

## 2007-2013 Atlantic Area Programme

**Acronym:** ATBrand  
**Title:** AT.Brand  
**Project start date:** 01/01/2014  
**Project end date:** 30/06/2015  
**Project working Language:** English

### Priority

4. Promote transnational synergies in sustainable urban and regional development

### Objective

2. Make cities and regions more influential and attractive through networking

### Number of partners

Territory	Partners	Associated partners	Total
Spain	1		1
France	2	0	2
Ireland	1		1
Portugal	1		1
United Kingdom	2		2
Atlantic Area regions	7	0	7
Non Atlantic EU regions			
Non EU countries		1	1
Total	7	1	8

### Project summary

#### English brief summary

AT.Brand focuses on innovation and management in integrated city branding. Looking beyond individual city branding, it will also explore the feasibility of a long-term strategy to co-brand the Atlantic area, building on recent developments in the Nordic countries and the Baltic Sea region. It will capitalize on best practice developments in place branding as well as and learning from past initiatives. A strong partnership of core cities will develop a suite of concrete actions including: a cross-learning programme of innovative city-brand management (development of methodological guidelines, thematic workshops, partner profiles and peer-review exercises); innovative pilot actions at local level with high potential for transferability; a complementary web-based toolkit for the Atlantic brand, highlighting core brand messaging; and creating a draft roadmap for co-branding the

Atlantic area. AT.Brand will reinforce and complement local and regional strategies while showcasing the effectiveness of developing a coherent place branding strategy across the Atlantic area.

**Project objectives.** AT.Brand focuses on innovation and management in integrated city branding, a proposal which incorporates priority 4.2 of the 4th

InterregIVB-Atlantic programme, namely: “make cities and regions more influential and attractive through networking”. Beyond the scale of individual city practice developments, it will also explore the ground for a long-term strategy to co-brand the Atlantic area, building on recent developments in the Nordic countries and the Baltic Sea region. With this perspective, three main objectives have been defined:

1. Increasing the level of innovation and effectiveness along the chain of city branding design and management in the Atlantic area:

1.2 To capitalize on the existing expertise and experience of the participating cities as well as the whole Atlantic area, and from the state of the art in place branding at EU level.

1.3 To establish a collaborative learning programme for innovative city-branding techniques and models.

1.4 To experiment new innovative solutions on the field.

2. Exploring the ground for a long-term strategy for co-branding the Atlantic area.

2.1 Detailed scoping and promotion of the common values of the European Atlantic façade as relevant element for local and regional branding strategies.

2.2 Orientations for a potential roadmap for co-branding in the Atlantic area.

3 Achieving the appropriation and the sustainability of the project’s findings and outputs.

3.1 Wide dissemination within the whole Atlantic area.

3.2 Setting mechanisms to guarantee availability and long-term relevance of the project’s findings and outputs.

**Partnership.** AT.Brand sits on a strong partnership of 6 cities from the 5 countries covered by the Atlantic programme, a geographical balance reinforced by the participation of the Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities, which will guarantee the relevance of the project for the whole cooperation area. While the partnership

brings diversity in terms of city size and global competitive profile, the partner cities all play a significant role in their respective regional (or national) context.

City Council of Dublin (lead partner). Dublin is the capital of Ireland and the most populous city in the state (with a regional population of 1,275,000 and a city administration population of 527,612) and the national economic driver, accounting approximately 38% of the national economy. It also acts as a European and international gateway for the many multinational firms that have established their headquarters in the city in sectors such as technology, business and financial services and life sciences. The city is also famous for its music, literature and pubs. It is one of the 4 international

cities designated as UNESCO city of literature. Among the partnership, Dublin displays an advanced branding management system, with an established stakeholder platform and a high interest in digital and interactive solutions for communication, but also for measuring and evaluating branding policies and initiatives.

City Council of Cardiff. Cardiff is the capital of Wales and arguably the cultural heart of the nation, being home to many national organisations. It is also the focal point in an emerging city region of close to 1.5 million people. While the city emerged as the national trading centre, it has changed dramatically over the last 20 years: the transformation of the port area, the creation of the Millennium stadium and the Millennium Centre have all helped challenge outdated perceptions and to draw new interest and visitors. The City Council of Cardiff is currently undertaking a redefinition of its branding policy along with an advisory group, with a clear perspective of the necessary improvements regarding the previous strategy, in particular regarding citizen and stakeholder engagement.

Liverpool Vision. Liverpool is nowadays one of the UK's leading business destinations, as the result of an ambitious and far-reaching regeneration programme, where £4 billion has been committed to physical regeneration, which reach a new step in 2012, with the issue of the Strategic Investment Framework (SIF). The emblematical regeneration of Liverpool's Waterfront will continue (as one of the six major transformational projects), building on the transformation that started with the creation of ACC Liverpool. With the "It's Liverpool" brand, Liverpool Vision, the city economic development agency, develops the strategic base for all organisations in the city that are promoting Liverpool, acting as the catalyst for a new, unified marketing and communications approach. Marketing Liverpool was established in 2013 within Liverpool Vision to take on this challenge.

