



PROCEEDINGS

Moderated Open Discussion

The European Funding Programmes for Culture

19 October 2023

Nicosia Municipality Conference Hall, Cyprus

The **Moderated Open Discussion** "The European Funding Programmes for Culture" was organised in the framework of the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union.

Leader:

Pierides Foundation

Partners:

PUBLICS – Helsinki, Finland

Valand Academy – Gothenburg, Sweden

New Hand Lab – Covilhã, Portugal

University of Thessaly – Volos, Greece

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona – Spain

Université de Picardie Jules Verne – Amiens, France



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The European Funding Programmes for Culture

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Place:

Nicosia Municipality Conference Hall

Organised by:

Pierides Foundation

Programme Coordinator:

Sophia Antoniadou

Moderator:

Apostolos Kouroupakis

Panel members:

Michalis Karakatsanis (Creative Europe Desk Cyprus),
Yiannis Toumazis (Cyprus), Sophia Antoniadou (Cyprus),
Annabelle Antas (Finland), Sarah Tuck (Sweden),
Alexander Guerreiro (Portugal), Zisis Kotionis (Greece),
Jessica Jaques (Spain), Andri Michael (France)

Sophia Antoniadou

I would like to welcome you all to the Open Up Nicosia Festival, which starts today with many art events, exhibitions, workshops, and performances. This is the first stop of a journey that actually started four years ago, went through covid restrictions the first two years, but managed to accomplish all its objectives and activities and we are all very happy about this. These activities were laboratories and workshops on many art forms, which aimed to enhance skills of underrepresented talented people from Cyprus, Finland, Sweden, Portugal, Greece, Spain and France.

The purpose of our gathering here today is first to have an open discussion regarding challenges on the practices of European cultural projects based on our experience from the Open Up Project, then to talk about sustainability of such projects and, finally, have a first-hand briefing on the new Creative Europe Programme.

On behalf of the Pierides Foundation and the team of NiMAC, I welcome and thank each one of you today for your participation, and look forward to the next four festive days in Nicosia. Thank you. I now give the floor to Apostolos Kouroupakis, who is the moderator for today's discussion.

Apostolos Kouroupakis

Thank you. I welcome you too to this discussion and I would like to start with my first question to Yiannis Toumazis and Annabelle Antas. In your opinion, how has the Open Up Project contributed to the promotion of overlooked, neglected creative individuals?

Yiannis Toumazis

Thank you very much Apostole. Before answering your question, allow me to also welcome you dear friends, dear partners from all over Europe, dear cultural producers from Cyprus. I see many dear friends here.

As Sophia said, it has been a long journey, a four-year journey. A difficult one, because it started during the Covid pandemic, so we all had to readjust and reschedule our activities.

I am also very glad to welcome to Cyprus some of the members of Trans Europe Halles. As you probably know, Trans Europe Halles is a large European network of cultural centres around Europe, and NiMAC is an active member of this network. Tomorrow, the Mediterranean hub of Trans Europe Halles will be established in Cyprus. So, that is great news because this hub will be active in the difficult region of the Eastern Mediterranean. As you all know, we also have a partner from Lebanon arriving today, so with the unpleasant situation that is developing in our region (Israel-Hamas war), you know how important it is for all of us dealing with culture to be present in these difficult times. So, I warmly welcome the initiative of Trans Europe Halles to establish this Mediterranean hub at NiMAC in Nicosia.

Yes, it was a difficult project for many reasons. First of all, I would like to say how important it is to be able to lead and to organise a Creative Europe Programme; a very competitive programme. This is the third one that Pierides Foundation manages as a leader. The first

EU project was in 2004, when Cyprus entered the European Union, and our focus in that programme was always the Mediterranean and the countries around the Mediterranean Sea, but also the connection of our neighbourhood with broader Europe. That was the idea for this Open Up Project. In fact, we have here next to me Sarah Tuck on behalf of Valand Academy. If you remember Sarah, we had a brainstorming discussion at NiMAC one year before we got the programme, about how to name it and the word Open Up – Open Up Europe was the dominant one. We think that we still need to open up and we need to bring culture to the floor but not as a parallel activity I strongly believe that culture can play a very active role in the overall strategic planning of governments and of their policies. So, the idea of the Open Up Project was to try and give the floor to people, to artists, to creative individuals, who would not have been able, otherwise, to get the knowledge, the knowhow, the pleasure, let's say, to work in professional environments, to work with established or experienced artists and to manage, promote and sustain their work. You know, additionally the issue of migration, the issue of movements around the Mediterranean and in Europe for all these years, which is quite violent and sad and unhappy, puts our countries at the centre of these difficult circumstances and issues.

Well, unfortunately I did not get involved in the project as much as I would have liked to due to my professional, let's say, life, but from what I saw there was quite an active participation from creative people in all the countries and what you will also find out tonight, there is a variety of approaches in every country. Each one had different circumstances, different difficulties, different

possibilities, and I think you will see this in the exhibition, curated by Xenios Symeonides, which will be inaugurated tonight at the festival. In addition, through the Nicosia festival's programme and the artists' performances, you will discover all these differences because each space, each place, has specific local differences, necessities and needs. And I think that's what the workshops in different countries tried to accommodate.

It certainly was not easy but I think that overall it is quite a successful venture. First of all, because we are all gathered here today. We made new friends, new collaborators, new partners and this is the idea of this project, especially because local cultural funding is so low in most of the countries that we come from – in others more, in others less. I think what we need to propagate and act upon is to really stress the importance of augmenting and rising the local situations towards culture, but also work and profit from these European projects that are very vital for the very, very difficult existence of culture producers, of cultural centres, of cultural institutions across the board. So, I believe I have answered your question.

