



Project: 101249763 — COTAF – Connected Towns for a Shared Future
Programme: CERV-2025-CITIZENS-TOWN-NT

ANNEX A7 - EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

(To be filled in and uploaded as deliverable in the Portal Grant Management System, at the due date foreseen in the system.)

Please provide one sheet per event (one event = one workpackage = one lump sum).)

PROJECT	
Participant:	Impact Hub Donostia (IHD)
PIC number:	920934491
Project name and acronym:	COTAF – Connected Towns for a Shared Future

EVENT DESCRIPTION			
Event number:	12		
Event name:	Stories of Migration		
Type:	Living Libraries		
In situ/online:	In situ		
Location:	Spain], Donostia		
Date(s):	14/07/2026		
Website(s) (if any):	https://www.cotafeuproject.info/		
Participants			
Female:	35		
Male:	10		
Non-binary:			
From country 1 [Donostia:	45		
Total number of participants:	45	From total number of countries:	1
Description			
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>			
At least 1 page detailed description of the event			



The Living Library "Story of Migration" was organised by Impact Hub Donostia as part of the Connected Towns for a Shared Future (COTAF) project. The activity was designed as an interactive and participatory learning experience aimed at promoting dialogue, reducing prejudice and strengthening social cohesion through direct encounters between citizens and people with lived experience of migration.

The methodology was based on the internationally recognised Living Library approach, in which participants "borrow" a Living Book instead of a conventional book. Each Living Book represents a real person willing to share their personal experience in a safe and facilitated environment. Rather than receiving information through presentations or lectures, participants engage in face-to-face conversations that encourage active listening, respectful questioning and mutual learning. This format allows complex social issues to be explored through authentic human experiences, creating opportunities for empathy and reflection that are difficult to achieve through traditional awareness-raising activities.

The thematic focus of the event was migration, belonging and social inclusion. The Living Books represented different migration pathways and personal circumstances, illustrating the diversity of experiences that exist behind migration processes. Through their testimonies, participants were invited to understand migration not as an abstract political or social issue, but as a collection of individual life stories shaped by personal decisions, opportunities, challenges, resilience and adaptation. This approach directly supported the objectives of COTAF by fostering democratic dialogue, intercultural understanding and community participation.

The preparation of the activity extended beyond logistical planning and included a dedicated support process for the Living Books. Prior to the event, participants received information about the Living Library methodology, safeguarding principles and facilitation procedures. Particular attention was paid to informed consent, emotional wellbeing and participants' autonomy, ensuring that each Living Book retained complete control over the aspects of their personal story they wished to share. Pre-event questionnaires confirmed that participants generally felt well prepared, trusted the facilitation team and understood that they could choose not to answer questions they considered too personal or emotionally difficult. The responses also revealed strong motivations to contribute to changing public perceptions of migration, encourage dialogue and make less visible experiences more widely understood.

The activity was originally planned with six Living Books. However, one participant was unable to attend due to an unforeseen family emergency. The event therefore proceeded with five Living Books representing a broad range of migration experiences. This unforeseen change did not affect the overall methodology or the achievement of the planned objectives, as the diversity of perspectives and personal narratives remained sufficiently comprehensive to stimulate meaningful dialogue throughout the sessions.

The event took place at Medialab Tabakalera in Donostia / San Sebastián and brought together **45 participants**, including the Living Books. Following a short introductory session explaining the methodology, ethical framework and rules for respectful dialogue, participants rotated through successive conversation rounds with the Living Books. These small-group conversations created an atmosphere of trust, openness and reciprocal learning, allowing participants to ask questions freely while recognising the agency of the Living Books in deciding how their stories were shared. Attendance was documented through participant registration and signed attendance sheets, although a small number of participants did not sign the attendance list despite attending the activity.

Evaluation formed an integral part of the event design. In addition to attendance records, both Living Books and participants completed evaluation questionnaires before and after the activity. These tools were designed to assess participants' expectations, perceptions of safety, learning outcomes and changes in attitudes towards migration and inclusion. Together with the photographic documentation and organisational records, these evaluation instruments provide robust evidence supporting both the implementation of the activity and its contribution to the wider objectives and Theory of Change of the COTAF project.

