

CULTURAL EMERGENCY: NITEROI AND LOCAL POLICIES FOR CULTURAL RIGHTS



AGENDA 2030 - SDGs



CULTURE 21 ACTIONS - COMMITMENTS

1. CULTURAL RIGHTS
2. HERITAGE, DIVERSITY AND CREATIVITY
5. CULTURE AND ECONOMY
9. GOVERNANCE OF CULTURE

**ECONOMIC, RESILIENCE, BOTTOM-UP, COVID,
GOVERNANCE, PARTICIPATION, STRATEGY,
WOMAN/WOMEN, LGBTQ+, CULTURAL RIGHTS**

1. Niterói and culture

Niterói is a municipality with an estimated population of 500,000 inhabitants. It's located in the Metropolitan Region of Rio de Janeiro, an area that concentrates 18 cities and one of the highest population densities in Brazil. In this group, Niterói stands out for the highest Human Development Index. In terms of social indicators, Niterói has one of the highest incomes per capita in Brazil, despite still having one of the biggest segregations of color/race. In recent years, cultural policies have faced these local adversities. Today, Niterói is among the 10 cities that most invest in culture in Brazil.



THE PROGRAM WAS CREATED IN MARCH 2020 FROM THE NEED TO QUICKLY THINK ABOUT LOCAL IMPACTS ON CULTURE AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ANNOUNCEMENT.

2. Project goals and implementation

2.1. Main goal and specific objectives

The Cultural Emergency program consists of a set of local cultural policies during the COVID-19 pandemic intended to mitigate its negative impacts, maintain sustainability, plan the economic recovery and guarantee the exercise of cultural rights in the city of Niterói. The program's differential is: the inclusion of culture in the city's central planning; the expansion of the budget dedicated to the sector; the encouragement of popular participation; and the formulation of structuring policies for cultural rights.

2.2. Project development

The Cultural Emergency program consists of few local public policies:

Damage reduction policies: the municipal government created the "Arte na Rede" (Art on the net) project, with the aim of virtually disseminating the cancelled cultural activities, as well as selecting and paying artists to perform in their own homes. Furthermore, a partnership was made with the online ticket sales company Sympla to sell tickets to the city's cultural spaces (which could be used when these spaces reopened). The profit obtained from the tickets was used to purchase food assistance for cultural workers. The project was called "Ingresso Solitário" (Solidarity Ticket). In partnership with the Department of Economics, which was launching an emergency aid program for sectors of the city, the Secretariat of Cultures acted to include individual micro-entrepreneurs linked to culture and artisans. The program, in partnership with the Department of Economics, reached 2616 individual micro-entrepreneurs and 481 artisans with monthly support of R\$500 (€90). In total, this program transferred R\$21 million (€3,8 million) directly to cultural workers between 2020 and 2021.

Sustainability policies: Niterói carried out the "Emergency Aid to Artistic and Cultural Spaces", which benefited 151 collectives and cultural spaces in the city with an investment of R\$1.166 million (€290.000). A Public Call was also developed to fund a stage of production that is generally unpaid and did not require the artists to leave their homes. The Erika Ferreira Award (named in honor of one of the first artists victims of Covid-19 in the city) was created. It was the Public Call with the highest number of registrations (871), reaching all regions of the city. The Call had quotas for women, black people and trans people. 678 ideas were considered. The Award invested R\$1.955 million (€360.000). Furthermore, the "Citizen Company" project was launched in partnership with the Department of Economics. The objective of the project was to fund formal jobs, preventing layoffs due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Culture workers were again included. A total of 296 companies in the cultural area and 1060 workers were affected. In 2020, the investment in this program for culture was R\$11.077 million (€1.9 million).



Economic recovery policies: A local law was created to deal with economic recovery in culture. This Law made it possible to create a specific Public Call to support cultural spaces and new projects so that they could once again receive the public and hold events in the city. 7 Public Calls were launched, which together had a total investment value of R\$8.7 million (€1.5 million). Also in this period, a participatory budgeting policy was carried out, with the team from the Secretariat of Cultures going to the city's neighbourhoods so that the population could decide how the budget amounts should be spent.

Cultural rights policies: A "Niterói's Cultural and Creative Sector Mapping" was carried out. The data obtained were fundamental for the development of the two following projects, the "Cultural Rights Charter" and the "Cultural Rights House". The Cultural Rights Charter was the first document of this type prepared in Brazil. It was created after more than 20 meetings (mostly online) with more than 800 people participating. The Cultural Rights House was created in 2021 to become the office of the program.

Social Participation: The Secretary of Cultures called civil society through the Municipal Council for Cultural Policies, to participate in a Working Group and present proposals for culture. 34 proposals were submitted and 27 of these were implemented.

THE CULTURAL EMERGENCY PROGRAM INTENDED TO MITIGATE THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, MAINTAIN SUSTAINABILITY, PLAN THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND GUARANTEE THE EXERCISE OF CULTURAL RIGHTS.



3. Impacts

3.1. Direct impacts

In these two years, Cultural Emergency gathered the following data: Niterói was the first city in the country to develop an action for the artistic sector in the pandemic (“Arte na Rede” / Art on the net); allocated 68 million reais (€12 million) in income directly to the productive sector of culture; created specific legislation with the intention of rebuilding the economy of the cultural sector; and created the first Cultural Rights Charter in Brazil and the first Cultural Rights House.

NITERÓI WAS THE FIRST CITY IN THE COUNTRY TO DEVELOP AN ACTION FOR THE ARTISTIC SECTOR IN THE PANDEMIC.

3.2. Assessment

The evaluation of the program is regularly carried out by the Municipal Cultural Policy Council, a group constituted by Law, which meets periodically to evaluate goals and results of actions involving cultural policies.

3.3. Key factors

The success of the actions was due to the rapid local response to the global problem. For example, “Arte na rede” (Art on the net) took place in the first week of the pandemic. The program was carried out together with civil society, in an agreed manner, in working groups and deliberated by the Municipal Cultural Policy Council. This ensured that actions were developed from the bottom to the top, including affirmative policies, such as prioritization for women, black people, trans people and residents of vulnerable areas. During the program, transparency was maintained with constant meetings to present results and with funding through Public Calls.

Actions in the cultural sector were developed in partnership with the general planning of local government actions. Innovative actions were also created, such as the Erika Ferreira Award, which paid for creative ideas, and internationally recognized policies were incorporated, such as the Cultural Rights Charter, which will be the basis for the future of the program.

3.4. Continuity

The program was still in progress in 2022. In the area of cultural rights, the local government remains committed to keeping the Cultural Rights House open and in operation for a long time, understanding the importance of this space for the promotion of cultural rights, and also made the guidelines, goals and strategies of the Cultural Rights Charter into law, through the Municipal Culture Plan sent to the local legislature in May 2022.

4. Further information

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

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