



Llamita will be a space for playful and artistic experimentation. Photo: Belén de Benito

Faro Santander opens its doors with creative learning programme that invites participation and experimentation

Santander, 20 August 2026. – PRESS RELEASE

Faro Santander, the new arts centre launched by the Banco Santander Foundation, opens its doors with a public programme that invites audiences to create, participate, learn and experiment. It brings together immersive experiences, creative activities, collaborative projects, talks, film, music and performance.

The programme is structured around four areas of focus which come to life across different spaces within Faro Santander. **Cubo** is dedicated to art and technology; **Llamita** to education, play and creative experimentation; **Marisma** to participatory projects connected to Cantabria's cultural community; and talks, film screenings, concerts and cross artform performances.

It will also extend into the local, national, and global community through initiatives and partnerships with cultural organisations and institutions.

"Faro isn't just a place to visit: it's a place to experience," says Ana Botella, programme director at Faro Santander. "Through an experimental and cross-disciplinary programme, we aim to build a vibrant, open community around Faro Santander, comprising artists, researchers, education professionals, cultural figures and the general public." The programme is designed to foster an ongoing relationship with audiences and encourage them to incorporate Faro into their cultural lives. The centre opens its doors with the firm conviction that culture takes on its true meaning when it is created collectively."

Cubo: exploring the future of creativity through art and technology

Cubo is an audiovisual gallery that explores how technology is transforming the ways we create, interact and understand the world through the installations and artistic collaborations with technology professionals and research centres.

For the opening, **Cubo** presents *'Before Faro Santander'*, a virtual reality project that takes visitors on an immersive historical journey from the founding of Banco Santander in 1857 to present day. The experience features three narratives, interweaving the evolution of the port and the city with milestones in the Bank's history and significant events in contemporary history. Through VR headsets, visitors will be transported back to the iconic spaces of the original Santander building, with 360° immersive projection technology spanning two floors and an exterior LED measuring almost 400 m². The content has been developed by Zanskar, Layers of Reality and Intervento.



Cubo will open with the exhibition *'Antes de Faro Santander'*. Photo courtesy of Faro Santander

Llamita: art, play and experimentation for families and schools

Llamita is a space designed for children and families, welcome to visitors of all ages. It explores how experiences with art can open up new ways of thinking and connecting with others, using play, curiosity and creativity as starting points for experimentation. The opening programme has been curated by Sara San Gregorio, an architect specialising in the culture of play, with spatial design by Acha Zaballa Arquitectos.

"Its name comes from the tiny flame that is kindled – that moment when curiosity sparks wonder and everything begins," notes Ana Botella. "Llamita highlights play as the source of the creative process."

The space has been designed to encourage children to explore freely, with reading areas, continuous play surfaces and spaces for free play and workshops. A regular programme of activities will take place at weekends, making the space a destination for families throughout the year. These will complement Faro's exhibition programme, inviting visitors to reinterpret works, colours, shapes and compositions through play.

Llamita will also host Faro Santander's school visits programme, introducing pupils from different educational stages to the centre's exhibitions through practical and experiential activities.

Marisma: participation as creative practice

Marisma is a dedicated space for the development and presentation of collaborative projects developed with cultural organisations across the region. The approach sees participation not simply as a way of engaging audiences, but as a creative process in its own right, combining artistic ideas with meaningful community engagement.

For its opening, Marisma presents four projects selected through the inaugural Faro Santander Creation Grant call for artists, aimed at artists from Cantabria: '*Ludarquías*', by Amaia Bregel; '*Suite de los Riconchos*', by Casapalma, the Brañaflor Ethnographic Collective and Jorge Rojas; '*Flesh & Films / Piel y pantallas*', by Itxaso Iribarren and Germán de la Riva; and '*Una forma minúscula*', by Salón de belleza (Manuela Gutiérrez Arrieta and Cristina Somavilla). Ane Rodríguez has coordinated the project and curated the presentation.

Public Programmes: Faro Thursdays and Faro Specials

Faro Santander's **Public Programmes** connect the exhibitions, the collection, the architecture and the city, inviting the public to take part in an ongoing conversation, bringing audiences together through talks, film, music and performance.

