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BALATONFÜZFŐ – 5 GOOD PRACTICES

Cultural Heritage as a Community Resource

TANDEM: CITIES AND DEMOCRACY REVIVING LOCAL HERITAGE THROUGH PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY

PANAGYURISHTTE, BULGARIA | 9–11 OCTOBER 2026

Professional Background Material for the Good Practices Collection

1. Vezetői összefoglaló

Balatonfűzfő TANDEM-ben betöltött szerepe szempontjából a kulturális örökség nem kizárólag megőrzendő tárgyi vagy történeti érték, hanem olyan közösségi erőforrás, amely kapcsolatot teremthet az önkormányzat, a kulturális intézmények, a civil szervezetek, a fiatalok, az idősebb generációk és a helyi lakosság között. A projekt célja ugyanezt a szemléletet helyezi középpontba: a kulturális örökséget a közösségi részvétel, a demokratikus párbeszéd és a helyi együttműködés erősítésének eszközévé teszi.

A jelen anyag öt olyan balatonfűzfői gyakorlatot rendszerez, amelyek különböző módon kapcsolják össze a helyi örökséget és a közösségi életet. Az első három a civil–önkormányzati együttműködésre, az ipari örökség közösségi értelmezésére és a kulturális intézmény közösségi szerepére épít. A negyedik és ötödik gyakorlat a művészeti örökség generációk közötti továbbadását és közösségi újraértelmezését mutatja be.

Fontos szakmai megkülönböztetés: ahol a rendelkezésre álló források egy már megvalósult programot vagy önkormányzati mechanizmust dokumentálnak, azt meglévő jó gyakorlatként kezeljük. Ahol a TANDEM céljaihoz illeszkedő továbbfejlesztésről van szó, azt külön fejlesztési irányként jelöljük; nem állítjuk róla, hogy már teljes körűen működő részvételi módszer.

1. Executive Summary

The role of Balatonfűzfő in TANDEM

From the perspective of Balatonfűzfő's role in the TANDEM project, cultural heritage is not merely a tangible or historical asset to be preserved, but a community resource capable of creating connections between the municipality, cultural institutions, civil society organisations, young people, older generations and the local population. The project places precisely this approach at its centre: it regards cultural heritage as a tool for strengthening community participation, democratic dialogue and local cooperation.

This document presents five practices from Balatonfűzfő that connect local heritage with community life in different ways. The first three focus on civil society–municipal cooperation, the community interpretation of industrial heritage, and the role of a cultural institution as a community platform. The fourth and fifth practices demonstrate the intergenerational transmission and community reinterpretation of artistic heritage.

An important professional distinction should be made: where the available sources document an already implemented programme or municipal mechanism, it is treated as an **existing good practice**. Where the proposal concerns further development in line with the objectives of TANDEM, it is identified separately as a **development direction**; it is not presented as an already fully operational participatory method.

2. Balatonfűzfő's Heritage and Community Profile

- **Industrial heritage and factory culture:** a defining part of the town's history and local identity.
- **Lake Balaton and the natural environment:** an important background to the town's identity and community life.
- **Cultural institutional background:** Vágfalvi Ottó Cultural Centre, Library and Tourist Centre.
- **Civil communities:** cultural, sports, senior citizens', heritage-preservation and other community organisations.
- **International cooperation:** town-twinning relationships and the international TANDEM network.

According to the TANDEM application, one of Balatonfüzfő's key strengths is its experience in community-based cultural programmes and international cooperation. Therefore, the project does not aim to present a ready-made model, but rather local experiences from which transferable participatory methods can be developed for other small European towns.

