Ministry of Education, Culture and Science

CALL FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS FOR THE UNION ACTION "EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE" FOR THE YEAR 2033 IN THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS

Throughout history, Europe has been a hub of artistic development of exceptional richness and great diversity where European cities have played a vital role in the formation and spread of culture.

The European Capital of Culture action is an initiative of the European Union governed by Decision No 445/2014/EU as amended by Decision (EU) 2017/1545 and by Decision (EU) 2020/2229[1] for the titles 2020 to 2033. It aims at highlighting this richness and diversity as well as common cultural aspects in Europe with a view to contributing to bring the peoples of Europe closer together and improve mutual understanding.

Against this backdrop, the general objectives of the European Capital of Culture action have been defined as follows: to safeguard and promote the diversity of cultures in Europe and to highlight the common features they share as well as to increase citizens' sense of belonging to a common cultural area, on the one hand, and to foster the contribution of culture to the long-term development of cities at economic, social and urban level, in accordance with their respective strategies and priorities, on the other hand.

In line with these objectives, activities developped by the city that will be designated as European Capital of Culture will strive to enhance the range, diversity and European dimension of its cultural offering, including through transnational co-operation; to widen access to and participation in culture; to strengthen the capacity of its cultural sector and the links of the latter with other sectors and to raise its international profile through culture.

In accordance with the calendar set out in the Annex of Decision No 445/2014/EU as amended by Decision (EU) 2017/1545, the title of European Capital of Culture shall be awarded in 2033 to one city in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, to one city in Italy and to one city in an EFTA/EEA country, a candidate country or a potential candidate to EU membership.

The aim of this call is:

- to trigger applications from cities in the Kingdom of the Netherlands wishing to bid for the "European Capital of Culture" title for the year 2033 and
- to lead to the designation of one of these cities, that may be awarded the Melina Mercouri prize, funded from the respective Union programme supporting culture at the time of its award.

To assist cities in the preparation of their bid, this call provides an overview of the criteria that will be applied for the assessment of their applications in accordance with the criteria set out in the Decision No 445/2014/EU as well as information about the selection procedure. In Annex 1, cities will also find the application form they have to complete in order to submit an application.

The Managing Authority in charge of the selection procedure for the European Capital of Culture title for the year 2033 in the Kingdom of the Netherlands is DutchCulture, at the request of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science of The Netherlands (hereafter "the Ministry of Culture") .

Further details on the European Capital of Culture action may be obtained at the following webpages:

- https://www.2033ecoc.nl/

- https://ec.europa.eu/culture/policies/culture-cities-and-regions/european-capitals-culture

[1] Official Journal of the European Union, OJ L 132 of 3 May 2014: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal- content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L:2014:132:TOC, OJ L 237 of 13 September 2017: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal- content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32017D1545 and OJ L 437 of 28 December 2020: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32020D2229.

1. Outcome of the selection process

The outcome of the selection process of the European Capital of Culture Union action under this specific call is twofold:

- The award of the title of European Capital of Culture;
- The award of a pecuniary prize of 1.5 million EUR in honour of Melina Mercouri.

To that extent, this call for submission of applications is also to be seen as the rules of the contest for the awarding of the Melina Mercouri prize.

The title and the prize are awarded on the basis of the same criteria detailed in section 2. The payment of the prize occurs in the course of the title-year and is conditioned and ruled by the requirements laid down in section 5 of this document.

2. Criteria for designating a city for the title of European Capital of Culture and awarding the Melina Mercouri prize

a. Eligibility criteria

Eligible applicants:

This call for submission of applications is exclusively addressed to the cities of the Kingdom of the Netherlands that wish to apply for the title of European Capital of Culture 2033.

The title applies to a city. Cities may involve their surrounding areas if they wish so, but the title is awarded only to the city itself and not to the whole area. Therefore, where a city involves its surrounding area, the application shall be made under the name of the city.

Every application must be based on a cultural programme with a strong European dimension. The cultural programme shall cover the year of the European Capital of Culture title and shall be created specifically for the title.

For recollection, in case of claim relating to the activities carried out in the framework of the submission for applications the sole liability of applicants can be invoked.

Formal criteria of the application:

All candidate cities shall fill in the common application form laid down in Annex 1. Candidate cities should note that there are different questionnaires for preselection and selection.

Candidate cities are invited to comply with the following formal requirements when drafting their application. Applications which do not follow these requirements at pre-selection or final selection stages[2] may be considered ineligible and not examined further:

- The candidate cities shall communicate in writing to the Managing Authority their intention to submit an application at the latest one month before the deadline specified in section 4 below "Submission of applications".

