

MONS FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

30.01 / 06.02
02.02 / 09.02



MONS²⁰ EN LUMIÈRES²⁵



FREE ENTRANCE
CITY CENTER

16 INSTALLATIONS
3 KM ROUTE



Cofinancé par
l'Union européenne



Wallonie

Winter in Mons will shine brighter than ever! At the start of 2025, the cultural capital of Wallonia is gearing up for the return of “Mons en Lumières”, the South of the country’s largest winter event. Following the success of its first edition, the City of Mons is presenting a new edition of this unique festival of lights in Wallonia, promising magic and wonder.

Over eight evenings, January 30 to February 2 and February 6 to 9, 2025, the historic center of Mons will be transformed by a 3 km light trail featuring around twenty installations. This year, the festival explores the theme “Between Earth and Sky”, inviting visitors to discover artworks celebrating the beauty of nature and our connection to the universe. Among the participating artists, renowned Japanese creator Tadashi Kawamata will bring a unique touch with poetic installations suspended in the trees of Place du Parc. In collaboration with UMons and MUMONS, Tadashi Kawamata’s work will be illuminated by artist Mike Latona, blending elements of nature, space, and the universe.

“Mons en Lumières” is a major national event, designed to offer visitors an immersive and one-of-a-kind experience. Free and open to all, the trail welcomes young and old to discover local, national, and international talent. The event also collaborates with local institutions, such as the ARTS² art school, the Mons Music Academy, and other regional schools. This celebration highlights regional creativity and craftsmanship, seamlessly integrating into the city’s architecture to create an enchanting and unforgettable atmosphere.



"MONS EN LUMIÈRES, AN AMBITIOUS EVENT TO ILLUMINATE THE CITY"

A word by Nicolas Martin, Mayor of Mons

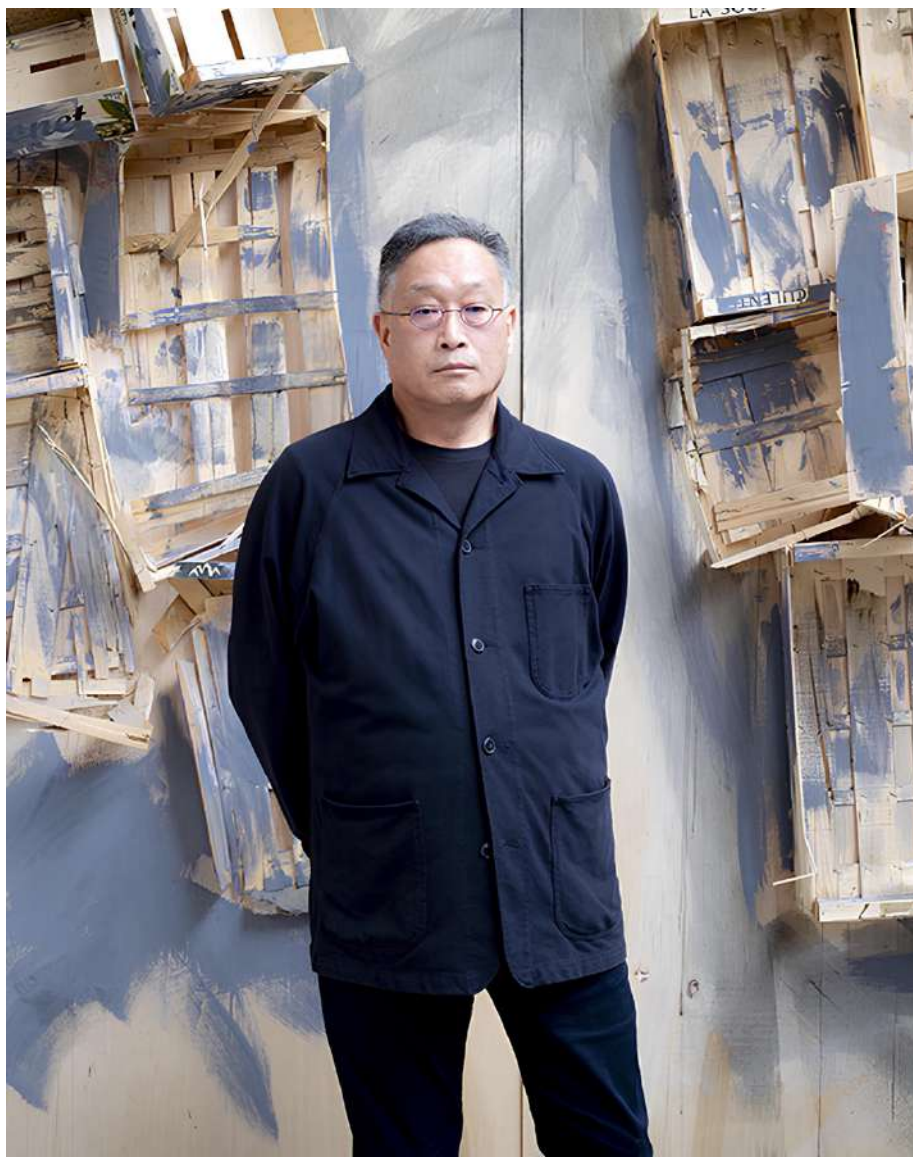
From January 30 to February 9, 2025, Mons will host the second edition of the Festival of Lights, a major winter event designed to energize the city during a traditionally quieter period. By attracting numerous tourists and visitors, this event represents a significant opportunity to support our local businesses.

