



Rouen Seine
Normande
2028

Candidate City
European
Capital
of Culture

All Aboard
for

Rouen
2028!

The Seine Normande:
from Giverny to Le Havre and Honfleur,
European Capital of Culture.

www.rouen2028.eu
#rouen2028



Association Rouen Normandie 2028
108 allée François Mitterrand – 76 000 Rouen
contact@rouen-normandie-2028.fr
www.rouen2028.eu

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The project

What is a European Capital of Culture?

Each year, the European Capitals of Culture (ECOC) initiative honours two or three cities that have been designated by the European Commission. This designation, established in 1985 by Melina Mercouri, then Greek Minister of Culture, is designed to:

- highlight the richness and diversity of cultures in Europe;
- celebrate the cultural features Europeans share;
- foster the contribution of culture to the development of cities.

For a full calendar year, the chosen cities will showcase their heritage and cultural dynamism by holding dozens of exhibits, festivals, and other culture-centred events. Being a European Capital of Culture also serves as a springboard for developing and implementing foundational projects that transform the city, its surroundings, and its image for decades to come.

Since the program began, more than 60 cities have been granted this designation, four of them in France: Paris in 1989, Avignon in 2000, Lille in 2004, and Marseille in 2013.

In 2028, another French city will be designated a European Capital of Culture, along with a city of the Czech Republic and another in a candidate country seeking to join the European Union.

Why is Rouen an ECOC Candidate?

For several years, the European Capital of Culture designation has been awarded to what are known as “resilient cities.” These cities have weaknesses or have survived crises that they manage to turn into strengths and opportunities for change. The cities’ leaders set ambitious objectives for transforming their municipalities over the long term, with culture as both catalyst and ambition. Lille and Marseille, France’s European Capitals of Culture in 2004 and 2013, respectively, fit this model.

Rouen has experienced major upheavals due to crises in the Seine Valley’s industrial model and the resulting social and environmental consequences. The communities of the Seine Normandie Valley are pooling their support for this ECOC bid in the hopes of generating a regional metamorphosis on a par with past challenges and those that may be to come.

The Bid Timeline

For France, 2028 will be the year one of our cities is designated a European Capital of Culture. The date may seem far off, but the project is already well underway!

2018 / The Métropole Rouen Normandie announces its intention to bid for designation as a European Capital of Culture for 2028

2019 / The Rouen Normandie 2028 non-profit entity is formed to support Rouen's bid efforts

2019-2020 / The application strategy is defined through an assessment process and delineation of the project's bid area

2021 / The Rouen Seine Normandie 2028 project is founded and structured

2022 / The application file, known as

the bidbook, is drafted and prepared

11 november 2022 / The bidbook is submitted to the European Union

2023 / Preselection of some cities – the selected cities are toured by the European selection panel

Late 2023 / The European selection panel designates the French city that has been chosen as European Capital of Culture for 2028

2024-2028 / Project implementation and production phase

2028 / Rouen, European Capital of Culture

2038 / The time objective used in planning and implementing foundational projects



The Bid Area



With Rouen serving as the “home port”, the bid area encompasses the Seine Normande Valley, from Giverny to Le Havre and Honfleur.

The area’s local communities have expressed **their fervent desire to work together with the area’s residents, artists, businesses, and non-profit and cultural entities** to transform this delineated region with the European Capital of Culture project serving as catalyst and objective. The communities along the Seine, the “ports of call”, will each contribute in their own ways to pursuing this European Capital of Culture designation.

The area known as Rouen Seine Normande 2028 is **a land of contrast and complexity**. Abandoned sites could become cultural gems, disadvantaged neighbourhoods could become transformed treasures, isolated streets could become project hubs, lonely quays could become populated ports, places from which to set sail for new artistic horizons. These little-recognized

elements are assets with as much potential as the area’s well-known heritage sites and sources. The Seine Normande Valley is a land of shared history and geography that is **now birthing a shared future that has seen, and will see, industrial and climatic risks.**

The bid area is Europe, as well!

