culture, education, currently developing the first [Urban Innovation Unit](#) in Eastern Europe, through a partnership with the civil society.

Together with BBU University, we initiated in 2019 a strategic approach for our [Digital Transformation Strategy](#).



Our ecosystem developed several **Digital Innovation Hubs** in the network of Smart Specialization Platform of European Commission. Enabled by the concept of Cluj as a Platform, we launched [CREIC \[6\]](#) in 2019 as a home for world-class innovation.



- **Climate resilience, mobility and energy efficiency**

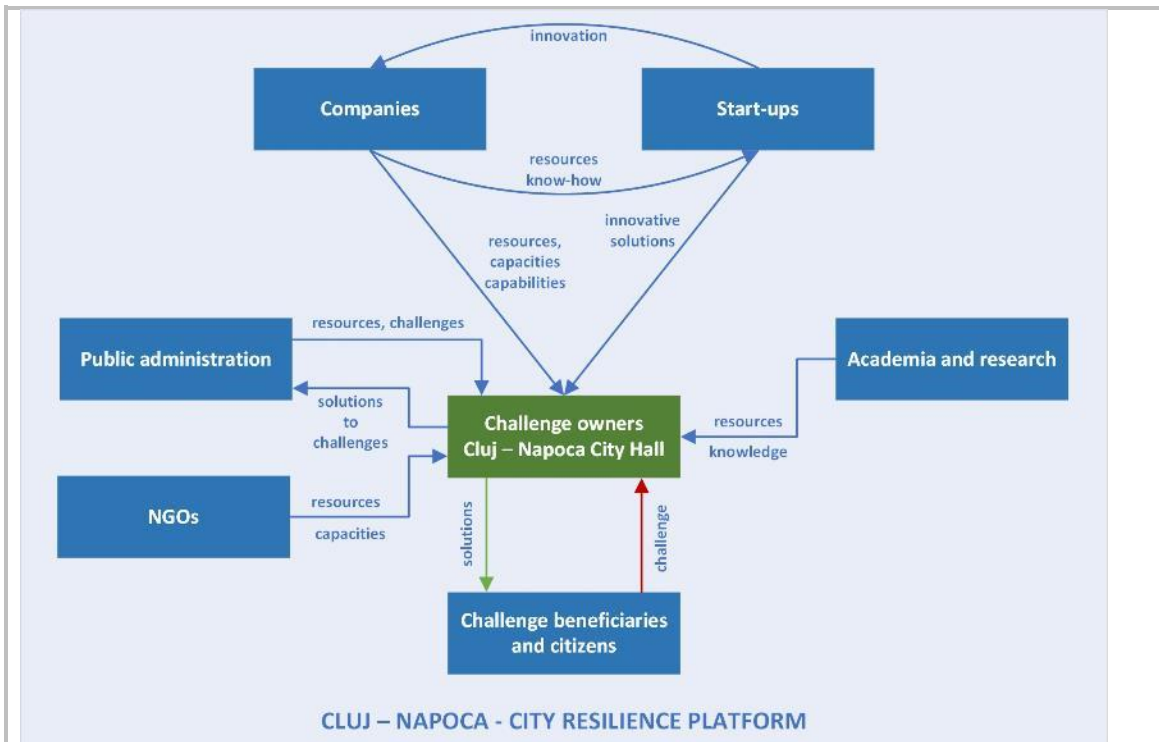
The building of eco-friendly city parks, [“smart” streets and nature-based solutions](#) have all moved the bar to show what is possible in a modern European city. Half the public transportation fleet is now electric, and we intend to achieve 100% by 2027. Cluj has 50 self-service rental stations for bikes, free EV charging stations, and a fleet of electric cars available for sharing. We lead the JRC [City Science Initiative working group on sustainable mobility](#), taking a leading role in shaping the future post-Covid-19 European urban mobility.

- **Skills, learning, culture and youth**

Cluj-Napoca is the first Eastern European city to win an Urban Innovative Action. [Cluj Future of Work](#) (2019-2021) is a € 5.6 mil. initiative working around 3 scenarios that connect improbable stakeholders in a city-wide effort to forecast work in 20 years' time.

In a nutshell, Cluj is running several participatory budgeting mechanisms, co-building its new long-term strategy, developing a voluntary assessment of its SDGs compliance, all while also being the first city in Eastern Europe to perform a **city resilience assessment**. Our ability to come together, self-organize and innovate both in good times and in bad is perhaps best reflected in the [City Resilience Platform model](#):





Born from the need to act locally and self-organize during the Covid-19 pandemic, the platform is a **challenge-focused matchmaker** ensuring the intelligent use of resources according to real needs (i.e. of hospitals, schools). Anyone can contribute in any role – and this is the essence of Cluj and our ecosystem thinking.

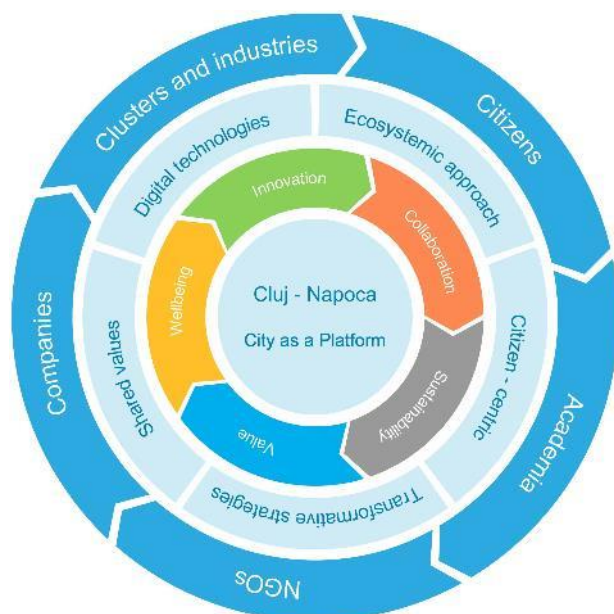
2. AWARD CRITERION: ENGAGING

Describe how your city offers increased opportunities to citizens to innovate and ensures the uptake of their ideas. Be precise in terms of municipal support and implementation of citizen-driven innovation.

