

The Dilemma of Derelict Spaces:

Capacity Development for Heritage Revitalization NGOs in Romania

WPI Research Team:

Eli Budde, Albert Lewis, Paige Scully, Nathan Willemsen, Anna Wix



Collaborator:
Make Better

Advisors:
Lorraine Higgins
and Yury Bosin



WPI



Romania has a variety of built heritage



Saxon Fortified Churches

Dacian Fortresses



Of the 6,800 buildings considered
cultural heritage in Romania,

60%

are in bad condition



Heritage NGOs (H-NGO) revive abandoned built heritage



Bánffy Castle in Bontida, Romania

Heritage revitalization commonly involves the following components

**Assess
Heritage
Asset**

**Create
Fundraising
Plan**

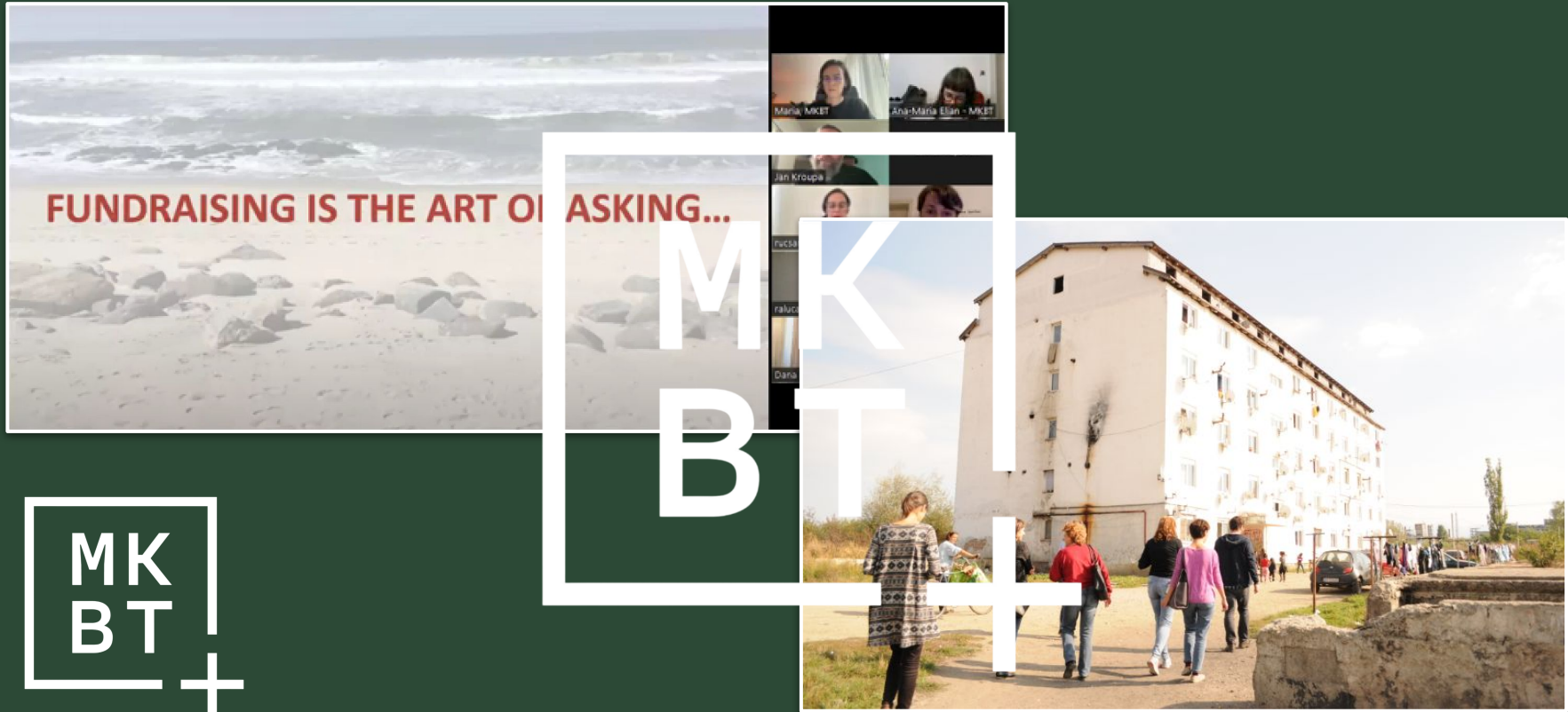
**Renovate
Space**

**Set
Revitalization
Vision**

**Prepare
Site for
Renovation**

**Maintain
Site**

Make Better (MKBT) is an NGO & Consulting Firm that Supports H-NGOs





Goal:

Develop insights as to how MKBT might enhance their existing H-NGO support programs

Objectives

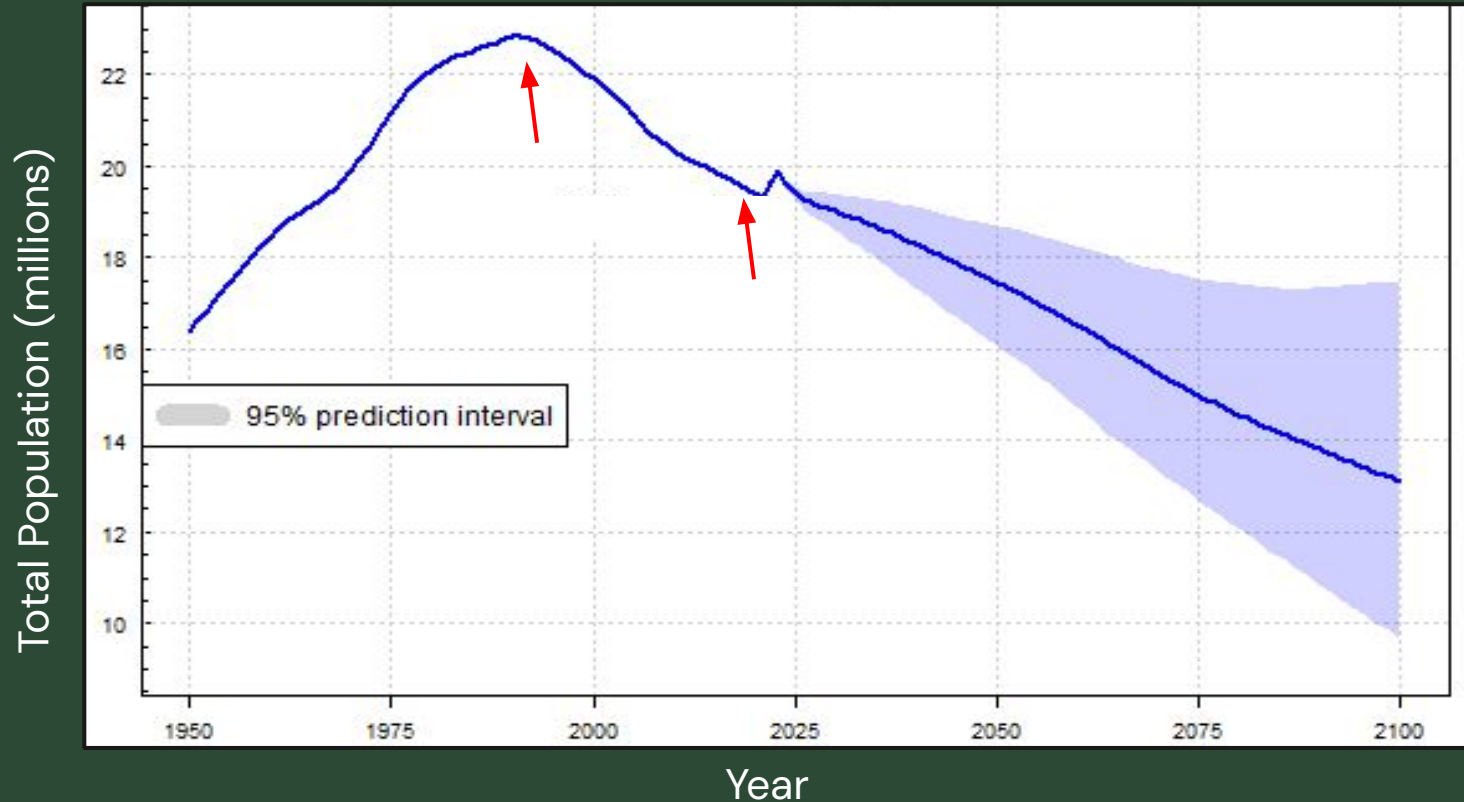
Identify
CHALLENGES
that H-NGOs in
Romania face

Find
SUPPORT
programs that US
organizations use
to assist H-NGOs

Why are there derelict spaces in Romania?



