

International Cultural Exchanges Scheme

Guidelines and Regulations 2023



ISSUED: FEBRUARY 2023



ALLOCATIONS

SESSION BUDGET	MAXIMUM ELIGIBLE AMOUNT PER PROJECT
EUR 100,000	EUR 10,000

CO-FUNDING	DISBURSEMENT
The fund may cover up to 100% of total project costs	70% upon signing of grant agreement 30% following approval of final report

TIMEFRAMES

DEADLINE	RESULTS	ELIGIBLE TIMEFRAME
22nd June 2023	31st July 2023	01st August 2023 – 01st February 2025

1. Introduction

This *International Cultural Exchanges Scheme* forms part of Arts Council Malta's Internationalisation Strategy for the cultural and creative sectors. It addresses international cultural exchanges, focusing specifically on the outgoing mobility of Maltese and Malta based artists over 18 years of age as well as their art works and cultural productions.

The objective of this scheme is to assist Malta based artists with the following:

- To encourage international collaborations and exchanges with the aim of building bridges with the rest of the world so as to enable further understanding and gain trust with other people through culture
- To increase international accessibility and exposure, to tour their productions, to build networks and to experience the work of artists from around the world in its cultural context
- To promote cultural diversity and strengthen cultural relations worldwide
- To showcase creative excellence to international cultural programmers, festival-makers, operators and audiences at large and to sustain and develop professional work.

This scheme supports:

- International collaborations
- Marketing, including digital as well as printed adverts in, for example, international art/literature/film magazines, train stations, subways, buses, bus stations, ferries, parks, websites, social media platforms, TV programmes etc. This is specifically intended for overseas collaborations/projects
- Participation in international festivals, exhibitions, showcases, networking events, films, conferences, artist residencies and fairs. Participation can also take place in a digital format
- The production of audio visuals of completed artworks and cultural productions, which are then presented to international programmers, producers and collaborators overseas. This could include, for example, the filming of a theatrical or a dance production, filming of art installations, poetry readings, exhibitions, fashion shows etc
- The production of websites and demos for international promotion purposes.

2. Definitions

Activities falling within the cultural and creative sector

1. Arts (literature, visual arts, music, performing arts, interdisciplinary)
2. Creative Business Services (design, architecture, cultural tourism and cultural services)
3. Heritage (crafts, traditional festivals and celebrations, cultural sites, antiques)
4. Media (publishing and printed material, audiovisuals, including film and video production, film servicing, television, video games, radio, online media).



Applicant

- An applicant may be an individual, a group, or an organisation. Applicants cannot be employees of Arts Council Malta or involved in the management of the *International Cultural Exchanges Scheme*.

Application

- An application is a submission, inclusive of all mandatory documents and any annexes to the application form made by an eligible applicant.

Beneficiary

- The beneficiary is the recipient of the grant. The beneficiary is responsible for the implementation of the proposal supported by the Scheme. The beneficiary of the grant may not be changed throughout the duration of the funded project and until the final disbursement is issued. The disbursement of the grant may only be issued on behalf of the beneficiary. The beneficiary is responsible to ensure that any VAT invoices are issued on behalf of the beneficiary and include the beneficiary's VAT information.

Cooperatives

- Cooperatives must be registered with the Koperattivi Board. For more information visit <https://maltacooperativefederation.coop/coops/bord-tal-koperattivi>.

Creative professionals

- All artistic and creative individuals professionally active in the cultural and creative sectors.

Eligibility

- Applications will first be screened in terms of technical and artistic eligibility by the Fund administrators and managers. Proposals which are not considered eligible in terms of the set criteria shall not be processed further and shall not undergo evaluation.

Evaluation

- Applications deemed compliant and eligible are evaluated against the criteria established in these guidelines by the appointed evaluators.

Evaluation board

- Arts Council Malta appoints an Evaluation Board team for each call under the Scheme. The appointed board may be composed of local or foreign professionals in the sector of culture and the arts.

