

Dr. Adam Hajduga

Vice-president European Route of Industrial Heritage (ERIH)



Adam Hajduga is a sociologist and recognised specialist in industrial cultural heritage, holding a doctorate in social sciences from the University of Silesia in Katowice. He has, for three consecutive terms, served as Vice-President of the European Route of Industrial Heritage (ERIH), one of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. He is the co-founder and long-standing coordinator of the Industrial Monuments Route of the Silesian Voivodeship and of INDUSTRIADA, the principal industrial heritage festival in Central and Eastern Europe.

He played a formative role in establishing the Museum of Metallurgy in Chorzów (2020), where the permanent exhibition “Kingdom of Iron” received a prestigious distinction in the 2021 “Sybilla” Museum Event of the Year Competition, recognising it as one of the three finest new permanent exhibitions created in Poland that year.

In January 2025, he assumed the position of Director of the cultural institution Szyb Staszic in Tarnowskie Góry, responsible for the Staszic Water Station, a key attribute of the UNESCO World Heritage Site *Lead, Silver and Zinc Mines and Underground Water Management System in Tarnowskie Góry*. From mid-2026 onwards, the institution will also oversee the Industrial Monuments Route.

He has acted as an external consultant and expert in numerous international projects dedicated to heritage-based tourism development and has served as a Jury Member in the architectural competition for the revitalisation of the “Pokój” steelworks blast furnace, scheduled to open to the public in 2027.

He has lectured at universities in Poland and abroad, spoken at numerous international conferences, and authored peer-reviewed publications on sociology and industrial heritage management. His work remains deeply rooted in the history and identity of Upper Silesia, whose heritage he promotes with dedication at national and international levels.

Ana-Maria Schlupp

Executive Director of Banat
Mountains Community Foundation



Ana-Maria Schlupp has been part of the Banat Mountains Community Foundation since April 2025, where she contributes to the development of educational programmes in Reșița and across the wider Banat Mountain region. Her work focuses on creating learning experiences rooted in local identity, cultural memory, and the relationship between community and place, with particular attention to how younger generations engage with the region’s industrial and natural heritage.

With a PhD in German literature from Free University of Berlin, Ana-Maria’s academic work has explored themes of place, identity, and cultural memory—questions that continue to inform her engagement with industrial heritage and post-industrial landscapes today. Her background in literature brings a nuanced perspective to how places are narrated, remembered, and reimagined.

Her connection to the region is grounded in direct exploration and observation: she continues to discover both Reșița’s industrial fabric and the wider Banat Mountains landscape on foot and by bicycle. This close relationship with the territory informs her contribution to conversations about heritage, memory, and the role of local communities in shaping future narratives of post-industrial places.

Andreea Iager Tako

Co-founder PLAI Cultural Center



Andreea Iager Tako is passionate about discovering people, ideas, projects, and connecting them all into models that change communities by developing impactful solutions. She studied psychology and sustainable development in both urban and rural areas and worked in marketing and human resources before dedicating herself full-time to community work.

She is a co-founder of the PLAI Festival, supports PLAI productions (like JAZZx, BEGA!, and many others) for more than 20 years, co-founded AMBASADA - the first cultural social enterprise in Romania that supported the capacity building of the local doers, acting as an ecosystem builder for social impact. AMBASADA also developed an extension of creative and social businesses spaces through building.a.community as well as a prototype to inclusive and independent living space- building.a.home.

Most recently, Andreea co-founded FABER - alongside great creative entrepreneurs. During the pandemic, she also founded a social enterprise - ONE.shirt - an endeavour in slow fashion that speaks about social inclusion and draws attention to the pollution of the textile industry and clothing waste.

She has been part of the Trans Europe Halles since 2017 and has been elected to the Executive Committee Board since 2021.

Bogdan Demetrescu

Architect, Founder D PROIECT



Architect and Associate Professor at the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism within the Polytechnic University of Timișoara, where he coordinates the Restoration courses in the 5th year of study, as well as the design studios in Restoration, Regeneration, and Heritage Reconversion in years 5 and 6, with a strong focus on heritage revitalization through contemporary theoretical frameworks.

