

# “LA QUIOSCA”: ART TO STRENGTHEN THE SOCIAL NETWORK OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AFTER THE PANDEMIC



## AGENDA 2030 - SDGs



## CULTURE 21: ACTIONS - COMMITMENTS

1. CULTURAL RIGHTS
2. HERITAGE, DIVERSITY AND CREATIVITY
6. CULTURE, EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION
7. CULTURE, URBAN PLANNING AND PUBLIC SPACE

PARTICIPATION, CITIZENSHIP, PUBLIC SPACE,  
EQUITY, WELLBEING, ACCESS, COMMON GOOD,  
URBANISM, COVID, CULTURAL RIGHTS

# 1. Granollers and culture

Granollers is a city of 62,000 inhabitants located 30 kilometres north of Barcelona, Spain, with a long history of working on social inclusion through three pillars: education, culture, and sport. One example is the socio-community project "Murs que parlen" (Walls That Talk), which enlivens the regions and improves the urban landscape through participation, discourse, community co-creation, and by putting up partitions that have collaborative and experiential artistic activities.

The Kiosk initiative builds on this project and broadens it to contribute to social cohesion in the Congost neighbourhood, an area in Granollers with some of the highest levels of inequality. The neighbourhood has a 28.8% migrant population, from 42 different countries, and the lowest per household, and per person income in the city. The COVID-19 crisis in 2021 was an opportunity to address the effects of the pandemic through a sociocultural project focused on this neighbourhood..



**THE COVID-19 CRISIS IN 2021 WAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE EFFECTS OF THE PANDEMIC THROUGH A SOCIOCULTURAL PROJECT FOCUSED ON THIS NEIGHBOURHOOD.**

## 2. Project goals and implementation

### 2.1. Main goal and specific objectives

"The Kiosk: Using Art to Strengthen the Social Fabric of The Congost Neighbourhood Following The Pandemic" was carried out in 2021 and whose general objective was to salvage relationships in public spaces through art and culture within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The aim of the project was to strengthen community ties, revive social life, and ensure cultural rights in community spaces to help people cope with the harsh consequences of the pandemic's public health measures. To do so, an abandoned kiosk was revamped and used both as an outdoor radio station and for painting a mural in one of the neighbourhood squares. This served as a way to connect with people on their mobile devices and spark conversations, and ultimately to create a space for bonding, participation, and access to culture and art.

### 2.2. Project development

The Kiosk is a cross-cutting municipal project promoted by the Granollers City Council. In January 2021, an analysis was done in the neighbourhood in order to learn more about the territory, people, organizations, and businesses. At that stage, the education team began to establish contacts with the neighbourhood and identified existing opportunities.

#### **Transformation of the Kiosk**

The transformation of the kiosk structure into The Kiosk as a large scale project took place visibly within the neighbourhood as well as in partnership with its residents. Together the kiosk became the main form of communicating the project to other inhabitants. The Kiosk addressed questions like "How do we take care of ourselves?", "How are you living through the pandemic?", and "When have you felt bad?". Asking these has underpinned all of the work done with different groups in the areas, and also with people who regularly used the space.

The answers, concerns, and comments were displayed at The Kiosk and have been the subject of conversation on Radio Kiosk (Quiosca), the radio program broadcast from there. They have also been the subject of the material that has inspired the artist's mural.





### **Radio Kiosk**

During the month of June, Radio Kiosk was proposed as a means for community conversation. It has brought together different people working on the project, experts in issues of care, health, diversity, art, community action, and everyday residents of the Congost neighbourhood. Additionally, there was time reserved at the end of each program for children to ask questions. There were also music sessions.

### **3TTMAN and “Cuando los animales regresaron a la ciudad” (When the animals returned to the city)**

3ttman (Louis Lambert), the artist chosen to paint the mural, created his painting based on feedback from neighbourhood residents. He was provided with the results of the surveys, walked around the neighbourhood, and talked and listened to the residents. Then the artist spent 10 days painting the mural. What he created was a living work of art that could be experienced by all.

On June 31st, a celebration was held in the neighbourhood, with a special radio program, musicians, and stilt walkers who held a parade in the square to celebrate the completion of the wall.

**THE AIM OF THE PROJECT WAS TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY TIES, REVIVE SOCIAL LIFE, AND ENSURE CULTURAL RIGHTS IN COMMUNITY SPACES.**



## 3. Impacts

### 3.1. Direct impacts

- The project has proven that community arts and culture actions can socially transform places and promote community well-being.
- The Kiosk and Radio Kiosk have guaranteed access to culture and cultural production for children, youth, the elderly, women, and more in a neighbourhood on the outskirts of the city. It has also strengthened relationships among resident communities, the neighbourhood at large, and municipal actors.
- The artistic intervention of 3TTMAN and The Kiosk have helped calm the conflictive dynamic of the neighbourhood created by the stress of the pandemic by creating joy and excitement.
- The bright colours and the motif of 3ttman's work "When the animals returned to the city" offers an optimistic message to the neighbourhood and encourages respect for nature. 3TTMAN's wall has put the neighbourhood on the map for local, regional, and international urban art.

**THE PROJECT HAS PROVEN THAT COMMUNITY ARTS AND CULTURE ACTIONS CAN SOCIALLY TRANSFORM PLACES AND PROMOTE COMMUNITY WELL-BEING.**

### 3.2. Assessment

The reaction of the neighbourhood residents has been a daily form of evaluation for the project. Active participation in radio sessions and workshops are positive indicators. The city aims to implement a satisfaction survey and standardize participation indicators for new intervention projects carried out in public spaces in different neighbourhoods. This would make it easier to evaluate, analyze, and create future initiatives that are better suited to the communities.

### 3.3. Key factors

One of the key factors of The Kiosk project's success is its use of art and culture for intervention in neighbourhoods. By placing art at the centre of the conversation, problems and conflicts are displaced and conflictive dynamics are eased. Another factor is the beautification of public space, improving the neighbourhood's self-perception. The walls create a new artistic heritage for the neighbourhood and the city, establishing a new urban dynamic.



### 3.4. Continuity

The “Walls That Talk” project has been carried out in Granollers since 2014 and each year focuses on a different neighbourhood of the city. The Kiosk took an extraordinary next step by hiring an external professional team to alleviate the post-pandemic stress of the Congost neighbourhood. The Kiosk is open one afternoon a week, and offers a new sociocultural dynamic to the area.

## 4. Further information

Granollers was a candidate for the fifth UCLG Mexico City – Culture 21 International Award (February - June 2022). The jury for the award drew up its final report in September of 2022, and requested that the UCLG Committee on Culture promote this project as one of the good practices implemented under Agenda 21 for culture.

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