

Bringing  
people  
together



4: Executive summary

---

6: Overview

---

8: Bringing people together

---

10: Principles

---

17: Navigating challenges  
and their impact  
on actions

---

20: Focus areas:  
Words to action

---

50: Future outlook

# Executive Summary

*“Whereabouts are you from?” Papà would invariably ask anyone seated opposite him the moment we’d alight on one of Malta’s iconic buses. This would be followed by “My name is Gabriel Caruana, I’m an artist from Malta.” This would invariably make my sister and a much younger me giggle, mostly at how he could easily strike up a conversation with anyone, breaking up the monotony of a commute. This formed a core memory of Papà and how he connected with everyone he met, be it on a bus to Valletta, a train ride to Faenza, or casual visitors at The Mill. His open studio policy became legendary; people from all walks of life invited in to see him create, for a chat, a drink, and friendship.*

Gabriel Caruana’s creative endeavours are undoubtedly celebrated for his tangible artistic outputs, but I believe that his art was also relational in spirit. His first creative outputs can in fact be traced back to his engagement with

his beloved Balzan community and the Saint Gabriel Band Club, through which his first carnival float designs materialised. His many renditions of the Annunciation are a testament to his devotion not only to the patron saints of Balzan but to its community. These experiences spurred him further into the world of art, from his years at the Malta School of Art, followed by his contribution to the Malta Society of Arts, and his years at the Technical School of St. Joseph and Tarġa Gap. These offered many opportunities to meet and relate to different situations and people. One of his favourite words was “connections”. It is significant that a recurrent motif in his oeuvre is two dots connected by a line, which he had told me symbolised how energy moves from one point to the other. It’s a symbol harking back from his formative years as an electrician, which he transformed into a symbol of what he held most dear, and which came most natural to him; connecting with people, material, and place.

It is in this spirit that the Gabriel Caruana Foundation has developed its first community engagement strategy “Bringing People Together”. Having garnered experience working with different communities through various initiatives such as *Kreaturi*, *hożż il-ħsejjes*, and *30@20*, the need to put action into words and more action was the next step for us. Thanks to Il-Premju Tal-President

Għall-Kreatività and Arts Council Malta, the Foundation was in a position to engage Martina Camilleri as our Community Engagement officer through the project *Whereabouts are you from?* Martina has, since 2021, delved deep into our projects, what drives us, but most essentially the needs of different people and communities. Through a sensitive approach she listened, spoke and created with artists, residents, volunteers, children, elderly, and youths from diverse backgrounds and corners of the world. By immersing herself in the community of and surrounding The Mill she was able to relate, engage and create.

A word of thanks to Aġenzija Żgħażaġh A4U scheme for supporting our project *Bringing People Together* which enabled us to publish our Strategy and Volunteers Programme.

I am sure that these documents, *Bringing People Together* and *Leave Your Mark* encapsulate our ethos and guide us on how to connect the dots of our growing creative community.

Raffaella Zammit  
Executive Director  
Gabriel Caruana Foundation  
June 2024

# (Overview)

‘Bringing People Together’ is a Community Engagement Strategy that reflects the Gabriel Caruana Foundation’s dedication to being agents of the change desired by those in its wider community. It is grounded in principles, strengthened by navigating challenges, motivated by doing. With caring observation,

patience, humility, empathy,  
and a passion for nurturing  
fruitful friendships and  
support systems, we foster  
a thriving and supportive  
community through  
contemporary artistic  
processes.

# (Section 1)

## Bringing People Together

This Community Engagement Strategy is an evolving product of 'Whereabouts Are You From?', a project which received the President's Award for Creativity in 2021. It is a direct result of a commitment to carry on Gabriel Caruana's artistic, and social legacy, with the title of the project being a phrase he regularly used to stir up a conversation with strangers.

The Strategy is rooted from a determination to further open up the doors of The Mill - Art, Culture and Crafts Centre, Birkirkara, Malta and based on the Gabriel Caruana Foundation's ongoing mission. This mission was not only gathered from the Foundation's Statute, or the GCF 2020-2022 Strategic Plan, the Conservation and Management Plan 2021-2031 and the SKOPRI project, but from first hand experience of the Community Engagement Officer, Martina Camilleri. The past years have been an immersive learning experience for the Community Engagement Officer brought on board by the Foundation through the President's Award for Creativity. As such, involvement and research carried out during the initial steps of the project but also due to being in and around The Mill, its surroundings and beyond has initiated the needs to be targeted in the Community Engagement Strategy 'Bringing People Together'.

By working on the Strategy, a continuation or in some cases initiation of close communication was encountered with various people. These include those who live, work, create at and visit the Mill, those who were or are in some way connected to the Foundation, as well as those who might not necessarily know of The Mill or the Foundation as yet. This communication is at the backbone of an evolving Strategy, and of all practices which result from it, to ensure that steps forward reflect the needs and priorities of our communities, as well as that of the Foundation.

The strategy and the role of Community Engagement Officer have been guided by various inputs. Priority was given to feedback and insights from our diverse communities. There has also been sensitivity to national and international Arts and Cultural strategies and goals. Diverse learning and sharing are a cornerstone of this Strategy which have allowed growth and development from informed actions.



NO  
IERAQ



ART  
EXHIBITION



# (Section 2)

# Principles

The principles of this Strategy are inspired by the enduring legacy of Gabriel Caruana with the Gabriel Caruana Foundation being committed to embodying principles of community engagement that reflect Caruana's values of creativity, collaboration, and inclusivity (Figure 1). Rooted in a dedication to legacy, our engagement practices are driven by a deep reverence for the contributions of those who have come before us, recognizing their lasting impact on our shared journey.

