



MINDCRAFTS Toolkit

1. Introduction

What is MINDCRAFTS?

MINDCRAFTS is an **Erasmus+ project, co-funded by the European Union**, that reconnects young people with **traditional building crafts** as a way to explore creativity, culture, and sustainability. It highlights how crafts are not just cultural heritage, but also meaningful and viable career paths.

Through hands-on experiences and multimedia content, MINDCRAFTS makes traditional professions feel real, valuable, and inspiring — especially for young people seeking purpose and direction.

Implemented by four partners from **Belgium and Italy**, the project combines the strengths of educational institutions, crafts networks, and youth-centered approaches.

What's in this Toolkit?

This toolkit is your **step-by-step guide** to understanding how the MINDCRAFTS approach works, how the modules were created, and how you can **use them in classrooms, workshops, or informal learning environments**.

Inside, you'll find:

- The **methodology** behind the training modules
- A look at the **development process** (research, interviews, visuals, quizzes)
- Practical suggestions for **how to use the toolkit with youth**
- Guidance on how to use the **guidebook** and the **educational materials** created for each of the six modules
- Direct links to videos, interviews, and quizzes

Whether you're a **young person**, a **teacher**, a **youth worker**, or just curious about crafts, this toolkit is built to **spark curiosity, learning, and action**.

Who Is This For?

This toolkit is designed for:

- **Young people (15–25 y.o.)** curious about crafts and culture
- **Educators and trainers** who want to run sessions using MINDCRAFTS materials

GRANT AGREEMENT : PROJECT KA210-24-23-R3-AP/180476 - 2023-3-BE04-KA210-YOU-000180476





- **Youth organizations** working with NEETs or at-risk learners
- **Crafts organizations** interested in outreach and transmission of know-how

2. The Methodology (Activity A2)

Hybrid, Heutagical, and Human-Centered

The MINDCRAFTS methodology is built on three pillars:

<p>1. Hybrid learning</p> <p>Mixing online and in-person formats allows learners to engage with crafts professionals remotely while also participating in hands-on, learning-by-doing activities.</p>	<p>2. Heutagogy (Self-Determined Learning)</p> <p>The modules are designed to encourage curiosity and autonomy. Learners are not just receiving information — they are encouraged to ask their own questions, follow their interests, and discover unexpected connections between crafts, culture, and sustainability.</p>	<p>3. Transnational Comparison</p> <p>Each of the six craft modules exists in two versions: one from Belgium, one from Italy. This approach highlights regional similarities and differences in techniques, materials, values, and stories — and gives learners a broader European perspective.</p>
--	--	---

How was the methodology created?

The methodology was co-developed by all four partners:

- **Belgian partners** (Mad'in Europe & La Table Ronde de l'Architecture) developed the modules based on Belgian craftspeople.
- **Italian partners** (CEFS & Confartigianato Udine) did the same for their region.
- Partners shared progress, insights, and improvements in regular online meetings. A framework was created to guide research and content creation for each module.

Common Framework for All Modules

To keep all modules consistent and rich in content, each partner followed this **shared framework** for research and development. For each of the 6 crafts professions (Mosaic, Wood, Stone, Clay, Metal, Ornaments), the following sections were explored:

Section	Description
1. Contextualisation	What's the cultural, historical, and local context of the profession?
2. Materials	What are the core materials used in this craft? Are they bio-based or local?
3. Tools	Which tools are traditional? Which are modernized or adapted?
4. Gestures & Techniques	Which body movements, methods, and techniques are specific to the craft?
5. Innovations	Are there recent innovations (technical, digital, material) that have improved the craft?
6. Sustainability	How does this craft align with the SDGs (e.g. use of natural materials, longevity, low impact)?
7. Business Opportunities	What career paths, niches, or entrepreneurial activities are possible?
8. Learning Paths	How can a young person become a craftspeople in this field (courses, apprenticeships, informal training)?

Implementation: What worked and what we learned

- **Smooth communication** with artisans in Belgium resulted in rich, collaborative interviews and resources.
- In Italy, there was a **learning curve** for craftspeople in understanding what kind of information was needed, but partners were able to support and guide them.
All 6 modules are structured the same in both countries, enabling side-by-side comparisons for learners.
- The modular approach allowed each partner to work within their own strengths and network, while contributing to a unified toolkit.

3. The Six MINDCRAFTS Modules

GRANT AGREEMENT : PROJECT KA210-24-23-R3-AP/180476 - 2023-3-BE04-KA210-YOU-000180476



Hands-on pathways to heritage, skills, and sustainability

Each MINDCRAFTS module represents a deep dive into a traditional craft, explored through a comparative lens between **Belgium and Italy**. These modules are more than informative: they are gateways to self-discovery, sustainability awareness, and potential careers.

