



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
REGIONAL AND URBAN POLICY
Budget, Communication and General Affairs
Outermost Regions

CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2020CE160AT032

Pilot project for the safeguard and promotion of culture in the Outermost regions and the Overseas Countries and Territories

1. INTRODUCTION – BACKGROUND

Legal basis: Pilot project within the meaning of Article 58(2)(a) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 from appropriations in the 2020 budget as announced by Commission Decision C(2020)5518 of 17/08/2020. The European Union recognizes the specificities of its outermost regions - Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique, Mayotte, Reunion Island and Saint-Martin (France), the Azores and Madeira (Portugal) and the Canary Islands (Spain) - in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (article 349). Due to their remoteness and constraints as recognised in the Treaty, the EU outermost regions benefit from tailored support under EU programmes.

In this context, the European Union supports the outermost regions through a strategic partnership presented in the Commission Communication "A stronger and renewed strategic partnership with the EU's outermost regions" (COM (2017) 623 final). Located in the Indian Ocean, the Atlantic, the Caribbean basin, and South America, the outermost regions have a rich cultural heritage, deriving from their history - closely interconnected with continental Europe's – geography and contacts with many civilisations.

The Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs)¹, which are not part of the European Union, also have a rich cultural heritage. A number of these OCTs – which have an associate status recognised in the Treaty - are located in the neighbourhood of EU Outermost regions.

These regions' and countries' rich cultural diversity is, however, not very well known.

¹ The OCTs listed in Annex II to the TFEU and linked to Denmark, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom are: Greenland, New Caledonia and Dependencies, French Polynesia, French Southern and Antarctic Territories, Wallis and Futuna Islands, Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon, Saint-Barthélemy, Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, Sint Eustatius, Sint Maarten, Anguilla, Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, Montserrat, Pitcairn, St Helena Dependencies, British Antarctic Territory, British Indian Ocean Territory, Turks and Caicos Islands, British Virgin Islands, Bermuda.

Pursuant to the [New European Agenda for Culture of 2018](#), the European Union seeks to support culture and cultural diversity, in particular by promoting cultural participation, encouraging the mobility of professionals in the cultural and creative sectors, protecting and promoting Europe's cultural heritage, and raising awareness on common history and values. Promoting the role of Europe's cultural heritage was one of the goals of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 and of the European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage of the European Commission. In addition, the Council supports the protection and promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity in its Work Plan for Culture 2019-2022.

The EU is also committed to promoting culture in its international relations, in accordance with Article 167 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU. In this framework, the 2016 Joint Communication of the European Commission and the European External Action Service "Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations" aims at putting cultural cooperation at the centre of the EU's diplomatic relations.

This call intends to complement the Creative Europe programme, which provides opportunities to support the cultural sector. Indeed, data shows that outermost regions and OCTs have hardly benefitted from such opportunities². Despite efforts of the Creative Europe Desks, empiric evidence indicates that this can be related to lack of knowledge about Creative Europe, and also to limited capacity to compete to access funding from this programme, which is highly competitive.

In this context, the European Parliament has called for a pilot project (OJ 27 02 2020 L 57/1125) applying a "specific approach" for the safeguard and promotion of culture in these regions and countries by establishing a pilot project for a dedicated financial mechanism.

Investing in a dedicated and flexible scheme at EU level targeting artists and culture organizations and institutions of these regions, territories and countries could, therefore help overcome the existing lack of support to the local cultures and unleash the potential of the culture and creative sector, and, as such, contribute to promoting European Union identity and values. Furthermore, the COVID 19 pandemic has strongly affected the culture sector. This pilot project aims at enhancing support to cultural activities, including adaptation to the new context and limitations linked to the pandemic response such as social distancing. As such, the project should also contribute indirectly to the recovery of the tourism sector in regions and countries that are highly dependent on tourism (including cultural tourism and its sustainability). Finally, in connection with the European Commission priorities, this pilot project should also contribute to reducing the footprint of cultural exchanges on the environment, e.g. by exploring new ways of supporting such exchanges through virtual mobility.