*Central to our approach is the cultivation of durable, diverse collaborations that transcend boundaries and unite individuals from all walks of life. We believe that by embracing the richness of diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences, we can create a more inclusive and persevering community that thrives on the strength of its collective wisdom.*

In our pursuit of meaningful engagement, we are guided by a commitment to informing and involving all stakeholders in the decision-making process. We recognize the importance of transparent communication, active listening, and mutual respect in building trust and fostering genuine partnerships. At the heart of our engagement efforts lies a commitment to cultivating a thriving program of activities and initiatives that resonate with our communities. From dynamic exhibitions and workshops to interactive events and educational programs, we strive to create opportunities for connection, inspiration, and growth that enrich the lives of all who participate.

Our guiding principles are interconnected and are most successful when applied simultaneously, as intended with the actions arising from the Community Engagement Strategy. For each principle an explanation of why these are valued by the Foundation and their importance for our community to thrive. Signposts have been included to ensure that our actions reflect our principles.

# Bringing People Together

01

## Dedication to legacy

Looking back, acting now, progressing forward

02

## Durable, diverse collaborations

Building relationships across existing and new communities to work together effectively

03

## Informing, involving

Sharing information through different channels, updating about actions, and the opportunities they will bring

04

## A thriving programme

Solid structures based on past practice and new initiatives

Figure 1: Guiding principles that resulted from the process undertaken to develop the Community Engagement Strategy.





## 2.1 Dedication To Legacy

*Looking back, acting now, looking forward.*

This principle values the past connections, activities and practices exercised by the Foundation, to inform moving forward. It also considers the social, cultural and built heritage tied to the Foundation, including the Mill itself, a Schedule I Heritage Site.

### Signposts

*The input of growing engagement on the Mill's conservation*

The Mill's conservation is kept as a priority throughout. Growth in engagement will facilitate more people knowing about the need of this conservation, as well as stakeholders (including volunteers, donors and sponsors and people of influence) who will help with direct and indirect factors leading towards this conservation.

*Focusing on quality*

A principle carried on from Gabriel Caruana's practice as well as projects carried out by the Foundation. It ensures consensus in the consistency of value of the level of work done by the Foundation.

*By and for artists, by and for communities*

Keeping close to heart the artist-run-space nature of the way the Mill has been functioning. The involvement of community members in the ideation, creation and implementation of community-led projects will indicate the maintaining of this quality.

---

## 2.2 Durable, diverse commitments

*Building relationships across existing and new communities to work together effectively.*

### Signposts

*Different people and understanding*

Building on the consultations which have been started, and continuing these to increase the Foundation's connections in a perceptive, sustainable way. Gathering needs from these consultations and cross-examining them with the Foundation's needs to scope current actions and future projects.

*Connections which last*

Valuing quality over quantity and making connections dependent on the resources there to sustain them. This ensures

A continued effort to explore the past and learn of new connections, nurture these relationships by understanding how they may develop and seeing that the Foundation and its connections benefit.

connections are not neglected.

### *Internationalisation*

Continually learning about progress and development of our international peers. Researching, following and maintaining networks which reflect the Foundation's vision on an international level.

---

## 2.3 Informing and involving

*Consistently communicating, conversing and creating opportunities for learning and making.*

This applies lessons learnt from connections made, through disseminating information and putting it into practice.

### **Signposts**

#### *Knowing the right channels*

Testing and tracking progress of engagement by sharing information through various channels and improving on these accordingly. This includes consideration of the accessibility of channels and how to best update on what is happening, the impacts of actions, and the opportunities they will bring through the Foundation's communication methods

#### *Why engage?*

It is a priority to make sure that different stakeholders - including those closely connected to the Foundation such as employees and volunteers, acknowledge why efforts to engage are being done. Checking-in with the different stakeholders and understanding their views on engagement, for instance through consultation is a way of doing this. Following up, educational opportunities and exercises which highlight the benefits of engagement on different levels would continue to critically evolve development on this front.

#### *Let's engage!*

Having different stakeholders and community members ideate, create and implement community-led projects, particularly reflecting any development of understanding of the concepts of engagement.



## 2.4 A thriving programme

*Solid structures based on past practice and new initiatives*

Carving out these structures through practice, application and revision, so as to find the healthiest ecosystems to cater for the Foundation's needs in relation to programming.

### **Signposts**

#### *Sustainability*

Appreciating environmental, financial, logistical needs amongst others, making sure not to over-load hence hindering other principles such as sound communication and quality of the Foundation's outputs.

#### *From the inside out*

A productive relation between community engagement and programming, with a balance between opportunities which are educational, mutually engaging and aimed at building long-lasting relationships with community members, artists, audiences and other stakeholders through the Foundation's programme. Team-effort is key to the success of this principle.



# (Section 3)

## Navigating challenges and their impact on actions

*The research phase has underlined certain challenges and needs that need to be addressed to ensure sensitive community engagement. The process included a thorough literature review of the Foundation's publications, past project proposals and projects, community engagement strategies of arts organisations, feedback from particular communities and internal team discussions. This has consolidated the challenges and limitations to community engagement, and contributed towards the development of actions that are detailed in the Action Plan, '4. Focus Areas - Words to Action'.*

### 3.1 Rethinking resources

Managing the Foundation's limited resources, particularly in terms of human and financial, often leads to strain within the team. This strain has inevitably influenced the organisation's activities. However, in response to this challenge, the Foundation has adopted a strategic approach aimed at maximising

available resources. By combining opportunities such as events, workshops, and funding initiatives, the Foundation seeks to optimise the impact of its various projects. This multifaceted approach not only improves audience reach but also helps to manage expenses effectively. Furthermore, it contributes to increasing the positive outcomes generated by the Foundation's endeavours, thereby enhancing its overall effectiveness and sustainability.



