

2026 Annual Work Programme for the implementation of the Creative Europe Programme

C (2025) 6405 of 24 September 2025



Brussels, 24.9.2025
C(2025) 6405 final

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 24.9.2025

**amending Implementing Decision C(2021) 3563 on the financing of the Creative Europe
Programme for 2021-2027 and the adoption of the work programmes for 2021-2025**

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

of 24.9.2025

amending Implementing Decision C(2021) 3563 on the financing of the Creative Europe Programme for 2021-2027 and the adoption of the work programmes for 2021-2025

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union¹ ('the Financial Regulation'), and in particular Article 110(1) thereof,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/818 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing the Creative Europe Programme (2021 to 2027) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1295/2013 ('the programme')², and in particular Article 15 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) By Implementing Decision C(2021) 3563³, first amended by Implementing Decision C(2022) 36⁴, then amended by Implementing Decision C(2022) 6138⁵, Implementing Decision C(2023) 3227⁶, Implementing Decision C(2023) 6084⁷, and last amended by Implementing Decision C(2024) 6503⁸, the Commission adopted the work programmes for the implementation of the Creative Europe Programme for 2021-2025 and provided for a Union contribution of EUR 2 472 488 539 for the years 2021-2027.
- (2) In order to ensure the implementation of the programme, it is necessary to amend the multiannual financing decision C(2021) 3563, to cover the period 2021-2027 and

¹ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast) (OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.09.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>).

² OJ L189, 28.5.2021, p. 34 .

³ Commission Implementing Decision C(2021) 3563 of 26 May 2021 on the adoption of the work programme for the implementation of the Creative Europe Programme for 2021.

⁴ Commission Implementing Decision C(2022) 36 of 13 January 2022 amending Implementing Decision C(2021) 3563 on the adoption of the work programme for the implementation of the Creative Europe Programme for 2021.

⁵ Commission Implementing Decision C(2022) 6138 of 31 August 2022 amending Implementing Decision C(2021) 3563 on the financing of the Creative Europe Programme for 2021-2023 and the adoption of the work programmes for 2021 and 2022.

⁶ Commission Implementing Decision C(2023) 3227 of 5 June 2023 amending Implementing Decision C(2021) 3563 on the financing of the Creative Europe Programme for 2021-2025 and the adoption of the work programmes for 2021, 2022 and 2023.

⁷ Commission Implementing Decision C(2023) 6084 of 14 September 2023 amending Implementing Decision C(2021) 3563 on the financing of the Creative Europe Programme for 2021-2025 and the adoption of the work programme for 2021, 2022 and 2023.

⁸ Commission Implementing Decision C(2024)6503 of 18 September 2024 amending Implementing Decision C(2021) 3563 on the financing of the Creative Europe Programme for 2021-2027 and the adoption of the work programme for 2021- 2025.

which is to constitute the annual work programme, for 2026 in accordance with Article 110(2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509). This financing decision needs to be multiannual to cover actions which are using commitments in instalments.

- (3) The activities should contribute to climate and gender-equality mainstreaming in line with the Commission Communication ‘The European Green Deal’⁹ and the Interinstitutional Agreement of 16 December 2020 on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management, as well as on new own resources, including a roadmap towards the introduction of new own resources¹⁰.
- (4) Implementing Decision C(2021) 3563 should therefore be amended accordingly.
- (5) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Creative Europe Committee established by Article 24 of Regulation (EU) 2021/818,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Sole Article

Implementing Decision C(2021) 3563 is amended as follows:

- (1) The title is replaced by the following:
“Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the Creative Europe Programme for 2021-2027 and the adoption of the work programmes for 2021-2026”;
- (2) Articles 1 and 2 are replaced by the following:

“Article 1

The work programme

The multiannual financing decision, constituting the annual work programmes for the implementation of the Creative Europe Programme for 2021-2026, as set out in the Annexes, is hereby adopted.

Article 2

Union contribution

The maximum Union contribution for the implementation of the programme for 2021-2027 is set at EUR **2 476 790 066**, and shall be financed from the appropriations entered in the following lines of the general budget of the Union:

- (a) budget line 07 05 01: EUR **821 630 453** for the years 2021-2027;
- (b) budget line 07 05 02: EUR **1 428 106 307** for the years 2021-2027;

⁹ COM (2019) 640 final of 11 December 2019.

¹⁰ Interinstitutional Agreement of 16 December 2020 between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management, as well as on new own resources, including a roadmap towards the introduction of new own resources (OJ L 433I, 22.12.2020, p. 28, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_interinst/2020/1222/oj).

- (c) budget line 07 05 03: EUR **227 053 306** for the years 2021-2027.

The appropriations provided for in the first paragraph may also cover interest due for late payment.

The implementation of this Decision is subject to the availability of the appropriations:

- (a) as provided for in the draft general budget of the Union for 2026, following the adoption of that budget by the budget authority or as provided for in the system of provisional twelfths;
 - (b) as provided for in the general budget of the Union for 2027 following the adoption of that budget by the budget authority.
 - (c) Likewise, it is subject to the availability of the appropriations and contributions of EFTA and other participating countries to the programme.”
- (3) The text set out in the Annex to this Decision is added as Annex VI.

Done at Brussels, 24.9.2025

For the Commission
Glenn MICALLEF
Member of the Commission

Bruxelles, le 24.9.2025
C(2025) 6405 final

DÉCISION D'EXÉCUTION DE LA COMMISSION

du 24.9.2025

**modifiant la décision d'exécution C(2021) 3563 de la Commission relative au
financement du programme «Europe créative» pour 2021-2027 et à l'adoption des
programmes de travail annuels pour 2021-2025**

DÉCISION D'EXÉCUTION DE LA COMMISSION

du 24.9.2025

modifiant la décision d'exécution C(2021) 3563 de la Commission relative au financement du programme «Europe créative» pour 2021-2027 et à l'adoption des programmes de travail annuels pour 2021-2025

LA COMMISSION EUROPÉENNE,

vu le traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne,

vu le règlement (UE, Euratom) 2024/2509 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 23 septembre 2024 relatif aux règles financières applicables au budget général de l'Union¹ (ci-après le «règlement financier»), et notamment son article 110, paragraphe 1,

vu le règlement (UE) 2021/818 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 20 mai 2021 établissant le programme «Europe créative» (2021 à 2027) et abrogeant le règlement (UE) n° 1295/2013 (ci-après le «programme»)², et notamment son article 15,

considérant ce qui suit:

- (1) Par la décision d'exécution C(2021) 3563³, modifiée une première fois par la décision d'exécution C(2022) 36⁴, puis par la décision d'exécution C(2022) 6138⁵, la décision d'exécution C(2023) 3227⁶, la décision d'exécution C(2023) 6084⁷ et, en dernier lieu, par la décision d'exécution C(2024) 6503⁸, la Commission a adopté les programmes de travail pour la mise en œuvre du programme «Europe créative» pour 2021-2025 et a prévu une contribution de l'Union de 2 472 488 539 EUR pour la période 2021-2027.

¹ Règlement (UE, Euratom) 2024/2509 du Parlement européen et du Conseil du 23 septembre 2024 relatif aux règles financières applicables au budget général de l'Union (refonte) (JO L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>).

² JO L 189 du 28.5.2021, p. 34.

³ Décision d'exécution C(2021) 3563 de la Commission du 26 mai 2021 relative à l'adoption du programme de travail pour la mise en œuvre du programme «Europe créative» pour 2021.

⁴ Décision d'exécution C(2022) 36 de la Commission du 13 janvier 2022 modifiant la décision d'exécution C(2021) 3563 de la Commission relative à l'adoption du programme de travail pour la mise en œuvre du programme «Europe créative» pour 2021.

⁵ Décision d'exécution C(2022) 6138 de la Commission du 31 août 2022 modifiant la décision d'exécution C(2021) 3563 de la Commission relative au financement du programme «Europe créative» pour 2021-2023 et à l'adoption du programme de travail annuel pour 2021 et 2022.

⁶ Décision d'exécution C(2023) 3227 de la Commission du 5 juin 2023 modifiant la décision d'exécution C(2021) 3563 de la Commission relative au financement du programme «Europe créative» pour 2021-2025 et à l'adoption du programme de travail annuel pour 2021, 2022 et 2023.

⁷ Décision d'exécution C(2023) 6084 de la Commission du 14 septembre 2023 modifiant la décision d'exécution C(2021) 3563 de la Commission relative au financement du programme «Europe créative» pour 2021-2025 et à l'adoption du programme de travail annuel pour 2021, 2022 et 2023.

⁸ Décision d'exécution C(2024) 6503 de la Commission du 18 septembre 2024 modifiant la décision d'exécution C(2021) 3563 de la Commission relative au financement du programme «Europe créative» pour 2021-2027 et à l'adoption des programmes de travail annuels pour 2021-2025.

- (2) Aux fins de la mise en œuvre du programme, il y a lieu de modifier la décision de financement pluriannuelle C(2021) 3563 afin de couvrir la période 2021-2027; elle constitue le programme de travail annuel pour 2026 conformément à l'article 110, paragraphe 2, du règlement (UE, Euratom) 2024/2509. La présente décision de financement doit être pluriannuelle pour couvrir les actions qui utilisent les engagements de manière échelonnée.
- (3) Les activités devraient contribuer à intégrer les questions relatives au climat et à l'égalité de genre comme le prévoit la communication de la Commission intitulée «Le pacte vert pour l'Europe»⁹ et conformément à l'accord interinstitutionnel du 16 décembre 2020 sur la discipline budgétaire, la coopération en matière budgétaire et la bonne gestion financière, ainsi que sur de nouvelles ressources propres, comportant une feuille de route en vue de la mise en place de nouvelles ressources propres¹⁰.
- (4) Il y a donc lieu de modifier la décision d'exécution C(2021) 3563 en conséquence.
- (5) Les mesures prévues dans la présente décision sont conformes à l'avis du comité «Europe créative» institué par l'article 24 du règlement (UE) 2021/818,

DÉCIDE:

Article unique

La décision d'exécution C(2021) 3563 est modifiée comme suit:

- (1) Le titre est remplacé par le texte suivant:
«Décision d'exécution de la Commission relative au financement du programme "Europe créative" pour 2021-2027 et à l'adoption des programmes de travail annuels pour 2021-2026»;
- (2) Les articles 1^{er} et 2 sont remplacés par le texte suivant:

«Article premier

Le programme de travail

La décision de financement pluriannuelle, qui constitue les programmes de travail annuels pour la mise en œuvre du programme «Europe créative» pour 2021-2026, figurant en annexe, est adoptée.

Article 2

Contribution de l'Union

Le montant maximal de la contribution de l'Union destinée à la mise en œuvre du programme pour la période 2021-2027 est fixé à **2 476 790 066 EUR**, à financer sur les crédits inscrits aux lignes suivantes du budget général de l'Union:

⁹ COM(2019) 640 final du 11 décembre 2019.

¹⁰ Accord interinstitutionnel du 16 décembre 2020 entre le Parlement européen, le Conseil de l'Union européenne et la Commission européenne sur la discipline budgétaire, la coopération en matière budgétaire et la bonne gestion financière, ainsi que sur de nouvelles ressources propres, comportant une feuille de route en vue de la mise en place de nouvelles ressources propres (JO L 433I du 22.12.2020, p. 28, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_interinst/2020/1222/oj).

- a) ligne budgétaire 07 05 01: **821 630 453** EUR pour les années 2021-2027;
- b) ligne budgétaire 07 05 02: **1 428 106 307** EUR pour les années 2021-2027;
- c) ligne budgétaire 07 05 03: **227 053 306** EUR pour les années 2021-2027.

Les crédits prévus au premier alinéa peuvent également couvrir les intérêts de retard.

La mise en œuvre de la présente décision est subordonnée à la disponibilité des crédits:

- a) qui sont prévus dans le projet de budget général de l'Union pour 2026, après l'adoption de celui-ci par l'autorité budgétaire, ou qui sont prévus par le régime des douzièmes provisoires;
- b) qui sont prévus dans le budget général de l'Union pour 2027, après l'adoption de celui-ci par l'autorité budgétaire.
- c) De même, elle est subordonnée à la disponibilité des crédits et des contributions des pays de l'AELE et des autres pays participant au programme.»

(3) Le texte figurant en annexe de la présente décision est ajouté en tant qu'annexe VI.

Fait à Bruxelles, le 24.9.2025

Par la Commission
Glenn MICALLEF
Membre de la Commission



EUROPÄISCHE
KOMMISSION

Brüssel, den 24.9.2025
C(2025) 6405 final

DURCHFÜHRUNGSBESCHLUSS DER KOMMISSION

vom 24.9.2025

**zur Änderung des Durchführungsbeschlusses C(2021) 3563 über die Finanzierung des
Programms Kreatives Europa 2021-2027 und die Annahme der Arbeitsprogramme für
die Jahre 2021-2025**

DURCHFÜHRUNGSBESCHLUSS DER KOMMISSION

vom 24.9.2025

zur Änderung des Durchführungsbeschlusses C(2021) 3563 über die Finanzierung des Programms Kreatives Europa 2021-2027 und die Annahme der Arbeitsprogramme für die Jahre 2021-2025

DIE EUROPÄISCHE KOMMISSION —

gestützt auf den Vertrag über die Arbeitsweise der Europäischen Union,

gestützt auf die Verordnung (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 23. September 2024 über die Haushaltsordnung für den Gesamthaushaltsplan der Union¹ (im Folgenden „Haushaltsordnung“), insbesondere auf Artikel 110 Absatz 1,

gestützt auf die Verordnung (EU) 2021/818 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 20. Mai 2021 zur Einrichtung des Programms Kreatives Europa (2021 bis 2027) und zur Aufhebung der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 1295/2013 (im Folgenden „Programm“)², insbesondere auf Artikel 15,

in Erwägung nachstehender Gründe:

- (1) Mit dem Durchführungsbeschluss C(2021) 3563³, geändert erstmals durch den Durchführungsbeschluss C(2022) 36⁴, dann durch die Durchführungsbeschlüsse C(2022) 6138⁵, C(2023) 3227⁶, C(2023) 6084⁷ und zuletzt durch den Durchführungsbeschluss C(2024) 6503⁸, hat die Kommission die Arbeitsprogramme für die Durchführung des Programms Kreatives Europa für die Jahre 2021-2025 angenommen und einen Beitrag der Union in Höhe von 2 472 488 539 EUR für die Jahre 2021-2027 vorgesehen.

¹ Verordnung (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 des Europäischen Parlaments und des Rates vom 23. September 2024 über die Haushaltsordnung für den Gesamthaushaltsplan der Union (Neufassung) (ABl. L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>).

² ABl. L 189 vom 28.5.2021, S. 34.

³ Durchführungsbeschluss C(2021) 3563 der Kommission vom 26. Mai 2021 über die Annahme des Jahresarbeitsprogramms 2021 für die Durchführung des Programms Kreatives Europa.

⁴ Durchführungsbeschluss C(2022) 36 der Kommission vom 13. Januar 2022 zur Änderung des Durchführungsbeschlusses C(2021) 3563 über die Annahme des Jahresarbeitsprogramms 2021 für die Durchführung des Programms Kreatives Europa.

⁵ Durchführungsbeschluss C(2022) 6138 vom 31. August 2022 zur Änderung des Durchführungsbeschlusses C(2021) 3563 der Kommission über die Finanzierung des Programms Kreatives Europa 2021-2023 und die Annahme der Arbeitsprogramme für 2021 und 2022.

⁶ Durchführungsbeschluss C(2023) 3227 vom 5. Juni 2023 zur Änderung des Durchführungsbeschlusses C(2021) 3563 der Kommission über die Finanzierung des Programms Kreatives Europa 2021-2025 und die Annahme der Arbeitsprogramme für 2021, 2022 und 2023.

⁷ Durchführungsbeschluss C(2023) 6084 vom 14. September 2023 zur Änderung des Durchführungsbeschlusses C(2021) 3563 der Kommission über die Finanzierung des Programms Kreatives Europa 2021-2025 und die Annahme der Arbeitsprogramme für die Jahre 2021, 2022 und 2023.

⁸ Durchführungsbeschluss C(2024) 6503 der Kommission vom 18. September 2024 zur Änderung des Durchführungsbeschlusses C(2021) 3563 über die Finanzierung des Programms Kreatives Europa 2021-2027 und die Annahme der Arbeitsprogramme für die Jahre 2021-2025.

- (2) Damit die Durchführung des Programms gewährleistet werden kann, ist die Änderung des mehrjährigen Finanzierungsbeschlusses C(2021)3563 zur Deckung des Zeitraums 2021-2027 erforderlich; dieser stellt gemäß Artikel 110 Absatz 2 der Verordnung (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 das jährliche Arbeitsprogramm 2026 dar. Dieser Finanzierungsbeschluss muss mehrjährig sein, um Maßnahmen abzudecken, für die Mittelbindungen in Tranchen verwendet werden.
- (3) Die Maßnahmen sollten im Einklang mit der Mitteilung der Kommission „Der europäische Grüne Deal“⁹ und der Interinstitutionellen Vereinbarung vom 16. Dezember 2020 über die Haushaltsdisziplin, die Zusammenarbeit im Haushaltsbereich und die wirtschaftliche Haushaltsführung sowie über neue Eigenmittel, einschließlich eines Fahrplans im Hinblick auf die Einführung neuer Eigenmittel¹⁰ zur durchgängigen Berücksichtigung des Klimaschutzes und der Gleichstellung der Geschlechter beitragen.
- (4) Der Durchführungsbeschluss C(2021) 3563 sollte daher entsprechend geändert werden.
- (5) Die in diesem Beschluss vorgesehenen Maßnahmen entsprechen der Stellungnahme des gemäß Artikel 24 der Verordnung (EU) Nr. 2021/818 eingesetzten Ausschusses „Kreatives Europa“ —

BESCHLIEßT:

Einziger Artikel

Der Durchführungsbeschluss C(2021) 3563 wird wie folgt geändert:

1. Der Titel erhält folgende Fassung:
„Durchführungsbeschluss der Kommission über die Finanzierung des Programms Kreatives Europa 2021-2027 und die Annahme der Arbeitsprogramme für die Jahre 2021-2026“;
2. Die Artikel 1 und 2 erhalten folgende Fassung:

„Artikel 1 Arbeitsprogramm

Der in den Anhängen dargelegte mehrjährige Finanzierungsbeschluss, der die Jahresarbeitsprogramme für die Durchführung des Programms Kreatives Europa für 2021-2026 darstellt, wird angenommen.

⁹ COM(2019) 640 final vom 11. Dezember 2019.

¹⁰ Interinstitutionelle Vereinbarung vom 16. Dezember 2020 zwischen dem Europäischen Parlament, dem Rat der Europäischen Union und der Europäischen Kommission über die Haushaltsdisziplin, die Zusammenarbeit im Haushaltsbereich und die wirtschaftliche Haushaltsführung sowie über neue Eigenmittel, einschließlich eines Fahrplans im Hinblick auf die Einführung neuer Eigenmittel (ABl. L 433I vom 22.12.2020, S. 28, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_interinstit/2020/1222/oj).

Artikel 2
Beitrag der Union

Der Höchstbeitrag der Union für die Durchführung des Programms für den Zeitraum 2021-2027 beläuft sich auf **2 476 790 066** EUR und wird aus Mitteln finanziert, die unter den folgenden Haushaltslinien des Gesamthaushaltsplans der Union eingestellt wurden:

- a) Haushaltslinie 07 05 01: **821 630 453** EUR für die Jahre 2021-2027;
- b) Haushaltslinie 07 05 02: **1 428 106 307** EUR für die Jahre 2021-2027;
- c) Haushaltslinie 07 05 03: **227 053 306** EUR für die Jahre 2021-2027.

Die in Absatz 1 genannten Haushaltsmittel können auch Verzugszinsen abdecken.