Romania has seen significant population decline since the 1990's



Privatization of assets increased abandonment



1947-1989



1991-2024

Why revitalize abandoned sites?



There are consequences to leaving a space derelict



Structural Damage

Physical Danger

Lost Economic Opportunity

Loss of Culture

Revitalization can have positive impacts

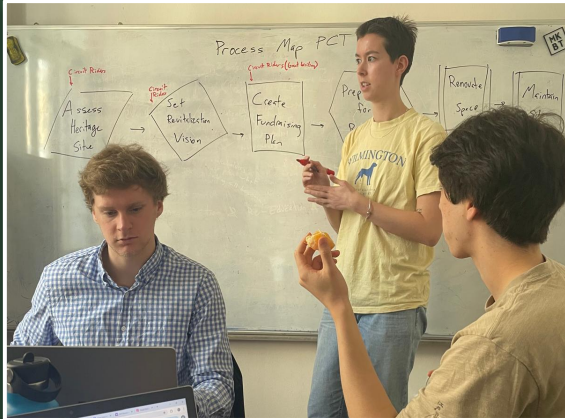


Blacksmith Workshop & Art Exhibit in Şona

Methods



Objective 1: Identifying Challenges



**Reviewed previous
MKBT interview
with an H-NGO**

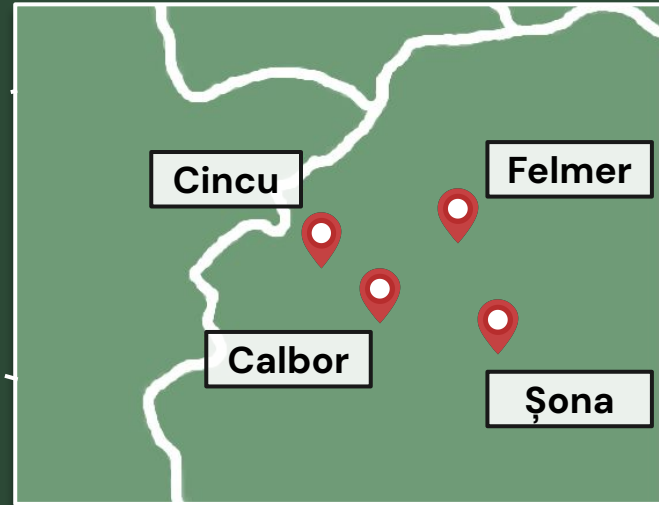
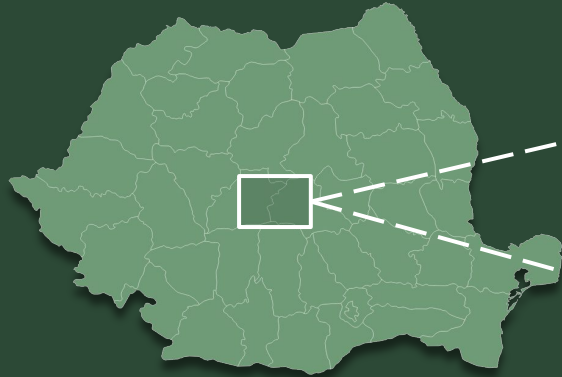


**Interviewed 10
additional H-NGOs
in Romania**



**Coded interviews
for most common
challenges**

Romanian H-NGOs



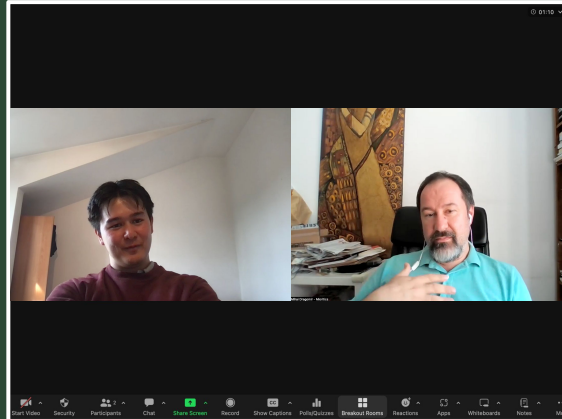
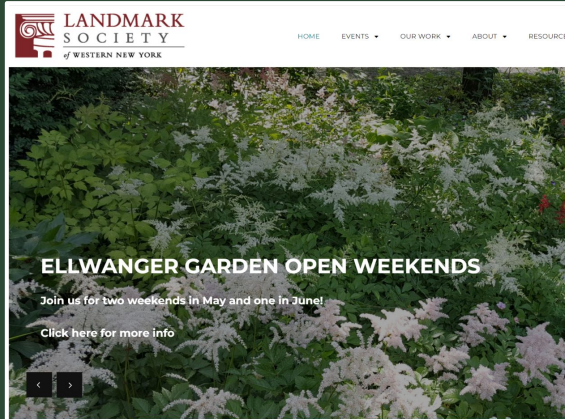
6 Online Interviews:

- Transylvania Trust
- Euroland Banat
- Asociația Romano-Canadiana Sf. Anton
- Asociația Mioritics
- CasApold
- Asociația Zestrea Bisoceană

4 In Person Interviews:

- Asociația Renascendis
- Făgăraș Research Institute
- Şona Noastră
- Kraft Made

Objective 2: Finding US Support Programs



**Conducted
Desktop
Research**

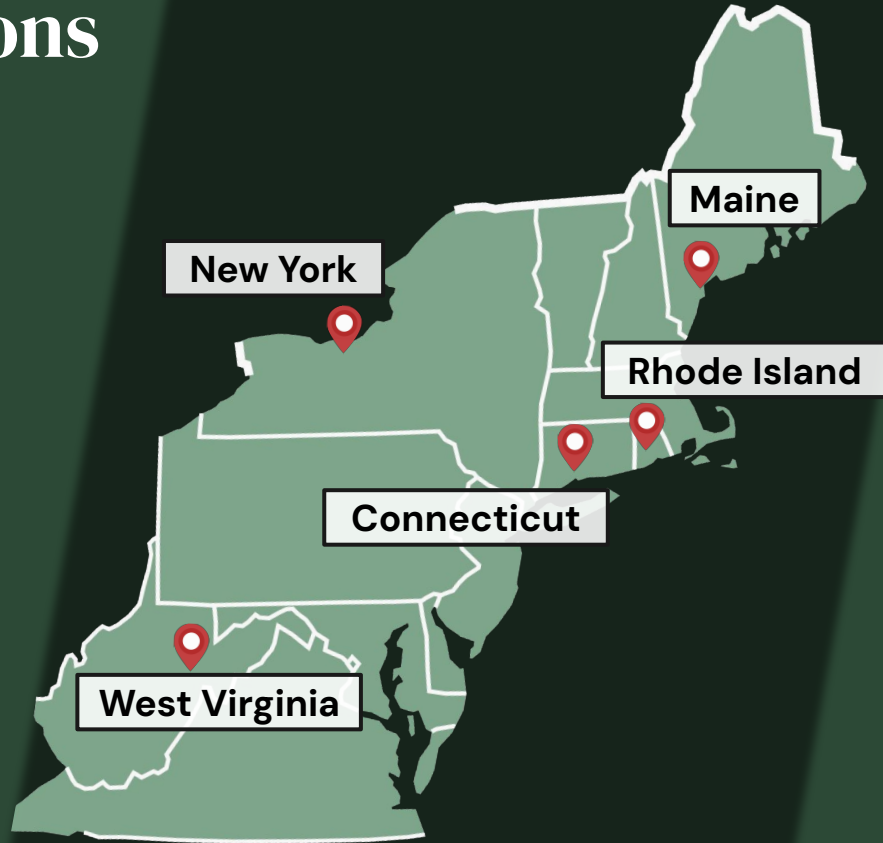
**Interviewed 5 US
support
organizations**