- The application shall be written in one or more of the official languages of the European Union, and one of the languages must be English. If there is more than one linguistic version, all versions must be identical from content and presentation points of view. The English version of the applications will be the working version for the panel established to carry out the selection procedure.

- Candidate cities shall answer all the questions listed in Annex 1.

[2] More details about the pre-selection and selection stages are provided in section 3 of this call.

- For the pre-selection stage, the English version of the applications shall not exceed 60 pages in A4 format. For the final selection stage, the English version of the applications shall not exceed 100 pages in A4 format. Applicants may include illustrations, graphics or any other visual elements (such as logos), but these are included as part of the page limit.

- For the pre-selection stage, applications shall be sent in paper and pdf formats within the deadline indicated under section 4 below "Submission of applications". For the final selection stage, applications shall be sent in paper and pdf formats within the deadline that will be indicated by DutchCulture to the shortlisted cities after completion of the pre-selection stage.

b. Exclusion criteria

Candidate cities must sign a declaration on their honour certifying that they are not in one of the situations referred to in Articles 136(1) and 141 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Union[3], filling in the relevant form attached in Annex 2.

c. Award criteria

The award criteria for the assessment of the applications are divided into six categories corresponding to the provisions laid down in Article 5 of Decision No 445/2014/EU and all six categories have the same weighting:

1. Contribution to the long-term strategy
2. European dimension
3. Cultural and artistic content
4. Capacity to deliver
5. Outreach
6. Management

1. As regards the "contribution to the long-term strategy", the following factors shall be taken into account:

- that a cultural strategy for the candidate city, which covers the action and includes plans for sustaining the cultural activities beyond the year of the title, is in place at the time of its application;
- the plans to strengthen the capacity of the cultural and creative sectors, including developing long-term links between the cultural, economic and social sectors in the candidate city;
- the envisaged long-term cultural, social and economic impact, including urban development, that the title would have on the candidate city;
- the plans for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the title on the candidate city and for disseminating the results of the evaluation.

2. As regards the "European dimension", the following factors shall be taken into account:

- the scope and quality of activities promoting the cultural diversity of Europe, intercultural dialogue and greater mutual understanding between European citizens;
- the scope and quality of activities highlighting the common aspects of European cultures, heritage and history, as well as European integration and current European themes;

[3] Financial Regulation of 30 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (Official Journal L 193 of 30.7.2018)

- the scope and quality of activities featuring European artists, cooperation with operators or cities in different countries, including, where appropriate, other cities holding the title, and transnational partnerships;
- the strategy to attract the interest of a broad European and international public.

3. As regards the "cultural and artistic content", the following factors shall be taken into account:

- a clear and coherent artistic vision and strategy for the cultural programme;
- the involvement of local artists and cultural organisations in the conception and implementation of the cultural programme;
- the range and diversity of the activities proposed and their overall artistic quality;
- the capacity to combine local cultural heritage and traditional art forms with new, innovative and experimental cultural expressions.

4. As regards the "capacity to deliver", the following factors shall be taken into account:

- the application has broad and strong political support and a sustainable commitment from the local, regional and national authorities;
- the candidate city has or will have an adequate and viable infrastructure to hold the title.

5. As regards "outreach", the following factors shall be taken into account:

- the involvement of the local population and civil society in the preparation of the application and the implementation of the action;
- the creation of new and sustainable opportunities for a wide range of citizens to attend or participate in cultural activities, in particular young people, volunteers and the marginalised and disadvantaged, including minorities, with special attention being given to persons with disabilities and the elderly as regards the accessibility of those activities;
- the overall strategy for audience development, and in particular the link with education and the participation of schools.

6. As regards "management", the following factors shall be taken into account:

- the feasibility of the fund-raising strategy and proposed budget, which includes, where appropriate, plans to seek financial support from Union programmes and funds, and covers the preparation phase, the year of the title, the evaluation and provisions for the legacy activities, and contingency planning;
- the envisaged governance and delivery structure for the implementation of the action which provides, inter alia, for appropriate cooperation between the local authorities and the delivery structure, including the artistic team;
- the procedures for the appointment of the general and artistic directors and their fields of action;
- the marketing and communication strategy is comprehensive and highlights that the action is a Union action;
- the delivery structure has staff with appropriate skills and experience to plan, manage and deliver the cultural programme for the year of the title.

