

# METHODOLOGICAL GUIDE

DANURB



ROWING  
IN THE  
SAME BOAT



DANURB



# ROWING IN THE SAME BOAT

A brainstorming game for the development and preservation  
of the cultural heritage of the Danube municipalities

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## INTRODUCTION

The Department of Urban Planning and Design of the Budapest University of Technology and Economics (BME) as the lead partner of the DANUrB (DANube Urban Brand, 2017–2019) and DANUrB+ (2020–2022) EU Interreg Danube Transnational Programme (DTP) projects, the Contemporary Architecture Centre (KÉK) and the kultúrAktív Association have been working together since 2018 to develop ‘DANUrbanity’ games that fit well with the main objectives of the project. These goals include strengthening and developing cultural links between small and medium sized municipalities in the Danube countries, exploring and reusing common cultural heritage, and developing further economic and community development opportunities.

In order for this activity to be carried out to the highest possible standard, it is essential to consciously develop methodologies that facilitate communication and cooperation between stakeholders, professionals and decision-makers. It is from this need that the idea of the board game ‘Rowing in the same boat’ was born. These types of games, which can also be seen as a method of engagement, are a great way of helping local democratic communities to develop, giving them the opportunity to work together later, and helping us to work better to understand local dynamics, previously unarticulated desires and issues.

We hope that plenty of organisations working with local communities along the Danube will be able to use the methodology presented here in their everyday work. This game was created not only for the experience of playing, but also for evoking inspiration, because it is in the liberated atmosphere that innovative ideas can be born that can later lead to the development of our social, built and natural environment.

Playing the game ‘Rowing in the same boat’ is an opportunity for all facilitators responsible for the community heritage development process who want to engage stakeholders; and for all stakeholders living in the Danube municipalities who want to take action to preserve and develop the heritage of their hometown and to develop larger scale plans for the future. The guide describes the heritage development objectives of the game, how to use it and how it can be integrated into the process of community heritage development. The guide is complemented by a game master’s handbook, which provides advice on how to lead the gameplay.

We wish you a great gameplay experience!



## ROWING IN THE SAME BOAT A 'SERIOUS GAME' FOR ADULTS

The word 'serious' refers to the fact that the game deals with issues that are high stakes, have serious consequences and require complex solutions. A serious game simplifies and reduces complex problems for players who can use simulation and role-playing to try to understand the problem and work out possible solutions. In the safe environment of the game, players can experiment with different solutions and strategies without any real stakes.

The game can be used to break down the problem into discussable elements, to frame and focus as well as to guide the discussion around problem exploration and resolution. The game therefore acts as a communication facilitator, bringing us closer to understanding and solving complex problems.

The game 'Rowing in the same boat' promotes participation in the development of cultural heritage and therefore combines the tradition of 'serious games' and 'political games' with the shaping of the environment, creating a game in which stakeholders from the Danube municipalities are the players and in which stakeholders can develop their ideas for the development or preservation of cultural heritage with the support of other players.

### When can the game be used and useful?

The 'Rowing in the same boat' game is therefore a way to engage **stakeholders** from small and medium-sized municipalities along the Danube in the formulation of ideas for heritage development and conservation. It is worth using the game

- to **conjure up ideas** for the development and protection of the town's heritage;
- to **bring together** a range of actors and stakeholders to brainstorm and develop project ideas;
- to facilitate the development of **linkages** between stakeholders and their ideas, beyond the formulation and development of individual ideas;
- for stakeholders to get to know each other and each other's ideas, and to **support each other** in developing (and preferably implementing) ideas;
- to lay the foundations for connecting stakeholders to create the possibility of **collaboration**;
- to explore a clearly definable topic/issue with the relevant stakeholder group.

### The objectives of the game within the framework of DANUrB

The aim of 'Rowing in the same boat' is threefold.

1. Firstly, it **raises awareness of the cultural heritage** and its development and preservation potential among stakeholders in the Danube municipalities,

2. Secondly, the game aims to **engage** stakeholders in the **development and preservation of local and regional cultural heritage**,
3. Thirdly, it aims to **build the capacity of stakeholders** to develop the cultural heritage of their localities and regions and thus create their own cultural offer.

The aim of the DANUrB+ project is to **bring** the broad **definition of cultural heritage** to the people of the Danube municipalities, so that they can relate to the concept and come up with their own ideas for its development and preservation. It also **supports all initiatives**, ideas and proposals that contribute in any way to the transmission, preservation, transfer and shaping of cultural heritage.

With the third objective of the game, the stakeholder **capacity building**, the game aims to strengthen ideas that build on community resources (human, material, financial) and contribute to the development and preservation of cultural heritage through their reorganisation and distribution, as well as their innovative combination and synergies.