**Coded interviews
for types of
support provided**

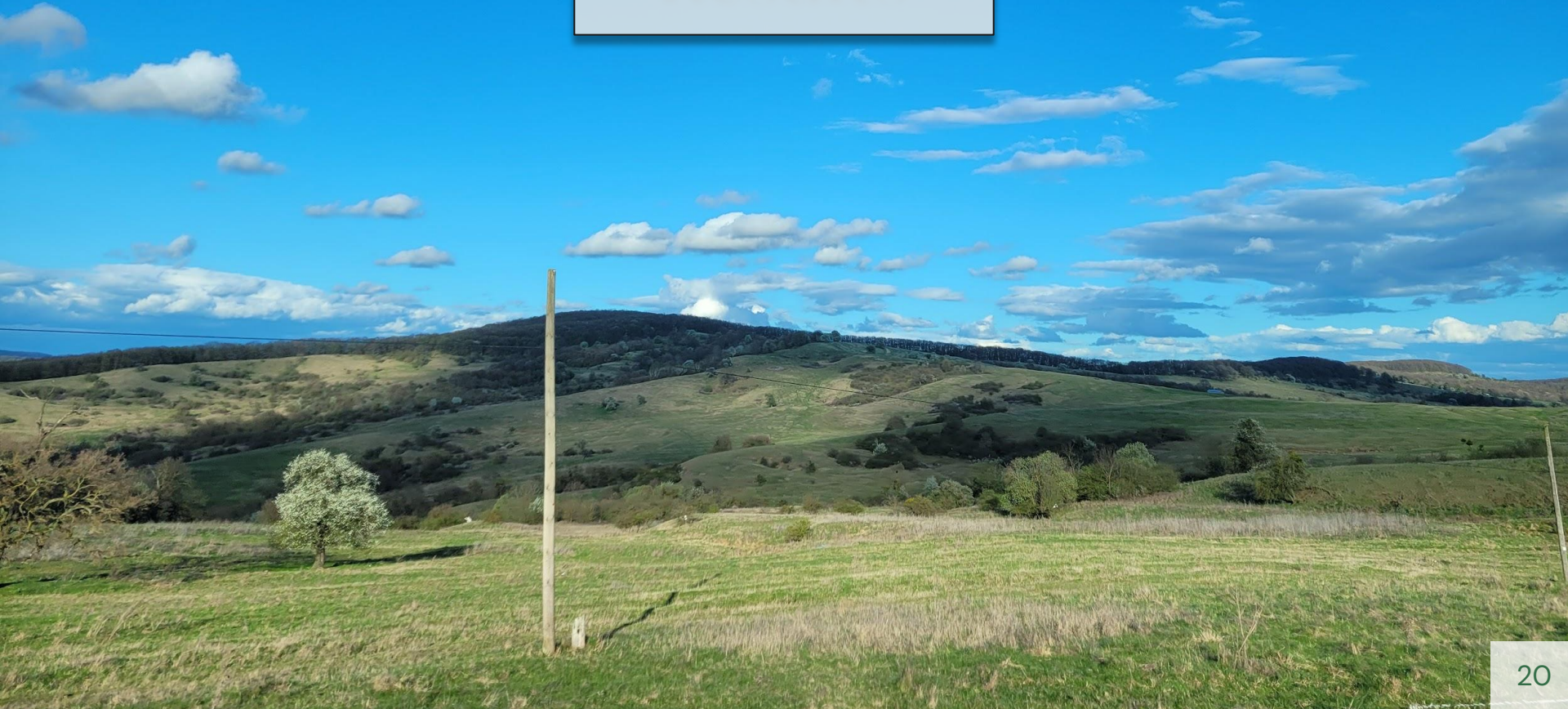
US Support Organizations

5 Online Interviews

- Landmark Society of Western **New York**
- Preservation Alliance of **West Virginia**
- Preservation **Connecticut**
- **Maine** Preservation
- Preserve **Rhode Island**



Results



Objective 1: Identify challenges that H-NGOs in Romania face



Funding Challenges

School in Calbor

**“Almost no nonprofit
business model... will
give you the possibility
to maintain the space
without headaches.”**

– Ștefan Cibian

Governmental/Legal Challenges

Pittner School, Reșița



Community Challenges

"Șona Noastră" Village Association Visit

“Unfortunately, in our country, people don't put [value] on culture”