² Under the Creative Europe programme 2014 to 2019, out of over 4 000 projects selected, only 7 projects involve the outermost regions. Although data are not available about the OCTs participation, the very low level of engagement of 3rd countries in this programme points to an even lower level of participation.

2. OBJECTIVES – THEMES – PRIORITIES

GENERAL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The proposal selected under this call will aim at testing a viable and efficient scheme to provide financial support to individual artists, groups of artists and culture organisations and institutions, as defined in article 11.8 d) of the present call, with the objective of “safeguarding, supporting and fostering the indigenous cultural richness of ORs and OCTs.” Such a scheme would act as a complement of existing mobility schemes available at local, regional and/or national levels.

The beneficiary will function as the secretariat for the implementation of the pilot project. As such, the beneficiary will launch calls for projects related to deliverables 1 to 3 in order to grant financial support to artists, groups of artists and culture organisations and institutions in the OR and the OCTs and monitor the implementation of these projects.

The beneficiary will also provide the European Commission with recommendations and lessons learned on how to effectively support culture in the OR and OCTs, drawing from the experience of the implementation of the pilot project and taking into account existing tools such as the Creative Europe programme.

The implementation of the pilot project will include the launch of calls for projects resulting in a minimum of 45 projects supported with a maximum amount of EUR 20,000 each. The amount of financial support per third party must not exceed EUR 10,000 for each individual artist and EUR 20,000 for cultural organizations or institutions.

The proposal should contribute to the aforementioned general objective by addressing the 4 specific objectives below.

Specific Objective N°1 -Implementation of activities to safeguard, support, foster and promote local and indigenous culture, popular arts and practices as well as the ancestral culture of OR and OCTs

Under this objective, the beneficiary is expected to launch and manage calls for projects to support projects that **safeguard/support/foster/promote indigenous culture, popular arts and practices**, and thus contribute to improving knowledge about local cultures.

Under this objective, the role of digital technologies in supporting culture should also be explored as a way to build resilience against crisis limiting social proximity and to ensure sustainability and a broader outreach.

Expected results:

Conferences, seminars, training activities, mapping projects, research and analysis papers, exhibitions as well other relevant small scale events real or virtual such as creation of online platforms, awareness and dissemination actions, etc. about local culture, practices and traditions such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices,

rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, or the knowledge and skills required for traditional crafts.

Such activities should also aim at increasing local actors' capacity to safeguard, support, foster and promote culture and cultural identity, notably in terms of access to funding opportunities. A proportion of the budget dedicated to this objective should be reserved to projects promoting the use of digital technology.

Specific Objective n°2 - Implementation of activities to improve cultural dialogue and exchanges amongst OR and OCTs and across the European Union.

Under this objective, the beneficiary is expected to launch and manage call(s) for projects to support exchanges and cooperation projects for the promotion, safeguard and improvement of knowledge about OR and OCTs' local cultures.

Under this objective, the role of technology in supporting virtual mobility should also be explored as a way to: build resilience to crisis that limit mobility; reduce the footprint of mobility linked to cultural exchanges and thus increase sustainability; and to ensure a broader outreach. A proportion of the budget dedicated to this objective should be reserved to projects promoting the use of digital technology.

Expected results:

Exchanges of cultural experiences among the OR, between OR and OCTs and across the European Union through actions such as mobility of artists/groups of artists and/or creative works in the framework of projects, the creation and development of networks, exchanges of good practices, twinning of institutions, virtual mobility (e.g. live recording and streaming) to promote culture and intercultural dialogue, resulting in increased knowledge about cultural diversity and establishing bonds between communities.

Specific Objective N°3- Implementation of activities to promote the dissemination of cultural and creative works.

Under this objective, the beneficiary should organize call for projects supporting small exhibitions and/or cultural shows aimed at promoting the OR's and the OCT's culture across OR, OCTs and continental European Union.