Group

- A number of persons with or without legal personality may form a group. One of the persons involved must take the leading role and have the main legal responsibility for managing the project and the grant. This person must be a Maltese citizen or be in possession of a Maltese residence permit or of a Maltese citizenship certificate or of a Maltese passport.

Individual

- Individuals applying for a grant must be Maltese citizens or be in possession of a Malta residence permit or of a Maltese citizenship certificate or of a Maltese passport.

International presentation

- The presentation of artistic content in the performing arts, design, visual arts, literature and audiovisuals to an audience outside the Maltese Islands.

Management and administration

- Arts Council Malta is responsible for the management of this scheme. All official correspondence, including the submission of applications or updates to awarded proposals, must be sent to the address indicated in these guidelines.

Mandatory documentation:

- Any document(s) needed to support your proposal and aids the evaluation of your project (eg. track records, portfolios, artistic CVs, official correspondence confirming rental of space, permits or other).

Maximum funding

- There is a ceiling amount of €10,000 per project to be allocated. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis depending on the project.

Public Cultural Organisations

- Public cultural entities which fall under the remit of Arts Council Malta are Teatru Manoel, Meediterranean Conference Centre, Malta Philharmonic Orchestra, Fondazzjoni Kreattività, Pjazza Teatru Rjal, Valletta Cultural Agency, MICAS, Festivals Malta, Teatru Malta, Kor Malta and ŻfinMalta.

Registered entities

- An entity legally established and registered in Malta. Registered entities must be registered with Malta Business Registry, in accordance with the Companies Act requirements in the case of a company or a partnership, and in accordance with the Civil Code in the case of a foundation and an organisation/association.

Single undertaking

- This includes all enterprises having at least one of the following relationships with each other:
 - a. One enterprise has a majority of the shareholders' or members' voting rights in another enterprise;
 - b. One enterprise has the right to appoint or remove a majority of the members of the administrative, management or supervisory body of another enterprise;
 - c. One enterprise has the right to exercise a dominant influence over another enterprise pursuant to a contract entered into with that enterprise or to a provision in its memorandum or articles of association;
 - d. One enterprise, which is a shareholder in or member of another enterprise, controls alone, pursuant to an agreement with other shareholders in or members of that enterprise, a majority of shareholders' or members' voting rights in that enterprise.

Enterprises having any of the relationships referred to in points (a) to (d) above through one or more other enterprises shall be considered as a single undertaking.

Tour

- A series of presentations of artistic content in the performing arts, design, visual arts, literature and audiovisuals to audiences outside the Maltese Islands.

Undertaking

- An undertaking is defined as an entity engaged in an economic activity within the meaning of Article 107 TFEU (i.e. any activity consisting in offering goods and services on a market), regardless of its legal status and the way in which it is financed. The classification of a particular entity as an undertaking depends entirely on the nature of its activities. The application of the State aid rules does not depend on whether the entity is set up to generate profits. Non-profit entities can also offer goods and services on a market. Where this is not the case, non-profit entities remain outside the scope of State aid. Furthermore, the classification of an entity as an undertaking is always relative to a specific activity. An entity that carries out both economic and non-economic activities is to be regarded as an undertaking only with regard to the former.

Voluntary organisation

- An organisation should be legally established and/or publicly registered in Malta and must have a statute. Voluntary organisations must be enrolled with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations in accordance with the Voluntary Organisations Act requirements (<http://www.maltacvs.org>). The applicant must be a legally authorised representative of the organisation.

3. Eligibility

Applications will first be screened in terms of technical and artistic eligibility. Ineligible applications in terms of the points below shall not be processed further and shall not undergo evaluation.

Maximum eligible timeframe to implement the project: 18 months

3.1 Who can apply?

Applicants must be Maltese citizens or be in possession of a Maltese residence permit or of a Maltese citizenship certificate or of a Maltese passport.

Applicants may be:

- Creative professionals/individual artists
- Entities registered with the Malta Business Registry (including companies, partnerships, foundations and organisations/associations)
- Groups, collectives and consortia
- Registered cooperatives
- Voluntary Organisations enrolled with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations.

