

European Spaces of Culture

Frequently Asked Questions

This FAQ document accompanies the third European Spaces of Culture Call for Ideas and answers some of the questions often received in the previous two application rounds, mostly concerning the eligibility criteria, financial aspects, and the partnership. If you don't find your question listed, do not hesitate to contact the team at the EUNIC office directly:

Robert Kieft

robert.kieft@eunicglobal.eu

+32471917003

Roxane Schavoir

roxane.schavoir@eunicglobal.eu

To help and inspire project teams from the very first steps of their thinking towards project ideas, EUNIC has developed a project idea design toolkit “Creating a spirit of dialogue”, guiding through some of the main aspects of project design in preparation for the concept note to be delivered. The toolkit offers main guiding questions which we recommend should be discussed and answered jointly by all collaborating partners, including thinking exercises and templates to help you develop your partnership and project. [Find the toolkit here.](#)

Partnership

Who should be leading the project and what does the ‘coordination team’ mean?

With European Spaces of Culture, one of the main characteristics we strive for is that projects are carried out by a partnership that is based on complementarity, equality, and shared ownership among the local and European partners. In this third Call for Ideas, we therefore ask for not one project team member to take a leading or coordinating role, but a team of three: one partner coming from the EUNIC side, one local partner and the EU Delegation. This will ensure a broad ownership from the very start of the process. The coordination team will function as first point of contact with the EUNIC office and will together transfer all relevant information to the rest of the team. This does not mean that the three coordinating partners take a leading role in terms of decision making or curating the project. This should be an effort of all partners concerned.

To what extent should each partner be involved in the project?

Each partner should have a clear role and responsibility and the partnership should be based on equity and complementarity. All partners are involved in the design, preparation, and implementation of the project from the start, as well as the evaluation. This does not mean all should share the same amount workload, but all should feel a shared ownership of the project. Each partner brings in its own contribution by applying its expertise or network. This should be explained in the application. The project design toolkit offers tools and exercises to discuss and determine who brings in what into the project and partnership.

Who receives the funding on behalf of the project team?

Only a Full EUNIC member (headquarter or local branch) can act as formal beneficiary in the team. This means one of the EUNIC partners should be appointed to sign the agreement with the EUNIC office to receive funding. For legal reasons, the EUNIC office can only subgrant an affiliated entity of the project. 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

Who can be local partners?

The local partners are crucial when exploring the local context and identifying needs and challenges to be addressed by the project, and therefore should be involved from the very start of the design and planning of the project. They can come from a wide range of types of organisations that have their roots and are operating in the host country or region, be they civil society organisations in the field of arts, culture, education, etc., interest groups, associations, etc., or public bodies, like local or regional authorities. Furthermore, it should be a legal entity.

How should the EU Delegation be involved in the project? Do they just agree on the proposal after the project team has drafted it, or should they have to co-build the proposal with the project team? Is it just an administrative participation or a deeper involvement?

The European Spaces of Culture project is there to test how the different partners can work together on equal basis. It is therefore important for all partners, including the EU Delegation, to be involved from the start. This involvement can go in many ways and intensities, depending on their capacity and experience.

The EU Delegation can be an active partner in drafting the project idea, it can play a role in communication, promotion, and advocacy, or one of networking and bringing in interesting partners, as it often has a different network than the cultural institutes. It could also take up an advising role and can place a project in wider EU strategy or policy development, for instance. The EUD is not bound by a national culture or agenda to promote, rather ambassadors of EU values and EU-wide topics, bringing in a wide perspective to be tailored to what's needed on local level. It can be involved as an extra ambassador of the project to give the project more EU presence, which can often help to open doors that otherwise stay closed. In transnational projects, the (regional) network of EU Delegations can also help to make connections across borders.

Because of the internal structure of EU Delegations, it is recommended to involve different divisions at the same time, such as Development as well as Press & Information.

One of the eligibility criteria is involving at least three EUNIC members in the project. Are these members of EUNIC at headquarters' level or of individual clusters?

