

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS CNECT/i.3(2019)5043110

### Platform(s) for cultural content innovation

#### Q&A

#### **1. Should I apply if I am not completely convinced that my concept for a project is within the scope of the Call?**

The main objective of this pilot project is to “incentivise content industries to nurture and embrace innovation and new technologies”, which can be understood broadly. We cannot pre-empt the decisions of the selection Committee, so we can neither encourage nor discourage anyone to apply. This is the first ever Call for Proposals with this profile, so we do not have data from previous years.

#### **2. Is the call open to Creative Europe MEDIA countries?**

The call for proposal takes place in the frame of a pilot project voted by the European Parliament and not in the frame of Creative Europe.

This means that only organisations established in one of the countries of the European Union can apply. Establishment in a country participating in Creative Europe programme, which is not a member state of the EU disqualifies the application.

This eligibility criterion covers the role of coordinator of the project and co-beneficiaries creating an applicant group.

#### **3. What about the UK-based organisations? There are conflicting stances: on the UK Treasury website I found information that: “UK organisations, such as charities, businesses and universities, will continue to receive funding over a project’s lifetime if they successfully bid into EU-funded programmes before the end of 2020”. At the same time, the *Call for Proposals Platform(s) for Cultural Content Innovation* says: "For British applicants: Please be aware that eligibility criteria must be complied with for the entire duration of the grant. If the United Kingdom withdraws from the EU during the grant period without concluding an agreement with the EU ensuring in particular that British applicants continue to be eligible, you will cease to receive EU funding (while continuing, where possible, to participate) or be required to leave the project on the basis of Article II.17.3 of the grant agreement". Which information is correct?**

The quoted text of the Call for Proposals on the pilot project *Platform(s) for Cultural Content Innovation* is correct.

In practice, this means that if the UK government withdraws from the EU without signing an agreement ensuring the participation of UK- organisations in EU funded programmes, then the costs incurred by a UK organisation after 31 October will not be eligible for funding under this call.

#### **4. Will this Call be organised on regular basis?**

The current call for Platforms for Cultural Content Innovation implements a pilot project put forward by the European Parliament. Budget commitments for Pilot Projects are limited to a maximum of two consecutive years, following the decision of the European Parliament and the Council in the framework of the annual budgetary procedure.

#### **5. When will there be any information if there is a second Call?**

The decision will be taken before end 2019 by the European Parliament and the Council, in the context of the annual budget procedure.

#### **6. How can I know if there is a second Call or a similar funding opportunity?**

If you want to be updated on funding opportunities, please follow the website:

<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/newsroom-agenda/funding-opportunity/media-programme>.

We also invite you to follow our social media accounts, where we communicate about upcoming funding opportunities:

- @MEDIaproEU on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/MEDIaproEU>)
- @CreativeEuropeEU on Facebook

#### **7. If more than 1 project is selected, will the budget of € 1.038 mio be split up between them?**

In case of more than one selected project the budget is going to be split as the total budget available for the action is no more than 1.038.000€.

#### **8. Is the full budget used for this Call this year? Or is it split for another Call?**

The total budget allocated by the European Parliament for this Pilot Project, € 1 038 000, is to be used only for the projects selected in the ongoing Call For Proposals. It is not combined or split with any other Call.

#### **9. What is the minimum budget of the project?**

There is no minimum budget set. Co-financing rate is 60% and a maximum of 3 projects might be supported.

#### **10. If one of the project's products is a book, will the costs of translations, layout, printing etc. be eligible?**

The main deliverable of the project should be a platform with collaborative aspects. It is not excluded that if the project includes several deliverables, one of them might have a form of a book, if its function is justified within the project. Therefore in such a case the costs associated with its production would be eligible.

#### **11. What if the applicant cooperates on regular basis with natural persons (specialists), who work under conditions similar to those of the regular employee and are paid by hour, depending on how much time they dedicate to the project? If these physical persons are involved, will their remuneration be eligible as a personnel cost or would this be considered a sub-contracting cost?**

The applicant cannot be a physical person, but an organisation with legal entity. It is in the discretion of the Applicant to choose an appropriate form of working agreement with team members – the employment contract is the default form, but equivalent forms are also acceptable. Remuneration paid for the services rendered to the Applicant by physical persons with whom the Applicant will have any acceptable working agreement will be counted as personnel costs.

Please remember that the professional profiles of all physical persons who will have a substantial input in the project as part of the Applicant's team should be included in the application form, because they will be evaluated under the criterion "Quality of the grouping and its management".