Many of our initiatives are not just welcoming innovation: they are an integral part of an **urban co-governance policy**. Any of our citizens can design, develop, submit and implement a solution, even for regenerating flagship areas of the city. The lynchpin of our approach to city development is the concept of a **City as a Platform**.

We are the top civically engaged city in Romania, the most attractive and the **best-ranked when it comes to quality of life** (2019). And that is because the citizens of Cluj have always been leading their own urban future.

The **CIIC, Urban Innovation Camps, Urban Innovation Unit, C-Edu** brings together ideas, knowledge and





resources from the civil society, the academic sector, the cultural sector, the business sector as well as the public administration, in order to propose alternative solutions to the strategic challenges of the city.

Cluj-Napoca was the first city in Romania to implement the participatory governance. In 2019, **15 innovative projects** proposed by the citizens on the [Bugetareparticipativa Platform](#) have been granted up to €150,000 to be implemented. But we go beyond already-traditional participatory budgeting schemes, and now welcome calls for civil servant innovation and city hall intrapreneurship ([Innovato-R](#)). A spin-off of the Participatory Budgeting programme which started as part of the European Youth Capital experience, [Com'ON Cluj 2019](#) was dedicated to engaging over 500 youth between 14 and 35 years in co-creating their city and becoming future urban leaders. [Culturepreneurs](#) engages young entrepreneurs and empowers them to create start-ups in the creative industries.

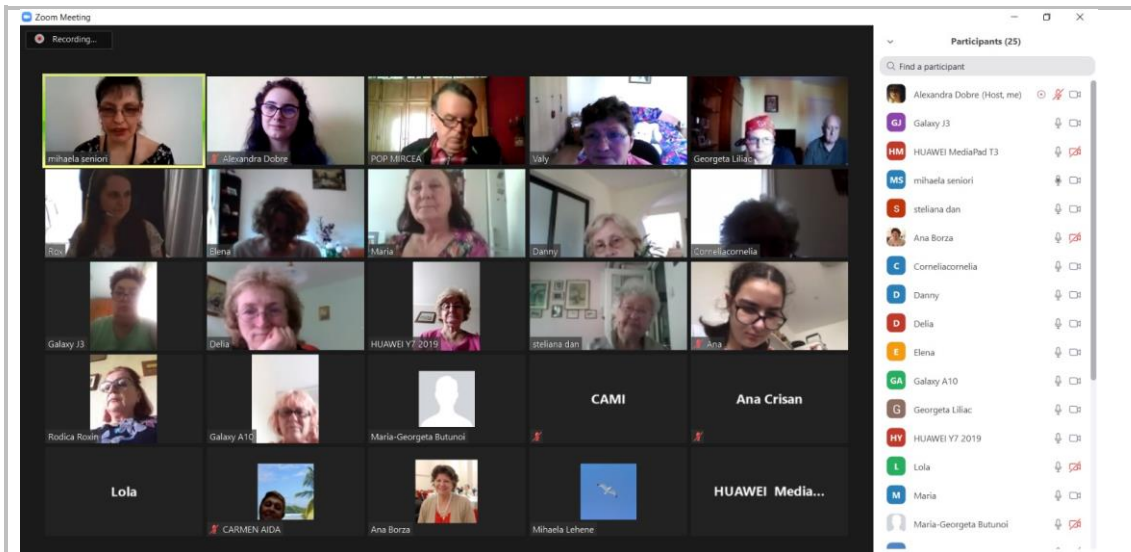


Cluj acknowledges the importance of co-managing urban commons. What began as an experiment with the **Rethinking Someș** architecture competition is now a staple of Cluj-Napoca: we do not tender vital urban projects anymore; instead, we welcome quality over quantity through **international idea contests and CIIC debates**.

It was a **lesson learnt from the citizens**, who in 2015 refused to accept an infrastructure project the way experts design it and who demanded to be involved. We stopped the project, embracing the failure of the top-down approach, and transformed the participatory co-creation of urban spaces in a tool.

Building on the need to **jointly valorize underused urban assets and contextualize the changes brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic**, we will lead 10 other cities in co-creating more flexible, inclusive and creative instruments for Public-Private-People-led physical and social regeneration through [AGORA](#).

Cluj is multi-cultural and inclusive: nobody gets left behind. In 2019, over 150 seniors successfully graduated the first digitalization program for the elderly ([Digital Seniors](#)). The project had cascading effects, enabled elderly to self-organize and had a tremendous impact on social resilience during the Covid-19 lockdown.



Our 10 universities are thinking outside the box when it comes to youth-led innovation. Also at highschool level, a Transylvania College proposal turned teacher-parent conferences on their head: they are now **student-led since 2019**, starting from primary school. The [International Youth Summit of Transylvania](#) was entirely organized by students, **secured the Presidential Seal** and welcomed members from 7 countries, 4 continents to create a Manifesto including viable solutions that each group could implement right away, in their communities.

Cluj is a model of solidarity, cohesion and trust. In the face of the Covid-19 crisis, the ecosystem gave birth to the **City Resilience Platform**, #EUvsVirus Hackathon winner [Donescu](#), and many more spontaneous initiatives such as [We help you from Cluj](#), or [Un Singur Cluj](#).

[Online public debates](#), livestreamed via Facebook, helped us understand how the Coronavirus pandemic has affected the cultural, health, sports, business environment and social state of Cluj, resulting in new public policies and financial allocations for NGO and medical organisations.

3. AWARD CRITERION: EXPANDING

Describe how your city is attracting new talents, resources, funding, investments through innovative practices, and how this helps your city to become a role model for other cities. You may include references to relevant innovation programmes and networks your city is participating in.

We may be small, but we have an ambitious vision: **to make Cluj the most attractive city to study, live and work in the region** – for all. We are a multi-ethnic, multi-confessional city with 3 names (in Romanian, Hungarian and German), home to 5100+ NGOs, 1.500 cultural events, 100 festivals a year, and hosting several European cities networks in culture, youth and sports.



