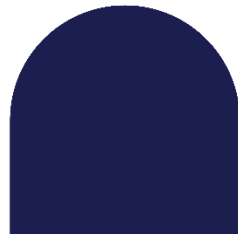


Regional Cultural Cooperation Programme

Guidelines and Regulations 2025



ARTS
COUNCIL
MALTA

ISSUED: JUNE 2025

ALLOCATIONS

SESSION BUDGET	MAXIMUM ELIGIBLE AMOUNT PER PROJECT
EUR 120,000	EUR 20,000

CO-FUNDING	DISBURSEMENT
The fund may cover up to 80% of total project costs	70% upon signing of grant agreement 30% following approval of final report

TIMEFRAMES

DEADLINE	RESULTS	ELIGIBLE TIMEFRAME
29 th July 2025	4 th September 2025	5 th September 2025 – 4 th March 2027

1. Introduction

This programme will help Regions and those involved in their councils to support and maintain Malta's creative and cultural ecology, whilst practicing cultural diplomacy by enabling cultural activities and collaborations with creative practitioners and cultural operators to:

1. Introduce programmes that will actively involve participants of various demographics (age, gender, ethnicity, nationality) within the various cultural regional areas.
2. Nurture cross-sectoral synergies at local and national levels to recognise arts and culture as essential for the well-being of all.
3. Maintain, build, and foster new and existing strategic partnerships, collaborations, and networks nationally to enable further opportunities for artists and practitioners.
4. Advocate for the involvement of diverse communities in decision-making processes, whilst providing opportunities for community involvement and responsibility to widen the scope of engagement within the arts and culture.

The Regional council will need to provide a proposed programme of related activities with a set of common objectives, which may include events, productions, performances, exhibitions, festivals, community cultural initiatives, research, training, and development initiatives in order to make the case for their proposals in line with the respective Regional Cultural Strategies. The programme aims to facilitate more collaborations between a Region and cultural operators for each cultural project, which are respective of each Region, as well as beyond, to encourage cross-sectoral engagement.

The Regional Cultural Cooperation Programme aims to invest in:

- Increased cultural participation of all generations and demographics across Malta and Gozo.
- Enhanced communication and tangible practice between Regions and cultural operators
- Diversity in cultural and regional programming
- A culture that is much more representative of Maltese society at large, by extending our practice beyond the traditional.

Applicants are encouraged to give due consideration, as appropriate, to the principles explained in the [Right to Culture – Resource Pack](#) when developing their proposal in relation to how they engage with communities and the considerations of everyone's cultural rights in their work. This resource pack is aimed at increasing awareness regarding inclusivity and supporting the implementation of cultural rights in our day-to-day practice.

Applicants are also expected to give due consideration, as appropriate, to the main principles outlined in the [Charter for the Status of the Artist](#) when proposing their operational and programming activities to ensure fair and just working conditions for artists. These include the right to artistic freedom, improved accessibility, formal/informal/non-formal skill recognition, decent socio-economic conditions, non-discrimination and equity, ethical considerations and adherence to intellectual property rights and international labour law. The Charter for the Status of the Artist is meant to provide a dynamic frame of reference for any legislation, policy, or initiative which directly or indirectly impacts artists and cultural and creative sectors, ensuring that any action is aligned with the ultimate long-term vision of elevating the status of artists in Malta in line with their tangible value to society.

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 is the Executive Secretary on behalf of the Region. Applicants cannot be employees of Arts Council Malta or involved in the management of the Programme.

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 legally 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. In the case of a beneficiary who does not carry out economic activity and as a result is not registered for VAT, the beneficiary has the duty to ascertain that they will receive a fiscal receipt for the goods and services received.

Community

- A group of people who share values, customs, identities, or practices.

Creative practitioners

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

Cultural operators

- All individuals or organisations operating within the cultural and creative sectors.

Disbursement of Funds

- The grant will be disbursed as indicated on page 2 of these guidelines and regulations. A cheque payment will be issued on behalf of the applicant. The applicant must have an active bank account when submitting the application.

Diversity

- Individual differences in terms of age, gender, sexual orientation, ability, ethnicity, culture, belief, language and socioeconomic background in communities, creatives and audiences.

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 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 Maltese residence permit; or of a Maltese citizenship certificate; or of a Maltese passport.

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 (e.g. track records, portfolios, artistic CVs, official correspondence confirming rental of space, permits or other).

Maximum funding:

- There is a ceiling amount of €20,000, per project to be allocated. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis, depending on the project.

