



# **EU4CULTURE II – SUSTAINABLE CREATIVE ECOSYSTEMS**

## **GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

RESTRICTED CALL FOR PROPOSALS: SUPPORTING THE  
INTERNATIONALISATION COMPONENT OF THE EU4CULTURE II  
PROGRAMME

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                                          |           |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>List of abbreviations .....</b>                       | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>Quick guide for applicants.....</b>                   | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>1. About EU4Culture and Call for Proposals .....</b>  | <b>5</b>  |
| 1.1 EU4Culture.....                                      | 5         |
| 1.2 About the call .....                                 | 6         |
| 1.3 Objectives of the Call.....                          | 6         |
| 1.4 Budget.....                                          | 7         |
| 1.5 Themes and priorities.....                           | 7         |
| 1.6 Eligible activities .....                            | 8         |
| <b>2. Who can apply?.....</b>                            | <b>10</b> |
| <b>3. How to submit and procedures to follow .....</b>   | <b>15</b> |
| 3.1 Filling and submission of the application form ..... | 15        |
| 3.2 Required application documents.....                  | 15        |
| Information session .....                                | 16        |
| <b>4. Evaluation and award procedure.....</b>            | <b>16</b> |
| <b>5. Timetable and deadlines.....</b>                   | <b>21</b> |
| <b>6. Promotion of Horizontal Principles .....</b>       | <b>22</b> |
| <b>7. budget and funding plan guidelines .....</b>       | <b>22</b> |
| <b>8. Reporting and payment arrangements.....</b>        | <b>25</b> |
| 8.1 Narrative reports .....                              | 26        |
| 8.2 Financial reports and payment arrangements .....     | 26        |
| 8.3 Financial management.....                            | 27        |
| 8.4 Audit and verification of expenditure .....          | 27        |
| <b>9. Visibility rules.....</b>                          | <b>28</b> |
| <b>10. Personal data protection .....</b>                | <b>28</b> |
| <b>11. Contact Information.....</b>                      | <b>28</b> |
| <b>12. Annexes.....</b>                                  | <b>28</b> |
| 12.1 Documents to be completed and uploaded .....        | 28        |
| 12.2 Documents for information .....                     | 28        |

***Version note (6 August 2026): The submission deadline has been extended from 18 September 2026, 18:00 CEST to 5 October 2026, 18:00 CEST. All other conditions and requirements set out in these Guidelines remain unchanged.***

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

- ➔ CCS – Cultural and Creative Sectors
- ➔ CEST – Central European Summer Time
- ➔ EaP – Eastern Partnership
- ➔ EU – European Union
- ➔ EUNIC – EU National Institutes for Culture
- ➔ GAP – Goethe Application Portal

## QUICK GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

This quick guide is intended as a supplementary tool only. Applicants must carefully read and fully understand the official application guidelines before applying.

|                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Purpose</b>                           | Design and deliver internationalisation programmes that directly serve cultural and creative sector actors participating in Living Labs and Intermediary Organisations supported by EU4Culture II across the Eastern Partnership region.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Who can apply</b>                     | <p><b>A single EUNIC member</b> organisation registered in an EU member state, active in the EaP countries with a minimum of ten (10) years of experiences in cultural development, international programme management, or other related fields</p> <p><i>Or</i></p> <p><b>Consortium:</b> Lead applicant: <i>a EUNIC member organisation</i> registered in an EU member state, active in the EaP countries, with a minimum of ten (10) years of experiences in cultural development, international programme management, or other related fields together with the <i>Co-applicant(s): a member of the Creative Europe Network with minimum 5 years of experiences, active at the time of application</i></p> <p>Optional third member: another EUNIC member or Creative Europe Network.</p> |
| <b>Total grant size</b>                  | EUR 500,000 (total call budget)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Project duration</b>                  | November 2026 – March 2029 (up to 28 months)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Application deadline</b>              | 5 October 2026, 18:00 CEST                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Who benefits</b>                      | Cultural and creative organisations, artists, and professionals active in Living Labs and Intermediary Organisations selected under EU4Culture II.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>What can be funded</b>                | <p><b>Non exhaustive list of the activities:</b></p> <p>Co-production and creative collaboration    Mobility and residency schemes    Participation in European networks and events    Strategic internationalisation planning    Matchmaking and partnership development    Alumni and community building    Country-specific measures including support for Belarusian CCS in exile</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>What cannot be funded</b>             | Activities with no link to Living Lab or Intermediary Organisation members    Purely local activities    Commercial or profit-driven activities    Standalone events without a development logic    Costs already covered by another EU grant    Activities serving only the applicant's own institutional interests    Construction or renovation works                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Primary beneficiaries</b>             | Members of the Living Labs and Intermediary Organisations selected under EU4Culture II programme                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Eligible countries for the action</b> | Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Belarusian CCS in exile, EU Member States                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>How to apply</b>                      | The application runs online through Goethe Application Portal ( <a href="#">GAP</a> ). Upload application form and all required annexes there. <sup>1</sup>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

<sup>1</sup> In order to access the online application portal, the applicants must register first.

# 1. ABOUT EU4CULTURE AND CALL FOR PROPOSALS

## 1.1 EU4Culture

**EU4Culture II – Sustainable Creative Ecosystems (2025-2029)** is a regional programme fully funded by the European Union and implemented by the Goethe-Institut. The programme operates across the Eastern Partnership (EaP) region, covering Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, and the Belarusian cultural and creative sector (CCS) community in exile.

The overall objective of EU4Culture II is to strengthen the role of culture as a driver of economic growth, social development, and resilience across the EaP region. To this end, the programme promotes sustainable creative ecosystems, empowers CCS actors, and deepens their cooperation with European networks through targeted financial support, professional development, and structured international engagement.

EU4Culture II delivers this objective through two complementary components:

- **Creative Platforms – Living Labs:** multi-stakeholder creative platforms established in selected regions of the EaP countries listed above, applying a co-creation methodology to develop and implement Creative Ecosystem Development Roadmaps for the local CCS.
- **Cultural Intermediary Organisations:** organisations that develop and test structured value propositions – practical solutions responding to concrete needs of CCS actors in the same EaP countries.

Living Labs bring together public, private, civil society, and academic actors to collaboratively map local ecosystem needs and co-create a Creative Ecosystem Roadmap addressing identified sectoral and cross-sectoral priorities. Each Living Lab operates within a defined geographic and sectoral focus determined at country level, anchoring cooperation in the specific needs, actors, and cultural and creative sectors present in its focus area.

Cultural Intermediary Organisations strengthen the wider ecosystem by developing structured value propositions designed for a clearly identified target group, sector, geographic area, or ecosystem need. Unlike Living Labs, which operate within defined geographic focus areas, Intermediary Organisations act at a broader level, supporting, connecting, representing, or strengthening other CCS actors across regions, sectors, or thematic challenges. Value propositions may take the form of services, support models, platforms, market access mechanisms, or advocacy tools, and are developed through research, stakeholder consultation, and co-creation, with close consideration of synergies with Living Labs operating in the same country. To this end, Intermediary Organisations extend their activities to the regions where Living Labs are established, allowing for potential synergies between the two components.