## 3.2 Accessibility

Considering that The Mill is 300 years old, the Foundation grapples with accessibility challenges within certain parts of the building, limiting the engagement of specific communities. This obstacle has had a significant impact on the Foundation's operations. However, in response to this challenge, the Foundation has adopted a proactive approach by venturing beyond The Mill and actively, physically integrating within communities. This strategic decision has resulted in notable improvements in the Foundation's engagement efforts, particularly in terms of the diversity of audiences reached. By forging closer ties with communities, the Foundation has also fostered increased collaboration with stakeholders. Additionally, this has led to enhanced opportunities for securing funding and support for its initiatives, ultimately strengthening the Foundation's ability to fulfil its mission and objectives.

## 3.3 Online presence and informing on ongoing initiatives

As numerous grass-roots organisations do, the Gabriel Caruana Foundation confronts challenges in maintaining dynamic and engaging outgoing social media content while ensuring consistency. This task demands regular efforts to keep content varied for optimal engagement across various platforms. While the Foundation actively fosters a diverse network of stakeholders, the breadth of this network can present challenges in maintaining consistent communication with each party. In countering this challenge, there has been a concerted effort to enhance expertise in social media management, including the encouragement of specialised training for the Community Engagement Officer in this specific area. Secondly, the Foundation has implemented a more collaborative approach by dividing responsibility for outgoing media and communication among team members. This approach ensures that content is enriched by team members' deep immersion in specific



initiatives, resulting in stronger and more diverse messaging. Additionally, the Foundation has prioritised increased in-person engagement activities with wider audiences. These activities serve as opportunities to inform and exchange ideas on ongoing initiatives directly, fostering deeper connections and understanding within the community.

## 3.4 Audience feedback and community testimonials

Considering the already significant workload carried, the Foundation's team encounters challenges with limited feedback from audiences and participants of past projects. This poses obstacles to assessing the effectiveness and impact of its initiatives. This has prompted efforts to enhance mechanisms for collecting feedback, including implementing post-project surveys and feedback forms to gather insights from participants and audiences. Additionally, the Foundation envisions establishing ongoing channels of communication with stakeholders to encourage continuous feedback and dialogue, without adding unnecessarily to modern day's influx of information. Furthermore, the Foundation has begun testing of recording certain sessions, with participant consent, allowing in-session feedback to be documented. This approach ensures that valuable insights and reactions from participants are captured in real-time, enhancing the Foundation's ability to evaluate project outcomes and make informed adjustments while enriching promotional content. By documenting feedback session-to-session, the Foundation can also track progress and identify areas for improvement more effectively.

## 3.5 Dependency on institutional funding

To maintain smooth and long-term operations, the Foundation contends with challenges arising from numerous ongoing projects and applications. While efforts to secure grants with manageable administration and longer-term support are ongoing, the current reality remains one of a heavy administrative burden and heightened expectations from funders. However, the Foundation's continued active engagement with diverse stakeholders, including a collaborative network of grass-roots and Corporate stakeholders, has yielded positive outcomes, with the GCF being approached for collaborative actions and projects. This proactive approach has alleviated the burden of co-financing in some instances, providing some much-needed relief and has opened new avenues to maintain the Foundation's operations.

# (Section 4)

# Focus Areas

# Words To Action

The Community Engagement Strategy is being implemented through five Focus Areas. Together these consist of a total of twenty-one short-term actions for the years 2024 to 2027 and seven long-term actions which cover 2028 onwards. Informed by exploratory initiatives implemented between 2022 and 2024, these 'Focus Areas' address the evolving needs outlined by the Foundation and its community, with each Action being backed by the principles explained in Section 2 - Principles.

The Focus Areas below are presented together with actions, including a timeline, budget, signposts, monitoring and evaluation and resources required. Signposts will guide development, allowing space for reflection and adaptation through the monitoring and evaluation processes. Resources and budget give an indication of forecasted capital required to navigate the Focus Areas, short-term and long-term actions as a whole. Stakeholders currently engaged in initiatives with

the GCF or those that may potentially be involved along the line are also envisaged.



## 4.1 Focus Area 1: Communication and Evaluation

*Overall, the four Communication and Evaluation actions outlined below are designed to foster transparency, inclusivity, and accountability, while also enabling continuous learning, adaptation, and improvement. This is intended through consultation, open communication, conscious active engagement and meaningful, reflective evaluation, thriving on collaboration and shared ownership.*

---

### Short-Term Action 1.1: Publicly consulting on the Community Engagement Strategy

---

Ongoing, thoughtful consultation will be conducted at various stages of the strategy implementation process to gather feedback, insights, and suggestions from diverse stakeholders. These consultations will provide an opportunity for community members including artists, volunteers, residents, organisations, partners and beyond to be actively involved in shaping the direction of our engagement efforts. Through interactive, inclusive, playful and participatory processes, we seek to ensure that the strategy reflects the needs, priorities, and aspirations of the communities we strive to serve and form part of.

*Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 2 to Quarter 3  
Ongoing

*Budget:*

Funding sourced  
Budget Template

---

## Short-Term Action 1.2: Caringly communicating the Community Engagement Strategy

---

The community engagement strategy will be shared widely, using diverse methods across all relevant platforms, including the Foundation’s website, social media channels, and physical spaces such as The Mill. By disseminating the strategy, we aim to transparently communicate our goals, objectives, and approaches to all stakeholders, fostering a sense of ownership and accountability within the community.

*Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 2 to  
Quarter 4  
Ongoing

*Budget:*

Funding sourced  
Budget Template

---

## Short-Term Action 1.3: Streamlining internal communication

---

Internal communication processes will be enhanced to focus on all team members being informed, engaged, and aligned with the goals and activities outlined in the strategy. The GCF will ensure that getting to know its team members and celebrating their diverse prior knowledge is consistently integrated in initiatives and ways of thinking. The intention is to facilitate knowledge sharing, collaboration, and coordination among staff, volunteers and board members. Enhancing internal communication will also impact ‘Short-Term Action 1.4: Improving external communication’, holistically strengthening relationships, building trust, and enhancing the effectiveness of our community engagement efforts.

*Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 2 to Quarter 3  
Ongoing

*Budget:*

Funding sourced

---

## Short-Term Action 1.4: Improving external communication

---

Improving internal and external communication goes hand in hand. With a similar guiding ethos the Foundation's vision is propagated while integrating partners', participants', and community members' prior knowledge. Apart from crucial, consistent communication on ongoing projects, by enhancing external communication practices, the Foundation hopes to inspire and be inspired by broader communities' support and methods, mobilise resources, and drive positive change toward shared goals and aspirations.

*Timeline:*

Ongoing

*Budget:*

Funding required  
Budget Template

---

## Long-Term Action 1.1: Community Engagement Strategy Review

---

The annual review of the Community Engagement Strategy (CES) will serve as a critical mechanism for ensuring both reach and quality in the Foundation's efforts. It allows a space to assess the alignment of actions with the current and evolving needs of the GCF, The Mill, stakeholders, collaborators, and the broader community. Through annual progress tracking, the review will identify and evaluate the status of actions, categorising them based on completion status and effectiveness. This process not only enhances accountability but also increases awareness of the GCF and The Mill's community engagement processes. Moreover, the review serves as a platform for integrating new projects and initiatives into the CES, reflecting the Foundation's commitment to innovation and responsiveness to emerging opportunities and challenges within our community.

*Timeline:*

Annual - Quarter 3

*Budget:*

This process would not require any external funding.

---

## Focus Area 1: Support and Signposts

---

### *Focus Area 1: Physical and Digital Resources:*

- Venue or online platform for hosting consultations
- Workshop materials based on content
- Digital content based on the strategy
- Communication platforms
- Printing

### *Focus Area 1: Human Resources:*

- Five to eight participants for strategy consultation
- Graphic Designer to design physical and digital material
- Community Engagement Officer to carry out consultations, reporting and marketing schedule plan
- Volunteer and/or intern support to carry out workshops, data analysis and marketing coordination

### *Focus Area 1: Signposts:*

- Establishing five to eight key stakeholders to consult with
- Defining which areas of the strategy to consult on
- Setting an agenda, method and content for consultations
- Organising, communicating and implementing the consultations
- Report to collate consultation findings
- Outlining fundamental aspects of the strategy to communicate, together with Foundation management
- Communication platforms confirmed
- Funding to support marketing
- Marketing plan scheduled, reviewed and implemented
- Sharing of lessons and skills learnt

### *Focus Area 1: Monitoring and evaluation:*

- Stakeholders consulted are varied, hailing from different fields and communities
- Stakeholders get a clear idea of specific parts of the Community Engagement Strategy
- Identification of potential collaborations and tentative projects
- Stakeholders are involved in our strategy and decision making processes
- Preliminary dissemination of the strategy
- Consultation findings feed into 2024-2028 fine-tuning of the Community Engagement Strategy
- Recorded reach on social media
- Stakeholders active in voicing need of The Mill's conservation
- Increased awareness of community engagement principles and strategy goals
- Communication amongst team consistently, healthily increases in a more organised way
- More active involvement of past, present and future collaborators
- Increased audiences for activities
- Actions gather international interest





## 4.2 Focus Area 2: Volunteering

*Volunteering plays a pivotal role in the success and sustainability of the Gabriel Caruana Foundation as both an NGO and an artist-run space. At the heart of the GCF's mission is a commitment to community engagement, creativity, and social impact. Volunteers serve as the lifeblood of the organisation, bringing diverse skills, perspectives, and passions to support its programmes, events, and initiatives. Recruiting dedicated volunteers willing to contribute in different ways not only amplifies the GCF's capacity to fulfill its mission but also fosters a sense of ownership and belonging within the community. Focusing on improving the volunteering experience, the GCF not only strengthens its operational capacity but also cultivates a culture of collaboration, empowerment, and shared responsibility.*

---

### Short-Term Action 2.1: Volunteer Handbook - 'Leave Your Mark'

---

A comprehensive volunteer handbook is an indispensable tool for the Foundation, serving as a vital resource for both local and international volunteer program coordinators and potential volunteers alike. The handbook will not only outline the GCF's mission, values, and objectives but also provide detailed information on volunteer roles, responsibilities, and expectations. By including content appropriate for various audiences, the handbook substantiates the GCF's volunteer program and enhances its credibility. Moreover, potential and incoming volunteers benefit from having access to this material, as it serves to inform and inspire their involvement by offering insights into the organisation's activities, impact, and opportunities for development

within a supportive and enriching environment.

*Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 1 to Quarter 4  
Ongoing

*Budget:*

Funding sourced  
Budget Template

---

## Short-Term Action 2.2: Preparation for recruitment process

---

Preparing for the volunteer recruitment process involves establishing a structured framework that ensures effective communication with potential and incoming volunteers from the outset, while also nurturing relationships with consistent volunteers for longer-term engagement. By implementing a reference structure, the Gabriel Caruana Foundation can streamline recruitment efforts, through clarifying roles and expectations, provide ongoing support and celebrate volunteers' efforts. This structured approach not only facilitates recruitment for the Foundation, but encourages a wholesome experience for volunteers.

*Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 1 to Quarter 3  
Ongoing

*Budget:*

Funding sourced

---

## Short-Term Action 2.3: Regular intake of volunteers

---

Consistent volunteer recruitment is essential for the Gabriel Caruana Foundation to alleviate the workload on GCF staff, enabling them to focus on administrative tasks while navigating the development of the Foundation's initiatives through an evolving practice. By actively recruiting longer-term volunteers, the GCF can cultivate a sense of ownership among volunteers, empowering them to take on responsibilities and contribute to the organisation's mission with dedication and enthusiasm. This approach not only enhances operational efficiency but also contributes to cultivating a sustainable volunteering culture based on principles of civic engagement, collaboration and shared responsibility locally and abroad.

*Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 3 to 2027 - Quarter 4  
Ongoing

*Budget:*

Funding sourced

---

## Short-Term Action 2.4: Achieving ESC Quality Label

---

Achieving the European Solidarity Corps (ESC) Quality Label holds immense positive implications for the Gabriel Caruana Foundation, paving the way for increased volunteer diversity and inclusion within the GCF team. This accreditation not only expands international collaboration opportunities but also enriches the volunteer program, ensuring a more impactful experience for participating volunteers. By welcoming individuals from diverse backgrounds, the Foundation would further contribute to cultural exchange, broaden its perspectives and strengthen its global network, ultimately advancing its mission of promoting creativity, community engagement, and social impact on an international scale.

*Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 3 to Quarter 4  
Ongoing

*Budget:*

This process would not require any external funding.

---

## Long-Term Action 2.1: Revision of Volunteer Handbook - 'Leave Your Mark'

---

As the Foundation and The Mill's community evolves, the volunteer handbook will be a developing resource to inform ongoing and incoming volunteers and collaborators. With initiatives kicking-off year after year, the handbook will stay up to date with changes in the recruitment process, new roles, responsibilities and insights based on collaborator and volunteer feedback - adapting to changing times and collaborator's needs.

*Timeline:*

Annual - Quarter 4 (or after volunteer intakes as necessary)

*Budget:*

This process would not require any external funding.

---

## Long-Term Action 2.2: Continued volunteer intake

---

A continuation of 'Short-Term Action 2.3: Regular intake of volunteers', the recruitment timeline would adapt to the needs of the Foundation and its collaborators, to ensure that the team and wider community have the support needed to implement initiatives. This sub-action also includes the recruitment of international volunteers, including from programmes such as the European Solidarity Corps. As there is a rise in a sense of ownership of initiatives, the possibility of volunteer-led activities, upon consultation with the Foundation team, would continue to feed into this sub-action.

*Timeline:*

Annual - The recruitment timeline would go hand in hand with the Foundation's programming.

*Budget:*

Funding required

---

## Focus Area 2: Support and Signposts

---

*Focus Area 2: Physical and Digital Resources:*

- Venue for information sessions
- Accommodation for international volunteers
- Workstations for volunteers
- Volunteer perks to offer volunteers as appreciation
- Digital content based on the volunteer handbook, including call material
- Communication platforms
- Printing

*Focus Area 2: Human Resources:*

- Graphic Designer to design physical and digital material
- Volunteer coordinator to liaise with GCF team on recruitment timeline, marketing and communication with volunteers
- Community Engagement Officer to support volunteer coordinator with calls, recruitment and marketing coordination

### *Focus Area 2: Signposts:*

- Team consultation on what to include in the volunteer handbook
- Transparent, inclusive volunteer application and selection process which facilitates communication with stakeholders
- Accessible compilation of documents relating to volunteer call, including social media designs, application forms, evaluation guide and role guides.
- Certification giving access to ESC funds and pool of volunteers
- Increase in longer term volunteers, taking ownership of initiatives

### *Focus Area 2: Monitoring and evaluation:*

- Load taken off the GCF staff for more focus on administrative tasks and further development of Foundation, artistic programming and creative outputs
- Continually updated volunteer log documenting the volunteer journey including recruitment journey, feedback and developments
- Increased cultural diversity within the GCF team, impacting initiatives across the organisation
- International opportunities for collaboration nurtured through expanding networks



## 4.3 Focus Area 3: Engagement in Action



*With ‘Focus Area 3: Engagement in Action’, the GCF aims to put the values and intentions behind the strategy and previous actions into practice. The following actions reflect a holistic and participatory approach to community development, grounded in research, collaboration, and innovation. These actions are also grounded in view of the Foundation’s potential and responsibility towards activating agents of change, making it crucial to focus on nurturing and navigating resources, partnerships, and expanding networks.*

*In nurturing resources, the GCF hopes to continue improving the provision of access to essential tools, materials, and facilities while offering and receiving training, mentorship, and support towards individual and collective development of skills and realisation of potential. Furthermore, as focused on in more detail in ‘Focus Area 4: Nurturing Networks’, ‘Focus Area 3: Engagement in Action’ outlines initiatives to support partnership building, shaping collaborative relationships with diverse stakeholders, including local communities within and beyond organisations, businesses, and government agencies.*

*Initiatives aim to encourage the pooling of collective resources such as expertise, networks, logistics, time, human resources and facilities, amplifying their impact to address complex challenges and create sustainable solutions together.*



---

## Short-Term Action 3.1: Market research

---

Thorough market research continues to be essential in understanding the needs, interests, and preferences of those the Foundation works with and hopes to collaborate with. This data-driven approach informs the development of tailored programs and initiatives that resonate with the target audience, ensuring maximum impact and relevance.

*Timeline:*

Ongoing

*Budget:*

This process would not require any external funding.

---

## Short-Term Action 3.2: Programming and implementation of children's workshops

---

The Gabriel Caruana Foundation is dedicated to continue working and learning with children, across all aspects encountered at The Mill, and the Foundation's wider initiatives. The Foundation understands that it forms part of a community hoping to inspire the next generation of artists, creators, and changemakers, fostering a lifelong appreciation for the arts and a tighter-knit community. Through organising activities that span various media and thematic, children are encouraged to unleash their imagination, challenge ways of thinking and doing, and develop valuable social and cognitive skills. The workshops are designed to be inclusive and accessible, welcoming children from diverse backgrounds and abilities to participate and engage in a supportive and nurturing environment. The GCF aims to provide moments of play, by providing enriching and interactive experiences.

*Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 1 to 2027 - Quarter 4  
Ongoing

*Budget:*

Funding required  
Funding sourced  
Fundraising  
Budget Template

---

## Short-Term Action 3.3: Internal capacity building

---

Past and current collaborators and friends of the Foundation often note the tight-knit community surrounding the Mill and the Foundation. Keeping these cherished connections alive through moments of collective learning and opportunities for sharing is crucial. Furthermore, the Foundation puts immense value in keeping its team informed, engaged, and passionate through training that will improve quality of life and work. Capacity building includes team-building and social events as well as participation in workshops, conferences and exchanges.

*Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 1 to 2027 - Quarter 4  
Ongoing

*Budget:*

Funding required

---

## Short-Term Action 3.4: Reflections on community engagement: External workshops

---

Consistently encouraging a culture of learning and exchange, the GCF will continue to delve into the diverse manifestations of engagement methods across disciplines. This action is based on ideating and exploring innovative approaches that contribute to increased civic action and public involvement. Reflecting on these methods' impact, stakeholders may gain valuable insights into what works, what doesn't, and how to adapt strategies for greater effectiveness. Moreover, the action facilitates the exchange of methods and resources among stakeholders, promoting collaboration and collective learning.

*Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 1 to 2027 - Quarter 4

*Budget:*

Funding required

---

## Short-Term Action 3.5: Engagement with the SPRING programme

---

In celebrating and propagating everything that the Gabriel Caruana Foundation's emerging artist programme has come to be, the Foundation will continue to explore and implement initiatives based on concepts and themes rooted in the SPRING collectives and solos. Thematics explored by artist alumni of the SPRING programme are generated through hours of observation and conversations, deep development of concepts and methods, and challenging expectations. Brought into the public sphere, the methods and content of SPRING will continue to encourage new perspectives, pushing for experimentation and imagination, curiosity, wonder and possibility.

*Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 1 to 2027 - Quarter 4

*Budget:*

Funding required  
Budget Template  
Sponsorship

---

## Short-Term Action 3.6: 'SKOPRI flimkien'

---

SKOPRI, led by the Gabriel Caruana Foundation between 2021 and 2022, aimed to uncover the multifaceted potential of The Mill - Art, Culture, and Crafts Centre. 'Action 6: SKOPRI Flimkien' continues this project's legacy by emphasising the necessity and needs of the space, together with its community and context. In the coming years, the team will prioritise activating the space and conversations around it through various initiatives, ensuring its sustainable future in collaboration with partners.

*Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 1 to 2027 - Quarter 4

*Budget:*

Fundraising



---

## Short-Term Action 3.7: Small-scale projects with communities

---

Small-scale projects with communities focus on nurturing networks and connections, allowing for the organic generation of ideas with people met along the way. These projects involve co-designing initiatives that address the identified needs of the community, ensuring that the scale and desired impact are well understood. By maximising collective resources, these initiatives aim to achieve meaningful and sustainable outcomes, fostering a sense of ownership and collaboration within the community.

*Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 1 to 2027 - Quarter 4

*Budget:*

Funding required  
Funding sourced  
Fundraising  
Budget Template

---

## Short-Term Action 3.8: International projects present and future

---

Engaging in international projects in the past has significantly informed the Foundation's processes. Such initiatives provide rich development opportunities; from improving administrative methods, enhancing ways of collaborating remotely and better understanding the global cultural ecosystems that GCF is a part of. To maximise impact, the Foundation will focus on picking up on the learnings and outputs from past international collaborations while maintaining international professional relationships through continued conversations with present and future partners. Presently, such conversations include improving cultural practitioners' working conditions and quality of life, the relevance of European and global grass-root organisations, and delving into the historical and socio-political significance of being a part of the Mediterranean Basin. Furthermore, connecting through shared values towards cultural exchange of parallel or innovative practices and sustainable economic and environmental methods continues to be a way of navigating and acting on mutual needs. These efforts enhance the Foundation's programmes and contribute to a broader dialogue on art, culture, and community development.

### *Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 1 to 2027 - Quarter 4

### *Budget:*

Funding required  
Funding sourced  
Fundraising  
Budget Template

---

## Long-Term Action 3.1: A consistent programme of community-led initiatives

---

Activities will continue developing from multilayered needs analysis and pilot projects carried out with and initiated by individuals and groups. These active citizens, community members met along the Foundation's journey, are encouraged to apply resourcefulness, playfulness and considerate, future-thinking methods in achieving tangible outputs they find pride in standing by.

*Timeline:*

Twice Annually - Quarter 2 and Quarter 4 (dependent on running artistic programme)

*Budget:*

Funding required  
Funding sourced  
Fundraising

---

## Long-Term Action 3.2: Reflective approaches to workshop feedback

---

Collecting participants' reflections and insights on the processes carried out during initiatives, particularly workshops, will be a continued practice. This feedback will inform future iterations, the evolving needs and specific sensitivities of everyone involved.

*Timeline:*

Carried out within two months of activity.

*Budget:*

This process would not require any external funding.

---

## Focus Area 3: Support and Signposts

---

### *Focus Area 3: Physical and Digital Resources:*

- Venues with necessary utilities for activities
- Materials according to workshop content
- Online platform for market research and feedback surveys
- Communication and marketing platforms
- Printing of marketing material

### *Focus Area 3: Human Resources:*

- Marketing support to increase the reach and impact of initiatives
- Project coordinator to support with the writing of funding applications, to keep activities up to standard and to support the collaborators involved in implementation
- Administrative role to implement accounting, reporting, procurement and other project and Foundation related project needs.
- Volunteers supporting ideation, organisation and implementation of initiatives
- Volunteer supporting market research and feedback data analysis
- Community Engagement Officer to support ideation, organisation and implementation of initiatives
- Specialised guest contributors involved in workshop planning and implementation

### *Focus Area 3: Signposts:*

- Programming of workshops considerate to feedback
- Market research serves as a reference to those planning future initiatives
- Increase of quality, meaningful activities for members of different communities, from children to youth, adults and elderly
- Increase of potential self-sustaining or fundraising activities
- A growing team of employees, volunteers and collaborators having varied skill-sets, coming from diverse backgrounds
- A network of local and international collaborators open to consulting and partnering with the Foundation

### *Focus Area 3: Monitoring and evaluation:*

- Streamlined process of implementing feedback through surveys and other tools, as well as reporting templates to document results
- Team is motivated to follow-up on and apply learning gained from diverse experiences including training and projects implemented
- Minimum three intergenerational sessions annually (one-offs or series)
- At least one CPD experience per employee annually
- At least three funded projects being implemented annually, including with worldwide collaborations.





