

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

OPEN CALL FOR PROPOSALS
CULTURAL INTERMEDIARY ORGANISATIONS (STAGE 1)
Ukraine

Open Call Period: 18 June 2026 - 20 July 2026, 23:59 CEST

*This Call for Proposals is issued within the framework of **EU4Culture II - Sustainable Creative Ecosystems**, a programme fully funded by the European Union*

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QUICK GUIDE (STAGE 1)

SUPPORTING CULTURAL INTERMEDIARY ORGANISATIONS

PURPOSE OF THE CALL

Strengthening Ukraine's cultural and creative ecosystem by supporting intermediary organisations to develop practical solutions that connect, represent, and strengthen cultural and creative sector actors.

WHAT WILL BE SUPPORTED

- ☑ Development of value proposition
- ☑ Needs assessment, stakeholder consultation, mapping, and validation activities directly supporting value proposition development
- ☑ Development of services, support models, platforms, advocacy formats, networking models, or other practical intermediary solutions

WHO CAN APPLY

- ☑ Non-profit Cultural Intermediary Organisations legally registered in Ukraine, in territories under the control of the Government of Ukraine
- ☑ Applicants must demonstrate a clear intermediary role and wider benefit for cultural and creative sector actors and ecosystems in Ukraine.

FUNDING

- ☑ Up to EUR 9,000 for Stage 1

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

- ☑ The grant beneficiary will also receive support in capacity-building and internationalisation opportunities.

HOW TO APPLY

- ☑ Apply via the Goethe Application Portal ([GAP](#))
- ☑ Submit the application and all required documents in English before the deadline

KEY DATES

- ☑ Call opens: 18 June 2026
- ☑ [Information Session : 7 July 2026](#)
- ☑ **Application Deadline: 20 July 2026, 23:59 CEST**
- ☑ Implementation (Stage 1): October 2026 – February 2027

WHAT COMES NEXT (STAGE 2)

- ☑ Successful Stage 1 beneficiaries will be invited to apply for Stage 2 funding of up to EUR 60,000 to test and refine their value propositions.

QUESTIONS & SUPPORT

- ☑ Questions can be sent to: eu4culture@goethe.de - before **9 July 2026, 23.59 CEST**

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

1. What is EU4Culture II

EU4Culture II - Sustainable Creative Ecosystems is a regional programme fully funded by the European Union and implemented by the Goethe-Institut from 2025 to 2029.

The programme strengthens the role of culture as a driver of economic growth, social development, cooperation, and resilience across the Eastern Partnership region, including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine, as well as among Belarusian cultural and creative sector actors operating in exile.

EU4Culture II supports the development of sustainable, inclusive, and connected cultural and creative ecosystems through professional development, structured cooperation, mentorship, international networking, and engagement with European cultural networks and partners.

The programme implements two complementary components:

a) Establishing Creative Platforms (Living Labs)

Creative Platforms are based on Living Lab methodology. They bring together cultural actors, communities, businesses, educational institutions, public authorities, and other relevant stakeholders to identify ecosystem needs and opportunities, co-create Creative Ecosystem Roadmaps, and develop practical actions for cultural ecosystem development.

b) Supporting Cultural Intermediary Organisations

Cultural Intermediary Organisations support, connect, represent, and strengthen cultural and creative sector actors. They develop practical value propositions, such as services, support models, platforms, market-access mechanisms, advocacy formats, networking models, and other structured solutions responding to clearly identified ecosystem needs.

Together, these two components aim to strengthen cooperation, improve support structures for cultural and creative sector actors, encourage innovation and participation, and contribute to the long-term sustainability and resilience of cultural and creative ecosystems.

2. About the Call for Intermediary Organisations

2.1 What does this call support?

The Stage 1 open call supports Cultural Intermediary Organisations in Ukraine to develop practical and testable value propositions responding to concrete needs within Ukraine's cultural and creative ecosystem.

The call is designed for organisations that already play, or have the potential to play, a wider role by supporting, connecting, representing, or strengthening other cultural and creative sector actors.

Through this call, EU4Culture II aims to strengthen intermediary organisations as key support structures for sustainable cultural ecosystem development, with particular attention to regional outreach, professional capacity, cooperation, innovation, advocacy, and international engagement.

