

The culture department of the Formentera Council has clinched a partnership agreement with the República de Cultura association covering a two-pronged effort—hosting “cultural project” Barnasants here on the island and booking Formentera artists at the 2019 Barnasants in Barcelona.

Formentera, the first in the archipelago to partner with the Barnasants initiative, hopes to cultivate a network of independent artisans of culture in the Catalan-speaking territories to put cultural and language-related initiatives within the reach of islanders, specifically young people and artists.

It seeks moreover to amplify representations of the cultural and ecological realities on the island and raise their profile in other areas of the country where Catalan is spoken.

Culture secretary Susana Labrador praised the framework of the deal, predicting it would “give Formentera residents the opportunity to enjoy two festival acts here locally, and, in turn, be a chance to catapult homespun musical culture to Barcelona stages”.

Barnasants

Projecte Cultural Barnasants began 24 years ago in Barcelona as a sounding board for independent musicians in the winter.

Today it is, for considerable swaths of Catalan-speaking territories, the leading festival of independent songwriting and has grown to become the top cultural initiative of its kind in Europe. With more than 100 performances scheduled every year, Barnasants serves as a vehicle for both established musical powerhouses and emerging talent.

Important deals have filled in to promote partnerships and exchanges with festivals and cultural initiatives in Italy, Occitània, Latin America and the Basque Country. Among other distinctions, Barnasants has been at the receiving end of the Catalonia Generalitat's National Culture Award and Barcelona's Medal of Honour (both in 2012).

What's truly special, according to festival director Pere Camps, “is Barnasants' awareness that culture is a crucial part of social change and progress”. “That's why when it comes to independent music on the margins of what's fashionable, marketable or industry-friendly”, Camps says, “we're in it for keeps”.

This winter and in spring 2019—in February and April—two Barnasants concerts will take place on Formentera. Local singer-songwriter Maria José Cardona will be tasked with representing the island in the Barcelona edition.