These criteria are explained and illustrated by examples in the Guide for candidate cities, which is available on the websites of DutchCulture and the European Commission at the following addresses:

- https://www.2033ecoc.nl/

- https://ec.europa.eu/culture/policies/culture-cities-and-regions/european-capitals-culture

3. Procedure for the designation of one city as European Capital of Culture and the award of the Melina Mercouri prize

a. The panel of experts

A panel of independent experts ("the panel") shall be established to carry out the selection and monitoring procedures.

The role of the panel is to assess the applications received from candidate cities, agree on a list of pre-selected cities as well as recommend one city for being awarded with the title of European Capital of Culture and the Melina Mercouri prize. At the end of the monitoring phase[4], it is also the role of the panel to issue a report, which will be the basis for the Commission's decision to pay or not the Melina Mercouri prize to the city.

The panel will consist of 12 members.

For the purpose of the pre-selection and selection stages, ten members will be experts appointed by the European institutions and bodies, i.e. the European Parliament, Council, Commission and Committee of the Regions, and two members will be experts appointed by the Ministry of Culture in accordance with the relevant national procedures and in consultation with the European Commission.

The same experts shall be appointed by the authorising officer of the Commission so as to give a recommendation about the award of the Melina Mercouri prize.

In accordance with Article 6 of Decision No 445/2014/EU, the experts shall be citizens of the Union, shall be independent, have no actual or potential conflict of interest in respect of a specific candidate city and have substantial experience and expertise in the cultural sector, in the cultural development of cities or in the organisation of a European Capital of Culture or an international cultural event of similar scope and scale.

b. Phases of the procedure

The procedure for designating one city as European Capital of Culture is broken down as follows:

b.1 The selection phase:

The selection phase is made of two different stages:

- *Pre-selection stage*

DutchCulture will organise a pre-selection meeting on a date that will be specified later on the Dutch ECOC 2033 website, inviting all candidate cities that have submitted an application in response to this call in the deadline set below, to send a delegation for a hearing with the panel.

The panel shall assess each candidate city on the basis of its application and hearing against the objectives of the European Capital of Culture action and the criteria as specified above.

After this meeting, the panel will agree on a shortlist of candidate cities, which shall be invited to revise and complete their application during the final selection stage. It shall issue a pre-selection report containing a general assessment of all the applications, the short-list of candidate cities that are to be considered further as well as recommendations to these cities.

The Netherlands shall then formally approve the short-list based on the report of the panel and the Ministry of Culture shall send a letter to short-listed candidate cities inviting them to complete and revise their applications and indicating the deadline for submitting such applications.

- *Final selection stage*

The short-listed candidate cities will complete and revise their applications with a view to complying with the award criteria as well as taking into account the recommendations contained in the pre-selection report. Each pre-selected city will send its revised application to DutchCulture in due time.

At this stage, the panel may wish to pay a visit to the pre-selected cities to get *in situ* a better understanding of the candidacies as well as the level of ownership among the city's inhabitants and key stakeholders.

[4] More details about the monitoring phase are provided in section 5 of this call.

In any case, DutchCulture will organise a selection meeting approximately nine months after the pre-selection meeting (the precise date will be specified by DutchCulture at a later stage) inviting all short-listed cities to send a delegation for a hearing with the panel.

The panel shall assess each short-listed candidate city on the basis of its revised application and hearing against the objectives of the European Capital of Culture action and the criteria as specified above.

After this meeting, the panel shall agree on the recommendation of a maximum of one city for the title. If none of the candidate cities fulfils all the criteria, the panel may recommend not to award the title in the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 2033.

The panel shall issue a selection report containing a general assessment of all the applications and a justified recommendation for the designation of one city for the title. The report shall also contain recommendations to the city concerned regarding the progress to be made by the year of the title.

b.2 The designation of the city as European Capital of Culture and the award of the Melina Mercouri prize

The Netherlands shall, based on the recommendation of the panel, designate one city to hold the title for the 2033 European Capital of Culture and shall notify the European Parliament, the Council, the Commission and the Committee of the Regions of that designation no later than four years before the title-year.

At the same time it recommends a city for the title, the panel will also recommend the authorising officer of the Commission to award the Melina Mercouri prize to this city.

After the city has been officially designated, the authorising officer of Commission, upon this recommendation, may award it the Melina Mercouri prize which amounts to 1.500.000 EUR[5].

4. Submission of applications

The cities of the Kingdom of the Netherlands wishing to apply for the European Capital of Culture title in 2033 shall reply to this call by filling in the application form in Annex 1 as well as the "declaration of honour" form in Annex 2.

There are two questionnaires: one for pre-selection stage and one more developed for the final selection.

