Content

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A look back

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A look back

Participation

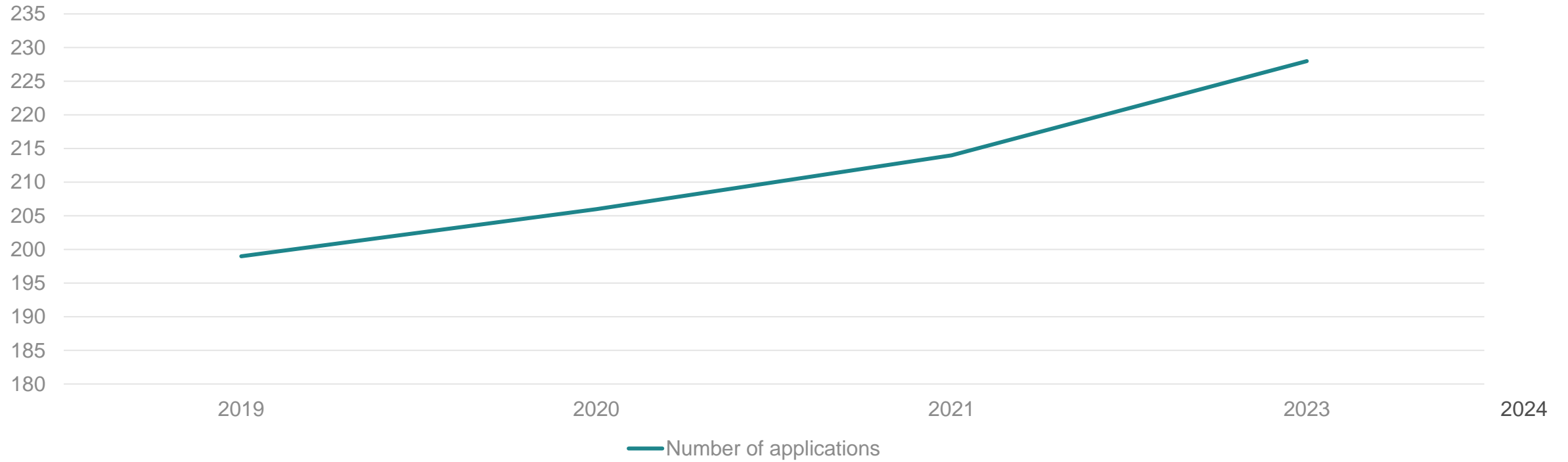Number of applications
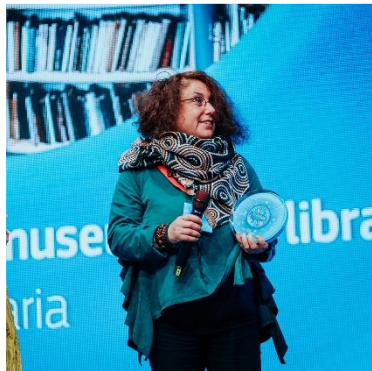
Winners in 2023

Cat 6. TechGrounds West (The Netherlands)

Cat 5. EuroregioFamilyPass (Interreg Italy-Austria)

Cat. 3 Dynaxibility4CE
(Interreg Central Europe)

Cat 1. Edificio Fundacion
Pasqual Maragall
(Spain)

Cat. 4   ProFem2.0 (Czech Republic)

Public choice winner
Cultural Art Centre in Burgas
(Bulgaria)

Cat 2. From Mine to river.
The Water Guardians!
(Interreg Romania-
Serbia)

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Participation in 2023

- Some Member States were less active than usual
  - Belgium: only five applications (-12 from 2021)
  - France: only 6 applications (-4)

- Zero applications from Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta and Slovakia

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WELCOME
BACK!
★ ☺ ♥

Competition Structure

Structure of the competition

- Competition categories (5) aligned to Policy objectives (2021-2027)

- Focus on completed projects

- 2 phases in the selection process

  - First stage: an assessment of all applications on paper and a selection of up-to 5 finalists per category by an independent jury.

  - Second stage: a 'live' presentation of the finalists in front of the jury after which the winners will be decided.

- Guide for applicants in all EU languages… is coming!

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Competition categories

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A Competitive and Smart Europe
Promoting competitiveness, innovation and economic resilience

- Category 1 focuses on projects in support of Policy Objective 1, to achieve a competitive and smart Europe by promoting innovative and smart economic transformation and regional ICT connectivity.

- Including, but not limited to, good projects that
  - promote innovative and smart economic transformation in line with the goals of the twin transition,
  - enhance digitalisation processes and show innovative approaches to implementing Research and Innovation Strategies,
  - Foster smart cities and villages agenda
  - prepare European SMEs for competing in a globalised economy,
  - contribute to sustainable regional innovation systems and furthering the job market in the digital industries.

