

About the ROCK-Marvila Project

The competition area is located in the center of the neighborhood of Marvila, separated from the riverfront and old Marvila by a hillside and two railway lines. These are geographical barriers that divide the territory also at the social and economic level. Currently, this urban discontinuity is being further accentuated as old Marvila is undergoing a fast gentrification process.

The area is part of a wider intervention zone, that encompasses the riverfront of the parishes of Beato and Marvila, and which seeks to address the multi-faceted challenges of the territory through the valorisation of its material and immaterial cultural heritage, focusing in four core topics: urban voids, ecological networks, territories of continuity and local communities versus gentrification.

ROCK stands for “Regeneration and Optimization of Cultural heritage in creative and Knowledge cities” and it’s an Horizon 2020 (EU) funded project under the thematic of “Cultural Heritage as a driver for sustainable growth”. Lisbon is part of the consortium with two members (of a total of 23), the City (CML) (Department of Cultural Heritage) and the Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lisbon (ICS). Each participating city has its own local partners. The Lisbon Architecture Triennale is engaged as strategic consultant with its education department.

IMPORTANT NOTE: the following excerpt of the ROCK-Marvila Project Report is introduced here as an element for context characterization of the site and does not represent the criteria by which the proposals will be evaluated by the jury or selected for the “Natural Beauty” exhibition.



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Regeneration and Optimization
of Cultural heritage in creative
and Knowledge cities

Excerpt of Report for the ROCK-Marvila Project:

ROCK-Marvila vision

The ROCK vision for Marvila, is inscribed in the Lisbon/Europe 2020 strategy, and recognizes as paramount the promotion, conservation and the valorisation of the rich cultural heritage of the city, as well as the intellectual development of the population and the potential of society, based on the values of authenticity, quality and diversity.

Lisbon has selected as an intervention area the riverfront of the parishes of **Beato and Marvila** and its relationship with the parish of Santa Maria Maior - Baixa (Terreiro do Paço). The ROCK intervention will be on specific territorial niches, tackling four fronts and keeping in mind several values considered paramount for the cohesion and comprehension of the whole territory.

Description of the demonstration site

the old industrial neighbourhoods of Marvila and Beato (Lisbon eastern riverfront)

Marvila is a former rural and industrial territory tucked away between two prominent neighbourhoods, but separated from both by a river and railway belt line. This situation has lessened its connections to the rest of the city, especially Lisbon's historical city centre.

Marvila used to be a leisure zone for the wealthier classes, with many families owning palaces along the Tagus. Thanks to the proximity with the river and the opportunities it created for trade and transport, Marvila later became an industrial hub. Immigrants from Portugal's countryside settled in the area in social housing units and shanty towns. This mix between a rural and industrial heritage created a set of very specific traditions and societal behaviours in Marvila, linking agricultural activities with factory workers' social and political identities. These traditions still resonate today.

Over time, Marvila's geographical barriers have evolved into socio-spatial barriers. The social housing units have been used as solutions for housing problems and have mushroomed. Many of the palaces present in the area are at risk because abandoned and waiting for rehabilitation, including the ones owned by the municipality. The riverfront is being fast redeveloped with high standing housing units being built at the moment, with the risk of creating an even stronger social barrier between the different parts of the territory. The social

heritage and traditions of the population is still very present and revendicated, and should be used to develop a programme of rehabilitation of the area.

At the same time, the territory is being revived and becoming Lisbon's newest creative hub¹, with many private initiatives from young creative and entrepreneurs being started there. The municipality itself is investing in Marvila and capitalising on its creative potential, with the rehabilitation of a former army supplies factory into a creative hub. The territory is quite young, with a high proportion of NEET population (Not in Education, Employment, or Training).

With ROCK, the Lisbon municipality is investing in the creation of a living lab to work on these urban issues. The Lisbon Living Lab seeks to address the multi-faceted challenges of the territory through four core topics: urban voids, ecological networks, territories of continuity and local communities versus gentrification.

Challenges in the area

- The coexistence of a rural and industrial past, social housing, vacant (green) spaces, looselands and geographical barriers such as the train tracks have to be considered;
- Marvila is considered a priority intervention territory, with priorities put on social territorial cohesion, participatory governance, financial and technical support;
- Divided territory: geographical barriers visualized by the rail tracks, but also social and economic barriers. Discontinuities exist in the urban landscape, with urban voids and abandoned buildings;
- Territory with a strong identity, mixing a rural and industrial heritage. The challenge is to understand and respect this identity and the different needs and profiles of the strata of population;
- High proportion of NEET population;
- Population attached to the territory and to their region of origins (population of immigration with roots in the countryside);
- Fast gentrification process closer to the riverfront, real estate developers' paradise, new demographics and new dynamics in place;
- Population living on the territory is getting tired of the multiple social programmes that have been implemented in the area over the years without any concrete effects and impacts on their daily lives.

Objectives of the ROCK intervention in the demonstration area

The Lisbon municipality vision for the territories of Beato and Marvila do not encompass another series of cultural events in an already stigmatized neighbourhood. The plan is rather to concentrate on a large-scale urban regeneration plan with a long-term vision. The impacts would be longer-lasting and results made more visible for the population. In that sense, the

¹ Reis e Silva, M., Space and memory: written sources and oral history when planning urban renewal, *Intangibility Matters International Conference on the values of tangible heritage*, May 2017, Lisbon

focus will be on co-creation with the local residents, users and stakeholders present and acting in the area.

The ROCK actions will intervene on specific territorial niches, on four identified aspects and with important values to consider for the cohesion and comprehension of the territory as a whole.

Lisbon Living Lab

The Lisbon Living Lab (LLL) is hosted in partnership with the Marvila Municipal Library and is located at the heart of the Marvila district. The LLL seeks to transform residents into prosumers – both consumers and producers – of cultural heritage by supporting local start-up actions and raising communities' awareness of Marvila's shared heritage spaces and its importance, whether tangible or intangible, natural or cultural. The LLL aims to support the revitalization, renovation and re-qualification of this historical area, which has become socially and geographically isolated.

Local communities and stakeholders, as well as associations working in Marvila are all involved in the LLL. Together, they will develop temporary projects, fostering new dynamics of transformation, creativity and innovation. This participatory approach makes it possible to identify and strengthen the district's social, economic and environmental values, which underpin sustainable urban development. Through community involvement, the LLL will bridge Marvila's history and spatial identity with the memories and experiences of communities of various origins.

The LLL will structure a proposal of possible scenarios and /or ideas to respond to the four themes selected within the territory:

- Urban voids
- Ecological networks
- Territories of continuity
- Local communities versus gentrification.

These themes will constitute the basis for public-private partnerships that will contribute to the development of the area. In addition to local stakeholders such as the parish councils, socio-cultural associations, residents, schools and representatives of other local cultural facilities, the LLL is supported by four external strategic consultants developing specific projects addressing the four above-stated issues. The consultants will act as intermediates, facilitators between the residents and the municipality.