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Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and  
Technology

Media Policy  
**Media Convergence and Social Media**

CALL FOR PROPOSALS Connect/i.4/2020/4611098

*Preparatory Action*

*Art and the digital: Unleashing creativity for European industry, regions and  
society*

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## **1. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE**

Europe's capacity to compete in the global market depends on its capacity to convert scientific and technological knowledge into innovative products and services. Here, the transformation of society by digital technologies is opening new opportunities for collaboration across disciplines and sectors in regional and urban development. In particular, a committed partnership between digital technologies and creativity in the arts can open new horizons for deployment of digital technologies on a local level that fully acknowledges the 'human factor'. The claim of the present call is that combining European creativity in the arts with its lead in science and technology can transform European cities and regions, culturally, socially, ecologically, and economically. It can define a new European art-driven approach to innovation rooted in its cultural assets and its values.

The 2015 Latvian Presidency conclusions on ‘*crossovers from culture to businesses*’ already invited the European institutions to consider enhancing collaboration between arts and technology for a holistic exploration of opportunities in the digital age. Links of art and digital can help make technologies more humane and technology development more empathic, more responsive to human needs, and ultimately help find new solutions for the ecological and social challenges we face, for instance towards the new Green Deal and in the current COVID-19 related crisis.

In the context of seeking synergies between the digital and the arts, the European Commission - DG CONNECT - has already promoted art as a fruitful element in helping digital technologies making a difference for humans and environment via its [S+T+ARTS](#) program -innovation at the nexus of **Science**, **Technology**, and the **ARTS**. STARTS is promoting technological, ecological, social and business innovation with the arts as a catalyst for unconventional and critical thinking about technology and its impact and for creative exploration of alternative uses of technology in art-driven experiments.

#### Regional STARTS centres:

This call will solicit proposals that link existing and planned initiatives across Europe that develop synergies between the arts and digital technologies to boost uptake of the digital by local business, facilitate and enable sustainable urban development and social cohesion, and contribute to a humane dimension of technology. The contention of this call is that, in order to enable such cross-overs between technology and creative sectors, it is necessary to support the creation of local centres across European regions that promote synergies between art and technology and to create a Europe-wide network of like-minded cities/regions willing to host such centers. Such ‘regional STARTS centres’ could form the core of a movement towards an art-inspired European approach to innovation. These centers will serve as catalysts that bring together all players (artists, technology, industry, businesses, creatives from all sectors, policy makers, funders, foundations, regional agencies...).

#### Artistic Experiments:

For digital technologies like new digital media (virtual and augmented reality), smart cities technologies, artificial intelligence, data science, Internet of Things, biotechnologies or 3D printing, activities experimenting with use cases of such technologies are driving immersion of these technologies in economy and society. The European Commission is funding a number of test pilots to facilitate such experiments in various technologies. This crucial experimenting with use scenarios and prototyping in digital technologies can profit very concretely from inclusion of artistic thinking to enhance the humane dimension of the digital. Artistic experiments where artists contribute critical reflection and out of the box thinking to develop new scenarios for technology use and deployment can boost uptake of the digital both in society and in local businesses while allowing to keep a critical mind towards the impact of technology on society. Such artistic experiments can and will often result in art works and artistic performances. However, the main goal is to connect stakeholders in R&D and business development with artists in search for new ideas and novel, sustainable uses of technology.

STARTS thus suggests that the inclusion of artists as catalyst for different modes of thinking can facilitate such experiments. Indeed, other DG CONNECT programs are now explicitly addressing the role of the arts and artists/creatives. For instance, under the Horizon 2020 programme, certain ‘Digital Innovation Hubs’ explore the role of the arts in their core task of bridging the digital divide in European economy and facilitating uptake of digital technology in local businesses. [STARTS lighthouse pilots](#) explore the role of artists in smart cities and urban manufacturing.

The ‘regional STARTS centres’ should thus become hubs for artistic experiments. The centres should facilitate artistic experiments either at their premises or in pertinent business and technology institutions and transfer of results of such experiments into novel uses of the digital, insights on how to immerse the digital more gracefully into society and local economy. The instrument to do that is artistic residencies, in digital companies and in companies from other sectors as well as other pertinent regional institutions interested in take-up of the digital. A core task of the project will thus be to launch open calls for artistic residencies inspired by the [STARTS residencies program](#).

To this end, consortia will propose concrete ideas at the nexus of art, digital, and regional development how to achieve the goals outlined above. The project will explore links between art and digital in given regional contexts and will mobilise the technological and cultural resources of European regions to help tackle the challenges and opportunities of uptake of the digital. It will build on and link to [two running pilot projects](#). The preparatory action will accelerate the actions that were started in the two pilot projects towards a network of STARTS regional centres and supporting policies.

### **Legal Basis**

Preparatory within the meaning of Article 58(2)(a) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 (OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1).

The annual work programme was adopted under Commission Decision C/2020/2259 of 20/04/2020.

### **The present call for proposals**

The present call for proposals will select one consortium to execute the project as introduced in section 1 and detailed in section 2.

## 2. THE PROJECT

### 2.1. Objectives and Expected outcomes

#### Objectives:

The objectives of the present call for proposals are two-fold:

(a) Networking and Policy framing:

- Nurturing a network of pertinent actors in cities and regions (local authorities, foundations, businesses, art organisations, technical institutions, investors, etc.) willing to promote initiatives for art and technology collaboration as a driver of urban and regional development. Engage a dialogue between public and private actors how to setup, fund, manage, and use existing and emerging local art and technology centres.
- Lay out a policy framework in order to support emerging and expanding regional STARTS centres. Establish synergies and draw up recommendations on links to regional funding schemes or foundations willing to support such centres and to EU funding schemes like Horizon Europe including the newly created digital innovation hubs.

(b) Funding artistic experiments and other seed activities

- Funding of [STARTS residencies](#) with the aim to promote among others artistic experiments (see section 1). This will be done via third-party funding given to artists willing to work with local economic, technology and institutional players. Some of the partners should create or offer existing local infrastructures (buildings, institutions etc.) or be willing to fund and facilitate such artistic experiments.
- Raise funds and attract sponsors to create exhibitions and installations that showcase innovation rooted in art-technology collaboration, in particular results of the promoted artistic experiments.
- Organise other seed activities that promote the goals of this call at the nexus of digital, art and regional development (see section 2.2 for eligible activities).

#### Expected Outcomes:

The expected outcomes of this project are concrete artistic experiments that result in an impact on local business and regional development and the building up of a community of regional players across Europe interested to collaborate at the nexus of digital, art and regional development.

Regarding objective (a), proposals should:

- Create an open and sustainable network of pertinent players in regions and cities interested in art and technology collaboration for local development.