Such initiatives should aim at defining and illustrating the cultural specificities of the OR and OCTs and /or their historical links with the EU Member States, thus contributing to the safeguard and promotion of their culture. Such initiatives are to be organized in tandem with events supported by the European Union involving the OR and/or the OCT's to benefit from the large attendance at these events to raise the visibility and the knowledge about these regions and countries. The organisation of such small exhibitions or cultural shows should encompass the use of digital technology.

Expected results:

Organization of small exhibitions and/or a cultural shows from (some) ORs or (some) OCTs in tandem with events supported by the European Union aimed at increasing the knowledge and visibility of the cultural heritage of OR and OCTs.

Specific Objective n°4 - Analysis and Recommendations on the funding opportunities for the mobility of artists and/or cultural professionals

Building on the experience and lessons learnt from the implementation of this project, the beneficiary is expected to provide recommendations to the European Commission on how to further support OR and OCTs' culture, with reference to existing tools and programmes such as the Creative Europe programme.

Expected results:

An annex to the final report including feedback from beneficiaries and other stakeholders; providing recommendations to the European Commission on how to support culture in the OR and OCTs, identifying/exploring synergies with existing policies and programmes as a way to build local actors' capacity to benefit from various EU policies and programmes.

Minimum elements to be included in the proposal:

In addition to the elements required by this call for proposals, the applicants shall indicate in their proposals the organizational framework to deliver the pilot project and all necessary arrangements to manage the pilot project in compliance with the objectives of the call and the applicable legal framework, including the following:

- An implementation plan and timetable of the project presenting the time and sequence of implementation of the various activities.
- The organisation details/geographical coverage/sequence of the calls for projects needed to implement the objectives of the pilot project, following one of the two options below:
 1. Three calls during the pilot project: first call on objective 1; second call on objective 2, third call on objective 3.
 2. Two calls during the pilot project: first call on objectives 1, 2 and 3; second call on objectives 1, 2 and 3;
- The estimated number of beneficiaries/number of projects to support and the proposed budget to be assigned to each objective. The budget assigned to each objective should be at least EUR 200,000 for each of objectives 1 and 2 and at least EUR 100,000 for objective 3.
- The methodology to implement the full cycle of the project selection and support, including publication of the calls for projects, reception, evaluation and selection of applications, signature of the grant agreements with the applicants, support to project implementation, monitoring and evaluation, ensuring financial management and project closing and reporting. This should include the methodology to ensure that the pilot project provides ample opportunity for potential beneficiaries to apply for funding the number, sequence and scope of the calls for projects.
- A communication and information strategy for the dissemination of funding opportunities under this pilot project and a methodology for the dissemination of information on the results (e.g. promotional material, photos and video recording of

testimonials, statistics on the use of communication channels, communication campaigns, etc.) among beneficiaries and stakeholders.

- A light reporting system to collect data on the individual financial support awarded per region and per theme and to collect feedback from the beneficiaries and other stakeholders about the benefits, synergies, lessons learnt, as well as difficulties. The data will support the recommendations to be provided to the Commission in the final report.
- A minimum of 55% of the total budget should be allocated to financial support to third parties and personnel costs cannot go beyond 25% of the total budget.

Elements requiring formal validation by the European Commission during project implementation

The beneficiary is expected to work in close contact with the European Commission throughout the project implementation process. In particular, the following elements will have to be validated by the Commission prior to their implementation:

- The text of the calls for projects, including the text of all material prepared to assist the third parties in submitting their applications.
- The nomination of the call for projects' evaluation committees. A representative of the Commission may take part in these committees as an observer.
- The call for projects' evaluation reports, including the final list of thirds parties selected to benefit from financial support.
- The contents of the communication campaign.
- Changes in the team dealing with the implementation of the call.