3.2 Who cannot apply?

- Applicants/Activities receiving local public funds through established government line-votes;

- Applicants whose profile is not verified due to it being an incomplete profile for not having the below mandatory documents:
 - A copy of your Maltese ID card (including the front and back side) or your Maltese residence permit or your Maltese citizenship certificate or your Maltese passport;
 - A signed statute in the case of a Voluntary Organisation.
- Applicants who do not qualify under the definition of applicant for this specific scheme.
- Beneficiaries who have not honoured previous funding commitments;
- In the case of registered entities, entities who have not presented the required annual documentation to the Malta Business Registry.
- In the case of Voluntary Organisations, Voluntary Organisations which are:
 - not enrolled with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations;
 - who have not presented their updated accounts to the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations;
 - which do not have a registered address in the Maltese Islands.

3.3 What costs can be covered?¹

This grant may cover up to 100% of the following costs (up to a maximum of €10,000 per project, whichever is the lowest).

- Artistic fees and expenses on coordination, administration, management, legal costs etc
- Contingency, not exceeding 10% of the total cost
- Costs related to health and safety measures, including costs for travel vaccinations and Covid-19 testing for international travel purposes
- Freight
- Insurance
- Marketing, PR and communications, including but not limited to:
 - Digital as well as printed adverts overseas in, for example, international art/literature/film magazines, train stations, subways, buses, bus stations, ferries, parks, social media platforms, TV programmes etc
 - Catalogues, posters, flyers etc
 - The production of audio visuals of completed artworks and cultural productions which are then presented to international programmers, producers and collaborators overseas. This could include but not limited to, for example, the filming of a theatrical or a dance production, filming of art installations, poetry readings, exhibitions, fashion shows etc
 - The production of websites and demos for international promotional purposes
- Membership fees of international networks
- Participation fees (for international festivals, exhibitions, showcases, networking events, conferences, artist residencies and fairs.) Participation can also take place in a digital format
- Production fees (including the rental of venues and/or hire of equipment overseas)

¹ All costs will be considered only if these resources are not already covered/cannot be covered by the applicants or supporting/partner organisations.

- Standard accommodation, excluding long-term accommodation or part of
- Standard (economy class) travel, including air travel, public transport, vehicle rental etc
- Subscriptions to virtual platforms or other digital services where relevant
- Translation, subtitling, proofreading and editing of, for example, exhibition catalogues, adverts, posters, websites, audio-visuals etc of artistic productions showcased internationally
- Travel visa

For more information about presenting your budget, refer to our General Budget Guidelines available on <https://www.artscouncilmalta.org/pages/funds-opportunities/schemes-2023/general-budget-guidelines/>.

3.4 What costs cannot be covered?

- Costs already covered by Public Cultural Organisations or another public funding programme managed or co-managed by Arts Council Malta or another public agency, Government department or Ministry
- Costs already covered by the international host
- Fees for services provided by Public Cultural Organisations or other public agency, Government department or Ministry
- Funding for the creation or upholding of bursaries, prizes or scholarships
- Incoming mobility
- Mobility around the Maltese archipelago
- Mobility costs for chaperones
- Recoverable VAT, where applicable
- Reimbursement of salaries or part of
- Retrospective costs
- Subsistence, catering and hospitality.

3.5 What applications are not eligible?

The following activities are **not** eligible under this Scheme:

- Activities that are not related to culture, arts and the creative industries
- Activities whose objective is fundraising or political propaganda
- Applications for funding the creation or upholding of contests, bursaries, prizes, or scholarships
- Applications submitted after noon (12:00) of the respective day of deadline
- Applications submitted by public entities with or without a line vote
- Incomplete applications. Refer to application checklist in Section 5.1
- Individual modules credited as part of an education course or research as part of established academic programmes
- Initiatives eligible under Screen Malta, TV Production and Content Fund, Annual Cultural Activities Scheme, VOPS, Għaqda Każini tal-Banda, National Book Council, Valletta Cultural Agency, Malta Arts Scholarships or any other State-funded programme dedicated to Maltese arts and/or culture

- Mobility of children and youth under the age of 18. If you are under the age of 18, kindly refer to Arts Council Malta's *Training and Development Scheme Strand 2*.
- Mobility not related to art and culture
- Projects that would have already taken place before the result is notified to applicant(s)
- Projects whose duration does not fall within the eligible timeframe.