- Stimulate the creation and funding of urban STARTS centres or reuse existing centres as STARTS centres and ensure their sustainability.
- Stimulate the uptake of a STARTS label at institutions across Europe.
- Work on a European (policy) perspective to solicit and fund local activities that put forward digital technologies and art collaboration to stimulate social cohesion, sustainable development, and local business development by building on cultural assets.

Regarding objective (b), proposals should:

- Organise co-funded seed activities that enhance the appeal of art-technology collaboration (including e.g. STARTS academies, STARTS events, STARTS residencies, and STARTS exhibitions in the participating cities).
- These seed activities should solicit follow-on activities in the participating cities that bring together artists, business and technology to work on local development projects.
- A ‘STARTS collection’ of art works reflecting the spirit of STARTS is another desirable outcome.
- A number of artistic experiments that show the benefit of the approach to local businesses.

## **2.2. Eligible activities**

Eligible activities must clearly involve artistic expression and use of digital technologies with a goal to promote local regional development and uptake of digital via artistic experiments. Proposals can include the following activities:

### Networking/Community building:

- Mentoring activities (e.g. teaming up with investors, discussing possible support with local foundations).
- Activities (workshops, talks, exhibitions...) that further collaborations of actors at the nexus of art-digital-regional development.
- Networking events of stakeholders in cities/regions already at the forefront of this movement and those starting activities in this area (local authorities and business, foundations etc.). Digital players should whenever possible be included.
- A website (in collaboration with [www.starts.eu](http://www.starts.eu) and hosted by starts.eu) open to artists and interested companies that can serve as a gathering point.
- Events co-funded with non-consortium partners that help enlarge the community to not yet included regions and industry sectors

### Artistic experiments and exhibitions:

- Residencies of artists in companies/institutions from the digital and/or other sectors targeting uptake of the digital to work jointly on artistic experiments.

Remark: Residencies will be implemented via Financial support to third parties (see point 11.8. (d)). Residencies have to be co-funded (see section 11.1.1)

- Experiments on uptake of the digital by local businesses inspired by artistic expression and enabled by digital technologies (mainly done via artistic residencies).

- Art works/installations that inspire policy makers, local business and citizens to engage towards a more humane and empathic use of the digital.
- Art exhibitions presenting works that contribute to the idea of art-driven technology innovation promoted by STARTS.
- Educational workshops: Team up technology and the arts to make the digital more accessible to citizens in particular the young generation (digital skills and critical thinking) in the spirit of '[STARTS academies](#)'.

Applicants should propose a list of activities chosen from above list that could credibly achieve the goals outlined in section 1. Funding of residencies of artists via third party funding is a mandatory activity.

### **2.3. Methodology**

The consortium shall take into account below aspects in writing the proposal and establishing its methodological approach.

#### Financing and proposal stage

- Financing and co-funding: The project is based on co-funding of both the activities and the financial support of artists (see section 4 and section 11.1.1). Proposal that do not respect these conditions will be rejected.
- To be admissible, applicants must follow the structure given in section III.1 of the Grant Application Form.
- Funds foreseen for seed activities may be pooled (that is not distributed to a given partner) and it shall be foreseen to organise activities ad hoc during the project lifetime in order to react to emergent opportunities and expressed needs of the EC services.

#### Consortium/Network:

- Consortia as a whole shall demonstrate knowledge in:
  - Art and in bridging of digital and business communities to the art community.
  - Pertinent digital technologies
  - Regional development and/or in business and its link to the digital.
- New partners from European regions not covered so far in the [two previous Pilot Projects](#) should be integrated in the consortium together with experienced and established STARTS actors and stakeholders.
- The consortium should foresee measures to extend the network to other cities/regions as those included in consortium (e.g. by foreseeing co-financing of events across Europe).
- Existing similar residences programs should be identified and contacted to achieve synergies with the idea of STARTS residencies. Links to existing initiative like STARTS and Digital Innovation Hubs –DIH- are strongly encouraged.

### STARTS residencies and artistic experiments:

- Plan procedures for open calls for financial support of artists during residencies or support of creation of pertinent artworks (financial support to third parties; see 11.8 (d) for more detail). Given the rather short project duration a maximum of two calls shall be launched as soon as possible.
- The open calls must be labelled ‘STARTS residencies’. Calls to artists must be open to nationals from Europe and can be (limited by budgetary concerns) open world-wide. The hosts of the artists must be located in Europe.
- The artistic residencies and/or installations shall be implemented by hosting artists in pertinent institutions/companies in the digital or other sectors willing to use the digital. Some of these institutions can be partners in project, others should be chosen from outside the consortium based on regional priorities.
- Hosting institutions will not receive funding and will have to provide the necessary logistic support to the hosted artist. There must be a clear commitment from the side of the hosting institutions to accommodate and collaborate with the artist. The hosting institutions must provide access to their premises and equipment for the artist free of charge. Material specific to artistic needs shall be covered by the art grant.

### Dissemination/Communication:

- Leverage the existing starts.eu website that is open for new consortia. The project should contribute to its promotion and development with a view to dissemination of STARTS ideas to local stakeholders.
- Use the STARTS label as a means to achieve synergies of similar minded activities across Europe in order to promote adoption of a STARTS label by centres across Europe. In particular, foresee to announce the planned residencies as STARTS residencies and educational efforts as STARTS academy.

## **3. TIMETABLE**

The indicative schedule for the different steps and stages of the selection procedure are as follows:

	<b>Steps</b>	<b>Date and time or indicative period</b>
(a)	Publication of the call	mid September 2020
(b)	<b>Deadline for submitting applications</b>	<b>30 October 2020, 24:00 CET</b>
(c)	Evaluation period	December 2020
(d)	Information to applicants	January 2021

(e)	Signature of grant agreement	January 2021
(f)	Start date of the action	Latest by 1 <sup>st</sup> March 2021

The suggested project duration is between 16 months and 20 months.

#### **4. BUDGET AVAILABLE**

The total budget earmarked for the co-financing of the project under this call for proposals is estimated at **1.800.000 EUR (one million and eight hundred thousand Euros)**.

The Commission expects to fund **one** proposal.

For the **maximum EU co-financing rates** applicable under this call for proposals **see section 11**.

The Commission reserves the right not to distribute all the funds available.

#### **5. ADMISSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

In order to be admissible, applications must be:

- sent no later than the deadline for submitting applications referred to in section 3
- submitted in writing and in electronic form (searchable pdf format) (see section 14) using the application form available at

<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/news-redirect/684417>

- drafted in one of the EU official languages<sup>1</sup>.

Failure to comply with those requirements will lead to rejection of the application.