Selected organisations will receive financial support and mentoring during Stage 1 to develop their value propositions. These value propositions may then be tested and refined during the Stage 2 implementation phase.

2.2 What is a cultural intermediary organisation?

Cultural intermediary organisations work for the benefit of the wider cultural and creative ecosystem by supporting, connecting, representing, or strengthening other actors in the sector, rather than focusing only on their own organisational activities.

They may provide services, create platforms, build networks, support professional development, improve access to markets or resources, advocate for sector needs, or facilitate cooperation between different actors.

Eligible intermediary organisations may include, for example, cultural networks, associations, unions, umbrella organisations, creative hubs, clusters, alliances, platforms, advocacy organisations, and other mission-driven organisations supporting cultural and creative sector actors.

2.3 What is a value proposition?

In the framework of this call, a value proposition is a structured and practical solution developed by a cultural intermediary organisation for a clearly defined target group, sector, geographic area, and/or ecosystem need.

It is based on the needs, challenges, strengths, and unrealised potential of that target group or ecosystem. It may take the form of a service, product, support model, platform, market access model, advocacy mechanism, policy dialogue format, or other structured offer.

A strong value proposition should clearly show:

- **for whom** it is developed
- **what problem, gap, or opportunity** it addresses
- **what solution** is proposed
- **what impact, outcomes, or benefits** it is expected to create

A value proposition is not a broad strategy or a general project idea. It should be concrete enough to be tested, improved, and further developed during the programme.

Important clarification

The intermediary organisation does not create the “value of” the target group, sector, or geographic area. Rather, it develops a value proposition **for** that target group, based on its needs, challenges, strengths, and unrealised potential.

In this process, the intermediary is the main actor that designs and carries the structured solution. The target group is the group that should benefit from it.

The table below summarises the main priorities of this call and clarifies what types of proposals are supported and not supported.

This call supports:	This call does not support:
 Structured solutions for a clearly defined target group, sector, geographic area, or ecosystem need	 One-off events, isolated activities, or short-term projects without a clear development logic
 Approaches that benefit the wider cultural and creative ecosystem , including other CCS actors, regions, sectors, or communities	 Activities focused only on the applicant’s own programme, visibility, or organisational needs
 Ideas that can be tested, refined, and further developed during and beyond the programme implementation	 Ideas that remain too vague, too broad, or too limited to be realistically tested and developed

2.4 Illustrative Examples of Value Propositions

The examples below are illustrative only. Applicants are not expected to copy them, but to use them as a reference for the level of clarity and specificity expected in this call.

Example 1

Crafts and Market Access

Target group: crafts producers and artisans

Challenge / gap: Crafts producers and artisans in regional areas have limited access to markets, low visibility/sales, and weak governmental support, while local knowledge and traditions risk being lost.

Value proposition developed in Stage 1: an intermediary organisation develops a support service model which will help crafts producers and artisans to improve product branding, sales, and access to online marketplaces.

What could be tested in Stage 2: A pilot programme combining product development support, a shared online catalogue, marketing guidelines for craft producers, and participation in selected fairs or pop-up sales events.

Expected impact: Increased income opportunities, stronger visibility, and better preservation and transmission of local craft knowledge.

Example 2

Sustainability and Entrepreneurial Shift

Target group: Cultural organisations and creative initiatives with weak financial sustainability

Challenge / gap: Cultural organisations still operate in a donor-dominant model and lack the tools, skills, and mindset needed to develop income-generating activities and more sustainable organisational models.

Value proposition developed in Stage 1: An intermediary organisation develops a support programme model that helps cultural organisations become more self-sustainable by developing practical skills in service design, income generation, audience-oriented thinking, and strategic planning.

What could be tested in Stage 2: A pilot support cycle for a selected group of organisations including training, mentoring, and hands-on development of small-scale income models, services, or products.

Expected impact: Stronger organisational resilience, improved financial sustainability, reduced donor dependency, and a more entrepreneurial culture within the CCS.

Example 3

Culture, Recovery, and Social Cohesion

Target group: Cultural organisations and creative professionals working with displaced communities, veterans, young people, and other vulnerable groups

Challenge / gap: Cultural actors may lack the knowledge, tools, partnerships, and support mechanisms needed to respond effectively to challenges related to trauma,

displacement, identity, recovery, and social cohesion.