## 4.4 Focus Area 4: Nurturing networks

*The strategy's 'Nurturing Networks' action focuses on cherishing, caring for and consciously strengthening the budding relationships surrounding The Mill and the Gabriel Caruana Foundation. Encouraging and facilitating a growing community of support networks is part of the GCF's commitment to being a dynamic, active part of the critical mass towards social change. Collectively, further emphasis may be put on the importance of cultural, environmental, and social organisations in both local and international contexts. Methods fostered in conversations and actions will ensure that connections remain vibrant, functional and motivational; a collaborative ecosystem that supports and amplifies our shared impact.*

---

### Short-Term Action 4.1: Internationalisation - Engaging within the TEH MedHub

---

The GCF is currently an associate member of the Trans Europe Halles (TEH), with an ongoing application for full membership. During these years within the network, the TEH Mediterranean Hub (MedHub) was officially launched in Cyprus during the Open Up festival at the Nimac Center in October 2023. Conversations around setting up the Hub, its function and guiding principles indicated a shared desire to explore the Mediterranean Sea as a liquid continent, delving into its legends, myths, language, and narratives while addressing social and environmental concerns and decolonisation initiatives. Having initiated the first face-to-face meet-up at the TEH 2023 Conference, and the co-writing of the first two grant applications with fellow MedHub members, the Foundation aims

to continue representing Malta's complex narrative in this ongoing conversation.

*Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 1 to 2027 - Quarter 4

*Budget:*

Funding required  
Funding sourced  
Budget Template



---

## Short-Term Action 4.2: Engaging with friends of GCF and The Mill

---

Championing the conservation of The Mill cannot be taken for granted. This 300 year old, Grade 1 Scheduled Building requires the care and conservation necessary to bring it into the future as the home of the Gabriel Caruana Foundation. Doing this collectively has proven most impactful by delving deep through the roots of its past. In keeping legacy at heart, continuing efforts to connect with the community of friends around Gabriel Caruana that has been nurtured throughout the years until today, is crucial. This effort will continue through ongoing initiatives such as SPRING, SKOPRI Flimkien, Birkirkara Active Citizens, Layers of Being and consistent conversations around the subject with people passing by or through the doors of The Mill. In keeping close to the roots of connections, inherited shared intentions can be taken into the future, at The Mill itself and beyond its walls, including globally.

*Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 1 to 2027 - Quarter 4

*Budget:*

Funding required  
Fundraising  
Sponsorship

---

## Short-Term Action 4.3: Widening our international profile

---

This action follows up on 'Short-Term Action 3.8: International Projects Present and Future'. Having experienced the positive impact of international exchange in the sharing of knowledge, championing the significance of grass-roots cultural organisations and sowing fruitful relationships, the Foundation strives to keep this momentum going. Enhancing the Foundation's credibility by applying for the European Solidarity Corps (EUSC) Quality Label and actively seeking membership in international networks similar to Trans Europe Halles (TEH) would enrich international development. Additionally, application for participation in international conferences would facilitate the GCF's mission and values being shared with a broader audience. Furthermore, pursuing connections with international cultural practitioners based in Malta, both visiting and permanent nourishes the Foundation's cultural offerings while expanding global reach and exposure to different practices.

*Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 1 to 2027 - Quarter 4

*Budget:*

Funding required  
Funding sourced  
Budget Template

---

## Long-Term Action 4.1: Consistent International Exchange

---

The Gabriel Caruana Foundation is proudly a part of an active, determined community of cultural practitioners and diverse grass-roots organisations evolving around the world. Keeping close ties and fruitful connections towards international collective action and ensuring healthy exchange continues to strengthen confidence in the Foundation's place on an international dimension.

*Timeline:*

2028 - continued

*Budget:*

Funding required  
Fundraising  
Budget Template  
Sponsorship

---

## Focus Area 4: Support and Signposts

---

### *Focus Area 4: Physical and Digital Resources:*

- Venue with a good atmosphere to network and socialise, during face to face gatherings
- Accessible online platform to showcase the Foundation's portfolio, and the friendships made along the way
- Digital management tools including online meeting spaces and content sharing platforms

### *Focus Area 4: Human Resources:*

- Administrative role to follow-up on membership requirements
- Volunteers to support Community Engagement Officer in screening International activities and active networks
- Community Engagement Officer to research and connect with the diverse layers of people surrounding the Foundation and The Mill
- Community Engagement Officer to sustain communication with an international network of cultural practitioners and organisations
- Team members available for international travel

### *Focus Area 4: Signposts:*

- The Foundation as an active collaborator in projects and conversations initiated by the TEH MedHub
- Gathering and curating a living, evolving testimonial of the deep-rooted networks growing around The Mill, and beyond
- Increase in international opportunities for collaboration, including artistic exchanges, volunteering

opportunities, training and educational initiatives

- The Foundation's membership in international networks increases accessibility to resources and funding opportunities
- Improved facilitation of export and exchange of cultural practitioners based in Malta