Programme

- The programme of activities for a specific period of time which may revolve around artistic programming (e.g. a festival, a series of events, productions, exhibitions, etc.), capacity building and development programming, outreach programming as well as related research & development and start-up activities.

Public Cultural Organisations

- Public cultural entities falling under the remit of Arts Council Malta, which include Teatru Manoel, Mediterranean Conference Centre, Malta Philharmonic Orchestra, Fondazzjoni Kreattività, Pjazza Teatru Rjal, Valletta Cultural Agency, Malta International Contemporary Arts Space, Festivals Malta, and the National Agency for Performing Arts.

Voluntary organisation

- An organisation legally established and/or publicly registered in Malta, having 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, proposals must be for a duration of a minimum of 2 months.

3.1 Who can apply?

The grant is open to Regions in collaboration with one or more of the following:

- Creative practitioners/Cultural operators
- Groups, collectives, and consortia
- Voluntary organisations enrolled with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations.

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.

3.2 Who cannot apply?

- 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.
- Beneficiaries who did not submit or complete at least one final report related to a previous grant funded by Arts Council Malta within the established timeframes.
- Beneficiaries who have not honoured previous funding commitments.
- Applicants who do not qualify under the definition of applicant for this programme.

3.3 What costs can be covered?¹

This grant may cover up to 80% of the following costs (up to a maximum of €20,000 per project, whichever is the lowest). The remaining 20% of the total project cost cannot be covered through other funding programmes managed by Arts Council Malta or any other Maltese State-funded programme dedicated to arts and culture.

- Artistic fees;
- Consultation, research and advice from professionals regarding for example, digitalisation, ethical issues, risk management, and health & safety;
- Contingencies, not exceeding 10% of the total cost;

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

- Fees related to training and development (these need to be justified based on the proposed programme);
- Health & safety measures;
- Hire/purchase of equipment (purchase of equipment will only be considered if deemed necessary to the project);
- Insurance;
- Marketing, PR, and communications;
- Other fees directly related to project implementation (including but not limited to mentors, service providers, participation fees, linguistic fees, etc.);
- Project management (including but not limited to administration, coordination, development);
- Production costs;
- Rental of spaces;
- Subscriptions to virtual platforms or other digital services where relevant.

For more information about presenting your budget, refer to our General Budget Guidelines available on <https://artscouncilmalta.gov.mt/funding-and-grants/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 other public agency, Government department or Ministry;
- Costs declared by the beneficiary and already covered by another grant of the Government of Malta;
- Fees for services provided by Public Cultural Organisations or other public agency, Government department or Ministry, including the Division for Local Government;
- Costs which are already covered through usual operational budgets (space which is owned by the applicant or the partner/supporting organisation/individual);
- Funding for the creation or upholding of bursaries, contests, competitions, prizes or scholarships;
- 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 submitted after noon (12:00) of the respective day of the deadline;
- Applications for funding the creation or upholding of contests, competitions, bursaries, prizes, or scholarships;
- Applications for traditional activities and festivities;
- Events held on a regular basis, including annual projects, annual festivals, school/annual shows, regular training programmes;

- 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 Festivals Malta, Annual Cultural Activities Scheme, VOPS, National Book Council, Valletta Cultural Agency, Malta Arts Scholarships, or any other State-funded programme dedicated to Maltese arts/culture;
- Projects that would have already started and/or taken place before the result is notified to applicant(s);
- Projects whose duration does not entirely fall within the eligible timeframe.

Any other activity which may be developed outside the scope of the *Regional Cultural Cooperation Programme* is not eligible for support.

Applicants can submit only one application under the same call.

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 ideas of the proposed programme of activities as well as its strategic vision, creativity, applicability, aims, and objectives in relation to the applicant. This may also include the collaborations being proposed, the nature of projects and/or productions and/or events etc., whether they are regular or new, relevant background information on the applicant/s, and feasibility and envisaged impacts of the programme. The application will also need to refer to any plans for professional development and capacity building that form part of the proposal. Thus, the following questions are to be addressed:

- What is the artistic rationale and specific objectives that inform your proposed programme of activities? (15 marks)
- How is the proposal relevant to Arts Council Malta's Strategy 2025, ACM's Right to Culture Policy, and in line with the respective Regional Cultural Strategies initially established? (This should also include evidence of how the proposal considers the principles within the Right to Culture – Resource Kit and the Charter for the Status of the Artist as in Section 1) (10 marks)
- What are the anticipated and desired outcomes of your proposal? How will you determine whether these outcomes are likely to be achieved or not? (15 marks)