A European Capital of Culture must **promote Europe’s values, helping it remain a land of diversity, solidarity, respect, tolerance, and openness**. Of the firm belief that culture is vital to forging lasting, meaningful bonds, Rouen Seine Normande 2028 has chosen to build long-term partnerships with cities that share the Seine Normande’s challenges, concerns, and values.

These partnerships are nourished and strengthened by the river running through the Valley’s many friend-cities; today, the cooperation dynamic is gaining strength and momentum, guided by the standards held high by the Seine Normande and Europe.

A Three-Tiered Adventure

Brick by brick and step by step, we have been building Rouen's ECOC bid since 2018. In 2022, we entered the project's structural and drafting phase, which precedes the submission of our application file, the bidbook, to the European Union. It is up to us to write **a story that describes our area's history, geography, intentions, potentials, and spirit**. The bid is an opportunity to seek out and draw upon new sources of inspiration in the area, while examining the challenges we face here, such as industrial and climatic risks. The bid starts **a conversation, with history, nature, landscape, residents, past, present, and future all taking part**. It unites us in a shared vision, a collective adventure, a common commitment to give deep thought to what we want the Seine Normande to be and what we believe we can help it become.

This adventure is based on three structural tiers: **the Seine Normande seeking this designation, pooling the resources of the past and present for the generations of the future!**

1. A bid embracing science and shared knowledge

The bid can serve as a vector, helping everyone take an interest in **knowledge and skills of every kind**, what they require and how to share them, so they **may all be part of a common European project**.

In promoting culture, Rouen Seine Normande 2028 will blend science and science fiction, education and journalism, applied arts and academic research, lesson swaps and skills sharing, best practices and great ideas, controversies and idealism.

Let's join forces and join hands, opening our minds and our mouths for a project in which each person learns from the others.

With the different forms of knowledge as a foundation – expert and amateur, professional and layperson, teacher and neighbour – the European Capital of Culture process will unite us in the wisdom of employees and employers, pooling our technical, manual, and intellectual skills.

With a process centred on art and culture, working together to **design and build an ideal city with and for future generations** will help us to think beyond single events to true cultural transformation, with 2038 as our completion objective, which will nourish a proliferation of partnerships for sharing skills and knowledge.

2. A bid to nurture future generations

Let us look a generation ahead and develop a bid with and for future generations. The Rouen Seine Normande 2028 bid is an opportunity to **channel our energies into serving the interests of children of all ages**, with the help of their young parents, their grandparents, countless specialists, and the people who simply love our land.

Rather than doing the thinking for them, **let us ask children and teenagers to take their place at the table** and be change agents themselves, transforming the area, mapping the futures that will bring about that change,

preparing the land for the challenges the coming century has in store.

This will push us to multiply our inventiveness, creativity, and dreams a hundredfold, examining our streets, our cities, our countryside, our river from a fresh perspective, stimulating the imagination to **seek inspiration and see new worlds in which young people thrive**. This area has everything to gain when we give future generations the power to change their lives and we, the older generations, devote our experience and resources to **making that change happen**.



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3. A bid born of the Seine

This river flows powerfully through the Rouen Seine Normande 2028 project: It is much more than natural window-dressing, far beyond a thing to be exploited – **it is a being in and of itself.**

A wellspring of fresh ideas, partnerships, activities – **the life's blood of the land.**

Savouring its meanders, strolling its banks, appreciating its bends, rediscovering its past, helping it **determine its future, recognizing it as an entity in its own right:** In short, seeking to understand what we can do for the Seine, rather than merely what the Seine can do for us. How its waters can help seeds of creativity germinate, refresh withered centres of culture.

This is the potential of the ECOOC bid process.

This area is not simply land along the Seine: It has political and economic dimensions that are enriched by **the river's landscapes and movements, told in stories big and small.**

A space in which science helps us understand and protect the Seine, where long-distance bike paths and greenways encourage in-depth, lasting exploration that is environmentally minded. Shared spaces made sacred to bequeath to future generations.