Value proposition developed in Stage 1: An intermediary organisation develops a support model that helps cultural organisations design and deliver programmes responding to community recovery, participation, and inclusion needs.

What could be tested in Stage 2: A pilot package combining training, advisory support, peer learning, and small-scale implementation of community-based cultural formats in selected locations.

Expected impact: Stronger local resilience, more relevant cultural services, and improved support for communities affected by displacement, conflict, or social vulnerability.

2.5 Scope of Supported Value Propositions

The call supports intermediary organisations that contribute to cultural ecosystem development through services, coordination, representation, capacity-building, advocacy, networking, market access, innovation, or other structured support for CCS actors.

Developed value propositions may focus on:

- a) a specific **sector**
- b) a specific **geographic area**
- c) a defined **target group**
- d) or a concrete **ecosystem challenge** affecting the CCS more broadly.

These focus areas are not mutually exclusive. A value proposition may combine several dimensions. Applicants are encouraged to consider solutions that create value beyond one location, organisation, or short-term activity.

In addition to service or product-oriented approaches, value propositions may also focus on improving policy processes, sector representation, or evidence-based advocacy, where this is relevant to the profile of the intermediary organisation. Such approaches may include, for example, structured consultation formats, policy recommendations, advocacy tools, or mechanisms that strengthen dialogue between the cultural and creative sectors and decision-makers.

2.6 Grant Implementation Stages, Timeline and Funding

Stage	Purpose and Description	Indicative Implementation Period	Allocated Budget
<p>Stage 1 Value Proposition Development</p>	<p>Selected intermediary organisations will work with local mentors to identify target groups, analyse and validate key challenges, conduct needs assessment and mapping where relevant, and develop structured value propositions.</p>	<p>October 2026 – February 2027</p>	<p>Up to EUR 9,000 per selected intermediary organisation (lump sum)</p>
<p>Stage 2 Testing and Implementation</p>	<p>Intermediary organisations that successfully complete Stage 1 will be invited to apply through a restricted Stage 2 process. Under Stage 2, selected organisations may receive further financial support to test, implement, assess, and refine the value propositions developed during Stage 1.</p>	<p>From April 2027 onwards; detailed timeline to be communicated later.</p>	<p>Indicative Funding: up to EUR 60,000 per intermediary organisation, subject to the assessment of the Stage 2 application, available funding, and final programme approval. The grant is expected to be divided into at least two funding phases.</p>

Important clarification

Up to four intermediary organisations are expected to be selected under Stage 1 in Ukraine. Organisations that successfully complete Stage 1 will be invited to apply through the restricted Stage 2 process. Invitation to apply does not guarantee the award of further funding.

Any support under Stage 2 will be subject to assessment of the Stage 2 application, programme requirements, available funding, and final programme approval. The specific application conditions and requirements for Stage 2 will be communicated at a later stage.

2.7 Expected Deliverables from Stage 1

By the end of Stage 1, selected intermediary organisations are expected to submit a structured **value proposition** that includes:

Core elements of the value proposition	Description
Target group	For whom the value proposition is developed
Problem / opportunity	What need, gap, or challenge it responds to
Solution	What service, product, support model, platform, advocacy mechanism, or other practical approach is proposed
Testing approach	How it could be tested and further developed during Stage 2
Expected impact	What outcomes, benefits, or ecosystem value it aims to create
Sustainability	How the value proposition could continue or create longer-term benefit

The value proposition will serve as the basis for the restricted Stage 2 process.

2.8 Sustainability of Value propositions

Applicants must demonstrate how the proposed value proposition can create benefits beyond a single activity or short-term project. Sustainability in this call does not only mean financial sustainability. It also refers to the ability of the value proposition to continue, be adapted, repeated, scaled, transferred, or integrated into the organisation's longer-term work.

Applications need to demonstrate the following:

- how the proposed solution can remain useful for the target group or ecosystem over time
- whether the model could be adapted, replicated, or transferred to other regions, sectors, or groups

- how the value proposition could continue or be further developed after Stage 1 and Stage 2.
- what resources, partnerships, capacities, or income models may be needed for future-proofing the value proposition.