3. TIMETABLE

	Steps	Date and time or indicative period
(a)	Publication of the call	<i>14th September 2020</i>
(b)	Deadline for submitting applications	<i>16th November 2020</i>
(c)	Evaluation period	<i>November – December 2020</i>
(d)	Information to applicants	<i>January 2021</i>
(e)	Signature of grant agreement(s)	<i>February 2021</i>

4. BUDGET AVAILABLE

The total budget earmarked for the co-financing of projects under this call for proposals is estimated at **EUR 1 000 000**.

The Commission expects to fund one proposal.

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 (see section 14), using the application form available at http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/newsroom/funding-opportunities/calls-for-proposal/ and
- drafted in one of the EU official languages.

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

6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

6.1. Eligible applicants

Proposals may be submitted by any of the following applicants:

- non-profit organisations (private or public);
- public authorities (national, regional, local);
- international organisations;
- universities;
- educational institutions;
- research centres.

Natural persons are not eligible.

For UK applicants: Please be aware that following the entry into force of the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement³ on 1 February 2020 and in particular Articles 127(6), 137 and 138, the references to natural or legal persons residing or established in a Member State of the European Union are to be understood as including natural or legal persons residing or established in the United Kingdom. UK residents and entities are therefore eligible to participate under this call.

Country of establishment

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

- EU Member States, including EU Outermost regions;
- Overseas Countries and Territories.

Supporting documents

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

³ Agreement on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community

- **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 ;
- **entities without legal personality:** documents providing evidence that their representative(s) have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf.

6.2. Eligible activities

The beneficiary is expected to manage the financial support to third parties in the creative and cultural fields, from the selection of applicants to the supervision of the implementation of projects for all the related administrative aspects. The following types of activities are eligible under this call for proposals:

- The activities indicated under section 2 “Expected results” of objectives 1, 2 and 3 of this call;
- Financial support to third parties (see point 11.8. d));
- Studies and analysis.

Implementation period

- activities may not start before the signature of the grant agreement;
- the duration of the project is of **24 months**.

Applications for projects scheduled to run for a longer period than that specified in this call for proposals will not be accepted.

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 7.4), 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.

The same exclusion criteria apply to affiliated entities.

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

7.4. Supporting documents

Applicants and affiliated entities must provide a 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/regional_policy/en/newsroom/funding-opportunities/calls-for-proposal/.

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

For mono-beneficiary grants:

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

For multi-beneficiary grants:

- (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 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

EITHER

- 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;

OR

- the table provided for in the application form, filled in with the relevant statutory accounting figures, in order to calculate the ratios as detailed in the form.

- c) Grants for an action $>$ EUR 750 000 or operating grants $>$ EUR 100 000:

- (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 years available must be provided.

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

In the case of legal entities forming **one** applicant (the "sole applicant"), as specified in section 6.1, the above requirements apply to each one of those entities.

On the basis of the documents submitted, if the Commission considers that 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 11.4 below);
- where applicable, require the joint and several financial liability of all the co-beneficiaries.

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

- curriculum vitae or description of the profile of the people primarily responsible for managing and implementing the operation (accompanied where appropriate, like in the field of research and education, by a list of relevant publications);
- the organisation's activity reports;
- an exhaustive lists of previous projects and activities performed and connected to the policy field of the actions to be carried out; this list must also include the geographic area where the projects are/have been carried out; an inventory of natural or economic resources involved in the project.

In the case of legal entities forming **one** applicant (the "sole" applicant), as specified in section 6.1, the above requirements apply to each one of those entities.

In addition:

Applicants must prove the capacity to work in EN, FR, ES, and PT.

Evidence : CVs of the people primarily responsible for managing and implementing the project.

Applicants must prove experience of project management in at least one OR and/or one OCT.

Evidence: proven past experience in projects of approximately the same magnitude (EUR 1 000 000) –or bigger- in at least one OR and/or one OCT.

Applicants must prove expertise in cultural policy. Minimum level of capacity: applicants must have proven experience of at least 5 years in cultural policy and cultural cooperation in projects of similar magnitude. Basis for assessment: this criterion applies to the entities and to the individuals, i.e. the basis for the assessment are the combined experience of the applying entities; and the combined experience of the team allocated to the project from all involved entities. Evidence: the contracting authority will assess the lists of the projects of similar magnitude (EUR 1 000 000) carried by the applying entities in the last 5 years and CVs of the individuals ensuring these skills.