3. Comparative Overview of the Five Good Practices

Good Practice	Heritage Focus	Participation Focus	TANDEM Potential
1. Civil Society–Municipal Partnership	Local community and cultural values	Supporting civil society initiatives	Local partnership model
2. Community and Factory Culture	Industrial heritage and collective memory	Personal stories and community interpretation	Oral history/heritage mapping
3. Cultural Institution as a Community Platform	Cultural heritage, art and local culture	Meeting, programme development and community connections	Participatory cultural programme planning
4. Vágfalvi Ottó Art Competition	Artistic heritage	Involving young people and educational communities	Intergenerational heritage transmission
5. Vágfalvi 100	Local artistic heritage	Exhibition, collective memory and cultural connections	Collective reinterpretation of heritage

1st Good Practice – Civil Society–Municipal Partnership

Supporting and Co-implementing Local Initiatives

Practice status	EXISTING GOOD PRACTICE – documented municipal support system
TANDEM connection	Cultural heritage + community participation + local cooperation

1. Initial Situation/Challenge

In Balatonfüzfő, numerous civil society and non-profit communities undertake cultural, community-building, heritage-preservation, charitable or sports activities. The challenge is to ensure that these local initiatives do not operate in isolation, but become an integral part of the town's community life with appropriate municipal support.

2. Objective

To adopt a partnership-based and supportive approach to the municipality's role: encouraging initiatives developed by local communities themselves, providing the framework necessary for implementation, and supporting community value creation.

3. Essence and Method of the Practice

The municipality's grant support system provides opportunities to support public-interest cultural and sports programmes, as well as non-profit organisations and communities. The 2024 call for proposals explicitly included community-building, heritage-preservation and

heritage-related activities, charitable and sports activities, as well as the organisation of local and sub-regional cultural and sports events. In 2026, a call for proposals supporting civil society organisations was again placed on the municipal agenda.

4. Participants and Partners

Local civil society and non-profit organisations; the municipality; cultural institutions; and, in the case of events, other local community stakeholders.

5. Form of Participation

Civil society actors are not merely programme visitors, but can act as owners and implementers of their own initiatives. The municipality provides support and an organisational framework for this purpose.

6. Results and Added Value

The independent initiatives of local communities can become more visible, the cultural and community offer becomes more diverse, and cooperation between the municipality and civil society is strengthened.

7. Key Lesson

One of the foundations of participatory heritage management is that a municipality should not only organise programmes for its residents, but should also provide space and opportunities for residents' own initiatives.

8. Transferability to Other European Small Towns

The practice can easily be adapted in other small towns. The key is not to copy a specific grant scheme, but to adopt a partnership-based approach: a clear support framework, simple procedures, feedback mechanisms and increased visibility for civil society initiatives.

9. Resource Requirements

Municipal coordination, a grant/financing framework, venues and institutional capacity. The specific financial requirements vary from programme to programme.

10. Suggested Indicators

Number of civil society initiatives supported annually; number of cultural/heritage-preservation projects; number of participants; number of new partnerships; recurrence rate of supported projects.

11. Development Direction within TANDEM

Within TANDEM, the system could be further developed through a dedicated “heritage partnership” module, including a civil society forum, jointly defined annual heritage priorities, micro-projects and feedback mechanisms.

2nd Good Practice – Community and Factory Culture

Community Reinterpretation of Industrial Heritage

Practice status	GOOD PRACTICE BASED ON AN EXISTING PROGRAMME – the participatory methodology requires further development
TANDEM connection	Cultural heritage + community participation + local cooperation

1. Initial Situation/Challenge

Industrial heritage can easily become limited to a historical or economic-history topic. In Balatonfűzfő, however, the town's factory past is also closely connected to personal memories, family histories and local identity.

2. Objective

To transform factory heritage into a community topic: in addition to presenting the past, to create opportunities for local residents to connect with heritage through their own memories and stories.

3. Essence and Method of the Practice

The “Community and Factory Culture – 100 Years of Imprints in Balatonfűzfő” programme presented the town's industrial past as a cultural and community event. The practice could be further developed through oral history, the collection of photographs and objects, digital storytelling and the creation of a local memory map.

4. Participants and Partners

Municipality, cultural institution, local-history experts, former and current local communities, families, older generations and young people.

5. Form of Participation

The next level of participation is to incorporate personal stories: interviews, photographs, objects, family documents, memory points and digital stories created by young people.

