EUROPEAN CAPITALS OF CULTURE

An initiative of the European Union with cities across Europe
How to draft a bid-book that will make your City the next ECOC?
A simple idea...

Highlight **diversity of cultures** in Europe and the features **they share**

Promote the role of culture in the **city making**

Europe = more **attractive** place to work and live
... which is also demanding and complex

- Very high visibility across Europe and beyond...
- A multi-faceted event, with sometimes (conflicting) agendas
- Long-time process
... and ambitious

• A large scale **cultural** event of one year
  ... developed for the title and with a strong **European** dimension

• Not about what a city looks like or its past/heritage, but what it **will do** (programme) during the year

• A title awarded to one city in 2 Member States. (+ 1 city in a candidate country/potential candidate/EFTA/EEA country every three years)
At European level

• Main objectives:
  – Promoting cultural diversity and common features of cultures
    > "Sense of belonging to a common cultural area"
  – Fostering contribution of culture to long-term development of your city

• On a more operational level
  – Enhancing the range, diversity and European dimension of the cultural offering in cities, including through transnational co-operation
  – Widening access to and participation in culture
  – Strengthening capacity of the cultural sector + links with other sectors
  – Improving international profile of cities through culture
At local level

= Your own objectives

• On top of the EU level objectives

• Can be very varied, according to your own local priorities and circumstances

• Be clear about what you want to achieve

• Be realistic about what you can achieve
The process

• Manage by your country (or EC if not a Member States)

• Need to send a written application answering all the questions of the call by the deadline set in the call. Pre-selection then selection.

• In English (+ another official language of the EU)

• Respect the size limit
Six categories of award criteria

• ECOC = high standards reflected in demanding criteria. Is this for your City? Is it the right moment?

• See the criteria as a tool to prepare your bid and – if elected – to plan the title-year

• Six categories with equal weighting – All are important to ensure a successful ECOC

• Be concise and sharp in your answers
Six categories of award criteria

- Contribution to the long term strategy
- Cultural and artistic content
- European dimension
- Capacity to deliver
- Outreach
- Management
Contribution to the long term strategy

- At application stage, you need a City Cultural Strategy.

- plan to strengthen the Capacity of the Cultural and Creative sectors.

- consider the long-term cultural, social and economic impact of the title on the City

- Monitor and evaluate the impact of the title on the City and disseminate it.
Cultural and artistic content

- a clear and coherent artistic vision and strategy for the cultural programme.

- involvement of local artists and cultural organization.

- range and diversity of the activities and quality

- Combining local/traditional with experimental cultural expressions.
European dimension

Quality and scope of **activities** about:

- Cultural diversity of Europe, intercultural dialogue and greater mutual understanding.
- Common aspects of European cultures, heritage and history as well as European integration and current European themes.

**European artists** and transnational cooperation with **operators** from different countries, including other ECOCs.

A strategy to attract the interest of a broad **European public**.
Outreach

- Involvement of local population and civil society in preparing the bid-book

- Creation of new cultural opportunities for all.

- Have an overall strategy for audience development, also with the education world.
Management

- Governance and delivery structure
- Recruitment procedure and skills of the staff
- The marketing and communication strategy
- The fund-raising strategy and proposed budget.
Capacity to deliver

- Long-term cross-party political commitment to the project
- Close working relationship between ECOC Team and City administration
- Tourist and visitor capacity
- Major new infrastructures?
You are selected, Congratulations!
Now, the process starts...
The monitoring phase

• Organised by the Commission with the assistance of the Panel to provide you with support and guidance + measure compliance and progress

• Three official monitoring meetings
  – Three years before the year
  – 18 months before the year
  – two months before the year

• On the basis of the final Panel's recommendation, payment of the Melina Mercouri Prize few months before the year start.
The Melina Mercouri Prize

- Only direct EU funding = 1,5 M from Creative Europe or successor programme

- Reinforced conditionality of the Melina Mercouri Prize

  - Special attention will be given to:
    - The stability of the budgets
    - The independence of the artistic team
    - The European dimension
    - The visibility of the EU
    - The plans for monitoring and evaluation

  - The Prize will be paid during the year of the title
Online Resources

- Decision No 445/2014/EU of the EP and the Council

- The call for applications and the rules of procedure published in your country

- The guide to cities preparing a bid

- Two studies on our website + Monitoring and Evaluation report

- Internet: applications from former candidate cities / future ECOCs
Thank you for your attention

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