#### **6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

##### **6.1. Eligible applicants**

The call is open to a grouping of entities (consortia)

Proposals may be submitted by any of the following applicants or combinations of:

- non-profit organisation (private or public);
- public authorities (national, regional, local);
- universities;
- educational institutions;
- foundations;
- research/technology and art centres
- profit making entities.
- International organisations

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<sup>1</sup> To speed up the evaluation process, proposers are encouraged to draft the application in English

Natural persons are not eligible to apply for a grant under this call for proposals.

General notice for UK applicants: In conformity with the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement<sup>2</sup>, the UK and persons or entities established in the UK continue to be eligible to receive Union funds under actions carried out in direct, indirect or shared management, which implement Union programmes and activities committed under the MFF 2014-2020 until the closure of those Union programmes and activities. When restrictions apply, these will be clearly specified in the call for proposals.

### **Affiliated entities**

Entities affiliated<sup>3</sup> to the applicants are not eligible to receive funding under this Call for proposals. They may take part in the action as affiliated entities at their own costs only. In such case, applicants shall identify, for information such affiliated entities in the application form.

### **Country of establishment**

Only applications from legal entities established in the following countries are eligible:

- EU Member States.

### **Consortium requirements**

- In order to be eligible, consortium must be composed of **at least six legal entities** from **at least four different EU Member States**.

### **Supporting documents**

In order to assess the applicants' eligibility, the following supporting documents are requested:

- **private entity**: extract from the official journal, copy of articles of association, extract of trade or association register, certificate of liability to VAT (if, as in certain countries, the trade register number and VAT number are identical, only one of these documents is required);
- **public entity**: copy of the resolution, decision or other official document establishing the public-law entity.

## **6.2. Eligible activities**

The types of activities are eligible under this call for proposals are described in **section 2.2**.

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<sup>2</sup> Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community

<sup>3</sup> In accordance with Article 187 FR, entities that satisfy the eligibility criteria and that do not fall within one of the situations referred to in Articles 136(1) and 141(1) FR and that have a link with the applicant, in particular a legal or capital link, which is neither limited to the action nor established for the sole purpose of its implementation, will be considered as entities affiliated to the applicant.

### **6.3. Implementation period**

The suggested project duration is between 16 months and 20 months.

## **7. EXCLUSION CRITERIA**

### **7.1. Exclusion**

The authorising officer shall exclude an applicant from participating in call for proposals procedures where:

- (a) the applicant is bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding-up procedures, its assets are being administered by a liquidator or by a court, it is in an arrangement with creditors, its business activities are suspended, or it is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for under EU or national laws or regulations;
- (b) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the applicant is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions in accordance with the applicable law;
- (c) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the applicant is guilty of grave professional misconduct by having violated applicable laws or regulations or ethical standards of the profession to which the applicant belongs, or by having engaged in any wrongful intent or gross negligence, including, in particular, any of the following:
  - (i) fraudulently or negligently misrepresenting information required for the verification of the absence of grounds for exclusion or the fulfilment of eligibility or selection criteria or in the performance of a contract, a grant agreement or a grant decision;
  - (ii) entering into agreement with other applicants with the aim of distorting competition;
  - (iii) violating intellectual property rights;
  - (iv) attempting to influence the decision-making process of the Commission during the award procedure;
  - (v) attempting to obtain confidential information that may confer upon it undue advantages in the award procedure;
- (d) it has been established by a final judgment that the applicant is guilty of any of the following:
  - (i) fraud, within the meaning of Article 3 of Directive (EU) 2017/1371 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Article 1 of the Convention on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 July 1995;
  - (ii) corruption, as defined in Article 4(2) of Directive (EU) 2017/1371 or Article 3 of the Convention on the fight against corruption involving officials of the European Communities or officials of Member States of the European Union, drawn up by the Council Act of 26 May 1997, or conduct referred to in Article 2(1) of Council Framework Decision 2003/568/JHA, or corruption as defined in the applicable law;
  - (iii) conduct related to a criminal organisation, as referred to in Article 2 of Council Framework Decision 2008/841/JHA;
  - (iv) money laundering or terrorist financing within the meaning of Article 1(3), (4) and (5) of Directive (EU) 2015/849 of the European Parliament and of the Council;

- (v) terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities, as defined in Articles 1 and 3 of Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA, respectively, or inciting, aiding, abetting or attempting to commit such offences, as referred to in Article 4 of that Decision;
  - (vi) child labour or other offences concerning trafficking in human beings as referred to in Article 2 of Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council;
- (e) the applicant has shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations in the performance of a contract, a grant agreement or a grant decision financed by the Union's budget, which has led to its early termination or to the application of liquidated damages or other contractual penalties, or which has been discovered following checks, audits or investigations by an authorising officer, OLAF or the Court of Auditors;
- (f) it has been established by a final judgment or final administrative decision that the applicant has committed an irregularity within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95;
- (g) It has been established by a final judgement or final administrative decision that the applicant has created an entity in a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or any other legal obligations of mandatory application in the jurisdiction of its registered office, central administration or principal place of business;
- (h) it has been established by a final judgement or final administrative decision that an entity has been created with the intent referred to in point (g);
- (i) for the situations referred to in points (c) to (h) above, the applicant is subject to:
- (i) facts established in the context of audits or investigations carried out by European Public Prosecutor's Office after its establishment, the Court of Auditors, the European Anti-Fraud Office or the internal auditor, or any other check, audit or control performed under the responsibility of an authorising officer of an EU institution, of a European office or of an EU agency or body;
  - (ii) non-final judgments or non-final administrative decisions which may include disciplinary measures taken by the competent supervisory body responsible for the verification of the application of standards of professional ethics;
  - (iii) facts referred to in decisions of persons or entities being entrusted with EU budget implementation tasks;
  - (iv) information transmitted by Member States implementing Union funds;
  - (v) decisions of the Commission relating to the infringement of Union competition law or of a national competent authority relating to the infringement of Union or national competition law; or
  - (vi) decisions of exclusion by an authorising officer of an EU institution, of a European office or of an EU agency or body.

## **7.2. Remedial measures**

If an applicant declares one of the situations of exclusion listed above (see section 7.1), it must indicate the measures it has taken to remedy the exclusion situation, thus demonstrating its reliability. This may include e.g. technical, organisational and personnel measures to correct the conduct and prevent further occurrence, compensation of damage or payment of fines or of any taxes or social security contributions. The relevant documentary evidence which illustrates the remedial measures taken must be provided in annex to the declaration. This does not apply for situations referred in point (d) of section 7.1.

### **7.3. Rejection from the call for proposals**

The authorising officer shall not award a grant to an applicant who:

- (a) is in an exclusion situation established in accordance with section 7.1; or
- (b) has misrepresented the information required as a condition for participating in the procedure or has failed to supply that information; or
- (c) was previously involved in the preparation of documents used in the award procedure where this entails a breach of the principle of equal treatment, including distortion of competition, that cannot be remedied otherwise.