This ambitious project, funded by European grants (exclusively for tourism-related expenses), is expected to draw an even larger crowd than its first edition. The free 3-km trail, featuring around twenty light installations, will be accessible to everyone. Energy consumption remains limited thanks to the use of LED technology for all installations.

The light projections and artworks carefully integrated into the urban setting will immerse visitors in a magical and dreamlike atmosphere. We aim to make "Mons en Lumières" a must-attend event on the Walloon calendar, drawing thousands of visitors and enhancing Mons' reputation as a top-tier tourist destination.

This event completes our annual calendar by bringing a winter cultural dynamic, much like our other festivals and events that make Mons one of the most vibrant cities in Wallonia. At the same time, it coincides with the completion of the transformation works in several districts of the historic center, further strengthening our heritage and tourist appeal.

THE GUEST ARTIST OF THE EDITION 2025:
TADASHI KAWAMATA
(JAPAN)



For each edition, Mons en Lumières invites an international guest artist. For this second edition, on the theme of ‘Between Earth and Sky’, the choice naturally fell on the internationally acclaimed Japanese artist **Tadashi Kawamata**.

Tadashi Kawamata is a renowned Japanese artist, born in 1953 in Mikasa, on the island of Hokkaido. His work is distinguished by monumental and ephemeral installations, often made from recycled materials such as wood, transforming public spaces and inviting viewers to rethink their environment. Tadashi Kawamata studied at the Tokyo University of the Arts and quickly gained international recognition, notably after his participation in the Venice Biennale in 1982, while he was still a student.

Through his works, Tadashi Kawamata explores themes such as urbanism, the memory of places, and the relationship between humans and their environment. His projects unfold in various urban and natural contexts around the world, transforming buildings, parks, and public spaces into areas of contemplation. His installations, sometimes resembling perched cabins or interwoven piles of wood, question the ephemeral nature of architecture and highlight the fragility of nature in the face of urbanization.

Tadashi Kawamata often works closely with local communities, emphasizing the participatory and social aspects of art. His unique approach combines poetry with social reflection, making each installation a dialogue between the past and the present, and an invitation to reconnect with nature.

For Mons en Lumières, Tadashi Kawamata will explore the themes of refuge, connection with nature, and escape from the modern world. By exceptionally integrating light into his works for Mons en Lumières, Tadashi Kawamata will add a poetic and magical dimension, further strengthening the connection between urban life, natural habitat, and the starry sky.

