

Tools for Creative Urban Revitalisation (CUR tools)

CUR Tool description form (WP T2)

Project group	<input type="checkbox"/> Empty Floor Space <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revitalisation of Retail and Small Businesses <input type="checkbox"/> Establishment of a CI Support Centre
Pilot location	Gabrovo (Bulgaria), Kamnik (Slovenia)
Editor	Gabrovo & Kamnik project teams

1. Name of the tool	Open Call for City Business Starter
2. Aim of the tool	<p>To fill empty floor spaces with innovative retail and small businesses, to help those businesses settle in these locations and therefore foster their commitment to the locations.</p> <p>Further goals that will be addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fill floor spaces that have been empty for a longer period with innovative retail and small businesses that bring added value for the city centre • help the businesses that settle in these challenging locations to build sustainable business operations • create commitment of the businesses to the locations <p>Challenges and opportunities addressed:</p> <p>It is difficult to attract businesses to floor spaces that have been empty for a longer period. The situation is even more difficult, if there are several such spaces in the location or district (downward circles).</p> <p>Retail and small businesses are essential for the revitalisation of city centres. Municipalities often lack instruments to influence the mix of retail and businesses in their cities.</p> <p>Businesses, but especially retail has struggled during the pandemic. There is a good offer of consulting services for starting up a business in general. However, entrepreneurs often need consulting services that are tailored to their specific needs and they do not have the financial capacities to afford them. With the consulting voucher, we want to create an incentive for innovative businesses to settle in specific empty floor spaces that are of importance to the revitalisation of the city centre / district.</p>

<p>3. Tool description</p>	<p>Short description:</p> <p>The development of an open call for entrepreneurs which can apply for an consultation voucher. This consultation voucher can be used by the businesses during the settlement in one of the selected empty floor spaces. Different types of consultation services are available with the voucher in order to tailor the offer to the needs for the businesses.</p> <p>Main activities:</p> <p>To reach this goal, we will prepare an open call under which the entrepreneurs can apply for a consultation voucher. The consultation voucher can be used by the businesses during the settlement in one of the selected floor spaces. Different types of consultations services shall be available with the voucher in order to tailor the offer to the needs for the businesses. The call will be published on the CINEMA website and in the pilot locations. The call would be open to any SME in the EU. Selection criteria for the funded SMEs are defined by a call support team in cooperation with an external monitoring body (local policy-level).</p> <p><i>1. Preparation of the open call:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nomination of the call support team • definition of the empty floor spaces (other tool) • definition of the available consultancy services: services focussed on creative services like interior design/window shop design, marketing and other creative services and on consultancies that are not available via the local start-up support infrastructure • definition of the value of consultancy services provided per new business start-up (2.000 EUR – 5.000 EUR) • definition of the eligibility criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ size: SME, ○ locations of SME/entrepreneur: coming from a country of the EU, ○ eligible for the application would be also natural person that wants to establish a business, but under the condition that for contract signing, a company has been established ○ commit to establish a business in one of the locations presented in the call until defined date
----------------------------	---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the owner of a property is eligible, as long as the empty floor space is on the list of selected floor spaces ○ a company can re-apply with an improved concept, but max once ○ exclusion criteria: conflict of interest with project partner organisations or their employees ● definition of the evaluation/selection criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ feasibility of the business plan ○ innovativeness & contribution to the revitalisation of the city centre ○ description of the desired consulting services and their contribution to business success ○ business resistance during and after the end of the project ○ opportunities for interaction with the existing businesses, local cultural operators, citizens and other potential actors ● drafting of the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ application form (very simple) & instructions for filling in the document ○ the contracting agreement between the project partner providing the voucher and the selected business, including rules for voucher use ○ SME reporting template after voucher use ○ guidelines & templates for the evaluation and selection procedure (excluding any conflict of interest with the involved organisations) <p><i>2. Implementation of the call:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● nomination of the monitoring body (external, policy-level) ● publication of the open call at CINEMA website and in the pilot locations, in English and local languages (if wanted) ● promotion of the call (flyer, website, ...) ● submission with one or more deadlines until the call closes or until a business has been selected for all locations or the funding available has been fully distributed ● evaluation procedure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ eligibility check (call team) ○ evaluation (call team)
--	--

- selection (monitoring body)
- approval or rejection
- final report on the selection process (call team)