Administrative sanctions (exclusion) may be imposed on applicants, any of the declarations or information provided as a condition for participating in this procedure prove to be false.

### **7.4. Supporting documents**

Applicants must provide an original “blue ink” signed<sup>4</sup> declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to in Articles 136(1) and 141 FR, by filling in the relevant form attached to the application form accompanying the call for proposals and available at

<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/news-redirect/684417>

This obligation may be fulfilled in one of the following ways:

- (i) the coordinator of a consortium signs a declaration on behalf of all applicants and their affiliated entities; OR
- (ii) each applicant in the consortium signs a declaration in its name and on behalf of its affiliated entities; OR
- (iii) each applicant in the consortium and the affiliated entities each sign a separate declaration in their own name.

## **8. SELECTION CRITERIA**

### **8.1. Financial capacity**

Applicants must have stable and sufficient sources of funding to maintain their activity throughout the duration of the grant and to participate in its funding.

The verification of the financial capacity shall not apply to public bodies, including Member States organisations and to International Organisations.

In the event of an application grouping several applicants (consortium), the below thresholds apply to each applicant.

The financial capacity of a single applicant or coordinator will always be assessed based on documents to be provided under point 8.1 b).

In the event of an application grouping several applicants (consortium), the below thresholds apply to each applicant.

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<sup>4</sup> A hand-written “blue ink” signature is mandatory (electronic signature conform to eIDAS regulation will however be accepted) While scans suffice before the deadline of proposals, the original blue ink versions must be provided before any grant agreement can be signed by the Commission.

The individual applicants' financial capacity will be assessed on the basis of the following supporting documents to be submitted with the application:

- a) Low value grants ( $\leq$  EUR 60 000):
  - a declaration on their honour.
- b) Grants  $>$  EUR 60 000:
  - a declaration on their honour

AND

- the profit and loss account as well as the balance sheet for the last 2 financial years for which the accounts were closed;
  - for newly created entities: the business plan might replace the above documents;
  - the table with the financial figures provided for in the annex to the application form (BS and P&L Financial Capacity check table), filled in with the relevant statutory accounting figures.
- c) Grants for an action  $>$  EUR 750 000:
    - (i) the information and supporting documents mentioned in point b) above, and
    - (ii) **an audit report** produced by an approved external auditor certifying the accounts for the last financial year available, where such an audit report is available or whenever a statutory report is required by law

If the audit report is not available AND a statutory report is not required by law, a self-declaration signed by the applicant's authorised representative certifying the validity of its accounts for the last financial year available must be provided.

On the basis of the documents submitted, if the Authorised Representative Officer of the Commission considers that the financial capacity is weak, s/he may:

- request further information;
- decide not to give pre-financing;
- decide to give pre-financing paid in instalments;
- decide to give pre-financing covered by a bank guarantee (see section 11.7.2 below);
- where applicable, require the joint and several financial liability of all the co-beneficiaries.

If the Authorised Representative Officer of the Commission considers that the financial capacity is insufficient s/he will reject the application

## 8.2. Operational capacity

Applicants must have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications necessary to complete the proposed action. The applicants must demonstrate collectively prior activity at the crossings of art and technology.

In this respect, applicants have to submit a declaration on their honour, and the following supporting documents:

- A description of the applicants’ relevant competences and previous experiences;
- Curriculum vitae of the people primarily responsible for managing and implementing the operation. These CVs must prove for the consortium as a whole capacity to work at the nexus of art, digital and regional development. They must also prove capacity to organise open calls for artist residencies.

In the event of an application grouping several applicants (consortium), the above requirements shall apply to the combined capacity of all members of the consortium. Combined capacity means that individually, each member of the consortium should comply with the criteria corresponding to its task in the project.

## **9. AWARD CRITERIA**

Eligible applications/projects will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria

Minimum score per criterion (threshold): Proposals scoring less than **60%** of the maximum score for any award criterion will be considered of insufficient quality and rejected.

Minimum total score (threshold): Proposals with a total score of less than **70 points** at the end of the evaluation process will be considered of insufficient quality and rejected.

<b><u>Award criterion</u></b>	<b><u>Max score</u></b>	<b><u>Threshold</u></b>
<p><b>Excellence</b></p> <p>Does the proposal address the two objectives in a credible manner? Does the proposal demonstrate understanding of artistic and technological excellence and links to urban/regional development?</p> <p>Is there a clear plan to establish an open network of pertinent players in art and technology across European cities and regions and to ultimately enlarge this network beyond the core group?</p> <p>Are the proposed activities ambitious and credible in terms of furthering the idea of art and technology collaboration as a driver of urban/regional development? (both economic and social) ?(e.g. well thought out plan for artistic experiments, community building, clear ideas for type and scope of artistic residencies, level of integration of artists in activities of the industrial and technology stakeholders?</p>	<b>30</b>	<b>18</b>
<p><b>Impact</b></p> <p>Will the proposed activities – e.g. the artistic experiments – open concrete long-term perspectives for the regions and companies involved for art and technology collaboration for innovation?</p> <p>Will the activities lead to the lasting emergence of local art-technology centres, e.g. in terms of ensuring sustainable funding? Are links to potential funders like foundations credible?</p> <p>Will the proposed activities help in establishing a lasting community at the nexus of art-digital-regional development? Do consortium partners show commitment collaborate with artists beyond the project lifetime?</p>	<b>40</b>	<b>24</b>
<p><b>Consortium and Management</b></p> <p>Is there a balance between resources devoted to partners and resources made accessible to the wider community (e.g. artists and non-consortium stakeholders)?</p> <p>Is there a realistic and well described allocation of financial and human resources per partner, per objective, and per work package? Do personal costs of consortium respond to the needs of the call?</p> <p>Is there a clear plan how to implement the open call and the implementation of financial support to third parties (artists in residence)? Is there a clear commitment of partners to this task in terms of financial engagement and in terms of finding appropriate host institutions ?</p>	<b>30</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>70</b>

## 10. LEGAL COMMITMENTS

In the event of a grant awarded by the Commission, a grant agreement, drawn up in euro and detailing the conditions and level of funding, will be sent to the applicant, as well as the information on the procedure to formalise the agreement of the parties.

Two copies of the original agreement must be signed first by the legal representative<sup>2</sup> (person authorised to sign the agreement) of the coordinator on behalf of the consortium and returned to the Commission immediately. The Commission will sign it last.

The applicants understand that submission of a grant application implies acceptance of the general conditions attached to this call for proposals in Annex II to the model grant agreement. These general conditions bind the beneficiaries to whom the grant is awarded and shall constitute an annex to the grant decision.

