

We support arts and culture across wider Europe, by investing in creativity and boundary-crossing innovation.

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Introduction

Grants are at the core of our work. The connecting power of culture is essential for creating open, inclusive and democratic societies: for 'building Europe'. We are looking for projects that have the potential to inspire people to transcend boundaries in this process.

Our grants programme stimulates transnational cultural collaboration, artistic expression and the mobility of artists and cultural actors. Our various grants schemes relate to different ECF focus areas and to specific regions of the European continent.

All of our activities revolve around the three strategic guiding principles outlined below. Applications that tie in with these principles will receive a higher score in the assessment procedure.

Our guiding principles

1. Empowerment of People through Art and Culture – we want to support different communities in Europe and encourage the exchange and empowerment of under-represented groups.

We are interested in:

- **diversity within our societies:** projects that reduce exclusion and conflict by bringing people together; projects that target new audiences and create new places for showcasing culture.

2. Connecting Sources of Knowledge – we think sharing and connecting knowledge is vital in creating an open Europe.

We are interested in:

- **cross-sectoral and cross-generational online and offline collaborations:** projects that try out innovative and creative partnerships to develop/produce new

work, broaden knowledge-sharing and public participation, as well as experiment with new technologies.

3. Linking Policy and Practice – we are interested in projects that help build this open Europe by contributing to cultural policy development locally, nationally, regionally and at European level.

We are interested in:

- **Impacting on European cultural policy:** projects that actively contribute to policy and practice; that connect a local perspective to the European level; also projects that bring cultural and political players together in new ways, and that raise awareness and help prove the value of cultural policy.

Eligibility Criteria

Collaboration grants fund transnational, cross-sectoral activities by artistic and cultural organisations working together or with organisations from other sectors. Applications must be in line with all the eligibility criteria. Please read these carefully, as proposals which do not meet the criteria will not be considered.

1. Who is eligible?

- **Lead applicant:** independent artistic or cultural organisation based in Europe
- **Partnering applicant:** organisations from the cultural or other sectors.

Further explanation of lead applicant and partnering applicant organisation

- The main applicant must be a cultural or artistic independent organisation from Europe. We also welcome cross-sectoral cooperation: the main applicant can collaborate with partners from their same field and/or with transnational partners from other sectors. In other words, the leading cultural organisation can decide to develop a partnership with, for example, an environmental organisation, an activist group or an academic body.

Please note: organisations may participate once as a main applicant and once as a partner organisation for the same grants round. This means that one applicant may be involved in two different projects for the same funding round. Project applications involving organisations partnering in more than two projects, in the same grants round, will be excluded.

2. What is eligible?

There are six different eligibility criteria. All of them are equally important to us, which is why applications *must* be in line with all eligibility criteria. Please read them carefully. Proposals that do not meet these criteria will not be considered.

Partnership working methodology

- Transnational collaboration in Europe is the key phrase for this grants scheme. Projects are selected first and foremost on both their transnational and collaborative aspects. We need to see the transnational collaboration reflected in your entire application form. This means that project partners must be involved in all aspects of the project; working together on the planning, the development and the realisation. This also implies that all partners should contribute financially to the project (note that we also consider in-kind contribution as financial support).

Cultural focus

- The project should have a strong cultural objective and a concrete end product. In this sense, we support a variety of activities: the creation of artistic work, media projects or cultural policy development, including capacity-building of cultural actors.

European dimension

The project must be organised by a cultural organisation in Europe (following the [Council of Europe](#)'s definition, which comprises 47 countries). As we also encourage cooperation with the southern European region, projects partnering with Mediterranean countries are also eligible, as long as their content relates centrally to European cross-border cooperation. (Indeed, this is true for *all* projects we support.) By 'Mediterranean countries' we refer to Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia.

Sustainability

- The project must have a clear end-result that can be evaluated.
- Ideally, the project is a starting-point for sustainable cooperation between the partners.

Time frame

- Project activities should only start after we have made our funding decision (please check the exact planning for this grant scheme on the [ECF grants website section](#)).
- The project must be completed 18 months after the contract has been signed.

Financial

- ECF can support up to 80% (max) of the total budget. We encourage applicant organisations and their partners to demonstrate their own contributions and to apply to other funders. This should be shown in the budget outline.
- ECF provides an average collaboration grant of Euro 15 000. The maximum grant awarded is Euro 30 000.
- ECF specifically welcomes the involvement of local funding partners, as we believe this helps embed the project within the local context.
- ECF may select your project even if your remaining budget has not yet been secured when you are applying. Payment of the grant will be conditional on an agreed percentage of other funding having been secured at least one month before the start date of your project.

What we don't fund

We don't fund the activities listed below. Please read them carefully. No exceptions will be made. If your project is not eligible, we recommend you to look at [LabforCulture](#) for suggestions of other funding sources.

Investment of grant

- Operating costs of an organisation's regular activities
- Touring/exhibition of an existing work
- Production costs of a one-off performance or art work
- Awards, competitions or residencies
- Independent literary works, translations or running costs of an ongoing series of publications or cultural reviews (publications documenting your collaborative project, however, may be included in your application)
- Projects that rely entirely on ECF funding.

Nature of collaboration

- Organisations without committed partners
- Bilateral or local projects lacking a European dimension
- Projects in which the main applicant consists of: student bodies, commercial organisations, state institutions, amateur organisations, or organisations focusing primarily on education, religion or heritage
- Independent cultural or artistic organisations applying more than once as main applicant and/or more than once as project partner in a given grant round.

Focus of the project

- Activities that focus only on the academic sector or represent traditional approaches to research and education (e.g. school/university exchanges, scholarships, research or education programmes firmly located within a traditional institution)
- Institutional approaches to arts education or art therapy
- Folkloric events and projects that focus on conserving European heritage
- Initiatives based solely on tourism.

How we assess the applications

After the deadline is closed, the eligible applications are first evaluated by the grants team. The pre-selection is distributed among a group of external advisers, who come from all over Europe and have different fields of expertise. Each proposal is assessed by two advisers. After this assessment, ECF decides which projects it will support and the amount of each grant. Both awarded and rejected applicants are notified by e-mail around 5-8 weeks after the deadline. Decisions are final.

Want to apply? Go to the [grant application form](#)