

# CULTURE-HEALTH DAYS



Photo credit: Jean-Michael Seminario. In the photo: Marco Pronovost, host of the October 21 Culture-Health Day and social arts consultant, with Dominique Payette, representative for Les Impatients.

## AGENDA 2030 - SDGs

<b>1</b> NO POVERTY 	<b>3</b> GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 	<b>4</b> QUALITY EDUCATION 	<b>10</b> REDUCED INEQUALITIES 
<b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 	<b>16</b> PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS 	<b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 	

## CULTURE 21 ACTIONS - COMMITMENTS

1. CULTURAL RIGHTS
6. CULTURE, EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

HEALTH, CULTURE, NETWORK, SUPPORT, INSTITUTIONAL,  
SOCIAL, WELL-BEING, COMMUNITY



Photo credit: Jean-Michael Seminario. In the photo: Manon Trépanier, host of the September 25 Culture-Health Day, and artists H el ene Ducharme, Stanley F evrier and Carol Jones.

## 1. Longueuil and culture

Longueuil is the most urbanized area in the southern suburbs of Montreal, with a population of 252,000. It is an area comprised primarily of immigrants, with more than 38,000 residents speaking a language other than French or English, and has more than 350 cultural and community organizations, as well as hundreds of artists. Cultural mediation is an essential tool for mobilization. Its 2012 benchmark framework on cultural mediation made it a pioneering region in Qu ebec.

The Culture and Health Day planned for March 2020 was cancelled due to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Eighteen months later, the topic was all the more poignant. The relationship between culture and health suddenly became clear, but so, too, did both the objectives for intervention and the collaborations and partnerships between the different stakeholders in the two sectors.

Longueuil has affirmed its commitment to Agenda 21 for culture. The objective of the Culture and Health Days relates directly to the issues and values addressed by Culture 21: Actions, and the Rome Charter. Cultural democracy is at the heart of municipal practices, which aim to empower full participation in its citizens. Longueuil strives to be more inclusive, more democratic, and more sustainable. As such, the goals of its cultural public policy, and those of the Culture and Health Days, correspond to the objectives of global agendas, notably the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda and the New Agenda for Cities.

**THE IDEA IS TO ESTABLISH A LINK BETWEEN CULTURE AND HEALTH IN ORDER TO DEMONSTRATE THE REAL AND POSITIVE IMPACT OF CULTURE ON PEOPLE'S QUALITY OF LIFE.**



## 2. Project goals and implementation

### 2.1. Main goal and specific objectives

The objective is to spark reflection on the impact of art and culture on the well-being of individuals and populations. The idea is, for the Department of Culture and Libraries, to establish a link between culture and health that would lead to partnerships and a concrete intervention plan, and thus demonstrate the real impact of culture on people's quality of life, particularly with respect to their health.

Specific Objectives:

- To provide an overview of the sectors of health and cultural/artistic intervention;
- To motivate stakeholders to include culture and cultural mediation in their intervention plans, to be open to incorporating a cultural perspective in the health care sphere, etc. ;
- To observe the benefits and positive impacts of culture on the health care sector, both for workers and patients, alike.

### 2.2. Project development

On March 25, 2020 there was a planned day that was to include presentations, research, testimonies, inspiring experiences from different speakers (doctors, researchers, cultural organizations, community organizers, etc.). However, the COVID-19 pandemic caused the event to be cancelled. In the spring of 2021, the Department of Culture and Libraries decided to organize not one, but two Culture and Health days in the fall of 2021.



These were planned for September 25 and October 21, 2020, which included interventions from several stakeholders in the health, cultural, community, and university sectors. Artists from Longueuil were also able to share their respective projects and visions for their interventions in the fields of mental and physical health, which were particularly important during the pandemic. These days were held virtually in order to respect the public health and safety measures put in place at the time, although the majority of the speakers were present in the studio.

\$25,000 CAD was invested in the preparation and execution of the 2021 Culture and Health Days, thanks to the cultural development agreement between the City of Longueuil and the Government of Quebec. In addition to this amount, the city invested in providing services and tools for the days. Registration was free for participants.

**THE SPEAKERS AND THE AUDIENCE REACTED VERY POSITIVELY TO THE PRESENTATIONS, WHICH CREATED A DESIRE TO REPEAT PROJECT IN THE FUTURE, AND TO PLAN THE NEXT STEPS.**

## 3. Impacts

### 3.1. Direct impacts

The speakers and audience (approximately 150 people) reacted very positively to the presentations, which created a desire to repeat the project, and to plan the next steps. Since then, stakeholders have responded to various proposals (projects on perinatal bereavement, homelessness, mental health, domestic violence, caregiving, etc.). Cultural stakeholders found it easier to get in touch with healthcare stakeholders, receive positive responses to proposals faster, and vice versa.



Photo credit: Jean-Michael Seminaro. In the photo: Carol Jones, an artist who carries out a number of cultural mediation projects in the field of health.

**THE CITY LAUNCHED A CALL FOR PROJECTS ON CULTURAL MEDIATION IN HEALTH. SEVERAL PROJECTS HAVE SINCE BEEN LAUNCHED WITH MORE TO FOLLOW.**

### **3.2. Assessment**

In order to measure the impact of the event and to plan for its continuation, qualitative and quantitative evaluation mechanisms were put in place. The results and positive comments attest to the relevance of culture and health and the desire to continue this work. The days brought together nearly 150 participants from different backgrounds (artists, community and health workers, citizens, education, and social services).

### **3.3. Key factors**

- Consistency with the city's work in the cultural field over many years (Cultural Policy, agreements with Quebec, partnerships and projects with the cultural, community, education, and health sectors).
- Openness, collaboration, creativity, enthusiasm, and motivation of individuals involved.
- Involvement and listening to the needs of artists, cultural and community organizations, citizens, various stakeholders, cultural workers, and local leaders.

### **3.4. Continuity**

The city launched a call for projects on cultural mediation in health. Several projects have since been launched with more to follow. In addition, as a continuation of the partnership between the City and the University of Sherbrooke, a collaboration was planned with the Cultural Space at the university (exhibition space).

## 4. Further information

Longueuil 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.

This report was written by Dominique Malenfant-Gamache, Head, and Stéphanie Laquerre, Manager and Cultural Mediation Projects Officer, Arts and Heritage Division, City of Longueuil, Quebec, Canada.

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