## 11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

### 11.1. Form of the grant

#### 11.1.1 Reimbursement of costs actually incurred<sup>5</sup>

The grant shall take the form of reimbursement of a specified proportion of eligible costs actually incurred and declared by the beneficiary.

The maximum EU co-financing rates applicable under this call for proposals are as follows:

**(a) Financial support to third parties - (grants to artists): 70%** of the eligible direct costs<sup>6</sup>

**(b) Other activities: 60%** of the eligible costs

Please note that

- At least 35% of total requested EC contribution shall be in form of financial support to third parties via grants to artists (co-financing rate (a) applies, see also 11.8(d)).
- EC contribution to personnel costs shall not exceed 35% of total requested EC contribution for the consortium as a whole. It is considered good practice that only partners involved in core management activities ask for personnel cost.
- Applicants may propose a lower co-funding rate.
- The co-financing rates in (a) and (b) apply to consortium as a whole, not per partner. However, cost per individual partner or cost category cannot exceed 90% reimbursement rate.

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<sup>5</sup> See point (i) of Article I.3.2(a) of the model grant agreement

<sup>6</sup> As a reminder: Co-funding to the financial support to third party shall not be funded by the third party receiving the support

- Co-funding of activities (for example of events) may take the form of the beneficiary's own resources, income generated by the action or financial contributions from third parties.( see 11.5)
- A flat-rate amount of maximum 7 % of the total eligible direct costs of the action, excluding direct costs of subcontracting and direct costs of financial support to third parties, is eligible as indirect costs.

For details on eligibility of costs, please refer to section 11.2.

## **11.2. Eligible costs<sup>7</sup>**

Eligible costs shall meet all the following criteria:

- they are incurred by the beneficiary.
- they are incurred during the duration of the action, with the exception of costs relating to final reports and audit certificates;
  - o The period of eligibility of costs will start as specified in the grant agreement.
  - o If a beneficiary can demonstrate the need to start the action before the agreement is signed, the costs eligibility period may start before that signature. Under no circumstances can the eligibility period start before the date of submission of the grant application.
- they are indicated in the estimated budget of the action;
- they are necessary for the implementation of the action which is the subject of the grant;
- they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary and determined according to the applicable accounting standards of the country where the beneficiary is established and according to the usual cost accounting practices of the beneficiary;
- they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
- they are reasonable, justified, and comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

The beneficiary's internal accounting and auditing procedures must permit direct reconciliation of the costs and revenue declared in respect of the action/project with the corresponding accounting statements and supporting documents.

Eligible costs may be direct or indirect.

### **11.2.1. Eligible direct costs<sup>8</sup>**

The eligible direct costs for the action are the costs which:

**with due regard to the conditions of eligibility set out above**, are identifiable as specific costs directly linked to the performance of the action and which can therefore be booked to it directly, such as :

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<sup>7</sup> Article II.19.1 of the Model Grant Agreement

<sup>8</sup> Article II.19.2 of the Model Grant Agreement

- (a) *the costs of personnel working under an employment contract with the beneficiary or an equivalent appointing act and assigned to the action, provided that these costs are in line with the beneficiary's usual policy on remuneration.*

*Those costs include actual salaries plus social security contributions and other statutory costs included in the remuneration. They may also comprise additional remunerations, including payments on the basis of supplementary contracts regardless of the nature of those contracts, provided that they are paid in a consistent manner whenever the same kind of work or expertise is required, independently from the source of funding used;*

*The costs of natural persons working under a contract with the beneficiary other than an employment contract or who are seconded to the beneficiary by a third party against payment may also be included under such personnel costs, provided that the following conditions are fulfilled:*

- (i) the person works under conditions similar to those of an employee (in particular regarding the way the work is organised, the tasks that are performed and the premises where they are performed);*
- (ii) the result of the work belongs to the beneficiary (unless exceptionally agreed otherwise); and*
- (iii) the costs are not significantly different from the costs of staff performing similar tasks under an employment contract with the beneficiary;*

The recommended methods for the calculation of direct personnel costs are provided in Appendix.

- (b) *costs for the work of volunteers up to the limit of 50 % of the overall Union and other co-financing of the action; - NOT APPLICABLE*
- (c) *costs of travel and related subsistence allowances, provided that these costs are in line with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel;*
- (d) *the depreciation costs of equipment or other assets (new or second-hand) as recorded in the beneficiary's accounting statements, provided that the asset:*
- (i) is written off in accordance with the international accounting standards and the beneficiary's usual accounting practices; and*
  - (ii) has been purchased in accordance with the rules on implementation contracts laid down in the grant agreement, if the purchase occurred within the implementation period;*

*The costs of renting or leasing equipment or other assets are also eligible, provided that these costs do not exceed the depreciation costs of similar equipment or assets and are exclusive of any finance fee;*

*Only the portion of the equipment's depreciation, rental or lease costs corresponding to the implementation period and the rate of actual use for the purposes of the action may be taken into account when determining the eligible costs. By way of exception, the full cost of purchase of equipment may be eligible*

*under the Special Conditions, if this is justified by the nature of the action and the context of the use of the equipment or assets;*

- (e) *costs of consumables and supplies, provided that they:*
  - (i) *are purchased in accordance with the rules on implementation contracts laid down in the grant agreement; and*
  - (ii) *are directly assigned to the action;*
- (f) *costs arising directly from requirements imposed by the Agreement (dissemination of information, specific evaluation of the action, audits, translations, reproduction), including the costs of requested financial guarantees, provided that the corresponding services are purchased in accordance with the rules on implementation contracts laid down in the grant agreement;*
- (g) *costs derived from subcontracts, provided that specific conditions on subcontracting as laid down in the grant agreement are met<sup>9</sup>;*
- (h) *costs of financial support to third parties, provided that the conditions laid down in the grant agreement are met<sup>10</sup>( see section 11.8.d);*
- (i) *duties, taxes and charges paid by the beneficiary, notably value added tax (VAT), provided that they are included in eligible direct costs, and unless specified otherwise in the grant agreement.*

### **11.2.2. Eligible indirect costs (overheads)** <sup>11</sup>

Indirect costs are costs that are not directly linked to the action implementation and therefore cannot be attributed directly to it.

A flat-rate amount of maximum 7% of the total eligible direct costs of the action, excluding direct costs of subcontracting and direct costs of financial support to third parties, is eligible as indirect costs, representing the beneficiary's general administrative costs which can be regarded as chargeable to the action/project.

Indirect costs may not include costs entered under another budget heading.