Dieser Beschluss kann nur umgesetzt werden, wenn die Mittel bereitgestellt werden,

- a) wie im Entwurf des Gesamthaushaltsplans der Union für 2026 vorgesehen, und zwar nach Erlass des betreffenden Haushaltsplans durch die Haushaltsbehörde oder nach der Regelung der vorläufigen Zwölftel;
- b) wie im Gesamthaushaltsplan der Union für 2027 nach Erlass des betreffenden Haushaltsplans durch die Haushaltsbehörde vorgesehen.
- c) Desgleichen kann er nur umgesetzt werden, wenn die Mittel und die Beiträge von EFTA-Ländern und anderer teilnehmender Länder zum Programm verfügbar sind.“

3. Der Wortlaut des Anhangs des vorliegenden Beschlusses wird als Anhang VI angefügt.

Brüssel, den 24.9.2025

Für die Kommission
Glenn MICALLEF
Mitglied der Kommission



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ANNEX

Annual Work Programme for the implementation of the Creative Europe Programme for 2026

Part I - General overview

This Work Programme outlines the policy framework, the priorities and the actions implementing the Creative Europe Programme in 2026.

1. THE CREATIVE EUROPE PROGRAMME

OBJECTIVES AND STRUCTURE

Creative Europe (hereafter also 'The Programme') brings together actions supporting the European cultural and creative sectors¹. The budget of EUR 2.5 billion² for the period 2021-2027 represents a significant increase compared to its predecessor.

The general objectives of the Programme are:

- to safeguard, develop and promote European cultural and linguistic diversity and heritage;
- to increase the competitiveness and the economic potential of the cultural and creative sectors, in particular the audiovisual sector.

These goals are pursued through the following specific objectives:

- enhancing artistic and cultural cooperation at the European level, in order to support the creation of European works to foster innovation and mobility within Europe's cultural and creative sectors and strengthen their economic, social and external dimension (**Culture strand**);
- promoting the competitiveness, scalability, cooperation, innovation, and sustainability, including through mobility in the European audiovisual sector (**MEDIA strand**); and
- promoting policy cooperation and innovative actions supporting all strands of the Programme, promoting a diverse, independent and pluralistic media environment, and media literacy, thereby fostering freedom of artistic expression, intercultural dialogue and social inclusion (**Cross-Sectoral strand**).

The general and specific objectives of the Programme take into account the dual nature of the cultural and creative sectors, recognising, on the one hand, the intrinsic and artistic value of culture and, on the other, the

¹ In line with Article 2(1) of Regulation No. 2021/818 establishing the Creative Europe Programme for the period 2021-2027 (hereinafter also "Regulation 2021/818", "Creative Europe Regulation" or "the Regulation"): 'cultural and creative sectors' means all sectors whose activities are based on cultural values and artistic and other individual or collective creative expressions, whether those activities are market - or non-market-oriented, whatever the type of structure that carries them out; and irrespective of how that structure is financed. The activities include the development, the creation, the production, the dissemination and the preservation of goods and services which embody cultural, artistic or other creative expressions, as well as related functions such as education or management. Many of those have a potential to generate innovation and jobs in particular from intellectual property. The sectors include, inter alia, architecture, archives, libraries and museums, artistic crafts, audiovisual (including film, television, video games and multimedia), tangible and intangible cultural heritage, design (including fashion design), festivals, music, literature, performing arts, (including theatre and dance), books and publishing, radio, and visual arts.

² The financial envelope for the implementation of the Programme for the period 2021-2027 shall be EUR 1 842 000 000 in current prices and increased by an additional allocation of EUR 600 000 000 in 2018 prices, as a programme specific adjustment provided for in Article 5 of the MFF regulation.

economic value of those sectors, including their broader contribution to growth and competitiveness, creativity and innovation. The objectives are pursued in a way that encourages inclusion, equality, diversity and participation, including, where appropriate, specific incentives that encourage the active participation in the cultural and creative sectors of people with disabilities, people belonging to minorities and people belonging to socially marginalised groups, including both the creative process and audience development; and gender equality, in particular as a driver of economic growth, innovation and creativity.

THIRD COUNTRY ASSOCIATION

In addition to EU Member States, in accordance with Article 9 of the Creative Europe Regulation, the following countries can participate in the Programme:

- European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries, which are also members of the European Economic Area (EEA), in accordance with the conditions laid down in the Agreement on the European Economic Area³. In 2026 the following countries will participate: Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

- Acceding countries, candidate countries and potential candidates, in accordance with the general principles and general terms and conditions for the participation of those countries in Union programmes established in the respective framework agreements and Association Council decisions or in similar agreements and in accordance with the specific conditions laid down in agreements between the Union and those countries.

In 2026 Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo,⁴ Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Ukraine⁵ will participate, since they have already signed a participation agreement.

- European Neighbourhood Policy (“ENP”) countries, in accordance with the general principles and general terms and conditions for the participation of those countries in Union programmes established in the respective framework agreements and Association Council decisions or in similar agreements and in accordance with the specific conditions laid down in agreements between the Union and those countries.

In 2026, Armenia and Tunisia will participate in the Culture strand since they have already signed a participation agreement.

- Other third countries, in accordance with the conditions laid down in a specific agreement covering the participation of the third country to any Union programme, as stated in Article 9 (1)(d) of the Creative Europe Regulation.

As per recital 33 and in the spirit of Article 9§6 of the EC(2021)/818, third countries should aim to participate fully in the Programme. However, participation in the MEDIA strand and full-participation in the Cross-sectoral strand are subject to certain requirements (e.g. the fulfilment of the conditions set out in Directive 2010/13/EU as amended by Directive 2018/1808 (the “AVMSD”)) or a duly justified derogation.

- **Full participation**

The following European third countries fulfilling all the conditions set out in the AVMSD fully participate in all strands of the Programme:

³ OJ L 1, 3.1.1994, p. 3.

⁴ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

⁵ Provided that Ukraine ratifies the amendment, Ukrainian entities will be able to participate in all MEDIA actions covered by this Work Programme 2026. Ukraine will notify the ratification once completed.

- EEA/EFTA countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway
- Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia.

Moldova has officially expressed its interest in joining the current Creative Europe Programme and the Commission will soon start negotiations with Moldova in this regard. Given Moldova's status as a candidate country for joining the EU, a full participation in all three strands of the Programme will be mandatory, requiring an assessment of the alignment of Moldova's legislation with the Audiovisual Media Services Directive.

Subject to ratification of the Participation agreement by Ukraine, Ukrainian professionals will be able to fully participate in all MEDIA actions, thereby strengthening their ties and participation in development, production, distribution, market and networking activities.

- **Partial participation**

ENP countries satisfying the following conditions:

- essential minimum standards balancing freedom of speech and protection of citizens/vulnerable viewers underpinning the AVMSD such as prohibition of incitement to hatred or violence and protection of minors; and
- independence of audiovisual media regulators.

In line with the conditions set out in Article 9(c) of the Creative Europe Regulation on third country association, Georgia in Creative Europe participate partially in the MEDIA strand.

Level of participation:

- full participation in the Cross-Sectoral and Culture strands, and
- partial participation in the MEDIA strand, as follows:
 - Audience cluster: audience development & film education; European Festivals and networks of European festivals
 - Business cluster: training and skills; markets and networking

Tunisia was suspended from the MEDIA and cross-sectoral strands due to its non-compliance with the Directive 2010/13/EU on audiovisual media services. Therefore, as from the 31 January 2024 and until the suspension is lifted, legal entities from Tunisia will be deemed as not eligible to actions in MEDIA and cross-sectoral strands. Concretely, entities from Tunisia will not be eligible for future and ongoing award procedures, for which the legal commitments have not yet been entered. However, the suspension will have no impact on earlier award procedures and ongoing projects, for which award procedures have been completed and legal commitments have already been entered into. In addition, the suspension does not lead to modifications in the clauses of the association agreements signed with Tunisia, notably on the financial contributions and on the Creative Europe Desks established in accordance with article 7(1)(d) of the Creative Europe Regulation and which remain fully operational.

Proposals from applicants in third countries associated to the Programme may be selected provided that, on the date of the award, agreements are (at least provisionally) in force setting out the arrangements for the

participation of these countries in the Programme.⁶

Participation in the strands

Third countries should aim to participate fully in the Programme. However, third countries not fulfilling the conditions set out in the AVMSD and not benefitting from the derogation for ENP countries may only participate to the Culture strand and to the action 'Creative Europe Desks' under the Cross-Sectoral strand.

This approach is reflected in the following table defining our practice based on Article 9 of the Regulation:

CONDITIONS FOR THIRD COUNTRY ASSOCIATION - participation in the MEDIA and CROSS-SECTORAL strands

GENERAL OBJECTIVE Participate in all strands of the Creative Europe Programme	Participation in the MEDIA and CROSS- SECTORAL strands	Countries	Legal basis	2021-2022 (provisional participation)	2023-2027
		EFTA/EEA countries	Articles 9,2 9,4	Full participation in MEDIA and CROSS	Full alignment with AVMSD* needed in accordance with the conditions laid down in the EEA Agreement
		Candidate countries and potential candidates	Articles 9,2 9,4 and 9,5	Full participation provisionally granted to those countries that fully participated in the 2014-2020 programming period	Full participation in MEDIA and CROSS only if they provide evidence showing that they have fulfilled the conditions set- out in AVMSD
		European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) countries	Articles 9,2 9,3 and recital 33, which allows for a gradual approach	Partial participation in MEDIA and full participation in CROSS provisionally granted to those countries that partially participated in the 2014-2020 programming period. Partial participation in MEDIA gives access to the training, markets and networks, festivals, film education and audience development actions	- Partial participation in MEDIA and in CROSS to be pursued only if compliance with general principles** - Full participation in clusters 2 and 3 if tangible progress towards AVMSD: - rules on linear services aligned; - progress regarding alignment of rules on on-demand services - Full participation in all actions in MEDIA and CROSS if full alignment with AVMSD

*AVMSD: Directive 2010/13 as amended by Directive 2018/1808

**General principles: essential minimum content standards balancing freedom of speech and protection of citizens/vulnerable viewers underpinning AVMSD such as prohibition of incitement to hatred or violence,

⁶ If after the award the agreement is terminated, the selection may be cancelled in exceptional circumstances and if duly justified, after hearing the applicant. This applies in particular if the agreement is terminated shortly after the award and the third country has not paid the relevant contribution and provided that the acquired rights and legitimate expectations of the applicant are respected.

protection of minors and independence of audiovisual media regulators.

BODIES IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMME

The European Commission is responsible for the implementation of the Programme. Within the Commission, the following Directorates-General implement the Programme;

- i) Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture - DG EAC -;
- ii) Directorate-General for Communications, Networks, Content and Technology - DG CNECT;
- iii) Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs- DG ECFIN-, through co-delegation or cross-sub delegation, for the implementation of action 6.1. MediaInvest.

The Commission has delegated the management of most actions to the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), which operates under the Commission's political responsibility.

In accordance with Articles 62(1)(c)(ii) and 159(1) of the Financial Regulation, with reference to Pillar Assessed International Organisations, the Commission may entrust them budget implementation tasks via the conclusion of Contribution Agreements under the indirect management mode.

The Commission is assisted by a Programme Committee, within the meaning of Regulation 182/2011⁷, which gives an opinion on the Annual Work Programme proposed by the Commission.

Pursuant to the Regulation, a network of Programme Desks has been created (one Desk in each participating country), in order to provide information and promote the Programme, assist potential applicants, stimulate cross-border cooperation, support the Commission, and ensure the communication and dissemination of funding awarded and results obtained in their respective country.

⁷ Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers, OJ L 55, 28.2.2011, p. 1.

2. POLICY FRAMEWORK

The cultural and creative sectors are facing a number of overarching challenges triggered inter alia by the current volatile context and geopolitical instability, including the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine. In this difficult and changing context, the Creative Europe 2026 Annual Work Programme will be the first adopted under the College of Commissioners that took office at the end of 2024, and more especially under Executive Vice-President for Tech Sovereignty, Security and Democracy, Ms Henna Virkkunen and Executive Vice-President for Social Rights and Skills, Quality Jobs and Preparedness, Ms Roxana Mînzatu and Commissioner for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture and Sport, Mr Glenn Micallef.

The priorities of the new College of Commissioners - provide a special role for culture and media in protecting democracy, boosting societal resilience, upholding values and safeguarding the rule of law.

In particular, the mandate letter assigned to Executive Vice-President Virkkunen recognizes the unique role of the media in supporting our culture and democracies and its economic development.

In the field of culture, Commissioner Micallef has been entrusted with the mission to develop a more strategic policy approach to culture, a Culture Compass for Europe, to guide and harness the multiple dimensions of culture, while also focusing on improving the working conditions of artists and cultural professionals, as well as to work closely with Executive Vice-President Virkkunen to develop an AI strategy for cultural and creative industries. This will guide the implementation of the Culture Strand, alongside the priorities and actions of the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026, which extends through 2026.

Finally, the actions of the Programme will contribute to the implementation of high-level initiatives, such as the European Green Deal and the New European Bauhaus.

Evaluation of the Programme

An interim evaluation of the current Creative Europe programme is foreseen in line with Article 21 of the Creative Europe Regulation together with a final evaluation of the previous programme (2014-2020). The exercise is ongoing and will lead to the publication of a report from the European Commission to the European Parliament and the Council mid-2025. Where possible, preliminary findings from this analysis have been taken into account in the Work Programme 2026. The interim evaluation will help to steer the Programme for the remainder of the current Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and may also provide relevant findings to be taken into account for the design of support measures in the next Multi-annual Financial Framework.

CREATIVE EUROPE CONTRIBUTION TO OVERARCHING PRIORITIES

The Programme will contribute to the protection of democracy, strengthening of EU competitiveness and the green and digital transition while at the same time strengthening social and economic resilience.

Digital transition

Digital technologies, and in particular virtual worlds and the acceleration of generative artificial intelligence, have raised opportunities as well as concerns among the cultural and creative sectors. The training and deployment of AI models shall be carried out in full respect of EU law, including AI act and copyright legislations. Meanwhile artists, cultural professionals and creative companies and organisations need to position themselves to be ready to take advantage of these instruments.

In the context of strong international competition, several EU programmes will support and accompany the cultural and creative sectors and industries in this transition, in line with the Communication of April 2025 on the 'AI Continent Action Plan', the Communication of July 2023 "An EU initiative on Web 4.0 and virtual worlds:

a head start in the next technological transition” as well as the Commission’s mandate to work on developing an AI strategy for cultural and creative industries. Creative Europe funding, in particular on European Cooperation, skills and talent, innovative tools and cross-sectoral collaboration actions will be a catalyst for the sector to take up new technologies, while addressing the related challenges and risks.

On a more general note, Creative Europe will continue to be in line with the objectives of Europe’s Digital Decade⁸. Creative Europe will play a key role within the updated industrial strategy as regards the cultural and creative industries ecosystem. The Programme will continue to contribute to the implementation of the 2020 Media and Audiovisual Action Plan (MAAP).

Creative Europe contribution to the EU Greening efforts

In 2026 the Commission will continue to assess how environmental, sustainable and proportional measures can be effectively and efficiently introduced in Creative Europe actions and funded initiatives, addressing the objectives of the European Green Deal, while respecting the core values of the Programme.

This work will continue to be based on the results of the study “Greening the Creative Europe Programme⁹” (2023), particularly the “Creative Europe Programme Greening Strategy”¹⁰ included there and the “Quality Assessment of Green Aspects in Creative Europe Projects (Culture strand)” (2024), but also on the recommendations of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) group of experts from both cultural and environmental-climate policies, expected in the second half of 2025. The Commission (DG EAC) will also continue supporting the network of Green Contact Points in Creative Europe Culture Desks to share good practices and build the capacity of all stakeholders engaged in the implementation of the Culture strand of the Programme.

The development of a European audiovisual carbon calculator for live action content was procured in December 2023. Beta-testing is underway, and the launch is foreseen for 2025, including outreach activities with producers, calculators and stakeholders to facilitate uptake and extend its reach to other genres. This action needs to be followed up in the Work Programme 2026.

Inclusion and gender equality

Gender equality and social inclusion remain at the heart of the Creative Europe Programme. Funded projects must address equality in the design and implementation phases. These aspects are assessed in the evaluation of proposals. The Creative Europe Programme contributes to the Commission’s equality strategies under the Union of Equality priority, contributing and reporting its actions on gender equality, anti-racism and fighting antisemitism, Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation, LGBTIQ equality and rights of persons with disabilities.

International cultural relations

Following the illegal full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia, Creative Europe will continue supporting Ukrainian artists and cultural operators in showcasing their work and supporting the Ukrainian displaced population in accessing culture in these extremely challenging times. Under the Annual Work Programme 2026, the participation of Ukrainian organisations in the calls for European Cooperation projects and for literary translations will be specifically encouraged.

Creative Europe Networks will continue helping to build the capacity of cultural and creative organisations to be active at the international level, thus encouraging international cultural relations and supporting EU’s action

⁸ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/europes-digital-decade>

⁹ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/2204b297-f52d-11ed-a05c-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

¹⁰ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/93528bd3-f52c-11ed-a05c-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

and positioning globally.

Moreover, the European Spaces of Culture action aims to foster the implementation of new models of collaboration in international cultural relations, following a number of guiding principles, in line with the 2016 Joint Communication “Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations”.

2026 PRIORITIES: CULTURE STRAND

Under the Culture strand, the Annual Work Programme 2026 will maintain the structure of the 2025 calls, notably concerning the European Cooperation Projects and the Circulation of European Literary Works. Three new calls will be introduced to support specific actions: the Perform Europe initiative, the support to the implementation of the European Heritage Label and the European Spaces of culture. Moreover, the following three new actions will be launched: the Cultural and Creative sectors’ rural policy project, the support to WIPO’s clip initiative and the cooperation with the OECD in the field of data.

Finally, ongoing commitments, aligned with actions outlined in previous Annual Work Programmes, will persist in 2026.

Recurrent actions

Under the Annual Work Programme 2025, the call for **European Cooperation Projects** limited to three the number of applications an organisation was allowed to participate in. This requirement will remain unchanged under the Annual Work Programme 2026. The call for proposals under the Annual Work Programme 2026 will allow **for small and medium-scale** projects only.

Under the Annual Work Programme 2026, the call for the **Circulation of European Literary Works** will focus on the core of the action: translation, publication, circulation and promotion with special attention to linguistic diversity and fair remuneration of translators. It will encourage risk-taking in editorial choices or innovation regarding greening.

The European Capitals of Culture (ECOC) remain a flagship EU action with a positive effect on local cultural communities, economies, and societies. This action is governed by an ad hoc legal basis (Decision 445/2014/EU) is supported by Creative Europe. Building on the exceptional richness and diversity of cultures in the cities and regions of Europe, as well as on the cultural elements we share within the EU, this action, aims in particular to increase the citizens' sense of belonging to a common cultural area. It also seeks to foster the contribution of culture to the long-term development of cities. European Capitals of Culture provide a resourceful laboratory for policy reflection and experimentation on culture and Europe at city level, promoting sustainability, participatory approaches and cross-sectoral linkages, in line with the principles of the New European Bauhaus initiative.

The cities of Oulu (Finland) and Trenčín (Slovakia) will be **European Capitals of Culture** in 2026. The competition to designate the 2033 European Capital of Culture in Italy, in the Netherlands and in an EFTA/EEA country, a candidate country or a potential candidate will be launched in 2026. The Commission will continue supporting this action in various ways, including through the award of the Melina Mercouri Prize to the two cities holding the ECOC title in 2027, i.e. Liepāja in Latvia and Évora in Portugal (though the payment of these pecuniary prizes is conditional and deferred until early 2027) and to two cities holding the title in 2028, i.e. Bourges in France and Budweis (České Budějovice) in the Czech Republic (with a conditional payment deferred until early 2028), and through the financial support given to the work of the Expert panel that is established to carry out the selection and monitoring procedures of ECOC cities. As the current legal base of the European Capital of Culture action covers the title-years only until 2033, it will be necessary to have a new Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council in place by mid to end 2027 at the latest for the seamless continuation of the action.