Across both components, the underlying aim is the same: to build sustainable, inclusive, and connected cultural ecosystems by strengthening the capacities, cooperation, and ownership of CCS actors at the local level. EU4Culture II supports this aim through mentorship and capacity-building for both Living Labs and Intermediary Organisations, alongside structured international networking and peer-to-peer exchange opportunities, progressively connecting local ecosystems to wider regional and European networks.

It is within this framework that the present Restricted Call for Proposals is positioned, providing dedicated support for the internationalisation dimension of both components.

## The internationalisation gap and rationale for this call

Despite their dynamism and growing capacity, cultural and creative organisations in EaP countries face persistent structural barriers to international engagement. Research conducted during the EU4Culture II inception phase across all six programme countries confirms that demand for international cooperation is consistently high, but that meaningful, sustained engagement with European networks remains limited. The key barriers identified include:

- Limited access to European funding mechanisms, including Creative Europe, due to insufficient administrative, financial, and language capacity
- A concentration of international opportunities in capital cities, leaving regional organisations – the primary focus of Living Labs – without meaningful access to international platforms
- A predominance of short-term, project-based international relationships that do not translate into institutional connections or lasting partnerships
- Insufficient knowledge of and visibility within European cultural networks, platforms, and professional communities

This Restricted Call for Proposals is the dedicated grant mechanism through which EU4Culture II addresses this structural gap. Its objective is not to fund isolated international activities, but to enable sustained, strategic, and meaningful international engagement that is embedded in the work Living Labs and Intermediary Organisations are already undertaking. The expected outcomes are increased membership of European cultural networks, the establishment of durable international partnerships, and the integration of internationalisation strategies into the roadmaps and value propositions developed under EU4Culture II.

### 1.2 About the call

This document sets out the guidelines for the Restricted Call for Proposals under the Internationalisation Component of EU4Culture II – Sustainable Creative Ecosystems. Only organisations that meet the eligibility conditions set out in **section 2** of these guidelines are entitled to submit a proposal. It is designed to strengthen the international engagement of pre-selected EU4Culture II beneficiaries, specifically the members of Living Labs and Intermediary Organisations.

This call does not target the broader CCS sector. Internationalisation activities funded under this call are not standalone interventions or actions. Internationalisation activities within this call must be clearly and directly linked to the Creative Ecosystem Development Roadmaps (Living Labs) and Value Propositions (Intermediary Organisations) developed by selected organisations within the EU4Culture II programme.

**Note on Networks:** *Applications are encouraged to leverage Creative Europe Networks (e.g. networks funded or co-funded under the Creative Europe Programme). Where justified, membership or engagement with other established European Cultural Networks is also eligible. The applicant must clearly demonstrate the added value for the CCS from the EaP countries.*

### 1.3 Objectives of the Call

#### Overall objective

To enhance the internationalisation of the members of the Living Lab members and Intermediary Organisations from the EaP countries through stronger engagement with European cultural networks, platforms, and international cooperation opportunities, ensuring that their participation is strategic, meaningful, and sustainable.

## Specific objectives

- ➔ Strengthen ties between EaP CCS actors and European cultural networks, enabling active participation in Creative Europe and other EU platforms.
- ➔ Promote knowledge exchange and peer learning between EaP practitioners and EU network members, including sharing best practices in ecosystem development and creative sector support.
- ➔ Increase the international visibility and access to opportunities for Living Lab members and Intermediary Organisations within European and global cultural platforms.
- ➔ Support the development of sustainable international collaborations – building institutional relationships, not just project partnerships.

## Expected results

- ➔ At least 24 organisations from EaP countries become members of Creative Europe Networks or other European cultural platforms with stronger and lasting professional relationships that continues after the programme ends.
- ➔ At least 24 sustainable international collaborations established – including EaP-EU and EaP-EaP partnerships.
- ➔ Living Lab members and Intermediary Organisations have developed their internationalisation strategies

## 1.4 Budget

The total budget available under this call is EUR 500,000. The exact grant size will depend on the scope, scale of the proposed activities across the eligible EaP countries and communities.

Where the application is submitted by the consortium, the budget plan must reflect the active and meaningful participation of all consortium members. The budget distribution must be justified in the Grant Application Form (Annex I), clearly explaining how the resources allocated to the co-applicant(s) directly contribute to the objectives of the call and bring specific added value to the EaP beneficiaries.

As a general benchmark, applicants are encouraged to allocate a substantial share of the total budget (e.g. around 40 % of the total approved grant amount) to activities implemented by co-applicants, in order to ensure meaningful collaboration, this allocation must be clearly reflected and justified in the Grant Application Form (Annex I) and the Budget and Funding Plan (Annex II).

## 1.5 Themes and priorities

All proposals must directly address the internationalisation needs of Living Lab members and Intermediary Organisations. The call prioritises:

- ➔ **European network integration:** supporting Living Lab members and Intermediary Organisations to join, engage with, and benefit from Creative Europe networks and other EU cultural platforms – including coverage of membership fees.
- ➔ **Strategic internationalisation:** helping organisations move from project-based international activities towards embedded, institutional international engagement aligned with their roadmaps and value propositions.
- ➔ **Mobility and exchange:** enabling artists and CCS practitioners from Living Labs and Intermediary Organisations to participate in residencies, study visits, and professional exchanges in EU countries.
- ➔ **Visibility and access:** increasing the presence of EaP CCS actors in international contexts – festivals, fairs, conferences, and digital platforms.

- ➔ **Regional inclusivity:** ensuring opportunities reach organisations beyond capital cities, aligned with the regional focus of Living Labs. The Belarusian CCS community in exile must be specifically considered and supported.
- ➔ **Cross-sectoral collaboration:** encouraging connections between culture, innovation, and creative entrepreneurship – particularly where Living Labs or Intermediary Organisations are already working across sectors.

## 1.6 Eligible activities

Funded activities must fall within one or more of the directions set out below and must clearly and demonstrably serve Living Lab members or Intermediary Organisations in the eligible EaP countries and communities. Activities may combine elements from more than one direction, provided they form a coherent and well-justified programme of work. The list below is not exhaustive within each direction; proposals may include activities not explicitly mentioned, provided they fall within the scope of the relevant direction and are fully justified in the Grant Application Form (Annex I)

For each direction, illustrative examples of eligible activities are provided. These examples are indicative only and do not constitute a closed list.