2.9 Link with Creative Platforms

EU4Culture II supports both Cultural Intermediary Organisations and Creative Platforms. These two streams have different purposes, but cooperation and synergies between them are encouraged where relevant.

In Ukraine, Creative Platforms are expected to operate in:

- Ivano-Frankivsk;
- Lviv.

Their sectoral focus may include:

- performing arts;
- music;
- audiovisual and multimedia;
- design, digital and media arts;
- creative innovation.

During Stage 1 and later implementation, intermediary organisations are encouraged to consider possible links with Creative Platforms where these are relevant to their value propositions.

Such links may include, for example:

- communication and exchange of knowledge;
- cooperation with regional cultural actors and stakeholders;
- joint outreach or networking activities;
- stronger connections between national-level intermediary capacities and regional cultural ecosystems.

Where activities involve regional outreach, travel, or in-person implementation, applicants should consider relevant safety and security conditions and may use remote or hybrid formats where appropriate.

Important clarification

The possible linkage with Creative Platforms does not limit the geographic or sectoral scope of intermediary proposals and should not be understood as an additional eligibility criterion.

2.10 Examples of Eligible Stage 1 Activities

During Stage 1, selected intermediary organisations will receive support for activities necessary to **research, develop, and structure** their value propositions. These activities may include, for example:

Research and analysis

- needs assessment and stakeholder consultation
- mapping of relevant cultural assets, actors, and existing gaps
- research and analysis related to the identified challenge

Co-creation and development

- meetings, workshops, or co-creation sessions with relevant stakeholders
- development and refinement of the proposed service, product, support model, platform, or advocacy mechanism
- testing assumptions and defining how the value proposition could be implemented in practice

Preparation for Stage 2

- preparation of a structured value proposition for Stage 2 testing and implementation

Important clarification

Research and mapping activities should serve the development of a concrete and testable value proposition and should not be understood as standalone outputs. Standalone events, isolated actions, or activities without a clear link to the development of the value proposition will not be considered eligible under this call.

2.11 What additional support will intermediary organisations receive?

Grant beneficiaries will receive both financial and complementary non-financial support from EU4Culture II.

Throughout the grant scheme, non-financial support will include mentoring for the development of a clear, structured, and testable value proposition. Organisations may also benefit from capacity development, peer learning, networking, and internationalisation opportunities during the programme.

Together, these support measures are designed to strengthen the capacity, visibility, and longer-term role of intermediary organisations within their cultural ecosystems.

1. Mentorship

Each selected intermediary organisation will be accompanied by a mentor who will support the development of its value proposition and help with reflection, structuring, and adaptation throughout the process.

2. Internationalisation and networking

Selected organisations will benefit from **peer-to-peer learning** and **internationalisation opportunities**, including exchange, cooperation, and stronger engagement with European cultural networks and partners.

3. Capacity development

Selected organisations will have access to capacity-building opportunities, including both:

- **standard capacity-building**, providing general knowledge and skills relevant to the cultural and creative sectors
- **tailored capacity-building**, responding to the specific needs and gaps of selected organisations

Important clarification

This complementary support will be provided by EU4Culture II separately and should not be included in applicants' Stage 1 budget or activity plan.

Applicants shall include only costs directly related to Stage 1 activities for the development of the value proposition.

2.12 Expected impact of intermediary organisation actions

Through this call, EU4Culture II supports intermediary organisations to strengthen cultural and creative ecosystems, improve regional outreach and cooperation, and create more effective support structures for cultural and creative sector actors in Ukraine.

Supported actions are expected to contribute to:



Stronger organisations

Strengthened institutional capacities and resilience of intermediary organisations.



Better services for CCS actors

Improved support, services, and opportunities for cultural and creative sector actors.



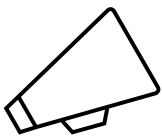
Stronger regional connections

improved access to support, networks, partnerships, and opportunities.



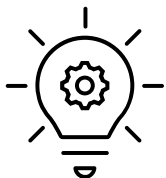
Cooperation and knowledge exchange

Improved cooperation, networking, and knowledge exchange within the CCS ecosystem.



Visibility, advocacy and policy dialogue

Increased visibility, representation, evidence-based advocacy, and contribution of CCS to policymaking.



