press release

embargoed until 12:00 pm on 22 September

22 september 2026 – La Chaux-de-Fonds

Step into Capital time

On 31 December 2026, La Chaux-de-Fonds will become the first Swiss Capital of culture. More than 300 events – including 118 new creations – will be held throughout the year, taking place in more than 70 of the city's iconic venues as well as in more unexpected, even unusual spaces. A rich and diverse programme, co-created with more than a hundred partners.

12 months, 12 themes and 12 highlights will generate hundreds of opportunities to discover the city from a different perspective, from heritage and new creations to popular culture and contemporary visions. Shows, concerts, exhibitions, installations, performances and screenings: In 2027, the watchmaking metropolis will become a hub of perpetual creativity. Shaped by its history, its urban planning, its artists, its institutions and, above all, its inhabitants.

A hub for new creations

At the press conference, lcdf27 unveiled the first part of its programme, giving a voice to artists whose projects reflect what it aims to develop throughout the year.

Directors Juliette Vernerey, Thom Luz and Floriane Facchini, choreographer Boris Charmatz, multidisciplinary collective LA CRUSH, musician Hania Rani, mezzo-soprano Marina Viotti, visual artist Claudia Comte, photographer Christian Lutz and filmmaker André Kuenzy, accompanied by the Les Perce-Neige Foundation, spoke about their creative projects for this Capital year.

The Musée des Beaux-Arts (MBA) and the Musée International de l'Horlogerie (International Watchmaking Museum - MIH) also revealed the unprecedented nature of the two exhibitions they are preparing for 2027. For the first time, they will offer visitors the chance to discover the entire MBA collection, as well as the collection of the Maurice and Édouard Sandoz Foundation.

Producers Gilles Valet and Loris Vettese announced the launch in La Chaux-de-Fonds of a new festival of contemporary music, ULTRA FROID, MEGA LOIN, while the Paléo Festival's director, Daniel Rossellat, announced its collaboration with lcdf27 on a choreographic and musical project that will take over the tarmac at Les Éplatures Airport on Saturday 26 June 2027. RTS Espace 2 also confirmed that the next Schubertiade – featuring around a hundred classical concerts – will take place in La Chaux-de-Fonds.

Finally, Giona A. Nazzaro, Artistic Director of the Locarno Film Festival, spoke about setting up a *Piccola Piazza Grande* in the market square to bring the celebrations for the 80th anniversary of Switzerland's unmissable international film festival to the Neuchâtel mountains.

You are the Capital!

A spotlight on the local and regional scene, and cultural dialogue on a national scale. A third, equally important pillar is added to these two foundations of the Swiss Capital of culture: cultural participation.

This is why lcdf27 is inviting local residents to come together at the *Anciens abattoirs* from 5:30 pm on 22 September to explore the various opportunities to get involved in this first Swiss Capital of culture. By becoming a member of the audience, naturally, by joining the team of volunteers, but also by making your living room available to host a creative project, or even by stepping right through the looking glass. Indeed, some of the creative projects developed for lcdf27 will only be possible with the help of volunteers. Around ten of these participatory projects will be presented at stands hosted by the artists behind them and the teams supporting them.

Whether you love dancing, singing, making things with your hands, cooking or being filmed, there's bound to be a project here for you.

Reception and Ticket Office

From Wednesday 23 September, the lcdf27 reception and ticket office will be open to the public on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 1:30 pm to 5:30 pm, on the ground floor at 121 Rue du Commerce, at the *Anciens abattoirs*. In addition, several partner outlets will be selling tickets in Neuchâtel and La Chaux-de-Fonds from December onwards.

On 31 December, a visitor hub, also located in the heart of the *Anciens abattoirs*, will open its doors for the whole of 2027. A new social space, welcoming everyone from Wednesday to Sunday and on event evenings. The hub will house the Ticket Office, Shop and Café, offering light and original refreshments.

An average ticket price of CHF 20 will provide access to as many events as possible, with numerous additional benefits and discounts. In addition, a number of major projects will be free of charge.

Rounding out this range of offers, the Carte Capitale, issued in the holder's name and valid throughout 2027, can be used to purchase half-price tickets at the lcdf27 box office (excluding associated festivals) and obtain reduced rates at numerous partner organisations.

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