Twenty paper copies and one pdf copy of each application (in English and potentially also in another EU official language) must be sent to the following postal address and e-mail address no later than 1 October 2027, 17:00 CEST:

DutchCulture
Nieuwe Herengracht 14
1018 EH Amsterdam
The Netherlands
2033ecoc@dutchculture.nl

The candidate cities shall communicate in writing their intention to submit an application at the latest 1 September 2027.

Applicants will be informed by DutchCulture of the receipt of their application within 5 working days.

By submitting an application, cities accept that their e-application at both pre-selection and selection stages be made public on the ECOC 2033 website of DutchCulture and the website of the Commission at the end of the selection phase.

For formal requirements please refer to section 2 under a) of the call.

[5] Subject to the funding being made available under the relevant Union programme supporting culture.

5. Monitoring and payment of the Melina Mercouri prize

The Melina Mercouri Prize is awarded in connection with the designation of one city as European Capital of Culture. However, its payment will occur no later than the end of March 2033 provided that the city designated continues to honour the commitments it made at the application stage, still complies with the criteria stipulated in the call and takes into account the recommendations contained in the selection and monitoring reports of the panel.

The commitments made at the application stage shall deemed to have been honoured by the designated city where no substantial change has been made to the programme and the strategy between the application stage and the year of the title, in particular where:

a) the budget has been maintained at a level capable of delivering a high-quality cultural programme in line with the application and the criteria;
b) the independence of the artistic team has been appropriately respected;
c) the European dimension has remained sufficiently strong in the final version of the cultural programme;
d) the marketing and communication strategy and the communication material used by the designated city clearly reflect the fact that the European Capitals of Culture is an action of the Union;
e) the plans for the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the title on the city are in place.

Compliance with these requirements will be assessed by the Commission on the basis of a recommendation made by a panel of independent experts at the end of the monitoring phase, which runs from the designation of the city as European Capital of Culture up to the beginning of the year of the title.
Similarly to the selection process, the monitoring phase is carried out by the panel. The Commission will convene three monitoring meetings between the panel and the designated city in order for the panel to take stock of the preparations for the event and give advice with a view to helping the city to develop a high-quality cultural programme and an effective strategy. After the third meeting, the panel will issue a report, which will be the basis for the Commission's decision to pay or not the Melina Mercouri prize to the city. Please note that the payment of the prize is therefore not automatic.

Once the authorising officer of the Commission has issued the decision regarding the award of the prize, the city accepts that checks and audits by the Commission, OLAF and the Court of Auditors can be carried out.

Regarding the award and payment of the prize, the Law of the Union applies. The competent court or arbitration tribunal to hear disputes is the General Court of the Court of Justice of the European Union:

General Court
Rue du Fort Niedergrünewald
L-2925 Luxembourg
tel.: (352) 4303-1 Fax: (352) 4303 2100
e-mail: GeneralCourt.Registry@curia.europa.eu

Financial or administrative penalties, or both, may be imposed on applicants who have made false declarations, or committed irregularities or fraud, in accordance with the conditions laid down in Article 243 of the abovementioned Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Union and in proportion to the value of the Melina Mercouri prize.

Once the title year ends, the city awarded the title of European Capital of Culture will have to produce an evaluation report using the common guidelines and indicators established by the Commission[6] and transmit it to the European Commission by 31 December of 2034 in accordance with Article 16 of Decision No 445/2014/EU.

[6] https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/sites/creative-europe/files/library/guidelines-for-cities-own-evaluations-modmai18.doc.pdf

6. Additional information

Cities interested in the title may obtain information at the information meeting to be organised by DutchCulture on 11 February 2027 [location to be confirmed].

Information on the European Capital of Culture action can be consulted on the website of the the European Commission at the following address: https://ec.europa.eu/culture/policies/culture-cities-and-regions/european-capitals-culture.

Candidate cities are advised to read the guide for cities applying for the title of European Capital of Culture, which is available at the same address.

Cities interested in the title can obtain further information from DutchCulture and from the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture of the European Commission at the following address:

DutchCulture
Nieuwe Herengracht 14
1018 EH Amsterdam
The Netherlands
2033ecoc@dutchculture.nl

European Commission
DG EAC
Creative Europe Programme
E-mail: EAC-ECOC@ec.europa.eu

The Rules of procedure, specifying in particular the name of the managing authority responsible for organising and managing the competition, the competition arrangements as well as the rules for the pre-selection and selection meetings, including the language regime and the organisation of the candidate cities' hearings, will be available on 16 November 2026 on the ECOC 2033 website of DutchCulture.