La Rochelle Urban Community. Located between Nantes and Bordeaux, on the French Atlantic coast, La Rochelle agglomeration unites 18 towns to form a community of 146,000 citizens. By 2014, La Rochelle Urban Community will encompass a further 10 towns. La Rochelle's economy is based upon three key areas: industries of excellence (marine, food-processing industries, renewable energies and eco-construction, transmedia and ICT), supported by higher education and research centres and its cutting edge port infrastructure. La Rochelle hosts major events linked to the audiovisual industry and is also home to many important sporting events. The urban agglomeration joins the AT.Brand partnership with the ambition to define an action plan on city branding and marketing from a wide-scope Atlantic perspective.

Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities. The Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities (CAAC), formed in 2000, currently represents more than 100 local entities and 7 million inhabitants of the European Atlantic seaboard. This structure of coordination and representation works with different institutions, to promote the role of cities in

Europe and to highlight the specificity of the Atlantic Arc. CAAC intends to become the urban forum of reference for the Atlantic. Member cities are Cherbourg,

Caen, Lorient, Rennes, Nantes Métropole, AIRE 198 (La Rochelle, Niort, Poitiers, Angoulême), Saint-Nazaire Agglomeration, Brest Métropole Océane, CUB

Bordeaux and Port Nantes –Saint Nazaire, Cork, A Coruña, Santiago de Compostela, Gijon, Avilés, Santander, San Sebastian, Sevilla, Las Palmas, Lisboa and

Faro.

Fomento San Sebastian. San Sebastian is one of the three capital cities of the Basque Country, in the North of Spain, at 20 km from the French border. It is a city of 183,000 inhabitants, where commerce and tourism are the most important economic activities, supported by a first-class international cultural agenda – the city will be European Capital of Culture in 2016 – it also has a world-famous gastronomic scene. An aspiration of the Basque city is to be recognized as a “city of talent”, placing creativity and innovation at the centre of a smart specialization strategy. Fomento San Sebastian, the local development agency, promotes networking between all the agents of the knowledge and innovation ecosystem. In addition to this strategy, San Sebastian has an extensive background in destination branding.

City Council of Faro. Faro is the capital of the Algarve region, one of the most popular tourist destinations in the Atlantic coast. With a resident population of

64.560 inhabitants, the city is actually serving a hinterland of almost half a million inhabitants. Faro is currently defining its new strategic development plan around the concept of “Sea Cluster”, along with tourism and developments on smart city as main anchors. In this context, the city has made the decision to move forward systematically in the field of integrated city-branding, from a stronger Atlantic perspective.

**Actions and results.** Apart from the activities related to the coordination and management, the project will develop four main groups of activities in line with its objectives:

☐☐ Cross-learning Itinerary on Innovative City-Brand Management in the Atlantic Area (months 1 to 15):

☐☐ Elaboration of partner profiles regarding their brand policy (months 1 to 4). And peer-review exercise to be compiled in a specific report.

☐☐ Thematic workshops (months 5 to 14), open to any other interested city or party, covering the main issues of integrated city-brand management: training materials, along with reporting notes, will be the main outputs.

☐☐ Comprehensive methodology for Innovative City-Brand Management (months 1 to 15): based on the analysis and adaptation of the „state of the art“ at EU level, discussed in the thematic workshops and enriched by the conclusions of the pilot actions.

☐☐ Innovative pilot actions at local level with high potential for transferability (months 1 to 15). Each partner city will propose a pilot action, which will be discussed with the rest of the partners and examined through criteria such as the degree of innovation and the potential for transferability. For instance, initiatives in fields like: collective place-making techniques and participatory approach in building new narratives; innovative visual communication of cities and places; new local partnerships in city branding; digital-based communication initiatives; or tools for monitoring and evaluation. The outcomes of the pilot actions will be analysed so as to produce a landmark report aiming at transferability. This will also feed into the methodology model.

☐☐ Complementary toolkit for the Atlantic Brand (months 4 to 17).

☒☒ Design of a web-based toolkit for the Atlantic brand (months 4 to 15), a set of elements for visual and narrative communication at the disposal of placebranding practitioners in the area. The contents will result from a participatory research process.

☒☒ Roadmap for joint branding and promotion initiatives in the Atlantic area (months 10 to 18), to be drafted with consensus among project partners in consultation with other bodies and forums operating at the Atlantic scale.

☒☒ Communication and dissemination (months 1 to 17). Design and delivering of a focused communication strategy, involving all partners and in particular the CAAC and clearly segmented, for the dissemination of project outputs to the whole Atlantic area. Additionally, the project will take great care to guarantee the sustainability of these outputs beyond the project timeframe.

### **Main guidelines of the communication plan**

The communication plan will rely on initiatives at partner level (in their local, regional and national contexts) and at the Atlantic area level. The strategy and activities will be described in detail in the second part of the application. However, the following guidelines are recommended: a communication officer for the project will be appointed within the partner organization in charge of the WP Communication and dissemination, presumably the CAAC; all partners may participate by invitation as guest speakers on behalf of the AT.Brand partnership; review of the implementation of the Communication Plan at mid-term; delivery of a project website and blog which will be continuously updated, publication of the main project outputs, use of the blog for interactive discussions; logo and visual identity for the project which will align with the InterregIVB-Atlantic visual identity; use of social networks to engage with the community of practitioners

(Linkedin) and the general public (Facebook or others); press releases in each partner's city, region and/or country and in international specialized publications or website; presentation of intermediary and final outputs in relevant European and international forums; production of communication materials, mainly digital project newsletters and booklets.