

INVESTMENT IN CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS (ICO)

**Strand 1: Investing in Capacity Building for
Non-Governmental Cultural Organisations**

Call for Proposals





1. INTRODUCTION

Arts Council Malta (ACM) invites Non-Governmental Cultural Organisations (NGOs) active in the cultural and creative sectors to apply for the strand ‘Investing in Capacity Building for Non-Governmental Cultural Organisations’ (ICB) that will address the professional development of new skills for cultural professionals and enhance conditions for such organisations to excel through sustainable models of management.

The ICB strand will provide a stable support for organisations to plan ahead, grow, develop and deliver ACM’s strategic goals primarily addressing cultural professionals and communities through building the capacity of NGOs, namely to:

- Nurture creative potential and support its development into professional activity;
- Invest in artistic excellence;
- Connect Malta to the international artistic community;
- Provide more opportunities for people to engage in creativity.

2. PRIORITY AREAS

2.1 ACM will be receiving proposals from NGOs active in the cultural and creative sectors that have the potential to make a significant contribution to the priorities of ACM’s Strategy2020.

2.2 The organisations and their programmes will also need to have a commitment towards:

a) Work that inspires community cultural exchange and reaches a comprehensive range of people, engaging them as both audience and participants.

b) The promotion of cultural diversity, addressing cultural inclusion and accessibility.

c) Championing cultural rights.

d) Environmentally friendly policies.

e) The overall sustainable development goal as implied by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development as



“economic vitality, justice, social cohesion, environmental protection and the sustainable management of natural resources” thus ensuring that the needs of present and future generations are met.

2.3 ACM reserves the right not to consider the submitted proposal if it does not match the priorities of this call for proposals.

3. BENEFITS

The ICB strand benefits will include:

3.1 Access to Funding - Funding Grant: An annual grant over a 36 consecutive month period of up to 80% of the total costs or which does not exceed €25,000. ACM is establishing a financing programme for beneficiaries following negotiations on the proposed budgetary plans. ACM reserves the right to award grants to beneficiaries based on a fixed allocation every year or gradually increase or gradually decrease the awarded amount without exceeding the 80% co-funding threshold or which does not exceed €25,000. The amount to be awarded is at the discretion of ACM.

3.2 Access to business development in kind training and mentorship programme.

3.3 Access to specific training for the needs of the organisation to be established on a case by case basis.

3.4 Access to local and international networking to be established on a case by case basis.



4. ELIGIBILITY

Proposals will first be screened in terms of eligibility. Ineligible proposals in terms of par. 4.2 and par. 4.4 below shall not be processed further and shall not undergo evaluation.

The eligible timeframe of a proposal is a 36 consecutive month period starting from 1st January 2020 till 31st December 2022.

4.1 The applicant must:

a) be a registered Voluntary Organisation with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations or a registered Cooperative having its legal seat in Malta and in existence as a legal entity for at least two years on the date of the deadline of submission

and

b) have at least one person who has a key role in the organisation to be on a full-time employment basis or two persons who have two key roles on a part-time basis in the cultural and creative sectors.

4.2 The following are not eligible to submit a proposal:

- Organisations/activities with a line vote as indicated in the financial estimates published by the Ministry for Finance;
- Organisations which do not have registered address in the Maltese islands;
- Activities which are not related to the cultural and creative sectors;
- Funding for activities aimed at making a profit to be distributed among the organisation's members and/or stakeholders (this does not include surplus to be reinvested in the organisation);
- Organisations which have not honoured previous funding commitments;
- Voluntary Organisations which have not presented their relative updated accounts to the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations;
- Organisations whose objective is fundraising or political in nature;



- Organisations, subsidiaries or parent organisations whose primary activity is providing education and training services;
- Organisations presenting an incomplete application.

4.3 This Strand may cover up to 80% of the following costs:

- Fees or salaries related to the engagement of team members;
- Operational costs (rental of spaces, utilities);
- Fees related to training and development of active members in the organisations;
- Marketing.

4.4 Non-eligible costs include:

- Costs incurred before the start of the eligibility period;
- Return on capital;
- Debt and debt service charges;
- Provisions for losses or debts;
- Interest owed;
- Doubtful debts;
- Exchange losses;
- Costs declared by the beneficiary and covered by another grant of the Government of Malta or the European Union;
- Contributions in kind exceeding 5%;
- Expenditure deemed excessive or reckless;
- Refundable VAT.

4.5 The applicant is eligible to submit up to one other proposal in Investment in Cultural Organisations - Strand 2 which may be considered for funding in parallel with Strand 1.

5. MANDATORY DOCUMENTATION

5.1 The proposal should include the following:

- A copy of the application form signed by the legal representative/s of the organisation;
- A detailed strategic plan;
- Detailed income-expenditure budget for year 1 accompanied by budget plans and forecasts covering three years;
- Relevant supporting documents, where possible, such as email exchanges, official documentation confirming and/or proving points listed in the proposal together with quotes and past invoices justifying figures in the budget;
- A copy of the latest profit and loss and/or audited accounts;
- Current Organisation Statute;

5.2 ACM reserves the right not to consider the submitted proposal if the information requested in this document is not completely provided.