Apostolos Kouroupakis

And Ms Annabelle Antas?

Annabelle Antas

Hello, and thank you. I am representing PUBLICS, an agency, an art association based in Finland. So, we are, I would say, probably one of the smallest organisations of this partner group in the Open Up

Programme. We are a small to medium size association and our work mostly follows the practice of a working together model, meaning that we always work with other partners as our mandate and mission.

So, to answer your question, I suppose what I really want to say at first, is that we prefer to use the term underrepresented and under-supported artists, and it's worth noting that our focus during the four years of the Open Up Project was to work with two main groups, these being professional cultural workers and artists and young people between the ages of 17 and 21. This has been a great and rich experience for us to expand on this kind of working together model that we have and we think that the people that we work with have fewer opportunities, at least where we are based, and I suppose many of the people we worked with come from other places and they speak many different languages.

At the beginning of the project, we invited other small artist groups, cultural groups and other associations into PUBLICS to offer a series of what we call para-hosting events, where we hosted them and they invited their own audiences, which in return expanded and opened up participation for us to learn new things and have new audiences. Those para-hosting listening sessions were incredibly important for us and for those small organisations and cultural groups that we invited in and there, giving them the opportunity to invite their personal audiences and ours and bring all those together. I think that's pretty much it. Thank you.

Apostolos Kouroupakis

Thank you both. So, as I understand it, it's a very challenging ongoing

project. My second question goes to Ms Sarah Tuck and Mr Zisis Kotionis. Sustainability is the keyword to every EU funded project. Do you plan to sustain any of the Open Up activities and how?

Sarah Tuck

Hi, I am Sarah and I am from Valand Academy, which is part of Gothenburg University in Sweden. I think in response to your question, may be the first thing to really elaborate on is the fact that participating countries are working from different contexts. So, there is quite a significant difference in some ways between being a participant country, which is higher education to an art organisation. So, within Gothenburg University and within the art school, there is a lot of language around decolonising the curriculum, and a lot of related vocabularies around inclusivity and the university's role in terms of civil society.

What may be surprising, and this is where the issue of sustainability is really something that's got to be grappled with Gothenburg, is actually the most residentially segregated city in Europe and therefore the role of the University within civil society is actually a really critical question. So, rather than "decolonising the curriculum", the issue was how might this project prompt the university to be in a different type of configuration and relationship with new communities and the people who are living in the suburbs of the city.

I think what also arose during the time of this project was quite a significant political shift within Sweden. So, the far right is now a coalition partner in the government. That is a major shift in postwar

Swedish history that's kind of familiarly understood as being the kind of, you know, paragon of social democracy. Alongside that, I think that when using the language of culture, culture has now become increasingly, within Europe, a byword for cultural wars. I am originally from England and, therefore, I am also someone who is experiencing the aftermath of withdrawing from the European project.

So, I think that there's twofold on the question of sustainability. Is the sustainability of the European idea and also the sustainability of the meaning of this project for the participants and also for an organisational culture? I think there are three very discreet ways to think through that question and how it might be operationalised. A large part of the sustainability will be really on how effective the documentation and the dissemination is. In particular, in terms of Sweden's efforts in the programme. We did not want to undertake this work in a kind of like a charitable, benevolent kind of mode of thinking. Really, it was for us to understand this as something around a new sort of collaboration and mutual learning. So, what could we learn both as people but also organisationally in terms of our position within the city and the failings of the universities to really make an invitation and be adequately hospitable to new communities in Sweden. So, I think there's a lot to unpack, so I wouldn't kind of boldly say this is the pathway to sustainability because in each of the respective organisations it's going to be a question of how it is embedded in the organisational culture and how it may be operationalised from here on.

Apostolos Kouroupakis

Thank you, thank you very much. And Mr Zisis Kotionis?

Zisis Kotionis

Hello, from my side, Zisis Kotionis is my name and I work at the University of Thessaly. Basically, the question for us was how our participation in this programme would be an occasion, an opportunity for the University to open to the local society. We are working in Volos, a city in the centre of Greece. And, so, there was a question of opening and sustaining this openness with more permanent characteristics after the programme. Opening to the city, opening to the youth of the city, who do not have the opportunity to be included in the University, and also another aspect of this opening has to do with internationalisation of the processes, which takes part inside the University. So, these were some major issues we had to deal with and I think there is a positive outcome on that.

Talking about sustainability. The way that the university generally works in this context, and I think that we have to deal with the poor basically, and we are not successful in that. We are not successful because in order to keep on working on things, you have to be constantly, for example, supported; financially supported to do so. When the financial support ends, for example, now that the programme comes to an end. But in order to sustain activities, you need to support it financially and this support you cannot have from a university, which is really poor – the public university in Greece today, and works only on the edge. It gives salaries and reproduces itself as it is and does not give more attention and additional tools to sustain positive activities, such as those we had the last four years. So, basically, the problem is the financial support to achieve the evolution and the sustainability of what we already have done.

But talking about sustainability, I would like to also pose a question to all of us. What unites us is the need to connect in the scale of Europe. But at the same time, I was quite astonished and surprised when I initially saw the budget and the way that the funds were allocated to different sectors and saw that one huge sector in terms of percentage of the budget money was allocated to travelling. So, what unites us all here is the opportunity that we have to take the airplane and go from one city to the other. I think most of the ideas in Europe, the Erasmus programme, for example, are based on this mobility. So, looking to that from the ecological side we have to question it. We can't spend huge amounts of money in programmes to invest in the airlines. And I don't say it in a very strict political way, but thinking of how mobility could work with less CO2 emissions. This is a problem I think not only for our project, but generally speaking, how we could keep on connecting. Maybe, we will talk about the new forms of permanent stay here and there. Not these crazy things that we do. Two days here, two days there, always on an airplane. But think of new forms of mobility combined with more permanent situations. People not travelling or visiting, but also staying, for example, why not stay for a longer time in Nicosia. So, I think this is problematic; having to do with how mobility can be conceived nowadays in programmes.