The Seine Normande is both the impetus and instrumental element of this bid.



The Rouen 2028 Community



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The founding members:



The Ports of Call

Around Rouen, the bid's "home port," **the communities bordering the Seine** join the bid process via the "ports of call" that symbolize and represent the European Capital of Culture all along the Seine.

Many of the Seine Valley's public establishments for **intercity cooperation** have already responded favourably to this appeal, including the Seine-Normandie Agglomération, Caux-Seine Agglo, and the communautés de communes (federations of municipalities) of Lyons-Andelle, Le Roumois-Seine, and Caux-Austreberthe.

They have joined **the project's long-standing partners and founders** that have been working together since 2019: the Métropole de Rouen Normandie, the City of Rouen, the Région Normandie, the Eure and Seine-Maritime départements and the Seine-Eure Agglomération.

By pooling expertise and effort, we can identify each sub-area's unique characteristics (geography, history, heritage) and expectations, determine the project's "ports of call" serving as **points of entry** into the Capital **through intermodal transportation** and expanded active-mobility infrastructures.

We can also identify and **involve the vital forces** – institutional and economic actors, charitable and non-profit circles for cultural or social causes, and especially the people who live here – in identifying key projects that will serve as the bid's framework and contribute to **the project's collective construction**.

The Supporters

The supporters of Rouen Seine Normande 2028 are **local figures who champion the values embodied by the bid**. They have committed to supporting the project, promoting it to all the stakeholders in the area that are involved in the process, along the banks of the Seine, in Rouen, and from Giverny to Le Havre.

The First Supporters:

Philippe Torreton, actor, director; Marie Dupuis Courtes, business executive, President of Maison Dupuis; Rilès, rapper, composer, performer, producer; Michel Bussi, writer, geographer; Alain Van der Malière, President of the Festival

des Francophonies in Limoges and the Le Pavillon non-profit centre for architecture, city planning, and landscaping in Caen; Juline Anquetin Rault, teacher, one of the 10 finalists for the 2021 Global Teacher Prize; Julie Tocqueville, visual artist; Joël Alexandre, President of the University of Rouen Normandie, Emilie Daudin, influencer; Wax Tailor, musician, author, composer, producer; Gaël Musquet, hacker and meteorologist; Benoît Laignel, President of the Normandy IPCC and member of the international IPCC.

They will be joined by many others as the bid project moves forward.

Benoît Laignel

A member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and Chairman of the local IPCC, Benoît Laignel is Professor of Geosciences and Environment at the University of Rouen Normandie, where he also serves as Vice President in charge of Sustainable Development and Social Responsibility.

“I agreed to become a supporter of Rouen Seine Normande 2028 because this bid embodies the highly original idea of culture in the broadest sense, culture that includes such things as the culture of risk, the culture of multirisk. The fact that the application takes these dimensions into account serves as a great asset that could make the difference in its acceptance.”



Michel Bussi

A geographer by training and long a university professor in Rouen, Michel Bussi had a passion for words and intrigue since he was a child. In the space of a few years, he became one of France's most widely read authors. His novels – packed with suspense, virtuosity, and emotion – examine our society through a fair, modern lens tempered with humanity. This style has led to tremendous success, including translations in 37 countries of such works as *Black Water Lilies*, *The Double Mother*, *Time Is a Killer*, *After the Crash*, *Code 612*, and numerous adaptations into comic strips or televised series, keeping Mr. Bussi's strong bond with his readers alive and thriving.



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Emilie Daudin

Better known online as The Brunette, Émilie Daudin started a blog in 2007 to share fashion tips. Suffering from triple-negative breast cancer, the most difficult form to treat, she has been posting about her experience to help raise awareness among women on the importance of cancer screening. Émilie was listed in the *Vanity Fair France* ranking of the 50 most influential French people of 2021, alongside artists, business leaders, and researchers. It was a natural choice for this influencer to support the Rouen European Capital of Culture 2028 bid.

"I've lived in Rouen for several years and have found it to be a very culturally dynamic city with a rich heritage in a region that is worth discovering."