Therefore, the game

- helps to assess and understand the **power of relations** in a given municipality, who and how can participate in the development of local cultural heritage;
- **brings together** stakeholders interested in the development and preservation of cultural heritage;
- **utilizes the knowledge and contacts** of the community in developing ideas;
- **promotes networking** between players and develops social capital;
- **maps** the already available **material, human and financial resources** in the municipality, helping to combine existing resources effectively.

### **Who can play the game and why?**

In the following, we will discuss who the game is for and what they can gain from the game, beyond their individual experience, regarding both the game master and the players.

#### **Who is the facilitator, a.k.a. the game master?**

The facilitator's task is to plan, lead and conduct the group meetings, taking into account the group's purpose, thus making the group processes **effective** in order to **work** together, complete the tasks set, reach **joint decisions and solve problems**.

Responsibilities of the game master:

1. **Preparing** the environment for the game.
2. Helping the game to run smoothly by leading the **thought** process and informing the players during the game.
3. Identifying and correcting errors and problems during the game that prevent players from having a good game experience. In practice, this means helping to

**enforce the rules of the game** with the players, but also, if necessary, adapting them to give the players the best possible experience.

4. Finally, after the game, it is the task of the game master to hold a short group process **evaluation session**, where the participants can reflect on their experiences, the success of the game and their own feelings, and share their experiences, issues and wishes for the next meeting.

### **How do the facilitators of the community heritage development process benefit from this game?**

For DANURB+ facilitators who do not live in the Danube municipalities that they work in, the game can be exciting because it helps them

- to get to know locals better;
- to explore the power of relations between heritage stakeholders (the game is also an opportunity to rebalance the power relations between the actors present);
- to map local links of interest for the development of cultural heritage;
- find out who can contribute and in which ways to the development of cultural heritage;
- identify what intellectual, financial and material resources exist or are lacking in the community to develop cultural heritage;
- to understand the wishes and aspirations of the participants;
- to understand how and why people feel connected to their place of residence, and what they value there.

### **About the 'serious players' of the game**

The target group of the game is the **stakeholders** living in the Danube municipalities, who have the potential and/or the resources and/or the want to develop cultural heritage.

#### **Who are the stakeholders?**

When we use the word '**stakeholders**', we are actually referring to **individuals, groups** or **organisations** who are interested in and concerned about the development of the cultural heritage of their municipality and the decisions and activities that affect the fate of cultural heritage.

They can be **involved** in the development of cultural heritage through a wide range of areas and activities, and can therefore **develop and protect the cultural heritage** of the Danube municipalities from their own perspective. For example, they can come from tourism, municipal, civil, business, cultural, educational, etc. areas, or they can simply be enthusiastic residents.

#### **What stakes are stakeholders holding?**

Regarding the development of cultural heritage, individuals, groups and organisations can be involved in



- the preservation, transmission and evaluation of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of their municipality,
- discovering and utilizing the human, material and financial resources that can contribute to the development of cultural heritage,
- community organising and community building, which is possible through the heritage development process and the implementation of ideas resulting from the process,
- the economic, social and cultural benefits of cultural heritage development.

The game can therefore be used to involve and mobilise the above-mentioned stakeholders in the development of cultural heritage.

### **How do stakeholders benefit from the game?**

The game can be exciting for stakeholders living in small and medium-sized municipalities along the Danube because

- they can get to know the views of other stakeholders;
- they can get fresh information and new ideas;
- they can make new contacts and gain new partners;
- it can open up opportunities for cooperation between stakeholders participating in the game;
- it highlights potential problem areas, which, if addressed, will facilitate the implementation of stakeholders' projects;
- they can get tips for the implementation steps of their project ideas;
- they can get useful tips and advice from each other on how to implement their ideas;
- they can get a better understanding of the interests and initiatives of others;
- it brings the participants' perspectives closer together.

### **Guide to organizing a game session with local stakeholders**

Here is an introduction to the 'Rowing in the same boat' game. Detailed rules and description of the game can be found on the DANURB project's official webpage on the [danurb.eu](http://danurb.eu).

### **Choosing the players**

Choosing potential players can be helped by creating a so-called stakeholder map, which can be further filtered and evaluated. A simple method consists of the following steps:

1. Identify the heritage development objective that will bring stakeholders together at the game session.
2. Compile a list of participants already involved in the ongoing heritage development process.
3. Expand the list with those who may be interested in the topic, as you may have

chosen a heritage development or conservation objective that may be worth seeking out new stakeholders.

Further questions that may help:

- Who might be interested in or affected by the development of this topic or venue / the realization of this event?
- Who already has an initiative, event or programme on a similar topic / or in a similar location?
- Whose support is important to make the development happen?

### **Narrowing down the list of participants**

Use the following criteria to finalise and narrow down the list of participants:

- Who are the people who are motivated, willing and eager to take action to improve their community, and to do so by improving and protecting the assets of the place where they live?
- Who has the social capital and means for cultural heritage development?
- Is my participant list varied? Do participants come from different sectors and fields of interest?