Subcontracting is understood only as a service provided to the Applicant by an entity with profile, expertise and capacity clearly different than those of the Applicant.

Please see point 11.2.1. Eligible direct costs and 11.8 Other financial conditions of the Call for Proposals for details.

**12. Can the indirect costs be covered by the grant "Platform(s) for cultural innovation" if the applicant is already receiving an operating grant financed by the EU or Euratom budget?**

As indicated in the Call for Proposals, indirect costs are eligible. However, applicants who receive an operating grant financed by the EU or Euratom budget may not declare indirect costs for the period covered by the operating grant. The reason is that such operating grants are deemed to cover them already. The purpose of this rule is to avoid the risk of double financing by the operating grant on the one hand and the pilot project on the other hand.

**13. As the word "platform" can have different meanings (e.g. an economic marketplace, a communication and publication medium for projects ...), what is expected in this context?**

As for the concept of platform no more can be said than what is in the Call for Proposals. What is important is that there is a tool of cooperation and communication that is active and lively and involving a wide community of players from the content industries. The second important element is that the platform seeks actively and concretely to stimulate innovation in order to enable European content industries to maintain their pioneering position while their business models are disrupted by digital technology.

**14. What if the Applicant plans to create a platform, which will give its users non-direct collaboration opportunities? Does the deliverable have to create direct collaboration space?**

The main objective of this pilot project is to "incentivise content industries to nurture and embrace innovation and new technologies", which can be understood broadly. The collaboration aspect – in any form you see applicable – should be important in the project.

**15. What if a project addresses a particular cultural phenomenon and aims at creating a thematic platform? It will not cover the whole creative sectors, but it may have a scope going beyond the EU and extra-EU partners. Is it eligible?**

The main objective of this pilot project is to “incentivise European content industries to nurture and embrace innovation and new technologies”, which can be understood broadly. We cannot pre-empt the decisions of the selection Committee, so we can neither encourage or discourage to apply.

All the applicants should justify thoroughly in the Application form how the project would fit into the profile of this call, especially that it should present a strong collaboration component. The platform should have an added value for all European partners by enabling and increasing their possibilities to cooperate between each other and enhancing their market position.

**16. If an organisation is searching for partners, and at the moment of applying has not signed a partnership agreement, can it apply?**

The call is open to: a single entities; “sole applicants” (where several legal entities form together one legal entity or sole beneficiary) and groupings of entities (consortiums). Since at the moment of application the organisation cannot guarantee the participation of any partner, it can apply as the “single entity”. The applicant can describe the strategy for acquiring partners in the application form.

**17. Is there a separate application form for projects with only one entity? Should the entities applying alone delete the sections referring to other participating entities from the form published on the website?**

There is only one application form, which includes some optional sections to be filled in if applicable. Entities applying as a single entity without affiliated entities should leave the sections referring to the partners blank.

**18. The website where the Call is published is updated frequently. Which documents are changed? Do I need to check if I have the most updated version of the Application forms?**

The only document that is being updated is the Q&A (whenever we receive several new questions), there is no need to re-download the application documents.

**19. Does the call address only content industries? Could a project involve organisations from other creative sectors, eg. live performance arts and collaboration between those organisations and/or technology sector?**

This call targets in the first place the content industries, which can be characterised as:

(1) investing and relying heavily on intellectual property rights and

(2) whose business models were heavily impacted by new technologies changing especially the consumption patterns of their products

These industries include especially film, publishing, multimedia, animation and music/recording.

Other sectors, like live performance can be partners in a project, as long as the project includes their collaboration with partners in the content industries and possibly also high-tech industries. An application for a project including eg. a live performance organisation, would have to include a justification on how this organisation can relate to the challenges and opportunities of the new environment for content production, distribution and consumption.

**20. Can my regional Creative Europe Desk help me with preparing the Application?**

No, this Pilot Project is not part of the Creative Europe programme, so the applicants should direct any questions directly to [cnect-i3@ec.europa.eu](mailto:cnect-i3@ec.europa.eu).

**21. Is it expected to do the market analysis as part of the application or can it be part of the project itself?**

The market analysis is not a deliverable of the project; instead it needs to form part of the application itself.

**22. How detailed does the financial plan have to be? What if the self-sustainability depends on the outcome of the project and cannot be described now?**

The financial plan required in the application should not be as detailed as a business plan, but it should give an indication on the potential future of the project including information on other sources of funding and on the level of commitment of the partners engaged in the project.