After becoming EU's Capital of Youth, the vibrant student lifestyle flourished, powered by unique events and festivals such as UNTOLD, Electric Castle, Jazz in the Park, TIFF. Today, the expat community in Cluj has now over **10,000 foreign students** studying at Cluj universities, with many adopting the city to settle down because of the **unique energy**, reflected in every art venue, underground gallery, craft and cocktail bar, café and public space.



Cluj has **80,000 students and 100,000+ highly skilled graduates** working in IT, medical, arts, social sciences and many other fields. With more than **1,800 companies** based in the Cluj Metropolitan Area and **350 new IT start-ups per year**, we are a city which supports added value within a complex ecosystem in full expansion. Between 2019-2021, more than 50,000 m2 of office space will be delivered: a **15% total increase**. A fifth of the 2019 real estate investment in Romania happened in Cluj-Napoca: we are truly growing into our innovation leader role, and start-ups are the driving force.

Get to know the tech/startups-support organisations in Cluj!

<p>Startup hackathons</p>	<p>Accelerators, incubators and support programs</p>	<p>Get investment from</p> <p>Read news about startups</p>	<p>Organisations and events within universities</p>
<p>Tech/startups communities (+ many other tech communities)</p>		<p>IT-related and startups conferences where you can participate, learn, network</p>	
<p>Do you need for an office office or want to participate in meetups?</p>			<p>Support organizations</p>
<p>Various services for startups and new businesses (+ many more)</p>			<p>IT innovation-focused clusters</p>

Map done by **ACTIVIZE** and **CLUJ STARTUPS**

The ecosystem's appetite for growth has not gone unnoticed: we have been **the 2019 host of Startup Europe Summit** – the most successful event under the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the EU, with over 700 representatives experiencing the EU policy making highlight event of the year with a Cluj twist.



SCEP - StartupCity Europe Partnership, powered by the EC, enabled the City Hall in partnership with Transilvania IT Cluster to establish **the Cluj-Varna Strategic Partnership**, launching a collaborative trend inspiring cooperation practices for second-tier cities in Europe.

Startup Innovation Camp 2020 is another example of successful partnership within the local ecosystem, trying to find ways to solve the new problems using a Quadruple Helix. The event was also an opportunity to host the European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, **Ms. Mariya Gabriel**, back to the city, and to receive the support for the creation of many new innovative initiatives, such as the initiative group **GIPIA** (Interuniversity Group for Innovation and Entrepreneurship), **C-EDU** (the Cluster for Education) and **LEAP** (first interdisciplinary approach study to map Youth in the City).



For every **€ 5** paid by Cluj-Napoca's inhabitants on taxes, **€ 1** goes to the City Hall's programs supporting **access to education**. And for every **€ 1** that the citizens paid in 2019, the city attracted **over € 2.5 from ESIF funds**, specifically ensuring investments in sustainable urban mobility, equitable access to quality green and public space, energy efficiency and climate resilience, culture and heritage.

We push the boundaries of traditional sectors and instead, focus on cross-sectorial innovation, openness and connection at all levels – especially **human connection**. Cluj-Napoca is part of the **European Pact for Integration Project**, launched in January 2020, aiming to upgrade the quality of existing pro-migrant inclusion local strategies. We are preparing a partnership with UN-Habitat to develop a **Strategy for Urban Resilience and Affordable Housing**.

Cluj's innovation ecosystem includes the organisations managed by the **EU Cluster Manager of the Year 2019, Bianca Muntean**, also a member of many R&I European networks, including DIH² - a network of 26 Digital Innovation Hubs across Europe, the Network of European Youth Capital Cities, and many more.

As a Rapporteur in the Committee of the Regions, the Mayor, Emil Boc, is involved in **high-level policy making**, Member of the **A Soul for Europe Advisory Board**, and actively working as a member of the CoR to solve vital issues related to Cohesion (COTER) and research & education (SEDEC), where he already finished the **Brain Drain in the EU**.





4. AWARD CRITERION: EMPOWERING

Describe the concrete and measurable added value directly connected to the innovative practices. Please provide facts and figures about concrete achievements. Although it is not necessary, you can elaborate on how your city would use the European Capital of Innovation title (any idea, plan or relevant useful information on how the prize could enhance the impact of your city innovation related activities).

In Cluj, we build, we measure, and we learn – all together. And then we improve, as an ecosystem. The unique culture of cooperation in Cluj-Napoca makes us the fastest expanding economy in the country, and successfully enables an unparalleled growth in local wealth: just between 02.2019 and 02.2020, the **median income in the Cluj County grew with 13%**.

In recent years, the tech scene in Cluj has managed to make headway, growing more than tenfold in the last decade. In 2019, Cluj-Napoca hosted more than 15% of startups in Romania: a higher per capita figure than anywhere in Romania, including the capital of Bucharest, which is 7 times the size. Of the 11 business incubators/ accelerators in ICT in Romania, 5 were from Cluj-Napoca, and this speaks volumes for the cooperative, trust-based and idea-filled community of Cluj.

The city lives and breathes through its startup ecosystem: in 2019, around **€3 million** have been raised by new Cluj-born deep tech start-ups delivering world-class innovation in **AI** (AlphaBlock, Neurolabs), **e-commerce** (Blugento), **fintech** (Beez and Finqware), **telemedicine** (Telios), **cybersecurity** (Cyscale), and many more.

In March 2020, the innovation ecosystem launched the first **Public Manifesto** in Romania on the joint values and mission of startups, a best practice whose replication in other EU countries has the support of the Commission.



Cluj has managed to come a long way, and it continues to grow each year throughout all sectors and domains. Last year, **Untold** and **Electric Castle** became two of the biggest festivals in Europe (370,000 and 231,000 participants respectively in 2019), making Cluj a true world city. The **“Cluj Youth General Culture Olympiad - CuGeT”** welcomed 12,000 highschool students to test their knowledge and creativity in return for free access to cultural and artistic events. And a plethora of spontaneous creative, inclusive, innovation-oriented initiatives simply popped up fueled by the city’s energy.