6. Results and Added Value

Factory heritage is not simply “the past”, but part of personal and community identity. The topic provides an excellent basis for intergenerational dialogue, the transfer of local knowledge and strengthening people's attachment to the town.

7. Key Lesson

The strongest TANDEM value lies in making heritage personal. Industrial heritage becomes participatory heritage when the stories of local people become part of the shared narrative.

8. Transferability to Other European Small Towns

The practice is particularly transferable to small towns. Any community with industrial, agricultural, mining or craft heritage can develop its own memory project.

9. Resource Requirements

Low to medium cost: a coordinator, recording of interviews, digitisation, an exhibition or online platform. Community-based collection activities can mobilise significant volunteer capacity.

10. Suggested Indicators

Number of stories collected; number of participating families; number of young and older participants; number of digitised photographs and objects; number of heritage points created; visitor numbers.

11. Development Direction within TANDEM

In 2026–2027, it would be worthwhile to create a pilot project such as a “**Balatonfüzfő Memory Map**” or “**Factory Stories**”, in which at least two generations work together.

3rd Good Practice – Cultural Institution as a Community Platform

The Community Role of the Vágfalvi Ottó Cultural Centre, Library and Tourist Centre

Practice status	EXISTING INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICE – the participatory element can be consciously further developed
TANDEM connection	Cultural heritage + community participation + local cooperation

1. Initial Situation/Challenge

A cultural institution can achieve a lasting community impact when it is not merely a venue for programmes, but also functions as a platform for meeting, knowledge sharing and cooperation.

2. Objective

To strengthen the role of the cultural institution as a community “connection point”, bringing together different generations, civil society organisations, artists, local-history actors and residents.

3. Essence and Method of the Practice

The programmes of the Vágfalvi Ottó Cultural Centre, Library and Tourist Centre include a range of cultural, artistic and community initiatives. Its official platforms present, among other things, cultural programmes, the Tér-Zene programme, the “Community and Factory Culture – 100 Years of Imprints in Balatonfűzfő” initiative and infrastructure development projects.

4. Participants and Partners

Cultural institution staff, the municipality, civil society organisations, artists, local historians, schools, families and local residents.

5. Form of Participation

The level of participation can be further increased by involving the community in the selection, planning and evaluation of programme topics. A simple tool could be a regular community discussion entitled “What do we want to preserve?”

6. Results and Added Value

The cultural institution can reach different communities through the same infrastructure. A cultural programme therefore becomes not an isolated event, but a tool for building connections.

7. Key Lesson

The most important lesson is that participation does not necessarily require a separate “project”. Community decision-making, consultation and co-creation can also be integrated into the operation of an existing cultural institution.

8. Transferability to Other European Small Towns

High transferability. Other towns also have cultural centres, libraries or community facilities. The essence of the method is the transformation from a programme provider into a community platform.

9. Resource Requirements

The practice primarily relies on existing institutional capacity. Additional costs may include facilitation, communication, digital documentation and community workshops.

10. Suggested Indicators

Number and diversity of participants; number of new community initiatives; number of civil society partners; number of community proposals; number of residents' ideas implemented.

11. Development Direction within TANDEM

During the 2027 TANDEM meeting in Balatonfüzfő, the cultural institution could be used as a “living laboratory” for co-creation workshops, heritage cafés and digital storytelling.

4th Good Practice – Vágfalvi Ottó Art Competition

Passing Local Artistic Heritage on to Younger Generations

Practice status	EXISTING, DOCUMENTED GOOD PRACTICE
TANDEM connection	Cultural heritage + community participation + local cooperation

1. Initial Situation/Challenge

Local artistic heritage remains alive when young people not only learn about it, but also reinterpret it through their own creative means.

2. Objective

To create a creative and intergenerational form of heritage transmission connected to the artistic legacy of Vágfalvi Ottó, enabling young people to engage with the heritage of a local cultural figure through their own artistic work.