ANNEX 1

APPLICATION FORM

Candidate cities must clearly answer all the questions below. For each section (1 to 6) questions can be answered separately or jointly.

Candidate cities are also invited to be clear, concise and sharp in their answers. Furthermore great care should be given to ensure maximum readability of the applications; and bids should be written in no smaller than 10-pitch font.

Preselection questionnaire:

Introduction – General considerations (max. 3 pages).

- Why does your city wish to take part in the competition for the title of European Capital of Culture?

- Does your city plan to involve its surrounding area? Explain this choice.

- Explain briefly the overall cultural profile of your city.

- Explain the concept of the programme that would be launched if the city is designated as European Capital of Culture.

1. Contribution to the long-term strategy

- Describe the cultural strategy that is in place in your city at the time of the application, including the plans for sustaining the cultural activities beyond the year of the title?

- Describe the city's plans to strengthen the capacity of the cultural and creative sectors, including through the development of long term links between these sectors and the economic and social sectors in your city.

- How is the European Capital of Culture action included in this strategy?

- If your city is awarded the title of European Capital of Culture, what do you think would be the long-term cultural, social and economic impact on the city (including in terms of urban development)?

- Outline briefly the plans for monitoring and evaluation.

2. Cultural and artistic content

- What is the artistic vision and strategy for the cultural programme of the year?

- Give a general overview of the structure of your cultural programme, including the range and diversity of the activities/main events that will mark the year.

- Explain succinctly how the cultural programme will combine local cultural heritage and traditional art forms with new, innovative and experimental cultural expressions?

- How has the city involved, or how does it plan to involve, local artists and cultural organisations in the conception and implementation of the cultural programme?

3. European dimension

- Give a general outline of the activities foreseen in view of:

  - Promoting the cultural diversity of Europe, intercultural dialogue and greater mutual understanding between European citizens;
  - Highlighting the common aspects of European cultures, heritage and history, as well as European integration and current European themes;
  - Featuring European artists, cooperation with operators and cities in different countries, and transnational partnerships.

- Can you explain your overall strategy to attract the interest of a broad European and international public?

- To what extent do you plan to develop links between your cultural programme and the cultural programme of other cities holding the European Capital of Culture title?

4. Outreach

- Explain how the local population and your civil society have been involved in the preparation of the application and will participate in the implementation of the year.

- Explain how you intend to create opportunities for participation of marginalised and disadvantaged groups.

- Explain your overall strategy for audience development, and in particular the link with education and the participation of schools.

5. Management

a) Finance

- ***City budget for culture:***

  - What has been the annual budget for culture in the city over the last 5 years (excluding expenditure for the present European Capital of Culture application)? (Please fill in the table below).

Year	Annual budget for culture in the city (in euros)	Annual budget for culture in the city (in % of the total annual budget for the city)
n-4		
n-3		
n-2		
n-1		
Current		

- In case the city is planning to use funds from its annual budget for culture to finance the European Capital of Culture project, please indicate this amount starting from the year of submission of the bid until the European Capital of Culture year.

- Which amount of the overall annual budget does the city intend to spend for culture after the European Capital of Culture year (in euros and in % of the overall annual budget)?

- ***Operating budget for the title year***

  - **Income to cover operating expenditure:**

    - Please explain the overall operating budget (i.e. funds that are specifically set aside to cover operational expenditure). The budget shall cover the preparation phase, the year of the title, the evaluation and provisions for the legacy activities. Please also fill in the table below.

Total income to cover operating expenditure (in euros)	From the public sector (in euros)	From the public sector (in %)	From the private sector (in euros)	From the private sector (in %)

  - **Income from the public sector:**

    - What is the breakdown of the income to be received from the public sector to cover operating expenditure? Please fill in the table below:

Income from the public sector to cover operating expenditure	in euros	%
National Government		
City		
Region		
EU (with exception of the Melina Mercouri Prize)		
Other		
Total		

- Have the public finance authorities (City, Region, State) already voted on or made financial commitments to cover operating expenditure? If not, when will they do so?

▪ **Income from the private sector:**

- What is the fund-raising strategy to seek support from private sponsors? What is the plan for involving sponsors in the event?

▪ **Operating expenditure**:

- Please provide a breakdown of the operating expenditure, by filling in the table below.

