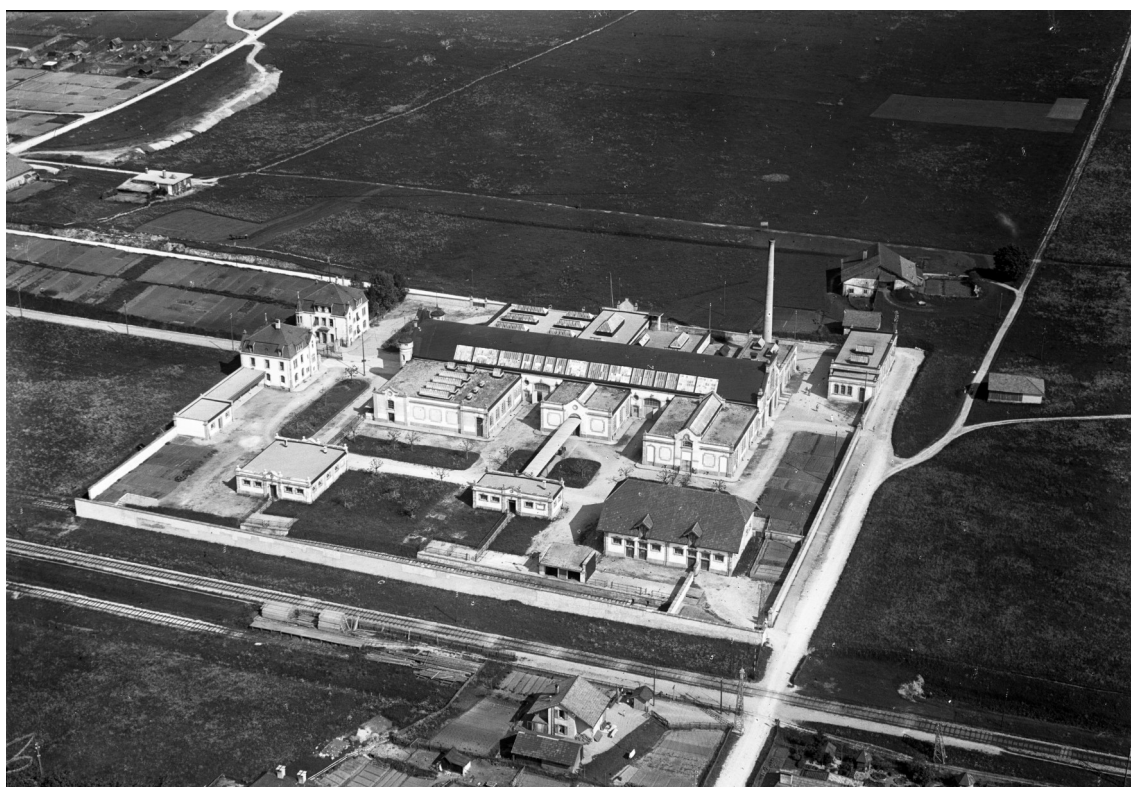




Open call

12 invitations for an occupation of the Anciens
Abattoirs



Abattoirs de La Chaux-de-Fonds vus du ciel, 1925

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La Chaux-de-Fonds Swiss capital of culture 2027 – overflowing and open to the world

In 2027, La Chaux-de-Fonds will become the first Swiss capital of culture. A year punctuated by the abundant and diverse local cultural life that makes this manufacturing town a unique place in Switzerland, where heritage and experimentation combine. During 12 months, La Chaux-de-Fonds will be a point of convergence for culture from Switzerland and beyond, an invitation to take a step back and think together about the stories we want to imagine for the future. A major celebration, a city-wide laboratory, a year which will keep breaking out of its ruts, just as this city keeps escaping from its well-defined grid. In 2027, audiences and artists from La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland and further afar will meet, exchange and share around a huge cultural bonfire. We want every cultural event, from the smallest to the largest, from the most institutional to the most alternative and DIY, to be part of the Swiss capital of culture 2027 programme. It's this cultural life that makes this city so lively, long before and long after 2027.

Les Anciens Abattoirs (*the Old Slaughterhouses*) – a space to meet and share

Culture exists wherever it is nourished, practised and created, and that will be the case in 2027. Swiss capital of culture 2027 will live on every corner of every bistro table, in every theatre, concert cellar, museum, cinema and in all the other indescribable places where it is shaped. But we need landmarks, meeting places where we can meet up, dance, watch, imagine and create together. The Anciens Abattoirs will be at the crossroads of all the paths followed by Swiss capital of culture 2027 and its audiences. In collaboration with its long-standing hosts, including the art centre QG, we will make the Anciens Abattoirs into a space that is open to the city, a witness to its life and its challenges. Whether as a performance space, a festive venue or an exhibition space, the layout and use of the Anciens Abattoirs will be radically re-imagined over the course of the year.