- **Strategic internationalisation planning** – supporting Living Lab members and Intermediary Organisations to develop, embed, and implement internationalisation strategies as part of their Creative Ecosystem Development Roadmaps and value propositions.
  - *Development or update of an organisational or Living Lab internationalisation strategy, including partner mapping and market analysis*
  - *Facilitation of strategic planning workshops with Living Lab members focused on international priorities*
  - *Development of cooperation models and joint international project concepts with European partners*
  - *Consultancy support for Intermediary Organisations seeking to integrate internationalisation into their value propositions*
- **Relationship-building, matchmaking, and network participation** – facilitating sustained contacts and partnerships between EaP cultural and creative actors and European organisations, networks, and platforms, including participation in international festivals, fairs, and professional events, and coverage of membership fees for relevant European networks.
  - *Participation of Living Lab members and Intermediary Organisation staff in international cultural fairs, festivals, conferences, and professional events relevant to the predefined sectoral focus areas*
  - *Coverage of membership fees for Creative Europe Networks or other European cultural networks for Living Lab members or Intermediary Organisations*
  - *Facilitation of structured matchmaking events and professional meetings between EaP CCS actors and European partners*
  - *Brokering of formal cooperation agreements and partnership frameworks between EaP and EU organisations*
  - *Support for EaP organisations to apply for membership of relevant European or international cultural platforms*
- **Mobility and professional exchange** – enabling artists, cultural professionals, and CCS practitioners who are members of Living Labs or supported by Intermediary Organisations to participate in mobility opportunities, residencies, and short-term professional exchanges in EU member states.
  - *Short-term professional residencies for Living Lab members at European cultural institutions, networks, or organisations*

- *Study visits for Living Lab members and Intermediary Organisation staff to comparable ecosystems, intermediary structures, or policy environments in EU member states*
- *Participation of EaP cultural practitioners in professional development programmes, training courses, or expert exchanges in EU countries*
- *Mobility grants for individual artists or cultural professionals from Living Labs to attend or participate in European events, co-productions, or collaborative projects*
- **Awareness, visibility, and digital engagement** – increasing the international presence and recognition of EaP cultural and creative actors and the work of Living Labs and Intermediary Organisations within European cultural platforms, policy discussions, and professional communities.
  - *Development and implementation of communications initiatives promoting the work of Living Labs and Intermediary Organisations to European audiences*
  - *Organisation of online networking events, webinars, and virtual meetings connecting EaP CCS actors with European counterparts*
  - *Production of multilingual promotional materials presenting EaP cultural scenes, Living Lab outputs, and value proposition results to European audiences*
  - *Participation in European policy forums, conferences, or advocacy platforms to increase EaP representation in cultural policy discussions*
  - *Development of digital platforms or online communities facilitating ongoing exchange between EaP and EU practitioners\*
- **Alumni engagement and community building** – establishing and maintaining follow-up structures and communities of practice among former mobility participants, mentors, and programme alumni, ensuring that connections formed through the project are sustained beyond its duration.
  - *Establishment of alumni networks connecting EaP CCS professionals who have participated in European mobility or exchange programmes*
  - *Organisation of follow-up events, peer-learning sessions, and community gatherings for mobility alumni*
  - *Development of mentoring structures pairing EaP Living Lab members with European professionals or organisations on a sustained basis*
  - *Creation of digital communities or platforms maintaining connections among alumni and extending their reach to other Living Lab members and Intermediary Organisation participants*
- **Cross-sectoral collaboration and sub-granting** – encouraging and enabling connections between culture, innovation, and creative entrepreneurship through the award of sub-grants to Living Lab members or Intermediary Organisations for the development of new ideas, products, or international cooperation models with cross-sectoral dimensions.
  - *Sub-grants to Living Lab members for the development of cross-sectoral international creative projects involving EU partners*
  - *Sub-grants to Intermediary Organisations for the design and piloting of new international cooperation models linking culture with digital innovation, design, or creative industries*
  - *Support for the joint development of new products, services, or formats combining EaP creative expertise with European market knowledge*
  - *Facilitation of cross-sectoral co-creation processes between EaP cultural actors and European businesses, research institutions, or technology partners*
- **Country-specific and community-specific measures** – addressing the internationalisation needs of specific EaP countries and communities, including dedicated support for the

Belarusian cultural and creative sector community in exile and locally anchored collaboration models aligned with the geographic and sectoral contexts of Living Labs.

- Hybrid online and in-person internationalisation activities designed for the geographically dispersed Belarusian CCS community in exile
- Locally tailored internationalisation initiatives responding to the specific sectoral focus areas of Living Labs in Armenia, Moldova, and Ukraine
- Support for Azerbaijani cultural actors, including in the carpet weaving and contemporary art sectors, to engage with relevant European networks and markets
- Development of cooperation models between Georgian CCS organisations and European partners aligned with the sectoral focus to be confirmed for Georgia
- EaP-EaP internationalisation initiatives that strengthen regional solidarity and cross-border cooperation within the Eastern Partnership region

|                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>What is not funded</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Activities with no clear link to Living Lab members or Intermediary Organisations</li> <li>▪ Purely local activities with no international dimension</li> <li>▪ Commercial or profit-driven activities</li> <li>▪ Standalone events without a development logic</li> <li>▪ Activities already funded by another EU grant covering the same costs</li> <li>▪ Activities focused only on the applicant's own visibility or programme needs</li> <li>▪ Construction or renovation works</li> </ul> |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Applicants are expected to propose activities that are specifically tailored to the:

- Geographic context (e.g., focusing on the Syunik region in Armenia, Ungheni in Moldova, or hybrid approaches for the Belarusian exile community).
- Sectoral focus (e.g., performing arts, visual arts, carpet weaving, digital innovation).
- Identified needs derived directly from the Roadmaps and Value Propositions.

Example of a tailored approach: a proposal for the Syunik Living Lab (Visual Arts) should explain, e.g. why that specific fair (e.g., Paris Design Week) is strategically aligned with the Syunik ecosystem's needs to access European markets, applying the "Craft Fair" example generically will be treated as non-sufficient.

The detailed geographical and sectoral scope of the Living Labs and Intermediary Organisations is set out in **Annex A** (Overview of the Living Labs and Intermediary Organisations).

## 2. WHO CAN APPLY?

In order to be eligible for funding under this call, applications must satisfy all criteria set out in this section:

A single EUNIC member organisation:

- registered in an EU member state,
- active in the EaP countries
- with a minimum of ten (10) years of experiences in cultural development, international programme management, or other related fields

Or

### **Consortium Composition:**

- 1 (one) mandatory Lead Organisation: a member of European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC):
  - registered in an EU member state,
  - active in the EaP countries
  - with a minimum of ten (10) years of experiences in cultural development, international programme management, or other related fields
- 1 (one) mandatory Co-Applicant: a Creative Europe Network organisation:
  - minimum 5 years of experiences,
  - active at the time of application
- 1 (one) optional Co-Applicant: either another EUNIC member organisation or another Creative Europe Network

**Note about consortium-based proposals:** *While individual applications are eligible under this call, the Goethe-Institut will prioritise consortium-based applications in the evaluation and selection process. Consortium proposals are considered better placed to deliver the internationalisation support required across the targeted countries and communities. Proposals that bring together complementary expertise – in particular a lead applicant with established presence in the Eastern Partnership region and a co-applicant active within Creative Europe Networks – are expected to demonstrate stronger operational capacity and a more convincing delivery model. Applicants are strongly encouraged to consider partnership arrangements before submitting.*

**Eligibility Criteria:** all consortium members must be legally registered in the European Union, non-profit entities with a clear connection to the cultural and creative sectors. The specific eligibility criteria for each role are as follows:

#### **Lead Organisation** - EUNIC member:

- Must be an EUNIC member
- Must have an active, demonstrable presence and operations in the eligible EaP countries
- Must have a minimum of ten (10) years of experience in cultural development, international programme management, or other related fields.