- Conversion table: TO 1; TO 2; TO 3.

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In 2023…

- **Circular 4.0**: trained nearly 300 SMEs to adopt digitalization processes

- **DigiPro**: has helped over 500 SMEs in the Dutch-German border area with their digital transformation

- **Edificio Fundacion Pasqual Maragall**: state-of-the-art infrastructure that enables research on Alzheimer and other age-related neurodegenerative diseases

- **Junior centrum excellence**: provides cybersecurity training for pupils, thus increasing the quality of graduates for the labour market or higher education

- **Technologicky park:** A new Science and Technology park was created from a former Světovar brewery

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A Green Europe

The green transition as the enabler of regional development

- Category 2 focusses on projects in support of Policy Objective 2, to achieve a green and resilient Europe promoting clean and fair energy transition, green and blue investment, the circular economy, climate change mitigation and adaptation, risk prevention and management, and sustainable urban mobility.

- Including, but not limited to, good projects that
  - promote a greener and more resilient Europe,
  - help achieve the EU's Green Deal goals of climate neutrality,
  - improve air and water quality, promote sustainable agriculture, preserve environmental systems,
  - create an effective circular economy, enable transformation towards a resource- efficient economy or transitioning to renewables.

- Conversion table: TO 4; TO 5; TO 6

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In 2023…

- **Compose**: empowers communities to decarbonise their energy system and reach climate neutrality

- **From mine to river**: researched for a solution to cut the degree of pollution caused by mining activities and to restore the natural attractiveness

- **Green Screen**: inspiring the world of filming by creating sustainable practices

- **NonHazCity**: developed a comprehensive urban detoxification package

- **Smart altitude**: tested and documented efficient technical solutions to tackle consequences of climate change at altitude

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A Connected Europe
Enhancing mobility and connectivity between regions

- Category 3 focusses on projects in support of Policy Objective 3, to enhance mobility and connectivity.

- Including, but not limited to, good projects that

  - Promote the delivery of a more connected Europe
  - Support efficient, safe and environmentally friendly mobility solutions within the EU,
  - help achieve the goals of the Trans European Networks in the field of energy, transport or digital connectivity,
  - develop new energy or transport infrastructures, or the rehabilitate or upgrade existing ones,
  - develop safe, secure and sustainable high-performance infrastructure including Gigabit and 5G networks; increase capacity and resilience of digital backbone infrastructures; or the digitalisation of transport and energy networks.

- Conversion table: TO7 (but also TO2)

In 2023…

- **ANTeTUL:** research in modular autonomous electric utility vehicles

- **Danube cycle plans**: aimed to improve conditions for cycling in the Danube Region

- **Diglogs**: cutting-edge digital solutions, transforming logistics for multimodal freight

- **DYNAXIBILITY4CE**: improved low-carbon mobility and air quality across the Central European region by increasing the ability of public transport authorities to deal with new mobility trends

- **EfficientFlow**: made real time port information available for all the actors involved when a ship arrives to a port

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A Social and Inclusive Europe

Achieving a more inclusive Europe by harnessing regional talents

- Category 4 focusses on projects in support of Policy Objective 4, to achieve a more social and inclusive Europe.

- Including, but not limited to, good projects that

  - contribute to a more inclusive society at large, non-discrimination of any person, and gender equality within and beyond the EU,
  - support the 20 principles as well as of the three targets of the Action Plan of the European Pillar of Social Rights,
  - Foresee activities on the labour market, in the education sector, in local communities and international networks,
  - foster active inclusion of discriminated persons or persons at the risk of discrimination, ease the reintegration of disadvantaged persons into the labour market, contribute to gender equality and diversity,
  - engage with child, elderly, or health care, contribute to a good work-life balance.

- Conversion table: TO8, TO9, TO10

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In 2023…

- **Covatti**: focuses on getting valuable employment for people with specific mental needs

- **Nobody without your daily ration**: is about digitisation of food donation systems

- **proFEM 2.0**: a significant shift in support for victims of sexual violence in Czech Republic

- **SIforREF**: helped to overcome the widespread short-term approach of refugee policies

- **The invisible heritage**: bring the most important monuments and museum objects of Lublin and Ivano-Frankivska closer to the blind and visually impaired inhabitants and visitors of these cities

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A Europe Closer to Citizens

Fostering the sustainable development of all types of territories

- Category 5 focusses on projects in support of Policy Objective 5, to foster the sustainable and integrated development of all types of territories and local initiatives.

- Including, but not limited to, good projects that
  - support the implementation of local and regional strategies, such as, for example, Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) strategies or territorial and local development strategies.
  - showcase specific areas of improvement for citizens daily life and support capacity building.
  - help the region encounter specific development challenges in a functional urban area or territory and develop specific place-based solutions for the citizens.