### *Focus Area 4: Monitoring and evaluation:*

- At least twenty testimonials from local and international supporters, championing The Mill's conservation
- Minimum two annual meet-ups gathering friends of The Mill over the years
- Listing of and contact with potential supporters continued as a consistent practice



## 4.5 Focus Area 5: Funding a future

*Focused work on sourcing alternative modes of funding is essential for a number of the Gabriel Caruana Foundation's initiatives to thrive. Securing financial support enables the Foundation to sustain and improve its programme, while investing in efforts to make the GCF as self-sustaining as possible. With the conversation around funding being persistent among non-governmental organisations, the Foundation strives to continue researching, applying, adjusting and sharing methods. This focus area's underlying goal is to allow for suitable replenishment of resources, ensure fair pay and conditions for cultural practitioners, quality opportunities for artists, audiences and participants and encourage an increase in support for culture.*

---

### Short-Term Action 5.1: Researching funding opportunities

---

The Foundation, together with collaborators from local and international organisations, will continue to actively research alternative methods of funding and resourcing. This collaborative approach enables the sharing of experience, resources, and networks, enhancing each organisation's ability to secure essential funding. Additionally, a joint effort not only increases the chances of successful funding but also fosters a sense of solidarity and shared purpose, ultimately strengthening the entire community and advancing the mission of each participating organisation. The Foundation's research particularly considers administrative load, the possibility of supporting the continuity of the Foundation's existing initiatives,

the ethical legitimacy of funding sources and continued collaborative opportunities with supporters.

*Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 1 to 2027 - Quarter 4  
Ongoing

*Budget:*

Funding required  
Funding sourced  
Budget Template



---

## Short-Term Action 5.2: Attaining sponsors and donors

---

Efforts to attain sponsors or donors is an ongoing effort that requires consistent input. This includes the listing of potential support, such as local businesses, industries and institutions, community foundations, and philanthropic individuals. Prioritising a screening process for any potential sponsors will be a continued practice. The Foundation invests in knowing how potential sponsorship will be of mutual benefit, such as ensuring alignment with environmental and social governance (ESG) goals, or finding specific ways of how shared values may be further propagated. Furthermore, finding innovative ways to engage in sponsor and donor networking and maintaining regular communication will build and sustain strong, long-term relationships. It is a priority for the GCF to utilise support networks as a means of advocating the significance of cultural organisations in local and international contexts.

*Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 1 to 2027 - Quarter 4  
Ongoing

*Budget:*

Funding required  
Funding raised  
Fundraising  
Budget Template  
Sponsorship

---

## Short-Term Action 5.3: Apply for funding opportunities

---

While ‘Short-Term Action 5.1: Researching Funding Opportunities’ focuses on the diversification of funding methods, this action will prioritise informed grant applications which respond to the Foundation’s needs. Understanding the most strategic grants to apply for will be based on developing ongoing projects while aiming for the continuity and evolution of past initiatives. With a continued holistic approach to the Foundation’s future, thorough consideration to conversations with the Foundation’s collaborators including volunteers and artists, participating members of the public, international partners and ultimately the GCF management will guide applications. Funding towards the conservation of The Mill, the continuity of the artistic and community engagement programme are a priority.

*Timeline:*

2024 - Quarter 1 to 2027 - Quarter 4  
Ongoing

*Budget:*

Fundraising  
Budget Template

---

## Long-Term Action 5.1: Employment of Fundraising Manager

---

This role would reduce the load on GCF management, with a staff member dedicated to fundraising being able to take on the tasks outlined in ‘Focus Area 5: Funding a future’. Budgeting, necessary reporting and documentation for auditing, management of incoming funds, donor and sponsor relations and scoping out the Foundation’s financial sustainability would be key in supporting a productive flow across all focus areas.

*Timeline:*

Role initiated prior to 2028 focusing on Long-Term actions accordingly

*Budget:*

Funding required  
Fundraising



---

## Focus Area 5: Support and Signposts

---

### *Focus Area 5: Physical and Digital Resources:*

- Venue for hosting networking sessions
- Access to international and local call platforms
- Platform to document and coordinate open calls, ongoing funds and progress and process for potential support
- Platform and printing for digital and physical sponsor pack for distribution

### *Focus Area 5: Human Resources:*

- Volunteers supporting Fundraising Manager
- Community Engagement Officer to support Fundraising Manager in identifying potential funding streams from network of supporters

### *Focus Area 5: Signposts:*

- Internal grant open call timeline adapts to needs of Foundation and project ideas generated with collaborators
- Testimonials backing The Mill as a cultural centre and supporting work done by the Foundation are applied in advocating for continued support
- Initiatives supported by sponsors and donors are targeted to be of mutual benefit
- A structured process of writing grant applications is made accessible for Foundation employees, volunteers and potential collaborators who wish to contribute

### *Focus Area 5: Monitoring and evaluation:*

- Administrative load from funding is reduced or delegated to a specialised role
- Calls for support are pitched to at least two potential industry partners annually
- At least three funded projects annually

(Section 5)

# *Future Outlook*

The Foundation's future is as colourful as the people who continue to contribute to its story. In the spirit of Gabriel Caruana, the Foundation and The Mill will continue to provide a critical space for contributing to

community development, civic action and quality cultural opportunities and experiences. By Bringing People Together, the Foundation, with The Mill as its home and the continued dedication of employees, volunteers and supporters, will continue striving to provide the most adequate conditions possible for nurturing a rich cultural scene locally and internationally.

The Gabriel Caruana Foundation's Community Engagement Strategy was informed during 'Whereabouts Are You From?'. In 2021, the project received the President's Awards for Creativity, coordinated by Arts Council Malta under the patronage of H.E. The President of Malta. Printing of the publication was supported by Aġenzija Żgħażaġh through the A4U fund. Image credits; with thanks to Elisa von Brockdorff and Trans Europe Halles.





Il-Fond tal-President  
għall-Kreattività