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).



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Management Guidelines – Annex A
M&E Plan & Strategy – Annex 3

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HUMAN LIBRARY EVENT MONITORING TEMPLATE

SECTION 1 – Event Identification

Event type: Living Library

Work Package: WP12

Date(s): 14/07/2026

Location: Donostia (Medialab-Tabakalera)

Number of participants: 45

The event was organised by Impact Hub Donostia using the Living Library methodology to promote dialogue on migration, belonging and social inclusion. Participants engaged in facilitated conversations with Living Books representing diverse migration experiences, creating opportunities for direct interaction, mutual learning and reflection.

SECTION 2 – Expected ToC Outcomes (Empathy & Awareness)

Expected outcomes:

- Increased empathy and understanding
- Reduction of stereotypes
- Reflective dialogue

Observed outcomes:

☒ Fully achieved ☐ Partially achieved ☐ Not achieved

Short explanation (max 5 lines):

The Human Library organised in Donostia generated a high level of participant engagement throughout the activity. The Living Library methodology created a safe environment in which participants could engage directly with people who shared their lived experiences of migration, encouraging active listening, respectful questioning and meaningful conversations.

Preparation questionnaires completed by the Living Books indicated that participants felt well informed about the methodology, trusted the facilitation process and understood the safeguarding measures in place. They also expressed strong motivation to participate in order to reduce stereotypes, humanise migration experiences and contribute to greater social understanding.

Post-event evaluation confirmed that participants highly valued the opportunity to engage in direct dialogue with people whose experiences differed from their own. Feedback highlighted increased empathy, greater awareness of the diversity of migration pathways and a stronger appreciation of dialogue as a tool for building inclusive communities. Living Books also reported feeling



respected throughout the activity and considered that their stories had contributed positively to participants' understanding of migration and belonging.

Overall, the evidence collected through attendance records, evaluation questionnaires and participant feedback confirms that the activity successfully achieved the expected Theory of Change outcomes by fostering authentic dialogue, challenging stereotypes and encouraging reflection through personal interaction.

SECTION 3 – Dialogue Quality

Quality of dialogue:

☐ Low ☐ Medium ☒ High

Safe and inclusive environment ensured?

☒ Yes ☐ Partially ☐ No

The event was implemented following the Living Library methodology and safeguarding principles established within the COTAF project. Facilitators introduced the rules for respectful dialogue before the conversations began and remained available throughout the activity to support participants whenever necessary.

The small-group format promoted active listening, openness and mutual respect, allowing participants to ask questions freely while ensuring that Living Books retained full control over the aspects of their personal stories they wished to share. No situations compromising participants' wellbeing or dignity were reported during the event.

SECTION 4 – Risks and Mitigation

Did any risk materialise (e.g. low participation, inappropriate behaviour)?

☒ No ☐ Yes

Were mitigation measures applied?

☐ No ☒ Yes

Comments:

Potential risks identified during the planning phase included lower-than-expected participation, emotionally challenging conversations, reinforcement of stereotypes, safeguarding concerns and organisational changes affecting implementation.

To minimise these risks, the organisers provided advance preparation for all Living Books, established clear facilitation guidelines, ensured informed consent procedures and maintained continuous facilitator support throughout the activity. Participants received an introduction to the Living Library methodology and expectations for respectful dialogue before the sessions began.

One Living Book was unable to participate due to an unforeseen family emergency. The programme was successfully adapted without affecting the quality of the activity, and the diversity of migration experiences represented remained sufficient to achieve the planned objectives.

No safeguarding incidents or inappropriate behaviour occurred during the event.



SECTION 5 - Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) – Narrative Impact Analysis

The monitoring and evaluation component of the Living Library event held in **Donostia / San Sebastián** was designed to assess the quality of dialogue, participants' experiences and the immediate outcomes of the activity, in line with the COTAF Theory of Change.

The evaluation was based on **post-event questionnaires completed by both Living Books and Readers**, combining quantitative ratings with qualitative reflections on participants' experiences.

A total of **20 survey contributions** were collected:

- **5 Living Books** completed the post-event questionnaire.
- **15 Readers** completed the post-event questionnaire.