- Conversion table: ITI, CLLD, UIA (but also TO6)

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In 2023…

- **Aldeias do Xisto**: implemented an integrated regional development strategy, which boosted the local economy and attracted investors

- **CINEMA**: redesigned abandoned centres or empty spaces by harnessing the potential of creative industries

- **CULTURAL ART CENTRE**: modernizing cultural infrastructure in the municipality of Burgas

- **EUREGIOFAMILYPASS**: a card for families offering numerous benefits in the fields of leisure, mobility, culture, education, shopping, and more

- **Reconversion and Renovation Wintercircus**: revitalizes Ghent with startups, cultural events, and a vibrant atmosphere

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Eligibility criteria

Eligibility of a project

- The application submitted via the online platform by **31.5.2024** 23:59:59.

- Applications must be **in an official EU language**.

- The application includes an **endorsement letter** of the Managing Authority.

- The project has received EU co-financing from the **ERDF, CF, ESF, JTF, INTERREG**, starting earliest on 1 January 2014.

- Only **completed projects** are considered.

- The project must **refer to one of the five award categories**. The same project cannot be submitted for several categories.

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Award criteria

Evaluation of a project

- **Cohesion**
  The contribution of the project to economic, social and territorial cohesion at large; with a supraregional to European perspective. A project's added value in relation to cohesion will be evaluated here.

- **Impact**
  The local and regional impact of the project and the quality of the final results. How did the project change something for the better in its region?

- **Innovation**
  The innovative character of the project within the logic of the selected award category. What is new? What has not been done before? Innovation may be understood in economic, social and/or ecological terms.

Evaluation of a project

- **Sustainability**
  The potential of the project to last into the future, in terms of economic sustainability. Efforts of the project to live beyond the actual project life-time should be demonstrated.

- **Citizens**
  How citizens and actors of civil society got involved in the development and/or implementation of the project.
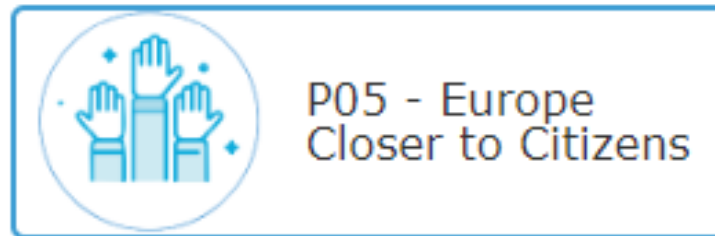
- **Transferability**
  The potential of the project to be transferred to other regions in Europe and, in the best case, to be upscaled and rolled out across the European Union.
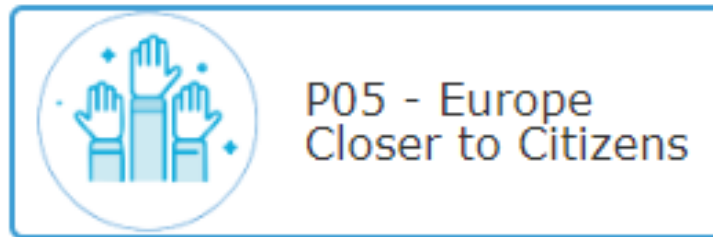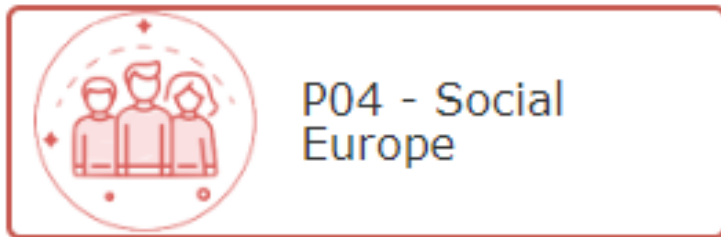
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Application form

Step 1 – Category selection

P01 - Smarter Europe

P02 - Greener Europe

P03 - Connected Europe

P04 - Social Europe

P05 - Europe Closer to Citizens

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Step 1 – Category selection

- Which of these categories does the project fit in?

- Double checked during the eligibility check

P01 - Smarter Europe

P02 - Greener Europe

P03 - Connected Europe

P04 - Social Europe

P05 - Europe Closer to Citizens

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Step 2 – Basic information

- Project title… twice

- A short catchy description of the project – important because:
  - Used to communicate your project across platforms
  - Used in the public vote to promote your project
  - I.e. it becomes the known story of your project

- Where?

- Which fund?

- Under which programme (CCI number)?

- Start date and end date?