Any other activity which may be developed outside the scope of the *International Cultural Exchanges Scheme* is not eligible for support.

Applicants can submit more than one application under the same call. However only one of the applications can be funded per session. Applicants may benefit from only one awarded application through this scheme during a calendar year.

4. Evaluation

The Evaluation Board will base its decision upon the following criteria:

4.1 Criterion 1: Concept (40 marks)

This criterion considers the artistic idea(s) of the proposal, the international collaborators involved, the relevance of the concept with regards to international exchanges and exposure as well as the contribution towards the participants' artistic development. Thus the following questions are to be addressed:

- Will this concept encourage the applicant to engage in a professional international context? Is the proposed international platform relevant to the applicant's artistic development? (10 marks)
- How does this exchange encourage further international networking and collaborations? (10 marks)
- How strong are the artistic track records of the applicant and the collaborators involved in the project (as presented in CVs, artistic portfolios and other supporting material) (20 marks)

4.2 Criterion 2: Project management (20 marks)

This criterion considers the level of commitment and preparation prior to the funding application as well as the proposed plan to deliver and achieve the targeted objectives. Thus the following questions are to be addressed:

- How strong is the implementation plan?
(Applicants are to include timeframes, workplan with collaborators involved, the skills and track record of individuals/groups managing and participating in the project, their role(s) in the project, possible risks envisaged and contingency plans, health and safety measures.) (20 marks)

4.3 Criterion 3: Audience engagement (20 marks)

This criterion considers the engagement and the development of international audiences. Engagement refers to the role, the nature of involvement and the experience offered to the audience. Thus the following questions are to be addressed:

- Who are your target audiences? How will these audiences be reached and engaged with? (10 marks)
- Kindly provide information and plans on how you aim to develop new international audiences. You are also required to provide an outline of the marketing, PR and communications plan. (10 marks)

4.4 Criterion 4: Budget (20 marks)

This criterion considers how well-planned and realistic the presented budget plan is. To make a stronger case in terms of this criterion, applicants are required to provide quotations to substantiate the budget items. Please refer to the budget template in the application form. Thus the following questions are to be addressed:

- Please provide a clear budget breakdown including expenses directly related to the proposed project. Kindly explain the rationale for the expenses of the project. (20 marks).

5. Submitting the application

Follow these steps to apply:

1. Read these guidelines and regulations very carefully.
2. Check whether your proposed idea can be addressed by this scheme.
3. Press the link that will take you to the online application system.
4. Create your profile with Arts Council Malta by clicking on Register and filling in the details.
5. From the open calls section, select the online application for the scheme you intend to apply.
6. Follow the instructions step by step. Fill in all the required information from the online application including the budget and attach the supporting documentation.
7. Submit the application. You should be receiving an automatic acknowledgement by the system. If you do not receive such a notification, contact us on applyforfunds@artscouncil.mt.

In case of difficulty or if you would like to consult us regarding this fund, you can call us on 2334 7230 Monday to Friday between 09:00 and 16:00 or email us on fundinfo@artscouncil.mt.

It is your responsibility to present a complete application form as explained in these guidelines and regulations. If you do not present all the necessary information and documentation, your application will not be processed and evaluated.

Prior to the application deadline, Arts Council Malta representatives will not be checking your application forms. It is solely at the Council's discretion to request that applicants provide any missing mandatory documentation following the call deadline.

Upon the submission of the application, applicants accept that should the application be awarded funding, the name, the project title, the short project description and the amount awarded can be published by the Council.

A decision on funding will be made on the strength of the information submitted, including documentation in support of the proposal.

Applications handed in after 12.00 (noon) of the respective deadline cannot be accepted.

