An Updated Quick Guide to EU Cooperation Projects

On 31 July 2014, the European Commission published a new call for proposals for Collaboration Projects within the Creative Europe Funding Programme. This Creatives’ Europe Quick Guide aims to provide an overview of this funding opportunity and give you the relevant information necessary to decide whether this may be interesting for you and your organisation.

Fact Check

- Who is funded?
  Projects by cultural organisations from different countries that encourage cross-border corporation through joint activities, the exchange of works, and/or people.

- What is funded?
  Joint innovative & creative cultural activities that create long-term cross-border collaboration; develop (new) audiences. Ideally with a component addressing:
  - capacity building (i.e. training),
  - digitisation &
  - new business models.

- Eligibility Criteria
  Viable, relevant, high-quality cooperation projects with:
  - partners in EU, EFTA, ENP+
  - existing for a min. of 2 yrs
  - with finance & operating capacity

- Grants
  Small Collaboration
  - No. of Partners: min. 3
  - Funding: max. EUR 200 000
  - Own contribution: min. 40%
  Large Collaborations
  - No. of Partners: min. 6
  - Funding: max. EUR 2 Mio.
  - Own contribution: min. 50%

- Deadline
  1 October 2014; 12:00 CEST

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Eligible Countries

Participating organisations need to have their legal seat in one of the following countries*:
- Albania
- Austria
- Belgium
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Georgia
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Ireland
- Israel
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lichtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Macedonia
- Malta
- Moldova
- Montenegro
- Morocco
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Serbia
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Turkey
- United Kingdom

Please check for updated list of eligible countries online before submitting.*

Eligibility - Do You Qualify for Funding?

This programme offers support for cultural cooperation projects by at least 3 partner organisations from at least 3 eligible countries. If you don't have any partners, or the activities you want to collaborate on cannot be defined as a ‘project’, don’t apply. If your project is mainly in the area of film, television or other audiovisual media, you should apply to the MEDIA, not the Culture strand of Creative Europe.

Who Can Apply?

Groups of organisations who:
- are active in the cultural & creative sector (usually non-profit or public)
- have their legal seat in an eligible country
- have been established as a legal entity for at least 2 years
- have the financial and operational capacity (no bankruptcy, not subject to legal investigations...*)
- have registered themselves on the ECAS portal and received a Participant Identification Code (PIC)

How Many Partners Do We Need?
- For a ‘smaller project’: at least 3 partners from at least 3 different, participating countries.
- For a ‘larger project’: at least 6 partners from at least 6 different, participating countries.

What Activities Are Funded?
- project activities (no operational funding)
- activities that help achieve the objectives & priorities of
  - collaborating across borders & promoting the exchange of works or people
  - contribute to audience development
  - are innovative & creative
  - support activities related to training, networking & capacity building for international careers
  - contribute to ‘European added value’*
  - ‘cultural activities’, which are not purely audiovisual

How much Money Can I Ask for? Do I need to Contribute?
- For a ‘smaller project’: a grant of up to €200,000; your own contribution has to be at least 40% of the total budget*
- For a ‘larger project’: a grant of up to €2,000,000; your own contribution has to be at least 50% of the total budget*

When & For How Long Can I Get Funding?

Projects cannot last longer than 48 months and most start between May (June for ‘larger’ projects) and December 2015.

* download our Detailed Guide for a full explanation
What is funded?

This call funds European cultural collaboration projects that help achieve the objectives & priorities of the Creative Europe Programme. To understand what is funded, it’s good to look at these objectives and the reasons behind them in some detail.

Fulfilling the Programme Objectives

The call lists three main reasons for funding collaboration projects:

1. to increase transnational activities
2. to increase the audiences
3. to promote innovation & development

To fulfil these objectives, projects need to:

- collaborate across borders,
- showcase activities in several countries &
- ensure that project participants and/or beneficiaries travel to other countries.
- invest in audience development, including international and minority groups
- improve access to their activities
- promote real interaction and engagement
- suggest new, creative and innovative activities
- develop their organisations e.g. through investing in digitisation, exploring new business models, or creating links with other sectors

Addressing the Programme Priorities

In addition to these objectives, projects will have to focus on one or more of the following priorities:

Capacity Building

- Training: providing cultural players with new skills, competences or know-how
- Career Internationalisation: helping cultural players to develop their activities and reach beyond their own country in the long-term
- Networking: connect people and organisations across borders to help them get access to international professional opportunities

Promoting Transnational Activities

- Supporting international cultural activities, or products (e.g. literature)
- Stimulate interest in European cultural works, products and heritage through promotion & audience development

Why does the EU Fund Culture?

Most people are familiar with the saying incorrectly attributed to Jean Monnet: ‘if we had to begin (the EU) all over again, we would start with culture’. And indeed, there’s a long EU tradition of giving (a little) money to cultural projects and organisations. For a long time, culture has been seen as a ‘soft factor of integration’ – with the power of bringing people together – and a means of showing Europe’s richness and diversity.

In order to contribute to the overall EU Strategy - Europe 2020 - the Creative Europe Programme adds another – highly important – motivation: “to strengthen the competitiveness of the European cultural and creative sectors […] with a view to promoting smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.” Art.3 Reg. 1295/2013

EU funding is therefore not support for creativity and artistic excellence. It’s a tool to promote European integration, highlight Europe’s rich diversity and drive economic development.