Apostolos Kouroupakis

Thank you Mr. Kotionis and I would like to proceed with my third question to Alexander Guerreiro. And now that you have the experience of implementing the Open Up for the past four years, what would you have done better or differently? And what are the main

lessons you learned? What will you keep as best practices on this project?

Alexander Guerreiro

I am here to represent New Hand Lab in Covilhã, Portugal. I am substituting for Guida Rolo. She couldn't be here so I will try to do my best to answer the questions even if my experience does not extend to the four years. From what I understand throughout these four years is that it's hard to keep all the things that we wanted to do each time. I think it is a constant learning throughout time. We have some clear examples of occasions that really make us have to have flexible components and I am being really specific about the Covid pandemic and how we had to adapt to everything and how those things really teach us that there will be, and there can be different types of occasions when we will really have to keep a flexible mind and to prepare for future events like those. But it's not just Covid. I think that when dealing with a lot of people coming from different parties, it's always a challenge. We always had to be open minded about adjustments throughout the four years, and it is constant learning and the communication is also a fundamental part. On my part, it's hard to dig deeper into this question, thank you.

Michalis Karakatsanis

Unfortunately, I was not part of the project and congratulations to all of you. I am here representing the Creative Europe Desk here in Cyprus and actually the questions are very relevant to what we are doing also because there is an attempt during the past couple of years by the European Commission to collect all this kind of information

from the project leaders in order to combine them and be able to exchange this information and to disseminate the information as good practices for the future applicants. And actually, your feedback in terms of the whole project, I mean, the running of the whole project, but also, in terms of the functions of sustainability is very relevant and just to inform you there is a very recent publication by the European Commission also by the Creative Europe Programme regarding the greening aspect of the creative programme in general. There is a very big focus on greening the whole programme, and the whole structure of the programme, and all the methods that it uses and the methodologies, etc. There was a very recent publication of "Good Practices" as it is called for greening methods and from previous projects, for the Creative Europe and I suggest that this is something that you all go download and read. It will help you in preparing the next application because it seems that there will be a bigger focus on this aspect of greening and what we mean by greening and also about sustainability.

Sophia Antoniadou

So, what do you mean by greening, could you please elaborate because I am not sure what you mean.

Michalis Karakatsanis

There are two very broad points of view, let's say, regarding greening. The first one, is how the projects themselves implement and utilise green and sustainable methods for doing the day-to-day works. That means using digital methods, reducing the CO2 emissions, etc. It's not a matter of one size fits all, let me be clear about that. By that,

I mean that the European Commission understands that different projects and different budgets call for different approaches. The European Commission cannot expect from let's say a small project that has a total budget of €250,000 to be able to follow and utilise the same methods as a bigger programme. But there is a balance that you all need, we all need actually, to follow.

And the second aspect is how the projects themselves build awareness regarding the need for sustainable solutions and for different solutions for environmentally friendly solutions, etc.

Sophia Antoniadou

Do you mean that cultural projects should provide solutions for greening?

Michalis Karakatsanis

Not provide solutions themselves. We cannot expect from the cultural sector to solve the environmental problem, let's be clear about that. It's not something that the cultural sector has brought about. But, as you all know, the utilisation let's say of culture and instrumentalization of culture, in many aspects, is a very long-lasting theme that goes back decades. Actually, it started from the UK, but we see this focus again, in terms of how culture can be because if the cultural sector is talking about integrating culture in all aspects of policy at the same time, it seems that the culture sector needs to be able and be ready to actually use its power, its force, to build awareness regarding different social issues. I am here as a messenger. Don't shoot the messenger, just explaining.

Yiannis Toumazis

If I may intervene. But this could be done also through policies of the European Union, for example, if there are synergies with other major funding schemes, and other directors, for example, like the new European Bauhaus and how you could relate the Creative Europe Project, which is a very great but also a very antagonistic project. How could you expand this European funding to include culture, not as a marginal player, but as an active player in the formation of new policies. Culture should be integrated in all policy aspects of the European Union. That is what I strongly believe, and I think that then cultural actors and players could really think out of the box and not try to fill in the boxes. Like Zisis Kotionis proposed about more permanent mobility, that is very nice, but I think that the EU should really focus on how to integrate culture as one of the main axes of its policy formation.

Michalis Karakatsanis

I couldn't agree more about that actually and I will come back to it later when I will be presenting the new call for cooperation projects that actually was published just today. and I will show how this focus on building linkages and synergies among the Creative Europe Programme, and the European Green Deal, and the new European Bauhaus is actually included in the call. But again, let me be honest, this regards the Creative Europe Programme as such, not the other programmes. Not the European Bauhaus programme, not the European Green Deal programme. There's a big discussion about how cultural actors can be included in other funding programmes. Of course, there is the Horizon Programme, in which there is a very big

proportion, and very big aspect that culture players may be involved in different calls. And of course, the Erasmus Project. It's actually just recently that the Erasmus Programme opened up to cultural professionals; previously it was strictly just for higher educational institutions. There is a long road to cover yet. Let's be honest about that, but we are here to discuss and to propose solutions and get feedback and keep this dialogue going.