Step 2 – Basic information

- Funding info

- Type of funding: grant, FI, other

- Synergies with other funds

- Contact of project promoter

- Contact of Managing Authority

Step 3 – Description of the project

Used to evaluate your application

- Project description

- Contribution to economic, social and territorial cohesion

- Examples of local and regional impact and quality of final results

- Why it is innovative and impactful?

- Is it financially sustainable?

- The involvement of civil society

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Step 3 – Description of the project

- Transferability to other regions

- Evaluation report, if available

- Declaration to be ticked

- Endorsement letter to be uploaded

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Step 4 – Project pictures

- Up to three good quality project pictures requested

- Ensure the rights and authorisations

- Of the three pictures we select one to be used as the visual of the project

  ✖ Avoid graphs, structures, text, and project partner group pictures

  ✔ Instead show what the project is about, people in project related activity

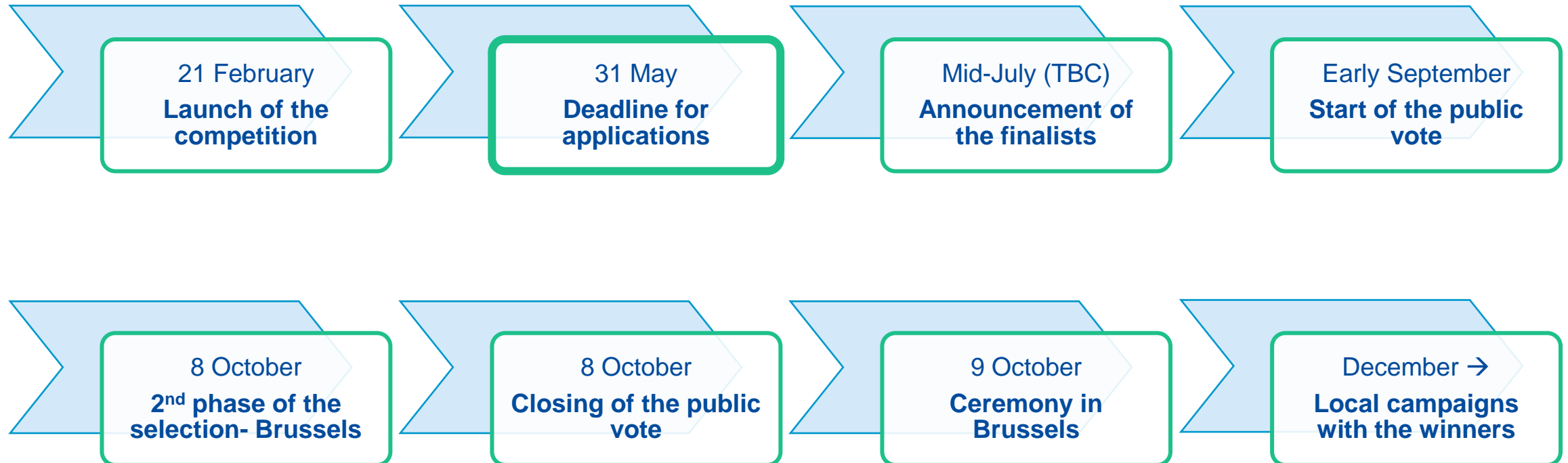European Commission

Step 5 – Submission

You are good to go!

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(Once the application is submitted, it cannot be modified. Until then, you can also save and come back and continue until you are ready to submit.)

Timeline & second evaluation phase

Timeline

21 February
Launch of the competition

31 May
Deadline for applications

Mid-July (TBC)
Announcement of the finalists

Early September
Start of the public vote

8 October
2nd phase of the selection- Brussels

8 October
Closing of the public vote

9 October
Ceremony in Brussels

December →
Local campaigns with the winners

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What the second phase of selection is about?

- It concerns up to 25 finalists (max. 5 per category)

- It happens during the EU Regions Week (8 October)

- It consists of two moments:

  - A public "on stage": performance: project pitch of 6 minutes and 40 seconds, pecha kucha style (in English)
    (*a training will be offered in September to the project representative doing the pitch*)

  - A face-to-face interview with the jurors of the specific category (all projects of the category together)

Final notes

Important links

- Inforegio: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/projects/regio-stars-awards_en
  - Information and campaign updates

- Competition platform: www.regiostarsawards.eu/
  - Apply here: create profile, fill-in the application form and submit
  - All materials available: Guide for applicants, application form, endorsement letter

- Canva links for editable visuals: Signature, Square, Story

- Contact: REGIO-REGIOSTARS@ec.europa.eu

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Your questions

Some questions already received

- If the project was finished at the end of the year 2023, and the final report is due in spring 2024, but final payment is foreseen around May/June 2024 (possibly after the application deadline), is the project eligible?

- Can a project from X fund apply?

Thank you, and looking forward for your applications!

Slide 7: Nick Fewings, Unsplash

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