Programme expenditure (in euros)	Programme expenditure (in %)	Promotion and marketing (in euros)	Promotion and marketing (in %)	Wages, overheads and administration (in euros)	Wages, overheads and administration (in %)	Other (please specify) (in euros)	Other (please specify) (in %)	Total of the operating expenditure

- ***Budget for capital expenditure***

- What is the breakdown of the income to be received from the public sector to cover capital expenditure in connection with the title year? Please fill in the table below:

Income from the public sector to cover capital expenditure	in euros	%
National Government		
City		
Region		
EU (with exception of the Melina Mercouri Prize)		
Other		
Total		

- Have the public finance authorities (city, region, State) already voted on or made financial commitments to cover capital expenditure? If not, when will they do so?

- What is your fund raising strategy to seek financial support from Union programmes/funds to cover capital expenditure?

- If appropriate, please insert a table here that specifies which amounts will be spent for new cultural infrastructure to be used in the framework of the title year.

b) Organisational structure

- Please give an outline of the intended governance and delivery structure for the implementation of the European Capital of Culture year

c) Contingency planning

- What are the main strengths and weaknesses of your project? How are you planning to overcome weaknesses identified?

d) Marketing and communication

- Please provide with an outline of the city's intended marketing and communication strategy for the European Capital of Culture year.

- How does the city plan to highlight that the European Capital of Culture is an action of the European Union?

6. Capacity to deliver

- Please confirm and supply evidence that you have broad and strong political support and a sustainable commitment from the relevant local, regional and national public authorities.

- Please confirm and provide evidence that your city has or will have adequate and viable infrastructure to host the title. To do that, please answer the following questions:

    - Explain briefly how the European Capital of Culture will make use of and develop the city's cultural infrastructure.

- What are the city's assets in terms of accessibility (regional, national and international transport)?

- What is the city's absorption capacity in terms of tourists' accommodation?

- In terms of cultural, urban and tourism infrastructure what are the projects (including renovation projects) that your city plan to carry out in connection with the European Capital of Culture action between now and the year of the title?

Selection questionnaire:

Introduction – General considerations

- Has the concept of the programme described for the ECoC year changed between the pre-selection and the selection stage? If yes, please describe the new concept and explain the reasons for the change.

1. Contribution to the long-term strategy

- Describe any changes to the cultural strategy since the preselection stage, and the role of the ECOC pre-selection in these changes, if relevant. Indicate specifically which priorities of this strategy the European Capital of Culture action intends to contribute to, and how.

- Have your intentions in terms of long-term impact of the European Capital of Culture action on the city changed since pre-selection? If yes, please describe the changes or further impact foreseen.

- Describe your plans for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the title on your city and for disseminating the results of the evaluation. In particular, the following questions could be considered:

    - Who will carry out the evaluation?
    - What objectives and milestones will be included in your evaluation plan, between the designation and the year of the title?
    - What baseline studies or surveys do you intend to use?
    - What sort of information will you track and monitor?
    - How will you define "success"?
    - Over what time frame and how regularly will the evaluation be carried out?
    - How will the results be disseminated?

To get guidance for answering this question, please read the Guidelines established by the European Commission for the cities' own evaluations at the following web address:

https://ec.europa.eu/culture/sites/default/files/2021-04/ecoc-guidelines-for-cities-own-evaluations-2020-2033.pdf

2. Cultural and artistic content

- Describe in detail the artistic vision and the strategy for the cultural programme of the year outlined at pre-selection stage, explaining any changes brought in since pre-selection.

- Describe the structure of the cultural programme, including the range and diversity of the activities and the main events that will mark the year.

  For each one, please provide with information about project partners and estimated budget.

- How will the events and activities that will constitute the cultural programme for the year be chosen?

- How will the cultural programme combine local cultural heritage and traditional art forms with new, innovative and experimental cultural expressions?

- How has the city involved local artists and cultural organisations in the conception and implementation of the cultural programme?

- Please give some concrete examples and name some local artists and cultural organisations with which cooperation is envisaged and specify the type of exchanges in question.

3. European dimension

- Elaborate on the scope and quality of the activities:

    - Promoting the cultural diversity of Europe, intercultural dialogue and greater mutual understanding between European citizens;

    - Highlighting the common aspects of European cultures, heritage and history, as well as European integration and current European themes;

    - Featuring European artists, cooperation with operators and cities in different countries, and transnational partnerships.

    - Name some European and international artists, operators and cities with which cooperation is envisaged and specify the type of exchanges in question. Name the transnational partnerships your city has already established or plans to establish.

- Can you explain in detail your strategy to attract the interest of a broad European and international public?

- Describe the links developed or to be developed between your cultural programme and the cultural programme of other cities holding the European Capital of Culture title.