5.1 Checklist

In order to be complete, applications must be accompanied by:

- A copy of Maltese ID card (front and back) or Maltese residence permit or Maltese citizenship certificate or Maltese passport. This should be included in the applicant profile
- A copy of the VAT Certificate of Registration
- A signed statute in the case of a voluntary organisation. This should be included in the applicant profile
- Applicant's biography/artistic CV. This should be included in the applicant profile
- Artistic portfolio showing the artistic ability of the applicant. Audiovisuals up to 5MB may be uploaded directly in the application form. Larger files may be provided as a link)
- If applicable, a most recent Good Standing Certificate. This document is renewed annually by the Malta Business Registry and is proof of compliance
- Signed letters of intent from collaborators and potential venues
- Quotations and supporting material if available
- Acceptance letter by institutions or platforms, if not available at the time of application the applicant must provide a justification.

6. Evaluation process

This scheme is competitive and will be evaluated by a panel of sectorial experts according to established criteria.

As specified above, each criterion is allocated a number of specific marks. In order to be considered for funding, projects have to obtain an average of at least 60 marks.

Nevertheless, the evaluation session and funding decisions depend on the quality of the submitted proposals and on the availability of the funds. Therefore, obtaining 60 marks or more does not automatically mean that you will be awarded the funds. The Evaluation Board may decide not to allocate the total funds available for a particular call if the proposed projects do not reach the required level in terms of the fund criteria.

Eligible applications will be assessed by an evaluation team selected by Arts Council Malta on the basis of their professional experience. The Council will select evaluators based on their independent and professional experience. The evaluators will present an assessment on each of the proposed projects, indicating the relevant ratings awarded.

6.1 Communication of results

On the day indicated on page 2, you will receive your result notification from Arts Council Malta. Together with the covering letter, we will also attach a copy of the evaluation form, indicating the reasons and marks leading to the Evaluation Board's decision, according to the fund criteria.

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

If you have any difficulties concerning your results, you should email us on fundinfo@artscouncil.mt within five (5) days of receiving your funding decision.

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

All information received by the Fund administrators, managers 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.

7. Project implementation and monitoring

Beneficiaries must provide full documentation to support the application and budget plan within 30 days from receipt of the notification letter. Arts Council Malta will accept a variation of up to 5% from the proposed total cost. The contingency indicated in the budget plan will support any variations from the proposed total cost. **Under no circumstances will the Council be in a position to increase the grant awarded.**

Upon provision and approval of the above mandatory documentation, a contract specifying the conditions of the fund will be signed. The grant may only be awarded upon completion of the above process within the established timeframe.

70% of the total amount allocated by the Evaluation Board will be processed after the signing of the contract. The remaining 30% will be disbursed after the submission of the final report by the beneficiary, following approval by the Council.

The beneficiaries must use the Council's logo on all related material and specify that the project was supported by the grant as follows: **Supported by Arts Council Malta**, 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 contract.

Beneficiaries must notify the Council immediately if changes affecting the nature of the project take place during implementation. Changes cannot be implemented unless approval is received. The Council reserves the right to revise or withhold the final payment if the change in the project is not considered to be in line with the initial proposal, or if the Council is not informed of the changes within a reasonable time.

Beneficiaries must make themselves available for visits and communication with the Council's representatives for monitoring purposes, both during the implementation of the project as well as after its completion.

The Council also reserves the right to revise the final payment if the total expenditure is less than that estimated in the application form.

7.1 Report

At the end of your project, you will be required to submit a detailed report highlighting the work carried out and the project achievements, by not later than six (6) weeks after your project is concluded. Arts Council Malta will provide a template for your report. If relevant, together with this report beneficiaries must submit copies of any relevant marketing, publicity or information material developed for the funded project. Beneficiaries will also be requested to submit evidence of the research process, which includes visual documentation, blogs and other documentation.

You will also be required to present a final updated budget together with all supporting documents.

The Council retains the right to make use of submitted project material.

The Council retains the right to recover funds in case these are not being used and/or are misused and/or are not used according to the submitted budget.