**23. Is it possible to make an application with the same or a similar project in the Call for "Platform(s) for Cultural Content Innovation", if the organisation already made a submission in the "Bridging culture and audiovisual content through digital" ?**

An applicant can try applying for the same activity to several calls. It is always a plus to declare this information in the application form.

Then a project can be selected or not. If it is selected, by chance, under 2 different calls the applicant has the obligation to choose which grant they want to receive and withdraw from the other. In no circumstance can the same action be financed by 2 EU grants.

**24. Who will have the ownership of the deliverables of the project?**

Granting the funding by the Commission will have no impact on the ownership, other than the provisions on intellectual property of the standard agreement by the Commission and beneficiaries. In this respect you can look notably at Article II.9.1 *"Ownership of the results by the beneficiaries: The beneficiaries retain ownership of the results of the action, including industrial and intellectual property rights, and of the reports and other documents relating to it, unless stipulated otherwise in the Agreement."*

**25. Does the 18 months period cover the total execution of the project, or just the launching phase?**

The 18 months period mentioned in the call for proposals refers to the "maximum period for implementation of the action (including the public conference with stakeholders where the results are to be presented to policy makers and stakeholders)"

**26. The call places emphasis on "sharing experience, data and knowledge". How does this apply to private companies, creating for profit competitive business?**

The call targets both for-profit and not-for-profit applicants aiming at improving the competitiveness of creative sectors. The scale of openness and disclosure of results is one of the evaluation criteria. However: it is understood that confidential and business sensitive information shall be excluded from disclosure. Sharing of experience, data and knowledge is not contradictory to keeping business secrets. Any information disclosure shall not violate any business secrets.

Another aspect is that the project should have a collaboration component. Not all participants of the platform have to benefit from its functioning equally, but the platform should have an added value for all by enabling and increasing their possibilities to cooperate between each other. The project can serve to strengthen the capacity of the applicant, but it cannot only serve as a company growth vehicle.

**27. What if the applicant at the moment of applying is in the process of acquiring the capital needed to cover the 40% own share in the project budget?**

This financial situation does not exclude the application. If the project is selected and EC financial department feels that the financial capacity of the applicant is not sufficient, EC will propose to run the project without pre-financing from the EC or to ask for a bank guarantee to guarantee EC's pre-financing. Please, see the details of the documents confirming financial capacity in section 8.1 Financial Capacity of the Call for Proposals. The documents will differ depending on the requested grant.

**28. Can a small company, counting less than 10 employees, apply?**

Companies of all sizes can apply. Operational capacity of the applicant is one of the evaluation criteria. Evaluation will be based on the qualitative assessment of the team members and against the scale of funding requested and the scale of the planned activities. Applicants must have the professional competencies as well as appropriate qualifications necessary to complete the proposed action (please, see point 8.2. Operational Capacity of the Call for Proposals for the requested supporting documents). Sub-contracting costs shall not exceed 30% of the total eligible cost of the action.

**29. What is the date regarded as "submission date" for the paper version of the application if the application is sent by post? Is it the date when the documents are received by the Commission or the date of registration of sending it?**

The deadline for submitting the applications is 20.09.2019. All applicants have to send their online versions before the end of this date (midnight) and the paper versions before the end of the working day of the post/courier on that date. This means that it is the registration of sending it date which counts - a post stamp date on the registered letter or the acknowledgement of receipt of a courier service.

**30. Are NGOs and similar non-profit organisations apply, or is the Call targeting market-oriented organisations?**

Both for-profit, as well as non-profit organisations are eligible.

**31. Can games industry organisations apply?**

The games sector is not explicitly part of the narrowly understood cultural content industry in this Call. The content industries include mainly publishing, films (and TV programming and animation) and music, because:

- They rely on IP rights (which would be also the case of game industries)

And

- Their business models are heavily impacted by new technologies (consumption patterns of their products changed) (and this is not the case of the games industry)

However, also multimedia belongs to the “content industries” group alongside film, music etc., so it depends on how the applicant would present and justify their project. The applicant from the games industry would need to justify how their project would fit into answering to the challenges that the content industries are facing.

**32. Are there any specifications in regard to what stage the project should be in? Can the development of a prototype be funded?**

There is no requirement as to the starting point of the project. The funding can be dedicated to both the development of a prototype or creating new functionalities of an already existing platform. In other words, the project might be based on an already existing prototype/platform, or it can be created from the scratch. However, the deliverable at the end of the project should be a functioning platform - at least a basic version.