Sophia Antoniadou

Very well, if I may add something. I think based on our four-year experience, one of the best practices to my view was that through our workshops we actually managed to show that culture and cultural processes are one of the best practices for inclusivity. We actually managed to address several issues through our workshops, have a target group that varies from underrepresented artists, immigrants, people that never had the opportunity to promote their work so actually, what we saw is that this can be applied through cultural workshops. Take into account all local traditions, various artistic trends but locally in each country. So, that's one thing that we learned so far. And the actual proof for this is the festival and the exhibition that we host today. Now, one of the main challenges to my view as well, was that if, let's say, EU policy is to bring different cultures, institutions, closer together to work regardless of the size or the legal entity of the foundation, then it should facilitate this kind of collaboration more. And what I mean specifically, is that we were a consortium of seven organisations, different organisations as legal entities. We had many universities that had different kind of financial processes, which was not at all easy, and I think made the life of our

partners more difficult, rather than easier, and had to struggle with all these financial processes than focus on what they should. So, the one thing is that I think EU has to find a way that universities, that cultural bodies and research institutes, like universities, private cultural foundations, larger or smaller, they have somehow to be able to work together in an easy way, not in a difficult way. Because you can understand that an organisation like a university obviously has different procedures, different ways of extracting money, paying or whatever and a private institution is more flexible. If the aim is to bring together these cultural institutions and be able to work together without having to face such struggles, they need to find a way to make this easier.

So, I think, maybe Andri or Jessica would like to contribute to this as well.

Michalis Karakatsanis

Just a small comment regarding the implementation methodologies of the projects. It is something that the commission actually considered and that's why the way of applying, the way of receiving funding has changed in the new Creative Europe Programme and we now have this "lump sums funding". I don't know if that was the case for you. I suppose your project was not based on this methodology. What do we mean by "lump sums"? We mean that the project has to deliver certain "deliverables", as they are called. The applicant structures the way that the project will run during its running period and then when you say what you will deliver as regards to the different events, publications, etc. the European Commission funds the amount that you asked for without asking for any invoices.

Just keep this in mind, and I will come back to this later when I will present the programme.

Apostolos Kouroupakis

As I understand there are many, many challenges that you are facing so that brings me to my fourth question for Andri Michael from France and Jessica Jacques from Spain. What are the key challenges of the Open Up Project and other similar projects?

Andri Michael

Thank you! Allow me to add to your last proposal and intervention that, if the way of the funding is changing for us it makes a huge difference. I said to my colleagues and friends at the end of the project, but now I am ready to start because I learned a lot. It was an amazing experience, many difficulties with the administration at the university and many, many obstacles to organise. But now I know how to do it and if the process is more flexible it would be perfect.

I think that the most important thing for us now that we learned a lot about the project is to continue. How to continue a four-year project, after the end of this amazing project, finally, because we faced many challenges at the university and the difficulty of the current situation was very difficult for us. Due to covid restrictions we had to stay indoors but it was not possible to approach migrants and marginalised people via zoom. We didn't do that. Instead, we organised a think tank about the ethical scope of the project during the Covid period and then we started all the activities two years ago. For me it's a project that really started two years ago.

We had time to think a lot about these ethical questions and in Amiens, because I am from the University of Picardie in Amiens we focused on three subjects. First of all, working with underrepresented people, sharing with them experiences and making inclusivity more effective by trying to mix nationalities of the participants, but also of the mentors. So, I agree with Sarah that we should try to decolonise our practices at the University and decolonise our practices towards a society. So, for us, it was the most important challenge to show how academic research and work is crucial for the society. I think that we have done this well and we will continue. This is so important for us, as human experiences. For all the participants of our workshops, not the transnational one, because it was one short lab but the other workshops which lasted 3-6 months. The same people coming together and so on. So, we tried to work on the immigration, migratory aesthetics, also how people who come from other countries can be integrated in our project in a very creative way and to be able to think about immigration of people, languages, cultures. So, how to deal with all of these very different and various issues. So, our aim was also not only to create things or create objects, even though you create many objects during the workshops, but to create sharing experiences, human experiences. So, we focused on hospitality, humanity and exchange of knowledge practices, because our aim at the very beginning of the project was not to teach something to people in a very hierarchical way but learn also from them. So, this is the most important challenge for us. To have this interaction with people who participated in our workshops. I don't know if I have answered your question.

Apostolos Kouroupakis

Thank you Andri. Jessica, can you hear us?

Jessica Jaques

Yes, I hear you with some delay but hello everybody. It's very sad that I am not there with you, but I am pleased to see you all together even on the screen. I think the question was about the key challenge. Isn't it?

Apostolos Kouroupakis

Yes.

Jessica Jaques

Yes, thank you. Because it was just the moment I couldn't hear you.. Well, you have said lots of things at the moment and Sophia was saying exactly what I felt. Flexibility was a huge challenge for an institution like mine to be a partner of such a project. I regret a lot some issues we had to deal with the universities because they are such big institutions and with management that is very difficult to deal with. And this would be if universities are working on a creative project like Open Up their challenge is to be more flexible, and we have done the best we could to make this possible. For my university Open Up was the first Creative Europe Programme so as Andri Michael said if I had known how to do it from the beginning it would be very different. We have learned a lot about how to try to make such an institution more flexible. In this learning, workshops and labs have been such a great experience, knowledgeable experience, creative experience, social experience, political experience. Even local workshops or transnational workshops, which were for me a discovery on how our university can go further than the institution and let's say go to the city and try to make a micro-revolutions and from the creativity, this is one challenge.