UMONS AND MONS EN LUMIÈRES

Francesco Lo Bue,
Director of the Museum of University
of Mons (MUMONS)

Friday March 8, 2024. The arrival of an email, both concise and mysterious, immediately grabs my attention. The Museum Hub invites MUMONS – the Museum of the University of Mons – to discuss potential collaborations as part of Mons en Lumières... How could we refuse? Soon after, we meet Adrien and Ilenia, the two driving forces behind this operation. “The 2025 Mons en Lumières trail will pass through Place du Parc. Would you be willing to join us?”

The area around the square houses not only part of the University’s administration but also the Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences, the Rectorate, the Parc Library, and MUMONS! It’s safe to say that there is a long-standing connection between Place du Parc and UMons.

This is where the invited artist, Tadashi Kawamata, will install his famous treehouses, these trees he cherishes so much, which are central to his work.

My MUMONS team is thrilled by the artistic project. However, we’re not artists... Our role is to provide keys to understanding the world.

A brainstorming session is organized around the theme “*Between Earth and Sky*” and the connections we could create with the trees so dear to Tadashi. In a burst of collective creativity, we jot down our ideas on the board: one idea sparks another, we move them around, reorganize them. We meet Mr. Tadashi for the first time on June 19th and present the outcome of our reflections. In less than thirty seconds, he proposes a spectacular staging idea: why not an artistic projection on the sky above Place du Parc?

A few weeks later, we meet another artist, the talented Mike Latona. A master of video projection, he regularly incorporates trees into his shows. The cherry on top: the connection between us is immediate. The project becomes even more exciting.

Behind the scenes, we revisit our ideas, defining a sequence with a few post-its. In the end, we send Mike a series of key ideas, some images, and occasionally sound, to fuel his thoughts and emotions. That’s where our role as knowledge brokers ends... and the artist’s work begins!

The exercise we participated in tells us a great deal: about our relationship to the two infinities – the vast and the minuscule – our desire to live together, our connections with other living beings, and the relationship between science and art.

Mons en Lumières is a way to reconnect with an ancient tradition: one that, in the heart of the long and dark winter nights, invites us to come together to celebrate the long-awaited return of light.

We wanted to cultivate some fascinating paradigms from 21st-century science. Today, science offers us a dizzying and incredibly beautiful vision of our existence. We know that the atoms that make up us, as well as the atoms of our world, were forged in stellar furnaces, at the core of giant stars that have since vanished. These inert atoms have organized themselves so that the inanimate gives way to the living... We live, we think, and we can even fall in love!

Within each of us coexist the infinitely small and the infinitely large. We rest upon the entire complexity of the universe, and every day, we question it. We are just one living species among millions of others, but perhaps with an additional responsibility.

And then, there are the trees of Place du Parc. They rise from the ground, where they draw the atoms necessary for their growth. Thanks to the light from our star, the Sun, they reach toward the sky, defying gravity. Yet again, the connection between the small and the vast, between Earth and Sky.

At the gates of the University, a hub for curious minds passionate about research and the sharing of knowledge, how can we not think of the connections between knowledge, trees, and books? We mentioned to Mike our *Bibliothèque du Parc*, with its spectacular Tree of Knowledge, an elegant metal structure supporting a vast window opening to the sky of the Visitandines. At its base, every day, hundreds of students try, each in their own way, to understand the world and prepare for the future.

These few ideas will be written in letters of light, in a form and language that may surprise us, one that we might not fully understand. It doesn't matter. We've confronted ideas, exchanged energy.

For a few moments, ephemeral beings will celebrate, like fireflies in the night, their joy of existing, thinking, and living together. Isn't the effort worth it?

THE ITINERARY:

Around twenty light installations and projections set up in the historic heart of Mons.