The European Heritage Label (EHL) continues to be a valuable EU initiative for strengthening the sense of belonging to the Union for European citizens, especially among the youth while improving accessibility to culture in rural and remote territories. In 2025, the EHL amount to 67 sites and 275 locations in 22 EU member states. A distinctive feature of the action is its focus on the European dimension of heritage sites and the European values they embody.

The evaluation of the European Capitals of Culture and the European Heritage Label have also been entrusted to DG EAC. Both of these evaluations are currently being finalised and their results will be communicated in Q3 2025 to both the European Parliament and the Council, in accordance with the legal basis of these two actions. Both evaluations will be used to feed-in the reflections on the next legal base for both these actions.

Continuing Actions

The calls for the multi-annual actions launched under AWP in 2024 allowed for the selection of **39 European Networks of Cultural and Creative Organisations**, **18 European Platforms for emerging artists** and **5 Pan-European Cultural Entities**, which is more than the numbers initially indicated in the 2024 Annual Work Programme. Due to an extremely good quality of proposals the budgets foreseen for PLAT and PECE calls have been slightly exceeded. As a consequence, the annual budget for Platforms and Pan-European Cultural Entities will increase in 2026 and 2027.

The Cultural prizes (in the fields of Architecture, Music, Literature and Heritage) will be implemented in 2026, in accordance with their respective grants set in the Annual Work Programme 2024 and 2025.

Creative Europe's mobility scheme, **Culture Moves Europe**, will also continue its regular implementation in 2026.

Similarly to previous years, the 2026 Annual Work Programme will provide financial support to implement actions stemming from the priorities mentioned in section 1. This includes continued support to the action launched in 2024 and aiming at safeguarding cultural heritage from man-made and natural disasters with the intergovernmental organisation ICCROM ("International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property").

New calls and actions

A new call for proposals to select an organisation to support the implementation of the EHL will be launched under the Annual Work Programme 2026. The call will replicate the one published under the AWP 2022. This call will aim to select one single project (either one organisation or a consortium of partner organisations) responsible for steering the community of practices of the labelled sites, ensuring their upskilling, visibility and encouraging cross borders projects among the European Heritage Label sites. Following the evaluation and monitoring of the action in 2024, efforts in 2026 will also be focused on the adoption of a new legal base for the continuation of the action.

A call for proposals to select a consortium of partner organisations to run the third iteration of the Perform Europe scheme will be launched under the Annual Work Programme 2026. The Perform Europe III Call intends to build upon the success of its pilot (Perform Europe I, 2019-2022) action and the Perform Europe II Call (2023-2026) to support innovative touring and cross-border distribution schemes of performing arts works in a sustainable and inclusive manner. The project will support distribution partnerships between producers and presenters to showcase performing arts across borders, with a focus on a broad outreach and stakeholder engagement in the sector.

Furthermore, it is proposed to launch a new action following the same model and objectives of the European Spaces of Culture project (2023-2025) to continue supporting the external dimension of the future strategic framework for culture.

Support to cultural and creative sectors will be implemented to unlock their competitiveness potential and help them embrace new emerging priorities, including artificial intelligence. Building on previous initiatives in support to cultural and creative sectors and the results achieved so far, it is envisaged to launch a new action under the Annual Work Programme 2026 to elaborate common responses to the challenges faced by the cultural and creative sectors' professionals, in particular with a rural and remote dimension, as well as an emphasis on young culture professionals.

The Annual Work Programme 2026 will also include support to the World Intellectual Property Organization's (WIPO) CLIP initiative. The action aims to support the development of targeted content for music creators in Creative Europe countries and to expand WIPO's CLIP platform to other cultural sectors, with the goal of raising awareness among creators of their intellectual property rights and contributing to a fairer, more sustainable creative economy. In doing so, this project will also contribute to supporting efforts aimed at improving artists' working conditions.

Finally, the Annual Work Programme 2026 will include an action in collaboration with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The action will aim at enhancing the evidence basis, data collection and analysis to better measure the cultural and creative sectors and industries with a view to supporting policy making in the field of culture.

SUMMARY TABLES OF FUNDING MEASURES

<u>Recurrent Actions</u>
European Cooperation Projects
Circulation of European literary works
Melina Mercouri Prize

<u>Continuing actions (multiannual commitment)</u>
European Platforms for the promotion of emerging artists
European Networks of cultural and creative organisations
Pan-European Cultural Entities
Culture moves Europe
Day of European Authors
EU Prizes in contemporary architecture, cultural heritage, Jewish cultural heritage, literature, popular and contemporary music
Cooperation with the Council of Europe/European heritage days
Safeguarding cultural heritage from man-made and natural disasters peer-learning

<u>New calls and new actions</u>
<u>New calls</u>
New call for the Perform Europe Initiative (covering the 2026-2027 period)
New call for the support to the implementation of the European Heritage Label (covering the period July 2026 to end of June 2028)
<u>New actions</u>
Cultural and creative sectors' Rural Policy Project
Support to WIPO's CLIP Initiative
European Spaces of Culture
Cooperation with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

2026 PRIORITIES: MEDIA STRAND

The Work Programme proposes some adaptations for the MEDIA strand in response to issues arising from implementation and results of recent work programmes. It also takes into account the recent study on the Level Playing Field¹¹.

Overall, research carried out in preparation of the second Media Industry Outlook indicates the main audiovisual market continues to be characterised by strong international competition, in particular through a few dominant online Video On Demand services (VOD). Audiences are shifting online where there is an abundance of content. These challenges make MEDIA support more relevant than ever, to enable industry from across the EU to provide diverse content and compete for audiences beyond national markets.

MEDIA will support video games and immersive content, where the Council and Parliament invited¹² the Commission to propose a European video game strategy.

The frontloaded budget curve of the programme since 2021 has allowed launching several multi-annual actions which do not need to be funded in the Work Programme 2026. These include:

- Business cluster: MEDIA 360 (three-year Call 2025-2027)
- Audience cluster: European Festivals, Audience development and film education (two-year Call 2025-2026)

On the other hand, a number of schemes are to be re-introduced in the WP 2026 as their multi-annual financing has finished. These include:

- Business cluster: Markets and Networking
- Audience cluster: Networks of European Festivals, VOD Networks and Operators (two-year calls 2024-25) Subtitling of cultural content

Also, the Commission monitors closely the results of the Calls for proposals launched so far, to adapt the support when necessary, taking into account the evolution of the market and business practices. Recent analysis in the context of the interim evaluation of Creative Europe sheds light on the European added value of MEDIA, in particular:

a) Broadening participation and fostering collaboration and nurturing talent wherever located. The level playing field measures established in the WP 2021 have been implemented across the relevant schemes. Since 2021 the share of all supported works across all content and distribution actions that involve collaborations between low capacity and high-capacity countries has increased from less than 5% during Creative Europe 1 to around 30% under Creative Europe 2. The level playing field measures for lower capacity countries¹³ will be continued in the WP 2026. The study on broadening the participation in MEDIA has been taken into account in this Work Programme, notably in Skills and Talents and MEDIA Stands, and it will also inform future proposals.

b) Fostering cross border collaboration

MEDIA has strengthened trans-national cooperation, where support from national support programmes is

¹¹ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/48adac91-44eb-11f0-b9f2-01aa75ed71a1>

¹² https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-9-2022-0244_EN.html

¹³ Group A: Czech Republic, Estonia, Romania, Greece, Croatia, Portugal, Poland. Group B: Bulgaria, Luxembourg, Slovenia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Hungary, Latvia, Cyprus, Malta and the following third countries subject to the conditions being fulfilled for their participation in the MEDIA strand: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Lichtenstein, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Republic of Serbia and Ukraine. 20

limited. 7 out of 10 tickets sold for non-national films in the EU is directly attributable to MEDIA support. MEDIA improves the cross-border circulation of EU films and series not only in cinema, but also on TV and VoD: On average, a film or series supported from a MEDIA programme can be accessed in 9.5, 6.6 and 3.2 additional EU countries across TV, cinema and VoD respectively, compared to an unsupported film or series. Over 50% of MEDIA supported EU films and series are international coproductions.

c) Ensuring economies of scale and creating leverage

Blending of resources from MEDIA and InvestEU, aiming at mobilising resources from private investors is an effective way of building economies of scale. This is the approach of MedialInvest, an equity investment platform which addresses important gaps in financing by channelling equity to the sector. In turn this strengthens the financial foundation of companies and enables a better exploitation of intellectual property. There has been strong market interest and as of 25th March 2025, the EIF has signed under MedialInvest four deals with a diversity of investment strategies:

- [Behold Ventures 0 AB \(EUR 20m\)](#), Swedish venture capital fund focusing on early-stage companies in the **video games sector**, [signed in December 2024](#).
- [IPR.VC \(EUR 25m\)](#), Finland-based fund with strong focus on financing **European films and TV series**, [signed in January 2025](#).
- [Logical Content Ventures \(EUR 25m\)](#); a French alternative investment fund focusing on financing **content production across Europe**, [signed in July 2024](#).
- [Together S.L.P. \(EUR 25m\)](#); a pan-European private equity fund with a focus on SMEs and small mid-caps active in the **audiovisual sector**, signed in December 2024.

Content cluster

The priority continues to be on supporting actions with a strong European added value. This means encouraging cross-border cooperation among producers and content developers and stimulating innovation in terms of content, – in particular through high quality storytelling and effective business models.

- **European Slate Development, European Mini-Slate Development, European Co-development, Video Games and Immersive content development:** Due to the steep increase in the number of proposals received in all the development actions in the last two years, it is proposed to reintroduce a limitation of multiple proposals for a same coordinator across the development calls.
- **TV and Online Content:** Animation is the genre that travels better across borders, and it plays a significant role in shaping the identity of new generations of Europeans. Documentaries contribute to democratic and societal resilience. However, funding of animation and documentaries by broadcasters and streamers is under pressure. In view of this, support to animated content and documentaries will be strengthened through earmarking of budgets and the introduction of a fixed lump sums grid.

Business cluster

This cluster of measures promotes business innovation, scalability, and talents across the value chain. Specific groups driving the internationalisation of cinematic works – such as distributors and sales agents – will keep receiving targeted support.

- The main objectives and activities of the **European Film Distribution** scheme will be maintained but some implementing modalities need to be updated to ensure its efficient functioning. A survey of

Member States and discussions with industry have shown how there are differences in the methodologies applied for the calculation of cinema admissions, which may in turn impact the calculation of MEDIA support to distributors. Therefore, the Commission will provide guidelines to ensure greater harmonisation, and the Member States and participating countries will be required to reflect them in their methodologies and certification systems. On this basis, a revised framework for certifying cinema admissions will be introduced in the Call financed by the WP 2026.

- Furthermore, market trends show a return to box office admissions in line with pre-Covid levels. Therefore, the coefficients applied for the generation of the investment funds per distributor will be adjusted in line with recent admission figures, to avoid the generation of funds higher than the Call's budget.
- The **European Film Sales** action will be adapted to focus more on the challenge of cross-border circulation of films. Sales Agents can play a valuable role, by focusing on non-national EU films from across the EU. However, currently 80% of beneficiaries are from a single Member State. Therefore, the coefficients for the generation of funds will be revised to reward more the acquisition and promotion of non-national films, taking into account both the nationality of the film and the country of establishment of the Sales Agent applying for the grant. Also, the availability of English language versions to distributors will be further encouraged, in addition to the local language, in order to reach international audiences.
- **Innovative tools and business models:** The monitoring of the current projects has shown that the targeted start-ups coordinating the projects may have limited financial and co-financing capacities which slows down the project implementation. The proposal is therefore to increase the max EU co-financing rate from 70% to 80% of the total eligible costs. This will make the Call more attractive to young start-ups and projects in the early stages of development. It will also optimise the impact of the support.
- The **Markets and Networking** action will be supported again, as in 2024.
- The **MEDIA Stand** will be refocused on increased participation by companies from lower capacity countries, in line with the finding of the Level Playing Field Study, starting already in 2025. This activity will continue to be implemented through procurement.
- The introduction of budget based lump sums in the **Talent & Skills** action will be explored, on grounds of simplification.

Audience cluster

The objective of the Audience cluster is to connect European audiovisual works across borders with their audiences by:

- Stimulating audience growth on all platforms
- Engaging new audiences, in particular young people
- Promoting access to a diverse range of European works
- One key challenge is ensuring a cinematic presence in underserved areas. The **Network of European Cinemas** action will play an increased role in addressing these disparities by including cinemas from outside the network in collaborative activities, to strengthen access to non-national European content and capacity building in these regions. Another pressing issue is the need for cinemas to enhance their ability to widen and reach more diverse audiences. To achieve this, the cinemas network will support

initiatives helping cinemas to gain deeper insights into viewing behaviours, including by analysing audience data and leveraging AI-powered tools in an ethical and responsible manner.

- **The Films on the Move** action will be adapted to address the high concentration of films from certain linguistic areas, which has increased since Brexit, to ensure greater cultural diversity. This is coherent with the revised Sales Agents support, which will focus on support for non-national films. Also, to ensure greater impact of distribution campaigns in a fiercely competitive market higher support ceilings will be introduced for animation films and bigger films.
- Also, the recent launch of the new Eurimages Film Marketing and Audience Development programme needs to be considered to avoid double financing of costs related to pan-European promotion activities. Thus, a clause will be integrated into the Films on the Move, European Distribution and European sales calls to this effect.
- The **Networks of European Festivals** need to fully reflect the growth in innovative content, in order to help new potential beneficiaries to develop and reach out more diverse audiences. Therefore, it will be clarified that the scope of the action includes video games and immersive content. Also, in order to strengthen the focus of the selected networks, the award criteria will be further clarified in terms of expected impact on audiences and measurable indicators.
- Participation in the **VOD Networks and Operators** action remains limited despite the exceptional growth of a sector which remains characterised by the dominance of a few non-EU services combined with a high number of smaller services. To encourage further participation the support will be adapted to facilitate a broader participation, notably by reducing the threshold of minimum number of European works in the catalogue and redefining the requirements on networked collaboration. The award criteria will be further clarified in terms of expected data to be provided and measurable indicators.
- The **Subtitling of cultural content** action will be financed again given its continued relevance in reaching online audiences across borders and in different languages. In order to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the action, including by widening the multilingual offer, the potential for innovative practices in subtitling, including through technologies such as AI, will be encouraged.

Policy cluster

A common European approach to the challenges for audiovisual policy will help to develop a European audiovisual market.

The objectives of this cluster are to:

- support innovative policy actions and exchange of best practices through data gathering and forward-looking studies that can provide insights on future trends;
- promote stakeholder engagement, dissemination activities and awareness campaigns related to European content.

High quality **market and legal analysis and data** will continued be funded. Membership of and cooperation with the European Audiovisual Observatory will continue to be supported.

Policy exchanges and cooperation will be supported in key areas, notably on the European Board for Media Services. This body stands at the heart of the European Media Freedom Act, comprised of the national regulatory authorities of the Member States. The Board shall advise and support the Commission on matters related to media services within the Board's competence and promote the consistent and effective application of certain key aspects of EMFA and the implementation of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD).

A **MEDIA Carbon Calculator** will be funded, building on the calculator procured under the Work Programme 2023 to ensure continuity of service whilst adapting to developments in the audiovisual market and covering

other parts of the value chain as appropriate.

Communication and engagement with industry and citizens will be funded to ensure visibility and understanding of the Programme. Activities will include the European Film Forum in key industry events as well as high level intelligence gathering on future trends.

Audience outreach activities and awareness campaigns will be further pursued by showcasing European content, supporting the dissemination of European film heritage and through European Prizes such as the LUX Audience Award of the European Parliament and the European Film Award.

SUMMARY TABLES OF FUNDING MEASURES

ACTIONS TO BE ADJUSTED
Content cluster
European Slate Development, European Mini-Slate Development, European Co-development, Video Games & Immersive content development Reintroduction of limitation of multiple proposals for a same coordinator across the four development calls.
TV/Online content Measures to ensure strengthen support to animation content and documentaries
Business cluster
European Film Distribution A revised framework for certifying cinema admissions will be introduced Financial coefficients will be brought back to pre-Covid levels Double funding to be avoided with Eurimages Film Marketing and Audience Development scheme
European Film Sales Coefficients will be revised to reinforce acquisition and promotion of non-national films The availability of English language versions to distributors will be further encouraged. Double funding to be avoided with Eurimages Film Marketing and Audience Development scheme
Innovative tools and business models Increase co-financing rate from 70% to 80%.
MEDIA Stand Refocus on increased participation by companies from lower capacity countries
Audience cluster
Network of European Cinemas Increase focus on inclusive actions with cinemas from underserved areas Initiatives to gain deeper insights into viewing behaviours
Films on the move Higher support ceilings for animation films and bigger films Double funding to be avoided with Eurimages Film Marketing and Audience Development scheme
Networks of European festivals

Scope of the action includes video games and immersive content
VOD Networks and Operators Adaptations to encourage further participation
Subtitling cultural content Incentives for innovations in subtitling

ACTIONS REMAINING UNCHANGED
Business cluster
Talent and skills
Markets and Networking
Policy support
European Board for Media Services (EMFA)
European Audiovisual Observatory (EAO) membership and cooperation
Communication and engagement
Audience outreach and awareness campaigns
MEDIA Carbon Calculator renewal
Blending
MediaInvest

2026 PRIORITIES: CROSS-SECTORAL STRAND

In line with the objectives of the Programme referred to in Article 3 of the Regulation, the CROSS-SECTORAL strand shall have the following priorities:

- to support **cross-sectoral transnational policy cooperation** including on promoting the role of culture for social inclusion and on artistic freedom and promote the visibility of the Programme and support the transferability of results;
- to encourage **innovative approaches** to content creation, access, distribution, and promotion across cultural and creative sectors and with other sectors, including by taking into account the digital transition, covering both market and non-market dimensions;
- to support adjustments to the structural and technological changes faced by the **news media**, including enhancing a free, diverse, and pluralistic media environment, quality journalism and media literacy, including in the digital environment;
- to support the establishment and activities of **Programme Desks** in participating countries and to stimulate cross-border cooperation and the exchange of best practices within the cultural and creative sectors.

I. Transnational policy cooperation

Presidency conferences: In line with previous practice, the Programme will support Presidency conferences in the fields of culture and media respectively, organised by the two Member States holding the Presidency of the Council in 2026r.

II. Cross-sectoral innovative approach

Support to the **“Creative Innovation Lab”** is a key response to the common challenges and opportunities brought about by the ongoing digital transition across the cultural and creative sectors. The monitoring of the current projects has shown that the targeted start-ups coordinating the projects may have limited financial and co-financing capacities, which slows down the project implementation. The proposal is therefore to increase of the max EU co-financing rate from 70% to 80% of the total eligible costs. This will make the Call more attractive to young start-ups and projects in the early stages of development. It will also optimise the impact of the support. Special emphasis will still be placed on attracting private investment and on own investment. Also given the high number of applications, many of which remain below the quality threshold, the action will be focused on the most promising fields, namely projects in the IP intensive sectors of audiovisual, gaming, music, publishing or museums. The project’s ability to apply for a sound and reasonable level of EU public funding below the 80% authorised will be assessed through revised award criteria. This will encourage projects and companies that have already received support under the scheme or that are more mature in terms of development to apply for less support and demonstrate their self-financing capacity, linked to their market positioning.

III. Support to the news media sector

Support will still be provided to **Journalism Partnerships** through two schemes: (i) systematic collaborations among media to address current challenges for the production, impact and monetisation of news, and (ii) support for projects in areas of special relevance for democracy, such as local media or investigative, independent journalism.

Monitoring the internal market for media services: The Media Pluralism Monitor shall measure risks to media pluralism in the EU through a broad set of indicators, covering legal, economic and socio-demographic aspects. It shall provide evidence-based information on the state of media pluralism in each Member State, each EU candidate (country), and in the EU as a whole, covering risks to and progress in the functioning of the internal market for media services.