©Photo MRN/Alan Aubry

How to Get Involved in the Project

All Aboard for Rouen 2028!

Are you a culture-focused entity eager to help build momentum for the Rouen Seine Normande 2028 project?

You can support this effort by using the project's name and iconography when promoting your events that are already in keeping with the spirit of the bid.

This helps show our determination to move forward together toward

2028 and beyond, a way to showcase the area's dynamics in principle and practice.

Use of the «All Aboard for Rouen 2028» strategy is free of charge as long as everyone respects the project's spirit.

Below are some helpful guidelines.

Rouen Seine
Normande
2028

Candidature
capitale
européenne
de la culture

Criteria

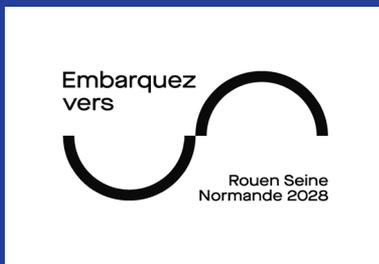
To know if your event is in keeping with the «All aboard for Rouen 2028» spirit, it must meet the criteria explained below. Your event must be held within the bid area and meet at least two of the following criteria:

- It has a supraregional or even national allure,
- It targets an audience not regularly exposed to culture,
- It results from cooperation between several public or cultural entities in the bid area,
- It involves the public in a creative process,
- It has an intrinsic European dimension.

It is recommended that organizers interested in using the strategy's name and iconography favour events relating in some way to at least one of the following:

- Gender equality
- Ecological transition
- Active/soft mobility
- Child-Friendly City
- Knowledge sharing
- The Seine
- Future generations

For more information or to retrieve communications materials for promoting your event as a «All aboard for Rouen 2028» event, please write to us at contact@rouen-normandie-2028.fr



Become a Supporter

Everyone can become a bid supporter:

Do you like your city, town, and/or region? Do you live here or just enjoy spending time here?

Do you want to see it grow and thrive for future generations, the way you've always imagined?

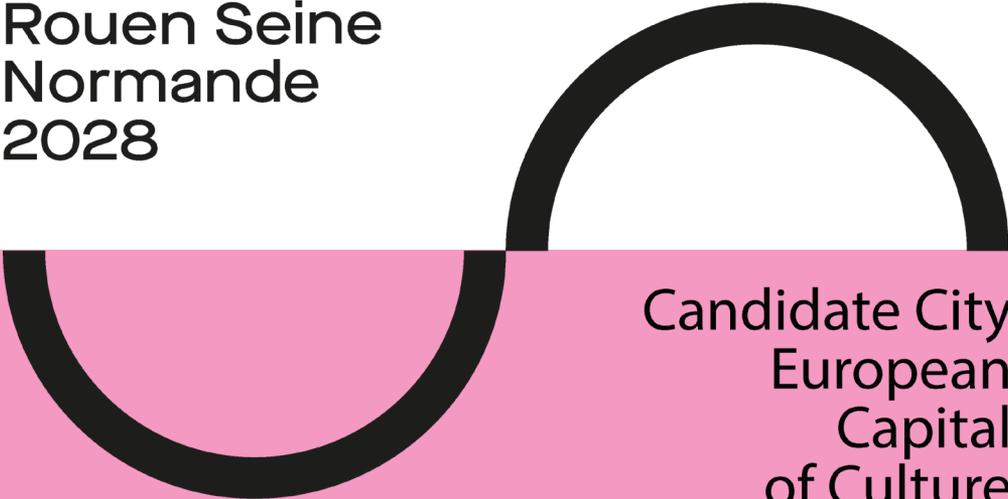
Do you have ideas to offer, leads for us to explore, comments to share?

Do you support the bid, whatever your age, whatever you most like doing, wherever you live, whether you are single, part of a family, involved with a charity, school, business, or other such organization?

You can download the supporter's kit from www.rouen2028.eu or write to us to become a bid supporter:

contact@rouennormandie-2028.fr

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