4. Outreach

- Explain in detail how the local population and your civil society have been involved in the preparation of the application and will participate in the implementation of the year.

- How will the title create in your city new and sustainable opportunities for a wide range of citizens to attend or participate in cultural activities, in particular young people, volunteers and the marginalised and disadvantaged, including minorities? Please also elaborate on the accessibility of these activities to persons with disabilities and the elderly. Specify the relevant parts of the programme planned for these various groups.

- Explain in detail your strategy for audience development, and in particular the link with education and the participation of schools.

5. Management

a) Finance

- ***Operating budget for the title year***

    - Income to cover operating expenditure:

- Please confirm or update the budget figures using the tables below. Explain any differences with regards to pre-selection.

- Total operating budget (i.e. funds that are specifically set aside to cover operational expenditure)

Total income to cover operating expenditure (in euros)	From the public sector (in euros)	From the public sector (in %)	From the private sector (in euros)	From the private sector (in %)

- Income from the public sector:

- What is the breakdown of the income to be received from the public sector to cover operating expenditure? Please fill in the table below:

Income from the public sector to cover operating expenditure	in euros	%
National Government		
City		
Region		
EU (with exception of the Melina Mercouri Prize)		
Other		
Total		

- Have the public finance authorities (City, Region, State) already voted on or made financial commitments to cover operating expenditure? If not, when will they do so?

- What is your fund raising strategy to seek financial support from Union programmes/funds to cover operating expenditure?

- According to what timetable should the income to cover operating expenditure be received by the city and/or the body responsible for preparing and implementing the ECoC project if the city receives the title of European Capital of Culture?

Source of income for operating expenditure	Year -5*	Year -4*	Year -3*	Year -2*	Year -1*	ECOC year
EU						
National government						
City						
Region						
Sponsors						
Other						

* Please fill in the appropriate date

- Income from the private sector:

- What is the fund-raising strategy to seek support from private sponsors? What is the plan for involving sponsors in the event?

- Operating expenditure:

- Please provide a breakdown of the operating expenditure, by filling in the table below.

Programme expenditure (in euros)	Programme expenditure (in %)	Promotion and marketing (in euros)	Promotion and marketing (in %)	Wages, overheads and administration (in euros)	Wages, overheads and administration (in %)	Other (please specify) (in euros)	Other (please specify) (in %)	Total of the operating expenditure

- Planned timetable for spending operating expenditure:

Timetable for spending*	Programme expenditure (in euros)	Programme expenditure (in %)	Promotion and marketing (in euros)	Promotion and marketing (in %)	Wages, overheads and administration (in euros)	Wages, overheads and administration (in %)	Other (please specify) (in euros)	Other (please specify) (in %)
Year n-5								
Year n-4								
Year n-3								
Year n-2								
Year n-1								
ECoC year								
Year n+1								
Later								

*Please fill in the appropriate date

- ***Budget for capital expenditure***

- What is the breakdown of the income to be received from the public sector to cover capital expenditure in connection with the title year? Please fill in the table below:

Income from the public sector to cover capital expenditure	in euros	%
National Government		
City		
Region		
EU (with exception of the Melina Mercouri Prize)		
Other		
Total		

- Have the public finance authorities (city, region, State) already voted on or made financial commitments to cover capital expenditure? If not, when will they do so?

- What is your fund raising strategy to seek financial support from Union programmes/funds to cover capital expenditure?

- According to what timetable should the income to cover capital expenditure be received by the city and/or the body responsible for preparing and implementing the ECoC project if the city receives the title of European Capital of Culture? Please fill in the table below.

Source of income for capital expenditure	Year -5*	Year -4*	Year -3*	Year -2*	Year -1*	ECOC year
EU						
National government						
City						
Region						
Sponsors						
Other						

* Please fill in the appropriate date

- If appropriate, please insert a table here that specifies which amounts will be spent for new cultural infrastructure to be used in the framework of the title year.

b) Organisational structure

- What kind of governance and delivery structure is envisaged for the implementation of the European Capital of Culture year?

- How will this structure be organised at management level? Please make clear who will be the person(s) having the final responsibility for global leadership of the project?

- How will you ensure that this structure has the staff with the appropriate skills and experience to plan, manage and deliver the cultural programme for the European Capital of Culture project?

These two questions above could be answered by enclosing in particular diagrams, the statutes of the organisation, its staff numbers and the curricula vitae of those primarily responsible.

- How will you make sure that there is an appropriate cooperation between the local authorities and this structure including the artistic team?