Each week, **Faro Thursdays** will host a series of activities in the fields of music, literature, film, *performance*, poetry and contemporary thought. This initiative will provide opportunities to meet artists, writers, musicians and filmmakers who will open up new ways of engaging with the exhibitions and the Collection.

Faro Thursdays will include a **Mexican film series** centred on the exhibition '*Modern Mexico in the Gelman Santander Collection*'. In collaboration with the Mexican Cultural Institute in Spain and the Mario Camus Film

Archive of Cantabria, and under the title **'Modern Mexico on Screen: Art, Identity and Imaginaries'**, the series will begin in September with an opening lecture and will continue with the screening of ten feature films, which can be enjoyed at two venues: the Faro Auditorium and the Mario Camus Film Archive of Cantabria.

A series of six talks **'New Perspectives on the Banco Santander Collection'**, centred on the exhibition *'Masterpieces from the Banco Santander Collection'*, invites attendees to explore the Banco Santander Collection through different voices and perspectives, each featuring a presentation by experts, artists and public engagement specialists.



The Faro Santander auditorium will host a diverse programme of talks and events. Photo courtesy of Faro Santander.

Faro's spaces will come alive through **Faro Specials**, which offer a programme of events at significant moments in the year. In collaboration with Casa México, Faro will celebrate the **Day of the Dead** with a week of activities inspired by the Gelman Santander Collection. The exhibition *'The Symptomatic Surreal: Leonora Carrington'* will have its own programme, exploring Carrington's world.

Public programmes will extend beyond the Auditorium, with **'Sound Garden'**, bringing electronic music to **Los Jardines de Faro** on the building's terrace on the last Sunday of every month. **'Sound Walk'** will also wind its way through Parque de la Vaca, the site where Leonora Carrington was admitted to Dr Morales' sanatorium.

"With this programme, Santander opens its doors to encounter, participation and experimentation, and aims to become a vibrant cultural space, open and connected to the public, where art, technology, education and participation coexist throughout the year," concludes **Daniel Vega Pérez de Arlucea**, director of Faro

Santander. "Faro's programmes foster shared knowledge and engage in dialogue with the world from Santander and Cantabria."

Faro Santander will open its doors on 8 September. Full details will be available on the website www.farosantander.com, where tickets can be purchased in the coming days, starting from the opening day at the centre's ticket office.

About Faro Santander

Faro Santander is a cultural project run by the Banco Santander Foundation. It is the city of Santander's new arts centre, where art, culture and technology come together in an open setting accessible to all. Faro Santander is housed in the Pereda Building, the former headquarters of Banco Santander and one of the city's most iconic buildings. This historic building is now being given a new lease of life with the aim of becoming an ambitious, innovative and inclusive cultural space, connected to society and the cultural fabric of Cantabria. The centre's architectural design has been entrusted to the English architect David Chipperfield, winner of the Pritzker Prize in 2023. The opening of Faro Santander will mark a new milestone for the city, offering a dynamic, stimulating and fun venue where everyone is welcome.

About the Banco Santander Foundation

The Banco Santander Foundation works to help build a more equitable, inclusive and sustainable society. To this end, it carries out initiatives grouped into three areas of action: promoting culture as a tool for understanding the world around us; social action to support the progress of vulnerable groups; and education and entrepreneurship as drivers of society.

FARO SANTANDER

PROGRAMME PREVIEW

Masterpieces from the Banco Santander Collection

Dates: 8 September 2026 – February 2027

Modern Mexico in the Gelman Santander Collection

Dates: 8 September 2026 – 10 January 2027

The Symptomatic Surreal: Leonora Carrington

Dates: 8 September 2026 – 31 January 2027

Cubo: Before Faro Santander

8 September 2026 – April 2027

Marisma: Faro Santander Creation Grants

8 September 2026 – May 2027

Faro Santander

Paseo de Pereda 9-12, 39004 Santander (Cantabria), Spain

Tickets: coming soon at www.farosantander.com

Further information: www.farosantander.com

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