Fight against disinformation and fostering media literacy: Support will be slightly adjusted in order to better define the targeted projects. A more practice-oriented approach will be followed by putting a stronger emphasis on the potential for the impacts of (co-)funded initiatives to be sustained, increasing the reach of media literacy initiatives, identifying priority audiences beyond “youth” and achieving a balanced geographical coverage.

Support to the new **European Board for Media Services**. This body stands at the heart of the European Media Freedom Act, comprised of the national regulatory authorities of the Member States. The Board shall advise and support the Commission on matters related to media services within the Board’s competence and promote the consistent and effective application of certain key aspects of EMFA and the implementation of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD). The Board replaces the European Regulators Groups for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGA) and is assisted by a secretariat provided by the Commission and funded through the Commission's general budget. The Board held its first constitutive meeting on 10 February 2025 and approved its Rules of Procedure and work programme at the second meeting on 11 April 2025.

IV. Creative Europe Desks

Creative Europe Desks constitute a network essential for the successful functioning of the Programme. They provide a wide range of services from promoting, encouraging and facilitating cross-border cooperation to assisting organisations with their applications, organising information days and workshops as well as advising potential applicants. Desks are designated by participating countries and therefore have a variety of different structures.

Following the invitation to submit a proposal in 2024, the Creative Europe Desks will continue their activities until 2027, via annual instalments, for the period 2025-2026, subject to available budget appropriations.

To help the Creative Europe desks build-up their capacities on greening strategies of the Creative Europe Programme, a network of greening contact points among the Culture Desks was established in 2023 and will continue to share best practices under this initiative.

Within the limits of their operational capacities, the Creative Europe Desks will, whenever possible and relevant, cooperate with EUROPE DIRECT centres and other EU networks (find other EU networks here: https://european-union.europa.eu/contact-eu/meet-us_en) to broaden their target audience and reach with their messages/promotion.

SUMMARY TABLES OF FUNDING MEASURES

Actions to be adjusted	
Creative Innovation Lab	Increase co-financing rate from 70% to 80% and adaptation of award criteria. Focus projects on audiovisual and gaming plus music, books or museums.
Media Literacy	A more practice-oriented approach will be followed.

Actions remaining unchanged	
Journalism Partnerships	Systematic collaborations and projects in areas of special relevance for democracy will be supported.
Media Pluralism Monitor	The Media Pluralism Monitor is supported again, one year, to closely follow trends on media freedom and pluralism.
European Board for Media Services	Support to be provided as envisaged in the legislative financial statement accompanying the EMFA proposal. The Board will play a central role in supporting the implementation of the new rules provided by the European Media Freedom Act as well as the existing framework of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD).

Part II – Implementation of the Programme

This part details how the different sections of the programme will be implemented in 2026.

Budget Lines and Basic Act

07 05 01	Culture strand
07 05 02	Media strand
07 05 03	Cross-sectoral strand
Basic act	Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Creative Europe Programme (2021 to 2027) (hereafter "the Regulation")

METHODS OF INTERVENTION

On the basis of the objectives given in the Creative Europe Regulation, the 2026 Work Programme will be implemented through:

- Grants (direct management);
- Prizes (direct management);
- Procurements (direct management);
- Indirect management (including Blending);
- Other actions (direct management).

GRANTS

Calls for proposals will be published by the European Commission or by the European Education and Culture Executive Agency, after the adoption of the financing decision, in accordance with Article 192 (1) of the EU Financial Regulation¹⁴ ("FR" or "Financial Regulation").

The calls for proposals, managed by the European Education and Culture Executive Agency, will provide detailed information on application and selection procedures, criteria and other modalities aimed at assisting those interested in developing projects or receiving financial support under the Programme and to help them understand its objectives and the supported actions. Calls for proposals implemented under the Culture, MEDIA, and Cross-sectoral strands may be implemented through financial support to third parties. The amount allocated to a third party cannot exceed EUR 60 000 per entity and per year, except if specified differently in the grant description below. This funding must be managed in line with the rules on activities as defined in the call.

Some grants will be awarded in accordance with indents (d) and (f) of Article 198 of the Financial Regulation.

Some grants will be financed through simplified forms of grants (lump sums), in accordance with Article 184 of the Financial Regulation. In accordance with these financial rules, the methodology used to establish the simplified forms of grants, and their levels ensures the respect of the principle of sound financing management and reasonable compliance with the principles of co-financing and no double funding.

PRIZES

The Melina Mercouri prize will be awarded to European Capitals of Culture in accordance with Title IX FR.

¹⁴ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast) (OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.09.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>).

PROCUREMENTS

This Work Programme includes actions that will be implemented by public procurement procedures (via calls for tenders or the use of framework contracts) (Title VII FR).

INDIRECT MANAGEMENT (INCLUDING BLENDING)

With reference to International Organisations, the Commission may entrust them budget implementation tasks via the conclusion of Contribution Agreements under indirect management mode in accordance with Articles 62 (1)(c) and 157 of the FR.

As per Article 2(3) of the Creative Europe Regulation, 'blending operation' means actions supported by the EU budget, including within blending facilities pursuant to Article 2(6) of the Financial Regulation, combining non-repayable forms of support and financial instruments from the EU budget with repayable forms of support from development or other public finance institutions, as well as from commercial finance institutions and investors.

OTHER ACTIONS

This Work Programme includes costs related to the experts involved in the assessment, monitoring and evaluation of the projects.

CULTURE

GRANTS IN THE CULTURE STRAND

1.1 EUROPEAN COOPERATION PROJECTS

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 1.01

This action will support projects involving a wide variety of players active in different cultural and creative sectors to carry out a broad spectrum of activities and initiatives. The action is anchored in the policy framework of the Culture strand of the Creative Europe Programme and EU overarching priorities. The consequences of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine on its population and on the cultural and creative sectors of that country should be accounted for as much as possible in the project proposals.

European Cooperation Projects are open to all the cultural and creative sectors. However, considering that this action aims to pursue the objectives of the Culture strand of the Programme, projects involving exclusively organisations from the audiovisual sector or projects of exclusively audiovisual content are not targeted for funding under it.

Under the 2026 Annual Work Programme, small and medium scale projects, depending on the number of organisations involved, can be submitted. Small-scale projects are particularly suitable to promote the access of grassroots organisations and supporting them in the creation of new partnerships and the development of new activities and innovative ideas, such as festivals, art fairs, exhibitions, performances, etc.). Medium-scale projects have already proven their quality both in the applications received and the results already achieved in the first years of the programme implementation.

Support will be given to cooperation projects contributing to the following objectives:

- Transnational creation and circulation: to strengthen the transnational creation and circulation of European works and artists;

Transnational creation and circulation is important for the advancement of collaborations, increased outreach and, in many cases, necessary for the viability and development of cultural organisations, institutions and individuals. Co-production is also a tool to stimulate creativity, share resources and facilitate the transnational distribution of content and the circulation of artists. Projects will consider the new context such as health or environmental concerns and integrate innovative (digital) ways of producing and disseminating content.

- Innovation: to enhance the capacity of European cultural and creative sectors to nurture talents, to innovate, to prosper and to generate jobs and growth

Innovation, in a broad sense, is necessary for the evolution of the cultural and creative sectors and their competitiveness. Innovations can be of technological and artistic nature; they may include the joint creation and production of innovative European works and their dissemination to a wide and diverse audience. Innovations also include the development and experimentation of new practices or models, as well as the transfer and dissemination of innovative practices from more advanced European regions or sectors or disciplines to other regions in Europe. Areas of innovation can encompass a social or societal dimension, such as: audience engagement/development, gender equality, the inclusion of people with disabilities, people belonging to minorities and people belonging to socially marginalised groups, fighting climate change, digitisation, etc., as well as culture's contribution to health and well-being, especially mental health, given the existing evidence and the persisting mental health crisis affecting in particular the youth. Capacity building to empower artists and cultural professionals, as well as cultural organisations to make use of artificial intelligence for the benefit of creativity, creators and cultural operators is another crucial area to enable ethical innovation in view of current

challenges.

Type of applicants:

Applicants must be legal entities established and officially registered in a country participating in the Creative Europe Programme. The coordinating entity must have had a legal existence for at least two years on the date of the deadline for submission of applications. An organisation can apply only once as coordinator under the call, regardless of the scale of projects chosen (COOP 1 or 2). Moreover, an organisation can be part of a maximum of 3 applications submitted, whether as coordinator and/or partner, regardless of the scale of project.

Expected results:

This action is expected to foster cooperation between organisations active in the culture field, to increase the European dimension of creation and circulation of European artistic content, as well as to encourage the development, experimentation, dissemination or application of new and innovative practices.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through a call for proposals	60 273 174

1.2 CIRCULATION OF EUROPEAN LITERARY WORKS

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 1.19

This action will support projects that will translate, publish, distribute, and promote European works of fiction. This action complements the other Creative Europe support actions to the book and publishing sector, such as reading promotion to younger audience and the European Union Prize for Literature (promotion of European emerging authors).

In line with the current cultural policy priorities, applicants should propose projects contributing to the following:

- increasing the transnational circulation and the diversity of European literary works, notably through the translation, promotion and distribution of works of fiction written in less translated European languages;
- promoting reading and the linguistic and cultural diversity of European literature to a large audience;
- supporting the profession of literary translator in line with the principles of good working conditions and fair remuneration; publishers should ensure that the names of the translators appear visibly in published books, and preferably on the cover, and that the source language is clearly mentioned;
- increasing the competitiveness of the book sector by encouraging cooperation between different actors within the book value chain – notably between publishers, booksellers and libraries.

As part of the exceptional support to Ukraine, applicants will be encouraged to propose activities facilitating the circulation/translation of books from and/or into Ukraine, as well as their translation into or from Ukrainian. In addition, projects aimed at providing books in the Ukrainian language to Ukrainian refugees and displaced people will be encouraged. In this context, the printing in Ukrainian of (non-translated) Ukrainian books will be eligible.

In order to preserve the quality of translation and the profession of literary translator, machine translations will be excluded from this call.

Type of applicants:

Applicants must be legal entities established and officially registered in an eligible country and be active in the

publishing and book sector.

Expected results:

The action will target around 40 projects, implemented either by a single entity (mono-beneficiary) or by a consortium of organisations (multi-beneficiary).

Projects must be based on a sound editorial, and distribution and promotion strategy covering a package of at least five eligible works of fiction to be translated, published, distributed and promoted. Projects must also demonstrate a strong commitment to facilitate collaboration between authors, translators, publishers, distributors, booksellers, libraries and literary events and festivals.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through a call for proposals	5 000 000

1.3 PERFORM EUROPE

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 1.18

Perform Europe is designed to further develop and implement a platform that will enable the performing arts sector to test innovative touring and presentation models while rethinking the cross-border distribution of performing arts works in a sustainable, inclusive, and balanced manner. This initiative supports a diverse array of activities, including:

- Physical and/or online presentations of performing arts works outside their country of production;
- Design, implementation and management of open call(s);
- Creation and maintenance of a database of performing arts production companies, festivals, and venues;
- Promotional activities to increase visibility and audience engagement;
- Development and the implementation of a communication, dissemination and branding strategy.

Eligibility Criteria for Applicants:

Proposals must be submitted either by a single applicant organisation or by a consortium of partner organisations that must be legal entities established and officially registered in a country participating in the Creative Europe Programme. They must be active in the performing arts sector and have a high sectorial, sub-sectorial representativity and geographical coverage.

Expected results:

This call for proposals aims to award a single project to either a beneficiary organization or a consortium of partner organizations. The selected organization will be responsible for running an open call for proposals, selecting a minimum of 25 projects within the performing arts sector. The focus will be on fostering partnerships between producers and presenters to showcase performing arts works across borders. This initiative will primarily utilize a cascading grants system to support projects led by producers and presenters. The objective is to encourage the presentation and distribution of performing arts works internationally in a sustainable and inclusive way.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through a call for proposals	2 000 000

1.4 SUPPORT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN HERITAGE LABEL

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 1.17

The action will aim at enhancing the visibility of the European Heritage Label (EHL) action and sites for the years 2026-2029. The action will include a wide range of activities, events, tools and materials in order to:

1. **Increase the Impact and Visibility of the EHL Action:** Strengthen the presence of the EHL Action across participating countries through targeted outreach, communication, and press activities. Organize workshops, stakeholders' assemblies, and bi-annual award ceremonies to elevate the profile of EHL sites. Emphasise the shared European narratives and values promoted by the sites, ensuring these messages resonate throughout the campaigns.
2. **Equip EHL Stakeholders with the Tools for Success:** Empower EHL stakeholders by enhancing their competencies and know-how through upskilling opportunities, training programs, and tailored advice. Focus on specific priorities such as youth engagement, international cooperation, the promotion of EU values, and the integration of digital tools. Offer EU project management programs to help sites access funding from EU initiatives like Creative Europe, Erasmus+, and CERV, ensuring their long-term sustainability. Develop specialised programs for applicants and sites that were not selected.
3. **Foster Collaboration Among European Heritage Players:** Strengthen the EHL Action's capacity to cooperate with other European heritage organisations by fostering collaboration at regional and transnational levels. Create funding opportunities that support the EHL network, ensuring it remains cohesive and sustainable. Promote intercultural dialogue and encourage sites to contribute to the strengthening of European identity, ensuring that EHL activities align with broader European goals and values.

Type of applicants: Applicants must be legal entities established and officially registered in a country participating in the Creative Europe Programme.

Expected results: This call for proposals will fund a single project (either one organization or a consortium of partner organizations) responsible for organising activities that address the broadest possible number of European Heritage Label sites and stakeholders active in cultural heritage, with an emphasis on networking, capacity-building, and expanding outreach.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through a call for proposals	3 000 000

1.5 CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTORS' RURAL POLICY PROJECT

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 1.08

EU's rural areas cover 83% of the EU territory and are home to 137 million people (30% of the EU population). Many of our traditions, festivals, heritage, and culture are rooted in Europe's rural areas. Acknowledging the range of challenges faced by rural areas (decreasing population, older demography, reduced services, digital

connectivity), in June 2021 the European Commission published a communication that set out “A long-term vision for the EU’s rural areas - Towards stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas by 2040”, and a comprehensive rural action plan to help rural communities and businesses reach their full potential. The communication highlights the role of cultural and creative sectors in supporting productivity and employment growth in rural areas. The Committee of the Regions Opinion on Promoting cultural policies in rural areas within the framework of development and territorial cohesion strategies and the 2030 Agenda states that promoting culture in rural areas is key for sustainable development, but also for attracting youth and countering population decline. At EU cultural policy level, a structured dialogue with the civil society (Voices of Culture) report on “The role of culture in non-urban areas of the EU” was published in 2020. Since then, Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries (CCSI) stakeholders are calling for more action at EU-level.

Strengthening CCSIs in rural areas can enhance local economies and can help to revitalise remote regions - including when possible EU’s outermost regions and rural areas through employment opportunities, which would also bring increased social cohesion. Young culture professionals can be an important factor for the development of remote regions and rural areas and can help regions with the use of innovative and creative approaches. On the other hand, rural areas can also contribute to help artists and creative professionals to achieve decent living and working conditions and to help towards the insertion of young culture professionals into the labour market.

Objectives:

The objective of the call is to highlight and disseminate initiatives as well as to create new networking and learning opportunities for CCSI professionals in rural areas, and to help these regions retain and attract young people by expanding opportunities in the cultural and creative field. The call will support the pooling and dissemination of information, the testing of innovative approaches via peer-learning and exchanges and to closely link the sectors to policy-making via joint workshops and other activities. Synergies with other EU policies, and in particular the EU Cohesion Funds, - should be further explored and enhanced. In addition, an important objective of the call is to enhance EU actions related to EU cultural policy objectives.

Type of Applicants: Applicants must be legal entities established and officially registered in a country participating in the Creative Europe Programme. The coordinating entity must have had a legal existence for at least 2 years on the date of the deadline for submission of applications. Applicants should specify how they are going to achieve a wide geographical coverage through meaningful active and continuous joint activities and exchanges, involving a wide range of European and neighbouring countries as well as a wide sectoral and cross-sectoral coverage.

Proposals may be submitted by any of the following applicants:

- non-profit organisations (private or public);
- public authorities (national, regional, local);
- international organisations;
- universities; educational institutions; research centres;
- profit making entities.

Natural persons are not eligible to apply for a grant under this call.

Expected results:

- Creating new opportunities for inter-rural areas and cross-sectoral cooperation within the cultural and creative sectors, involving regional authorities and REGIO-desks/Creative Europe desks;

- Improved awareness of the contribution of EU funding instruments for supporting culture in rural areas (Creative Europe, Cohesion Funds, Erasmus+, Recovery and Resilience Facility, Smart Villages initiative, Smart Specialisation Strategies, LEADER, Community led Local Development (CLLD), Just Transition fund and other);
- Development and testing of innovative approaches and peer exchanges between creative hubs and other third spaces aimed at retaining young creatives and building up their potential in rural and remote areas;
- Enhanced exchanges of experience, skills development and practical testing and cooperation opportunities also with view to EU cultural policy priorities (including artists' working conditions, challenges for CCSI, digital transition and artificial intelligence);
- Recommendations for further policy making in particular with regards to policy and support needs of rural and remote areas.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EAC	Direct management through a call for proposals	EUR 1 million for the 2026-2027 period EUR 500 000 for 2026 EUR 500 000 for 2027

1.6 EUROPEAN SPACES OF CULTURE

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 1.09

This special action is a follow-up and will build on the results of the preparatory action with the same name, proposed by the European Parliament and implemented by DG EAC from 2018-23, and of the special action funded by Creative Europe in 2024-2025. The action aims to foster the implementation of new models of collaboration in international cultural relations, following a number of guiding principles, in line with the 2016 Joint Communication "Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations":

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

The action will fund promising projects co-created by EUNIC members, EU Delegations and local partners in countries outside the EU, based on equal partnerships and geared towards gathering policy and practice recommendations, in line with the new political guidelines and priorities of the European Commission.

To the extent that this is possible, indicatively one third of the projects will be implemented in the Southern Mediterranean region, due to its geopolitical strategic importance and to support the implementation of the forthcoming EU Pact for the Mediterranean (according to Article 207 from the FR, costs for financial support to third parties are allowed for a maximum amount per third party of EUR 60.000). Moreover, countries from Sub-Saharan Africa are excluded from this special action, since they are covered by a similar project funded by NDICI. The implementation will be done by EUNIC, the network of EU National Institutes for Culture on the basis of

Article 198(f) of FR, “for activities with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation” . EUNIC is the only existing network of EU national cultural institutions from every EU Member State, in total 39 members organised in 140 clusters present in over 100 countries worldwide, bringing a specific expertise and a high degree of specialisation in international cultural relations.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EAC	Direct management through the award of a grant without a call for proposals on the basis of article 198(f) of FR	1 000 000

1.7 SUPPORT TO WIPO’S CLIP INITIATIVE

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 1.10

Promoting the rights of artists and creators is central to building a fair, inclusive, and sustainable creative economy. Many creators, particularly in the music industry, are not always fully aware of the mechanisms through which they can protect and monetise their work.

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the UN organisation in charge of intellectual property, has developed an awareness raising and professional education programme to address this challenge through, in particular, the development of the Creators Learn Intellectual Property (CLIP), a global knowledge platform dedicated to raising awareness of intellectual property (IP) rights and related processes among creators. Initially launched with a focus on the music industry, CLIP provides accessible, creator-first content such as expert videos, explanatory resources, and interactive tools like quizzes.

This action will support the development of additional content more targeted to music creators based in Creative Europe countries. The action will also support the expansion of the CLIP platform to other cultural sectors. Coordination with other relevant EU initiatives/organisations (such as for instance EUIPO) and Creative Europe-supported networks should also be ensured to maximise its impact.

By helping creators gain a better knowledge and understanding of their rights, this action will also support the policy efforts to improve the working conditions of artists and cultural professionals.