–Diana Iabrașu
Șona Noastră



On-site Challenges

Fortified Church, Felmer



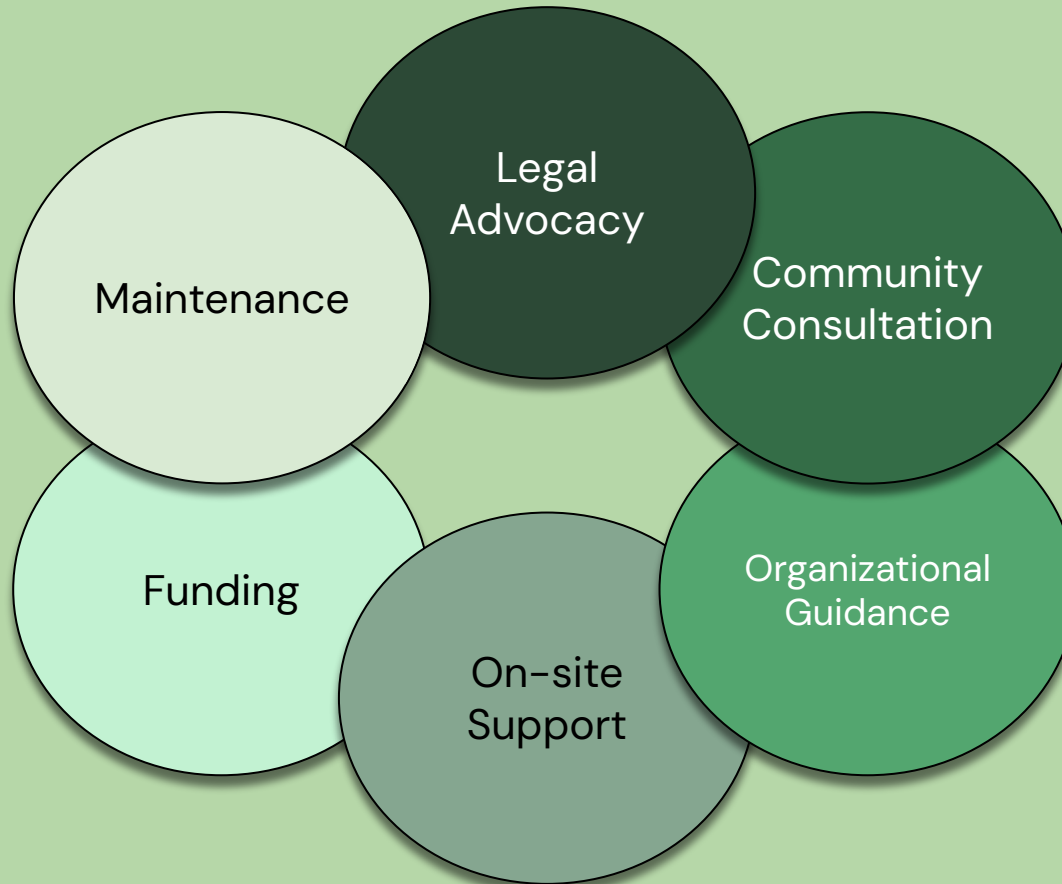
Organizational Challenges

"The absence of a full-time person employed in the project prevents the organization/project from growing"



– Aura Cășaru
Asociația Zestrea Bisoceană

Objective 2: Find Support programs from US organizations



Legal Advocacy



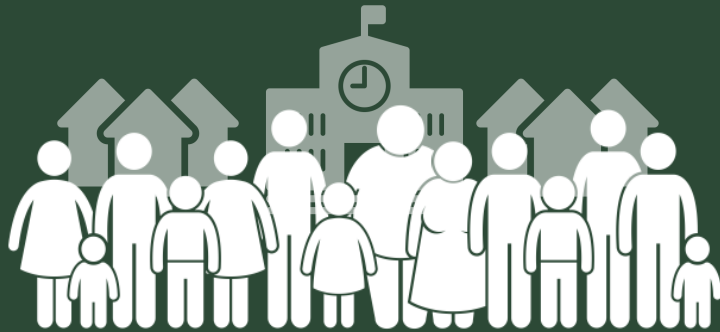
Advocate for policies



Stalling demolition legislation

Community Consultation

Community Engagement



Help organizations **connect** with community

Stakeholder Assessment



Who does the revitalization impact and **how?**

Jane's Walk

Maine Preservation



Organizational Guidance

Know-How Resources (Toolkit)



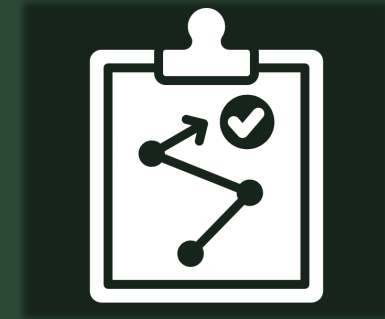
Providing online **resources** to help organizations

Technical Expertise



Providing **specialized** knowledge or expert advice

Strategic Planning



Articulate the **direction** for their mission

Know-How Resources (Toolkit)

Preserve Rhode Island



Support PRI Today!