**33. Is there any guidance as to how the budget should be composed? Are there any limitations per category, eg. how much can be allocated to costs of travel?**

The information on eligible costs is listed in Art 11. Financial Provisions of the Call for Proposals. The only limitations within the eligible direct cost categories apply to sub-contracting (30%) and the IT infrastructure and development of the platform (30%). Another limitation applies to overheads (7%). The distribution of the budget between other direct eligible cost categories is up to the applicant and depends on the project.

**34. What is the understanding of “cultural content”?**

In the context of this Call the term “cultural content” is understood especially in a practical perspective - through the industries dealing in the production and distribution of such content, which (1) rely heavily on intellectual property rights and (2) whose consumption patterns have been heavily impacted by new technologies. At the same time, on a more general level, according to UNESCO (Art 4.2 of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions) cultural content “refers to the symbolic meaning, artistic dimension and cultural values”.

**35. Does "different content industries" mean music, film, dance, art?**

As listed in the Call, the cultural content industries include mainly: film, publishing, multimedia, animation and music publishing, as these are the industries whose business models were disrupted most gravely by new technologies. The production, distribution and consumption of performative and visual arts was less affected. However, there are common areas where eg. visual arts share the

challenges typical to the audiovisual content. In this respect cultural and creative industries other than the ones mentioned above can be treated the same as the core content industries.

**36. Does “across borders” means including different countries inside Europe?**

Yes, the cross-border dimension relates to the project engaging (as partners of the project) or affecting industries in various member states of the European Union.

**37. If my project is a technological solution which applies to the audiovisual sector, is that understood as a cultural content? Or should I have a cross-cultural relation with a museum, opera, ballet, etc?**

As the project is targeting the audiovisual content and combining it with IT, including other content or other industries is not obligatory. That said, the deliverable of this Call should be a platform, which would enable the cooperation of different players from the industry/industries, not just a technological solution enriching the audiovisual functionalities.

**38. As the coordinator of a consortium, do I have to hand in the original signed documents (e.g. declaration of honour, legal entity form, financial identification) of all partners? Or can I submit printed scans of the partners signed documents? The documents provided by the coordinator will be originally signed.**

For the consortium partners, if the originals are not yet in the possession of the coordinator at the time of submitting the proposal, the coordinator can include copies of the completed documents and then send the originals at a later stage. Please note that the "financial identification form" is only requested for the coordinator.

**39. Can non-profit organisations funded as university spin-offs apply?**

Yes, all non-profit associations can apply. However, the aim is to create a platform targeting mostly the industry, not only the academia world.

**40. We have been speaking to several institutions; from some we will have the LOI back on time and for some it was too short notice. Is it possible to send the LOIs, we receive back after the 20th of September to you later than 20th of September?**

If secondary documents are missing, we may ask for them at a later stage. Nevertheless, proposals will be evaluated as received by the deadline.

**41. "private entity: extract from the official journal, copy of articles of association, extract of trade or association register, certificate of liability to VAT (if, as in certain countries, the trade register number and VAT number are identical, only one of these documents is required)": do we need one or all of these documents? And for VAT, is the VAT itself enough?**

One official document should be sufficient. The VAT itself can also be sufficient.

**42. "The profit and loss account as well as the balance sheet for the last two financial years for which the accounts were closed": we can easily provide this. Do you want it in the application or after the decision?**

If possible, with the application.

**43. "The table with the financial figures provided for in Annex to the application form, filled in with the relevant statutory accounting figures": may I ask, what does this mean? I will provide a budget. But what needs to be added?**

It refers to the table called "04\_BS-and-P&L-Table-data.xls".

**44. "The organisation's activity reports": may I ask, is this meant as an short description of what we do?**

It can be that. Please do what you think is most relevant to ensure that your proposal is properly evaluated.

**45. "An exhaustive lists of previous projects and activities performed and connected to the policy field of a given call or to the actions to be carried out": shall we list all hundreds projects, we did so-far or all new projects we would like to cover in our submission or both?**

Please do what you think is most relevant to ensure that your proposal is properly evaluated.

**46. "Legal Entities Form(s) (LEF) for all applicants + related statutory documents": we have this only as an confirmation from the trade register, is that ok?**

That should be sufficient.

**47. "Financial identification form (BAF) for the coordinator + related supporting documents or bank signature": may I ask, is it ok to send the financial identification with a confirmation letter from our bank, but not with a stamp in the Financial Identification documents ?**

As written in the financial identification form, "It is preferable to attach a copy of RECENT bank statement". With this document, there is no need for a stamp neither a letter from the bank.