3. Essence and Method of the Practice

In 2025, the Irinyi János Primary and Basic Art School of Balatonfűzfő, together with the Vágfalvi Ottó Cultural Centre, Library and Tourist Centre, organised the competition for the seventh time. A total of 264 artworks from 24 primary and secondary schools were submitted; during the centenary year, the creators of 100 artworks were invited to the final event.

4. Participants and Partners

Schools, students, teachers, the cultural institution, artists and jury members, as well as the local community.

5. Form of Participation

Young people engage with heritage as active creators. They are not required simply to accept an established narrative; instead, they create their own paraphrase and interpretation of an existing artwork or artistic legacy.

6. Results and Added Value

The practice involves young people from a broad range of backgrounds and transforms engagement with heritage into a creative activity. Based on the documented participation in 2025, the initiative reaches beyond the local community and involves a nationwide network of schools.

7. Key Lesson

One of the strongest ways of involving young people is to transform heritage into a creative task. The participant is not merely an audience member, but a creator.

8. Transferability to Other European Small Towns

Other towns could develop similar creative competitions around local artists, buildings, objects, stories or traditions. The method is particularly suitable for partnerships with schools.

9. Resource Requirements

Low to medium cost: call for entries, jury process, exhibition/final event, prizes and communication. Institutional capacities can be shared through partnerships.

10. Suggested Indicators

Number of applicants; number of schools and municipalities represented; age groups; number of participants in the final; number of teacher partners; number of artworks created; number of returning participants.

11. Development Direction within TANDEM

Within TANDEM, the method could be expanded to digital storytelling: young people would not only create visual artworks, but also produce short videos or digital stories explaining what local heritage means to them.

5th Good Practice – Vágfalvi 100 – Community Reinterpretation of Artistic Heritage

From a Local Artistic Legacy to Collective Memory and a Cultural Meeting Point

Practice status	EXISTING, PROGRAMME	DOCUMENTED
TANDEM connection	Cultural heritage + community participation + local cooperation	

1. Initial Situation/Challenge

An individual artistic legacy can easily become primarily a museum or specialist topic. For the local community, however, it becomes truly living heritage when it is connected to personal memories, stories and contemporary community experiences.

2. Objective

To present the legacy of Vágfalvi Ottó in a way that transforms it from a simple exhibition into a series of community meeting and collective-memory events.

3. Essence and Method of the Practice

In 2025, on the 100th anniversary of Vágfalvi Ottó's birth, the Vágfalvi Ottó Cultural Centre, Library and Tourist Centre organised an exhibition entitled "Vágfalvi Ottó 100". According to the available sources, the exhibition presented not only paintings and graphic works, but also photographs, letters, documents and personal objects. The programme also included an opening event and a special evening guided tour/finissage.

4. Participants and Partners

Cultural institution, municipality, artists, local historians, cultural professionals, collectors, admirers of the artist's work and the local community.

5. Form of Participation

The practice can be further developed through the collection of personal memories, the inclusion of family photographs and documents, community-led guided tours, digital stories created by young people and intergenerational discussions.

6. Results and Added Value

Local artistic heritage becomes accessible through multiple layers: artworks, personal documents, memories and community stories are brought together.

7. Key Lesson

Connecting tangible heritage with personal memory can create a stronger sense of community belonging than a traditional presentation based exclusively on expert interpretation.

8. Transferability to Other European Small Towns

Other small towns can develop similar community-memory projects around the heritage of any local artist, teacher, community leader or cultural creator.

9. Resource Requirements

Exhibition and communication costs, documentation and curatorial/professional work. Community story collection can also be organised on a voluntary basis.

10. Suggested Indicators

Number of personal stories collected; number of families involved; number of documents presented; number of visitors; number of community events; number of young participants; number of digital contents created.

11. Development Direction within TANDEM

Within TANDEM, the “Vágfalvi 100” model could be developed into a regular “**Local Heritage – Personal Stories**” format, which could also be tested by international partners in 2027.

