



## **General info on our Making Collaboration Work Grants**

The ECF Grants Programme supports projects that promote European cultural cooperation. We fund small and medium-sized independent cultural organisations that work on cross-border and inter-regional projects.

### **THIS PRINTABLE VERSION CONTAINS:**

- **GUIDELINES FOR ECF GRANT APPLICATION**
- **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**
- **SOME TIPS WHEN FILLING OUT THE APPLICATION FORM**
- **EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS SUPPORTED IN THE PAST**

## **GUIDELINES**

### **What is eligible?**

#### *Cultural*

- The project should have a strong cultural objective.

#### *Cooperation*

- The project should be concerned with European cross border cooperation. In exceptional cases we also support cooperation that does not transgress the national level, when ECF considers it to be essential to achieve future European cooperation.
- All project partners must be involved in the execution of the project.

#### *European*

- The project has to be organised by a cultural organisation in Europe or from across the Mediterranean.

#### *Outcome*

- The project must have a clear end-result that can be evaluated.

If your project does not answer to all of these eligibility criteria, it is highly unlikely that it will be supported



## What do we like, what are we interested in?

*Below you find examples of the qualities that might convince us to support your project. Please note however that there is no magic recipe or perfect approach for getting your application awarded. Our Grants process is highly competitive, on average only 1 in 8 applications is supported.*

### We are interested in:

- projects that express the diversity within our societies and within Europe. ECF has a special diversity focus for 2006-2008
- projects that improve cultural collaboration within Europe and its immediate neighbourhood;
- projects that reach beyond the national level, particularly those which forge new connections between countries or regions that would not usually collaborate;
- projects that approach European developments in an artistic way;
- projects that are original, and give a new perspective on certain concepts or fields of expertise;
- projects that have a legacy for the future, and can become substantial as well as sustainable, for example through structural cooperation on an organisational level;
- project which bring culture of high quality to places that are usually not part of the international cultural discourse;
- projects that attract new audiences to the arts;
- projects that are participatory;
- projects that have a concrete end-product, to which ECF could give extra exposure.

### What is not eligible?

- Projects by **individuals**, including those seeking scholarship, bursary or residency costs. The ECF has two mobility funds which support individual professionals in the cultural sector: STEP beyond and the Roberto Cimetta Fund.
- projects organised by **student bodies, commercial organisations, state institutions, amateur organisations**, or organisations focusing primarily on **education, religion or heritage**
- activities that focus only on the **academic sector** or represent traditional approaches to research and education (e.g. school/university exchanges, scholarships, research or education programmes firmly located within a traditional institution)
- **folkloric events** and projects which focus on conserving European **heritage**
- initiatives based solely on **tourism**
- conventional approaches to **arts education or art therapy**
- **awards**, competitions
- **individual literary works**, translations or running costs of an ongoing series of publications or cultural reviews (however, publications documenting your collaborative project may be included in your budget)
- touring of an **existing work**
- operating costs of an **organisation's regular activities**
- production costs of a **one-off performance** or art work
- bilateral or local projects **lacking a European dimension**
- **projects that rely entirely on funding from our organisation**
- organisations wishing to realise a **project without strong partners**



## The application

Please note:

- ECF grants up to a maximum of Euro 30,000. The average project grant is Euro 10,000 - 15,000
- The ECF does not support more than 80% of the project's total budget. Since the application process is highly competitive, you will maximize your chances of being awarded a grant by presenting a project which will be supported by a balanced and mixed range of funders
- All applicants and project partner organisations are required to create a profile of their organisation on rhiz.eu, the ECF-initiated intercultural internet community for all those active in arts and culture
- Projects that will take place before the grants assessments have been finalized will not be awarded. Assessment decisions will usually be finalized within 8 - 10 weeks of the deadlines advertised on the website
- We do not normally support the same organisations more than once in a period of 18 months. However, if your second project reflects significant developments in its form or content and represents an essential follow-up to work already realised, you should contact the grants department for guidance. Please note that we never support recurring projects if content, form and project funders remain largely unchanged
- We recommend that all applications should include clear arguments explaining why the ECF as a European foundation should support your project
- Incomplete applications will not be considered
- Applications will not be accepted after the deadlines advertised on our website.



## Some Frequently Asked Questions

### ***What does the ECF mean by 'European' relevance?***

Our definition of a European project is broad and flexible: we always consider the specificities of the regional context in which the project is developed and we do not insist that a certain number of countries be involved. However, it will be important for us to see how your working model could be transferred or adapted to other European contexts. We encourage open reflection and increased input from beyond Europe on its past and current cultural identity within the world, but as the ECF has a European mission, we only support projects with a European centre of gravity.

### ***How does this work with 'Mediterranean' organisations and the request for 'European' projects?***

ECF considers it to be very valuable that Europe relates to its direct neighbours. For that reason also organisations from 'Mediterranean' countries (being all non-European countries with a Mediterranean coastline) can apply for a grant. However, it is crucial that those projects have a clear European relevance, and a distinct European involvement. Projects that are only concerned with collaboration between partners in North Africa or the Middle East, without a European significance, are not likely to be supported.

### ***What does the ECF mean by 'cultural'?***

A cultural project can be a variety of things: we support the creation of artistic work, media projects or cultural policy development as well as capacity building of cultural operators or international collaboration of arts managers, et cetera. We like to see projects that are involving people with different backgrounds (ethnic, religious, national or otherwise), but they should also relate strongly to artistic/cultural expression (theatre, visual arts, literature, et cetera).