The EUNIC members involved can include both members locally based and those at headquarters' level. As the projects should take place in countries outside of the EU, it will mostly be members locally based teaming up together as well as with the EU delegation and local organisations, as they have the local networks. But headquarters may

also initiate or be involved in a project. Moreover, EUNIC members are not required to be formally established in a EUNIC cluster when submitting a proposal.

Can clusters' associate members also be involved in the project?

Some cluster members are indeed formally associate members but could be full members if they receive a mandate. Headquarters of EUNIC members may nominate a representing entity to act on their behalf as a full member in a cluster. This representative can be the embassy of their country or a different entity acting on the EUNIC member's behalf. Some other associate members of a cluster – embassies or cultural institutes of non-EU countries, such as Switzerland or Norway – can participate in the project but are not counted as EUNIC partners. Please contact your headquarters, or the EUNIC team, to verify if a partner can partake in the project.

Is there a limit of EU partners to the project?

There is no limit to the number of partners involved, but the balance of the partnership between European and local partners should be always kept in mind.

Do we need to be a cluster?

No, if there are three Full EUNIC members involved you meet the criteria of three EUNIC members. In some countries there is no formally established cluster, but some EUNIC members do work together, and they can also submit a proposal for European Spaces of Culture, as long as they adhere to the partnership criteria and work together with the EU Delegation and local partners. Pilot projects from the first two phases have included numerous countries where no cluster was established – in fact, in some cases the project was a starting point to establishing one!

Financial aspects

How does It work with the two-step funding?

You can apply for a maximum of 60,000 euros for the entire project, of which a small portion, up to 5,000 euros, can be requested for activities in Step 2, the project refinement stage. As an example, if you apply for 5,000 euros for this step and you are shortlisted to go to the next round, it will leave you with 55,000 euros to be applied for in your final application (or if you apply for 3,000 euros, it will lead you with 57,000 euros, etc.). You can choose not to apply for anything in Step 2 and have the opportunity to apply for the full amount for project implementation, if your final application is selected.

What if we don't need the maximum of 60,000 euros for our project?

You are not required to apply for the maximum amount of 60,000 euros. Applying for less will not diminish your chances either, as long as your budget is realistic and in coherence with the project activities as proposed. However, keep in mind that European Spaces of Culture offers opportunities to perhaps think bigger than with other projects, e.g., EUNIC Cluster Fund projects.

Does the project need to be co-financed, or can it be exclusively financed by the European Spaces of Culture budget?

No co-financing is required for these projects, but highly recommended. The maximum contribution from the Spaces budget is 60,000 euros for each project, but for an ambitious project, this is often not enough. Experience shows that most European Spaces of Culture projects do seek additional funding. Such additional funding can come from EUNIC members, or local or national public or private sources. Note however that an EU Delegation cannot co-finance a European Spaces of Culture project (see next question).

Co-financing: Is it possible to connect European Spaces of Culture with other EU funding sources?

Other funding from EU sources, for instance a financial contribution from the EU Delegation or from any EU funding programme, is considered double funding and therefore not allowed. If your idea is selected for Step 2, but not for Step 3, of course we encourage you to look for EU funding for implementation of the project at a later stage, to keep momentum of the work done thus far.

Proposal

In which language should the concept note be written?

The concept note and all other application documents should be written in English. Feel free to translate and work on the documents in the language most suitable for your partners when drafting them together, but the final submission should all be in English.

Is there a character limit for the application?

For each section in the concept note, there is a character limit that is indicated in the question. Make use of this space, but be as concrete and direct as you can, as the Selection Committee will have quite a number of applications to read. The character limits have been expanded compared to the previous application rounds.

In the concept note, in the “Activities and timeline (Step 2)” section, are the details only meant for Step 2?

Yes. In this section you enter only the activities you foresee for Sep 2, the refinement phase of the project. If shortlisted, you will be expected to reflect on those activities and the progress and achievements made in this phase. These reflections will be integral part of the final application and selection.