Alongside his academic work, he founded D PROIECT, a Timișoara-based practice with over 20 years of activity in heritage intervention and historic landscape projects, serving as coordinator of several projects relevant to current professional discourse (www.dproiect.ro), and has been recognized with multiple national and international awards for both his professional and academic work.

His professional activity is further enriched by involvement in numerous cultural projects over the years, which have contributed to building a balanced dialogue between practice and the academic environment.

Daniela Copaci

Executive Director, Department of
Local Development and Investment,
Reșița City Hall



Daniela Copaci is the Director of the Local Development and Investments Department within the Municipality of Reșița, where she coordinates a portfolio of more than 40 local and European projects worth €250 million, spanning urban regeneration, green innovation, sustainable tourism, as well as social housing and education.

In recent years, she has been actively involved in the revitalisation of former industrial sites and the implementation of New European Bauhaus initiatives. She is currently coordinating an ambitious project to transform a former limestone funicular into a new urban connector, bringing communities closer and reimagining the city's identity.

Daniela Copaci has proven expertise in strategic planning, territorial development, and network building, and is committed to fostering sustainable, resilient, and people-centred urban transformation.

Georgiana Mihailovici

vice president of the CR.EU
Metacluster



Georgiana Mihailovici is vice president of the CR.EU Metacluster and representative of the OpenHub Creative Cluster, specializing in community-driven innovation and cross-border collaboration in the cultural and creative industries. She has worked with partners from over 12 countries within two EuroClusters, supporting SMEs in innovation and internationalisation through cross-sectoral cooperation.

At the “Regenerating Places, Reimagining Futures” conference in Reșița, she advocates for metaclusters as governance infrastructure that moves collaboration beyond project-based partnerships, enabling continuity, investment readiness, and scalable impact in heritage-led regeneration.

Ioan Popa

Mayor of Reșița



Ioan Popa has served as Mayor of Reșița since 2016 and has been re-elected for a third consecutive term. Born on May 8, 1968, an engineer by profession, he transitioned from a successful entrepreneurial career to public administration, bringing with him a strategic vision focused on urban regeneration and sustainable development.

Before entering public life, he founded Pangram, the producer of Monte Banato pasta, a brand that established itself as a market leader in the Romanian pasta industry. In 2016 he ran for office with the PNL (National Liberal Party), with the stated objective of reversing the city's decline and applying private-sector efficiency principles to public administration.

Under his leadership, Reșița has become a case study in the absorption of European funds — over €250 million across the 2014–2020 and 2021-2027 programming periods, with 27 major investments completed by 2026, worth more than €60 million.

Flagship projects include the reintroduction of the tram system (approximately €107 million, comprising 13 new trams and 10 buses), the conversion of the historic funicular into a pedestrian and cycling corridor (€8.6 million), the redevelopment of the Bârzava riverbanks, the integral regeneration of the Govândari district (over €22 million), and a comprehensive energy retrofit programme covering all the city's schools and high schools, as well as residential apartment buildings.

His vision, "Modern Reșița", is built around a new educational ecosystem, an improved quality of life for citizens, and the adaptive reuse of the city's industrial heritage (the Minda area, the Civic Centre, Mociur, and the former UCMR site), with the aim of attracting investors and retaining young people in the city.

Ilinca Păun Constantinescu

co-founder of Ideogram Studio and
founder of the IDEILAGRAM
Association



Ilinca Păun Constantinescu is an architect, researcher, and faculty member at the "Ion Mincu" University of Architecture and Urbanism in Bucharest. She is co-founder of Ideogram Studio and founder of the IDEILAGRAM Association. A significant part of her work focuses on shrinking cities, industrial heritage, and regeneration processes through culture and participation. She is the initiator and coordinator of the Shrinking Cities project in Romania and co-founder of the Planeta Petrila initiative - one of the most relevant post-industrial regeneration efforts in Romania, bringing together local administration, civil society, and the community around the reconversion of a former mining site.

Since 2026, she has been coordinating the MuzA - Architecture Museum project. Through research, curation, and practice, she promotes an interdisciplinary and long-term approach in which architecture becomes a tool for mediation between communities, memory, and the future.