Another issue that we spoke about it in other meetings, is how to make inclusive strategies even with the project managers. Because, I think, our focus has been to include underrepresented and overlooked people in our workshops and labs and I remember the first time we met in Nicosia we were talking about this, however, it was not possible at that moment but maybe in other projects, similar to Open Up, there should be an aim to think about how to create methodologies to have inclusive partners and managers from the beginning. I think these are the two key challenges I have thought.

Of course, sustainability that you have talked a lot about. I am the Erasmus coordinator of my faculty and I think all of these projects, as it's been said, have to create new strategies of mobility in order to sustain our planet. Thank you.

Apostolos Kouroupakis

Thank you, thank you. I don't know if anybody wants to add something on that?

Sarah Tuck

Yes, I would like to add something. I think it's important that it should not be overlooked. We sought to do Open Up during a period of lockdown. So, there is quite an interesting and I think there's a lot of productive learning to actually look at that. Whereby we were all in a circumstance of restricted mobility, of a certain level of a public health crisis and attended anxieties around that. And this relates to the really interesting point about, you know, a budget that is absorbed

on bed nights and flights. Because also during Covid for most people, one of the critical learning goals, due to the fatigue we all felt, most people actually were then longing for in-person communication, for the intimacy that that brings about. So, I think there's a whole other set of learning that we are sitting on and I think has actually more broadly we are all sitting on that we haven't quite worked out. What the hell did we just lived through? What does that mean? Because there could be future occasions of that. What does that mean for mobility? And therefore, what does mobility actually mean? Because I think we all realised to have that moment of restriction to suddenly feel fixed in place even if, in that same period of time, you wouldn't have travelled, had a kind of a social sensibility. But that's a class-based thing, because for the most part, the working class remain in place, because of the fact of the cost of flights. Yeah, I think there's a lot that, I don't know, in times of an evaluation of the project of what we went through and reporting and how that would actually factor in feature and what we unpacked from that, because we were seeking to create an ensemble of participants for us to operate as an ensemble and that being in person it's because that's where you forge trust, you can forge trust online but it lacks intimacy. So, what does that mean? And what if there's another public health crisis coming, what does that mean?

Yiannis Toumazis

Well, I mean, I also wanted to say from what we are hearing today the word decolonisation, the word Covid pandemic, but also the climate change, I mean, one of our partners, the University of Thessaly had a major catastrophe because of the floods in Volos, the destruction

of Open Up artifacts that were ready to be sent to Cyprus and as a result they never did. I think these are main issues that are very relevant also to the Creative Europe Project, and to Europe and to what we are doing as cultural actors, and I think the Green Deal, as you mentioned, and the climate change, and the New European Bauhaus, I strongly insist, again, that as culture producers we need to search more the political impact that culture could have in the years to come because the world has changed. Maybe the pandemic was the first knock on the door of how the world is changing. I believe that climate change will be very revealing and apocalyptic in the next decade. So, I think we need to be a bit proactive and really try to find ways, us, as partners, how our political, cultural work could be of value and of help and of action.

Apostolos Kouroupakis

I would like to ask all of you, the project has found the word culture and the importance that this word has to the societies? Is it strictly defined as a word, as a meaning?

Sarah Tuck

I think culture is really poorly defined, so we are all using it but what precisely do we mean by it, and because there was a Welsh, a socialist, Raymond Williams, who said culture is just the life of the everyday and that gives it a far more kind of political importance. I think in terms of the kind of looseness, I mean, the more often when the culture is now always the kind of word that's used prior to the word "wars" in the English language. And again, the other question, as someone that was formally living and is from a country that was

part of the EU subsequent to Brexit to be out of that and that came about by the mobilisation of a certain rhetoric on vocabularies of cultural wars. So, I think how we are thinking of defining culture, or keeping opening up is an incredibly important political moment.

Michalis Karakatsanis

If I may say something about that, actually thank you for reminding us of Raymond Williams. The word culture is a very highly saturated word actually and the way it is used in many different fields in society, it's heavily, let's say, influenced by the political background and political meaning that someone wants to convey. Culture is neither good nor bad actually. We cannot say that culture is good or culture is bad. Cultural expressions is what word we are looking for and what we are trying to extract meaning out of. So, it's something that we'll have to have in mind when we are talking about how culture can help other sectors or help other societal issues, etc. Not to think of culture as something like a quick fix, a tool that can be used to solve problems but as a ground for debates, for dialogues also as a playground. Many, many times I think of culture as a playground where people come together to play, exchange meanings, exchange ideas and formulate new ideas, etc. This is a very important thing for culture and also this is the reason that there's again, a very big focus on how places of culture, how grounds of culture need to include everyone and need to open up, as you say, and to give the floor to people to express themselves in order to understand how they understand the world, how we can all help each other to make better societies, because I think that's what we are all aiming for actually.

Apostolos Kouroupakis

Thank you. Now I would like to open the floor for questions for this session and if anyone from the audience would like to ask something. Yes, please.

Question from the audience

I think that EU has a western approach to funding culture and I also think that they consider today's politics in the Mediterranean Region only from the Western point of view, and undermines the plurality of voices. What do you think?

Apostolos Kouroupakis

Thank you very much. Anyone else? Yes, please. Who wants to answer first?

Sophia Antoniadou

Allow me to clarify that there isn't anyone here as official representative of the European Union, so there's no one really to answer the question officially; only from a personal point of view.

