



What is the BSR Cultural Pearls title?

Information for Applicants

The BSR Cultural Pearls title is a title **for small and medium size towns and cities** that creatively use culture to strengthen their communities, to build stronger connections and increase trust among citizens. Therefore, the Cultural Pearls initiative welcomes local authorities in the Baltic Sea Region to join this transformative journey.

Annually, eligible candidates are invited to develop **Culture and Resilience Action Plans (CuReAP)** for community engagement and culture-driven resilience. By using culture and creativity in their action plans these cities aim to improve social connections and foster a sense of belonging among residents, helping communities become stronger and more united.

The candidates that have developed the best CuReAPs are selected by an international jury. Title recipients then embark on a one-year title year during which time their action plan is implemented. The Cultural Pearls Network ensures visibility and provides opportunities for peer-learning with previous Pearls, as well as access to materials and online webinars.

Applications must be submitted in English via the Cultural Pearls website: [Apply - BSR Cultural Pearls](#).

The deadline for the submission of the pre-selection application is 30 April 2026, 23:59 CET.

For questions please contact:
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What will you gain?

Becoming a BSR Cultural Pearl and implementing a well-prepared Culture and Resilience Action Plan brings many advantages for the municipality and its residents. Here is how it can make a difference:

- **Stronger community connections**
When citizens are involved in decision-making and cultural activities, they feel more connected to their community. This sense



of belonging and pride helps bring people together and promotes mutual trust. This is very important in the situations when the unexpected shocks or situations arise allowing people to better overcome these difficult times together.

- **Cooperation**

The focus on culture develops cooperation between different groups—citizens, local organizations, and decision-makers—leading to better relationships and a more connected community.

- **Better decision-making**

The process of developing a Culture and Resilience Action Plan (CuReAP) with the help of the BSR Cultural Pearls Network, helps decision-makers (politicians, city administration etc.) understand better what is needed to improve to make the community stronger and more united and how to involve the people in coming up with their ideas and participate.

- **Recognition and visibility**

The BSR Cultural Pearls title gives your city greater visibility, both nationally and internationally. This recognition can increase pride among citizens and attract attention from tourists, investors, and new residents.

- **Networking and learning opportunities**

As part of the BSR Cultural Pearls Network, your municipality can connect with other like-minded communities. This network offers valuable learning opportunities, knowledge exchange, and support to continue growing socially resilient communities.

Conditions of Entry

- Towns and cities from the Baltic Sea Region are eligible to apply, meaning Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany (the States (Länder) of Berlin, Brandenburg, Bremen, Hamburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Schleswig-Holstein and Niedersachsen), Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland and Sweden.
- Small, medium-sized and less central towns and cities are especially welcome.
- The capital cities Stockholm, Helsinki, Tallinn, Riga, Vilnius, Warsaw, Berlin, Oslo, and Copenhagen are non-eligible.
- The applicant needs to be a local authority. A municipal department, a public library or other local public institution can apply on behalf of the city or town.
- A local authority can apply on behalf of a smaller entity within its territory. The Cultural Pearl title is then awarded to this entity. Non-



public institutions such as NGOs or CCS actors can be partners in the application.

The Application Process

1. Online application

A local authority fills out an online application, which must be submitted in English using an online form.

2. Pre-selection

By assessing the eligibility, motivation and general approach, the Executive Board chooses eligible candidates to move to the second round, the development phase.

3. Development Phase

Based on a Culture and Resilience Action Plan template, candidates outline activities and processes for the year to come, preferably aligned with existing priorities and strategies. In this phase, they participate in online webinars with experts, have access to a database of good practices, and are supported by the Cultural Pearls Network and their National Contact Points.

4. Final Selection

The international jury* evaluates the Culture and Resilience Action Plans submitted by the candidates assessing the innovative and holistic approach, usage of participatory methods and cultural tools, and the ability to implement the actions planned. Three candidates that have submitted the most convincing action plans with the highest scores but not more than one per country receive the BSR Cultural Pearls title. In case of tight scores or very convincing action plan, the jury can select one more candidate. In this case, the rule of the country does not apply.

*Our international jury is comprised of experts in social resilience, urban planning, arts, and culture, along with representatives from pan-Baltic and European organizations and networks of cities.

Criteria

The criteria for the Cultural Pearls 2027 title are available on culturalpearls.eu.

Selection Timeline



Monday, 16 March

Call for applications is open

Thursday, 30 April, 23:59CET

Application submission deadline

Friday, 8 May

Announcement of the pre-selection results: Candidates chosen for the second stage of the selection. Launch of the Development Phase

Friday, 16 October

Deadline for the CuReAP submission

November 2026

Announcement of BSR Cultural Pearls 2027