E-News Sign-up

The Statewide Advocate for Rhode Island's Historic Places

HOME

WHAT WE DO

LIPPITT HOUSE MUSEUM

SUPPORT US

CALENDAR

WHO WE ARE

RESOURCES

NEWS



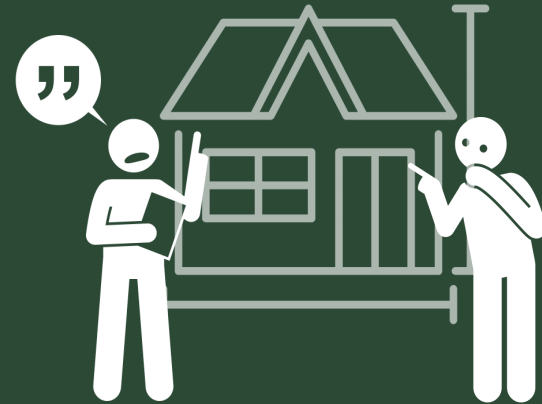
On-site Support

Crafts Workshops



Restoration skill
instruction events

Architectural Assessment Expertise



Provide assistance in
assessing properties

Cemetery Preservation Workshops

Preservation Alliance of West Virginia



WEST VIRGINIA

Cemetery Documentation & Preservation Workshop Series

September 8-9, 2023
Bramwell, WV

October 6-7, 2023
Huntington, WV

September 23, 2023
Hinton, WV

October 14, 2023
Fairmont, WV

 Preservation Alliance of West Virginia

 AmeriCorps

 WEST VIRGINIA HUMANITIES COUNCIL



Funding Assistance

Grant Making Programs

Offering funds to organizations



Tax Credit Assistance

Applying for the proper tax credits



Grant Application Support

Third party grants



Revenue Generating Models

Sustainable plan for organization



Circuit Riders

*Preservation
Connecticut*

Talking About Preservation: Meet the Circuit Riders- and new staff!

by Preservation CT | Jan 18, 2022 | Education, Event



**Talking About Preservation:
Meet the Circuit Riders- and new staff!**

Wednesday, January 26th at noon

A continuation of Preservation Connecticut's weekly
noontime chats

Maintenance

Easements



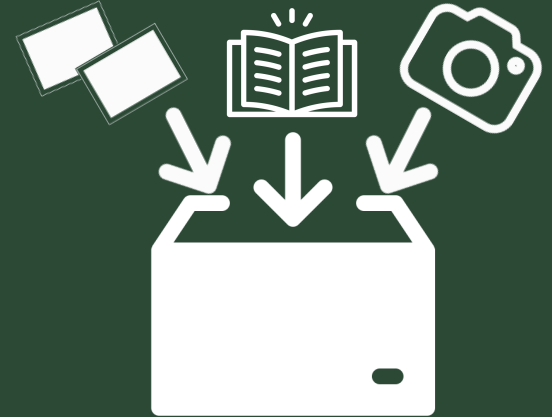
Perpetual **contracts**
that protect properties

Purchase Buildings



Own a site to
maintain it

Archive Assets



Documentation
of local site

Five to Revive

Landmark Society of Western New York



Recommendations



Applicable US Support Programs

H-NGO Challenge

Lack of Civic Engagement

Lack of Expertise

Various Challenges

Possible Solution

Community Walk

Toolkit

Circuit Riders

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape under a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The sun is high in the sky, creating a lens flare. In the foreground, there is a dirt road curving to the left, a small white car parked on the side, and a large, two-story brick building with a red roof. The background shows rolling green hills and a few more buildings. A large, semi-transparent white rectangular box is centered over the image, containing the text "Thank you!" in a green, serif font.

Thank you!