**Applicants' attention is drawn to the fact that if they are receiving an operating grant financed by the EU or Euratom budget, they may not declare indirect costs for the period(s) covered by the operating grant, unless they can demonstrate that the operating grant does not cover any costs of the action.**

In order to demonstrate this, in principle, the beneficiary should:

- a. use *analytical cost accounting that allows to separate all costs (including overheads)* attributable to the operating grant and the action grant. For that purpose the beneficiary should use *reliable accounting codes and allocation keys*

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<sup>9</sup> Article II.11 of the Model Grant Agreement

<sup>10</sup> Article II.12 of the Model Grant Agreement

<sup>11</sup> Article II.19.3 of the Model Grant Agreement

ensuring that *the allocation* of the costs is done in a *fair, objective and realistic way*.

b. *record separately*:

- all costs incurred for the operating grants (i.e. personnel, general running costs and other operating costs linked to the part of its usual annual activities), and
- all costs incurred for the action grants (including the actual indirect costs linked to the action)

If the operating grant covers the entire usual annual activity and budget of the beneficiary, the latter is not entitled to receive any indirect costs under the action grant.

### **11.3. Ineligible costs** <sup>12</sup>

The following items are not considered as eligible costs:

- a) return on capital and dividends paid by a beneficiary;
- b) debt and debt service charges;
- c) provisions for losses or debts;
- d) interest owed;
- e) doubtful debts;
- f) exchange losses;
- g) costs of transfers from the Commission charged by the bank of a beneficiary;
- h) costs declared by the beneficiary under another action receiving a grant financed from the Union budget. Such grants include grants awarded by a Member State and financed from the Union budget and grants awarded by bodies other than the Commission for the purpose of implementing the Union budget. In particular, beneficiaries receiving an operating grant financed by the EU or Euratom budget cannot declare indirect costs for the period(s) covered by the operating grant, unless they can demonstrate that the operating grant does not cover any costs of the action.
- i) contributions in kind from third parties;
- j) excessive or reckless expenditure;
- k) deductible VAT.

### **11.4. Eligible costs that may be covered by the single lump sum**

NOT APPLICABLE

### **11.5. Balanced budget**

The estimated budget of the action must be attached to the application form. It must have revenue and expenditure in balance.

The budget must be drawn up in euros.

Applicants for whom costs will not be incurred in euros should use the exchange rate published in the Official Journal of the European Union

**The applicant must ensure that the resources which are necessary to carry out the action are not entirely provided by the EU grant.**

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<sup>12</sup> Article II.19.4 of the Model Grant Agreement

Co-financing of the action may take the form of:

- the beneficiary's own resources,
- income generated by the action,
- financial contributions from third parties.

## **11.6. Calculation of the final grant amount<sup>13</sup>**

The final amount of the grant is calculated by the Commission at the time of the payment of the balance. The calculation involves the following steps:

### **Step 1 — Application of the reimbursement rate to the eligible costs**

The amount under step 1 is obtained by applying the reimbursement rate specified in section 11.1.1 to the eligible costs actually incurred and accepted by the Commission.

### **Step 2 — Limit to the maximum amount of the grant**

The total amount paid to the beneficiaries by the Commission may in no circumstances exceed the maximum amount of the grant as indicated in the grant agreement. If the amount obtained following Step 1 is higher than this maximum amount, the final amount of the grant is limited to the latter.

### **Step 3 — Reduction due to the no-profit rule**

‘Profit’ means the surplus of receipts over the total eligible costs of the action, where receipts are the amount obtained following Steps 1 and 2 plus the revenue generated by the action for beneficiaries [and affiliated entities] other than non-profit organisations.

In-kind and financial contributions by third parties are not considered receipts.

The total eligible costs of the action are the consolidated total eligible costs approved by the Commission. The revenue generated by the action is the consolidated revenue established, generated or confirmed for beneficiaries [and affiliated entities] other than non-profit organisations on the date on which the request for payment of the balance is drawn up.

If there is a profit, it will be deducted in proportion to the final rate of reimbursement of the actual eligible costs of the action approved by the Commission.

### **Step 4 — Reduction due to improper implementation or breach of other obligations**

The Commission may reduce the maximum amount of the grant if the action has not been implemented properly (i.e. if it has not been implemented or has been implemented poorly, partially or late), or if another obligation under the Agreement has been breached.

The amount of the reduction will be proportionate to the degree to which the action has been implemented improperly or to the seriousness of the breach.

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<sup>13</sup> Article II.25 of the Model Grant Agreement

## 11.7. Reporting and payment arrangements<sup>14</sup>

### 11.7.1 Payment arrangements

The beneficiary may request the following payments provided that the conditions of the grant agreement are fulfilled (e.g. payment deadlines, ceilings, etc.). The payment requests shall be accompanied by the documents provided below and detailed in the grant agreement:

Payment request	Accompanying documents
A <b>pre-financing payment</b> corresponding to <b>60%</b> of the maximum grant amount	financial guarantee (see section 11.7.2) <sup>15</sup>
<b>Payment of the balance</b> The Commission will establish the amount of this payment on the basis of the calculation of the final grant amount (see section 11.6 above). If the total of earlier payments is higher than the final grant amount, the beneficiary will be required to reimburse the amount paid in excess by the Commission through a recovery order.	(a) final technical report (b) final financial statement (c) summary financial statement aggregating the financial statements already submitted previously and indicating the receipts (d) a certificate on the financial statements and underlying accounts <sup>16</sup>

Please note that the consortium will deliver an interim report not linked to a payment at mid-term of the project.

In case of a weak financial capacity, section 8.1 above applies.

### 11.7.2 Pre-financing guarantee

A pre-financing guarantee for up to the same amount as the pre-financing may be requested in order to limit the financial risks linked to the pre-financing payment.

The financial guarantee, in euro, shall be provided by an approved bank or financial institution established in one of the EU Member States. When the beneficiary is established in a third country, the Commission may agree that a bank or financial institution established in that third country may provide the guarantee if it considers that the bank or financial institution offers equivalent security and characteristics as those offered by a bank or financial institution established in a Member State. Amounts blocked in bank accounts shall not be accepted as financial guarantees.

The guarantee may be replaced by:

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<sup>14</sup> Articles I.4 And I.5 of the Model Grant Agreement

<sup>15</sup> The decision on the request of a financial guarantee will be taken by the Authorised Representative Officer of the Commission in line with the financial capacity assessment (section 8.1)

<sup>16</sup> The decision on the request for certificates on the financial statements and the threshold will be taken by the Authorised Representative Officer of the Commission during the evaluation of the proposal.

- a joint and several guarantee by a third party or,
- a joint guarantee of the beneficiaries of an action who are parties to the same grant agreement.

The guarantee shall be released as the pre-financing is gradually cleared against interim payments or the payment of the balance, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the grant agreement.