Carte blanche – a new ritual, new imaginaries

If the Anciens Abattoirs are the heart of the Swiss capital of culture 2027, then it is first and foremost up to the local scene to keep it beating. That is why we are opening this first call for projects to the artists, collectives and associations involved in the cultural life of La Chaux-de-Fonds. Each month, a different area of the Anciens Abattoirs will be occupied, transformed and reappropriated through a *carte blanche*, like a mapping of all the possibilities this place has to offer. From the Fridges to the Central street and the outside areas, each space is open to occupation (*see the space description document*). These occupations will be a regular feature of Swiss capital of culture 2027. Each month, the doors will open to a new artistic world and imagination, unveiled to the public in a kind of ritual on the 1st of the month at midnight. The *cartes blanches* will then be open to the public at various times throughout the month.

We see these *cartes blanches* as an invitation to reappropriate these spaces materially and mentally by giving them new functions and new stories. We want to make them desirable to everyone, to open up the possibilities of how they can be used. We believe that artists have the power to transform spaces, to free them from their existing rules.



We remember the day in August 1974 when Philippe Petit crossed a wire stretched between the Twin Towers in New York. With this daring, pirate gesture, he forever transformed the relationship between the city's inhabitants and the towers, which were at the time unloved and misunderstood. Dancing on his high-wire more than 400 metres above the streets, the tightrope walker wrested the towers from the property companies and offered them to the entire population.

The cartes blanches won't necessarily be as dizzying and dangerous as Petit's attempt, but we hope they will have the same collective impact, the same liberating movement.

Whether you're a young collective with more dreams than experience, an artist who's been working tirelessly for decades, a neighbourhood association with a desire to share, whether your playground is circus or architecture, ventriloquism workshops or noise, gastronomy or craftsmanship... this call for projects is for you. These 'cartes blanches' will be a portrait of a multiple and lively culture, and an opportunity to make space, visibility and above all resources available to the people who bring it to life.

Depending on your own rhythms and needs, as well as the different artistic and cultural forms involved, we will have to work out and define the arrangements for how we open the public together. A visual installation does not have the same needs and constraints as a music label or a street theatre company. All ways of sharing with the public are welcome. All ways of occupying the space and time available are encouraged.

Terms and Conditions of participation

Who ?

The open call is open to artists, collectives, labels, companies, associations or cultural players with strong links to La Chaux-de-Fonds.

What ?

A carte blanche to occupy one of the spaces of the Anciens Abattoirs (please indicate your preference). A description of the different spaces can be found at the end of this document.

When ?

- One month during 2027 (please indicate your preferred month(s)).
- A minimum of 15 days of opening to the public (see reception conditions below).
- The opening hours are to be defined together.
- A ritual : each carte blanche will open to the public at midnight on the 1st of the month.

How ?

Funding :

- Swiss capital of culture (here-by « CCS ») will cover costs of up to CHF 50,000, including fees, purchase of equipment, accommodation, travel and transport (budget to be attached to the project, see 'How to apply').



Reception conditions :

- The CCS team will assist in preparing the project and setting it up.
- The technical set-up will take place over the two weeks preceding the opening of the carte blanche on the 1st of the month. A member of the CCS technical team will work with you for a maximum of 10 days at a rate of 8 hours per day for this set-up. For example, for a carte blanche starting on 1 February 2027, installation will begin on 18 January 2027.
- The opening times will be decided jointly with CCS and may be spread over the whole month.
- Reception of the public will be handled jointly with CCS during the operational phase.
- The project will be assessed from a technical point of view by the CCS team to ensure its feasibility, in terms of cost, safety and compatibility with current regulations. Please indicate your requirements in the project description (see 'How to apply').
- CCS will provide basic technical equipment.
- Energy costs (electricity, heating) will be covered by CCS, as will the provision of electrical boxes installed on site (exact description on request).

Selection committee :

The selection committee, consisting of 4 people from the CCS team and 4 people from the Swiss and European cultural scene, will choose 12 cartes blanches, spread over the 12 months of 2027.

How to apply ?

You can submit a written dossier in one of the 4 national languages or in English. You can also submit a short video including the various elements below:

- a short presentation of the project team and its motivations,
- a description of the project (maximum 4 pages for a written application)
- a simple budget including the number of people involved in the project, salary conditions and technical costs.

Our team is available to answer your questions and advise you on preparing your application. Please make an appointment to meet us at our offices on the 10th floor of the Espacité Tower. You can register via the Swiss capital of culture 2027 website: <https://ccs2300.ch/appele-a-projets/>

Dates and times of the advisory periods :

- Wednesday 26th February from 10:00 to 16:00
- Thursday 13th March from 10:00 to 19:00
- Friday 28th March from 12:00 to 20:00
- Tuesday 15th April from 14:00 to 19:00



Application deadline:

Applications must be sent by e-mail only to the following address: projets@ccs2300.ch
Each proposal will receive a delivery receipt. The deadline for applications is midnight on 30th April 2025. No extensions will be granted. The commission will take place in May and the answers will be communicated during the month of June.