What makes these modules unique is that the same six crafts, though common to both countries, reveal differences in materials, gestures, innovations, and cultural value. Below, you'll find a comprehensive look at each craft, enriched with excerpts and insights from the MINDCRAFTS Guidebook.

◆ Module 1: Flooring & Coatings (Mosaic Art)

Artisans highlighted: Gino Tondat (BE), Dario Puntin (IT)

Examples of learning pathways: Scuola Mosaicisti del Friuli (Spilimbergo), AWAP Belgium

This module introduces learners to **mosaic art**, one of the oldest crafts, rooted in Mesopotamian and Roman traditions. It explores how the craft evolved in **Italy**, notably through **Venetian mosaicists**, whose rich use of smalti, gold leaf, and religious iconography shaped iconic spaces like **St. Mark's Basilica**, and how **Italian migration brought mosaic techniques to Belgium**, especially during the Art Nouveau period.

Learners discover the **tools** of the trade (hammer, hardie, modern tile cutters), traditional **laying techniques** like *micromosaic* or *mosaico a tasselli*, and how mosaics have moved from sacred spaces into **modern public art** and urban design.

Sustainability Links:

- Use of **recycled ceramics and glass**
- Mosaic as a **durable, repairable** material
- Strong alignment with SDGs 4, 8, 9, and 12

🪵 Module 2: Wood Working

Artisans highlighted: Dirk Mortier (BE), Ermanno Puntel (IT)

Examples of learning pathways: Enaip Trentino, La Paix-Dieu (AWAP), IFAM

This module explores the world of **carpentry, timber framing, and fine woodworking**, from **Carnia's Alpine homes in Italy**, built using *blockbau* and *hydraulic sawmills*, to **timber-frame houses in medieval Belgium**, often incorporating lime plasters and steeply pitched roofs.

Learners compare regional **wood species** (oak, larch, fir, spruce), discover ancient techniques like **tree selection by moon cycles**, and experience the emotional link between builders and forests. The module includes detailed illustrations of **traditional and modern tools**, from Japanese saws to CNC routers.



Sustainability Links:

- Emphasis on **locally sourced wood**
- Timber as a **renewable material with low embodied energy**
- Integration of **bio-based finishes** and minimal-waste joinery
- Supports SDGs 8, 9, 12, 13

Module 3: Stone Working

Artisans highlighted: Thomas Richard (BE), Dario Comuzzo (IT)

Examples of learning pathways: Stone Centre Soignies (BE), Istituto del Marmo Carrara (IT)

Stoneworking is a craft that balances **brute strength and fine precision**. In **Wallonia, Belgium**, learners are introduced to materials like **bluestone, limestone, and sandstone**, used historically in Gothic cathedrals and still in high demand today. In **Friuli Venezia Giulia**, they encounter **Piasentina and Aurisina stones**, used in sculpture and elite construction.

Students learn to use **bush hammers, chisels, and gradines**, and understand techniques from **roughing to polishing, wire-saw cutting, and restoration principles** based on reversibility and minimal intervention.

Sustainability Links:

- Stone as a **naturally abundant and recyclable** resource
- Minimal industrial processing = **low carbon footprint**
- Reuse of offcuts in **infrastructure and restoration**
- Strong link to SDGs 11, 12, and 13

Module 4: Clay Working

Artisans highlighted: Groffin Warolus (BE), Daniele Franceschinis (IT)

Examples of learning pathways: CEFS Udine, École des Métiers du Bâtiment (BE)

This module delves into **brick-making, plastering, and decorative clay use**. Learners trace the history from **Roman brick aqueducts** to **Gothic Flemish brick vaults**, comparing Italy's emphasis on **facing bricks** with Belgium's technical richness in **bonding patterns** like *opus spicatum* and *opus reticulatum*.

They learn the **composition of clays**, understand **mortar science**, and practice techniques like **joint finishing, decorative brick shaping, and lime-based plastering**, with sustainability embedded throughout.