- According to which criteria and under which arrangements have the general director and the artistic director been chosen – or will be chosen? What are – or will be – their respective profiles? When will they take up the appointment? What will be their respective fields of action?

c) Contingency planning

- Have you carried out/planned a risk assessment exercise?

- What are your planned mitigating measures?

d) Marketing and communication

- Could your artistic programme be summed up by a slogan?

- What is the city's intended marketing and communication strategy for the European Capital of Culture year, in particular with regard to the media strategy and the mobilisation of large audiences? This includes the use of digital communication channels.

- Please describe the partnerships planned or established with media with a view to ensuring wide coverage of the event

- How will you mobilise your own citizens as communicators of the year to the outside world?

- How does the city plan to highlight that the European Capital of Culture is an action of the European Union?

6. Capacity to deliver

- Please supply evidence of the continuous political support and commitment from the relevant authorities.

- Please detail the state of play of the foreseen infrastructure projects detailed at pre-selection stage, including the planned timetable for the works. Please clarify the links with the European Capital of Culture project.

7. Additional information

- Add any further information that if you deem useful in relation with your application.

ANNEX 2

DECLARATION OF HONOUR BY THE APPLICANT CITY

The undersigned [*insert name of the signatory of this form*]:

representing the following legal person:

full official name:

official legal form:

full official address:

VAT registration number:

- certify that the applicant city is not in one of the following situations which would exclude it from receiving Union prizes:

a) is bankrupt or being wound up, is having its affairs administered by the courts, has entered into an arrangement with creditors, has suspended business activities, is the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;

b) has been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct by a judgment of a competent authority of a Member State which has the force of *res judicata*;

c) has been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the Commission can justify including by decisions of the European Investment Bank and international organisations;

d) is not in compliance with all its obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions and the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which it is established, with those of the country of the authorising officer responsible and those of the country where the action is to be implemented;

e) has been the subject of a judgement which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation, money laundering or any other illegal activity, where such activity is detrimental to the Union's financial interests;

f) is subject to an administrative penalty for being guilty of misrepresenting the information required as a condition of participation in a procurement procedure or another grant award procedure or failing to supply this information, or having been declared to be in serious breach of its obligations under contracts or agreements covered by the Union's budget.

- declare that the applicant city:

g) has no conflict of interests in connection with the prize; a conflict of interests could arise in particular as a result of economic interests, political or national affinity, family, emotional life or any other shared interest;

h) will inform the Commission, without delay, of any situation considered a conflict of interests or which could give rise to a conflict of interests;

i) has not granted and will not grant, has not sought and will not seek, has not attempted and will not attempt to obtain, and has not accepted and will not accept any advantage, financial or in kind, to or from any party whatsoever, where such advantage constitutes an illegal practice or involves corruption, either directly or indirectly, inasmuch as it is an incentive or reward relating to the award of the prize;

j) provided accurate, sincere and complete information within the context of this prize award procedure.

- I declare that the applicant city is fully eligible in accordance with the criteria set out in the specific call for submission of applications.

- I acknowledge that according to Article 131 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union ('the Financial Regulation'), as amended and Article 145 of Commission Delegated Regulation No 1268/2012 of 29 October 2012 on the rules of application of Regulation 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union ('the Rules of Application') as

amended applicants found guilty of misrepresentation may be subject to administrative and financial penalties under certain conditions.

If selected to be awarded a prize, the applicant city accepts the conditions as laid down in the call for submission of applications.

Last name, first name:

Title or position in the city:

Signature [and official stamp] of the applicant:

Date:

Your reply to the call for submission of applications will involve the recording and processing of personal data (such as your name, address and CV), which will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC. Unless indicated otherwise, your replies to the questions in this form and any personal data requested are required to assess your application in accordance with the specifications of the call for submission of applications and will be processed solely for that purpose by DutchCulture. Details concerning the processing of your personal data are available on the privacy statement at the page: http://ec.europa.eu/dataprotectionofficer/privacystatement_publicprocurement_en.pdf.

Your personal data may be registered in the Early Detection and Exclusion System (EDES) by the Accounting Officer of the Commission, should you be in one of the situations mentioned in:

- Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union ('the Financial Regulation'), as amended by Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2015/1929 (for more information see the Privacy Statement on http://ec.europa.eu/budget/contracts_grants/info_contracts/legal_entities/legal_entities_en.cfm), or
- the Commission Regulation 2008/1302 of 17.12.2008 on the Central Exclusion Database (for more information see the Privacy Statement on

  http://ec.europa.eu/budget/explained/management/protecting/protect_en.cfm)