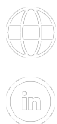


# Kaleidoscope Culture Festival 2026

Call for proposals



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# ACE<sup>2</sup>-EU



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<https://www.ipsantarem.pt/>



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# ACE<sup>2</sup>-EU Mission and Values

The mission of ACE<sup>2</sup>-EU is to equip our students, staff, researchers, and external stakeholders; through the establishment of our Inter-University European University Campus; with the knowledge, skills, and competencies to collectively address future challenges; including the twin digital and green transitions and current socio-economic issues; thereby delivering sustainable societal transformation today for the benefit of our stakeholders and society overall, within our regions and across the EU.

ACE<sup>2</sup>-EU will deliver on its mission by applying, active, challenge & real-world, work-based learning, and entrepreneurial approaches in the development of its joint education, research, innovation, and service to society activities through collaboration with external stakeholders. By applying an active learning approach at the core of our joint activities' students will automatically be involved in the co-creation of knowledge thereby improving their professional and personal development capacity. In implementing its mission ACE<sup>2</sup>-EU will foster at its core existing European Union principles, values and objectives including multiculturalism and multilingualism thereby strengthening European identity across our European University.

The principal aim of our common vision, ambition, and associated long-term joint strategy in the context of the European Universities Initiative and the European Universities strategy is to establish a European higher education inter-university campus which has the potential to transform the capacity and quality of institutional cooperation between ACE<sup>2</sup>-EU member institutions and bring it to the next level, fostering deeper integration, enhancing collaboration, and increasing our overall impact and influence within the European higher education landscape. Our interuniversity campus will become a legally recognised European University with European and global reach, reputation, and impact focussed on "Addressing Future Challenges and Delivering Sustainable Societal Transformation Today".



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## ACE<sup>2</sup>-EU VALUES AND PRINCIPLES



How do art and culture contribute to the idea of Europe?

In the context of the ACE<sup>2</sup>-EU initiative and the Kaleidoscope Culture Festival, it is essential to acknowledge the conceptual frameworks of multiculturalism and interculturality, which are integral components of these activities.

- **Multiculturalism** recognises the presence of diverse cultures within a society but often treats them as separate entities. It emphasises tolerance but may lead to cultural parallelism, where communities coexist without significant interaction.
- **Interculturality** encourages active engagement between cultures, fostering dialogue, shared experiences, and mutual learning. It seeks to build bridges rather than maintain boundaries.

Based on these conceptual pillars, the festival is designed to acknowledge the different cultures that exist while fostering collaboration and recognising the connections in diversity.

# 1. ACE<sup>2</sup>-EU Kaleidoscope Culture Festival

## 1.1. About the Kaleidoscope Culture Festival 2026

The ACE<sup>2</sup>-EU Kaleidoscope Culture Festival is an annual celebration where students from all ACE<sup>2</sup>-EU Alliance universities come together to share and showcase their cultures in a lively festival atmosphere. The festival promotes multiculturalism, multilingualism, and inclusion, celebrating the diversity that makes our Alliance so unique.

Each year, student teams from all partner universities will design creative cultural programmes that highlight the traditions, identities, and heritage of their countries and regions. These programmes can include anything from art, literature, and music to dance, sport, food and language – anything that helps bring their culture(s) to life and explore the notion of culture itself.

The festival provides a wonderful chance for students to showcase their talents, engage with their peers, and immerse themselves in the vibrant cultural diversity of the ACE<sup>2</sup>-EU community.

### Kaleidoscope Culture Festival 2026

The second ACE<sup>2</sup>-EU Kaleidoscope Culture Festival will take place in **Târgu-Jiu**, in Romania, hosted by the **University Constantin Brâncuși Târgu-Jiu**, from **28 to 30 October**. The festival, titled “**100 Voices – One Future,**” is designed as an interactive intercultural experience that brings together students from all ACE<sup>2</sup>-EU partner universities. The festival concept focuses on collaboration, creativity, and dialogue between cultures, encouraging students to explore how cultural diversity contributes to shared European values and future societal development.

Rather than presenting cultures as separate traditions, the festival promotes collaboration and intercultural exchange through collaborative activities where students work in international teams, share perspectives, and co-create cultural and



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creative outputs. The concept combines artistic expression, cultural exploration, and innovation-based learning.

This year's festival theme is connected to the SPACE Centre's' Social Impactors "Culture & Diversity" and "Social Well-Being". The former focuses on multi-, inter- and transculturalism, explores the meaning(s) of culture, including for instance subcultures and countercultures, and addresses diversity in a broad sense; while the latter tackles the place of social well-being within health; considers both objective and subjective dimensions, with an understanding that subjective social well-being is easier to influence at the SI scale; and highlights components such as social relations, culture and society, and policy and governance.