THE ARTISTIC INTENTION

Between earth and sky

Xavier Roland,

Director of the CAP / Museum of
Fine Arts of Mons

In 2024, we aimed to highlight Surrealism, an artistic movement historically linked to Mons, in reference to the centenary anniversary of the birth of this artistic movement. Through this, we also wanted to assert the artistic and visual dimension as a key element of the festival. As a result, we invited urban poet Robert Montgomery to contribute with poetic light integrations throughout the parcours. Building on this experience, we want to continue emphasizing this visual aspect for this new edition, with a thematic approach linked to the City of Doudou.

In recent years, the City of Mons has placed increasing importance on the greening of the city. Several parks and gardens have been restored, and a policy for greening the streets has also been implemented. Finally, there is a renewed focus on our vegetal heritage as a vital element to preserve and continuously enrich. This theme also aligns with a societal commitment that contributes to the gradual change in our sensitive relationship with the living world.

This year, our trail has been designed to highlight trees, plants, birds, and other animals that inhabit our cities, while opening new perspectives on our relationship with the environment. This earthly connection, essential to our urban lives, also invites us to awaken to the sky and the stars that light up our nights.

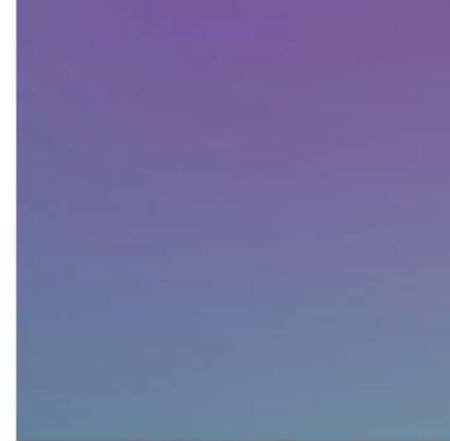
It is between earth and sky that the guiding thread of the various installations takes shape. Omnipresent throughout the trail, the Tree, through its verticality, embodies a deep connection between Earth and Sky. It draws its resources from the Earth, nourished by elements from the life of the stars. Thanks to the light from our star, the Sun, it captures the energy necessary for its existence. The tree rises, defying gravity, reaching toward the Sky, thus symbolizing the union between the terrestrial world and the infinity of the cosmos.

Each year, an artist is invited to embody the spirit of the project. In line with the festival's approach, we sought an expression that celebrates both the vegetal and the urban, while reimagining our relationship with nature and culture. The ancient battle between Saint George and the Dragon – the Doudou – is a beautiful illustration of this, with its symbolism continuously evolving over the centuries.

The choice of the guest artist naturally led us to Tadashi Kawamata, whose works address the contemporary challenges of reconnecting with earth and sky, far from the concerns of the modern world. His treehouses provide a refuge in the heart of nature, perfectly embodying the theme "between earth and sky".

The exceptional integration of sound and light in his installation will bring a poetic and magical dimension, reinforcing the connection between life, habitat, and the cosmos throughout this route. Kawamata, who constantly intertwines the vegetal and the urban in his work, fits seamlessly into this project to enhance the vegetal heritage of Mons.

By occupying urban space in this way, we invite a reconsideration of our traditional relationship with it.



THE WORKS

HORIZONS

Ofer Smilansky

Location: Place Léopold

Horizons recreates the aesthetic atmospheres of natural landscapes using a 100-meter-wide, 1-meter-high semi-transparent LED screen surrounding Place Léopold. Visitors experience visual and sound compositions that evoke the vastness of natural landscapes. This installation, reminiscent of the horizon line, uses light and music to create a contemplative and immersive experience, transforming Place Léopold into a space for strolling and reflection.

TIME RIFT ODYSSEY

ARTS²

By the students of Digital Arts and their professors Martin Waroux and Cédric Sabato

Location: Place Louise

Time Rift Odyssey is an immersive installation that takes the audience through space-time rifts, unveiling fascinating alternative realities. Each passage reveals a utopian dimension where technology blends with new forms of life and unprecedented connections.