4. Common Professional Lessons

- Local heritage becomes a community resource when people can connect to it through their own stories, knowledge or creative work.
- Participation is not the same as simply being present at programmes. The strongest form of participation occurs at the levels of planning, content creation, decision-making and evaluation.
- Cultural institutions can play a key role in connecting local government, civil society organisations and residents.
- The involvement of young people should preferably be linked to a concrete creative task; this can be more effective than simply transmitting information.
- The personal memories of older generations are a particularly valuable resource for exploring industrial and local-history heritage.
- Civil society organisations are not merely implementers, but also carriers of and experts on local heritage.
- Good practices are more transferable when the method is described not as a single event, but as a process that can be broken down into clear steps.

5. Proposed Common Methodology for the TANDEM Good Practices Collection

At the Panagyurishte meeting, all partners could use the same structure. This would facilitate the comparison of experiences from the five countries.

1. Local Challenge

What problem or need did the practice address?

2. Heritage Resource

What cultural, historical, natural or community heritage does it build upon?

3. Objective

What did the practice seek to change or strengthen?

4. Participants

Who were the stakeholders? Who was left out?

5. Participatory Method

How could people participate in planning, implementation or evaluation?

6. Result

What changed in terms of community, cooperation, knowledge or identity?

7. Resources

What time, human capacity, venues and financial resources were required?

8. Challenge

What was the greatest obstacle?

9. Lesson Learned

What would we do in the same way, and what would we do differently?

10. Transferability

Which elements can be transferred to other communities?

11. Indicators

How can participation and results be demonstrated?

12. Documentation

Photographs, videos, links, interviews, programmes and reports.

6. Proposed Further Development for the 2027 TANDEM Meeting in Balatonfűzfő

The professional focus of the Balatonfűzfő event is inclusive and intergenerational cooperation, co-creation and digital storytelling. Therefore, the five practices presented above could be combined into a joint “**Heritage Participation Lab**”.

- **Heritage Walk:** joint interpretation of industrial and cultural heritage sites.
- **Heritage Café:** intergenerational discussions between older and younger people about personal memories.
- **Oral History Workshop:** recording short interviews about the industrial and cultural past.
- **Digital Storytelling:** young people create short videos or digital stories.
- **Community Co-creation Workshop:** contemporary reinterpretation of a local heritage element, following the example of Vágfalvi Ottó’s artistic legacy.
- **Civil Society–Municipal Workshop:** identifying heritage topics on which the municipality, cultural institutions and civil society can work together.
- **Joint Evaluation:** identifying which methods should be incorporated into the Heritage Participation Toolkit.

7. Concluding Professional Statement

Based on Balatonfűzfő’s experience, cultural heritage does not become a community value by itself. It becomes living heritage when the municipality can engage as a partner, the cultural institution can function as a platform, civil communities can contribute as carriers of knowledge and initiatives, and young people can participate as creators.

Therefore, Balatonfűzfő’s most important contribution to TANDEM is not a single event, but a local approach in which support, community culture, industrial memory and artistic heritage reinforce one another and create opportunities for participation.

8. Sources and Professional Notes

- TANDEM – Submitted Project Application: project objectives, partner strengths, European dimension and the purpose of the Good Practices Collection.
- Program_Panagyurishte_hungarian.docx: topics and expected results of the professional meeting in Panagyurishte.
- Balatonfuzfo_TANDEM_Jo_Gyakorlatok_Panagyurishte.pptx: the previously developed professional framework of Balatonfűzfő’s good practices.
- Municipality of Balatonfűzfő – Vágfalvi Ottó Cultural Centre, Library and Tourist Centre: official website.
- Municipality of Balatonfűzfő – Civil Society Organisations and Municipal Support Calls.
- Balatonfűzfői Hírlap 2025–2026: documented materials relating to Vágfalvi Ottó 100 and the Vágfalvi Ottó Art Competition.

Professional Note: The document is based on practices verified through the available project materials and official Balatonfűzfő sources. Where further development of participatory methods is proposed, this should be understood as a **development direction**, rather than as a practice that has already been fully implemented.

Balatonfűzfő, October 2026