Each partner university will be represented by 12 students who will take part in festival activities and have the chance to contribute their own content to the Student Innovation Lab and the International Cultural & Creative Showcase event. These students will receive mobility funding from ACE<sup>2</sup>-EU.

## 1.2. Festival Programme

The Kaleidoscope Culture Festival 2026 will take place over three days and will combine creative workshops, intercultural collaboration activities, and cultural events. The programme will begin with an opening session and interactive team-building activities that bring together students from all ACE<sup>2</sup>-EU partner universities and introduce the festival's artistic theme "100 Voices – One Future." Throughout the festival, participants will engage in collaborative activities such as the Student Innovation Lab, digital storytelling workshops, and Exploratory Practice Labs, where students can experience hands-on learning and have a chance to explore cultural storytelling through audiovisual media. The programme will also include artistic and cultural activities, such as the International Cultural & Creative Showcase and Folk Dance Night, where participants can present elements of their cultural heritage through performances, storytelling, and other creative formats. The festival will conclude with short film presentations and an award ceremony, celebrating the inspiring creative contributions and recognising the spirit of intercultural collaboration among participants.

No matter which activity the students apply to, they are required to participate in all the festival's activities.

The festival **draft** programme can be found here:



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## The first day, 28<sup>th</sup> October

F I R S T  D A Y	Timeframe	First Day (28th of October)
	09:00 - 09:30	Welcome & Registration
	09:30 - 10:00	Kaleidoscope Festival Kick-off: Vision & Collaboration
	10:00 - 10:30	Get to know each other
	10:30 - 11:30	Puzzle of Culture Challenge
	11:30 - 11:45	<b>Coffee Break</b>
	11:45 - 13:00	<b>OPEN CALL: Student Innovation Lab</b>
	13:00 - 14:00	<b>Lunch</b>
	14:00 - 16:00	Digital Storytelling Challenge
	16:00 - 17:30	Guided Field Experience: Heritage & Digital Storytelling
	18:00 - 19:30	<b>OPEN CALL: International Cultural &amp; Creative Showcase</b>
	19:30 - 23:00	<b>Dinner &amp; Rhythms of Tradition: Folk Dance Night</b>

## The second day, 29<sup>th</sup> of October

S E C O N D  D A Y	Timeframe	Second Day (29th of October)
	09:00 - 09:30	Guided Social Well-being Practice
	09:30 - 11:30	Exploratory Practice Lab I
	11:30-11:45	<b>Coffee Break</b>
	11:45 - 13:00	Exploratory Practice Lab II
	13:00 - 14:00	<b>Lunch</b>
	14:00 - 15:00	Voices on Stage: Cultural Diversity Through Theatre
	15:00 - 16:00	ACE TALK – Cultural Diversity & Social Well-being
	16:00 - 17:30	From Concept to Camera: Digital Storytelling Lab
	19:00 - 23:00	<b>Masquerade Ball &amp; Movie Night with Dinner &amp; Pop music</b>

The third day, 30<sup>th</sup> of October

T H I R D  D A Y	Time frame	Third Day (30th of October)
	09:00 - 09:30	Social Well-being Connection Ritual
	09:30 - 10:15	Insights & Takeaways Moment (Reflection time)
	10:15 - 11:45	ACE GALA - Awards Ceremony
	11:45 - 19:00	CITY EXHIBITION
19:00 - 22:00	Dinner & Grand Closing Event	

## 2. Call for Proposals

### 2.1. Activities open for contributions

This year, the students can contribute their own content in two festival sections. In total, 12 students will be selected per university, either as one big group or several smaller teams:

#### 1) Student Innovation Lab

The Student Innovation Lab is an interactive collaborative space within the Kaleidoscope Culture Festival where students work together to develop creative ideas and solutions related to culture, diversity, and social well-being.

Topic: How can cultural diversity strengthen social well-being in communities?

Interested students must form a team of maximum 12 persons and apply for one of the following proposals. Please note that, depending on the number of applications per

university, there might be less places to attend the festival than students in the group, so the teams might want to think of an internal prioritisation process if that happens.

### **Proposal 1 – Practical Tool**

Develop a concrete and applicable tool idea (e.g., toolkit, framework, checklist, structured model) that demonstrates how cultural diversity can actively enhance social well-being within a community.

### **Proposal 2 – Mini-Campaign**

Design a small-scale awareness or engagement campaign idea that promotes the positive impact of cultural diversity on community social well-being.

### **Proposal 3 – Community Activity Format**

Create a structured and replicable activity idea (e.g., dialogue circle, intercultural event model, workshop concept) that fosters intercultural interaction and strengthens social well-being in a community context.