#### **Mandatory Co-Applicant** - Creative Europe Network:

- Must be recognised under or affiliated with the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union and be active at the time of application
- Must demonstrate its capacity and active facilitation role, specifically on how it will provide members of EU4Culture Living Labs and Intermediary Organisations with direct, meaningful, and active integration into European platforms, professional communities, and funding opportunities.
- Minimum 5 years of operational experience.

#### **Optional Co-Applicant** – EUNIC member **or** European Cultural Network:

- Another EUNIC Global Member: must satisfy all conditions set out for the Lead Applicant, or
- Another European Cultural Network: must satisfy all conditions set out for Mandatory Co-Applicant.

### **Who cannot apply**

The following are not eligible under this call:

- Natural persons
- Organisations that are not legally registered entities

- Profit-making companies
- European cultural networks acting as lead applicant
- Organisations without a clear connection to the cultural and creative sectors
- Organisations not meeting the administrative, legal, or financial requirements
- Organisations subject to exclusion under EU, Goethe-Institut, or programme rules
- Consortium of more than three organisations
- Applicants previously involved in preparing this call (conflict of interest)

### **Geographical eligibility criteria and specific eligibility**

The proposed action must take place in and target the following eligible countries and communities, in the geographic and sectoral focus areas set out in the **Annex A** under Sections 1.2 and 2.2:

- Armenia
- Azerbaijan
- Georgia
- Republic of Moldova
- Ukraine
- Belarusian CCS in exile <sup>2</sup>
- EU member states

### **Duration**

Projects funded under this call must be completed within the overall programme timeline.

- ➔ Start of activities: November 2026 (following selection and contracting)
- ➔ End of activities: December 2028
- ➔ Maximum project duration: up to 28 months

Extensions beyond March 2029 will not be possible and are subject to the programme's own contractual constraints.

### **General Conditions, operational capacity and exclusion criteria**

Before submission of the application, the Applicant must confirm that the information in the application is correct and complete, and that the applicant complies with the conditions for receiving EU funding (especially eligibility, financial and operational capacity, exclusion, etc). Before signing the grant contract, grant beneficiaries must confirm this again by signing a Self-declaration form (Annex VI).

### **Operational capacity**

The Applicants must have the know-how, qualifications and resources to successfully implement the action (e.g., sufficient experience in projects of comparable size and nature).

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<sup>2</sup> Belarusian Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCS) in exile comprise Belarusian cultural actors, organisations, artists, creative professionals, media, and diaspora initiatives operating outside Belarus while continuing to create, promote, and develop Belarusian culture internationally.

This capacity will be assessed together with the '**Design of the action, implementation approach and feasibility**' award criterion, on the basis of the competence and experience of the applicants and their teams, including operational resources (human, technical and other).

If the evaluation of the award criterion is positive, the applicants are considered to have sufficient operational capacity.

Applicants need to demonstrate their capacity through:

- general profiles (qualifications and experiences) of the staff responsible for managing and implementing
- description of roles and functions
- reference list of previous projects (e.g., key projects (max.5 ) for at least 3 years).

Additional supporting documents may be requested, if needed to confirm the operational capacity.

### **Compliance and exclusion**

The applicants (neither lead, nor co-applicant) must not be in any of the following situations at the time of application.

Applicants which are subject to an **EU exclusion decision** or in one of the following **exclusion situations** that bar them from receiving EU funding can NOT participate:

- bankruptcy, winding up, affairs administered by the courts, arrangement with creditors, suspended business activities or other similar procedures (including procedures for persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts)
- in breach of social security or tax obligations (including if done by persons with unlimited liability for the applicant's debts)
- guilty of grave professional misconduct (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- committed fraud, corruption, links to a criminal organisation, money laundering, terrorism-related crimes (including terrorism financing), child labour or human trafficking (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- shown significant deficiencies in complying with main obligations under an EU procurement contract, grant contract, prize, expert contract, or similar (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- guilty of irregularities within the meaning of Article 1(2) of Regulation No 2988/95 (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision making- or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant)
- created under a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social or other legal obligations in the country of origin or created another entity with this purpose (including if done by persons having powers of representation, decision-making or control, beneficial owners or persons who are essential for the award/implementation of the grant).

The Applicant will also be rejected, if it turns out that:

- During the award procedure the Applicant misrepresented information required as a condition for participating or failed to supply that information.
- The Applicant was previously involved in the preparation of the call and this entails a distortion of competition that cannot be remedied otherwise (conflict of interest).

### **The roles and responsibilities of the applicants**

The lead applicant is directly and fully responsible for the management and implementation of the action on behalf of the consortium. In this capacity, the lead applicant is required to:

- Represent the consortium and act on behalf of all co-applicants in all matters relating to this call and to the implementation of the grant.
- Coordinate the implementation and administration of the action, including the management of grant funds.
- Sign the grant contract with the Goethe-Institut and assume full financial and legal accountability for the proper use of the grant.
- Ensure that all consortium members satisfy the applicable eligibility conditions and obtain from each co-applicant a written declaration of consent, signed by their duly authorised representative, prior to submission.

Co-applicants are active participants in the design and implementation of the action and co-beneficiaries of the grant. Costs incurred by co-applicants in the implementation of approved activities are treated in the same way as costs incurred by the lead applicant and are subject to the same eligibility rules. If the grant is awarded, all consortium members become grant beneficiaries and are bound by the terms of the grant contract.

## 3. HOW TO SUBMIT AND PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

### 3.1 Filling and submission of the application form

All applications must be submitted through [GAP](#) before the application deadline. Applications submitted by post or through any other channel will not be evaluated.

The lead applicant submits the application on behalf of the entire consortium. Co-applicants do not submit separate applications. The lead applicant is responsible for ensuring that all consortium members have reviewed and consented to the application before submission.

#### Step-by-step submission process

To apply, the lead applicant should:

- register on GAP via this [LINK](#)
- complete the [online application form](#)
- Complete the Grant Application Form (Annex I), following the structure and guiding questions provided in the document
- Attach all required supporting documents in PDF format (see Section 3.2 for the full list). The Budget and Funding Plan (Annex II) must be attached in Excel format.
- Review the completed application carefully using the submission checklist provided on the last page of the Grant Application Form (Annex I) before submitting.
- Submit the application before the deadline. After submission, an acknowledgement of receipt will be sent to the email address from which the application was submitted.