DOUBLE FLUX

Scale

Location: Athénée Royal de Mons

Double Flux is a kinetic installation that transforms the Athénée Royal de Mons into a vibrant and dynamic space. Composed of 96 moving light bars, this artwork combines technology and art to create a synchronized light ballet, accompanied by an original composition by Grégory Sémah. *Double Flux* invites visitors into a total immersion, where light and sound merge to transform the rigid architecture of the Athénée into an organic and hypnotic spectacle.

DES RACINES²

Patrimoine à Roulettes in collaboration with the students of the Mons Academy of Music

Location: Rue des 5 Visages

Des racines² is a participatory installation where inflatable, luminous, and musical sculptures emerge from the windows of the Mons Academy of Music. This artwork highlights the vocal and visual creations made by children and teenagers, in collaboration with Patrimoine à Roulettes.

A VOL D'OISEAU

Cédric Bastin

Location: Rue de la Réunion

A vol d'oiseau evokes the journey of a bird crossing Rue de la Réunion, heading to its nest perched in the tree at the corner of Rue Terre du Prince. This nest symbolizes the importance of birds in the city and reminds us of their essential role in our mental and physical well-being. By inviting passersby to look up and follow this luminous flight, *A vol d'oiseau* offers a rediscovery of the facades and

surrounding architecture, revealing the hidden poetry of the downtown streets.

FLUX
MagicStreet

Location: Square Saint-Germain

Flux transforms Square Saint Germain into a space for dialogue between the sky and the earth. Beams of light emanate from the Belfry and converge at the fountain, symbolizing this essential connection. Accompanied by organic light patterns and an original soundscape, the installation invites spectators into an immersive experience where light appears to breathe with nature, creating a luminous sanctuary that celebrates the harmony between humanity and the universe.

FAUX CIEL DES FRIPIERS (temporary name)
Comptoir des ressources créatives of the Mons territory
and the merchants of Rue des Fripiers

Location: Rue des Fripiers

Faux Ciel des Fripiers transforms Rue des Fripiers into a waking dream. A suspended sky between the façades projects surreal interpretations of the sky, from the northern lights to shooting stars, created by local artists from Mons. The projection, enhanced by lasers, smoke effects, and a soundscape incorporating testimonies from local shopkeepers, offers a unique immersive experience.

PLANÈTES
Pitaya

Location: Rue de la Coupe

Planètes is an immersive installation that transports visitors into a poetic and mysterious universe. The Pitaya collective has designed

a series of 2D luminous spheres, suspended at varying heights along Rue de la Coupe, evoking planets floating in the void. Through meticulous work with light and shadow, these flat forms come to life with a three-dimensional appearance, creating the illusion of actual planets in orbit.

LUCIOLE
Glitch Prod

Location: Grand-Place

Luciole is a poetic fable brought to life through an immersive video mapping performance. The collective Glitch Prod and the music producers ELEFAN create a unique sensory experience that combines holographic projections with an original soundtrack. *Luciole* takes spectators on a journey through a mysterious forest, where a glowing firefly embarks on a quest to reach the Moon, celebrating perseverance and self-discovery. This installation transforms the Grand-Place into a magical and unforgettable universe.

SOLEIL NUIT
Le Pilote Productions

Location: Tribunal - Rue de Nimy 35

Soleil Nuit plays with light and shadow to evoke the cycle of day and night. Two large discs, one representing the Sun and the other the Night, capture and reflect light dynamically, creating moving bursts of light that illuminate the surroundings. This installation invites spectators to contemplate the passage of time and the beauty of natural changes, transforming Rue de Nimy into a poetic space where light dances with the wind, evoking both the power of the Sun and the serenity of the Night.

MYCELIUM
MagicStreet

Location: Maison Losseau

Mycelium illuminates the historic garden of the Maison Losseau, blending art and nature under the theme "Between Earth and Sky". Using optical fibers to enhance the surrounding greenery, this installation evokes the mycelial network that connects plants through their roots. As night falls, the garden transforms into a living canvas of light and color. Visitors wander through an interactive path, discovering luminous halos and rising columns of light. Mycelium celebrates the invisible yet vital connection of nature while reflecting the aesthetic harmony of Art Nouveau embodied by the Maison Losseau.