After being informed that they have been selected, students must work within their chosen team at their home university to:

- Clearly explain how their initiative responds to the central topic
- Develop a realistic and implementable concept
- Define practical steps for implementation
- Prepare a clear and structured presentation

All initiatives must be fully developed prior to arrival at the festival. The selected students receive a more detailed version of what they need to prepare (level of development, measurements & criteria, etc.) afterwards.

During the 1h15min Student Innovation Lab session, each university will present its developed outputs among the three proposals (tool, campaign, and activity format).

In September, an online meeting will be held to review the progress of the proposals. Presentation time will be equally divided among all participating teams.

## **2) International Cultural & Creative Showcase event**

The International Cultural & Creative Showcase is a dynamic platform for creative, cultural, and conceptual expression, where festival participants are invited to present how their communities, disciplines, and personal perspectives contribute to the richness of our Alliance.

The Showcase is not limited to traditional performing arts. Students may contribute through a wide range of formats, including:

- Music and dance
- Theatre and spoken word
- Multimedia presentations
- Short staged concepts or creative demonstrations
- Interdisciplinary performances
- Contemporary reinterpretations of cultural traditions
- Conceptual or thematic stage moments exploring identity, belonging, and diversity

Each participating university or country will have one dedicated 15-minute slot to design and present its contribution(s). This moment may reflect cultural heritage, contemporary identity, academic perspective, or a creative exploration of multi- or intercultural experiences.

The Showcase encourages participation from students of all academic backgrounds – including engineering, medical, and social sciences – recognising that cultural expression can take artistic, conceptual, technical, or multimedia forms. Contributions may combine different disciplines and approaches, reinforcing the idea that culture is lived, constructed, and shared in multiple ways.

The aim of the Showcase is not competition, but exchange:

- Celebrating cultural diversity
- Encouraging intercultural understanding
- Fostering collaboration across borders
- Making visible the many voices within the alliance

To ensure smooth organisation, participating teams will be asked at a later point to complete a registration/technical form indicating any technical or logistical requirements (music, microphones, projections, props, instruments, lighting, etc.), enabling the organising team to provide appropriate support in advance. After approval of the participation, a recording of the performance is requested to help the organisation team better visualise the needs.

Through this shared stage, the Showcase becomes a space where diversity is not only presented, but experienced – strengthening mutual understanding and connection within the alliance community.

## 2.2. How to apply?

Interested teams must submit their nominations no later than **10<sup>th</sup> of May 2026**, via the official registration form [here](#). Each participant must provide in the proposal:

- A brief description of the proposed content for the festival in one or both sections:

### 1) Student Innovation Lab

- Chosen activity (Proposal 1 – Practical Tool; Proposal 2 – Mini-Campaign; Proposal 3 – Community Activity Format).
- Describe the motivation to work on the topic: How can cultural diversity strengthen social well-being in communities?
- The number of students involved in the team.
- The name of a student responsible for the proposal.

### 2) International Cultural & Creative Showcase event

- The format of the content (presentation, performance, showcase, storytelling moment, demonstration, etc.);
- The proposed duration of the content (max 15 min);
- The number of students involved in executing the content;
- An initial overview technical support required to implement the content (which can be confirmed and precised at a later point);
- The name of a student responsible for the proposal.

The proposal description can be submitted via the registration form. You can also include additional supporting materials in various formats: Document, presentation, drawing, PDF, image, video, or audio.

### Questions to consider while making the proposal

When creating your proposal, think about how your activity can actively engage other participants and encourage intercultural collaboration. The festival focuses not only on presenting cultures but also on creating shared experiences that highlight the diversity and connections between them. Your proposal should reflect the festival theme "100 Voices – One Future" and contribute to dialogue, creativity, and collaboration among participants.

As you develop your idea, consider the following questions:



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- What aspects of your culture(s), traditions, or contemporary creative practices would you like to share with others?
- How can your activity encourage interaction and collaboration between participants from different cultural backgrounds?
- In what way does your idea reflect the festival theme “100 Voices – One Future” and the values of intercultural dialogue and European cooperation?
- What experience do you want participants to have, and what message or insight should they take away from your activity?

## 2.3. Proposal evaluation and selection process & timeline

The festival coordinators at each partner university will collect the proposals and evaluate them based on their relevance to the festival and feasibility, the students' motivation and the values of ACE<sup>2</sup>-EU.

The evaluation process is as follows:

- Selection from the proposed ideas and evaluation (May 2026);
- Final nomination of festival participants (by the end of May 2026);
- September (exact date TBD) – online meeting
- Festival “**100 Voices – One Future,**” 28-30<sup>th</sup> October, **Târgu-Jiu**, in Romania, hosted by the **University Constantin Brâncuși Târgu-Jiu**

Communication and information dissemination are coordinated centrally among all partner universities, ensuring they meet the same deadlines and schedule.

## 3. Contact information

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