Considering the **45 participants** who attended the event, the evaluation represents approximately **44% of participants** and provides a solid basis for identifying patterns of learning, empathy, agency and inclusion.

Among the Readers, 13 respondents identified as women and 2 as men. Twelve were participating in a Living Library for the first time, while three had previous experience. Among the Living Books, four respondents identified as women and one as a man; only one had previously participated in this methodology.

Although the evaluation captures immediate perceptions rather than long-term behavioural change, the responses provide consistent evidence of the contribution of the Living Library methodology to promoting dialogue, empathy and mutual understanding.

Living Books: From Prepared Agency to Situated Experience

The responses from the five Living Books show a highly positive assessment of the experience, particularly regarding safety, respect, personal agency and recognition.

Across the main evaluation dimensions—including feeling respected, maintaining control over what they chose to share, facilitator support, respect for personal boundaries and willingness to participate again—average scores ranged between **4.6 and 4.8 out of 5**.

Participants consistently reported feeling listened to, valued and respected throughout the activity. They highlighted that the Living Library created a safe environment in which they could openly share deeply personal migration experiences without feeling judged.

The qualitative responses demonstrate that the experience generated important personal and social outcomes.

Several Living Books explained that sharing their stories helped them recognise the value of their own journeys and understand the positive impact their experiences could have on others. One participant reflected that putting lived experiences into words allowed them to appreciate the significance of seemingly small achievements throughout their migration journey. Another explained that sharing their story strengthened their confidence and showed that personal testimony can inspire empathy and hope for people facing similar situations.



Others emphasised the importance of the emotional connections created during the event, highlighting the opportunity to feel understood, exchange experiences with other participants and contribute to breaking down stereotypes surrounding migration.

Only one participant reported feeling slightly uncomfortable at the beginning of the activity due to initial shyness when meeting unfamiliar people. Importantly, this feeling disappeared quickly and was not associated with inappropriate behaviour or shortcomings in facilitation. No participant reported disrespectful interactions or safeguarding concerns.

Overall, the evaluation suggests that the Living Library provided Living Books with an opportunity not only to share their personal experiences but also to strengthen their sense of agency, recognise the social value of their stories and experience genuine dialogue based on trust and mutual respect.

Readers: From Openness to Structured Awareness

The Reader questionnaires demonstrate consistently positive outcomes across all evaluated dimensions.

The highest average scores were recorded for recognising the importance of direct dialogue between people with different experiences and for willingness to recommend participation in a Living Library, both reaching **4.73 out of 5**.

Understanding of diverse life experiences also scored highly, with an average of **4.6 out of 5**, while understanding how different factors combine to create situations of vulnerability reached **4.67 out of 5**.

Participants also reported feeling safe, respected and comfortable throughout the activity, with average scores of **4.67 out of 5**, confirming that the facilitation model successfully created an environment conducive to honest and respectful dialogue.

Openness towards diversity, appreciation of European values of equality and inclusion and motivation to engage in initiatives promoting social cohesion all scored between **4.3 and 4.4 out of 5**.

Awareness of personal stereotypes received a slightly lower average (**4.13 out of 5**), although qualitative responses suggest this reflects the profile of several participants, many of whom already had personal or professional experience in migration or inclusion contexts. For these participants, the Living Library reinforced and deepened existing perspectives rather than fundamentally changing them.

Participants frequently described the emotional impact of listening to authentic migration stories.

They highlighted the courage and resilience demonstrated by the Living Books, the complexity of migration journeys and the opportunity to understand migration as a deeply human experience rather than an abstract social issue.

Many respondents emphasised the intimacy created through respectful conversations with people they had never previously met. Listening directly to personal testimonies helped participants appreciate the diversity of migration experiences, understand the challenges involved in rebuilding life in another country and recognise the importance of empathy in overcoming prejudice.



Several participants explained that the experience strengthened their willingness to listen before judging, increased their understanding of the reasons behind migration and reinforced their appreciation of dialogue as an effective tool for building more inclusive communities.