As an alternative to requesting a guarantee on pre-financing, the Commission may decide to split the payment of pre-financing into several instalments.

## **11.8. Other financial conditions**

### **a) Non-cumulative award**

An action may only receive one grant from the EU budget.

Under no circumstances shall the same costs be financed twice by the Union budget. To ensure this, applicants shall indicate in the grant application the sources and amounts of Union funding received or applied for the same action or part of the action or for its (the applicant's) functioning during the same financial year as well as any other funding received or applied for the same action.

### **b) Non-retroactivity**

No grant may be awarded retrospectively for actions already completed.

A grant may be awarded for an action which has already begun only where the applicant can demonstrate in the grant application the need to start the action before the grant agreement is signed.

In such cases, costs eligible for financing may not have been incurred prior to the date of submission of the grant application.

### **c) Implementation contracts/subcontracting<sup>17</sup>**

Where the implementation of the action requires the award of procurement contracts (implementation contracts), the beneficiary may award the contract in accordance with its usual purchasing practices provided that the contract is awarded to the tender offering best value for money or the lowest price (as appropriate), avoiding conflicts of interest.

The beneficiary is expected to clearly document the tendering procedure and retain the documentation in the event of an audit.

Beneficiaries may subcontract tasks forming part of the action. If they do so, they must ensure that, in addition to the above-mentioned conditions of best value for money and absence of conflicts of interests, the following conditions are also complied with:

- a) subcontracting does not cover core tasks of the action;

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<sup>17</sup> Articles II.10 and II.11 of the Model Grant Agreement

- b) recourse to subcontracting is justified because of the nature of the action and what is necessary for its implementation;
- c) the estimated costs of the subcontracting are clearly identifiable in the estimated budget;
- d) any recourse to subcontracting, if not provided for in description of the action, is communicated by the beneficiary and approved by the Commission. The Commission may grant approval:
  - (i) before any recourse to subcontracting, if the beneficiaries requests an amendment
  - (ii) after recourse to subcontracting if the subcontracting:
    - is specifically justified in the interim or final technical report and
    - does not entail changes to the grant agreement which would call into question the decision awarding the grant or be contrary to the equal treatment of applicants;
- e) the beneficiaries ensure that certain conditions applicable to beneficiaries, enumerated in the grant agreement (e.g. visibility, confidentiality, etc.), are also applicable to the subcontractors.

**d) Financial support to third parties<sup>18</sup>**

The applications shall envisage provision of financial support to third parties as outlined in section 2. In such case, the applications must include:

- an exhaustive list of the types of activities for which a third party may receive financial support out of the following fixed list:
  - support to artists in residence at companies or institutions in the digital and/or other sectors willing to promote novel uses of digital (travel, daily allowance, fees, cost of material).
  - support to artists for setting up of art installations or creation of art works pertinent in the context of the present call, e.g. art works that are an artistic unconventional appropriation of technology in tight collaboration with technology institutions or end-users of technology.
- the definition of the persons or categories of persons which may receive financial support out of the following categories:
  - Artists, that is, persons with degrees from an art institution or persons recognised as artists by their peers.
- the criteria for awarding financial support as follows:
  - Grantees have to answer to an open call launched.
 

Remark: artists can be named at proposal stage (not more than 25% of third party funding can be given to named grantees).
  - For the open call an evaluation committee must review the proposals and criteria must be established. The names of the minimum five members must be decided in agreement with EC

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<sup>18</sup> Article II.12 of the Model Grant Agreement

services. Members of the consortium can form part of this committee.

Remark: for launching the call and the evaluation, proposers can use the tools developed in [STARTS residencies](#)

- In case of a named artist, the proposal must provide sufficient detail on the nature of the activity performed and its pertinence for the goals of the project.

- the maximum amount to be granted to each third party and the criteria for determining it:

The amount of financial support per third party (in this call the artist) **must not exceed 40.000 EUR**. Hosting institutions do not receive funding and must provide access free of charge and commit to collaborate with artists.

## 12. PUBLICITY

### 12.1. By the beneficiaries

Beneficiaries must clearly acknowledge the European Union's contribution in all publications or in conjunction with activities for which the grant is used.

In this respect, beneficiaries are required to give prominence to the name and emblem of the European Commission on all their publications, posters, programmes and other products realised under the co-financed project. Clear links with STARTS must be established and the STARTS logo and graphical identity must be used.

To do this they must use the text, the emblem and the disclaimer available at [https://ec.europa.eu/info/resources-partners/european-commission-visual-identity\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/resources-partners/european-commission-visual-identity_en) and the STARTS logo and graphical identity available on request.

If this requirement is not fully complied with, the beneficiary's grant may be reduced in accordance with the provisions of the grant agreement.

### 12.2. By the Commission

With the exception of scholarships paid to natural persons and other direct support paid to natural persons in most need, all information relating to grants awarded in the course of a financial year shall be published on an internet site of the European Union institutions no later than the 30 June of the year following the financial year in which the grants were awarded.

The Commission will publish the following information:

- name of the beneficiary;
- address of the beneficiary when the latter is a legal person, region when the beneficiary is a natural person, as defined on NUTS 2 level<sup>19</sup> if he/she is domiciled within the EU or equivalent if domiciled outside the EU;
- subject of the grant;
- amount awarded.

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<sup>19</sup> Commission Regulation (EC) No 105/2007 of 1 February 2007 amending the annexes to Regulation (EC) No 1059/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a common classification of territorial units for statistics (NUTS), OJ L39, 10.2.2007, p.1.

Upon a reasoned and duly substantiated request by the beneficiary, the publication shall be waived if such disclosure risks threatening the rights and freedoms of individuals concerned as protected by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union or harm the commercial interests of the beneficiaries.

### **13. PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA**

If processing your reply to the call for proposals involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as your name, address and CV), such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC.

Unless indicated otherwise, any personal data requested are required to evaluate your application in accordance with the call for proposals and will be processed solely for that purpose by and will be processed solely for that purpose by Mr. Paolo Cesarini, Head of Unit, Unit I4 , Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology.

Details concerning the processing of your personal data are available on the privacy statement at:

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/data-protection-public-procurement-procedures\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/data-protection-public-procurement-procedures_en).

Your personal data may be registered in the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES) if you are in one of the situations mentioned in Article 136 of the Financial Regulation. For more information, see the Privacy Statement for the database of the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES) at :

[http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/explained/management/protecting/privacy\\_statement\\_edes\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/explained/management/protecting/privacy_statement_edes_en.pdf)

### **14. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS**

Proposals must be **submitted by the deadline** set out under section 3.

No modification to the application is allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. However, if there is a need to clarify certain aspects or to correct clerical mistakes, the Commission may contact the applicant during the evaluation process.

