

European Spaces of Culture: Call for Ideas Phase 3

Deadline: 19 June 2022

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1. European Spaces of Culture: Taking EU cultural relations to the next level

European Spaces of Culture (2019-2023) is testing innovative collaboration models in cultural relations between European and local partner organisations in countries outside the European Union. At the heart of the project lies a new spirit of dialogue, in which equality, mutual listening and learning represent the core values that help build trust and understanding between peoples. It was initiated by the European Parliament as a Preparatory Action and attributed to EUNIC by the European Commission.

The project contributes to the implementation and further development of the EU's strategic approach to international cultural relations by testing and evaluating innovative cultural relations work worldwide, gathering policy and practice recommendations and refining the concept of international cultural relations work. Over the course of three phases (2019-2021, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023) EUNIC has received funding from the European Commission (Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport, and Culture, EAC) to implement the project by means of three Calls for Ideas, of which this is the third.

The Preparatory Action and the resulting funded pilot projects aim to seek new ways of collaboration in cultural relations, following guiding principles which are enshrined in the EU's strategic approach to international cultural relations and the EUNIC Strategic Framework 2020-2024:

- Encourage people-to-people contacts through a bottom-up approach, based on local consultation and co-creation.
- Go beyond projection of the diversity of European cultures.
- Focus on the process as well as on outputs and outcomes: a spirit of dialogue, mutual listening and learning, where partners are on equal footing and engage in a joint capacity building process.

EUNIC's understanding of culture includes the arts, creative industries, development cooperation, digitalisation, education, gender, heritage, human rights, language and multilingualism, social inclusion, sports, sustainability, tourism, youth, and others.

More information about European Spaces of Culture, its objectives and information about the pilot projects previously and currently running in the Preparatory Action, can be found on europeanspacesofculture.eu.

2. Call for Ideas

The purpose of the Call is to redefine the idea of what Europe's international cultural relations can be, by finding and testing new innovative ideas for models of European Spaces of Culture or to replicate in other regions already identified models during the first phase (2019-2021) and second phase of European Spaces of Culture (2021-2022). The Call requires proposals to be co-created by local stakeholders (e.g., civil society organisations, local cultural actors, local authorities, intergovernmental organisations, etc.), EUNIC members and EU Delegations in the spirit of equal partnership. Applicants are encouraged to investigate transnational and transregional projects.

The Call has an envelope of **EUR 420,000** and is implemented in three steps:

Step 1 invites the EUNIC network, together with EU Delegations and local partners, to come together to submit innovative ideas for European Spaces of Culture.

At this stage, teams need to present a concept note of a locally relevant project idea that is co-created with partners and follows the principles of international cultural relations. This idea will be presented in the form of a concept note focusing on the broader picture of the proposal: local context and relevance, proposed partnership, aspects of innovation, and intended impact.

Step 2 shortlists project ideas that will be further developed into more detailed project proposals.

Shortlisted project teams will have four months to further define their partnership and proposal. At this stage, teams develop their idea into a project plan that includes more details about the partnership, concrete activity plan, and evaluation and communication strategies. In addition, project teams will have to demonstrate developments and learnings from the process after being shortlisted.

Step 3 selects project proposals that are implemented as funded pilot projects.

This step is the core of European Spaces of Culture, as now projects will be implemented on the ground. As European Spaces of Culture is also a policy development instrument, all projects are expected to contribute to the overall communication, evaluation, and advocacy efforts of European Spaces of Culture and therefore will be invited to participate in community and policy development activities.

Eligibility criteria

Eligible proposals include **any suitable project format**, focusing on arts, creative industries, development cooperation, digitalisation, education, gender, heritage, human rights, social inclusion, sports, sustainability, tourism, youth, and others. As preparatory activities for the project research, feasibility studies and capacity building initiatives are possible. With a view to learning from the Covid-19 pandemic, the Call is open to innovative digital or hybrid formats of cultural relations projects.

Pilot projects should take place between **1 January and 31 October 2023** and take place in **one (or more) non-EU country(ies)** – applicants are encouraged to investigate transnational and transregional projects.

Activities are based on the **principles of cultural relations** as reflected in both the EUNIC Strategic Framework 2020-2024 and the Joint Communication "Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations": building fair partnerships by practising mutual listening and learning and engaging in dialogue, co-creation, and joint capacity building.

Project team requirements:

- A minimum of **three Full EUNIC members** is required, with the exception in countries with limited EUNIC member presence. In such cases it must be made clear why the threshold of three EUNIC members is impossible to achieve. Both EUNIC members' headquarters and their local branches (direct or mandated) are

eligible. It is not required for EUNIC members to be structured in a cluster. When in doubt about whether a potential partner can participate in a project, do not hesitate to contact the EUNIC team.