* download our Detailed Guide for a full explanation
How Your Project Is Evaluated - Award Criteria

If your project is eligible and handed in by the deadline, it will be assessed by at least two independent European experts. These are cultural professionals that have been chosen by the Executive Agency running Creative Europe (EACEA) on the basis of their expertise. This ‘external peer review’ aims to provide a fair and objective assessment.

Experts are asked to evaluate your proposal along detailed guidelines* including the following main criteria:

- **Relevance**: Relevance to the programme objectives and priorities
- **Quality of Content and Activities**: quality of activities, experience of organisations & staff, quality of implementation plan. A particular focus is put on how these activities will implement an audience development strategy.
- **Communication & Dissemination**: Quality of strategies & activities that help the project to maximise its European impact and that create awareness and results beyond the funding period.
- **Quality of Partnership**: Balance of partnership, quality of project management and coordination and extent to which the partnership can effectively implement the project and create sustainable results.

### Inspiration & Success Stories

As long as your project is eligible (page 2), helps achieve the programme objectives and addresses at least one of the priorities (page 3), you can suggest whatever activities you like.

There are some tried and tested formats you may want to know about - either to model your proposal on those who have been successful, or to avoid duplicating ideas.

### Suggested Activities & Formats

In its documents, the European Commission and Executive Agency provide a few examples of activities that could be proposed. These include:

- touring events
- joint exhibitions
- exchanging artefacts
- artistic and cultural exchanges, residencies
- festivals
- exchanges of staff & cultural players for training & knowledge exchange
- joint training sessions, workshops
- co-productions and co-commissions by cultural organisations from different countries
- promoting innovation through the use of digital technologies
- trying new business and management models for cultural organisations
- testing new approaches to audience development and engagement

### Successful Applicants

Checking the proposals of successful applicants is an excellent way of getting inspired. Unfortunately, the results of the first call for Collaboration Projects have not been published at the time of publication of this Quick Guide. Subscribe to our newsletter, Twitter of Facebook feeds to be kept informed of any updates.

In the meantime, it’s worth looking at the **brand new Creative Europe Dissemination Platform** which also lists projects from the previous programme: [http://bit.ly/ce-projects](http://bit.ly/ce-projects)

*download our Detailed Guide for a full explanation*
What Documents to Prepare for Submission?

All proposals have to submit electronically by the deadline:

✦ eForm (online form)
✦ Detailed project description
✦ Budget (use available template - incl. a printed, signed and stamped version)
✦ PIC number of all partners - can be acquired by registering in the participation portal and uploading:
  ✦ signed legal entity form (use available template) & annexes

In addition to the electronic submission, a paper & electronic copy (CD-ROM or USB) of the application needs to be send by post with a postmark/ registered mail receipt date serving as proof. It can also be delivered in person by 4pm on the day of the deadline.

All proposals have to submit on paper & on a CD-ROM/ USB stick:

✦ eForm (printed & pdf copy online form)
✦ Detailed project description
✦ Budget (use available template - incl. a printed, signed and stamped version)
✦ Cover Letter signed by project leader only
✦ Mandate Letters by all partners (use available template)
✦ Cooperation Agreement signed by all partners*
✦ Statutes of all partner organisations (proving their activity supporting their cultural (sub)sector; and min. 2 years in existence)
✦ Curriculum Vitae of the key personnel to be working on the project*
✦ Financial identification form (use available template - needs to be signed)

For grants of more than € 60 000

✦ signed declaration of honour → needs to be submitted with e-form & on paper plus CD-ROM/ USB-Stick
✦ activity reports of all partners of the last 2 years → to prove operational capacity
✦ financial capacity form from the project leader (use available template)*
✦ financial statements (balance sheet, profit & loss including annexes) for the last 2 years from the project leader → to prove financial capacity*

For grants of more than € 750 000

✦ audit report of all partners (?) by an approved external auditor for the last financial year available

* only required for private organisations, not for public bodies or international organisations
* if this is not considered satisfactory proof, the Commission may require a bank guarantee or offer the grant without pre-financing

* you can find sample documents and templates for these on our website
Getting help and further information

This guide gives only a brief overview – the aim is to help you understand the call and see if it may be relevant for you and your activities. While it is thoroughly researched and based on the latest information available at the time of publication, it cannot be held responsible for lack of details, changes in the funding programme or for summarising certain points for the sake of clarity.

If you would like to apply, make sure to read the detailed documentation provided by the European Commission or by the Creative Europe Help Desks which are currently being set up around Europe. We at Creatives’ Europe also publish a much more detailed guide, which can be downloaded for a small fee.

It’s also useful to talk to people who have submitted such a proposal before, to understand what works and what really counts in your application. At Creatives’ Europe, we can help you find someone to talk to. We also provide some templates and best practice examples for you to download and we’re working on a partner search.

On the Internet, there are many places to go – but to give you a starting point, we recommend to check:

✦ The Creative Europe desks in all EU Member countries (currently being set up)
✦ The Creatives’ Europe Resources, Guidelines, Partner Search and Expert support resources at http://creatives-europe.eu/category/resources/

Was this useful? Do you have comments or questions? Anything we can help you with? We’d love to hear from you via info@creatives-europe.eu, on Facebook or Twitter.

http://creatives-europe.eu/
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