TREE HUT IN THE PARK – An installation in collaboration with UMons and MUMONS

Tadashi Kawamata

Location: Place du Parc

Tree Hut in the Park is an immersive installation that transforms the Place du Parc into a dreamlike space. Four wooden huts are suspended in the trees, creating a unique atmosphere that evolves from day to night through a play of light and sound designed by **Mike Latona**. This artwork embodies the fragility of nature, inviting reflection on our relationship with the environment.

STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Claire Ducene & Christophe Bailleau

Location: Hôtel de Graty, Rue du 11 Novembre

Stream of Consciousness transforms the walls of the Hôtel de Graty into living scenes, through a video mapping that takes visitors on a poetic journey. Inspired by the literary concept of "stream of consciousness," the windows light up one by one, revealing silhouettes of local artists and writers, accompanied by a soundtrack blending electronic music and poetry. Each projection pays tribute to Mons' artistic heritage, making this visual and sound stroll a vibrant homage to its history.

VIRTUAL ECOSYSTEM

ARTS²

Martin Warroux and the students of Digital Arts

Location: Rue des Telliers

Virtual Ecosystem offers an immersive experience into a hybrid ecosystem, where an artificial intelligence, driven by the preservation of biodiversity, imagines a new nature fused with the digital realm. This virtual cabinet of curiosities invites visitors to explore reinvented fauna and flora, where natural elements merge with digital forms. The projection of bio-digital landscapes, accompanied by immersive sounds, plunges the viewer into a universe where the boundaries between the real and the virtual fade away.

LE RÊVE DES LUCIOLES

Romain Tardy of LDA Production

Location: Square Roosevelt

Le rêve des lucioles is an artistic experience centered around the fictional character Lucie, who presents a luminous, sonic, and poetic ballet inspired by paradoxical sleep. Drawing inspiration from David Mesguish's sculpture and Isao Takahata's film "Grave of the

Fireflies”, this work stages Lucie in a luminous field open to multiple poetic interpretations. *The Dream of Fireflies* immerses the audience in an imaginary world rich in sensations and emotions, providing a unique and dreamlike experience.

MONS EN LUMIÈRES BY CAR

Several park and ride facilities are available around Mons:

1. Parking Mons Expo (Av. Thomas Edison 2, 7000 Mons)
2. Parking des Grand Près (Place des Grands Prés 1, 7000 Mons)
3. At Grand Large: TEC line 50 provides connections to the station every 15 minutes (accessible from the N50 coming from Ghlin and the E19-E42 motorway, exit 24 Mons).
4. At Parking Saint-Fiacre, along the N90 Chaussée de Binche. Its proximity to downtown makes this parking easily accessible on foot.

Indicative travel times to reach the Grand-Place:

From the P+R at Chaussée de Binche (Carrefour Saint-Fiacre):

- On foot: +/- 20 minutes (2 km)
- By bike: +/- 7 minutes (2 km)
- By bus: +/- 15 minutes (Combine lines U + City'O)

From the P+R at Grand-Large (Avenue de la Sapinette):

- On foot: +/- 25 minutes (+/- 2 km)
- By bike: +/- 11 minutes (3 km)
- By bus :
 - to reach the station (line 50, +/- 10 minutes)
 - from the station: +/- 25 minutes (lines City'R and City'O)

Mons en Lumières takes a step further towards eco-responsibility:

The festival seeks to develop the carpooling aspect.

Join us at Mons en Lumières by carpooling via: <https://togetzer.com/covoiturage-evenement/2m1ya4>

GUIDED TOURS FOR INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS:

Throughout the festival, exclusive guided tours are organized to offer a captivating experience at the heart of the event, both for individuals and groups.

Individual tours

Every evening at 7:00 PM, 7:30 PM, 8:00 PM, and 8:30 PM, with the starting point at visitMons. These tours reveal the secrets of the art installations and the theme "Between Earth and Sky" (duration: 2.5 hours).