At the conference, Ilinca Păun Constantinescu will speak about the transformation process of the former Petrila mine, tracing the journey from civic initiative and experimental cultural interventions to a complex process of planning and institutional integration. The presentation will highlight the essential role of civil society in triggering and sustaining regeneration, as well as the ways in which participatory actions, cultural events, and local initiatives have contributed to redefining the identity of a post-industrial territory. At the same time, the talk will address the need for a regulated framework and collaboration with public institutions, underscoring the transition from informal actions and activism to integrated regeneration policies and strategies.

Kyle Wiebe

Unleash.org Ambassador



Kyle Wiebe is an urban planner specialized in innovation and human-centred design processes to create impactful solutions. In 2019, Kyle joined UNLEASH as a talent at the Global Innovation Lab in Shenzhen, before becoming an UNLEASH Ambassador and facilitating labs in Greenland, Rwanda, and India. As partnerships and impact manager, Kyle is driven to scale UNLEASH programming to ensuring other passionate individuals have the opportunity to become future changemakers and entrepreneurs.

Prior to joining UNLEASH, Kyle was at UN-Habitat and the International Institute for Sustainable Development working on SDG localization, informal settlement development, and Nature-Based Solutions projects in Canada and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Łucja Zawadzka

Deputy Director for Development at the Coal Mining Museum in Zabrze and Board Member of ERIH



Łucja Zawadzka has over 20 years of experience working with European funding programmes focused on industrial heritage. She is currently Deputy Director for Development at the Coal Mining Museum in Zabrze and has served as a board member of ERIH since 2024.

In 2007, she was part of the founding team behind a pioneering global project to open one of the world's most significant industrial mining complexes to visitors. She led the full revitalisation of the Guido Mine and the Queen Louise Adit in Zabrze, Poland, an extensive undertaking involving 10 kilometres of original underground tunnels and 30 post mining buildings.

From inception through a highly complex construction process to its current success, she has played a central role in shaping the museum, which is now the largest post-industrial heritage complex open to the public, attracting over 450,000 visitors annually.

Łucja Zawadzka has been instrumental in integrating both the tangible and intangible aspects of mining culture, ensuring the preservation of this unique heritage for future generations. She also led a groundbreaking project to digitise every coal mine in the Silesia region, the first initiative of its kind in Europe.

Her work contributes to the broader regional transformation from traditional coal-based industry to clean energy. The museum's revitalisation has been recognised with a Europa Nostra award and is currently under consideration for UNESCO World Heritage status.

Marina Batog

Co-founder and Director MKBT



Marina Batog co-founded and is Chief Executive of MKBT, a Bucharest-based organization dedicated to urban regeneration. During the past 15 years, Marina conducted extensive grassroots work across Romania assisting communities in participatory strategic planning processes. She has, as well as, been involved in advisory work as a consultant for UNDP, the World Bank and Council of Europe, serving the Romanian Government and local authorities in Romania and Eastern Europe on policy fields including integrated planning, urban regeneration, and housing. Her background is in economic studies, complemented by postgraduate degrees in urban planning and regional development at the University of Architecture and Urbanism in Bucharest as well as the London School of Economics. Marina - and the MKBT team – have been working in Reșița since 2016, facilitating systemic urban regeneration processes targeting the town’s brownfield sites and marginalized urban areas.

Mateja Softić

Co-founder of Institute Iskriva



Mateja Softić is co-founder and co-creator at Iskriva, Institute for Development of Local Potentials from Slovenia with over 20 years of experience in developing and leading bottom-up regional development processes and projects based on responsible use of natural and cultural resources. Her work focuses on translating ideas and principles into concrete actions on the ground that bring socio-economic benefits to local communities.

With over 20 years of experience in international cooperation, she leads Iskriva's activities within the New European Bauhaus initiative, coordinating the New European Bauhaus on the Danube NEB Lab and working with the European Commission on integrating NEB values and principles in the Slovenian cohesion policy. For the past four years she has been coordinating the revitalisation of the Old Ironworks Museum area in Ravne na Koroškem in Slovenia, an internationally recognised best practice in urban transformation. She is also co-leading the activities of the project NONA – New Governance for New Spaces, raising capacities of cities in the Danube region for enabling investments into urban regeneration.