*Applicants are strongly advised to begin preparing their application well in advance and not to wait until the last day to submit proposal. Delays, transmission failures, or other technical issues arising close to the deadline will not be accepted as grounds for an extension.*

#### Language

Applications must be submitted in **English**. Supporting documents that are not originally in English must be accompanied by a translation of the relevant sections into English. Applications submitted in other languages will not be evaluated.

|                            |                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Submission deadline</b> | 5 October 2026, 18:00 CEST. Applications submitted after this deadline will not be evaluated under any circumstances. |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### 3.2 Required application documents

The following documents must be uploaded on [GAP](#) by the submission deadline. Incomplete applications will not be evaluated.

TABLE 1-LIST OF REQUIRED ANNEXES

| Document                                                     | Format | Submitted by   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------|----------------|
| <b>Annex I</b> – Grant Application Form (completed template) | PDF    | Lead applicant |
| <b>Annex II</b> – Budget Plan (completed template)           | Excel  | Lead applicant |

|                                                                  |     |                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Annex III</b> – Logical Framework Matrix (completed template) | PDF | Lead applicant                                             |
| <b>Annex IV</b> – Legal Entity Sheet(s) (completed and signed)   | PDF | Lead applicant + each co-applicant(s) <i>if applicable</i> |
| <b>Annex V</b> – Financial Identification Form (signed)          | PDF | Lead applicant                                             |
| <b>Annex VI</b> – Self-Declaration Forms (completed and signed)  | PDF | Lead applicant + each co-applicant(s) <i>if applicable</i> |
| <b>Annex VII</b> – Financial statements                          |     | Lead applicant                                             |
| CVs of core team members (max. 3 pages each)                     | PDF | Lead applicant + each co-applicant(s) <i>if applicable</i> |

### Multiple submissions and fraud

If the lead applicant submits more than one application, only the last submitted version will be assessed. Earlier submissions from the same applicant will be disregarded.

Applications with identical or substantially similar content submitted by different applicants will be subject to a special assessment and may be rejected on grounds of suspected fraud.

### Completeness and eligibility check

Following the submission deadline, all applications will undergo a formal completeness check. Applications that are incomplete – missing required documents or sections – will not be evaluated. Applicants will not be contacted to supply missing documents after submission.

If the formal and eligibility criteria are not met, the application will be excluded from further evaluation. Applicants will be informed of the reason for exclusion in writing.

### Information session

Following the launch of the call, EU4Culture II will organise an online information session for all potential applicants. The session will cover the call requirements, the application form, and the evaluation process. The session will be conducted in English, recorded, and made available on Goethe-Institut's website and on GAP for applicants who are unable to attend.

Individual consultations will not be provided. All questions received will be compiled and shared with all applicants in Q&A format to ensure equal access to information.

## 4. EVALUATION AND AWARD PROCEDURE

All applications go through two consecutive stages. In the first stage, applications are checked for formal completeness and eligibility. Only applications that pass this stage proceed to the second stage, where they are evaluated on quality by a Selection Committee. The process is the same for all applicants and is conducted **in accordance with the principles of transparency, equal treatment, and avoidance of conflicts of interest**.

### Stage 1 – Formal and eligibility assessment

The first stage is a pass/fail check. Applications that do not pass are rejected and will not proceed to quality assessment. There is no scoring at this stage.

### Formal check

The application must meet all of the following formal requirements:

- Submitted before the submission deadline
- Submitted using the correct application form and templates
- Complete – all required sections of the application form filled in and all required documents uploaded (see Section 3.2 for the complete list)
- Submitted in English
- Not planned to be funded by another EU grant for the same activities (no double funding)

### Eligibility check

The single EUNIC member must meet all eligibility requirements set out in Section 2.

The consortium and its members must meet all eligibility requirements set out in Section 2. The eligibility check covers the following:

- **Consortium structure:** the application is submitted by a consortium of two or three organisations; the lead applicant is a EUNIC member; the consortium includes at least one Creative Europe Network as mandatory co-applicant.
- **Lead applicant eligibility:** legally registered non-profit entity in an EU member state; EUNIC Global member with active presence in the EaP countries; minimum 10 years of experience in cultural development or programme management.
- **Co-applicant eligibility:** the Creative Europe Network is formally recognised under or affiliated with the Creative Europe Programme; minimum 5 years of experience; active at the time of application.
- **Geographic eligibility:** the proposed action targets all six EaP countries or communities and is relevant to the geographic and sectoral focus areas defined in Section 1.
- **Duration:** the proposed project falls within the implementation period of November 2026 to March 2029.
- **Exclusion criteria:** no consortium member is in an exclusion situation; all Declarations of Honour have been signed by each consortium member individually.
- **Sanction list check:** all consortium members have been checked against the EU sanctions map (<https://sanctionsmap.eu>). Organisations listed on EU sanction lists are excluded from receiving a grant.

### Stage 2 – Quality assessment

Applications that pass Stage 1 are evaluated by a Selection Committee on the basis of the award criteria set out in this section. The quality assessment is scored. Each criterion has a maximum score and a minimum pass threshold. An application that falls below the minimum threshold on any individual criterion will not be recommended for funding, even if its overall score exceeds the minimum.

### Scoring scale

Each award criterion is assessed on a scale of 1 to 5:

| Score | Meaning                                                                                                          |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5     | Very good – the criterion is addressed in a comprehensive and convincing manner, with no significant weaknesses. |
| 4     | Good – the criterion is addressed well, with only minor weaknesses.                                              |
| 3     | Adequate – the criterion is addressed adequately, but with notable gaps or weaknesses.                           |
| 2     | Poor – the criterion is addressed insufficiently, with significant weaknesses.                                   |
| 1     | Very poor – the criterion is barely or not addressed.                                                            |

Scores for each criterion are multiplied by the criterion weight to produce a weighted score. All weighted scores are summed to produce the total score out of 100.

### Award criteria

The table below sets out the seven award criteria, the minimum pass score for each criterion, and the guiding questions that evaluators will use to assess each criterion. Applicants should address these questions directly in the relevant sections of the application form.