Sarah Tuck

If I can just clarify this because maybe I am misunderstanding. Are you suggesting if European countries, the governments of particular European countries, therefore, in policy are aggressively anti-humanitarian and that part of the EU then, you're suggesting a kind of unethical crisis or hypocrisy. My question would be if you can obtain money to actually have a political impact then take it, and have a political impact. I do understand your question in a very

sincere level. I mean, because there's also circumstances where organisations obviously, as part of greening, do not take money from petroleum companies. That's something that anyone who is living in a European Union country has to fight for. To make a systematic change, or for it to be a representative body and that's, you know, that's the way that democracy functions. But I think there's always those tensions. I would think though, in terms of an EU project such as this, the reality was that it allowed because of the participating countries, a plurality of voices. So, some of the kind of agonistic tensions and contradictions around how we understood things was actually left out in terms of the particular countries. Rather than, you know, a singular point of view.

If I can just give an actual example. Britain has rejected EU funding and I can tell you the consequence has not been some kind of enlivening of a kind of unethical threshold. It's actually been a complete deadening of a kind of a political active cultural life.

But it has had a consequence in terms of a rejection of money. I mean that can be realised now, in terms of that rejection of the finance and the potential of international partnerships and collaborations across Europe.

Yiannis Toumazis

And if I may, coming back to her question, which was addressed to us, like, we are some pillars that we represent the spending of EU money, you'll know that I come from Cyprus, we have to consider the local policies on culture. She comes from Finland, from Sweden,

from France, from Greece, we all have many and very different difficulties and circumstances and we represent the institutions that really struggle to survive in this contested world we live in – talking about ethics and the institutional ethics, as you mentioned. So, I think what we should, and I mentioned it several times before, actually we are all here with EU money allocated for this project so we need to really address the issue of how cultural policies should be more dynamic and more active in the European landscape I agree on that. But on the other hand, we should be active players in shaping these policies and that is the most ethical approach to do this is to try to organise a project like this and really try to be as active and political we can in changing these worlds and to end the story, I hope there are no Palestinian refugees in Europe, I mean, that is the purpose not to have Palestinian refugees, because if we have Palestinian refugees in Europe, then there will be a major catastrophe. Palestinians should stay in their land and not come to Europe so that's something that we need to struggle for; to keep Palestinians in their land. Thanks.

Apostolos Kouroupakis

Is there anybody else who wants to say something?

Zisis Kotionis

Yes, I missed some of the things and I think it will be really nice to close with what Yiannis just said. So, I turn back, although I would like this thing about the Palestinians to continue being in my ears, but it's only a comment. Talking about these programmes, the EU funding. My note would be something like that. That in these programmes, what the European Union tries to do is, in a way support what we

call this –I don't know the right term– the artist as a working class in Europe, in the scale of Europe. We have this situation, which did not exist, let's say 20 or 40 years ago, a situation where artists and creative people are a serious factor, a serious agent and a serious minority inside the financial circle. And what happens is that they miss their right to get money for what they work on. There are many prepositions having to do for example with a salary, a minimum salary for artists to keep on working, which are very important discussions, all this. What I am trying to say is that programmes like that, like ours, in a way offer opportunities to young artists but the problem is huge. The question is much bigger than what does the EU does on that. And in a way, I would say that to face this, beyond cultural programmes and things, is that we need the kind of – shall I use this word, I want to add something, agonistic approach. This agonistic approach goes further than what shapes a programme. I would add, Athanasiou uses this term "agonistic hope". How to get involved in such environments with agonistic hope and knowing the bigger scene and how things work there. The bigger scene is also the problem of the earth more generally, but I insist on artists who have lost the opportunity to take money for what they produce, because artistic projects more or less don't have any more economic value, they have only symbolic value. Young artists know that. I mean, production and again production and no money to come back because you don't have any financial support. So, this is the case. That's the bigger scene. That's what I want to say.

Apostolos Kouroupakis

Thank you, so we'll take a break for half an hour and come back for the presentation of Michalis Karakatsanis.

Apostolos Kouroupakis

Welcome back. Now, we proceed to the presentation of the Creative Europe Programme, "Funding opportunities for the cultural and creative sectors" by Michalis Karakatsanis, Officer of the Organisation of European Programmes and Cultural Relations, Creative Europe Desk Cyprus.

Michalis Karakatsanis

Thank you very much again. Nice to see you all. I will be very brief. Actually, I will present today the call that was just published. It's a call for Cooperation Projects, one of the biggest and more let's say, important and attractive calls for organisations and the sub-programme, actually, that Open Up Project is part of. The call was published just today, the new call. I will show you later where you can find all the detailed information, how to apply, etc. I will go through very briefly on the basic objective, priorities of the call and how you can apply and a number of tips, let's say, and the common mistakes that many organisations make when applying for you to know. So, my name is Michalis Karakatsanis and I work for the organisation for European Programmes and Cultural Relations, a newly established organisation. We started in 2021; early beginning of 2021. It's an organisation that was established by the Council of Ministries here in Cyprus with the aim and the vision to host and to contact point desks for two different European funding programmes. The one that I will be talking about today is the Creative Europe Programme. The other one that we are also running is the CERV Programme: Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme, it's a different programme with a small focus on civil society. I would recommend that you check out this programme as well because it has many opportunities

for cultural organisations and art organisations to be involved in different project proposals.

Now, a few words about the programme itself. I will focus mainly on one of the three parts of the Creative Programme. The Creative Europe Programme is kind of divided into three strands, three sub-programmes. The first one is the Creative Europe Culture Programme that focuses on culture projects. The second, is the Media Programme, which has a strict focus on the audiovisual industry and the whole value chain of the visual industry. And the third one is what is called Crosssectorial, which is a smaller one, but has some very significant calls also related to new journalism; this is something that you can check out as well. So, the objectives of the Creative Programme itself: as you can see, it has two broad objectives. The first one is to develop, safeguard and promote European culture, linguistic diversity and heritage. European Commission wants to support projects that do exactly that and the second one is related to the economic, let's say, viability of the organisations and of the creators. The second objective is the competitiveness and the economic potential of the cultural creative sectors and, in particular, the audiovisual sector. This objective has a lot to do with the exploitation of intellectual property and that's why there is a special focus on the audiovisual sector, but we will see that in a while; how this translates into the calls.