Innovation and sustainable models

Development and dissemination of good practices, innovative solutions, and sustainable models across cultural and creative ecosystems.

3. Eligibility

3.1 Eligibility of Applicants

To be eligible to apply for Stage 1 of this grant call, the applicant:

1. Must be legally registered as a non-profit legal entity in Ukraine, in a territory under the control of the Government of Ukraine;
2. must have been legally registered and operational for at least two years by the application deadline;¹
3. must have sufficient operational, administrative, and financial capacity to implement Stage 1 activities and fulfil the programme's reporting requirements.

Public authorities, including ministries and municipalities, are not eligible to apply directly. However, a legally independent non-profit organisation established by a public authority may be eligible if it has its own legal status, operational autonomy, meets all other eligibility requirements, and demonstrates a clear intermediary role within the cultural and creative ecosystem.

Types of Eligible Intermediary Organisations

To be eligible under this Call, applicants must demonstrate a clear intermediary function within the Ukrainian cultural and creative ecosystem. Their role must go beyond the production or promotion of their own activities and must include regular and structured support to other CCS actors.

Such support may include, but is not limited to, provision of relevant services, coordination, representation, advocacy, networking, capacity-building, visibility support, professional development, or other forms of facilitation that contribute to strengthening CCS actors, organisations, communities, individual professionals, and practitioners.

Eligible intermediary organisation types may include, for example, cultural networks, associations, unions, umbrella organisations, creative hubs, clusters, alliances, platforms, advocacy organisations, cultural media initiatives, new media initiatives, and other types of organisations supporting Ukrainian cultural and creative sector actors.

¹ In duly justified cases, an organisation registered for less than two years may be considered eligible if it can demonstrate a continuous and verifiable track record of at least two years of relevant activities through a previous organisational structure, formally recognised predecessor entity, re-registration, or other documented organisational continuity.

Intermediary function	Examples
Support	supporting cultural and creative professionals, organisations, communities
Connection	building networks, partnerships, cooperation formats, or exchange opportunities
Services	providing relevant resources, training, mentoring, tools, or professional development opportunities
Representation	representing the needs, interests, or priorities of the sector
Advocacy	advocating for better policies, support mechanisms, working conditions, or recognition
Access	improving access to markets, audiences, international networks, funding, or resources

Operational Capacity

Applicants must have sufficient operational capacity to develop a value proposition within this Call (here: **Stage 1**) and, if selected for the Restricted Call (here: Stage 2) to test and implement the proposed action(s).

Applicants must demonstrate:

- ✓ experience and knowledge of the cultural and creative sectors;
- ✓ relevant experience working with Ukrainian cultural and creative actors, communities, members and stakeholders;
- ✓ basic administrative and financial management capacity to implement activities in line with programme requirements;
- ✓ the ability to communicate, report, and manage activities according to programme requirements.

Who Cannot Apply

The following applicants are not eligible:

- ✗ individuals or natural persons;
- ✗ Public authorities, including ministries and municipal bodies.
- ✗ organisations that cannot demonstrate a clear and professional reference to the cultural and creative sectors;

- ✘ organisations that do not meet the administrative, legal, or financial requirements of this call;
- ✘ organisations or persons subject to exclusion under applicable EU, Goethe-Institut, or programme rules.
- ✘ Commercial or for-profit legal entities.

4. How to Apply

Application Process

Applications must be submitted through the Goethe Application Portal (GAP) before the application deadline.

To apply, applicants must:

1. register in GAP using the following [link](#)
2. complete the online application form;
3. upload all required supporting documents;
4. submit the application before the deadline.

Applicants are advised not to wait until the final day to submit their application, in order to avoid possible technical difficulties.

Applications must be submitted in English. After successful submission, applicants will receive an automatic confirmation of receipt.

Required Application Documents

1. Annex A – Self-Declaration Form, completed and signed;
2. Document confirming legal registration of the organisation;²
3. Short biographies or CVs of the core team;

5. Key Dates and Deadlines

Step	Date / Period
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² Where an organisation has been registered for less than two years and relies on previous activities or organisational continuity, additional supporting documents may be submitted to demonstrate previous activities, predecessor structures, re-registration, organisational continuity, or a relevant track record.