Given WIPO’s unique mandate and global standing as the United Nations’ specialised agency for intellectual property, it effectively holds a *de facto* monopoly to carry out this action. The implementation will be done on the basis of Article 198(c) of FR.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EAC	Direct management through grants without a call for proposals - Article 198 (c) FR	250 000

1.8 OTHER GRANTS WITH MULTIANNUL COMMITMENTS

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 1.16; 1.03; 1.04; 1.02; 1.22; 1.20; 1.12; 1.13; 1.21; 1.14

For information, in 2026, a further annual commitment will be undertaken for the following multiannual actions launched and contracted under the Annual Work Programme 2024 and 2025.

Implementing body	Action	Call for proposal (reference)	2026 Annual Instalment (Indicative amount - EUR)
EAC	Safeguarding Cultural Heritage from Man-Made and Natural Disasters – Peer Learning (WPI: 1.16)	EAC/S01/2024	500 000
EACEA	European Networks of Cultural and Creative Organisations (WPI: 1.03)	EAC/CULT/2024/NET	11 125 000
EACEA	Pan-European Cultural Entities (WPI: 1.04)	EAC/CULT/2024/PECE	2 720 000
EACEA	European Platforms for the promotion of Emerging Artists (WPI: 1.02)	EAC/CULT/2024/PLAT	13 100 000
EAC	The EU Prize for Popular and Contemporary Music (WPI: 1.22)	EAC/S12/2023	600 000
EAC	The EU Prize for Contemporary Architecture (WPI: 1.12)	EAC/S06/2024	500 000
EAC	The European Union Prize for Literature (EUPL) (WPI: 1.20)	EAC/S04/2024	600 000
EAC	The EU Prize for Cultural Heritage (WPI: 1.13)	EAC/S05/2024	450 000
EAC	Day of European Authors (WPI: 1.21)	EAC/S15/2024	500 000
EAC	EU prize for Jewish Cultural heritage (WPI: 1.14)	EAC/S02/2025	300 000

INDIRECT MANAGEMENT

2.1 EUROPEAN HERITAGE DAYS

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 1.15

The European Heritage Days (EHDs), a joint initiative of the Council of Europe (CoE) and the European Commission since 1999, are the most widely celebrated participatory cultural events shared by the citizens of Europe. This pan-European initiative helps to bring citizens together and highlights the European dimension and the value of cultural heritage in the 48 signatory States of the European Cultural Convention that cooperate annually in the organisation of the European Heritage Days. During this time, citizens are invited to enjoy free visits and activities to explore their shared cultural heritage. Ultimately, this project encourages them to become actively involved in safeguarding and enhancing heritage for present and future generations.

The aims of the European Heritage Days are to:

- raise the awareness of European citizens about the richness and cultural diversity of Europe;
- create a climate in which the appreciation of the rich mosaic of European cultures is stimulated;
- counter racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia, and encourage greater tolerance in Europe and beyond the national borders;
- inform the public and the political authorities about the need to protect cultural heritage against new threats;
- invite Europe to respond to the social, political and economic challenges it faces.

Subsequent actions

Under the European Heritage Days, several funding opportunities are offered to Heritage professionals and European communities

- Call for European Heritage Days Stories
 - o Amplify the voices of heritage professionals and highlight the heritage work undertaken by individuals or groups of people in Europe.
- Young European Heritage Makers (formerly European Heritage Makers Week) Competition
 - o Gather the voices to children and young people on their vision of European Heritage at the local and national level
- Call for European transnational projects:
 - o Support cross frontier activities developed and led by the National Coordinators of the European Heritage Days programme.
- Call for European Heritage Label sites and Cultural Routes
 - o Raise the impact of Europe wide Heritage networks, such as the European Heritage Label sites and cultural Routes of the Council of Europe by fostering synergies and empowering their members and sites.

The budget implementation tasks will be entrusted to the Council of Europe (CoE) via the conclusion of Contribution Agreements under indirect management mode in accordance with Articles 62 (1)(c), 110 (3)(f) and 157 of the FR.

Implementing body	Implementing entity	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EAC	Council of Europe (CoE)	Indirect Management	400 000

2.2 COOPERATION WITH THE ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD)

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 1.11

In 2026, the European Commission and the OECD will aim at joining their respective forces to develop and implement an activity in the field of culture aimed at supporting data collection and analysis to better measure the cultural and creative sectors and industries (CCSI). This action will aim at enhancing the evidence basis to support policy making and policy priorities.

The action will aim at contributing to an analysis of the contribution of culture and the cultural and creative sectors to the EU's economy (e.g. GDP, employment, trade, etc.) as well as to a range of relevant thematic priorities (e.g. working conditions for cultural professionals and artists; digital, including impact of AI; access to culture, including focus on youth; etc.). This action may involve consultations with the sectors.

The maximum EU contribution will indicatively be EUR 500 000.

The budget implementation tasks will be entrusted to the OECD via the conclusion of Contribution Agreements under indirect management mode in accordance with Articles 62(1)(c), 110(3)(f), 157 and 159(1) of the Financial Regulation.

Implementing body	Implementing entity	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EAC	OECD	Indirect Management	500 000

2.3 OTHER ACTION UNDER INDIRECT MANAGEMENT WITH MULTIANNUAL COMMITMENTS

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 1.06

For information, in 2026, a further annual commitment will be undertaken for the following multiannual action launched and contracted under the Annual Work Programme 2025.

Implementing body	Implementing entity	Action	Call for proposal (reference)	2026 Annual Instalment (Indicative amount - EUR)
EAC	TBC	Culture Moves Europe (WPI: 1.06)	EAC/A06/2024	10 750 000

PRIZES

3.1 EUROPEAN CAPITALS OF CULTURE (ECOC)

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 1.05

For the ECOC titles 2020 to 2033, the European Capital of Culture action is governed by Decision 445/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council.¹⁵

The competitions for the award of the ECOC title are launched by the publication of a call for submission of applications at least six years ahead of the title-year. The call is also to be seen as the rules of the contest for the awarding of the Melina Mercouri Prize to ECOC designated cities, which is funded under the Creative Europe Programme in line with point a) of Special Actions under Section 1 of Annex I of the Creative Europe Regulation, in connection with Article 14 of Decision 445/2014/EU.

The objectives of this EU action are to promote the diversity of cultures in Europe, to highlight the common features they share and to foster the contribution of culture to the long-term development of cities.

Each year, two cities in two different Member States hold the title of European Capital of Culture in accordance with a chronological order agreed by the Council. In line with the Annex of Decision 445/2014/EU, a city from an EFTA/EEA country, from a candidate country or from a potential candidate can also hold the title in 2022, 2024, 2028, 2030 and 2033.

The action consists of:

A. Award of the Melina Mercouri Prize to the ECOC 2027 in Latvia and Portugal, as well as to the ECOC 2028 in France and Czech Republic.

In accordance with Article 11(1) of Decision 445/2014/EU, the cities of Liepāja and Évora were designated as European Capitals of Culture 2027 respectively in Latvia and in Portugal.¹⁶ Also in accordance with Article 11(1) of Decision 445/2014/EU, the cities of Bourges and Budweis (České Budějovice) were designated as European

¹⁵ Decision No 445/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014, OJ L 132, 3.5.2014, as amended by Decision (EU) 2017/1545 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 September, OJ L 237, 15.9.2017, and by Decision (EU) 2020/2229 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 December 2020, OJ L 437 of 28 December 2020.

¹⁶ See Commission Communications 2022/C 420/02 of 3/11/2022 and 2023/C 142/02 of 25/4/2023.

Capitals of Culture 2028 respectively in France and Czech Republic.¹⁷

According to Decision 445/2014/EU, a pecuniary prize of EUR 1.5 million (Melina Mercouri Prize) is awarded to all designated cities. The Prize is then paid to the ECOC concerned, provided that the city in question continues to honour the commitments it made at the application stage, complies with the criteria of the Decision and takes into account the recommendations contained in the selection and monitoring reports.

The award of the prize is connected with the contest that leads to the designation of a given city as European Capital of Culture, while its payment intervenes at the latest by the end of March of the year of the ECOC title, in line with Article 14 of the abovementioned Decision.

The Melina Mercouri Prize will be awarded in 2026 to Liepāja and Évora, European Capitals of Culture 2027, and financed from the 2026 budget, while the payment will occur at the latest by the end of March 2027. The Melina Mercouri Prize will also be awarded in 2026 to Bourges and Budweis (České Budějovice), European Capitals of Culture 2028, and financed from the 2026 budget, while the payment will occur at the latest by the end of March 2028.

B. Calls for submission of applications for the 2033 European Capitals of Culture

In line with the chronological order indicated in the Annex of Decision 445/2014/EU, there will be three ECOC in 2033, one in the Netherlands, one in Italy and one in an EFTA/EEA country, a candidate country or a potential candidate.

Consequently, three calls for submission of applications will be published for these three ECOC competitions at the latest in December 2026. These calls cover the contest for the award of the ECOC title and for the award of the Melina Mercouri Prize.

The publication of these calls is not linked to the budgetary appropriations under this action in 2026. However, as indicated above and in the calls themselves, these calls must be considered as contests in the meaning of Articles 209 and 210 of the Financial Regulation for the awarding of the Melina Mercouri Prize to the two ECOC 2033.

The competition is exclusively addressed to the cities of the countries designated in the Annex of the relevant Decision for the year 2033: (i) Netherlands, (ii) Italy, (iii) EFTA/EEA countries, candidate countries or potential candidates.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EAC	Direct management through prize (Contests under the meaning of Articles 209 and 210 FR)	Liepāja: 1 500 000 Évora: 1 500 000 Bourges: 1 500 000 Budweis (České Budějovice): 1 500 000

PROCUREMENTS

4.1 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND DIALOGUE WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 1.07

This action will allow the Commission to support policy development in the field of culture, including continued

¹⁷ See Commission Communication C/2024/3390 of 27/05/2024 and C/2023/569 of 26/10/2023.

support for the implementation of the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026 (e.g. organisation of meetings) and for the cultural and creative sectors' and industries' digital, green and just transitions. The action will also enable to address the priorities of the new Commission in line with the political guidelines.

Furthermore, it will cover ad-hoc activities targeting the cultural and creative sectors and industries as a whole, or specific sub-sectors, for instance meetings with (sector) representatives and relevant experts, including at events, exploratory actions such as short-term working groups or questionnaires, as appropriate and in line with the general objectives of the Programme.

Additionally, this action will provide support to enhance data collection and analysis to better measure different cultural and creative sectors with a view to enhancing the evidence basis to support policy making and policy priorities (e.g. working conditions for cultural professionals, access to culture (including a focus on youth), culture and health, digital [including AI] and green transitions of the CCS, etc.).

This action will be implemented through specific contracts based on existing framework contracts or new calls for tender procedures, renewal of existing contracts or through very low-value or low-value service contracts.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EAC	Direct management through public procurement	1 000 000

4.2 COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 1.23

The amount allocated will support a wide range of communication activities linked to the promotion and visibility at European and international levels: a) of the actions of the Culture strand of the Programme and b) of the European policy initiatives in the field of culture as well as c) to the dissemination of results of the previous Programme. In particular, under the terms of Article 15 of Decision No 445/2014/EU, the Commission shall contribute to the visibility of the European Capitals of Culture action at the European and international levels, as well as promote wider dissemination.

This action will be implemented through specific contracts based on existing framework contracts or new calls for tender procedures, renewals of existing contracts or through very low-value or low-value service contracts.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EAC	Direct management through public procurement	150 000

4.3 EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S CORPORATE COMMUNICATION (CO-DELEGATED TO DG COMM)

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 1.24

The Creative Europe Programme will also contribute to the corporate communication of the political priorities of the EU, in so far as they relate to the objectives of the Programme. Corporate communication seeks to coordinate messaging across all EU policy fields, in line with political priorities, to communicate more

consistently and effectively as an organisation. As set out in Communication C(2020)9390, in the period 2021-23, enhanced and strengthened corporate communication campaigns to inform and engage with citizens about EU values and actions and how the EU impacts daily lives. This action will cover the production of content; provision of corporate technical services; dissemination of information through integrated communication actions; organisation of and participation in events; and studies and evaluations, where relevant.

This action will be implemented through specific contracts based on existing framework contracts or new calls for tender procedures, renewal of existing contracts or through very low-value or low-value service contracts.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
COMM	Direct management through public procurement	29 750

4.4 MEETINGS WITH GRANT-HOLDERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Index references in budget table (WPI): 1.28

The costs related to grant-holders' meetings, as well as other ad-hoc physical or virtual meetings, seminars, conferences and events to support programme implementation, are included in the Work Programme.

This action will be implemented through specific contracts based on existing framework contracts or new calls for tender procedures, renewals of existing contracts or through very low-value or low-value service contracts.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through public procurement	300 000

4.5 SUPPORT TO IT SYSTEMS

Index reference in budget table (WPIs): 1.29

As other EU-programmes, the Creative Europe Programme benefits from the use of reliable, modern and high-quality information systems (E-grants/Sedia), in order to support the full cycle of the grant management of the implemented actions.

The scope of these IT applications, used both by internal and external user communities, covers the complete grant cycle, from call definition, publication, participants' data management, creation and submission of proposals, experts selection, evaluation of proposals by experts, notifications of the results, as well as the invitation to the preparation and signature of grant agreements, grants management, the reporting on the progress of financed projects, the pre-financing, cost submission and reimbursement, the monitoring by external experts, the ex-post auditing, recoveries, and closure of projects reporting and programme evaluation. Furthermore, if needed, an IT tool for the management and implementation of the mobility action for artists, creators or cultural professionals will be developed.

Moreover, as mentioned in the Communication to the Commission "Guidelines on Financing of Information Technology and Cybersecurity (IT)"¹⁸ that establishes guidelines to implement the co-financing of corporate IT

¹⁸ C(2020)6126.

for the new MFF 2021-2027 operational programmes, all programmes that benefit from the corporate communication and information systems, whether from infrastructure, developments, hosting or security, should contribute to the financing of these corporate systems.

The corporate communication and information systems (CIS) means any system enabling the handling of information in electronic form, including all assets required for its operation, as well as infrastructure, organisation, personnel and information resources. This definition includes business applications, shared IT services, outsourced systems, and end-user devices governed under the Commission's administrative autonomy and institutional prerogatives. DG Informatics (DIGIT) will implement the actions.

This action will be implemented through specific contracts based on existing framework contracts or new calls for tender procedures, renewal of existing contracts or through very low-value or low-value service contracts.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EAC (co-delegated to DIGIT)	Direct management through public procurement	1 175 896

OTHER ACTIONS

5.1 PROJECT SELECTION AND IMPLEMENTATION (INCLUDING MONITORING)

Index references in budget table (WPI): 1.25; 1.26; 1.27

Costs related to the experts involved in the assessment of applications and supporting of monitoring tasks. These tasks relate to actions managed by the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (Culture strand), as well as the European Capitals of Culture and the European Heritage Label. This item will be implemented through recourse to experts based on existing lists established following Calls for Expression of Interest in compliance with Art. 242 FR. It also covers the costs of experts involved in the implementation of the European Capitals of Culture and the European Heritage Label.¹⁹

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through calls for Expression of Interest	2 500 000
EAC		400 000
EAC		280 000

The budget is allocated as follows: EUR 2 500 000 for the activities carried out by the experts on the calls managed by the executive agency; EUR 400 000 for the European Capitals of Culture expert panel and EUR 280 000 for the European Heritage Label expert panel.

¹⁹ The experts included in the Expert panel established to carry out the selection and monitoring procedures of the European Capital of Culture action are designated in accordance with Article 6 of Decision 445/2014/EU. The experts included in the Expert panel established to carry out the selection and monitoring procedures of the European Heritage Label action are designated in accordance with Article 17 of Decision No 1194/2011/EU.

MEDIA

GRANTS IN THE MEDIA STRAND

CONTENT CLUSTER

1.1 EUROPEAN CO-DEVELOPMENT

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.01

The objective of the support to European co-development is to support the cooperation among European production companies that are developing works with a strong international audience potential.

Type of applicants (cumulative conditions):

- Applicants are allowed to make only one application as coordinator for either European co-development, European slate development, European mini-slate development or Video games and immersive content development. However, applicants can – in addition to being a coordinator in an application for either of these four calls – also be a partner in other European co-development or Video games and immersive content development applications. If an applicant submits more than one application as coordinator for the above-mentioned calls, only the application for the call with the earliest deadline will be evaluated; the application(s) for (the) call(s) with a later deadline will be deemed ineligible, regardless of the status or outcome of the application for the call with the earliest deadline.
- European entities: Entities (private companies, non-profit organisations, associations, charities, foundations, municipalities/Town Councils, etc.), established in one of the countries participating fully in the MEDIA strand and owned directly or indirectly, wholly or by majority participation, by nationals from such countries. When a company is publicly listed, the location of the stock exchange will in principle determine its nationality. Natural persons are not eligible for a grant except self-employed persons or equivalent (i.e. sole traders) where the company does not possess legal personality separate from that of the natural person.
- Independent European audiovisual production companies: An independent company is a company which is not, directly or indirectly, majority controlled by an audiovisual media service provider, either in shareholding or commercial terms. Majority control is considered to occur when more than 25% of the share capital of a production company is held by a single audiovisual media service provider (50% when several audiovisual media service providers have shares or other means of control in the company). An audiovisual production company is a company whose main objective and activity is audiovisual production.
 - In order to be eligible, a proposal must be submitted by a consortium composed of at least two applicants (beneficiaries; not affiliated entities), which complies with the following conditions: an eligible coordinator and at least one eligible partner (i.e. not an affiliated entity of the coordinator), established in at least two different European countries participating in the MEDIA Strand. The coordinator and the partner(s) must have signed a co-development agreement that needs to be submitted with the application.
 - The coordinator must be able to demonstrate recent experience in producing internationally distributed works.

For that purpose, the coordinator must prove when submitting the application that it has produced one previous work since 2019 that respects the following conditions:

- an animation, fiction or creative documentary project (one-off or series) of a total duration of minimum 24 minutes, unless it is an immersive animation, fiction or creative documentary project (e.g. Virtual Reality), in which case there is no minimum duration.
- it has been actually released in cinemas (or similar for location-based immersive projects), broadcast on television or made available on digital platforms in at least three countries other than that of the coordinator before the day of the deadline for submission of applications.
- the releases or broadcasts are of a commercial nature. Screenings during festivals are not accepted as a commercial distribution.

In relation to the previous work, the coordinator must also be able to prove:

- that it was the sole production company; or
- that it was, in the case of a co-production with another production company, the major co-producer in the financing plan or credited as delegate producer; or
- that its Chief Executive or one of its shareholders has a personal onscreen credit on the work as producer or delegate producer.

No other credits, even if seemingly equivalent, are accepted.

Expected results

- Increased collaboration at development stage between European production companies from different countries and from different markets and consequently an increased number of co-productions.
- Increased quality, feasibility, cross-border potential and market value of selected projects.
- A stronger position on European and international markets for companies selected under European co-development.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through call for proposals	9 000 000

1.2 EUROPEAN SLATE DEVELOPMENT

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.02

The objective of the European slate development support is to foster the competitiveness of European independent production companies and to increase their economic weight on the market. The aim is also to increase the capacity of audiovisual producers to develop projects with the potential to circulate throughout Europe and beyond, and to facilitate European and international coproduction.

The support will also provide an entry point for emerging talent, giving them the opportunity to direct a short film supported by the strong foundation provided by experienced companies.

Type of applicants (cumulative conditions)

- Applicants are allowed to make only one application as coordinator for either European co-development, European slate development, European mini-slate development or Video games and immersive content development. However, applicants can – in addition to being a coordinator in an application for either of these four calls – also be a partner in other European co-development or Video games and immersive content development applications. If an applicant submits more than one application as coordinator for the above-mentioned calls, only the application for the call with the earliest deadline will be evaluated; the application(s) for (the) call(s) with a later deadline will be deemed ineligible, regardless of the status or outcome of the application for the call with the earliest deadline.