If, during the lifetime of the project, the composition of the proposed team should be changed, the **CVs of new team members** shall be submitted to the Commission and validated by the Commission before the new team members start working for the project (CV to follow standard model available here <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae>).

9. AWARD CRITERIA

Eligible applications/projects will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:	Maximum points
1. Relevance and European added-value of the project (<i>threshold 18 points</i>)	30
2. Overall quality of the proposals (<i>threshold 25 points</i>)	40
3. Outreach and dissemination of project (<i>threshold 9</i>)	15
4. Organisation of the project team (<i>threshold 9 points</i>)	15

1. Relevance and European added-value of the project (30 points – minimum threshold 18)

This criterion will evaluate:

- Relevance of the proposed action to respond to the objectives and expected results of the pilot project; i.e. to which extent the proposal corresponds to the objectives and results envisaged;
 - The European added value in terms of effectiveness, complementarity, and improved coordination ie to which extent the proposal improves access to financial support, resulting in greater knowledge, shared experiences and enhanced capacities to make better use of limited resources. The proposal should also demonstrate the upholding of European Union values related to culture such as nourishing mutual understanding and fostering diverse and inclusive societies, as foreseen in article 3 and 176 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and in The New [European Agenda for Culture](#) adopted by the European Commission in 2018;

- Innovative nature of the project in relation to reducing the footprint of culture mobility and use of digital technology to support cultural promotion and exchanges.

2. Overall quality of the proposals (40 points – minimum threshold 25)

This criterion will evaluate:

- Clarity, coherence, consistency, overall quality of the proposal; rationale of the proposed methodology and organisation, including the quality of the work plan and its monitoring;
- Cost effectiveness of the proposed activities;
- Sustainability of the project and in particular to which extent the proposed projects/activities are realistic and sustainable, reaching medium- or long-term results and there are possibilities for continuation of the project beyond the end of the support.

3. Outreach and dissemination of the project (15 points – minimum threshold 9)

This criterion will evaluate:

- Adequacy of the approach proposed for reaching out to beneficiaries;
- Relevance of the outreach activities and ties with the culture and creative sectors;
- Impact of the expected results.

4. Organisation of the project team (15 points – minimum threshold 9)

This criterion will evaluate:

- Organisation of work;
- Organisation of roles and assignments within the project team to prepare, implement and monitor the various aspects of the pilot project.

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 beneficiary or 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. These general conditions bind the beneficiary to whom the grant is awarded and shall constitute an annex to the grant agreement.

11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

11.1. Forms of the grant

11.1.1 Reimbursement of costs actually incurred

The grant will be defined by applying a **maximum co-financing rate of 95%** to the eligible costs actually incurred and declared by the beneficiary and its affiliated entities.

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

11.2. Eligible costs

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;
 - The period of eligibility of costs will start as specified in the grant agreement.
 - 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.

The same criteria apply to costs incurred by the affiliated entities.

Eligible costs may be direct or indirect.

11.2.1. Eligible direct costs

The eligible direct costs for the action are those 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 :

- (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.*

- (b) *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;*
- (h) *costs of financial support to third parties, provided that the conditions laid down in the grant agreement are met;*
- (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)

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 7% of the total eligible direct costs of the action, 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 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

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. 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 on the Infor-euro website available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/inforeuro/inforeuro_en.cfm

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

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

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

11.5. Calculation of the final grant amount

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.

If volunteers' work is declared as part of direct eligible costs, the final amount of the grant is limited to the amount of total eligible costs approved by the Commission minus the amount of volunteers' work approved by the Commission.

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.