Open call period	18 June 2026 – 20 July 2026, 23:59 CEST
Information session	7 July 2026
Deadline for submitting questions*	9 July 2026, 23:59 CEST
Publication of answers / FAQ	14 July 2026
Application deadline	20 July 2026, 23:59 CEST
Evaluation and clarification	July – September 2026
Contracting of selected organisations	September 2026
Stage 1 – Value Proposition Development	October 2026 – February 2027
Submission of the final value proposition and reporting	March 2027
Stage 2 – Testing and Implementation	Planned from April 2027 onwards

Information Session

An online information session will be held for potential applicants to explain the call objectives, eligibility criteria, application process, evaluation procedure, and key deadlines. General questions may be asked during the session.

Item	Details
Date	7 July 2026
Time	12:00 Ukraine time
Format	Online (Microsoft Teams)
Registration	<u>Registration link</u>

Registration is mandatory. Participants will receive the access link automatically after registering.

Please note that individual consultations or feedback on project ideas or draft applications will not be provided.

Written questions: Submit by **9 July 2026, 23:59 CEST** to eu4culture@goethe.de.

Questions & Answers publication: By **14 July 2026** on the open call webpage.

6. Evaluation and Award Procedure

Applications will be assessed in two stages: first, a formal and eligibility assessment, followed by a quality assessment.

6.1 Formal and Eligibility Assessment

Each application will first be checked against the following formal and eligibility criteria:

No.	Formal and eligibility criteria
1	The application is submitted before the deadline through the Goethe Application Portal.
2	The application is submitted in English.
3	The application form is complete and all required documents are submitted.
4	The applicant complies with all eligibility criteria set out in these guidelines.
5	The proposed action is in line with the objectives, scope, budget and duration of this call.

If the formal and eligibility criteria are not fulfilled, the application will not be further considered.

6.2 Quality Assessment

Applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Criterion	Guiding questions	Max. score
Relevance and ecosystem need	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Is the target group, sector, geographic area and/or ecosystem challenge clearly identified?➤ Is the problem, gap or need relevant to the objectives of the call?➤ Does the applicant demonstrate clear motivation and readiness to use Stage 1 to strengthen its intermediary role and advance its longer-term organisational priorities?	20
Intermediary role and operational capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Does the applicant clearly demonstrate an intermediary role in the cultural and creative ecosystem?➤ Does the organisation have relevant experience, team capacity and ability to coordinate the Stage 1 process?	20
Quality of the initial value proposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Is the initial value proposition idea clear, specific and relevant?	20

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Does it demonstrate a logical connection between the target group, identified problem, proposed solution and expected impact? ➤ Is the proposed service, product, support model, platform or advocacy mechanism suitable for further development during Stage 1? 	
Feasibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Is the proposed Stage 1 activity plan realistic and clearly structured? ➤ Are the proposed research, needs assessment, mapping, consultation or development activities appropriate for preparing the value proposition? 	10
Expected impact and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Does the proposal show potential to strengthen CCS actors, improve regional outreach, or create long-term value for the cultural and creative ecosystem actors? 	20
Budget and cost-effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Is the proposed budget realistic, cost-efficient and aligned with the planned activities? 	10
Total		100

Threshold: only applications that achieve a minimum score of 60 out of 100 will be considered for funding

6.3 Selection and Validation

Applications that pass both the formal and quality assessment will be ranked according to their total score. Funding decision will be made based on the ranking, available budget, and the quality threshold.

Where relevant, the final selection may also consider geographic and thematic balance, as well as programme priorities.

6.4 Conflict of Interest

The evaluation and award process will ensure equal treatment, transparency, and avoidance of conflicts of interest.

Applicants will be rejected if they have conflict of interest that could distort fair competition.

Applicants are also required to submit the Self-Declaration Form confirming that they are not subject to exclusion criteria and that the information provided in the application is correct and complete.

6.5 Notification of Results and Contracting

Applicants will be notified of the evaluation results by email and/or through the Goethe Application Portal.

Successful applicants will be invited to contracting process. This may include clarification of technical, administrative, or financial details.

Invitation to contracting does not constitute a formal commitment to funding. The grant is awarded only after all required checks are completed and the grant contract is signed. Unsuccessful applicants will also be informed of the result.