6. SUBMISSIONS

Submissions may be carried out as follows:

- By sending an **email or link of an online file transfer service** (such as Wetransfer) on applyforfunds@artscouncilmalta.org till 12.00 p.m. (noon) of the deadline Thursday 10th October 2019 with the subject “Proposal for Investment in Cultural Organisations – Strand 1”. It is essential that the same email or hyperlink includes all additional supporting documents as required by these guidelines and regulations. Email should also include the signature application form provided.

OR

- By sending a printed copy and a soft copy on USB by **registered post** to the following address:



Proposal for Investment in Cultural Organisations – Strand 1
Arts Council Malta – Funding and Strategy
16, Casa Scaglia, Mikiel Anton Vassalli Street, Valletta

It is essential that the postmark indicates either the deadline Thursday 10th October 2019 or a date before the deadline.

OR

- By submitting a printed copy or soft copy on USB **by hand** till 12.00 p.m. (noon) of the deadline Thursday 10th October 2019 at:

Proposal for Investment in Cultural Organisations – Strand 1
Arts Council Malta – Funding and Strategy
16, Casa Scaglia, Mikiel Anton Vassalli Street, Valletta

Proposals may be submitted between Monday and Friday from 9.00 a.m. till 4.30 p.m. On the deadline Thursday 10th October 2019, proposals will be accepted till 12.00 p.m. (noon). **Late submissions will not be accepted.** Kindly note that:

- The application form within the proposal is to be signed prior to submission. Signature confirms acceptance of conditions of the fund as explained in this Call for Proposals. Proposals with unsigned application forms will be considered ineligible.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to present a complete proposal as explained in these guidelines and regulations. Only completed proposals will be examined in the next phase and rated according to the specified selection criteria and assigned a calculated final score.
- Hard and soft copies of the proposals will be retained by ACM.

7. PITCHING SESSION

The aim of the 'in person' pitching session is to create an opportunity for applicants to further introduce the proposal to the evaluators. Proposals would already have been reviewed by the evaluators prior to the pitching session. Applicants together with a maximum of two key team members should be present for the pitching session. The pitching session will have a maximum duration of 15 minutes.

During the session, the team should expand on the already submitted plans with comments, latest insights and relevant additions. There will be a question and answer time with the evaluation panel at the end of the pitch.

In the pitching session the applicant is expected to explain further the following points:

- How the organisation fits into the vision of ACM as presented in Strategy2020;
- The organisation's strategic plan presented in the proposal (including the budget and funding sources).

8. EVALUATION CRITERIA

8.1 Relevance of the organisation's artistic programme in line with ACM's Strategy2020 – see par. 2.1 and 2.2 above.

Maximum Allocated Score: 40%

8.2 The Strategic Plan

The detailed strategic plan is evaluated on the following points:

- vision, mission and main objective of the organisation;
- information about governance and management structure of the organisation;
- proposed artistic programme;
- collaborators to implement the artistic programme;
- information about the collaborations proposed;
- plans for professional development and capacity building in the organisation;
- implementation timeline for deliverables and timeframes;
- marketing and promotional plan of the organisation (including evidence of market research);
- budget, financial plans (including potential sources of funding, funding collaborators and stakeholders) and cash-flow statements demonstrating financial sustainability;



- monitoring and risk assessment plans for the proposed programme.

Maximum Allocated Score: 40%

8.3 Track Record

NGOs are expected to have a minimum of a two-year relevant track record in the cultural and creative sectors demonstrating commitment, development and achievement.

Maximum Allocated Score: 10%

Organisations who had applied for the first call of the three-year Cultural Partnership Agreement and have reached the targeted objectives.

Maximum Allocated Score: 5%

8.4 Clarity of presentation and proposal.

Maximum Allocated Score: 5%

9. EVALUATION PROCESS

Eligible proposals will be assessed by an evaluation team made up of ACM representatives. The evaluators will attend the pitching session for all applicants. The evaluators will subsequently present an assessment on each of the proposals indicating the relevant score awarded. As specified above, each criterion is allocated a specific maximum score. ACM's decision depends primarily on whether the organisation and its activities address the needs expressed by this Call for Proposals as well as on availability of the funds.

10. COMMUNICATION OF RESULTS

The order of classification of proposals, according to the score allocated by the evaluators, will be published online. Only successful applicants will be published. In the case of proposals which have not been awarded any funds, only the reference number will be published.



No information on the evaluation process will be released before the official result notification. Any form of soliciting will automatically disqualify a proposal.

All information received by the Fund Administrator, Fund Manager and Evaluators will be considered confidential, both during and after the evaluation process. Provisions on data protection and confidentiality for successful projects will be included in the grant agreement.

11. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

If the proposal is approved and funded, beneficiaries will be requested to sign a binding agreement specifying the grant conditions of ACM. When signing the agreement applicants accept that their name, the title and the amount awarded can be published by ACM. Approved proposals are subject to discussion with ACM and finalisation of a detailed grant agreement which may include specific conditions and which will also determine payment procedures for that specific funded proposal.

The beneficiaries must use ACM's logo on all related material and specify that the support was granted by ACM in all marketing, PR and printed material. The grant received must be used solely for the purpose for which it was awarded, in line with the submitted proposal and the binding agreement.

Beneficiaries must notify ACM immediately if changes affecting the nature of the proposal take place during implementation. Changes cannot be implemented unless approval is received. ACM reserves the right to revise or withhold payments accordingly, if the change in the proposal is not considered to be in line with the initial proposal, or if ACM is not informed of the changes within a reasonable time frame. If ACM deems fit, it can also commence proceedings to reclaim all funds already provided in the grant.



ACM reserves the right to send its representative to the beneficiary premises for monitoring purposes during the funded years including being present during one board meeting a year.

Beneficiaries are to participate as necessary in the promotion of the fund through exposure of their success story as deemed appropriate by the ACM.

All beneficiaries will be required to undergo obligatory cultural management training by ACM.

All beneficiaries will be required to submit regular reports providing general or specific updates as required.

ACM reserves the right to revise the payment procedures and overall budgeting if there are changes in the allocation by the Ministry for Finance.

13. COMPLAINTS

Filing a complaint will not affect the chances of receiving support from ACM in the future. All complaints will be treated with confidentiality.

13.1 Grounds for Complaints

Applicants can make a complaint regarding procedural anomalies and irregularities during the submission and evaluation process in terms of the procedures stipulated in this call for proposals.

Only applicants may file complaints. Complaints have to be in relation to the submitted proposal.

Complaints cannot be made concerning:

- ACM's or Government's policies and procedures;
- Merits of the proposal in terms of the criteria stipulated in these guidelines and regulations.



13.2 Filing a Complaint

Complaints must be made in writing and must be as clear as possible. The complaint must state the grounds and the reasons for the complaint, providing a detailed explanation and justification supported by relevant documentation or testimonials as to why the complainant deems that irregularities were committed in the procedure/s stipulated in these guidelines and regulations or in standard good governance rules and regulations governing the public sector. The decision at the end of the complaint process shall be final. Complaints need to be made to ACM within five (5) working days of communication of results. A reply to the complaint will be received within ten (10) working days.

In case applicant is not satisfied with the reply, ACM will convene a Board that will discuss the complaint further. If complaints procedure is approached, then it is being accepting that ACM can utilise the information about the proposal to address the complaint and that the decision of the Board will be final and binding whatever the decision.

14. CLARIFICATIONS

Any clarifications are to be sent by email on fundinfo@artscouncilmalta.org till 12.00 p.m. (noon) of Thursday 3rd October 2019. Interested candidates may ask for a one-to-one brokerage session with a member from the Funding and Brokerage Team to clarify further issues. All sessions will be minuted and clarifications will be regularly published on the ACM website.

15. STATE AID RULES AND OBLIGATIONS

15.1 Applicable State Aid Rules

The terms and conditions set out in these guidelines with regards to those beneficiaries who are commercial undertakings or NGOs that carry out an economic activity, are in line with the Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty, as



amended by Commission Regulation (EU) No 2017/1084 of 14 June 2017 amending Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 as regards aid for port and airport infrastructure, notification thresholds for aid for culture and heritage conservation and for aid for sport and multifunctional recreational infrastructures, and regional operating aid schemes for outermost regions and amending Regulation (EU) No 702/2014 as regards the calculation of eligible costs [hereinafter referred to as the General Block Exemption Regulation].

The measure is not applicable to the following:

- a. Activities listed down in Article (1), (2), (3), (4) and (5) of the General Block Exemption Regulation.
- b. Undertakings in difficulty defined in terms of the Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014.

Furthermore, assistance may not be granted if the aid is:

- a. Related to export activities towards third countries or Member States, namely aid directly linked to quantities exported, to the establishment and operation of a distribution network or to the other current expenditure linked to export activity.
- b. Contingent upon the use of domestic in preference to imported goods.
- c. In favour of a beneficiary which is subject to an outstanding recovery order following a previous Commission decision declaring an aid granted by Malta illegal and incompatible with the internal market.

15.2 Rules on Cumulation of Aid

In line with Article 8 of the General Block Exemption Regulation, the total amount of State aid for the aided activity or project or undertaking shall be taken into account.

Aid with identifiable eligible costs may be cumulated with:

- Any other State aid, as long as those measures concern different identifiable eligible costs;



- Any other State aid, in relation to the same eligible costs, partly or fully overlapping, only if such cumulation does not result in exceeding the highest aid intensity or aid amount applicable to this aid.

The aid shall not be cumulated with any de minimis aid in respect of the same eligible costs if such cumulation would result in an aid intensity exceeding that laid down in the GBER.

16. Contact us

For more information one may call on tel. 2339 7020 or send an email on fundinfo@artscouncilmalta.org

-end-