Primož Šporar

High Impact Designer and CEO FUND
2740



Primož Šporar, M.Sc., is a long-standing member of the European Economic and Social Committee, a high-impact designer, and CEO of FUND2740 – High Impact Foundation. He is a mentor listed with the Slovenian Enterprise Fund and SPIRIT Slovenia, and a recipient of a €1.0 million grant from Google.org for the development of impact design methodology. He is an innovator and holder of the first patent in the field of impact economy, owner of the Wood Belt brand, initiator of the AI platform IMPANOVA+ for addressing societal challenges, and founder of the WISH – World Impact Sales Hub network. He serves on the governing bodies of several international organizations and has participated in more than 500 international events related to impact entrepreneurship and socially beneficial activities.

The mission of FUND2740 is to develop tools and motivate individuals, organizations, and companies to increase their positive impact while balancing care for people, the planet, and profit. Our activities include impact design, impact investing, and the use of AI tools to maximize positive outcomes. FUND2740 is a non-profit foundation that provides support to impact-driven companies and organizations and collaborates with support ecosystems. Our work is backed by more than 500 donors and investors, including Google.org.

Sorin Dumitru

Coordinator of Banat Mountains
Integrated Territorial Investments
Association



Sorin Dumitru has more than 21 years of experience in local economic development and public administration reform, gained through advisory roles and donor-funded projects supported by the European Union, World Bank, DFID, and USAID across Europe and Central Asia.

His expertise includes local economic development, public-private partnerships, decentralization, and strategic planning, having collaborated closely with policymakers at both local and central levels, providing technical advice, facilitating reforms, and supporting multi-annual planning and investment processes.

Over the past 15 years, focused on designing municipal strategies, action plans, and project pipelines, as well as coordinating EU-funded programs (PHARE, IPA, ERDF, ESF) and contributing to sustainable development initiatives, provided technical assistance for institutional capacity building to national and sub-national governments across multiple countries.

Svetlana Kirova

Project Manager at the Collective
Foundation



Svetlana Kirova is a project manager specialising in EU funding instruments, with a strong focus on culture and citizenship participation. Most recently, she contributed to the work of the Collective Foundation - a placemaking organisation and New European Bauhaus Prize laureate (2023, 2024). There, her work centres on projects focused on revitalising neglected public spaces, engaging communities, and exploring the role of art in urban transformation.

Earlier in her career, she coordinated the International MitOst Festival and led the cultural programme of the Elias Canetti Society (2014–2017). In her role as an expert for Priority Area 3 (Culture & Tourism) of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, she gained experience in transnational cooperation.

Svetlana holds a degree in European Studies from Ruse on the Danube and a Master's in European International Politics from Maastricht and has completed additional training in project and cultural management, and civic education.

Simona Mureșan

Commercial Director at the
Romanian Bank for Investments and
Development



With a career spanning over 27 years, Simona Muresan, Commercial Director at the Investment and Development Bank, has accumulated extensive experience in the financial-banking sector, specializing in credit guarantees. She has previously held leadership positions in organizations relevant to the financial-banking system, playing a decisive role in the development of government guarantee programs with significant public policy components, such as *Prima Casă* (First Home) and *IMM INVEST*, in optimizing guarantee processes, and in strengthening relationships with institutional partners.

Her expertise covers essential areas such as credit structuring and guaranteeing, developing innovative solutions to support financing, leadership, and organizational strategy. Throughout her career, she has coordinated and supported the implementation of guarantee products aimed at SMEs and other entities, within the context of Romania's dynamic banking market, supporting economic priorities and policies while ensuring robust and sustainable economic outcomes.

Zdravko Kozinc

Co-founder of Institute Iskriva



Zdravko Kozinc is the co-founder of the Institute Iskriva, which operates in the field of regional development with a strong focus on projects that unlock sustainable development potential through new business opportunities, as well as modern technological and social science solutions, and global development perspectives.

He works in the planning of international development projects within the framework of the European Commission's New European Bauhaus initiative and broader European Territorial Cooperation programmes. As a representative of the Institute Iskriva, he is a founding member of the New European Bauhaus on the Danube initiative and a member of the advisory board of the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe.

One of his key projects is the business development of the "Amazon of Europe" tourism destination, one of the most ambitious sustainable tourism initiatives in the region, spanning five countries - Austria, Slovenia, Hungary, Croatia, and Serbia—under the Man and the Biosphere programme in cooperation with WWF and UNESCO.