Reservations are now open at an attractive rate of 10.00 euros for adults, 5.00 euros for youths aged 12 to 18, and free for children under 12. Reservations can be made through the visitMons reception, on the website visitMons.be or Monsenlumières.be.

Group tours

For groups, personalized tours are available on request. Contact us by email at groupe@ville.mons.be or by telephone on 065/40.53.46 to book.

Possible departures between 7:00 PM and 9:00 PM (duration: 2h30). The cost is 157,50 euros per group of 20 personnes.

Reservations are now open. Practical information: Reservations through the visitMons receptions, on the website www.visitmons.be or by telephone: +32 (0) 65 33 55 80

A LIGHT FESTIVAL ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE

Mons en Lumières cares about people with specific needs and implements a series of actions to ensure that a festival accessible to everyone.

A close collaboration with Access-i:

Mons en Lumières partners with Access-i, an organization specialized in accessibility consulting. This collaboration aims to adapt the event to the diverse needs of visitors, thereby guaranteeing a welcoming and inclusive experience.

Dedicated arrangements:

Considerable efforts have been made to improve the reception of people with reduced mobility.

- Specific reception areas;
- 4 information points (white containers) are distributed along the route and included on the maps;
- Public benches along the circuit;
- A team of dedicated volunteers ready to offer personalized support to those who need it. If you would like to take advantage of this service, please fill in the form.

Parking facilities:

The festival provides parking reserved for PRM, with a capacity of 40 to 50 spaces, located at Rue Chisaire which is at the beginning of the route. The safety and accessibility of this parking are ensured by the presence of a security agent.

The City of Mons is accompanied by Access-i and Plain-Pied to certify and improve the event's accessibility. Access-i works with Plain-Pied to assess and advise on the site accessibility, to train volunteers, and ensure effective digital accessibility. All this to best meet the needs of people with specific needs (PBS).

MONS EN LUMIÈRES, A SUSTAINABLE FESTIVAL

Mons en Lumières aims to be as sustainable as possible, thanks to the support of EventChange. EventChange is a Belgian platform dedicated to promoting sustainability in the cultural and events sector.

EventChange provided in-depth support and advice to the festival organizers in a number of areas, including:

- Mobility;
- Waste management and the creation of an eco-team;
- On-site water management;
- Sustainable scenography;
- Sustainable signage;
- Accommodation as close as possible to the event site;
- The use of short circuits for food and drinks;
- Teams, volunteers, ...

Their expertise has enabled us to put in place concrete actions for a more sustainable festival, such as:

- A sustainability charter that all catering suppliers must respect;
 - They are required to provide food that meets at least one of the following criteria:
 - Organically grown products (as certified);
 - Fair-trade products (certified);
 - Controlled artisanal products;
 - Products promoting Slow Food;
 - Products promoting short supply chains and seasonal fruit/vegetables;
 - Reusable, compostable or biodegradable containers;
 - A deposit system will be set up if they offer reusable cups;
- Maximum use of low consumption equipment;
- The use of the city's electrical network instead of generators;
- The use of ropes instead of plastic collars;
- The provision of water fountains for teams, with the obligation to use water bottles instead of plastic ones;
- As little paper/flyer distribution as possible;
- Increasing the number of buses and train capacity to encourage people to choose soft mobility;

- The use of electric vehicles on the route.

After the festival, Mons en Lumières will take stock of what's working and what's not and put concrete measures in place for the next edition. The aim is to improve every year.

PARTNERS



MONS EN LUMIÈRES IN PRACTICE

Dates

January 30 to February 2, 2025 and February 6 to February 9, 2025.

Location

An urban tour in the city center of Mons

Hours

From 7:00 PM until midnight

Price

Free

Website and social media

monsenumieres.be

[instagram.com/monsenumieres](https://www.instagram.com/monsenumieres)

[facebook.com/monsenumieres](https://www.facebook.com/monsenumieres)

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This program is part of the 2021-2027 programming of the FEDER.