Against the global pandemic backdrop, both the city and the people became more resolute in joining forces and





working like a true ecosystem. Initiatives born spontaneously out of necessity such as [MadeinCluj](#), [Un Singur Cluj](#) (One Single Cluj), **Cluj Resilience Tracker** and many more were joined by City Hall online debates connecting the Mayor and the citizens directly, and ambitious governance innovations such as the **Cluj Resilience Platform**, in order to reshape the future of the city for the better.



Mayor Emil Boc of Cluj-Napoca (Romania) “We need to act now”

Cluj believes that in the way forward, towards a better, more resilient, and cohesive future for our city, there is no place for old politics. Instead, there is the **shared belief in a policy of cooperation, support, and celebration of both successes as well as failures**. The Cluj Way of doing things means that everyone can represent the city, just as the city reflects everyone's needs and aspirations.

Becoming the next iCapital for 2020 would give a tremendous support and a new, reinforced meaning to the work that we do, together, to make Cluj-Napoca a better place for all through our **innovative trust-based city governance**. Especially now, in times of crisis, we believe it is important to share our lessons learned and the energy that drives us. We would use the European Capital of Innovation title and prize in order to achieve two objectives:

1. Reaching out to the iCapital alumni network and setting up a **City Innovation Academy**, in order to jointly share, learn and build a European community challenging the boundaries of citizen-led urban futures;
2. Promoting a **European Resilience Network**, as a forum for forward-thinking solutions to the current challenges which cities have to deal with – from pandemics, to socio-economic inequalities and climate change.



OPTIONAL ANNEXES

We would like to share a few quotes from the dozens of support letters that we received when drafting the iCapital 2020 application, all from the people of Cluj – both born and adopted:

“Nations are no longer “the thing”. Cities are the future. Cluj continues to surprise all who come. Cluj is exciting, happy, friendly, safe, a great place to raise a family. It’s hard to imagine that just a generation ago Cluj was under one of Europe’s most repressive regimes. It’s testament to Cluj and its people to be able to change and forge its own destiny in such a short period of time!” – **Mr. Shajjad Rizvi, Honorary British Prosperity Consul Cluj-Napoca**

„[The] experience based involvement is the foundation of the multicultural, tolerant environment in which the international community is welcomed when becoming expat in Cluj-Napoca. An environment which, by its nature, is the perfect ground for any innovative process, a place where people from different countries, cultures, experiences and religions share a high quality of life and great expectations. I strongly believe that Cluj has already a Global dimension. It is what I have long ago, when starting my company here, called a „Global City”. – **Antonio Patane’, President of the International Committee and the Association of Foreign Investors Cluj**

„When I moved to Romania almost 5 years ago with my family, I continually used one word to describe Cluj-Napoca: potential. In that short time since I have been here, I’ve seen a lot of progress and growth in all sectors of life. The expansion of Cluj into a truly metropolitan area can be seen with every new road laid and construction crane on the horizon. It has been and is continuing to prepare for a future of innovation.” – **William Cunneen, President of the American Business Club in Transylvania**

„The [Startup] manifesto is quite unique in Europe and can be a good practice example for other cities in Europe as well. No other city in Romania realizes better the importance of promoting and supporting its innovation hubs and also creating synergies between classical business, start-ups, citizens, academia and administration. [...] In the past ten years, Cluj-Napoca has been the city with the most dynamic development in Romania - economically, culturally and socio-academically” – **Sebastian Metz, Managing Director AHK Romania**

„Former European Commissioner Carlos Moedas said that „...more and more we all understand that innovation in the future will be on the intersection of arts and sciences” – a statement that rings especially true for Cluj-Napoca, where a world-renown cultural scene and one of Eastern Europe’s most recognized academic hubs interconnect.” – **Ingo Tegge, Director of the German Cultural Center**

“Cluj-Napoca has already been going through an open innovation and digital transformation processes for several years now with a considerable impact on the lives of citizens, businesses, universities and of course entrepreneurs. We have the privilege of living and working in a city where an extremely strong ecosystem has been formed during the past years, with various projects in the benefit of its citizens, and this is the



best result we can have. The fact that the ecosystem has generated sustainable innovative solutions and the actors from the community are open to initiatives aimed to improve the daily lives of citizens is an extremely important point reached by the parties actively involved in the development of the city, and the future of Cluj-Napoca sounds better and better! The strong leadership and vision of Cluj-Napoca Municipality succeeded to bring together all the positive energies, competences and capabilities for building together a bright future for our community”. - **Bianca Muntean, European Cluster Manager of 2019**

„About 9 years ago I was reluctantly stepping through the gates of Cluj airport. It was my second visit to this city. Genpact, a global leader in business process management has offered me a job and asked me to relocate to Cluj, take over and grow their local site, from roughly 400 people back then, over time it more than doubled. I remember the city like yesterday – provincial, quiet, like the time was moving slightly slower here. I moved with my family for a 2 year stint, and we are still here now – since November 2019 we are officially residents of Cluj-Napoca, the city today we call home. Today Cluj is internationally recognized thanks to many people who made efforts to “put it on the map”, and I fully trust it will continue to evolve. Multiple international festivals and events where people gather from all over the world are testimony of city’s continuous journey to progress. I am glad I decided to call Cluj-Napoca my home.”
Daniel Bratu – Vicepresident Genpact

1. The Cluj Way is to EXPERIMENT

[1]. Cluj as a Platform

Cluj as a platform is a concept developed as a shared value between the City Hall, clusters, industries, companies, NGOs, Academia and all citizens alike. This is the „cell wall”, the structural layer supporting the platform construction.

On the second level (light blue), the main tools and approaches are identified, while the core inner layer features the main fundamental elements that generate value at city level: Wellbeing, Collaboration, Sustainability, Value and Innovation.

This image represents the essence of our charter of values, which has a shared ownership across the whole ecosystem.





STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR THE CITY:

1. Sustainable urban mobility – green mobility

- 100% electric public transport by 2030
- 100 mil. Euro invested in the public transport fleet

2. Walkable city investment programme (100 mil. Euro)



- First Smart Street in Romania: work in progress in April 2020
- The high-tech pedestrian-friendly street will support greener mobility, improve connectivity, save energy and better include people with disabilities.
- The approach will be scaled and replicated in an effort to shift to low-carbon infrastructure in the City



3. Autonomous public transportation

- strategic partnership with the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca and companies that offer this last generation technology
- city mapping for sensor placement
- pilot project for the Line 0 - the first public route in Romania supplied by autonomous vehicles technology



4. Big infrastructure

- Sustainable public transportation: A metropolitan belt, metropolitan train and metro tram

5. Climate change

a. Green city:

- 110 ha new green areas and parks
- 100,000 new trees in public spaces by 2030
- 100 mil. Eur investments

b. Energy efficiency and deep renovation

- Integrated investments in public schools, kindergartens and nurseries
- Ca. 120 mil. Euro investments earmarked



c. Rethinking Someş (the main river crossing Cluj-Napoca)

- A 60 mil. Eur, two-phase intervention based on the winning solution of an international competition to reinvent the Someş riverbanks and reconnect the city
- First Phase, 2019 – 35 mil. EUR allotted for pedestrian walkways, bike lanes, recreational areas



[2]. Civic Imagination and Innovation Center (CIIC)

The CIIC is our main participatory governance instrument, and a recognition that Cluj can only work as an **ECOs**ystem, not an **EGO**system. While it was inaugurated back in 2017, since 2019 its purpose has grown, developed and branched out. It is not just debating solutions: it is actually enabling citizens to be involved throughout the whole decision-making process when it comes to large investments, starting with **the development of the actual specifications**, creating the project / investment / contest brief. The CIIC is now oftentimes full beyond capacity (eg. Sopor debate 2019)





[3]. Meet the Mayor



Meet the Mayor is an example of a **stakeholder-driven initiative** fully embraced and adopted by the city. The event started as an informal meeting of local authorities, at the initiative of the international community (Foreign Councilors of Netherlands, Sweden, France, Italy, UK, Germany etc.). **In 2019 it scaled up and became a tool to empower all social categories** to participate to the live and projects of the community: an official networking event, where any representative both local and foreign can ask questions and receive answers directly to and from the representatives of the City Hall and the Mayor himself.

Empowering the expat community to join the local ecosystem proved to be a both end learning experience and a very good problem solver platform, allowing the mapping of the expat community and much better problem solving in order to help expats to better integrate in the city.

In the last Meet the Mayor edition, in October 2019, **more than 300 people** interacted and established productive relationships both with the authorities and between themselves. The aftermovie of this event is available [\[HERE\]](#).

[4]. Urban Innovation Unit

The Cluj-Napoca Urban Innovation Unit is a research and development programme, bringing together ideas, knowledge and resources from the civil society, the academic sector, the cultural sector, the business sector and the public administration to propose alternative solutions to the city's strategic challenges.

Developed in partnership with the Civic Imagination and Innovation Center of the Municipality of Cluj-Napoca, the Urban Innovation Unit will be fully transferred to the Cluj-Napoca City Hall by 2022. The current priorities of the Unit are the future of the labour market, housing and resilience.

Future of work



2019

Housing



2020
coming soon

Urban resilience



2020



[5]. Digital Transformation Strategy

Technological development and changes in society increasingly require the setting of clear sectoral objectives for the development of communities, part of a comprehensive strategy, but in which the component parts are increasingly connected to each other.

In order to think of a strategic plan that incorporates as many of the needs and expectations of the Cluj community as possible, The Babeş Bolyai University together with the Municipality are developing the Digital Transformation Strategy, meeting with community actors interested in the digital transformation. So far there have been meetings with clusters (both IT and others), start-ups, NGOs. We planned meetings with universities, local institutions, medical and educational organizations. We are also awaiting contributions electronically.

This plan for the digital transformation of the city aims to highlight the challenges that Cluj-Napoca will face in the new information landscape in the coming years and to offer a series of possible solutions to existing and future problems.



Throughout the process of formulating this strategy, you will be able to read the latest version of the working document on this page. If you can help us in this phase of the project, please fill in one of the 2 forms below: one refers to the general document (possible additions to the specific Directions and Objectives formulated in the document, comments, suggestions or general criticisms, specifying, as far as possible, the section of the document you are referring to). Through the second form we also centralize proposals for operational programs.

[6]. CREIC

The Regional Center for Excellence in Creative Industries (Cluj-Napoca) is a one-of-a-kind building in this cultural space: it is brand new and can be used by anyone in the creative industries, offering spaces for both freelancers and companies in this sector.

CREIC was opened in 2019. Over 20 events have already been organized in the center, among which: "Amateur Film Factory" held at TIFF, DevTalks 2019 - event dedicated to the IT industry, Day Dreaming - event dedicated to the entertainment industry, TCIC 2019 - Transylvanian Clusters International Conference 2019 - event dedicated to clusters in the fields: industries creative, IT, agrofood, furniture, energy.



V1.0 – 10.04.2018



[7]. Cluj-Napoca is the coordinating city of the City Science Initiative – Sustainable Urban Mobility Working group



The City Science Initiative aims to strengthen the ways in which science and research can help address the urban challenges and to develop a structured approach to evidence-informed policy-making at cities' level. Read more about the Sustainable Mobility topic and the involvement of Cluj-Napoca here:

https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/communities/sites/jrccties/files/kd_sustainable_mobility_0.pdf

[8]. Cluj Future of Work (FoW)

The Urban Innovative Actions initiative was launched in 2019, being awarded a 4.5 mil. EUR ERDF grant to **experiment and implement an innovative solution** – completely new at European level. The city takes five innovative tracks to tackle the vulnerability of the local economy towards emerging technologies:

1. It promotes “**smart specialisation**”, aiming to make creative-based industries – one of the new competitive advantages of the city- and related knowledge intensive business services (KIBS) more competitive and engaged in societal change.
2. It enables **the transition to work 4.0**, providing training and skills development for the work of today and tomorrow, especially for work cycles under high risk of automation.
3. It **re-imagines work**, connected to both social values and technical potential.
4. It seeks to **improve the spatial conditions of the local economy**, through regeneration of the CREIC area, by transforming it into a knowledge-based new part of the city.
5. It introduces experimentations for systematic changes for local value-added chains and the new social contract governing the future of work by introducing a **local label acting as a financial tool**.