TABLE 2-ASSESSMENT GRID

| Criterion                        | Min.           | Guiding questions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Max.      |
|----------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>1. Relevance and impact</b>   | <b>12 / 20</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the proposal clearly address the specific internationalisation needs of CCS Actors from the EaP countries?</li> <li>How does the proposal demonstrate a clear awareness of the geographic and sectoral focus areas defined for the respective EaP countries? (cf. Section 1).</li> <li>Does the proposal demonstrate a clear understanding of the programme context, the internationalisation gap and structural barriers in the EaP countries?</li> </ul> | <b>20</b> |
| <b>2. Design and methodology</b> | <b>12 / 20</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are the proposed activities clearly described, logically structured, and coherent with the stated objectives?</li> <li>Does the proposal clearly define how activities will concretely reach Living Lab members and Intermediary Organisations?</li> <li>Does the design take into account external factors (risks and assumptions)?</li> <li>Are the activities feasible and consistent in relation to the expected results</li> </ul>                         | <b>20</b> |

|                                                          |               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |           |
|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
|                                                          |               | <p>(including timeframe)? Are results (output, outcome and impact) realistic?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the proposal include specific components that provide added value?</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |           |
| <b>3. Consortium composition and partnership quality</b> | <b>9 / 15</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the consortium bring together genuinely complementary expertise relevant to the proposed activities?</li> <li>Does the Creative Europe Network co-applicant demonstrate a concrete and specific capacity to connect EaP CCS Actors to European networks and platforms – beyond a general statement of network access?</li> <li>Are the roles and responsibilities of each consortium member clearly defined, proportionate, and justified?</li> <li>Does the proposal explain how the consortium was formed and demonstrate an existing working relationship or credible basis for collaboration?</li> </ul> | <b>15</b> |
| <b>4. Effectiveness and expected results</b>             | <b>9 / 15</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are the expected results clearly defined, specific, measurable, and achievable? (e.g., "20 organisations become members of networks," not just "improved contacts").</li> <li>Does the proposal include a robust results framework with clear indicators and target values?</li> <li>Does the proposal describe how and how many Living Lab members and Intermediary Organisation participants will directly benefit from proposed actions?</li> <li>Is there a clear results framework (Logframe) connecting activities to outputs and outcomes?</li> </ul>                                                      | <b>15</b> |
| <b>5. Promotion of horizontal principles</b>             | <b>6 / 10</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the proposal integrate gender equality, inclusion of underrepresented groups, and environmental sustainability into specific planned activities?</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>10</b> |
| <b>6. Sustainability</b>                                 | <b>6 / 10</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the proposal describe concrete mechanisms – such as network memberships, alumni structures, or</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>10</b> |

|                                         |               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |            |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
|                                         |               | institutional partnerships – for maintaining results after the project ends?                                                                                                                                               |            |
| <b>7. Budget and cost-effectiveness</b> | <b>6 / 10</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the proposed budget realistic, well-justified and directly linked to the planned activities? Does it represent good value for money relative to the expected results?</li> </ul> | <b>10</b>  |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>60</b>     | Overall minimum pass score: 60 out of 100. A proposal that falls below the minimum threshold on any individual criterion will not be recommended for funding, regardless of its overall score.                             | <b>100</b> |

### Strong vs weak applications – guidance for applicants

The following table illustrates the distinction between strong and weak applications based on the award criteria. It is provided for guidance only and does not form part of the formal evaluation framework.

| <b>Strong Application - (Do's)</b>                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Weak Application -(Don'ts)</b>                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Grounds the proposal in evidence: references the geographic and sectoral focus areas, the EaP internationalisation gap.                                                                   | Presents a generic internationalisation project without demonstrating understanding of the programme context or the specific situation of EaP CCS actors |
| Clearly describes the role of the Creative Europe Network co-applicant in delivering activities, and demonstrates the added value this network brings for EaP organisations               | Lists the Creative Europe Network as a co-applicant without explaining what it will concretely do or what access it will provide to EaP participants     |
| Includes a results framework with specific, measurable indicators linked to the expected results of the call (network memberships, durable partnerships)                                  | Describes expected results in vague terms without indicators, baselines, or target values                                                                |
| Describes concrete sustainability mechanisms: how network memberships will be maintained, how alumni connections will be sustained, how internationalisation will be embedded in roadmaps | Describes sustainability in general terms without specifying what structures, mechanisms, or commitments will remain in place after the project ends     |

|                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Addresses the specific contexts of each targeted country, including the hybrid online/offline model needed for the Belarusian CCS in exile | Applies the same approach to all six countries without acknowledging their different contexts, needs, and constraints   |
| AI is used responsibly and transparently to support drafting; content remains accurate, consistent and tailored.                           | Over-reliance on AI tools; generic, repetitive or inconsistent text; factual errors or content not adapted to the call. |

## Notification of Results and Contracting

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of the evaluation in writing, via the email address from which the application was submitted. An invitation to grant preparation does not constitute a formal commitment to funding. Legal entity validation, financial capacity checks, exclusion checks, and sanction list verification will be completed before the grant contract is signed. The grant is awarded only after the grant contract has been signed by both the lead applicant and the Goethe-Institut.

## Complaints procedure

Applicants who believe they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the evaluation and award process may lodge a written complaint with the contracting authority. Complaints must be submitted to [eu4culture@goethe.de](mailto:eu4culture@goethe.de) within 30 days of receiving the notification of results. The complaint must clearly describe the alleged error or irregularity and the grounds on which it is based.

The submission of a complaint does not suspend the award procedure or the contracting process.

## 5. TIMETABLE AND DEADLINES

TABLE 3-TIMETABLE

| The following timetable applies to this call        |                |                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Launch of the call                                  | 10 July 2026   | 14:00 CEST                                                                                                  |
| Online information session                          | 29 July 2026   | 12:00 CEST<br><i>Please register for the online information session following the <a href="#">link</a>.</i> |
| Deadline for submission of written questions        | 31 July 2026   | 18:00 CEST                                                                                                  |
| Publication of Q&A on Goethe-Institut website & GAP | 6 August 2026  |                                                                                                             |
| Submission deadline                                 | 5 October 2026 | 18:00 CEST                                                                                                  |

|                                                                 |               |                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Assessment of received applications                             | October 2026  |                                               |
| Notification of results to all applicants & Contracting process | October 2026  |                                               |
| Start the implementation process                                | November 2026 | Inception period (November 2026-January 2027) |

## 6. PROMOTION OF HORIZONTAL PRINCIPLES

The proposed projects and applications must, whenever possible, support and further the following horizontal principles, in line with EU policy and the EU4Culture II programme including.

- Gender equality
- Environmental sustainability
- Equal opportunity and multi-ethnicity

The applicant is invited to highlight how these horizontal principles are integrated in the project activities and outputs. Furthermore, applications are expected to underline the specific measures planned at the operational level for respecting these principles.

## 7. BUDGET AND FUNDING PLAN GUIDELINES

The Goethe-Institut is entrusted by the European Commission with the indirect management of EU funds in accordance with Article 62 in conjunction with Article 157 of the Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509. In this capacity, the Goethe-Institut applies appropriate requirements and procedures when awarding EU funds to third parties, in order to ensure compliance with EU budgetary law, including the principles of transparency, equal treatment, sound financial management, and effective and proportionate measures to prevent fraud and irregularities.