So, as I said, I will briefly present the call and the website that organisations need to go to in order to apply, and I will share some tips. So, the objectives of the call itself. We leave behind the Creative

Europe Programme as a whole, and we go to the objectives of the call for Cooperation Projects. Again, two main objectives. First objective, transnational creation and circulation. Here, we are talking about mobility of artists, dissemination of results, exchange of knowledge, mobility of the work, dissemination of the works and transnational creation and circulation of European works and artists; a broad objective. The second one focuses on innovation. Enhancing the capacity of the sectors to nurture talents, to innovate, to prosper and to generate jobs and growth and when we are talking about innovation we are not talking only about technological innovation, we are talking about all kinds of innovation, and when we are talking about innovation, how can we as organisations take into account new developments in the sector, in terms of methodologies, in terms of business models, in terms of dissemination practices, etc. and how we incorporate them in our work as organisation in our local or regional focus. When you apply for the project, you choose one of the two objectives that you are addressing through your projects. So, keep that in mind. You don't need to cover everything in your application, so you will have to choose one of the objectives and say, okay, this is the objective that I am addressing through this proposal.

Now, moving forward to the priorities of the call. We have six priorities which are the same as last year. First priority, is always the aspect of "audiences". How we engage with our audiences, how we enlarge our audiences, and we develop audience, how we reach out to audiences that we couldn't reach out previously. The second one is "social inclusion". Again, linked with the audiences – how we reach out to communities that are underrepresented, how we involve them

in our projects, not only in terms of participating as audience to our project, but also as active developers and creators to our projects. Third priority, which has been discussed at length previously, is "sustainability". Very much linked with the European Green Deal and the New European Bauhaus initiative and we will say a few words about this priority that has more and more focus on environmental sustainability, rather than sustainability of the projects. So, keep that in mind. Fourth priority is "digital"; Digitalisation. Use of new technologies and not only as a tool but also as creative aspiration. Fifth priority, the "international dimension" of our projects. How our projects showcase European values, how Europe understands culture, etc. and also how our projects can open up bridges and open up pathways towards reaching audiences, consumers, participants, whoever, outside of the European Union. So, this export, let's say, focus. And for this year, the annual priority each year, the call has one annual priority. Last year it focused on creating the capacity for the sector to be resilient, to be able to overcome the crisis. This year, the annual priority focuses on supporting Ukrainian Culture and creative sectors. When you are applying, you need to choose one or maximum two of these priorities that your project will focus on and elaborate and design your project based on the priorities that you choose.

Of course, aside from the priorities themselves, they use this cross-cutting priorities that European Union has instilled in all its funding programmes and these two have to do with inclusion, diversity and gender equality. So, this is one aspect that every project, every application for every funding programme of the European

Union has to address and the second one is the environment against climate change. As you see on the notes below, the projects should explain how you address these issues during the design of the project, and the implementation of the project. How your project contributes to environmental sustainability, how it issues gender balance, inclusion, etc. not just in terms of, as I said before, communicating the result, but also, in terms of taking these things into account, when designing the project itself.

Here, you can see some examples of ideas of how to approach the two cross-cutting issues. As you will see, as regards to the inclusion, diversity and gender quality. We could adapt inclusive practices when recruiting people, when approaching the artist who will be involved in your projects. You can focus on feminist values and engagement with citizens, etc. These are just points of approach views when you're designing your project.

Next, we go to who can apply actually, who is eligible to apply, and these are the criteria in general. Of course, you have to submit your project by the called deadline and you have to submit it electronically; there is no paper travelling around anymore. All applications are done digitally through a platform that has been created for all funding programmes. You have to use the specific documents, the forms that you can find on the platform itself and I will show you the specific platform in a while. You have to complete all parts of the application form and submit the mandatory annexes. The application must be readable, accessible and printable. The proposal, something that has changed from the previous seven years the programme has been running, is that instead of having

a limitation for each question in terms of characters –a number of words– in your application, you now have only one limitation in terms of the whole application package, which is limited to 70 pages. Keep in mind that the application itself, the PDF that you will download is around 30 to 55 pages, so you have to explain and elaborate on your whole project within the 70–page limitation. If you exceed this all the pages after page 70 will not be taken into account and that means that you will not be assessed equally.

So, who can apply? As we said, private or public legal entities, we are not talking about individuals, we are talking about companies, organisations, institutions, etc. There is no limitation regarding the sector or the field that the organisation or company is working on. So, it's no longer limited to educational and cultural organisations, but it's open to any kind of organisation and you can see applications, besides those of educational institutions, from hospitals, prisons or whatever you think that is appropriate for your proposal.

The organisation needs to be established in a European Union member state, or in another country that is eligible in participating in the Creative Europe Programme. Besides the EU countries, each year the European Union comes into agreement with countries outside of the European Union that want to participate in the project. This list of countries is updated each year, and you can find it on the call webpage that I will show you in a while.