- Applicants must be European entities: see definition under Part II MEDIA action 1.1 European Co-Development
- Applicants must also be independent European audiovisual production companies: see definition under Part II MEDIA action 1.1 European Co-Development
 - Eligible applicants shall be independent European audiovisual production companies that can demonstrate recent experience in producing internationally distributed works.

A company able to demonstrate recent experience in producing internationally distributed works is understood as follows:

The applicant must prove when submitting the application that it has produced two previous works since 2019, both of which respect the following conditions:

- an animation, fiction or creative documentary project (one-off or series) of a total duration of minimum 24 minutes, unless it is an immersive animation, fiction or creative documentary project (e.g. Virtual Reality), in which case there is no minimum duration.
- it has been actually released in cinemas (or similar for location-based immersive projects), broadcast on television or made available on digital platforms in at least three countries other than that of the applicant before the day of the deadline for submission of applications.
- the releases or broadcasts are of a commercial nature. Screenings during festivals are not accepted as a commercial distribution.

In relation to the previous works, the applicant must also be able to prove:

- that it was the sole production company; or
- that it was, in the case of a co-production with another production company, the major co-producer in the financing plan or credited as delegate producer; or
- that its Chief Executive or one of its shareholders has a personal onscreen credit on the work as producer or delegate producer.

No other credits, even if seemingly equivalent, are accepted.

Expected results

- A stronger position on European and international markets for companies selected under European slate development.
- Increased quality, feasibility, cross-border potential and market value of European works supported.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through call for proposals	21 000 000

1.3 EUROPEAN MINI-SLATE DEVELOPMENT

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.03

The objective of the European mini-slate development support is to foster the competitiveness of European independent production companies in countries with a low audiovisual capacity (LCC group A and LCC group B)²⁰ and to increase their economic weight on the market. The aim is also to increase the capacity of audiovisual

²⁰ These regions are in the most remote parts of the EU, located in the Atlantic Ocean, the Caribbean basin, South America and the Indian Ocean. Article 349 TFEU provides for specific measures to help these regions address the major and permanent challenges they face due to their extreme remoteness from the European continent, including to facilitate access to EU funds and horizontal programmes.

producers to develop projects with the potential to circulate throughout Europe and beyond, and to facilitate European and international coproduction.

The support will also provide an entry point for emerging talent, giving them the opportunity to direct a short film supported by the strong foundation provided by experienced companies.

Type of applicants (cumulative conditions):

- Applicants are allowed to make only one application as coordinator for either European co-development, European slate development, European mini-slate development or Video games and immersive content development. However, applicants can – in addition to being a coordinator in an application for either of these four calls – also be a partner in other European co-development or Video games and immersive content development applications. If an applicant submits more than one application as coordinator for the above-mentioned calls, only the application for the call with the earliest deadline will be evaluated; the application(s) for (the) call(s) with a later deadline will be deemed ineligible, regardless of the status or outcome of the application for the call with the earliest deadline.
- Applicants must be European entities: see definition under 3. Media action 1.1 European Co-Development.
- Applicants must also be independent European audiovisual production companies: see definition under 3. Media action 1.1 European Co-Development
- Eligible applicants shall be independent European audiovisual production companies based in countries with a low audiovisual capacity (LCC group A and LCC group B 21) that can demonstrate recent experience in producing internationally distributed works.

A company able to demonstrate recent experience in producing internationally distributed works is understood as follows:

The applicant must prove when submitting the application that it has produced one previous work since 2019 that respects the following conditions:

- an animation, fiction or creative documentary project (one-off or series) of a total duration of minimum 24 minutes, unless it is an immersive animation, fiction or creative documentary project (e.g. Virtual Reality), in which case there is no minimum duration.
- It has been actually released in cinemas (or similar for location-based immersive projects), broadcast on television or made available on digital platforms in at least three countries other than that of the applicant before the day of the deadline for submission of applications.
- the releases or broadcasts are of a commercial nature. Screenings during festivals are not accepted as a commercial distribution.

In relation to the previous work, the applicant must also be able to prove:

- that it was the sole production company; or
- that it was, in the case of a co-production with another production company, the major co-producer in the financing plan or credited as delegate producer; or
- that its Chief Executive or one of its shareholders has a personal onscreen credit on the work as producer or delegate producer.

21 Group A: Czech Republic, Estonia, Romania, Greece, Croatia, Portugal, Poland. Group B: Bulgaria, Luxembourg, Slovenia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Hungary, Latvia, Cyprus, Malta and the following third countries subject to the conditions being fulfilled for their participation in the MEDIA strand: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Lichtenstein, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Republic of Serbia and Ukraine.

No other credits, even if seemingly equivalent, are accepted.

Expected results

- A stronger position on European and international markets for companies selected under European mini-slate development.
- Increased quality, feasibility, cross-border potential and market value of European works supported.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through call for proposals	7 000 000

1.4 VIDEO GAMES AND IMMERSIVE CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.04

The objective of the support to Video games and immersive content development is to increase the capacity of European video game producers, XR studios and audiovisual production companies to develop video games and interactive immersive experiences with the potential to reach global audiences. The support also aims to improve the competitiveness of the European video games industry and other companies producing interactive immersive content in European and international markets by enabling the retention of intellectual property by European developers.

Type of applicants (combined conditions):

- Applicants are allowed to make only one application as coordinator for either European co-development, European slate development, European mini-slate development or Video games and immersive content development. However, applicants can – in addition to being a coordinator in an application for either of these four calls – also be a partner in other European co-development or Video games and immersive content development applications. If an applicant submits more than one application as coordinator for the above-mentioned calls, only the application for the call with the earliest deadline will be evaluated; the application(s) for (the) call(s) with a later deadline will be deemed ineligible, regardless of the status or outcome of the application for the call with the earliest deadline.
- Applicants must be European entities: see definition under 3. Media action 1.1 European Co-development.
- Applicants must also be European video game production companies, XR studios or audiovisual production companies. This means companies whose main objective and activity is video game production/development, (entertainment) software development or audiovisual production (or equivalent). Publishing companies are not eligible applicants.
- The coordinator must be able to demonstrate recent experience in producing internationally distributed works.
- For that purpose, the coordinator must prove when submitting the application that it has produced or developed a video game or (interactive or non-interactive) immersive experience that has been commercially distributed²² in the period between 01/01/2023 and the deadline for submission of applications. Work-for-hire, i.e. projects for which the development or production work was subcontracted to the coordinator by another company, is not eligible, nor are projects on which a member of the coordinating company has a personal credit. Early Access works are not eligible either because they are not

²² The work must have generated revenues, i.e. financial income. These revenues can be generated, for example, from the retail sales of the work, from the sale of in-game items or from advertising.

completed works yet and are still being developed. To prove the commercial distribution of the previous work, the coordinator must be able to provide a relevant sales report showing sales in the period between 01/01/2023 and the date of the deadline for submission.

Expected results

- Increased quality, appeal, feasibility and cross-border potential for selected projects.
- A stronger position on the European and international market for video games developers and companies producing interactive immersive experiences.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through call for proposals	10 000 000

1.5 TV AND ONLINE CONTENT

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.05

The objective of the support to TV and online content is to increase the capacity of European audiovisual producers to develop and produce strong projects with significant potential to circulate throughout Europe and beyond, and to facilitate European and international co-productions within the television and online sector.

The action aims to strengthen the independence of producers in relation to broadcasters and digital platforms, to enhance collaboration between operators, including independent producers, broadcasters, digital platforms and sales agents, from different countries participating in the MEDIA strand, including from low capacity countries, in order to produce high quality programming aimed at wide international distribution and promoted to a wide audience including commercial exploitation in the multi-platform environment. Particular attention will be given to projects presenting innovative aspects in the content and in the financing that show a clear link with the envisaged distribution strategies.

A minimum of 25% of the budget will be reserved for animation projects, and another 8% for documentary projects.

Type of applicants (combined conditions):

- Applicants must be European entities: see definition under 3. Media action 1.1 European Co-Development.
- Applicants must also be independent European audiovisual production companies: see definition under 3. Media action 1.1 European Co-Development

Expected results

- Increased production of high-quality European works for linear and non-linear broadcasting including on digital platforms, as well as an increase in the number of co-productions.
- Enhanced cooperation between operators from different countries participating in the MEDIA strand, including between broadcasters and from low-capacity countries.
- Increased audience for European works through linear and non-linear broadcasting including on digital platforms.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through call for proposals	22 000 000 (Divided indicatively as follows: Cut-off date 1: 40% Cut-off date 2: 60%)

BUSINESS CLUSTER

2.1 EUROPEAN FILM DISTRIBUTION

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.06

The European Film Distribution support shall encourage and support the wider transnational distribution of recent European films by providing funds to European distributors, based upon their performance on the market, for further reinvestment in the acquisition, promotion and distribution (including online) of recent non-national European films.

Type of applicants

- Applicants must be European entities: see definition under 3. Media action 1.1 European Co-Development.
- The applicants must be European companies active in the audiovisual sector as cinema / theatrical distributor involved in commercial activity designed to bring to the attention of a wide audience a film for the purpose of exploitation in cinema theatres. This shall be the principal activity of the company or division of the company.

The cinema / theatrical distributor shall fulfil the following criteria:

1. be the holder of the theatrical distribution rights for the film in the country concerned;
2. carry out the theatrical distribution of the film in the country concerned (determine the release date, plan, control and execute the distribution and promotion campaign);
3. pay directly the associated distribution costs; and
4. have theatrical distribution operations in the country concerned.

Expected results:

- Improvement in the trans-national distribution of recent non-national European films.
- Increase in the investment in the production, acquisition, promotion, theatrical and online distribution of non-national European films.
- Develop links between the production and distribution sector thus improving the competitive position of non-national European films.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative Amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through call for proposals	34 000 000

2.2 EUROPEAN FILM SALES

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.07

The European Film Sales support shall encourage and support the wider transnational distribution of recent European films by providing funds to European sales agents, based upon their performance on the market, for further reinvestment in the acquisition, promotion and distribution (including online) of recent non-national European films.

- Type of applicants: Applicants must be European entities: see definition under 3. Media action 1.1 European Co-Development.

- The applicant company must be a European Sales Agent, i.e. a European company acting as an intermediary agent for the producer, who specialises in the commercial exploitation of a film by marketing and licensing a film to distributors or other purchasers for foreign countries. The sales agent must be directly appointed by the producer of each film declared or supported by way of a written international sales agreement providing for the right to sell the film in at least 10 countries participating in the MEDIA strand.

Expected results:

- Improvement in the trans-national distribution of recent non-national European films.
- Increase in the investment in the production, acquisition, promotion, theatrical and online distribution of non-national European films.
- Develop links between the production and distribution sector thus improving the competitive position of non-national European films.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative Amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through call for proposals	5 500 000

2.3 INNOVATIVE TOOLS AND BUSINESS MODELS

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.08

The action is aimed at encouraging the development and/or the spread of innovative tools and business models to improve the visibility, availability, audience and diversity of European works in the digital age and/or the competitiveness and/or the greening process of the European audiovisual industry.

Type of applicants

Applicants must be European entities: see definition under 3. Media action 1.1 European Co-Development.

Expected results:

- Improve the competitiveness of the European audiovisual industry and seize the benefits of the innovative developments in technology and business models;
- Improve the adaptation of the European audiovisual industry to the opportunities offered by Artificial Intelligence and the development of virtual worlds (also called Metaverse(s)).
- Improve the greening process of the European audiovisual industry,
- Improve the production and circulation of European audiovisual works in the digital era;
- increase the number and diversity of European works available online and increase their visibility in order to allow them to reach more audiences

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through call for proposals	10 500 000

2.4 SKILLS AND TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.09

The objective of the Skills and Talent Development support is to enhance the capacity of audiovisual

professionals to adapt to new creative processes market developments and digital technologies that affect the whole value chain.

Particular focus will be put on supporting new creative processes (e.g. cross disciplinary creative collaboration, innovative storytelling blending creative and digital skills), harnessing digital innovation in audiovisual production (e.g. virtual production, post-production) and distribution (marketing, promotion, audience engagement); uptake of digital tools for videogames production and distribution; enhancing IP rights exploitation; green transition (aiming at promoting sustainable practices across the entire value chain).

Type of applicants

Entities (private companies, non-profit organisations, associations, charities, foundations, municipalities/Town Councils, etc.), established in one of the countries participating in the MEDIA strand.

Natural persons may not apply for a grant except self-employed persons or equivalent (i.e. sole traders) where the company does not possess legal personality separate from that of the natural person.

Expected results:

- To promote sustainable and more environmentally respectful solutions for the audiovisual industry
- Harness Europe's creative talent by embracing new creative processes
- To accompany the digital transition of the audiovisual sector in support of content creation and dissemination
- To foster growth and investment through greater exploitation of IP across the EU and beyond
- Equip audiovisual and gaming professionals with a new combination of creative and digital skills, thereby increasing the competitiveness potential of the European industry
- To promote sustainable and more environmentally respectful solutions for the audiovisual industry

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through call for proposals	9 500 000

2.5 MARKETS AND NETWORKING

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.10

The objective is to enhance the promotion of European content in the global market and to foster cooperation among all parts of the audiovisual value chain for the co-creation and promotion of European audiovisual works.

Cooperation of audiovisual professionals and promotion of European works are pursued by supporting two types of projects and activities:

- Markets focusing on a specific type of films and innovative content, or networking of markets that present similar genre/topics or are located in the same region;
- Networking activities and cooperation among networks across the whole value chain for the promotion of European talents and works.

Type of applicants

Entities (private companies, non-profit organisations, associations, charities, foundations, municipalities/Town Councils, etc.), established in one of the countries participating in the MEDIA strand.

Natural persons are not eligible for a grant except self-employed persons or equivalent (i.e. sole traders) where the company does not possess legal personality separate from that of the natural person.

Given the nature of this action and its international character, including the facilitation of international co-creations and co-productions, it is necessary that, in line with Article 17 (3) and 17(4) of the basic act, entities from the cultural and creative sectors established in third countries be able to participate in the projects it supports even if those countries do not participate in the programme or its MEDIA strand. In such cases, said entities will bear the cost of their participation.

Expected results:

- To improve the innovative aspect of existing European industry markets, and to increase their systemic impact;
- To encourage the creation of networks of markets;
- To encourage the development of networks among European professionals with the aim to co-create series;
- To promote sustainability and the greening process of the markets;
- To improve the competitiveness, circulation and promotion of European audiovisual works on international markets
- To enhance diversity and inclusion in the markets and networks;
- To ensure that Europe's audiovisual industry is taking full advantage of technological and business innovation.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative Amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through call for proposals	16 500 000

AUDIENCE CLUSTER

3.1 NETWORKS OF EUROPEAN CINEMAS

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.12

The aim of the support is to create and operate a network of cinemas with a view to:

- Encourage cinema operators to screen a significant proportion of non- national European films through incentives and collaborative projects;
- Contribute to raise and increase the interest of the audience for non-national films including through the development of activities for young cinema-goers;
- Help those cinemas to adapt their strategy to the changing environment including by promoting innovative approaches in terms of audience reach and engagement, including through AI, as wells as partnerships with other film industry operators as well as with local cultural institutions;
- Encourage exchange of best practice, knowledge sharing and other forms of cross border collaboration amongst members of the network;
- Contribute to the policy dialogue on the film industry by collecting data and disseminating the outcome of the activities of the network beyond its members.

Type of applicants (cumulative):

Entities (private companies, non-profit organisations, associations, charities, foundations, municipalities/Town Councils, etc.), established in one of the countries participating in the MEDIA strand.

Natural persons are not eligible for a grant except self-employed persons or equivalent (i.e. sole traders) where the company does not possess legal personality separate from that of the natural person.

The action is open to European cinema networks. A cinema network is a group of European independent cinemas developing, through the medium of a legally constituted co-ordination entity, joint activities in the area of screening and promoting European films.

To be eligible, the cinema network must represent at least 400 cinemas situated in at least 20 countries participating in the MEDIA strand.

A European independent cinema is a company, association or organisation with a single screen or several screens based in countries participating in the MEDIA strand. The screening of films should be the principal activity of the participant or division of the participant's organisation.

The participating cinemas must be registered in one of the countries participating in the MEDIA strand.

The guidelines of the coordinator must detail the method of assessment of cinema theatres and their performance based upon precise and objective criteria.

Expected results:

- Increase the audience for non-national European films on the European market;
- Reach new audiences for European films including young cinema-goers;
- Reinforce and renew the ongoing cinema experience;
- Adjust the business practices of European cinema theatres in terms of sustainability and inclusion;
- Foster the innovation potential of European cinema theatres through enhanced collaboration.

As the financial support is the primary aim of the EU grant, the maximum amount of the grant that can be allocated annually to third parties is fixed at the limit of EUR 250.000.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through call for proposals	17 467 470

3.2 FILMS ON THE MOVE

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.13

The Films on the Move action shall encourage and support the wider distribution of recent non-national European films by encouraging sales agents and theatrical distributors in particular to invest in promotion and adequate distribution of non-national European films.

Type of applicants

- Applicants must be European entities: see definition under 3. Media action 1.1 European Co-Development.
- Applicants must be a European sales agent. A European sales agent is the company acting as an intermediary agent for the producer, who specialises in the commercial exploitation of a film by marketing and licensing a film to distributors or other purchasers for foreign countries. The applicant must be directly appointed by the producer of the submitted film by way of an international sales agreement providing for the right to sell the film in at least 15 countries participating in the MEDIA strand.

Expected results:

- Development of pan-European theatrical and/or online distribution strategies for non-national European films.

- Increased investment in theatrical and/or online promotion and distribution of non-national European films in view of expanding audience reach.
- Develop links between the production and distribution sector thus improving the competitive position of non-national European films on a global market.

Financial support to third parties is limited to 70% of the promotion and advertising incurred by the third parties, within the following limits:

- EUR 150.000€ for FR, ES, IT and DE
- EUR 60.000€ for AT, BE, NL, PL
- EUR 30.000€ for CZ, DK, FI, EL, HU, IE, NO, PT, SE
- EUR 10.000€ for all the other territories.

The financial support to third parties is limited to 70% of the Promotion & Advertising costs incurred by the third parties, within the following limits for animated films as well as films with a production budget above EUR 15 M:

- EUR 300.000 for FR, ES, IT and DE
- EUR 120.000 for AT, BE, NL, PL
- EUR 60.000 for CZ, DK, FI, EL, HU, IE, NO, PT, SE
- EUR 20.000 for all the other territories.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through call for proposals	21 000 000 Divided indicatively as follows: First cut off: 40% Second cut off: 60%

3.3 NETWORKS OF EUROPEAN FESTIVALS

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.14

The Networks of European festivals shall provide support to coordinated/collaborative activities among European audiovisual festivals aiming at increasing audiences' interest in non-national European audiovisual content, including video games and immersive content, and promoting its circulation and visibility.

Type of applicants:

Entities (private companies, non-profit organisations, associations, charities, foundations, municipalities/Town Councils, etc.), established in one of the countries participating in the MEDIA strand.

Natural persons are not eligible for a grant except self-employed persons or equivalent (i.e. sole traders) where the company does not possess legal personality separate from that of the natural person.

Only applications from eligible entities organising audiovisual festivals in countries participating in the MEDIA strand will be accepted. By eligible audiovisual festival it is understood an event:

- programming European films and audiovisual works that are being screened to wide audiences including general public as well as accredited international audiovisual professionals and press;
- having a clear curation, regulation and selection procedure;
- 50% of the programming should be devoted to non-national films and audiovisual works from countries participating to the MEDIA strand and presenting a geographical diverse coverage of at least 15 from these countries including low-capacity ones.

The support is open to a European network of festivals comprising of a coordination entity plus a minimum of 3 member organisations.

The third parties must fulfil the eligible audiovisual festival criteria mentioned above.

No more than 20% of the festivals participating in the network (including the coordination entity) can come from the same country. One audiovisual festival can be member of max. 2 different networks.