The grant awarded under this call is subject to the following principles, as set out in Article 191 of the Financial Regulation:

- ➔ **equal treatment** – all eligible applicants are assessed under the same conditions and against the same criteria;
- ➔ **transparency** – the award procedure is conducted in a transparent and non-discriminatory manner; awarding decisions are justified and documented;
- ➔ **co-financing** – co-financing of the action from other sources is not required under this call; however, applicants must declare all other sources of funding received or applied for in connection with the proposed activities;
- ➔ **non-cumulative award and no double financing** – EU4Culture II will not cover costs already funded by another European Union grant or other donor source for the same activities. Expenditures financed by another action or work programme of the European Union will not be eligible;
- ➔ **non-retroactivity** – grant beneficiaries may begin implementing their action only after the grant contract has been signed by both parties. Costs incurred prior to the date of signature of the grant contract will not be eligible;
- ➔ **no-profit** – the proposed action must not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit for the grant beneficiary within the framework of the project.

## Grant amount and budget

The total budget available under this call is EUR 500,000. The amount of financial support awarded to any one project will depend on the scope, scale, and ambition of the proposed activities, and will be confirmed following evaluation and contracting.

Applicants are encouraged to allocate a substantial share of the total budget (e.g. around 40 % of the total approved grant amount) to activities implemented by or directly serving co-applicant organisations. This allocation must be clearly reflected in the budget plan (Annex II) submitted with the application and must be substantiated by a commensurate role of co-applicants in the implementation of the action.

Applicants are required to submit a Budget and Funding Plan (Annex II) as part of the application. The budget serves the following purposes:

- as an estimate of the total costs of the proposed action over the full project duration;
- as a basis for assessing cost efficiency, proportionality, and the justified allocation of costs to planned activities and expected outputs;
- as the upper limit for eligible costs, subject to approval by the Goethe-Institut.

The Budget and Funding Plan consists of three components:

- **Budget plan:** the applicant states the calculated project costs for the entire project duration, broken down into individual cost positions.
- **Justification of budget plan:** the applicant explains each cost position, its necessity, its relevance to the project, and justifies the calculation method used (unit cost × number of units). For example: for staff costs, the total employment cost and percentage of time dedicated to the project; for travel, the number of people, number of trips, mode of transport, and destinations.
- **Funding plan:** the applicant states all expected sources of funding, demonstrating that income from all sources covers the total calculated project costs.

## Eligible costs

Only eligible costs may be covered by the grant. Eligible costs are costs that satisfy all of the following conditions:

- are relevant to the grant purpose and are necessary for the implementation of the action;
- are actually incurred by the beneficiary;
- are incurred during the implementation period of the action, i.e. between the date of signature of the grant contract and 31 March 2029;
- are explicitly stated in the approved budget and funding plan;
- are identifiable and verifiable, being recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary and determined in accordance with the applicable accounting standards and the usual cost accounting practices of the beneficiary;
- comply with the requirements of the applicable tax and social legislation;
- are appropriate and justified, and are in line with the principle of sound financial management, in particular with regard to economy and efficiency.

## Direct eligible costs

The following categories of direct costs are eligible under this call:

TABLE 4-DIRECT ELIGIBLE COSTS

| Cost category                          | Conditions and limits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Staff costs</b>                     | Pre-tax wages including social security contributions and other remuneration-related costs, excluding performance-related bonuses. Salaries must not exceed the costs for which the beneficiary is normally responsible. Recommendation from the contracting authority: staff costs - not exceed 40% of the total eligible budget.                                        |
| <b>Travel and accommodation</b>        | Travel and accommodation costs for project staff and other persons involved in the project.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Equipment</b>                       | Purchase, depreciation, rental, or lease costs for equipment and accessories specifically dedicated to the purposes of the action. Purchased equipment must be inventoried and ownership must be transferred to the beneficiary at the latest upon submission of the final report. Equipment may not be used for other purposes or sold during the implementation period. |
| <b>Costs of services</b>               | Costs of external expertise, consultancy, translation, design, digital services, production, quality assurance, and other services procured by the beneficiary for project purposes.                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Office and administration costs</b> | Lease expenses for a project office (where justified and described in the application), rental of event space and equipment, consumables, and other administration costs directly related to the project.                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Other direct costs</b>              | Costs arising directly from contractual requirements, including dissemination, action-specific evaluation, audits, translation, photocopying, insurance, financial services (including costs of money transfer and bank guarantees where required by contract), customs duties, taxes, and other charges not recoverable by the beneficiary.                              |

### Indirect costs

Indirect costs are eligible costs that cannot be directly attributed to the implementation of the action but are incurred in connection with the eligible direct costs of the project. Indirect costs may not include any costs already shown under a direct cost position in the budget plan.

Indirect costs are funded at a flat rate of up to seven percent (7%) of the total incurred direct eligible costs. No supporting accounting documents are required for indirect costs.

### Non-eligible costs

The following costs are not eligible under this call and may not be included in the budget plan or claimed in the financial report:

- Debts and debt service charges, including interest on loans;

- Provisions for losses, debts, or potential future liabilities;
- Costs already financed through another project or fund that includes a European Union grant (double funding);
- Purchases of land or property, unless strictly necessary for the direct implementation of the action and compliant with the conditions defined in the grant contract;
- Currency exchange losses;
- Credits or loans to third parties, unless otherwise specified in the grant contract;
- Performance-related bonuses included in staff costs;
- Costs incurred before the date of signature of the grant contract (non-retroactivity);
- Costs that are excessive, unjustified, or not in line with the principle of sound financial management.

### **Procurement of goods and services**

For any works, supplies, or services procured by the grant beneficiary within the scope of the action, the following procurement principles apply:

- Contracts must be awarded on a competitive basis. For contracts above the applicable threshold, the beneficiary must request quotes from at least three (3) different suppliers, or put contracts out to public tender in accordance with applicable public procurement rules.
- The beneficiary must accept the most economically advantageous offer and retain a traceable record of the entire award procedure, including all quotes received, the evaluation rationale, and the award decision.
- The procedure must comply with public procurement rules, as well as any relevant conditions imposed by the EU.
- Commercial discounts must be sought and applied wherever available.
- Conflicts of interest in the procurement process must be avoided at all times.

Goods acquired for the purposes of the action using grant funds must be used within the implementation period and within the scope of the grant purpose as defined in the grant contract. Acquired goods must be inventoried by the beneficiary and may not be used for other purposes or sold without prior written approval from the Goethe-Institut.

### **Double funding exclusion**

Costs that are already covered by another source of funding are not eligible. Expenditures declared by the grant beneficiary under the proposed activities and financed by another action or work programme of the European Union, or by any other donor, will not be eligible.

To prevent the risk of double funding, the applicant must declare in the relevant section of the application form all sources and amounts of funding received or applied for in connection with the proposed activities, including other EU grants, national public funding, and private funding. The Goethe-Institut reserves the right to verify declarations of funding sources and to exclude costs where double funding is identified.

## **8. REPORTING AND PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS<sup>3</sup>**

This section sets out the reporting and payment obligations of grant beneficiaries funded under this call. All templates referenced below will be provided by the Goethe-Institut at the contracting stage.