- The project team must actively engage the **EU Delegation(s)** in the concerned country(ies). For countries where there is no EU Delegation established, the EEAS Headquarters could function as partner.
- A minimum of **three key local cultural partners**. Partners can be civil society organisations as well as public bodies.
- Project teams are furthermore encouraged to be as inclusive as possible and involve more local partners and other European actors that are not members of EUNIC.
- All partners are required to submit **written support letters** in the proposal.
- Organisations can be involved in **multiple applications at the same time**.

To ensure inclusive and shared ownership among the project partners from the start, the project teams are required to form a **shared coordination team** consisting of one full EUNIC member, the/an EU Delegation, and one key local partner. This coordination team will together form the first contact point for the EUNIC Office concerning the project.

For legal reasons, **only an affiliated EUNIC member can sign the funding agreement** with the EUNIC Office and consequently receive the funding on behalf of the entire project team. Affiliated members are those whose headquarters signed up with the EUNIC Office to the project European Spaces of Culture, see below. Bear in mind that this is purely an administrative role.

Affiliated entities: EUNIC members' branches eligible to be the signatory of the agreement

- Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs
- Wallonie-Bruxelles International
- Flanders Department of Foreign Affairs
- Czech Centres
- Danish Cultural Institute
- Estonian Institute
- Finnish Cultural and Academic Institutes
- Alliances Françaises
- French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs
- Institut français
- Goethe-Institut
- ifa – Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary
- Culture Ireland
- Società Dante Alighieri
- Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
- Lithuanian Culture Institute
- Arts Council Malta
- DutchCulture
- Camões, I.P.
- Romanian Cultural Institute
- Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- AECID
- Instituto Cervantes
- Swedish Institute
- British Council

Financial aspects

Applicants can request up to **EUR 60,000 in total**, with the possibility to spend maximum EUR 5,000 in Step 2. Teams can also choose to apply for the full amount for Step 3 only. Co-funding from the partners or any third party is not required but highly encouraged. Co-funding from the EU Delegation is not allowed. All applicants should submit a draft outline budget, already estimating the costs of potential implementation of the project. A budget template is provided to that end.

Eligible costs are those related to the project and its actions (honorariums for artists and experts, travel and accommodation, catering, rental of venues, printing material, etc.) including the hiring of external coordinators/consultants to carry out certain components of the project (studies, mapping of resources, PR/communication, etc.).

Costs not eligible are those related to the purchase of equipment, overhead costs (organisational costs unrelated to the project), the project partners' permanent staff costs, as well as costs related to the development of infrastructure. In-kind contributions cannot be included in the overall budget of the project.

Payment to shortlisted and selected teams will be made upon receipt of an invoice. All receipts related to project costs should be kept and made available for a possible audit. The partner signing the agreement will receive the payment on behalf of the project partners and is responsible for the correct financial administration of the project as well as the final reporting, unless otherwise agreed.

Selection criteria

Concept notes will be evaluated based on the following selection criteria and corresponding maximum points to be awarded. For the final application stage, the weight of the different criteria will change and lean more towards concrete activity plans and strategies for evaluation, impact, feasibility, and visibility.

| Criteria | Maximum points |
|---|----------------|
| <p>Relevance to local context</p> <p>The proposal describes the local context, including challenges, and its relevance to that context. The needs of the local target audiences, civil society, and/or cultural sector to be addressed are clearly identified, including considering the Covid-19 pandemic. The project description is convincing and target groups that are identified fit the objectives that are outlined. In conversation with the EU Delegation, the strategic importance of the project to wider EU priorities is made clear. Preferably, clear and specific links to the UN Sustainable Development Goals are made.</p> | 30 |
| <p>Innovation</p> <p>The proposed project brings new perspectives and processes to European collaboration through culture and goes beyond traditional one-off events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New concepts or ways of working with local cultural sectors, including digital cultural relations, based on local contexts and needs of local communities; • Equal partnerships with new stakeholders, or brought to a new level by a bottom-up approach and equality; • New ideas on entrepreneurship and sustainability; • New ways of strengthening culture as a vector to promote values such as artistic freedom (of expression), social cohesion and equality. | 25 |
| <p>Partnership set-up</p> <p>An inclusive approach is at the core of the design and implementation of the project. The proposal includes active inclusion, participation, and governance of all partners: EUNIC members, EU Delegation, local partners, and other stakeholders and ensures ownership by all. Other organisations or projects (e.g., international organisations, programmes) can also be partners in the proposal. The proposal clearly describes the added value and involvement of each partner. The proposal encourages involvement of other representations of EU Member States that are not part of the EUNIC network, where possible. Applicants are warmly invited to consider EUNIC's resources on Fair Collaboration when preparing their projects.</p> | 25 |
| <p>Impact foreseen</p> <p>The proposal states concrete, realistic and sustainable results and includes activities and expected results that will last beyond the timeframe of the project that clearly link back to the context and challenges described. Mid- or long-term impact on societies, local cultural scenes and other target groups are foreseen. The proposal creates opportunities for a continuous exchange and cultural dialogue and transfer of skills amongst the local target group.</p> | 20 |
| Total | 100 |

Selection process

The European Spaces of Culture team will carry out a first eligibility check of both the concept notes and the final applications. An **independent Selection Committee** will be established to evaluate the proposals in both steps and decide which ones will be shortlisted and selected for funding based on the selection criteria.