Expected results

- Reinforce cooperation among European audiovisual festivals members of a Network screening a significant proportion of non-national European films and audiovisual works through coordinated/collaborative activities targeted to expand and renew audiences.
- Increase the impact of European audiovisual festivals aiming to reinforce promotion, distribution and circulation of non-national European films and audiovisual works to growing audiences across Europe
- Foster exchange of knowledge and best-practice models for cooperation among festivals through coordinated/collaborative activities targeted to expand and renew audiences.
- Harness the digital transformation, including developing and updating online tools and applications.

The maximum amount of the grant that can be allocated to third parties is fixed at the limit of EUR 100,000 for activities running over 2 years.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through call for proposals	6 000 000

3.4 EUROPEAN VOD NETWORKS AND OPERATORS

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.15

Within the specific objective of promoting competitiveness, scalability, cooperation, innovation and sustainability, including through mobility, in the European audiovisual sector, the priorities of the MEDIA strand are:

- to enhance the circulation, promotion, online and theatrical distribution of European audiovisual works, within the Union and internationally in the new digital environment; including through innovative business models;
- to promote European audiovisual works, including heritage works, and support the engagement and development of audiences of all ages, in particular young audiences, across Europe and beyond

The MEDIA strand shall provide support for the following measures:

- European Video on Demand (VOD) operators' network(s), screening a significant proportion of non-national European works

Type of applicants (cumulative):

- Applicants must be European entities: see definition under 3. Media action 1.1 European Co-Development.

The proposal must be submitted by a network of applicants (consortium) involving at least two VOD services coming from at least two countries participating in the MEDIA strand or by a VOD platform offering its services in at least two countries within MEDIA Strand countries.

The action is open to European VOD services. A VOD platform is an on-demand audiovisual media service provided for the viewing of programmes at the moment chosen by the user and at its individual request, on the basis of a catalogue of programmes selected by the media service provider, with a clear brand identity and on which the applicant(s) have the editorial responsibility. A VOD platform offered by broadcasters or internet service providers is eligible.

The applicant VOD platforms must present a minimum European Dimension in their catalogue. The applicant must present a catalogue or an aggregated catalogue (in case of several VOD services involved in the consortium) constituted by:

- at least a total of 300 available audiovisual works
- at least 30% of audiovisual works from countries participating in the MEDIA strand
- include audiovisual works from at least five countries participating in the MEDIA strand representing at least five different official languages of these participating countries.

The 30% of European audiovisual works within the catalogue must be majority produced by a producer or producers established in the countries participating in the MEDIA strand.

Expected results:

- Strengthen the cross-border collaboration among European Video on Demand (VOD) platforms through joint/collaborative activities to increase the online audience of European audiovisual content
- Strengthen attractiveness of eligible European VOD platforms for cross-border audiences and online consumption at a larger scale
- Improve the digital circulation and consumption of European content by boosting its visibility, discoverability and prominence
- Develop new business models and achieve cross-border economies of scope and scale.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Call for proposals	8 000 000

3.5 SUBTITLING OF CULTURAL CONTENT

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.16

Support shall be given to the multilingual access to cultural TV programmes online through subtitling.

Type of applicant

This action will be implemented through a direct grant to ARTE. The direct award of this grant is justified by the specific characteristics of the action, requiring a high degree of specialisation that only the above-mentioned broadcaster possesses.

ARTE is a key and singular player in the European cultural audio-visual environment and has a unique transnational dimension and multilingual offer. It is the only public service broadcaster that has the experience of broadcasting cultural programmes in different languages for different audiences and has the required capacity of online dissemination of the subtitled content, in at least 20 countries, including at least 5 different language speaking MEDIA territories. The programmes are currently available online in six languages on the channel's website (www.arte.tv), connected TV and mobile apps. Through this linguistic choice ARTE has the

potential to reach almost 350 million European citizens in their mother tongue. ARTE's cross border cultural offering is unmatched by any other European broadcaster.

Expected results:

- Increase the online audience for quality European cultural and factual TV programming
- Respond to the market fragmentation at European level and increase the circulation of quality European cultural and factual TV programming across Europe
- Facilitate cross-border access to quality European cultural and factual TV programming, including through a possible widening of the multilingual offer
- Improve the digital circulation of quality European cultural and factual TV programming
- Increase the online supply, visibility, accessibility and prominence of quality European cultural and factual TV programming
- Increase the potential for innovative practices in subtitling, including through technologies such as artificial intelligence

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through a grant without a call for proposals on the basis of article 198 (f) FR	4 500 000

PROCUREMENTS

4.1 COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT WITH INDUSTRY AND CITIZENS

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.19

Communication and dissemination activities are essential for the visibility and the recognition of the added value of the Programme and are best achieved through activities reflecting a genuine engagement with the industry, on the one hand and the audience and citizens on the other. These activities are:

European Film Forum

The **European Film Forum** will maintain dialogue with the industry and professionals, map emerging needs and allow stakeholders to provide ideas and messages which can shape policy and the support schemes. The dialogue, also encompassing regulatory aspects (AVMSD, copyright, competition and internal market policies, etc.) will take place via ad-hoc meetings at relevant sector events (markets, festivals, fairs) or in Brussels through the organisation of virtual meetings or conferences. Exploratory actions such as short-term working groups or questionnaires will be also envisaged as appropriate.

Activities showcasing and promoting European gems will take place through:

- **Communication on European Awards:** support will be given to awareness raising and communication campaigns, in particular on the Lux Audience Award of the European Parliament and the European Film Academy which has established itself as a leading prize over the last 10 years.
- **Promotion of European Film heritage:** through the support of public events - virtual and physical - aiming at promoting the diversity and richness of the European audiovisual heritage it will allow to

engage with film archives and film institutions as well as citizens and raise awareness also on the need to preserve European film heritage.

Type of contract: specific contracts based on existing Framework Contracts. As regards events in the Cannes Film Festival an ad-hoc framework contract shall be used (FW-00126172 - Organisation du Forum du Film Européen et autres événements pour la promotion du Programme Europe Créative et de la politique audiovisuelle de l'Union Européenne dans le cadre du Festival International du Film (FIF) de Cannes 2022-2028).

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
CNECT	Direct management through public procurement	950 000

4.2 STANDS - B2B SERVICES

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.11

Stands services including promotional activities and services to Stand participants at the major audiovisual markets and trade fairs. Major audiovisual markets include for instance: Marché International du Film (Cannes), European Film Market (Berlinale), International Audiovisual Content Market (MIPCOM), Gamescom, Séries Mania and Marché International du Film d'Animation. If physical activities are not possible, online activities may replace them as appropriate.

The MEDIA Umbrella stands shall:

- encourage business-to-business exchanges and scalability by taking part in major audiovisual markets and trade fairs. The MEDIA Umbrella stands target participation from agile independent European companies of all sizes, offering strong European content, and/or services for audiovisual professionals, likely to succeed in international markets. The action is expected to increase their capacity to operate transnationally and internationally.
- facilitate the participation of newcomers and companies from lower audiovisual capacity countries Group B in the major audiovisual markets and trade fairs.
- provide a platform to enhance the visibility of the Creative Europe MEDIA Sub-programme and the Digital Single Market.
-

A particular focus will be put on the participation of newcomers, companies from lower capacity countries but also women-led companies and tech start-ups.

The MEDIA Umbrella stand shall be implemented via specific contracts based on a new framework contract to be signed by the end of 2025.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through public procurement	3,511,095

4.3 MEETINGS WITH GRANT BENEFICIARIES AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.23

The action covers costs related to grant-holders' meetings as well as other ad-hoc physical or virtual meetings, seminars, conferences and events to support programme implementation.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through public procurement	150 000

4.4 MEDIA CARBON CALCULATOR

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.20

Continued development, management and revision of a common carbon measurement tool for the European audiovisual sector, building on the first iteration financed by the Work Programme 2023. The common tool will consist of a CO2 measurement system, for calculation and collaboration on CO2 impact. The tool will complement the existing CO2 measurement tools as appropriate to allow comparability of the CO2 impact of production of audiovisual live action works across Europe.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
CNECT	Direct management through public procurement	500 000

BLENDING

5.1 MEDIAINVEST - INVESTMENT TO FOSTER EUROPEAN AUDIO-VISUAL PRODUCTIONS AND DISTRIBUTION

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.21

Provide enhanced access to finance for audiovisual companies active in the production and distribution of content in their start-up, growth and transfer phases through an equity financial tool, blending funds from Creative Europe MEDIA, Invest EU and private investment.

Expected results:

- To have a structuring effect on European audiovisual production and distribution companies, including testing new business models and enhancing the capacity to access finance;
- To increase investment volumes into the audiovisual companies;
- To improve the capacity of the audiovisual sector to operate transnationally and internationally including knowledge-sharing, networking capabilities, talent development, marketing, promotion and innovation;
- To strengthen the competitiveness of the audiovisual sector on European and international markets.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
DG ECFIN through co-delegation or	Indirect management - Blending facility with InvestEU	10 000 000

cross-sub delegation		
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INDIRECT MANAGEMENT

6.1 DATA AND ANALYSIS OF THE AUDIOVISUAL SECTOR

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.17a

Improving transparency of the audiovisual sector is necessary to strengthen its competitiveness and it can be achieved by providing the industry and policy-makers with data and analysis on the Union markets and legal framework. This information is also needed in order to assess the support measures for the sector. To this end the Commission will undertake cooperation activities with the European Audiovisual Observatory. The rationale is:

- To further develop the relevant areas covered by the European Audiovisual Observatory for the benefit of the EU audiovisual sector.
- To support the development of essential databases and tools for the audiovisual sector.
- To provide the European Commission with specific briefings and reports to cater to its work programme in the audiovisual field.

Support will be awarded for this purpose through a Contribution Agreement with the Council of Europe, implemented under the existing Financial Framework Partnership Agreement (FFPA), and to the benefit of the Observatory. The European Audiovisual Observatory (EAO) is an entity established as an enlarged partial agreement of the Council of Europe. The Observatory was created in 1992 in order to collect and distribute information about the audiovisual industries in Europe. The Observatory provides information on the various audiovisual markets in Europe and their financing. It also analyses and reports on the legal issues affecting the different sectors of the audiovisual industry.

Support is granted for activities undertaken over a two-year period.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
CNECT	Grant to body identified by a basic act – Art 195 (d) FR	800 000 (action grant)

OTHER ACTIONS

7.1 MEMBERSHIP OF EUROPEAN AUDIOVISUAL OBSERVATORY INDEX REFERENCE IN BUDGET TABLE

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.17b

As all members of the European Audiovisual Observatory (EAO), the European Union contributes an annual membership fee, in accordance with the Financial Regulation. The European Audiovisual Observatory is an entity established by an enlarged partial agreement of the Council of Europe. Regulation (EU) No 2021/818 (Article 11) states that the EU shall be a member of the Observatory for the duration of the Programme. The Union's participation in the Observatory shall contribute to the achievements of the priorities of the MMEDIA strand and EU priorities in the audiovisual field by encouraging transparency and accessibility of legal and market information.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
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CNECT	Direct management	350 000 membership fee
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7.2 EUROPEAN BOARD FOR MEDIA SERVICES

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.18

The European Media Freedom Act (EMFA)²³ puts in place a novel set of rules to protect media pluralism and independence in the internal market. EMFA establishes a new independent European Board for Media Services (the Board), composed of representatives of national regulatory authorities or bodies (defined as those designated by Member States pursuant to Article 30 of Directive 2010/13/EU). The Board shall replace and succeed the European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGA). The Board shall be assisted by a secretariat, to be provided by the Commission.

Activities

Support will be given to meetings with Member States' experts and regulators in the frame of the Board for the application of EMFA. Support will entail reimbursement of travel expenses/daily allowances for members of the Board/experts as well as for procurement of studies. Activities eligible under this action are linked to the urgent implementation of EMFA.

The Board shall advise and support the Commission on matters related to media services within the Board's competence and promote the consistent and effective application of certain key aspects of EMFA and the implementation of Directive 2010/13/EU - the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) - throughout the Union. In practice this means a significant increase in the tasks attributed to the Board, compared to the tasks of ERGA under the AVMSD.

In particular, the Board shall draw up opinions, e.g. on regulatory or administrative measures which are likely to significantly affect the operation of media service providers in the internal market, on national measures concerning media services from outside the Union and on media market concentrations which are likely to affect the functioning of the internal market for media services. The Board shall also assist the European Commission in drawing up guidelines on different aspects of EMFA and the AVMSD.

As envisaged in the legislative financial statement accompanying the EMFA proposal, a budget of EUR 1 million per year is foreseen for studies supporting the implementation of the EMFA and the work of the Board, to be procured by the Commission. Both these expenses will be financed equally by the Media and the Cross-sectoral strands of the Creative Europe programme.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
CNECT	Procurement of studies	500 000

7.3 PROJECT SELECTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.22

The costs related to the experts involved in the assessment of projects of the MEDIA strand are included in the Work Programme. This item will be implemented through recourse to experts based on existing lists established

²³ Regulation (EU) 2024/1083 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024

following Calls for Expression of Interest.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through calls for expression of interest	1 600 000

7.4 IT SERVICES FOR CREATIVE EUROPE PLATFORMS

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 2.24

Corporate IT services are required for the development, registration and hosting of Creative Europe websites for the management of the MEDIA umbrella stands participants and events, or the communication on professional training opportunities. These services will be provided through a Service Level Agreement with DG DIGIT.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Administrative Arrangement with DG DIGIT	160 000

CROSS-SECTORAL STRAND

GRANTS IN THE CROSS-SECTORAL STRAND

1.1 PRESIDENCY EVENTS

Index references in budget table (WPI): 3.01 and 3.02

Grants will be awarded to the bodies designated by the governments during their respective Presidencies of the Council of the EU or in preparation thereof, to organise one event on priority topics in the field of audiovisual and one in the field of cultural policy, with a clear European dimension. These two events should be linked to the EU works in the fields of audiovisual and culture, respectively. They may be combined with associated activities for the promotion of the Programme or the dissemination of Programme results.

The main outcomes from Presidency events are expected to inform the EU policy discussion and can take the form of policy guidance, recommendations, conclusions or targeted messages addressed to the EU, Presidency or Member States level.

The Presidencies are considered as a *de facto* monopoly because they play a unique role to foster policy cooperation, define priorities and follow-up the progress and results achieved in the fields of education, training and youth (Article 198 (c) FR).

Presidency events should be visibly labelled as EU events and display the Creative Europe logo.

The EU grant is limited to a maximum co-financing rate of 50% of total eligible costs.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EAC	Direct management through call without a call for proposals - Article 198 (c) FR	200 000
CNECT		200 000

1.2 CREATIVE INNOVATION LAB

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 3.03

The Creative Innovation Lab shall incentivise players from different cultural and creative sectors. In addition to audiovisual including gaming, projects may cover music, books or museums. They will design and test innovative solutions for key challenges, with a potential positive long-term impact on multiple cultural and creative sectors.

Type of applicants

European entities (private companies, non-profit organisations, associations, charities, foundations, municipalities/Town Councils/public authorities, Universities, educational institutions, research centres etc.) established in one of the countries participating in the Creative Europe programme and owned directly or indirectly, wholly or by majority participation, by nationals from such countries. When a company is publicly listed, the location of the stock exchange will in principle determine its nationality. Natural persons are not eligible for a grant except self-employed persons or equivalent (i.e. sole traders), where the company does not possess legal personality separate from that of the natural person.

Financial support to third parties is allowed for grants.

Expected results

1. Improve the competitiveness of the European audiovisual and other cultural and creative sectors: transparency, data collection and the appropriate use of artificial intelligence/big data, adaptation to

the challenges and opportunities driven by the ongoing changes in those sectors;

2. Improve the adaptation of the European audiovisual and other cultural and creative sectors to the opportunities offered by the development of virtual worlds (also called metaverse(s));
3. Improve the production/financing and circulation of European audiovisual and cultural content in the digital age;
4. Increase the visibility, discoverability, availability and diversity of European audiovisual and cultural content in the digital age;
5. Increase the potential audience of European audiovisual and cultural content in the digital age;
6. Accelerate the environmental transition of the European audiovisual, cultural and other creative sectors, in line with the priorities of the European Green Deal and the New European Bauhaus.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through call for proposals	7 021 561

1.3 NEWS - JOURNALISM PARTNERSHIPS

Index references in budget table (WPI): 3.04 and 3.05

The European news media sectors play a crucial and valuable role in Europe. Yet, they are facing multiple challenges. The economic sustainability of professional journalism has come under pressure, partially as a result of the digital shift, with readers shifting to online sources and traditional news outlets losing advertising revenues. Many media at the local level as well as those putting their public interest mission before profits, have had to close down, weakening media pluralism and posing risks for the good functioning of democracy.

This call therefore addresses media challenges and opportunities of a trans-national nature by supporting projects that address one of the following two topics:

Topic 1. “Journalism Partnerships - Collaborations” aims to support the economical sustainability of news media. It supports cross-border media collaborations focusing, among other aspects, on the resilience of news media organisations. This support shall foster media transformation, trustworthy reporting and skills for news media professionals, for instance by developing new business models and media production standards.

Topic 2. “Journalism Partnerships - Pluralism”. Besides a purely economic aspect, independent media contribute to upholding the essential principles of media freedom and pluralism. This topic seeks to protect news media sectors of special relevance to democracy and civic participation, such as local and regional media, community media, investigative journalism and organisations delivering public interest news. Support will target organisations with experience in media to put in cascading grants (i.e. regranting / support to third parties).

Type of applicants

For topic 1, the call is open to consortia composed of at least three entities from a minimum of three different countries participating in the Creative Europe Programme. Consortia may include non-profit, public and private media outlets (incl. written/online press, radio/podcasts, TV, etc.) as well as other organisations focusing on news media (incl. media associations, NGOs, journalistic funds and training organisations focusing on media professionals, etc.).

For topic 2, the call is open to organisations which are active in the news media sector (incl. media associations, NGOs, non-profit organisations, civil society organisations, public authorities, international organisations, universities, research centres, journalistic funds and training organisations focusing on media professionals, profitmaking entities, foundations, etc.).

Expected results:

- Increased innovation and creativity in business models, journalistic production processes and distribution processes;
- Increased viability of professionally produced journalistic content.
- Increased interest in professionally produced journalistic content, among various social groups, language groups and age groups;

Specific for Topic 1

- Increased media collaboration.
- Sector-wide networks for the exchange of best practices among news media organisations and professionals;
- Knowledge-hubs for sub-sectors around technical formats (written/online press, radio/podcasts, TV, etc.) and/or journalistic genres (data journalism, general topics, specialised journalism, etc.);
- Acquisition and improvement of professional skills by journalists as well as media business professionals.

Specific for Topic 2

- Increased resilience, pluralism and editorial independence at EU level of sectors such as local, regional and community media, investigative media or media specialised in public interest topics.
- Increased resilience of organisations active in the targeted news media sectors and protection of the news media landscape.
- Improved uptake of new technologies across the targeted media sectors in as much this contributes to media pluralism and a diverse media landscape.
- Fostering repositories of knowledge about media sectors delivering public interest news (e.g. by detecting areas with low provision of high-quality content and/or in which media pluralism is strained).

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through call for proposals	Topic 1 - 6 900 000
		Topic 2 – 6 900 000

1.4 NEWS – MEDIA PLURALISM MONITOR

Index references in budget table (WPI): 3.06

The European Democracy Action Plan and the Media and Audiovisual Action Plan aim to strengthen media freedom and media pluralism, which are essential to our democracies and are enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Free and pluralistic media are key to hold power to account and to help citizens make informed decisions. Furthermore, Article 26 of the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA) provides that the Commission shall ensure an annual independent monitoring of the internal market for media services.

Type of applicants

In order to help the Commission to effectively pursue this priority, on the basis of Article 198(f) of the Financial Regulation, a direct grant will be awarded to the European University Institute (EUI). The direct award of this grant is justified by the specific characteristics of the action, requiring a high degree of specialisation that only the above-mentioned entity possesses.