4.2 Criterion 2: Project management (20 marks)

This criterion considers the level of commitment and preparation prior to the proposal as well as the proposed plan to deliver your project and achieve the targeted objectives. Thus, the implementation timeline for deliverables and relevant timeframes needs to be made evident and justified accordingly, together with the relevant risk management. This is also applicable to applications focusing on activities that are primarily aimed towards the development and capacity building of the applicant/s. The following questions need to be addressed:

- How are you planning to deliver the proposed programme of activities? (e.g. timeframes, workplans, responsibilities, skills and track record of people managing projects, logistics, and contingency plans). (10 marks)
- How is this proposal relevant and challenging to your artistic development and to that of your collaborators and/or the community being actively engaged with or addressed through the programme? The collaborators' track record is required. (10 marks)

4.3 Criterion 3: Audience engagement (20 marks)

This criterion considers the engagement and the development of established and/or new audiences. Engagement refers to the role, the nature of involvement in the programme of activities, and the experience offered to the audience. Audiences may include internal and/or external stakeholder groups depending on the nature of the proposed programme of activities. For example, if the primary aim of the programme is towards capacity building, the audiences may include collaborators and any other participants who are involved in the process. If the programme includes a series of public events or productions, the audiences may include members from the general public. This criterion emphasizes the level of engagement based on what is being proposed by the applicant/s in line with the following questions:

- Who are your target audiences (whether that is internal and/or external) and why? What approaches will be adopted to reach these audiences? How have you identified and/or categorised your audience/s? Refer to the wider communities that are to be addressed through the proposed programme. (10 marks)
- Can you provide an outline of the marketing, PR, and communications plan as deemed relevant for the proposed programme of activities? Why did you opt for your chosen methods? (Note: communications plan also includes internal dissemination which may not be at a public level) (10 marks)

4.4 Criterion 4: Budget (20 marks)

This criterion considers how well-planned and realistic the presented budget plan is. It also considers efforts to secure funds from other sources. The following questions will need to be addressed:

- What are the budgeted costs that are both directly and indirectly linked to the delivery of the proposed programme of activities? (e.g. fixed costs that are ongoing such as maintenance as well as artistic fees for specific productions)
- What is the budgeted income for the proposed programme of activities? If no income is envisaged, what is the justification?

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. If you do not have a profile, 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.

Applicants are required to register a profile on the ACM's CRM at least two weeks prior to the deadline of the call.

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 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, and the amount awarded can be published by the Council.

A decision on funding will be made on the strength of the submitted 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

- A copy of the VAT Certificate of Registration, if applicable
- Audiovisuals / portfolio showing the applicant's or collaborator's work, as relevant to the proposal (Audiovisuals up to 5MB may be uploaded directly in the application form. Larger files may be provided as a link).
- A proposed programme of activities for the period being applied for. This may include any artistic and cultural events, productions, performances, exhibitions, festivals, training, and development initiatives that are relevant to the objectives of the applicant.
- If applicable, a sample of previous artistic programmes and related documentation, if the programme being applied for is based upon previously held activities as may be relevant to the application. If this is not applicable explain why.
- Signed letters of intent from each collaborator involved in the Programme.
- The track record of the applicants and collaborators. This should include a CV, artistic portfolios, and related documentation.

6. Evaluation process

This scheme is non-competitive and proposals 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 the Council on the basis of their professional experience. Arts Council Malta 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 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 official 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 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, the collaborative and co-creating components and the project achievements, by not later than six to eight (6-8) weeks after your project has concluded. Your report should include reflections on how collaborative work benefited the project and vice versa, including suggestions on how to strengthen/reshape engagement with audiences and communities.

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 (a minimum of 5, high res images should be submitted), blogs and other documentation.

In the case of a grant that does not exceed ten-thousand-euro (€10,000) you will be required to present a final detailed budget together with all supporting documents including VAT invoices and/or fiscal receipts.

In the case of a grant of a minimum of ten-thousand-euro (€10,000) beneficiaries must provide a final detailed and certified budget breakdown. The budget must be prepared in compliance with applicable

financial standards and aligned with these guidelines and regulations, and they must be certified by a warranted accountant or auditor.

The Council retains the right to request the Beneficiary to submit the VAT invoices and/or fiscal receipts to support the detailed certified budget.

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 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, the Council 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.

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 two weeks before the submission deadline.

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

Guidelines updated on 14th May 2025