6.6 Clarifications on Strong and Weak Applications

Strong Applications	Weak Applications
✓ clearly defines the target group, sector, geographic area, or ecosystem need	✗ Presents broad idea without a clear target group
✓ explains a concrete problem, gap, or opportunity based on evidence or experience	✗ provides a generic problem statement that is not clearly connected to the identified cultural and creative ecosystem context
✓ proposes a structured solution that can be tested and further developed	✗ proposes a one-off event, isolated activity, or general project not contributing to ecosystem development
✓ shows how the value proposition benefits other CCS actors or the wider ecosystem	✗ focuses mainly on the applicant's own visibility or internal programme
✓ presents realistic Stage 1 activities and deliverables	✗ lists activities that do not clearly lead to a value proposition
✓ shows sustainability potential	✗ relies only on future grants without explaining continuation
✓ provides a realistic and justified budget	✗ includes unclear, excessive, or weakly justified costs

7. Budget, Eligible Costs and Payment

Selected intermediary organisations will receive financial support of up to **EUR 9,000** for **Stage 1 - Value Proposition Development**. The grant will be provided as a **lump sum** and must be used only for costs directly related to the approved Stage 1 activities and deliverables.

The proposed budget must be realistic, cost-efficient, justified, and clearly linked to the development of the value proposition. The budget will be assessed according to the principles of eligibility, and value for money.

Key Principles

Although the Stage 1 grant is provided as a lump sum, selected organisations remain responsible for implementing the approved activities and completing the agreed deliverables in line with the grant agreement.

The following principles apply:

- **Budget efficiency:** costs should be realistic, reasonable, and proportionate to the planned Stage 1 work.
- **Value for money:** the requested amount should be justified by the expected deliverables, quality of the process, and relevance of the value proposition.
- **Cost eligibility:** grant funds may only be used for costs directly related to Stage 1 – Value Proposition Development.
- **Deliverable-based implementation:** payment and/or final approval may depend on the completion and acceptance of agreed deliverables, including the final value proposition and required reports.
- **Verification and documentation:** selected organisations may be required to provide supporting documents, evidence of activities, outputs, reports, or other verification materials in line with the grant agreement.
- **No profit and no double funding:** the grant may not generate profit, dividends, or private financial gain and may not cover costs already funded by another donor or funding source.

Eligible costs

The examples below are indicative. Final eligibility of costs will be assessed according to the grant agreement and applicable programme rules.

Eligible costs may include:

- ✓ **Staff and expert costs** directly related to Stage 1, including coordination, research, facilitation, analysis, and value proposition development.
- ✓ **External services**, such as research support, facilitation, moderation, translation, interpretation, design, communication, documentation, or technical support
- ✓ **Travel costs**, where necessary and justified for consultations, meetings, mapping, research, or co-creation activities
- ✓ **Meeting, workshop, and consultation costs**, including venue rental, basic materials, accessibility-related costs, or other necessary logistical costs

- ✓ **Communication and documentation costs** directly related to Stage 1 outputs, such as visual materials, documentation, editing, layout, or presentation of the value proposition
- ✓ **Materials, tools, or small equipment**, only where clearly necessary, proportionate, and directly linked to Stage 1 activities
- ✓ **Other direct costs** necessary for preparing a value proposition, where properly justified in the budget

Ineligible costs

The following costs are not eligible

- ✗ costs not directly related to Stage 1 – Value Proposition Development
- ✗ costs incurred before the signing of the grant agreement or outside the approved implementation period
- ✗ debts, debt service charges, losses, fines, penalties, or interest payments
- ✗ costs already funded by another donor or funding source
- ✗ costs that generate profit, dividends, or private financial gain
- ✗ purchase of land, buildings, or major assets
- ✗ credits or loans to third parties
- ✗ costs that are excessive, unjustified, or not in line with sound financial management
- ✗ costs that cannot be verified or are not supported by required documentation, where such documentation is requested under the grant agreement

Payment

After signature of the grant agreement, 75% of the grant amount will be transferred to the grant beneficiary. There will be no interim payment.

The remaining balance will be paid after submission and approval of the final narrative report, agreed deliverables, and the required verification documentation, no later than two months after the end of the implementation period.