Should projects be designed to be transferrable to other countries or contexts?

One of the objectives of European Spaces of Culture is to test innovative models of collaboration between EUNIC, the EU and local stakeholders that are considered best practice in international cultural relations. These models – be they based on content, methodology or partnerships – would ideally be transferrable to other countries, have the potential to be upscaled, but at the same time be translatable in a completely different context. This is something to be kept in mind when drafting your proposal.

Should the EU Delegation/ EU ambassador sign the support letter from partners?

The EU Delegation should indeed submit a support letter. It is not necessarily the EU Ambassador who signs, and the letter should not be seen as a legal document. It demonstrates that the EU Delegation supports and participates in the project, with its role to be described in the concept note and – if shortlisted – in the final application. If the EU Delegation, or any other partner, wishes to alter the wording in the support letter, please contact the Spaces team at EUNIC.

Can partners be involved in different applications at the same time?

Partners can be involved in multiple applications at the same time, as part of the coordination team or as regular partner.

Are multiple applications from the same country or city allowed?

Yes, it is allowed to submit several concept notes for different projects from the same cluster or country, involving the same or different partners. Keep in mind that it will be highly unlikely that more than one proposal per country will be shortlisted, given the considerably competitive nature of European Spaces of Culture.

If selected

What are the next steps when our idea is selected?

If your proposal is selected, you will be invited to submit a follow-up proposal in Step 2. The follow-up proposal should include more details about concrete activities, more details about your partnership and different roles and responsibilities, as well as a detailed monitoring & evaluation scheme and communication strategy. A new application form will be provided to this end and explained to all project partners involved, during a meeting directly following the selection. The follow-up proposal should be submitted by 20 November 2022. An agreement will be signed between EUNIC and the EUNIC member submitting the proposal for the period until the submission of the follow-up proposal, for the amount requested in the initial proposal for this period. This agreement sets out the process and responsibilities of both parties involved.

What about the Creative Labs for selected teams?

All shortlisted project teams will be invited to participate in the Creative Lab, foreseen to take place live in Brussels around the end of September 2022. At the Creative Lab, project teams will share among themselves and with European Spaces of Culture alumni, work on their follow-up proposals, and discuss together how they can design their project towards the final application. One participant per project team can be reimbursed by EUNIC, but it is strongly encouraged to include more participants per team (representatives from EUNIC, EU Delegation and local partners). Invitations to the Creative Lab in September 2022 will be sent to all project teams right after the shortlisting is done. A second Creative Lab in 2023 will bring together the project teams that are ultimately selected to implement their project in 2023.

What happens if we don't spend the amount we were awarded for Step 2?

The amount requested for Step 2 is maximum 5,000 euros. Keep in mind that this period is useful to further develop the project proposal, travel and meet partners, conduct research or consultancies and therefore must have meaning for the project to be implemented, if selected. However, this is optional. It could be possible that you don't need funding this the further development and you would rather apply for the full maximum of 60,000 euros for implementation.

What happens when a contact person changes jobs and leave the project after it being shortlisted?

It is quite common for both EUNIC members and EU Delegations that staff rotations take place during the preparations or implementation of projects. This however should not affect the project. Project partners will have the responsibility to hand over relevant information and insights into the running idea or project when new staff arrives. Regular information flow between all project partners is key in this. Setting up a shared online working space will also help keeping the information flow going with new arrivals. In the event one of the contact persons from the coordinating team leaves, the EUNIC office should be informed about the new colleague.

What about the Covid-19 pandemic, how does the project mitigate its effects?

It is unlikely that the Covid-19 pandemic and any measures taken by governments will have zero effect on the course of the implementation of projects. Project teams are therefore invited from the start to consider any potential risk and think of possible hybrid or fully digital formats for their project idea, that would fit the local context with possible limitations to travel and physical events. If selected projects are hindered in their implementation because of the ongoing crisis, solutions to alter programming and activities will be discussed and sought together with the European Spaces of Culture team at EUNIC.