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<sup>3</sup> The reporting scheme, the timeline and payment arrangements are indicative and might be updated during the contracting stage, based on the received proposal.

## 8.1 Narrative reports

Grant beneficiaries are required to submit regular narrative and financial reports to the Goethe-Institut throughout the implementation period. In addition, beneficiaries will submit an inception report within three months of the start of implementation; this report serves as a needs analysis and provides the basis for concrete planning for the activities ahead. The final narrative and financial report must be submitted within three months of the end of the implementation period.

The reporting schedule below is indicative and may be subject to adjustments in line with the grant agreement and clarification process.

Detailed reporting requirements and report templates will be provided at the contracting stage. For indicative templates, please refer to the annexes of the grant guidelines (**Annex F**: Narrative report template).

**TABLE 5-NARRATIVE REPORT SCHEDULE**

| Report                                   | Reporting period                               | Deadline for submission |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Inception report                         | 01.11.2026 – 31.01.2027 (3 months)             | 12.02.2027              |
| Interim Narrative Report 1               | 1 February 2027 – 30 September 2027 (8 months) | 15.10.2027              |
| Interim Narrative Report 2               | 1 October 2027 – 31 March 2028 (6 months)      | 15.04.2028              |
| Interim Narrative and Financial report 3 | 1 April 2028 – 30 September 2028 (6 months)    | 15.10.2028              |
| Final Narrative Report                   | Whole implementation period                    | 15.04.2029              |

## 8.2 Financial reports and payment arrangements

Payments under this call are made in instalments linked to reporting milestones. The table below sets out the indicative payment schedule. Exact amounts will be confirmed in the grant contract on the basis of the approved budget and activities. The payment conditions, including currency, tax treatment, VAT status, reimbursable costs, and supporting documentation, will be specified in the grant contract.

**TABLE 6-FINANCIAL REPORT SCHEDULE AND INSTALMENTS**

| Instalment | Reporting period covered | Report deadline | % of grant | indicative timing |
|------------|--------------------------|-----------------|------------|-------------------|
|------------|--------------------------|-----------------|------------|-------------------|

|                                                      |                            |               |     |                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1<sup>st</sup> instalment<br/>– pre-financing</b> | -                          | -             | 30% | Within 30 days of contract signature.                                                            |
| <b>2<sup>nd</sup> instalment</b>                     | November 2026 – April 2027 | 15 May 2027   | 40% | Approval of Interim Financial Report 1.                                                          |
| <b>3<sup>rd</sup> instalment</b>                     | May 2027 – May 2028        | 15 June 2028  | 20% | Approval of Interim Financial Report 2.                                                          |
| <b>4<sup>th</sup> instalment<br/>– Final payment</b> | June 2028 – March 2029     | 15 April 2029 | 10% | Approval of Final Financial Report (March 2028–March 2029). Released within 60 days of approval. |

All payments are made in euros. Where eligible costs are incurred in a currency other than euros, the exchange rate approach specified in the grant contract applies – either the rate at the time of each payment from the Goethe-Institut or an average rate communicated by the Goethe-Institut at the end of the project. Currency exchange losses are not eligible costs and may not be claimed in the financial report.

### 8.3 Financial management

Beneficiaries must maintain a transparent and auditable record of all project-related income and expenditure throughout the implementation period. The following requirements apply:

- **Accounting:** all project expenditure must be recorded in a dedicated project cost centre or equivalent accounting structure that allows project costs to be clearly separated from the beneficiary's other organisational costs.
- **Supporting documents:** original invoices, contracts, payroll records, attendance sheets, travel documentation, and bank statements must be retained for a minimum of ten years after the end of the project and made available to the Goethe-Institut or its authorised auditors on request.
- **Budget transfers:** transfers of up to 25% between approved cost categories may be made without a formal contract amendment, provided the primary objective of the project is not affected. The 25% threshold is assessed cumulatively across the full implementation period. Transfers exceeding 25% require a written addendum to the grant contract approved by the Goethe-Institut.
- **Bank accounts:** all project funds must be held in a dedicated or clearly identifiable bank account. Any change to bank details must be communicated in writing to the Goethe-Institut immediately and is subject to a mandatory verification process before the next payment is released.

### 8.4 Audit and verification of expenditure

The Goethe-Institut is responsible for verifying that all funds awarded under this call are used in accordance with the grant contract. For grants of EUR 100,000 or more, an external auditor appointed by the Goethe-Institut will verify the expenditure documentation submitted by the beneficiary. The cost of the external audit must be not included in the budget plan, the costs for the external audit will be carried by the Constracting Authority.

Verification of expenditure includes a review of invoices, contracts, payroll records, and bank statements against reported costs, as well as random-sample checks of expenditure documentation. At the start of each audit, the beneficiary will be informed in writing of the scope and timing of the verification. Findings will be communicated to the beneficiary, who will have a reasonable opportunity to respond before any recovery decision is taken.

The Goethe-Institut reserves the right to conduct on-site or remote project visits at any point during the implementation period. Beneficiaries are required to cooperate fully with any audit or monitoring exercise and to provide access to all relevant documentation on request. All project documentation must be retained for a minimum of ten (10) years after the end of the implementation period.

## **9. VISIBILITY RULES**

Beneficiaries of the grant scheme must clearly acknowledge the European Union's contribution in all publications or in conjunction with activities for which the financial support is used. In this respect, they are required to highlight the name and use the logo of the European Union on all their publications, posters, programmes, and other products produced under the financed project.

Detailed information and templates will be provided after signing the grant contract.

## **10. PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION**

Applying to the call involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CV). Such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2016/679 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data. Unless indicated otherwise, any personal data requested to evaluate the application in accordance with the specifications of the call will be processed solely for that purpose by the EU4Culture II team and external experts from the EU4Culture II jury.

## **11. CONTACT INFORMATION**

For enquiries regarding this call, please contact EU4Culture II – Programme Coordination Office-  
[eu4culture@goethe.de](mailto:eu4culture@goethe.de)

## **12. ANNEXES**

### **12.1 Documents to be completed and uploaded**

- Annex I:** Grant application form
- Annex II:** Budget and Funding Plan (Excel format)
- Annex III:** Logical Framework Matrix
- Annex IV:** Legal entity sheet (s)
- Annex V:** Financial identification form (s)
- Annex VI:** Self-declaration form (s)
- Annex VII:** Financial statements

### **12.2 Documents for information<sup>4</sup>**

- Annex A:** Overview of the Living Labs and Intermediary Organisations activities
- Annex B:** Grant Contract template
- Annex C:** Budget and funding plan guidelines
- Annex D:** Update Budget and Financial Plan

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<sup>4</sup> The documents provided for information (Annexes B, D, E, and F) are templates and may be modified during the contracting stage.

**Annex E:** Financial report template

**Annex F:** Narrative report template

**Disclaimer**

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