



COMPetencies for Agencies for Sustainable Site conversion



**ABSTRACT
OF THE
PROJECT PROPOSAL
SUSTAINABLE RECONVERSION
OF GARA MICĂ (SMALL TRAIN STATION)**

Location: Cluj-Napoca, Romania

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ABSTRACT

The project detailed in the following pages describes the regeneration of an unused building in a busy area of Cluj-Napoca. The building in question is called “Gara Mică”, which means “Small Train Station”, as it used to serve as the main building for the now-defunct small train station. It is located in the vicinity of the current train station at one of the city’s main transportation nodes.

The regeneration process actually has grass-roots origins, as organisations took it to themselves to organise workshops and contemporary art galleries for the local artists. The organisations themselves are usually made up of local artists. The most notable event was a month-long artist-workshop/art gallery organised in late 2016 within the framework of the Com’On Cluj participatory budget program. The event was called Spațiu Cultural Gara Mică (Small Station Cultural Space).

The stakeholders of the project are threefold: First, contemporary local artists would have more opportunities to both work and have their work shown to the public. Second, the citizens from Cluj-Napoca would gain a permanent contemporary art gallery dedicated to promoting local artists, which is something that the city is currently lacking. And lastly, Cluj-Napoca, as an entity, would gain tremendously, both domestically and internationally, as such a venue would host international exhibitions and further consolidate Cluj-Napoca as an up and coming international hub.

In technical terms, the project consists of two stages, and the outcome of the project also has two facets. The first stage is the renovation of the building, which is also the most costly part of the project that carries the highest risk. The second stage is the development of a sustainable, participative, non-political life within the walls of the gallery.

The two facets of the project refer, on the one side, to the art gallery/workshop as a place for artists; and on the other side, to the building itself, for which the project has a vision of incorporating several technologies that handle energy and water management in a smart way. The building itself

would serve as a technological exhibit on its own, aimed to educate visitors about energy-saving and renewable technologies.

The biggest weakness of the project is obtaining the necessary financial means for the renovation of the building. The second biggest weakness of the project lies in the fact that its owner is a state-owned enterprise (CFR), with its headquarters in Bucharest. The Bucharest headquarters of CFR also handles the subletting of its assets. This means that they may not care about the potential cultural and educational output of the building as it is distant to them and they would only see financial figures.

Its strength, however, lies in its popularity as a grassroots movement; the potential interest from the part of donors, as well as it fills a void in the current shape of the city.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPOSED LOCATION

Name:	Gara Mică (Small Train Station)
Address:	Căii Ferate Street, Cluj-Napoca
Country:	Romania
Current status (abandoned, misused etc.):	Abandoned
Former use:	Train station building
Ownership (public, private, mixed)	Property of a state-owned enterprise
Surface (expressed in m²):	313.4

Photos