Reporting

The grant beneficiary must inform the contracting authority through interim and final narrative reports.

The Interim report should provide an overview of progress achieved by the third month of the implementation period.

The Final Narrative Report shall provide a comprehensive overview of the action's implementation and achievements and provide sources of verification – demonstrating that activities have been actually implemented and the results have been achieved, no later than one month after the official end of the implementation period (February 2027).

Detailed information on reporting and the report templates will be provided to and discussed with the grant beneficiary during the process of signing the grant contract.

EU4Culture II will evaluate the grant application for Stage 2 (restricted Call for Proposals) only after approval of the final narrative report.

8. Communication and Visibility

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. Where justified, visibility requirements may be adapted in consultation with EU4Culture II.

9. Horizontal Principles

Applicants are expected to design and implement their activities in line with the core values of EU4Culture II, including inclusion, diversity, gender equality, accessibility, environmental responsibility, and respect for human dignity.

Where relevant, applicants should consider how their value proposition can:

- improve access to cultural opportunities for underrepresented or disadvantaged groups
- promote gender equality and non-discrimination
- support participation of regional and local communities
- reduce environmental impact
- create safe, respectful, and inclusive spaces for cooperation and exchange
- Support inclusion of Jewish communities and combating antisemitism

These principles should be reflected where appropriate in the design, implementation, communication, and evaluation of the supported activities.

10. Data Protection

Personal data submitted as part of the application will be processed only for purposes related to the management, evaluation, contracting, implementation, reporting, and audit of this call and the related grant process.

Personal data will be processed in accordance with the applicable data protection rules of the Goethe-Institut and the European Union, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), where applicable.

Applicants will confirm the relevant data protection declaration in the Goethe Application Portal during submission.

11. Important Information Before Submission

- ✓ Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their application is complete, accurate, and submitted before the deadline.
- ✓ Only applications submitted through the Goethe Application Portal will be considered. Applications sent by email or submitted after the deadline will not be evaluated.
- ✓ If an applicant submits more than one application, only the latest submitted version will be assessed.
- ✓ EU4Culture II reserves the right to request clarifications or additional documents during the evaluation or contracting process. However, applicants may not substantially change their proposal after the application deadline.
- ✓ Submission of an application does not guarantee funding. The final award depends on eligibility, evaluation results, available budget, and completion of the contracting procedure.
- ✓ EU4Culture II reserves the right not to award all available funds or to cancel the call if necessary.

12. Contact Information

- Programme Coordination Office- eu4culture@goethe.de
- Country Coordinator – Daria Moskalevych: daria.moskalevych@goethe.de

Definition of Terms

Term	Definition
Granting Organisation	Goethe-Institut, the organisation issuing and managing the grant under this call.
Applicant	A legally registered non-profit organisation applying to this open call.
Grant Beneficiary	The selected applicant after signature of the grant contract
CCS	Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCS) - all sectors whose activities are rooted in cultural values and/or artistic and other creative expressions.
Cultural Intermediary Organisation	An organisation that supports, connects, represents, or strengthens other actors in the cultural and creative sectors and contributes to the wider ecosystem.
Target Group	The group, sector, community, geographic focus, or ecosystem segment for which the value proposition is developed.
Value Proposition	A structured and testable solution developed for a clearly defined target group, sector, geographic area, or ecosystem need.
Open Call	A public application process open to eligible applicants that meet the requirements described in these guidelines.
Restricted Call / Restricted Process	A follow-up process open only to organisations that successfully complete Stage 1 and are invited to apply for Stage 2.
Stage 1	The phase in which selected organisations develop their value propositions with mentor support.
Stage 2	A follow-up phase for which organisations that successfully complete Stage 1 will be invited to apply. Stage 2 funding is not automatic and will be subject to assessment of the Stage 2 application, available funding, programme requirements, and final programme approval.
Deliverables	The agreed outputs that grant beneficiaries must submit, including the final structured value proposition.
GAP	Goethe Application Portal, the online platform through which applications must be submitted.
Lump Sum	A fixed grant amount linked to approved activities and agreed deliverables, subject to the grant agreement.
Eligible Costs	Costs that are necessary, reasonable, directly linked to Stage 1, and compliant with the approved budget, grant agreement, and programme rules.