3. Implementation of the voucher

- contracting with the selected candidate (SME), to be considered:
 - commitment to open a business in the selected floor space until a certain date (preferably before summer 2022, final date until end of October 2022)
 - commitment to have the business in the selected location for a minimum time period (for instance at least 1 year)
 - if a landlord in the selected locations steps off from the project, the support team helps the entrepreneur to choose another location in the city centre
 - commitment to avoid any conflict of interest when selecting the consulting services
 - rules on using the voucher
- voucher use - different options:
 - direct payment to the consultancy services directly according to a predefined mix of consultancy services for the different entrepreneurs
 - direct employment of the selected consultants in the partner organisation (Gabrovo municipality)
- besides the voucher, the entrepreneur can use also other support services provided by the project partners (e.g. chamber services)
- reporting by the SME
 - preparation of a short final report (all commitments are reached: business registered, tenancy agreement for the floor space signed for at least one year, positive business assessment)
 - availability for an evaluation interview with us and/or cooperation to be promoted as a success case / best practice

4. Evaluation of the call/ voucher

- final report on success of the voucher, lessons learnt etc

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presentation of best practices / success stories <p>Recommended methods to be used: The hero's journey will give us more insights on what problems our entrepreneurs could encounter.</p>
<p>4. Expected results</p>	<p>Direct effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • defining a minimum number of empty floor spaces out of the list that should be filled with new businesses or • defining a number of businesses to be attracted <p>Side effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing the attractiveness of the locations for new businesses, positive effect for other empty floor spaces in the locations • increasing the attractiveness of the locations for visitor and locals • revitalisation of the city centre and inspiring follow-up actions
<p>5. Key roles</p>	<p>People/ organisations that should be involved (incl. roles):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one project partner takes the full responsibility of the call preparation and implementation (support from external services possible – legal advice, translations etc.): all legal and financial arrangements with the entrepreneurs, reporting towards the project • support from other project partner • municipality • other relevant public partners
<p>6. Timelines</p>	<p>Duration of key activities in total (estimation): <i>Possible timeline:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparation of all call related documents until end of October 2021 • opening of the call in November 2021 • cut-off dates in December 2021, January, February and March 2022, closure of the end of March 2022 • implementation of the voucher until October 2022 latest (before and after opening the business) • opening of the business in the selected location after 6 months but latest until October 2022 • final reports from the businesses latest by October 2022

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> production of success stories between June and November 2022 to authentically document and communicate the different stories from the beginning
7. Link to other tools	<p>Integration in a leading tool concept and/ or recommendations for combinations with other CUR tools:</p> <p><i>Empty Floor Spaces for Creative Businesses:</i></p> <p>This tool builds on the tool presentation of strategic empty floor spaces to potential businesses; which aims to identify empty floor space that is of strategic importance for the revitalisation of the city centre / the city quarter, prepare an analysis of concrete vacant retail or business outlets, and reach an agreement with the landlords about cooperation in further revitalisation measures. In order to be successful the tool should be combined with various promotion and marketing tools and approaches, including storytelling.</p>
8. Good practices	<p>References to comparable practical experiences:</p> <p><i>StadtUp Ried 2.0</i></p> <p>The city of Ried (Austria) organized a competition for entrepreneurs wishing to open a new business in vacant floor spaces in Ried. The five winners with the best business proposals fitting into the city concept received an extensive award consisting of consultancies, vouchers and bonuses. The awards were provided from a network of support organisations (banks, legal, marketing & business consultancies, assurance company, craftsmen, etc.)</p> <p>Link: Das ist StadtUp Ried 2.0 - Stadtup Ried 2.0 : Stadtup Ried 2.0 (stadtup-ried.at)</p> <p><i>Creative district in Plovdiv</i></p> <p>The foundation of this district started with the use of a similar tool (as part of the program of Plovdiv – European Capital of Culture) for longterm and sustainable interventions in urban environment, enlivening of abandoned places and finding new functions for them). In 2014 there was an open call inviting businesses, creators, craftsmen, etc. to apply with a development and creative concept for 10 available premises in the district. The rent of the premises was funded by a municipal foundation for the period of 1 year.</p> <p>link: https://visitkapana.bg/en/about-the-project</p>
9. Cost factors & recommendations	<p>Cost factors:</p> <p>Communication material/ design</p>

	<p>Recommendations for piloting the CUR tool:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• active and transparent marketing campaign for promotion of the open call and the attractiveness of the location;• easy application procedure and not too much documentation required from the businesses;• the call should put a strong emphasis on the benefits for the applying businesses;• the tourist /people flow in the location and its seasonal (or not) nature should be taken into consideration when defining the timeline of the open call and the period for starting a business.
--	---

Add-on: Which Design Thinking tools could support this CUR tool?

- Empathy Map Canvas
- Value Proposition Canvas
- Team Charter Canvas
- Golden Circle
- Context Map Canvas
- Coverstory Canvas
- Storytelling Canvas
- Hero's Journey Canvas
- (Sustainable) Business Model Canvas
- Interviews: users, stakeholders, etc.
- Assumption grid
- Persona