The Selection Committee will be composed of at least five persons (with the European Commission and EEAS joining as an observer) and established based on a set of criteria:

- Relevance of knowledge and expertise in the field
- Experience in evaluation of grant programmes
- Diversity of professional roles and profiles and lived experience with different parts of the world

The independent nature of the Selection Committee ensures concentration on quality and relevance to the overall objectives of European Spaces of Culture, but also relevance to local context.

All applicants will be informed about the decision directly after selection and will receive feedback on their proposal.

3. Timeline

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| Step 1 | 16 March 2022 | Launch of Call |
| | 19 June 2022 | Deadline for submission of concept notes |
| Step 2 | 11 July 2022 | Shortlisting of best ideas |
| | July – November 2022 | Project refinement towards final application (including Creative Lab for shortlisted ideas) |
| | 20 November 2022 | Deadline for submission of final applications |
| Step 3 | Mid December 2022 (TBD) | Selection of pilot projects |
| | January 2023 | Inception meeting with selected project teams |
| | 1 January – 31 October 2023 | Implementation of pilot projects |
| | January – October 2023 | Creative Lab with project teams |

4. Implementation of the project

The eligible implementation period for the pilot projects is from 1 January until 31 October 2023. The Spaces team at EUNIC must be informed of any unforeseen changes to the implementation of the project's activities, as well as of any changes in the budget as submitted in the application. When implementing the project, all partners are obliged to adhere to all communication requirements as set out in an agreement to be signed with EUNIC to receive the full awarded amount.

All project teams are required to follow a **Monitoring & Evaluation system**, to be developed together with EUNIC which will be based on the Monitoring & Evaluation toolkit as designed in the framework of the Preparatory Action. All project teams are required to prepare a final project report and final budget and follow the communication requirements to receive the full awarded amount.

5. How to apply

Documents required

The following documents need to be submitted:

- Concept note completed in English (see template)
- Estimated balanced budget completed in English and drawn up in EUR (see template)
- Support letters from all identified project partners (see template)
- > **Find all relevant documents for your application in the [EUNIC Google Drive](#).**

Those project teams shortlisted will be invited to submit a final application form with a more detailed project plan and budget for actual implementation in 2023. New templates will be shared at that point.

Submission

Please submit the complete application package by **Sunday, 19 June 2022 (at 23:59 CEST)** to spacesofculture@eunicglobal.eu. Note that only complete applications sent to the email address above before the deadline will be considered. All applicants will receive confirmation when the application form has been received.

EUNIC support

Do not hesitate to reach out the Spaces team at the EUNIC office in Brussels if you have any questions about the call or the application process by contacting Robert Kieft via Robert.Kieft@eunicglobal.eu or Roxane Schavoir via Roxane.Schavoir@eunicglobal.eu. The team will be available every week on Thursday 4 pm CET and Friday at 10 am CET in the [open consultation space](#) – feel free to enter with any question about European Spaces of Culture, the application process, or your brewing idea.

We encourage you to start working on your application as early as possible to be able to resolve any potential issues in time. Please also consult the [European Spaces of Culture Frequently Asked Questions](#) for any question you may have about the Call or the application process.

Webinars will be organised to inform the EUNIC network and the network of EU Delegations and their partners about the call and application process, including webinars dedicated to specific regions and in specific languages (in cooperation with EUNIC members' headquarters). These webinars will be listed [on the EUNIC website](#).

The team at EUNIC has developed the toolkit "Creating a spirit of dialogue" to guide aspiring project teams through some of the main aspects of project design, from identifying the local need to taking concrete steps to set up the partnership. It offers five main guiding questions that are recommended to be discussed and answered jointly by all collaborating partners and includes several thinking exercises and templates to help them develop their partnership and project idea. [Download the toolkit here](#). Please also explore the tools and framework that have been developed by an external expert group commissioned by EUNIC on [Fair Collaboration in cultural relations](#).

After the first selection, the Spaces team at EUNIC will organise a face-to-face workshop for the shortlisted project teams to dive into the collaborative process further, create community among the project teams and share practical pointers for preparing the detailed project plans towards the final application.