### ***What does the ECF mean by 'cooperation'?***

Collaboration/Cooperation for us should be something that goes beyond merely the hosting of foreign work, a project partner's attendance at an event, or a financial contribution to the project. We are looking for projects which involve different cultural organisations working together in the planning, development and realization of the project. The collaboration aspect is one of the most important factors on which projects are being selected.

### ***Are there any forms of cooperation which the ECF is not likely to support?***

We do not usually support bilateral projects based primarily on well-established patterns of collaboration. National institutions are frequently active in this field.

ECF does not support the operating costs or regular activities of cultural organisations, but only specific actions that can be considered a project.

Events that are focused only on the presentation of culture are not very likely to be supported.

See also our list of project categories that are not eligible for support.

### ***Can local or regional projects with no official partners be eligible if the projects are relevant to the ECF's interests?***

No – this would only occur if the local funding situation was so extreme that it prohibited any development in the cultural sector. Even in such cases, priority would be given to projects that reflect at least some kind of cooperation with organisations or individuals from neighbouring regions.



***How many different countries should be represented in each project?***

There is no specific requirement regarding the number of countries that should be represented. What we like to see is evidence of genuine cross-border collaboration in all stages of the project – planning, development and implementation. We are not interested in superficial consortia built for fundraising purposes.

Regional and smaller-scale projects are as welcome as pan-European collaborations. However, we will not usually award grants to local or bilateral projects that could be supported through national or regional funds.

***Can an applicant apply more than once per deadline?***

Applicants can only apply once as leading applicant and once as partner organisation in another project. This means that one applicant may be involved in two different projects per deadline.

***If ECF has supported a project of my organisation already, can I apply for another one?***

Usually we do not support the same organisations more than once in a period of 18 months. Before you apply with a new project, make sure the previous one has been finalised administratively by the Grants department (meaning that the final reports have been processed).

***What about cultural networks?***

We cannot support the operating costs or regular activities of cultural networks. However, short-term projects or new actions which would encourage new members from non-EU and Mediterranean regions may be eligible for support through grants or our STEP beyond mobility fund.

***Are pan-European collaborations of interest to the ECF?***

Definitely, as long as they are developed through a bottom-up approach and are based on genuine, mutually beneficial partnerships.

***Do we give priority to any particular discipline or art form?***

No, as long as the project fits in with our eligibility criteria and corresponds to all requirements listed in the Grants Guidelines, we are open to most disciplines and art forms. However, we are particularly interested in cross-disciplinary projects and the breaking down of traditional or specialist ‘ghettos’. Please look at our website gallery and lists of projects supported for examples of grants awarded in recent years.

***Will we support projects which are also supported by EU funds (e.g. Culture 2000)?***

Yes, if the application explains clearly why ECF funds are also needed, and if the project is highly relevant to our goals. Applications to the ECF in the context of such large-scale projects should specify which phase or activity of the project the ECF grant would support.

***What is this rhiz.eu website and how this it relate to ECF?***

Rhiz.eu is an intercultural meeting place developed to give its members an easy and fun environment for communicating and collaborating with each other. It was created by the ECF. Rhiz.eu is a trans-European project that aims to be an interesting artistic project in itself while acting as a bridge between communities. We expect to gather loads of profiles, stories, project info – and to have vivid discussions.



## Some tips when filling out the application form

### **General**

The form we use is meant for a wide variety of projects, which means that not all questions are equally relevant for all categories. For example, not all projects can expect to have a big political impact, and the distinction between target group and audience is not always applicable. But please take every question seriously, and think about how it relates to the project you are proposing.

### **Partners**

Like we mentioned in the FAQ, partnership for ECF is about genuine cooperation in the execution of the project. Please only mention partners that are involved in the execution; co-financers can be mentioned in the budget section. If you have more than three partners, please mention the three most important ones in section 1.e, the other ones can be brought up in section 6.b.

### **Summary**

Use this space to explain clearly what you will actually be doing, and don't only express the good intentions you have. It may sound silly, but we actually see a lot of application forms where people forget to mention what the actions of the project really consist of, losing themselves in descriptions of goals, intentions and other more or less abstract notions. There is plenty of opportunity for this in other sections of the application form.

### **Expertise**

We like to see who the key people of the execution of the project are, and why they are suited for the job (experience, training, expertise). Just mentioning that the people involved in the project are good is not sufficient: we like to understand why you think so.

### **Budget**

#### *1. Expenditure*

- Make sure that you show what you based the figures mentioned on. For example, if you mention travel costs, show how the estimated cost relates to the expected number of people travelling and the expected cost per person.
- Of course the costs mentioned have to relate to the activities you are going to undertake. Just using the categories of costs we mention in the form with some abstract numbers is not sufficient, we really want to gain insight in how you plan to spend the money.
- We want to see the expenditure for the entire project, not only the amount you would like ECF to contribute.
- If the complexity of the project can not be expressed in the simple budget format we use in the form, please fill in a simplified version of the expenditure in the application form following our format and contact the grants administrator how to transfer the detailed budgetary information.

#### *2. Income*

- Make sure the total amount of funding you expect equals the total expenditure you have mentioned.
- Indicate clearly for each funding source whether it has been secured already (the funder has agreed to contribute) or whether it is requested only (the decision on the funding request is not yet taken).
- We think it is very important that each project shows a certain level of local commitment (be it financial or in-kind support), and is not solely dependent on international sources.