Picture References

- Slide 1: Lars. (n.d.). Rumänien, moldawien und der pseudostaat transnistrien | reiseblog von lars. Retrieved February 25, 2024, from <https://www.larsreisen.de/2016/09/22/rumaenien-moldawien-und-der-pseudostaat-transnistrien/>
- Slide 2: Vaida, A. L. (2019). English: Sarmizegetusa Regia - panorama that captures from the height the settlements and sanctuaries, to the South, Hunedoara county Română: Sarmizegetusa Regia - panoramă care surprinde de la înălțime așezămintele și sanctuarele, cu vedere spre Sud, județul Hunedoara. Own work. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sarmizegetusa_Regia_-_panoram%C4%83_general%C4%83_spre_S.jpg
- Schemmel, O. (1994). Deutsch: Die Kirchenburg in Birtihalm (Biertan) ist die großartigste Kirchenburg Siebenbürgens. Sie wurde im 16. Jh. erbaut, und ist mit dreifacher Ringmauer umgeben. Von 1572 bis 1867 war sie Residenz des evangelischen Bischofs der Siebenbürger Sachsen. Self-photographed. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kirchenburg_Birth%C3%A4lm.jpg
- Slide 3: Bucharest's run-down buildings: The silent testimony of decades of neglect – The Bite. (n.d.). Retrieved February 25, 2024, from <https://thebite.aisb.ro/bucharests-run-down-buildings-the-silent-testimony-of-decades-of-neglect/>
- Slide 4: Bartalis, Z. (2008). [Photo]. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/zoltan/4951655714/>
- The restoration of Bánffy Castle, Bontida – Transylvania Trust. (n.d.). Retrieved April 24, 2024, from <https://www.transylvaniatrust.ro/en/program/the-restoration-of-banffy-castle-bontida/>
- Slide 6: Portofoliu | MKBT. (n.d.). Retrieved April 24, 2024, from <https://mkbt.ro/portofolio-2-cols/>
- MKBT Make Better. (2023, November 15). Strategii de fundraising în revitalizarea de patrimoniu, cu Jan Kroupa. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tox-TMEtT2s>
- Slide 10: World Population Prospects - Population Division - United Nations. (2022). <https://population.un.org/wpp/Graphs/DemographicProfiles/Line/642>
- Slide 11: Westervelt, E. (2009, November 12). Corruption mars Romania's post-communist progress. NPR. <https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=120290631>
- <https://grindei.ro/assets/galleries/decembrie-89/67.jpg>
- Slide 18: Landmark Society of Western New York. (n.d.). Retrieved April 1, 2024, from <https://landmarksociety.org/>
- Slide 22: Home | Institutul de cercetare Făgăraș. (2020, February 23). <https://icf-fri.org/>
- Slide 23: Euroland Banat (2024). Restoration and revitalization of cultural heritage exhibition and event center Pittner School, Reschitza City. pdf.
- Slide 24: Șona noastră (n.d.). Retrieved April 24, 2024 from <https://www.facebook.com/sonanoastra/>
- Slide 25: Asociația Rencendis – Patrimoniul cultural văzut altfel. (n.d.). Retrieved April 24, 2024, from <https://rencendis.org/>
- Slide 26: Zestrea Bisoceană. (n.d.). Retrieved April 24, 2024 from https://www.facebook.com/AsociatiaZestreaBisoceana/?locale=ro_RO

Picture References Cont.

Slide 28: Noun project: Free icons & stock photos for everything. (n.d.). Retrieved April 24, 2024, from <https://thenounproject.com/>

Slide 29: Noun project: Free icons & stock photos for everything. (n.d.). Retrieved April 24, 2024, from <https://thenounproject.com/>

Slide 30: Jane's Walk – Jane's Walk is a festival of free, community-led walking conversations. (n. d.). Jane's Walk. Retrieved April 23, 2024 from <https://janeswalk.org/>

Jane's walk me. (n.d.). Maine Preservation. Retrieved April 24, 2024, from <https://www.maine Preservation.org/janes-walk-me>

Slide 31: Noun project: Free icons & stock photos for everything. (n.d.). Retrieved April 24, 2024, from <https://thenounproject.com/>

Slide 32: Preserve Rhode Island (n.d.). Statewide advocate for historic places. Preserveri. Retrieved April 1, 2024, from <https://www.preserveri.org>

Slide 33: Noun project: Free icons & stock photos for everything. (n.d.). Retrieved April 24, 2024, from <https://thenounproject.com/>

Slide 34: Instagram. (n.d.). Retrieved April 24, 2024, from https://www.instagram.com/preservation_wv/

Slide 35: Noun project: Free icons & stock photos for everything. (n.d.). Retrieved April 24, 2024, from <https://thenounproject.com/>

Slide 36: Home page. (n.d.). Preservation Connecticut. Retrieved April 24, 2024, from <https://preservationct.org/>

Slide 37: Noun project: Free icons & stock photos for everything. (n.d.). Retrieved April 24, 2024, from <https://thenounproject.com/>

Slide 38: Landmark Society of Western New York. (n.d.). Retrieved April 1, 2024, from <https://landmarksociety.org/>