Sustainability Links:

- Clay as a **natural, breathable, and recyclable** material
- Strong insulation properties reduce energy needs
- Restoration work preserves existing materials, avoiding demolition



- SDGs addressed: 8, 9, 11, 12

Module 5: Metal (Blacksmithing & Forging)

Artisans highlighted: Steven Dujardyn (BE), Andrea Berin (IT)

Examples of learning pathways: IFAPME (BE), Florence Institute of Art (IT), Fer à Modeler (FR)

Forging and ironwork are tactile, expressive, and essential. This module presents learners with a dual vision: **Belgium's blacksmithing revival**, led by artists like Dujardyn who merge Art Nouveau sensibilities with laser cutting and modern welding; and **Italy's sculptural tradition**, seen in ornate gates, balconies, and iron furniture.

From **heating and hammering** to **punching, riveting, and engraving**, learners understand how ancient techniques have endured, while integrating **CAD design, sustainable furnaces**, and recycled metal use.

Sustainability Links:

- **Reuse of scrap metal** in workshops
- Durable products mean **less waste over time**
- Balance between **manual skill and clean tech**
- Addresses SDGs 8, 9, 12

Module 6: Ornaments (Fresco & Sgraffito)

Artisans highlighted: Fabien Glineur (BE), Ennia Visentin (IT)

Examples of learning pathways: AWAP (BE), Accademia dell'Affresco (Padova), La Cambre (BE)

This final module honours the **decorative layer of architecture** — the part that tells stories, shapes emotion, and connects deeply with culture. From the **scratch-carved layers of sgraffito in Brussels** to the **vibrant frescoes of Friuli's churches**, learners explore techniques that demand **patience, chemistry, and creativity**.

They're introduced to tools like **loop knives, natural-hair brushes, and polishing trowels**, and experiment with layering lime plasters, natural pigments, and even digital planning for restoration. This module is also one of the most visually engaging, with direct links to **cultural storytelling and mental well-being**.

Sustainability Links:

- Natural materials: **lime, marble dust, mineral pigments**
- Longevity: works **last centuries** when done properly
- Supports **cultural continuity and identity**
- Ties into SDGs 4, 11, 12, 13



4. How to use the Toolkit in practice

Making MINDCRAFTS modules come alive for young learners

The MINDCRAFTS toolkit is more than a static set of materials, it's a **flexible, creative learning journey** designed to inspire young people to explore traditional building crafts. Whether you're an educator, youth worker, or a facilitator in a cultural space, this section helps you **bring the toolkit to life**.

Who can use this Toolkit?

- **Secondary school teachers** (technical, artistic, or humanities tracks)
- **Youth organisations** working with NEETs or at-risk youth
- **Crafts centres** and heritage institutions
- **Cultural mediators** and facilitators of workshops, exhibitions or summer courses

It is designed for use in classroom settings, extracurricular projects, civic workshops, or informal learning environments.

Structure of a Typical MINDCRAFTS Learning Session

A flexible session model might include:

This section will be developed once the first school sessions will start.

How to use the Guidebook and materials

Each module includes:

- A **written profile** (from the guidebook) that can be printed or explored digitally
- A **short video** (showcasing gestures, tools, spaces, and artisan stories)
- A **quiz** (for self-assessment, comprehension, and discussion)
- Optional: activities, discover the materials, gesture practice, and additional visuals

Suggested Flow:

1. **Start with the video** : This sparks curiosity and shows the profession in real life.
2. **Print or display the module section from the guidebook** : especially the "contextualisation," "tools," "gestures," and "learning path" parts.
3. **Discuss or explore the quiz** : either before the session (to raise questions) or after (as a reflection tool).
4. **Compare Italy vs. Belgium** : highlight one big difference in tools, culture, or values.
5. **Let learners respond creatively** : What part of the craft do they find most fascinating? Could they imagine themselves in this world?



Equipment & practical tips

- A **projector or screen** to show videos
- **Printed excerpts** from the guidebook (available in PDF)
- **Craft props or tool replicas** (optional, to create a tactile experience)
- A **worksheet or Youth Pass** journal for learner reflections

No technical workshop or physical crafting space is required — though having one will significantly enhance engagement.

Tips for working with schools

- Try to link the modules to existing curricula (e.g., sustainable development, cultural heritage, visual arts)
- Use the **Italy–Belgium comparison** to foster intercultural thinking
- Allow students to **choose which modules** interest them most, ownership boosts engagement
- Highlight **career relevance**: “Where can this lead me?”

Optional add-ons and extensions

- **Invite a local artisan** to class
- **Host a comparative debate** (e.g. “Stone or wood: which is more sustainable today?”)
- **Youth-led exhibitions**: let students create posters or presentations about the professions
- **MINDCRAFTS Week**: dedicate a few days to rotating through all six modules

Certification and recognition

You can pair this learning experience with the **Youth Pass** (for informal/non-formal learning projects)