11.6. Reporting and payment arrangements

11.6.1 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 pre-financing payment corresponding to 40	(a) At the signature of the grant

% of the maximum grant amount	
1 st interim payment(s) corresponding to 40 % of the maximum grant amount:	(a) Upon presentation of the interim report
Payment of the balance The Commission will establish the amount of this payment on the basis of the calculation of the final grant amount (see section 11.5 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) Upon presentation of final report and the annex to final report

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

11.6.2 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:

- 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.

11.7. 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

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.

Entities acting in their capacity as contracting authorities within the meaning of Directive 2014/24/EU or contracting entities within the meaning of Directive 2014/25/EU must comply with the applicable national public procurement rules.

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;
- 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

The applications may envisage provision of financial support to third parties. 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 activities indicated in section 2 “Expected results” for objectives 1, 2 and 3.

The definition of the persons or categories of persons which may receive financial support out of the following categories:

- Individual artists or cultural professionals legally residing in the Outermost regions or in the OCTs.
- Group of artists legally residing in the Outermost regions or in the OCTs.
- Cultural organisations or institutions, as defined in article 2 (1) of the Creative Europe Regulation⁴ legally residing in the Outermost regions or in the OCTs.

The criteria for awarding financial support is as follows:

- The financial support will be awarded through calls for projects, will comply with the requirements defined in section of 2 of the present call; in addition, it will have at least the following distinctive features:
 - Contribute to safeguard, promote and support local and indigenous culture, popular arts and practices as well as the ancestral culture of OR and OCTs.
 - Contribute to increase local actors’ capacity to access funding opportunities to support safeguard and promote local culture.

A proportion of the budget is to be reserved to projects promoting the use of digital technology as a way to build resilience against crisis, limiting social proximity, to ensure sustainability and a broader outreach.

The maximum amount to be granted to each third party and the criteria for determining it is as follows:

- The amount of financial support per third party must not exceed EUR 10,000 for each individual artist and EUR 20,000 for cultural organizations or institutions.

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.

⁴ Regulation (EU) No 1295/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 establishing the Creative Europe Programme (2014 to 2020) and repealing Decisions No 1718/2006/EC, No 1855/2006/EC and No 1041/2009/EC Text with EEA relevance

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.

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 level⁵ if he/she is domiciled within the EU or equivalent if domiciled outside the EU;
- subject of the grant;
- amount awarded.

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

The reply to any call for proposals involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CV). Such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data. Unless indicated otherwise, the questions and any personal data requested that are required to evaluate the application in accordance with the call for proposal will be processed solely for that purpose by DG REGIO – Budget and Financial Management.

Personal data may be registered in the Early Detection and Exclusion System by the Commission, should the beneficiary be in one of the situations mentioned in Articles 136 and 141 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046⁶. For more information see the Privacy Statement on:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/data-protection-public-procurement-procedures_en.

14. PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

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

⁵ 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.

⁶ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018R1046>

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/regional_policy/en/newsroom/funding-opportunities/calls-for-proposal/

Applications must be submitted in the correct form, duly completed and dated. They must be signed by the person authorised to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant organisation.

Applications must be submitted by email **in pdf format** to the following email address:

REGIO-CALL-A1-OCT@EC.EUROPA.EU

Evidence of submission by email will be constituted by date and time of receipt of the email with the application attached.

Where applicable, all additional information considered necessary by the applicant can be included on separate PDF documents.

Applications sent by fax or post mail will not be accepted.

Contacts

Any additional specific questions related to this call may be addressed to REGIO-CONTRACTS@ec.europa.eu. In order to ensure an efficient handling of any enquiry please indicate clearly the reference of this call for proposals.

The answers to the questions submitted will be published in the Q&A list at https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/newsroom/funding-opportunities/calls-for-proposal/ to ensure equal treatment of all potential applicants. Questions may be sent by to the above address no later than 10 days before the deadline for the submission of proposals

Annexes:

- Application form
- Checklist of documents to be provided
- Model grant agreement
- Financial and technical report template
- Template of Terms of reference for the certificate on the financial statements
- Declaration on honour