The EUI offers a truly pan-European structure gathering researchers from several academic disciplines with complementary economic, legal and social backgrounds. According to Article 2 of its statutes, the EUI is entrusted with an accompanying role to promote and anticipate further stages of European integration through academic reflection. The Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom (CMPF) at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (RSCAC) of the European University Institute was established by the Commission in 2011 as part of the Union's ongoing efforts to improve the protection of media pluralism and media freedom in Europe.

The prominent role of the Media Pluralism Monitor conducted by the CMPF was recognised in the Council conclusions of November 2013, November 2018 and December 2020 as well as in the report from the European Parliament on media pluralism and media freedom in the European Union (2017/2209(INI)). The Media Pluralism Monitor was upgraded to take into account digital challenges under the European Parliament Preparatory Action "Monitoring Media Pluralism in the digital era". The Commission has been assessing the state of certain aspects related to media pluralism and independence across Europe as one of the pillars of the annual Rule of Law Report. EMFA provides for an annual independent monitoring of the internal market for media services to be conducted independently by a specialised academic entity in collaboration with researchers from the Member States on the basis of a robust list of key performance indicators and methodological safeguards. The status of the EUI, its structure and modus operandi provide a framework to ensure that the internal market for media services and state of media pluralism are monitored in an independent manner. The results of its operations are neutral, and as a result of the previous implementation of the monitor, the Centre has already assembled a network of country teams in all EU Member States and candidate (countries).

As a result, the Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom of the Florence School of Regulation is best placed to implement the Action.

Expected results

The Media Pluralism Monitor shall measure risks to media pluralism in the EU through a broad set of indicators, covering legal, economic and socio-demographic aspects. It shall provide evidence-based information on the state of media pluralism in each Member State, and selected EU candidate countries, and in the EU as a whole, covering risks to and progress in the functioning of the internal market for media services.

The aim of this activity is two-fold: to upgrade the Media Pluralism Monitor to ensure the independent and continuous monitoring exercise in line with Article 26 of EMFA; and to produce a comprehensive main report and individual country reports on that basis.

The action will ensure logical coherence and comparability between the individual reports.

The project will:

- map risks to and elements of progress in the functioning of the internal market for media services and reflect them through indicators;
- draw up individual country reports as well as a comprehensive main report, covering among others (a) a detailed analysis of media markets in all Member States, including as regards the level of media concentration and risks of foreign information manipulation and interference; (b) an overview and forward-looking assessment of the functioning of the internal market for media services as a whole, including as regards the impact of online platforms; (c) an overview of risks to media pluralism and the editorial independence of media service providers where they could impact the functioning of the internal market; (d) an overview of measures taken by media service providers with a view to guaranteeing the independence of editorial decisions; (e) a detailed overview of frameworks and practices for the allocation of public funds for state advertising;
- organise a conference towards the end of the action, inviting stakeholders and the general public, with a view to presenting the results and methodology of the MPM;
- organise trainings for media professionals / stakeholders to further explore the matters covered by

MPM;

- ensure communication and ad hoc study activities concerning the internal market for media services and media pluralism.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through grant without a call for proposal – Article 198 (f) FR	2 200 000

1.5 NEWS - MEDIA LITERACY

Index references in budget table (WPI): 3.07

Support will encourage innovative cross-border media literacy projects and practices across Europe among various population segments, addressing the challenges of a continuously changing digital media landscape.

Type of applicants

Applicants cannot submit more than one proposal under this call.

The call is open to consortia composed of at least three entities from a minimum of three different countries participating in the Creative Europe programme. These consortia may include profit and/or non-profit organisations, whether private or public, such as public authorities (national, regional, local), international organisations, universities and educational institutions, media organisations, research and technology institutions, technology providers, etc.

Expected results

The Call for Proposals will result in:

- creating or scaling up cross-border collaborations to deliver projects that implement best practices across national, cultural and linguistic borders;
- developing and deploying media literacy tools and initiatives, taking into account the needs of specific target groups, including but not limited to groups with limited media literacy skills or access;
- assisting media literacy professionals in adapting their practices to rapidly evolving media formats and changing media consumption patterns.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through call for proposals	3 000 000

1.6 EUROPEAN BOARD FOR MEDIA SERVICES

Index reference in the budget table (WPI): 3.08

The European Media Freedom Act (EMFA) puts in place a novel set of rules to protect media pluralism and independence in the internal market. EMFA establishes a new independent European Board for Media Services (the Board), composed of representatives of national regulatory authorities or bodies (defined as those designated by Member States pursuant to Article 30 of Directive 2010/13/EU). The Board shall replace and succeed the European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGA). The Board shall be assisted by a secretariat, to be provided by the Commission.

Activities

Support will be given to meetings with Member States' experts and regulators in the frame of the Board for the application of EMFA. Support will entail reimbursement of travel expenses/daily allowances for members of the Board/experts as well as for procurement of studies. Activities eligible under this action are linked to the urgent implementation of EMFA.

The Board shall advise and support the Commission on matters related to media services within the Board's competence and promote the consistent and effective application of certain key aspects of EMFA and the implementation of Directive 2010/13/EU - the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) - throughout the Union. In practice this means a significant increase in the tasks attributed to the Board, compared to the tasks of ERGA under the AVMSD.

In particular, the Board shall draw up opinions, e.g. on regulatory or administrative measures which are likely to significantly affect the operation of media service providers in the internal market, on national measures concerning media services from outside the Union and on media market concentrations which are likely to affect the functioning of the internal market for media services. The Board shall also assist the European Commission in drawing up guidelines on different aspects of EMFA and the AVMSD.

As envisaged in the legislative financial statement accompanying the EMFA proposal, a budget of EUR 1 million per year is foreseen for studies supporting the implementation of the EMFA and the work of the Board, to be procured by the Commission. Both these expenses will be financed equally by the Media and the Cross-sectoral strands of the Creative Europe programme.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
CNECT	Procurement of studies	500 000

1.7 CREATIVE EUROPE DESKS IN NEW PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

Index reference in budget table (WPI): 3.09

In the event that a new third country joins the Creative Europe Programme, the Commission will conclude a multiannual agreement with the newly appointed Creative Europe Desk(s), with annual instalments for the period 2026-2027 for activities covering the period as from the submission date to 31 December 2027, subject to available budget appropriations.

In accordance with Article 7 (1) (d) of the Regulation, the countries participating in the Programme, acting together with the Commission, shall establish the Creative Europe Desks (Programme desks) to carry out the following tasks:

- Promote the Programme at national level, provide relevant information on the various types of financial support available under Union policy, and assist the cultural and creative actors, including the media sector, in applying under the Programme, including by informing them of the requirements and procedures related to the various calls and by sharing good practices;
- Support potential beneficiaries in application processes and peer mentoring for newcomers to the Programme, stimulate cross border cooperation and the exchange of best practices between professionals, institutions, platforms and networks within and across the policy areas and sectors covered by the Programme;
- Support the Commission in ensuring a proper communication and dissemination of the results of the Programme to the citizens and to the operators.

Beneficiaries can only be bodies designated at national level by national authorities. The support to the Creative Europe Desks is identified in Article 7 (1) (d) of the Regulation. The grant will be awarded on the basis of Article 198(d) FR subject to approval of an activity plan and an estimated budget.

Expected results:

Agreements for 1 or 2 Creative Europe Desks in the countries associated to the Creative Europe Programme.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through grant without a call for proposal– Article 198 (d)	600 000 for the period 2026-2027 300 000 for 2026 300 000 for 2027

This action covers third countries associated to the Programme. Additional funding will become available via the payment of the entry ticket for the countries joining the Creative Europe Programme.

1.8 OTHER GRANT WITH MULTI ANNUAL COMMITMENT

Index references in budget table (WPI): 3.10

For information, in 2026, a further annual commitment will be undertaken for the following multiannual action launched and contracted under the Annual Work Programme 2024.

Implementing body	Action	Call for proposal (reference)	2026 Annual Instalment (Indicative amount - EUR)
EACEA	Creative Europe Desks (WPI: 3.10)	CREA-CROSS-2024-CEDESKS-IBA (WPI.09)	6 387 628

PROCUREMENTS

2.1 MEETINGS WITH GRANT-HOLDERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Index references in budget table (WPI): 3.12

The action covers costs related to grant-holders' meetings as well as other ad-hoc physical or virtual meetings, seminars, conferences and events to support programme implementation.

This action will be implemented through specific contracts based on existing framework contracts or new calls for tender procedures, renewal of existing contracts or through very low-value or low-value service contracts.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through public procurement	180 000

OTHER ACTIONS

3.1 PROJECT SELECTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Index references in budget table (WPI): 3.11

Costs related to the experts involved in the assessment of applications and supporting of monitoring tasks. These tasks relate to actions managed by the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (Cross-sectoral strand). This item will be implemented through recourse to experts based on existing lists established following Calls for Expression of Interest in compliance with Art. 242 FR.

Implementing body	Implementing mode	Indicative amount (EUR)
EACEA	Direct management through calls for Expression of Interest	350 000

Part III – Budget

AVAILABLE APPROPRIATIONS

The total available appropriations foreseen under the 2026 Work Programme for the EU Member States, countries belonging to the European Economic Area and other countries participating in the programme amount to **EUR 380 531 574**.

These available appropriations are distributed as follows:

- appropriations from the budget of the Union and under Heading 2: **EUR 368 509 654**;
- appropriations arising from the participation of the EFTA/EEA countries: **EUR 9 728 655**;
- appropriations corresponding to other estimated external assigned revenues: **EUR 2.267.571**;
- appropriations corresponding to estimated internal assigned revenues from recoveries: **25.964 EUR**;

Strands	Budget lines	EU-27	External assigned revenues		Internal assigned revenues	2026 Draft Budget
			EFTA/EEA	Other countries		
CULTURE	07 05 01	121.721.256	3.213.441	967.393	1.730	125.903.820
MEDIA	07 05 02	213.758.213	5.643.217	1.063.171	23.964	220.488.565
Cross-sectoral (EAC)	07 05 03	9.310.629	245.801,00	70.507		9.626.937
Cross-sectoral (CNECT)	07 05 03	23.719.556	626.196,00	166.500		24.512.252
CROSS-SECTORAL	07 05 03	33.030.185	871.997	237.007		34.139.189
TOTAL		368.509.654	9.728.655	2.267.571	25.964	380.531.574

Table 1 – Creative Europe 2026: available appropriations

Legend for the following tables

Legend:	
CFP:	Grants awarded with a call for proposals
DB:	Grants to bodies identified by a basic act - Art 198 (d) FR
FPA:	Specific grant awarded under a Framework Partnership Agreement
IM:	Indirect management
MON:	Grants to bodies with a <i>de jure</i> or <i>de facto</i> monopoly - Art 198 (c) FR
PP:	Public Procurement
PR:	Prize
SE:	Experts - Art. 242 FR
SPE:	Grants for actions with specific characteristics - Art 198 (f) FR
WPI:	Work Programme Index

CULTURE STRAND

Table 2

WPI	Actions	Budget 2026	Mode of implementation	Implementing Body	Implementing Entity
Actions supporting all sectors of the CULTURE strand					
1.01	European Cooperation Projects	60.273.174	CFP	EACEA	
1.02	European Platforms for the promotion of emerging artists	13.100.000	CFP	EACEA	
1.03	European Networks of cultural and creative organisations	11.125.000	CFP	EACEA	
1.04	Pan-European cultural entities	2.720.000	CFP	EACEA	
1.05	European Capitals of Culture (Melina Mercouri Prize)	6.000.000	PR	EAC	
1.06	Culture moves Europe	10.750.000	IM	EAC	TBC
1.07	Policy development and Dialogue with stakeholders	1.000.000	PP	EAC	
1.08	Cultural and Creative Sectors' Rural Policy Project	500.000	CFP	EAC	
1.09	European Spaces of Culture (EUNIC)	1.000.000	MON	EAC	
1.10	Support to WIPO's CLIP Initiative	250.000	MON	EAC	
1.11	Cooperation with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)	500.000	IM	EAC	OECD
Architecture					
1.12	EU prize for Contemporary Architecture	500.000	SPE	EAC	
Cultural heritage					
1.13	EU prize for Cultural Heritage	450.000	SPE	EAC	
1.14	EU prize for Jewish Cultural Heritage	300.000	CFP	EAC	
1.15	Cooperation with the Council of Europe (European heritage Days)	400.000	IM	EAC	Council of Europe (CoE)
1.16	Safeguarding cultural heritage from man-made and natural disasters peer-learning	500.000	MON	EAC	
1.17	Support to the implementation of the European Heritage Label	3.000.000	CFP	EACEA	
Performing Arts					
1.18	Perform Europe	2.000.000	CFP	EACEA	
Literature and books					
1.19	Circulation of European literary works	5.000.000	CFP	EACEA	
1.20	EU prize for Literature	600.000	SPE	EAC	
1.21	Day of European Authors	500.000	CFP	EAC	
Music					
1.22	EU prize for popular and contemporary music	600.000	CFP	EAC	
Programme implementation					
1.23	Communication activities	150.000	PP	EAC	
1.24	European Commission's Corporate Communication (Co-delegated to DG COMM)	29.750		COMM	
1.25	Project selection and implementation	2.500.000	SE	EACEA	
1.26		400.000		EAC	
1.27		280.000		EAC	
1.28	Meetings with grant holders and other stakeholders	300.000	PP	EACEA	
1.29	Support to IT systems	1.175.896	PP	EAC	
TOTAL		125.903.820			

MEDIA STRAND

Table 3

WPI	Actions	Budget 2026	Mode of implementation	Implementing Body
Creation cluster				
2.01	European co-development	9.000.000	CFP	EACEA
2.02	European slate development	21.000.000	CFP	EACEA
2.03	European mini-slate development	7.000.000	CFP	EACEA
2.04	Video Games and Immersive content development	10.000.000	CFP	EACEA
2.05	TV and online content	22.000.000	CFP	EACEA
Business cluster				
2.06	European Film Distribution	34.000.000	CFP	EACEA
2.07	European Film Sales	5.500.000	CFP	EACEA
2.08	Innovative tools and business models	10.500.000	CFP	EACEA
2.09	Talent and Skills Development	9.500.000	CFP	EACEA
2.10	Markets and Networking	16.500.000	CFP	EACEA
2.11	MEDIA Stands	3.511.095	PP	EACEA
Audience cluster				
2.12	Networks of European Cinemas	17.467.470	CFP	EACEA
2.13	Films on the move	21.000.000	CFP	EACEA
2.14	Networks of European Festivals	6.000.000	CFP	EACEA
2.15	European VOD networks and operators	8.000.000	CFP	EACEA
2.16	Subtitling of cultural content	4.500.000	SPE	EACEA
Policy support & awareness raising cluster				
	1. Data			
2.17a	Data and analysis	800.000	DB	CNECT
2.17b	Membership of European Audiovisual Observatory	350.000	Membership	CNECT
	2. Policy cooperation			
2.18	European Board for Media Services	500.000	PP	CNECT
	3. Communication			
2.19	Communication and engagement	950.000	PP	CNECT
	Greening			
2.20	MEDIA Carbon Calculator	500.000		
	Blending			
2.21	MedialInvest	10.000.000	IM	CNECT - EIF
	Programme implementation			
2.22	Support to Project selection and implementation	1.600.000	SE	EACEA
2.23	Meetings with grant holders and other stakeholders	150.000	PP	EACEA
2.24	IT services for Creative Europe platforms	160.000	Administrative Arrangement	
	TOTAL	220.488.565		

CROSS-SECTORAL STRAND

Table 4

WPI	Actions	Budget 2026	Mode of implementation	Implementing Body
3.01	Presidency events	200.000	MON	EAC
3.02		200.000	MON	CNECT
3.03	Creative Innovation Lab	7.021.561	CFP	EACEA
3.04	NEWS - Journalism partnerships - Collaboration	6.900.000	CFP	EACEA
3.05	NEWS - Journalism partnerships - Pluralism	6.900.000	CFP	EACEA
3.06	NEWS-Media Pluralism Monitor	2.200.000	SPE	EACEA
3.07	NEWS - Media Literacy	3.000.000	CFP	EACEA
3.08	European Board for Media Services	500.000	CFP	CNECT
3.09	Creative Europe Desks in new participating countries	300.000	DB	EACEA
3.10	Creative Europe Desks	6.387.628	DB	EACEA
3.11	Project selection and implementation	350.000	SE	EACEA
3.12	Meetings with grant holders and other stakeholders	180.000	PP	EACEA
	TOTAL	34.139.189		

COUNTRY DISTRIBUTION - CREATIVE EUROPE DESKS

Table 5

Country	Annual max ceiling*
EU Member States	
Austria	170.000,00
Belgium	220.000,00
Bulgaria	105.000,00
Croatia	105.000,00
Cyprus	95.000,00
Czech Republic	182.000,00
Denmark	182.000,00
Estonia	67.000,00
Finland	179.000,00
France	538.000,00
Germany	719.000,00
Greece	144.000,00
Hungary	147.000,00
Ireland	231.000,00
Italy	445.000,00
Latvia	83.000,00
Lithuania	94.000,00
Luxembourg	94.000,00
Malta	70.000,00
Netherlands	227.000,00
Poland	272.000,00
Portugal	97.000,00
Romania	87.000,00
Slovakia	103.000,00
Slovenia	94.000,00
Spain	543.000,00
Sweden	207.000,00
Sub-total (EU)	5.500.000,00
EEA/EFTA	
Iceland	94.000,00
Norway	181.000,00
Liechtenstein	45.000,00
Sub-total (EEA/EFTA)	320.000,00
Associated countries	
Albania	75.140,00
Armenia	38.130,00
Bosnia & Herzegovina	75.140,00
Montenegro	44.000,00
North Macedonia	75.140,00
Serbia	82.660,00
Kosovo**	25.660,00
Georgia	54.270,00

Tunisia	75.140,00
Ukraine***	124.764,00
Sub-total (associated countries)	670.004,00
Total (EU+EEA/EFTA + associated countries)	6.490.004,00

*For third countries associated to the programme after the adoption of the AWP 2026: the maximum amount will be communicated individually by the Commission to the country concerned, in accordance with the amounts agreed upon in the Association Agreement. Additional funding will become available via the payment of the “entry ticket” for the countries joining the Creative Europe Programme.

** This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

*** The annual maximum ceiling for Ukraine is subject to a flexibility margin of + 20% to reflect the particular political situation.

Part IV. Indicative calls calendar

Culture Strand:

Call	Expected publication
European Cooperation Projects (CREA-CULT-2026-COOP-)	Q1 2026 (February)
Circulation of European Literary Works (CREA-CULT-2026-LIT)	Q4 2025 (October)
Call for the Support to the Implementation of the European Heritage Label Action	Q4 2025 (November)
Perform Europe	Q4 2025 (November)
Cultural and Creative Sectors' Rural Policy Project	Q1-2 2026
European Spaces of Culture	Q4 2025
European Capitals of Culture 2032	At the latest in December 2025

MEDIA Strand:

Call	Expected publication
European slate development	Q3 2025
European mini-slate development	Q4 2025
European co-development	Q3 2025
Video Games and Immersive content development	Q3 2025
TV and online content	Q3 2025
Skills and Talent development	Q3 2025
Markets and Networking	Q3 2025
European Film Distribution	Q4 2025
European Film Sales	Q4 2025
Innovative tools and business model	Q3 2025
Networks of European Cinemas	Q4 2025
Networks of European Festivals	Q4 2025
European VOD networks and operators	Q3 2025
Films on the Move	Q3 2025
Subtitling of cultural content	Q4 2025

Cross-Sectoral Strand:

Call	Expected publication
Innovation Lab	Q4 2025
Rapid respond mechanism	Q4 2025
Media Pluralism Monitor	Q4 2025
Journalism partnership	Q4 2025
European digital Media observatory	Q4 2024