(Cluj FoW Conference in December 2019 – discussion with Jaclyn Youngblood, Chief of Staff at Boston Mayor's office of New Urban Mechanics)



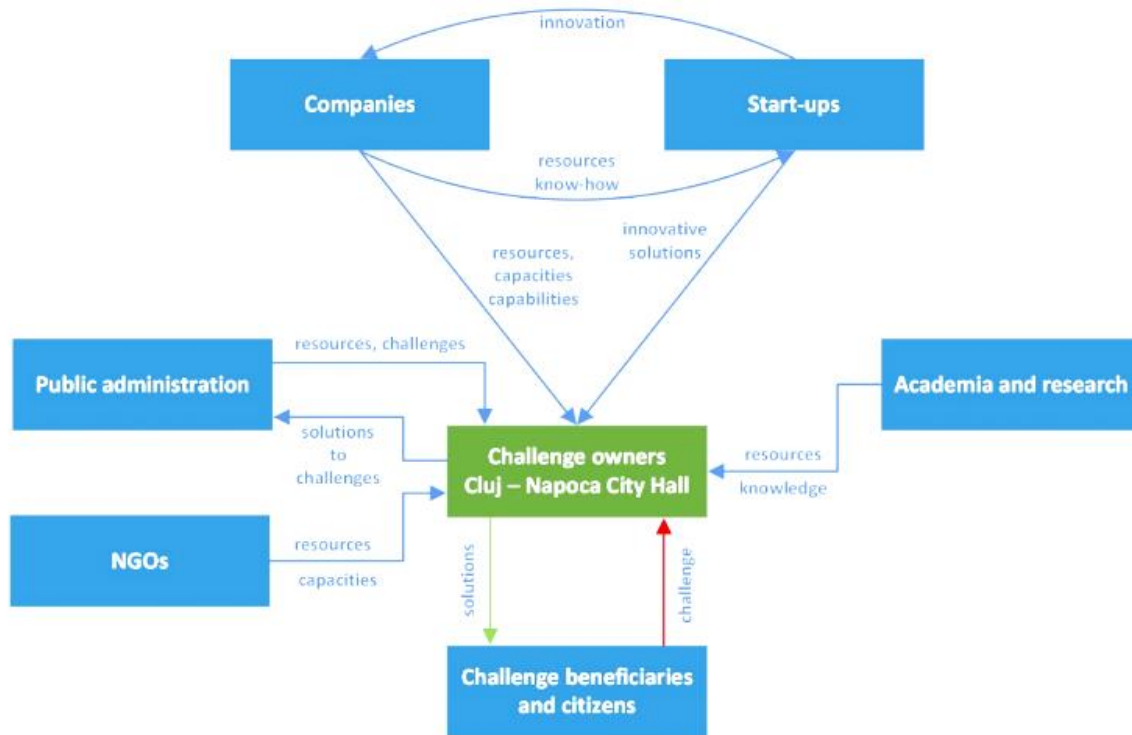
[9]. City Resilience Platform

The City Resilience Platform started as a reaction to the global COVID-19 pandemic and the limitations of the central administration. The Cluj local ecosystem reacted and built on the need for **intelligent self-organization at local and regional level**. There is an effervescence of entrepreneurial and professional initiatives that propose innovative solutions to solve pressing problems – and this energy will be captured in a digital platform for resilience.

The concept was developed by Transylvania IT Cluster, Transylvania DIH, Transylvania Living Lab, and was fully embraced by the city.

The proposal is an innovative approach that involves a multitude of stakeholders in solving concrete challenges that we have called "**resilience challenges**". The approach is one focused on "challenge" and not on available resources or needs or their entry in a database. Each "challenge" will have an owner who will manage the available resources based on the matchmaking made by the platform between the needs of the challenge and the resources available (posted) on the platform.

The City Resilience Platform has three facets between which multiple interactions and transactions can be mediated either manually or automatically:



The main value generated by the platform can be found in:

- the quality of the matchmaking carried out between the entities present on the platform;
- availability screening of resources, capacities and capabilities in a unitary manner at city level;
- intelligent use of resources according to the real needs of hospitals or institutions in various needs;
- allocating resources according to real challenges;
- quantifying the necessary resources according to each challenge;
- organizing the activity of real response to needs on each challenge exclusively in the online environment;
- smart centralization and measuring of resources and capabilities available for decentralized and inspired decisions.



2. The Cluj Way is to ENGAGE

[10]. C-EDU

Since mid-2019, the most relevant stakeholders of Cluj - namely the Municipality of Cluj-Napoca, the County Council, the County School Inspectorate, all the 6 State universities of the city (University of Babeş Bolyai, the Technical University, Gheorghe Dima Music Academy, the University of Art and Design, Iuliu Hatieganu University of Medicine and Pharmacy, the University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Cluj-Napoca and Transylvania College) got together and made Cluj the first Romanian city to create such an Educational Cluster - official intended date of launching 6th of October 2020-the International Day of Education - in order to shorten the gap between school and labour market and to approach the needs of cross-sectoral learning.



[11]. BugetareParticipativa and Com'ON Cluj 2019

BugetareParticipativa 2019 and the youth spin-off ComON Cluj 2019 - were financed by the local budget with aprox 1.5 Mil Euro, respectively 50.000 Eur for financing citizen & youth initiatives in Cluj-Napoca. (<https://www.comoncluj.ro/about-com-on-cluj-napoca>)



For Com'ON Cluj 2019, almost 10,000 public votes were cast for the 123 initiatives, and 37 were implemented during November 2019, in high-schools, parks, public institutions, cinemas.



[12]. **Innovato-R**

Innovato-R is an URBACT good practice transfer project and it also constituted for Cluj-Napoca a spin-of, an experiment of the Public budgeting platform the city offers to citizen, but used this time for the **experts & public employees**, enhancing their innovative potential from stimulating the dual quality of citizen/public employee.

In 2019 we put together an MVP and in early 2020 we experimented with **the first pilot call for action** - and the results were impressive! Winning solutions will be incubated in the next months and some implemented, the others developed in future iterations of the project.