8. Complaints procedure

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

8.1 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 these guidelines and regulations. Complaints cannot be made concerning:

- The Arts Council's or Government's policies and procedures
- The merits of the application in terms of the criteria stipulated in these guidelines and regulations.

Only applicants may file complaints concerning their project.

8.2 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 the Director of Funding and Strategy, Arts Council Malta on fundinfo@artscouncil.mt within five (5) working days of receipt of your funding decision. You will normally receive a reply to your complaint within ten (10) working days.

In case you are not satisfied with the reply, Arts Council Malta will convene a Board that will discuss your complaint further. If you approach our complaints procedure, then you are accepting that we can use information about your project to address the complaint. The decision of the Board is final.

9. Applicability of State aid rules

9.1 State Aid rules applicable for undertakings that carry out an economic activity within the meaning of Article 107 TFEU

The State aid scheme will be implemented in line with the provisions of Commission Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 of 18 December 2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid, OJ L 352/1 of 24 December 2013, as amended by Commission Regulation (EU) 2020/972 of 2 July 2020 amending Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 as regards its prolongation and amending Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 as regards its prolongation and relevant adjustments, OJ L 215/3 of 7 July 2020.

This Regulation applies to aid granted to undertakings in all sectors, with the exception of:

- a) aid granted to undertakings active in the fishery and aquaculture sector, as covered by Council Regulation (EC) No 104/2000;
- b) aid granted to undertakings active in the primary production of agricultural products;
- c) aid granted to undertakings active in the sector of processing and marketing of agricultural products, in the following cases:
 - i. where the amount of the aid is fixed on the basis of the price or quantity of such products purchased from primary producers or put on the market by the undertakings concerned;
 - ii. where the aid is conditional on being partly or entirely passed on to primary producers;
- d) aid to export-related activities towards third countries or Member States, namely aid directly linked to the quantities exported, to the establishment and operation of a distribution network or to other current expenditure linked to the export activity;
- e) aid contingent upon the use of domestic over imported goods.

The total amount of *de minimis* aid granted to a single undertaking shall not exceed the amount of €200,000 over any period of three consecutive fiscal years.

This period covers the fiscal year concerned as well as the previous two fiscal years. 'Fiscal year' means the fiscal year as used for tax purposes by the undertaking concerned.

This maximum threshold would include all State aid granted under this aid scheme and any other State aid measure granted under the *de minimis* Regulation including that received from any entity other than Arts Council Malta. Any *de minimis* aid received in excess of the established threshold will have to be recovered, with interest, from the undertaking receiving the aid.

The rules on cumulation of aid as outlined in Article 5 of the *de minimis* Regulation will be respected.

Applicants are to submit a *de minimis* declaration indicating any other *de minimis* aid received or applied for during the previous two fiscal years and the current fiscal year. This will ensure that the total amount of *de minimis* aid granted to a single undertaking under the *de minimis* Regulations will not exceed the applicable *de minimis* threshold over three fiscal years.

Should a successful applicant not be eligible to receive *de minimis* aid, the said applicant will be deemed ineligible and the next ranked applicant will be awarded.

In line with the *de minimis* Regulation, records regarding *de minimis* aid shall be maintained for 10 years from the date on which the last individual aid is granted under the Scheme.

9.2 Applicants and applications that do not carry out an economic activity within the meaning of Article 107 TFEU

Applicants and applications that do not carry out an economic activity within the meaning of Article 107 TFEU may also apply for the scheme. The rules outlined in Section 9.1 are not applicable in the case of such applicants and applications.



Need advice?

Arts Council Malta offers pre-submission consultation services to help secure support for your project. We are there every step of the way. We can help you determine whether the core concept and profile of your project are in line with the targeted support mechanism, and provide feedback on the way you plan to present your project. To make the best of our services, plan ahead and get in touch with us at least four weeks before the submission deadline.

You are welcome to call us on 2334 7230 on weekdays between 09:00 and 16:00 or to send us an email on fundinfo@artscouncil.mt.

Guidelines updated on 15th February 2023