### **Organizing a game session**

Once the players have been selected, the venue and date of the game can be chosen and invitations sent out. The time should be chosen according to the players' schedules and availability, while the venue should be a quiet, familiar place, accessible to all, where the game can be played in a calm setting.

**Invitations** should be sent to the players, not only drawing attention to the special nature of the game, but also including

- the **purpose of the game** and the topic of the brainstorming;
- a brief **description of the idea** you are looking for;
- the **exact location and time frame**;
- **contact details**, in case any of the invited players have preliminary questions.

### **Let the game begin!**

The facilitator gets to know the exact rules of the game so that he/she can run the game smoothly, and then prepares the ground for the game accordingly. He/she will meet and greet the players at the agreed time and place. The session can be scheduled as follows:

1. Welcome speech and introduction to the purpose of the meeting (10 min)
2. Ice-breakers and 'get to know you' games (10 min)
3. Playing 'Rowing in the same boat' (45-90 min)
4. Wrap-up (10 min)

The facilitator explains the rules of the game and presents the props for the game, which are placed on the game board as follows:

- Place the idea boats in the START space.
- Place the Community Members cards in a deck in the space marked in the Port 1 area.
- Place the I am convinced! / Take my advice! discs around the team's ports in the space marked according to their colour.
- Place the Resource cards in the Port 2 area at the space marked on the game board.
- Place the Role cards in the Port 2 area at the space marked on the game board.
- Place the business cards around the teams' ports in the space marked according to their colour.

### **Game rules and gameplay**

**START - Let's go!** *At the START space, teams present their ideas one after the other and then the Danube adventure is on! They board the boat and sail to Port 1. The slogan of the round is: Show us who you are! (Presentation of the stakeholders and their ideas)*

**Port 1 - Passengers, it's boarding time!** *At Port 1 (Round 1), the teams will meet various residents and stakeholders of the municipality, who they will have to convince to support the project idea.*

- **Individual move:** *at the start of the round, the game master spreads the cards on the 1st circle of the board. First, each team selects three local actors and convinces them to support the project by gathering arguments (Community Members cards).*
- **Community move:** *the teams share their arguments and then give each other advice to convince the actors (Take my advice! disc). The convinced actors get on the boat and head to the next port.*
- **Requirements for completing the round:** *each team gave away at least one Take my advice! disc and received at least one disc (in a different colour) from another team.*

**Port 2 - Load the cargo!** *In Port 2 (Round 2), teams need to mobilise material, financial and human resources to implement their ideas.*

- **Individual step:** *first, each team compiles their own resource requirements.*
- **Community move:** *the game master allocates the roles among the teams, which he/she signals by handing out the **Role cards**, first to the 'Resource Finder' team, then to the 'Resource Provider' team, and finally to the 'Observer' team. The teams share their needs and then have to play a situational game to get the designated resource from the representatives of the Resource Provider team. The Observer*

team judges whether the situation game was appropriate and whether the Resource Finder team can receive the **Resource card**. The **Role cards** are kept by the teams for the duration of the situational game and then returned to the game master, who uses them to redistribute the roles between the teams in the next situation. When all the situation games have been completed, the Role cards are returned to their original place. In case of a successful situation game, the Resource Finder team can load the acquired Resource card onto their ship and sail on to the next port.

- **Requirements for completing the round:** successful situational play, i.e. a Resource card provided by the Observer team.

**Port 3 - Shipmates, help us!** In Port 3 (Round 3), teams can develop contacts. They identify what contacts are missing and then there is an opportunity to exchange business cards. Once everyone has made contacts, the boats can cross the finish line.

- **Individual step:** first, each team writes down their own needs.
- **Community step:** the first team presents their needs; the other teams can provide contacts in the form of business cards. The round continues until all teams have had their turn.

After the first team has described the know-how they need to implement their idea, the other teams have the opportunity to write one or more of their own business cards for the team seeking expertise. Once the business card (name, contact details, expertise) has been filled in, it is handed to the team looking for expertise, who can stick the business card in their workbook.

- **Requirements for completing the round:** each team gave away at least one business card and received at least one business card from another team.

**GOAL - From boats to fleet.** We celebrate on the **FINISH** square, because it means that the teams are ready to realize their projects.

### Wrapping up the game

The aim of the wrap-up is to summarise the game experience and discuss the next steps.

You can ask the players at the end of the game:

- How did they feel? What did they think of the game?
- Have they received enough help? Are they satisfied?
- Were there any ideas that inspired them? Were there any ideas they could get involved in?

Then the next steps can be discussed:

- What will you do with the ideas? How will you go on?
- When will you meet next? What will be the topic of that meeting?
- How will the community process continue?

## IMPRESSUM

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Danube Transnational Programme  
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