Applicants will be informed in writing about the results of the selection process.

Application forms are available at :

<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/news-redirect/684417>

Applications must be submitted in **the correct form** following the guidelines as outlined in section III.1 of the Grant Application Form duly completed and dated.

The application must be submitted in **one original paper copy** (no additional paper copies required) signed by the person authorised to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant organisation.

**An electronic version (pdf) of the application form and all documents on USB stick must be provided together with the printed original requested.** The electronic version (pdf) of the Grant Application Form must not be a scan of the paper version but must be searchable.

Where applicable, additional information considered necessary by the applicant may be included as an annex (brochures, etc.), but assessment will be based on information included in the application form (therefore please limit the number and size of additional documents and attachments).

Applications must be sent to the following address:

***European Commission***

***Directorate-General for Communications, Networks, Content & Technology***

***Directorate I – Unit I4 – Media Convergence and Social Media***

***Ref : CALL FOR PROPOSALS Connect/i.4/2020/4611098***

***For the attention of the Head of Unit (BU25 05/094)***

***B-1049 Brussels- Belgium***

- **by post<sup>20</sup>** (evidence will be constituted by the postmark), or
- **by courier service** (evidence will be constituted by the date to deposit slip), or
- **by hand-delivery.** It is compulsory for security reasons to address it to ***the central mail department of the Commission*** as follows:

*European Commission*

*Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content & Technology*

*Directorate I – Unit I4 – Media Convergence & Social Media*

***Ref : CALL FOR PROPOSALS Connect/i.4/2020/4611098***

***Avenue du Bourget, 1***

***B-1140 BRUSSELS (Evere), Belgium***

In this case, proof of submission of the proposal will take the form of a receipt signed and dated by the official of the Commission's central mail department who takes delivery of the documents. The department is open from 08.00 to 17.00 on Mondays to Thursdays and from 08.00 to 16.00 on Fridays. It is closed on Saturdays, Sundays and Commission holidays.

**In addition** to the above:

**-applicants must send an e-mail with a reference to the Call's title before the deadline set out under section 3** to the following email address: [CNECT-I4@ec.europa.eu](mailto:CNECT-I4@ec.europa.eu) to inform us about your submission on paper.

**Applications sent by fax or by e-mail will not be accepted.**

Please refer to the “Checklist” at the end of the Grant Application Form for the summary of documents to provide, format (searchable pdf, pdf scan, excel) and support (Original paper, copy or USB)

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<sup>20</sup> Applicants are advised to keep the payment receipt with date and time from the post office in order to be able to prove that the proposal has been sent within the deadline

➤ **Contacts**

Questions and requests for clarification may be sent to: [CNECT-I4@ec.europa.eu](mailto:CNECT-I4@ec.europa.eu) with a reference to the Call's title.

The Commission is not bound to reply to requests for additional information received less than six working days before the deadline for submitting applications set in section 3.

The answers will also be published in

➤ **Annexes:**

- Grant application form and its annexes
  - Checklist of documents to be provided
  - Estimated budget form
  - Legal entity form
  - Bank account form
  - BS and P&L Financial Capacity table
- Model Declaration of honour
- Model grant agreement and its annexe II

11/9/2020  
– (e-signed)  
– *Roland Buehrle*  
– Authorising Officer by sub-delegation  
– Directorate I

**Appendix**  
**Specific conditions for direct personnel costs**

**1. Calculation**

The ways of calculating eligible direct personnel costs laid down in points (a) and (b) below are recommended and accepted as offering assurance as to the costs declared being actual.

The Commission may accept a different method of calculating personnel costs used by the beneficiary, if it considers that it offers an adequate level of assurance of the costs declared being actual.

**a) for persons working exclusively on the action:**

*{ monthly rate for the person*

*multiplied by*

*number of actual months worked on the action }*

The months declared for these persons may not be declared for any other EU or Euratom grant.

The **monthly rate** is calculated as follows:

*{ annual personnel costs for the person*

*divided by 12 }*

using the personnel costs for each full financial year covered by the reporting period concerned.

If a financial year is not closed at the end of the reporting period, the beneficiaries must use the monthly rate of the last closed financial year available;

**b) for persons working part time on the action**

(i) If the person is assigned to the action at a fixed pro-rata of their working time:

*{ monthly rate for the person multiplied by pro-rata assigned to the action*

*multiplied by*

*number of actual months worked on the action }*

The working time pro-rata declared for these persons may not be declared for any other EU or Euratom grant.

The monthly rate is calculated as above.

(ii) In other cases:

*{hourly rate for the person multiplied by number of actual hours worked on the action}*

*or*

*{daily rate for the person multiplied by number of actual days worked on the action}*

(rounded up or down to the nearest half-day)

The number of actual hours/days declared for a person must be identifiable and verifiable.

The total number of hours/days declared in EU or Euratom grants, for a person for a year, cannot be higher than the annual productive hours/days used for the calculations of the hourly/daily rate. Therefore, the maximum number of hours/days that can be declared for the grant are:

*{number of annual productive hours/days for the year (see below)}*

*minus*

*total number of hours and days declared by the beneficiary, for that person for that year, for other EU or Euratom grants}.*

The ‘**hourly/daily rate**’ is calculated as follows:

*{annual personnel costs for the person*

*divided by*

*number of individual annual productive hours/days}* using the personnel costs and the number of annual productive hours/days for each full financial year covered by the reporting period concerned.

If a financial year is not closed at the end of the reporting period, the beneficiaries must use the hourly/daily rate of the last closed financial year available.

The ‘number of individual annual productive hours/days’ is the total actual hours/days worked by the person in the year. It may not include holidays and other absences (such as sick leave, maternity leave, special leave, etc). However, it may include overtime and time spent in meetings, trainings and other similar activities.

## **2. Documentation to support personnel costs declared as actual costs**

For **persons working exclusively on the action**, where the direct personnel costs are calculated following **point (a)**, the beneficiaries must keep time records for the number of hours/days declared. The time records must be in writing and approved by the persons working on the action and their supervisors, at least monthly.

For **persons assigned to the action at a fixed pro-rata of their working time**, where the direct personnel costs are calculated following **point (b)(i)**, the beneficiaries must keep

time records for the number of hours/days declared. The time records must be in writing and approved by the persons working on the action and their supervisors, at least monthly.

For **persons working part time on the action**, where direct personnel costs are calculated following **point (b)(ii)**, the beneficiaries must keep **time records** for the number of hours/days declared. The time records must be in writing and approved by the persons working on the action and their supervisors, at least monthly.

In the absence of reliable time records of the hours worked on the action, the Commission may accept alternative evidence supporting the number of hours/days declared, if it considers that it offers an adequate level of assurance.