Read more about Innovato-R: <https://urbact.eu/cluj-napoca-project-using-digital-tools-storm-innovative-potential-public-employees>

[13]. **Culturepreneurs**

Culturepreneurs is an entrepreneurial education programme for the cultural and creative sectors. The project supports the creation and development of businesses and social businesses in design, film, music, crafts, publishing and other creative sectors by providing access to coworking spaces and labs, training and consulting in management, technology and societal challenges, as well as by organising meetings with potential investors and distributors.



Culturepreneurs 20/21 will take place between June 2020 and March 2021 and was further
Call: H2020-European-i-capital-Prize-2020 — European Capital of Innovation EU Grants: Proposal template (prizes): V1.0 – 10.04.2018



developed as one of the future work scenarios of the city in “Cluj Future of Work” Project, initiated by the Urban Innovation Unit in Cluj-Napoca in partnership with the Centre for Innovation and Civic Imagination of the Municipality of Cluj-Napoca.

[14]. **AGORA - Advanced coGeneration Options for Reintegrating local Assets**

In May 2020 we have successfully secured a total 2.4 mil. Euro project which will enable us to coordinate 10 cities, 17 total partners and an additional number of 11 Associated Strategic Partners (among which EUROCITIES and Spatial Foresight) in the ambition of going beyond regulated participation and urban redevelopment procedures and implementing **decentralised governance models making urban policy a co-produced public responsibility, with and for city stakeholders.**

AGORA supports joint design of **open governance solutions**, tests them and provides the instruments for transfer and scaling. The three key objectives are:

1. To set up new operational and policy instruments for public administrations in order to fast-track urban regeneration
2. To co-create shared, operationalised development strategies at local level
3. To foster organisational innovation for cooperative city asset management and valorisation

AGORA is our chance to share the City as a Platform and City as a Commons approach that makes us one of the most cohesive places to live in Europe.

[15]. **Digital Seniors**

The Digital Seniors project was implemented by the Municipality of Cluj-Napoca in collaboration with Transilvania IT Cluster in 2019.

A smart city leaves no one behind, and the elders are part of the local community. Carefully considering the digitalization needs of the senior citizens, the Municipality of Cluj-Napoca and Transilvania IT Cluster put together a PC training session that helped seniors pay their monthly bills, shop, socialize and more. More than 200 senior citizens have been actively involved, 150 have graduated the program, and we intend to extend it in the very near future.



The approach is the first of its kind in Romania and the project aimed to ensure support in matters of digital needs to all the citizens of Cluj-Napoca, focusing on inclusion and making sure not one individual is a stranger to the benefits of technological advancements. In spite of the project ending, the actual involvement of volunteers and activists has continued to support the Digital Seniors through the times of the pandemic.



[16]. International Youth Summit of Transylvania

The International Youth Summit of Transylvania (IYST) took place in March 2019, and it was coordinated entirely by the high school students of Transylvania College. The event was held under the High Patronage of Romanian Presidency. Watch the video:



<https://youtu.be/4M5PzFFC7U>

[17]. EUvsVirus Hackathon & Donescu

#EUvsVirus Matchaton and Hackaton created 2,164 multi-disciplinary, multi-nationality teams with innovative solutions throughout April 2020, then sparked the development of 2,235 new cross-European partnerships by matching the best 120 teams with 458 supportive partners from the public and private sectors throughout May. The Mayor of Cluj-Napoca, Mr. Emil Boc, has been one of the **event's ambassadors** and has pledged to support the event and its teams.

We are proud that one of the winners of the Hackathon was Cluj-based **Donescu**, a market
Call: H2020-European-i-capital-Prize-2020 — European Capital of Innovation EU Grants: Proposal template (prizes):
V1.0 – 10.04.2018



donation platform that transparentises and streamlines the donation process to hospitals. **Donescu** aims to bring together hospitals, donors and providers of medical equipment, ensuring full transparency of the process donation, so that donors will be notified throughout the process of the status of their donation.

🔍 Hospitals How It Works  Contact | Sign In Or



Now, more than ever, we need to show responsibility and solidarity.



We connect hospitals directly with donors or suppliers of protective equipment.

[18]. **Vă ajutam din Cluj & Susținem producătorii locali ai Clujului**

Translated as “**We help you from Cluj**” and “**We support the local producers of Cluj**” respectively, the initiatives are completely self-organized, volunteer based, bottom up movements which have supported, through volunteers and donations, hundreds of people and institutions during the coronavirus pandemic, in just a single month.

In the first 32 days after the launch, 92 volunteers joined We help you from Cluj and contributed to the distribution in conditions of minimal risk of contamination of **537 food and medicine packages to 345 individual beneficiaries**. Staff from more than 100 institutions were also supported by **donating 14,500 protective equipment**. Until April 25, 31,947 lei were spent from the donations received within the 9 undertaken actions. Group information is public: <https://www.facebook.com/va.ajutam.din.cluj/>

Later, some of the participants used their knowledge and expertise and initiated startups based on the need of the Facebook groups, finding a way to structure and create a business platform to address needs and exchanges, [MadeinCluj.ro](https://www.madeincluj.ro). Following this example, another already existing tool to boost producers access to the local market, **Produs de Cluj**, made an agile adaption of their business model and developed an online shop <https://magazinprodusdecluj.ro> to replace the fairs they usually organised.

[19]. **Covid-19 Online Debates**

In order to adopt effective public policies, including out-standing financial allocations from the local budget, Cluj-Napoca City Hall initiated a series of public online debates, livestreamed on Youtube and on Facebook, focusing on the following key topics for each thematic field:



1. How is the field affected by the Coronavirus pandemic?
2. What are the solutions in this field after the Coronavirus pandemic?
3. What are the ways and public policies through which the City Hall and the Local Council can help the respective field?



