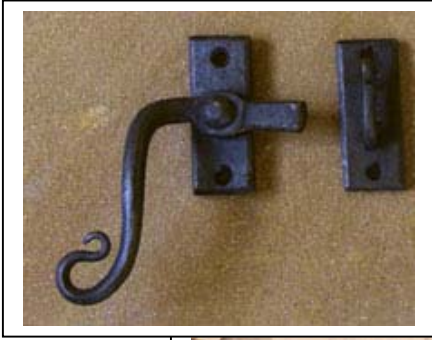


Project Information Sheet
Conference project brief number(PBN): 30



Sighisoara Information Centre

Sensitive commercial development, cultural preservation and communication

Description:	Information Centre, (incorporating Museum / Café) Local product development
Beneficiaries:	Inhabitants of Sighisoara and regional villages
Project Implementation:	Fodor & Franz GmbH, Sighisoara.com
Co-implementer:	local NGOs and S.r.l.s, interconnected projects such as PBN 22, 24, 25, 26, 32
Timespan:	Immediate 1 year
Estimated Cost:	246,000 Euros
Partners:	Local council, village inhabitants and producers, Tourist enterprises
Origin:	This project originated through the tourist needs of Sighisoara and the needs of farmers and micro-producers to find an efficient and profitable route to a wider market.

1. Title of the Project

Sighisoara Information centre and local produce development, marketing and sales.

2. Location of the Project and Area of Coverage

Sighisoara and the South-central part of Transylvania, Romania. In a naturally coherent area, with a network of interlaced narrow valleys. It is a dense cultural landscape with a large number of small Saxon villages in which the World Heritage sites of Sighisoara and of the Saxon Villages with Fortified Churches lie.

2. Justification

Much of the region's recent commercial development has orientated towards facility and volume, rather than authentic quality. This can be seen in anything from hotel renovation, food production to goods manufacture. As travelers (domestic and international) visit Sighisoara and its environs in greater numbers, demand will increase for traditional authentic products and elements of regional culture. The simplest and most efficient method of satisfying this demand – **while passing the benefits onto the region's producers** – can be met through an **Information Centre** (combining a restaurant, a museum, a shop, marketing and website administration office in the same building). Through sales and standard-setting of organically-produced agricultural products such as honey, fruit and fruit juices, wine and dairy products as well as a plethora of handicrafts and materials this could become a powerful engine in the sustainable development of the region, while safeguarding traditions, skills, habitats, monuments and culture for future generations.

What is missing is a route to a wide an affluent market for much of the region's quality produce. What is needed is a sales and marketing method that allows promotional and sales costs to be allocated across a broad enough product line, while maintaining and enriching a network of micro-producers. For this reason it is proposed that a marketing sales company – focused on only the best quality local products – be developed to allow for the purchase and selling of agricultural produce, and handicrafts rather than just production as is presently the case.

The company will select products, establish non-exclusive contracts for representation, promote sales at markets and outlets locally, internationally and virtually, and make all shipping and payment arrangements, as well as selling direct from the Information Centre outlet and market stall to inhabitants and visitors to the region. This would free any one individual producer, often a small enterprise or even a single individual, from having to focus on the marketing and sales of regional produce. This project is similar to PBN 22 with the main difference being that of scope and geography.

This project is about realising the full potential of:

- An historic property in central Sighisoara
- The surrounding historic and pristine beautiful environment
- An operating popular website, Sighisoara.com
- Existing traditional, high quality arts and crafts
- Local licensed and branded ecological agricultural produce
- A network of micro-producers
- A skilled, talented and highly educated local population



There are many examples of products that could be immediately marketed in this manner ranging from organic honey, organic apple and grape juice, dried fruits, traditional forged metal locks, carpets, handbags, tiles and bricks.

NGOs such as Avalon Foundation, PNR and MET would oversee the training and certification of local producers and ensure that the system benefited them for the long-term by reviewing contract terms and conditions of production and supply.

3. Objectives of the Project

a. Long-term objective

- Sustainable development through the appropriate use of heritage – cultural and natural – of Sighisoara and the region and the effective operation of programmes and projects and of private ventures in the region.
- Existing micro-producers and artisans to maintain economic autonomy while raising their standards and profitability. To safeguard and sustain the economic and social fabric of Sighisoara and the villages through bringing their assets to a wider market.

b. Immediate objectives

The priority objectives of this project will be:

- to set organic standards which producers are contracted to (and assisted in establishing) maintain in return for higher prices – to sustain these producers by bringing their products to a wider market
- to start a permanent organic produce stall at the market in Sighisoara to raise awareness among local sellers and producers that higher prices can be charged for higher (organic) standards of production and for this to mirrored on the world wide web (in terms of reach the largest market place)
- to establish a brand encompassing organic and traditional produce from the region and grow a network of independent producers and assist the creation of trademarks for participating producers.
- Promote high level tourism in Sighisoara and the region through an information service for tourists (hotels, restaurants, guides, cultural events, transport, products etc)
- Establish an Internet shop, Reservation and managing system for hotels and guesthouses to restore an historic house in Sighisoara to function as a museum, office and restaurant.



4. Activities of the Project

- **Information centre in Sighisoara: Internet-portal** - in 3 languages (Romanian, English, German) for Sighisoara. To include a Reservation and managing system for hotels and guesthouses; internet shop for products maps, books and promotional material about Sighisoara, including a catalogue of firms in Sighisoara, Cultural events etc. Outdoor webcam: Webcam for transmitting live pictures of Sighisoara skyline. Meteorostation for collecting meteo data and publish it on sighisoara.com. rain/snow fall / humidity / temperature / wind direction.
- **Information centre in Sighisoara: museum, information and restaurant** - will exhibition historical and cultural aspects of the region, will promote suppliers of quality products (ranging

from forged metal, to traditional building materials, architects firms to agricultural produce) and will serve freshly prepared “best of the region” dishes using local produce to high standard.

- **Brand design and imagery:** by running a competition to a set brief to universities and marketing agencies in Romania.
- **Project manager hired** - for brand development, management of the information centre and relationship building with micro-producers for two years
- **Permanent stall:** established in Sighisoara market in addition to the shop outlet in the centre.
- **Product distribution:** Maintain a distributor and distribution vehicle
- **Training and certification:** run a programme of certification (organic or other) and training for potential contracted producers and/or training in business administration (to become a micro-enterprise or other suitable)

5. Inputs

a. Human

- 1 brand development manager
- Local producers
- MET and/or PNR and/or Avalon programme of training and support

b. Material

- Financial
- Local producers and products
- An historic building in Sighisoara

6. Requirements from outside the project

- Finance
- Existing producers such as organic apple juice and organic sales network from Pro MET Srl and other existing micro-producers.

7. Calendar of Activities and budget