Very few situations of discomfort were reported. One participant referred to excessive intervention by another Reader during the introductory session, while another mentioned feeling initially shy. Neither response suggests any safeguarding concern. Overall, respondents consistently described the environment as welcoming, respectful and emotionally safe.

Interpreting Impact Through the Theory of Change

The survey findings provide strong evidence that the Living Library contributed to the objectives of the COTAF Theory of Change by creating meaningful encounters capable of strengthening empathy, reducing stereotypes and promoting social inclusion.

The experiences of Living Books and Readers reveal two complementary processes of change.

For the Living Books, the activity offered an opportunity to transform personal migration experiences into educational and social resources. Sharing their stories in a respectful environment reinforced their sense of recognition, dignity and confidence while demonstrating that lived experience can become a powerful tool for raising awareness and fostering understanding.

Readers experienced a parallel process. Direct dialogue enabled participants to move beyond general assumptions about migration and engage instead with individual stories shaped by personal circumstances, resilience and hope. Participants consistently reported increased understanding of diverse life experiences, greater appreciation of dialogue and stronger commitment to inclusive values.

The interaction between both groups generated a shared space in which:

- personal stories challenged stereotypes through direct human encounter;
- empathy emerged from authentic conversations;
- dialogue became a practical mechanism for promoting inclusion;
- migration was understood through lived experience rather than assumptions;
- participants engaged with complex social issues in a respectful and psychologically safe environment.

Importantly, the evaluation demonstrates that transformation was not identical for every participant. Some Readers reported significant changes in perspective, while others described reinforcement of existing values and beliefs. Likewise, Living Books experienced different forms of personal recognition depending on their own life trajectories and motivations for participating.

These diverse outcomes reinforce the credibility of the methodology. Rather than seeking uniform responses, the Living Library creates opportunities for meaningful reflection adapted to participants' different backgrounds and experiences.

The consistently high ratings for facilitation, safety and respect confirm that the ethical framework of the methodology played a fundamental role in enabling open dialogue while ensuring participants' wellbeing throughout the activity.

Final Consideration



The evaluation findings present the **Donostia / San Sebastián Living Library** as a highly successful, ethically grounded and emotionally meaningful intervention.

Both the quantitative and qualitative evidence demonstrate consistently high levels of safety, respect, quality of facilitation, meaningful dialogue and participant satisfaction.

The Living Library created a unique environment in which personal migration experiences became opportunities for empathy, mutual learning and civic reflection. Living Books experienced recognition and empowerment through sharing their stories, while Readers gained a deeper understanding of migration through direct human encounters that challenged stereotypes and strengthened inclusive attitudes.

Although participants entered the activity with different levels of prior knowledge and experience, the methodology successfully generated meaningful dialogue adapted to these different starting points. This diversity of responses strengthens the credibility of the evaluation and reflects the relational nature of the social change promoted by the COTAF project.

Overall, the Living Library successfully transformed personal testimony into collective learning, contributing directly to the objectives of **Connected Towns for a Shared Future** and to the broader priorities of the **CERV Programme** in promoting equality, inclusion, active citizenship and respect for human dignity.

SECTION 6 – Learning & Follow-up

Key insight from participants

Participants described the Human Library as an enriching, thought-provoking and emotionally meaningful experience. Direct conversations with Living Books helped participants better understand the complexity and diversity of migration experiences while encouraging empathy and challenging preconceived ideas.

Living Books also reported that the experience provided an opportunity to share their stories in a respectful environment where they felt listened to and valued. Several participants emphasised that personal dialogue had a greater impact on their understanding than more traditional awareness-raising activities.

Suggested improvement

Future editions could allocate additional time for conversations between Readers and Living Books, allowing participants to engage with a larger number of stories and deepen the dialogue. Additional preparation materials for Readers before the event could also help participants formulate more reflective questions and maximise learning opportunities.

Follow-up actions

The documentation generated during the event—including attendance records, evaluation questionnaires and photographic evidence—will contribute to the monitoring and evaluation framework of the COTAF project. The experience will also inform future Human Library activities.



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organised by project partners and support the continued development of participatory methodologies that promote inclusion, intercultural dialogue and democratic engagement.

This template is part of the COTAF M&E system and complements the official CERV Event Description Sheet.