So far, 4 online debates have been organized in May-June 2020 for the cultural sector, the health sector, sports and the business environment. Any citizen could register to intervene, raise an issue, propose a solution or even a policy. Live streams are available online:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCttK1zpjSFu29rmcut2eAA>

3. The Cluj Way is EXPANDING

[20]. Startup Europe Summit

SES - Startup Europe Summit was organised by the city hall with the local ecosystem

22 March 2019. It involved the participation of the European Commission, Romanian Government, Municipality of Cluj-Napoca, Transilvania IT Cluster, Local Companies (BT, Vitrina Advertising, Stables, local dealer of BMW, Grand Hotel Italia), local NGOs (CCC, Untold Festival, etc).

Cluj incorporated the official DG Connect agenda into an ecosystem process and engaged with the local helix to brainstorm on the side events and local flavour part of the summit. So, we gained attention toward the start-ups and the city's





innovation centres - and the local innovative stakeholders (start-ups, IT companies, etc) felt included in a meaningful way in the event'.

The most colourful example - the Untold Festival, a local start-up in the creative industry adapted their product to this context and organised a synergic event where technology, art and creativity was offered as a sample of the Cluj's way to approach an event. All these contributions were offered to the event in the attempt of showing the connection this city has with its people. If one is expected to provide a challenge the others naturally join into enforcing it and making sure that the quest is successful - in the end, it is about our city.

[21]. SCEP - StartupCity Europe Partnership



“SCEP StartupCities“, is a worldwide pioneer bottom-up initiative, started in 2019, powered by the European Commission with the leadership of European Commissioner Mariya Gabriel, overseen by Mr Arturo Villar Menendez in partnership with relevant stakeholders in the EU. In Cluj-Napoca, the stakeholders are the Municipality of Cluj-Napoca and Transilvania IT Cluster.

The pilot project “Cluj-Varna Strategic Partnership” was launched in Cluj-Napoca in March 2019, setting a collaborative trend for second layer cities. The SCEP StartupCities initiative is focusing on one specialization per city as the ecosystem flagship, to interconnect these ecosystems (markets) for consolidating alternative innovation hubs.

Aiming towards the exchange of good practices models between second tier cities, the StartupCity Europe Partnership enhances a vision of a collaborative partnership with a desire to stimulate innovation and support startups. The project addresses one of the most pressing issues on the global agenda: the unequal distribution of wealth and power generated by the startup phenomenon. The solution requires a stakeholders approach for public-private cooperation towards adapting the technological trends reshaping entrepreneurship in second tier cities.



4. The Cluj Way is EMPOWERING

WHY CLUJ-NAPOCA?

The city with the highest economic growth rate in Romania in the last decade

Forbes, 2018

Cluj-Napoca, the best-ranked Romanian city in the global Quality of Life Index 2019

Numbeo, 2019

The second European city in terms of access to employment

Eurostat, 2018

The most attractive Romanian city

Highest city magnetism index value, World Bank, 2017

The Romanian city with the highest cultural vitality besides the Capital

The Cultural Vitality of Romanian Cities, National Institute for Cultural Research and Formation, 2016

8 economic clusters that support the innovation ecosystem

393 companies, 8 universities, and 22 catalyst organizations

Highly skilled workforce

*= 80.000 students and 100.000+ higher education graduates
Ministry of Education, The National Institute of Statistics*

Romania ranks 6th in Europe and 16th worldwide for English Proficiency

According to EF's Global English Proficiency Index 2018

Romania is the 2nd European country with the lowest business economy labour cost

Hourly Labour Cost in Romania is 26% of the European Average, Eurostat Labour Cost Index, 2018

Top civically engaged city in Romania

Highest citizen participation in choosing the cities priorities, World Bank and The Federation of Metropolitan and Urban Areas in Romania, UrbanizedHub, 2019

Friendliest city in Europe with foreigners

European Commission study, 2015

[22]. Cluj Youth General Culture Olympiad – CuGeT (16.09.2019 – 16.10.2019)

Cuget is a word that can mean conscience, or thought, or mind, or all three together as one. An initiative of the AFA (Business Women Association), the local administration, schools, partner companies, universities, the “**Cluj Youth General Culture Olympiad - CuGeT**” reinterprets the meaning of the Olympics in the Romanian space and expands it - from the point of view of areas of interest - beyond its classical academic sense, for the benefit of young people aged 14-25 – **12,000 of them!**

CuGeT (<http://cuget.afacj.ro/>) is a "different Olympics" that empowers the value of general knowledge of young people in Cluj that attracts them to participate in a multidisciplinary competition organized in three successive stages and three age categories, exploring the arts, Romanian and universal literature, sciences, geopolitics, web culture, Europe and Europeanism, as well as the city of Cluj-Napoca, through scientifically constructed but creatively formulated questions.





[23]. **MadeInCluj**



MadeInCluj.ro was born out of the necessity to support Cluj county local small producers reach their customers in Cluj-Napoca in a context where traditional sales channels, like local markets, fairs and small brick-and-mortar shops are closed and people are forced to stay in home. In the long term, the purpose of the platform is to change the behaviour of customers, making them more aware of the

benefit of buying from local manufacturers, helping the development of new products and creating an increased interest in locally grown food.

With all the products in the marketplace being manufactured at regional level, **the platform creates short supply chains, from which both the local economy and the environment are benefiting.** As a regional brand, “*Made in Cluj*” will also help create a product identity that attracts consumers and stands for quality.

The online platform aggregates the offering of all the local producers (food, clothing, cosmetics, various small manufacturing products etc), thus enabling customers to fill their online basket with merchandise from multiple vendors, like shopping in a supermarket. **Over 100 small farmers, manufacturers and delivery restaurants joined the platform in less then one week from launch, listing over 500 items. They are encouraged to contribute with ideas to develop the platform further.**

[24]. **Un Singur Cluj (One single Cluj)**

Un Singur Cluj is a platform that brings together dozens of events, civic organizations, companies, universities and public administration institutions in Cluj County, to fight against COVID-19. Specifically, the platform allows direct donations to the public and companies, which will then be redirected according to updated needs.

One Single Cluj mobilizes money and resources to join the actions of hospitals, authorities and civic initiatives, in a joint effort to synchronize efforts and centralize information. Anyone can help buying `Solidarity Tickets` to unite forces for Covid-19 relief.