There were three different sub-programmes of this cooperation call. This year, we only have two of them and I will explain what I mean by that. The minimum consortium, the number of partners that

can apply, is three partners for the “small scale” as it is called, five partners for the “medium scale” and it was ten partners for the third scale. This year as I said, we do not have the call for the “large scale” programmes. As a result, the funding has been allocated accordingly to the other two. So, we have an increase of budget for the other two programmes. The coordinator, the lead applicant needs to be in a legal existence for at least two years from the date of the deadline, keep that into mind. If you are a very new organisation, let’s say one that was established last year, you cannot lead a programme, you cannot apply for the programme as a leader, but you can be a partner. But not a lead applicant. And of course, the activities that are included in your proposal have to comply with the eligible activities, but we will see this later. So, as I said, previously, these are the two scales that are running this year. We have the small scale that it’s minimum three partners from three different countries. The maximum of fund grant is €200,000. These €200,000 should add the 80% of the total budget. So, let’s say if you want to apply for the full amount in order to get the €200,000 your project budget should be around €250,000. Of which the EU will give you the €200,000. The medium scale is five partners from five different countries. The maximum EU grant is €1,000,000 and this corresponds to the 70% of the budget. The maximum duration of projects is four years (48 months). Of course, it can be less than that; it’s up to you.

How are the projects assessed? These are the four criteria that proposals are assessed on. There is the criterion of relevance. How relevant is your proposal to the objectives, to the priorities on the call itself, how it addresses the priorities on the call and how it helps the Commission towards meeting its goals, because you have also to

keep in mind that when you are applying for a project you get money to implement and to help the Commission to do its job. You are not getting the money to do just your job. You are getting the money to fulfil certain criteria, to meet certain objectives. Second criterion, the quality of the proposal in terms of its content activities, how well it is structured, how well it is designed, what methodology you are using, etc. Third criterion, the management of the project itself. How well you have established strategies regarding how you will run the project, how you will evaluate and monitor the project, how you will share feedback and how you will deal with crisis, how you will deal with risk, etc. The fourth one is the dissemination, not only of the activities of the projects in terms of how well you communicate and how you reach your audiences but also, in terms of how you disseminate the results of the projects into the wider sector, so how you communicate these results to relevant organisations and networks that are not part of the programme or public bodies, etc.

Moving forward, this again has to do with the criteria. How each criterion is broken down, what is actually checked when you are applying. How the project is relevant to the objectives as I said, before, in terms of the relevance, how you address the cross-cutting issues that I mentioned earlier – the greeting and the inclusion. How the strategies are sustainable, environmentally respectful. This is a new criterion, one that is included in the evaluation starting from this year. It was not part of the evaluation last year. So, you need to show how your project is environmentally respectful. Also, if the project is innovative, if it compliments other actions. In regards to the quality of the content, as I said earlier, how the concepts and methodologies are appropriate for achieving project objectives. How your project

involves an appropriate mix of participating organisations and what that means. If, let's say, your project will focus on a very specific aspect, you need to show that the consortium of partners are complimentary to each other. It's not only, let's say universities, or music organisations, but you have in the consortium, the capacity, and the professional skills to address the issues that you are saying that you will address. So, keep that in mind.

Target groups. How your approach is targeting groups, how you approach audiences and show how they will benefit concretely out of the project. Not just by coming to you to participate into your own conference or a concert or an exhibition, but how you will make sure that they actually benefit by taking part into the projects. You have the project management, effective mechanisms for coordination between the partners. Appropriate governance structure, who makes decisions, how decisions regarding project implementations are taken, who is in charge of what. This correlates also to the way that the project is structured in the application form, in terms of the work package of the programme. I will come to this later. The budget is cost effective and the appropriate resources should be allocated to each activity. So, having a realistic budget always. And dissemination, how the project generates short-, medium- and long-term effects. This is a very, very important aspect to consider. How your projects generate these effects and how you can showcase these effects, how you can check actually that these effects were made and how you will communicate and disseminate these results. Communication strategies, potential to reach and positively impact the target groups. Finally, steps to ensure the sustainability of the

projects. This idea of sustainability of the project itself you see that is not part of the sustainability and sustainable priority, but is a part of the dissemination aspect of your project.

So, in terms of budget this year, that is a total of €60 million that will be allocated to the two strands. Forty percent will go to the small, for the three partners, and the 60% will go to the medium. So, we are talking about €24 million for the first and €36 million for the second one. So, in general, we are talking about 120 projects from the small scale will be funded and around 36 to 40 projects for the second (the medium) will be funded. Last year, the medium category was just €21 million, so there is a big increase on the medium scale because it was the most contested one last year. Actually, this medium strand was introduced two years ago. Organisations were very enthusiastic about this opportunity, but it was very, very early, heavily contested and with a very low success rate. If I am not mistaken, last year the rate of successful applications for the medium scale was around 13–15%, whereas the small and large were close to 30–35% of successful applications. These were the numbers of the previous years.

So once again, what is the expected? What are the actions expected to be achieved. Foster cooperation between organisations, increase European dimension, encourage development, experimentation and dissemination application of new and innovative practices.

This was a very brief presentation. I will now show you a few things about the platform itself. Allow me to go to the platform. So, the application platform is called "Funding and Tender Opportunities

Platform". You need to Google search to find it because, as you see, the address is not easy to find. Here, you can find information about all programmes, all funding programmes. You click on the Creative Europe Programme. You will see here the number of calls that are open or closed. Click again. We see here that there is three categories Forthcoming, Open for submission and Closed. You can filter them and then you will just see the Forthcoming. As I said, it was just published today and you see European Cooperation Project: Medium scale and Small scale. Press here, and here, you can find all the information regarding the call.

The first thing that you need to do is to go to the platform and download the call document. The call document lays out all the information regarding the call. And here it is; I have downloaded the call. Here we will find all the information that I said earlier for the presentation are included in this in this document. You see the priorities, the objectives and it also gives you a number of links for documents that you need to study in order to address the specific priorities as regards to the greening, as I said earlier. Greening of European Europe, the cross cutting, you see, there is a study on the greening of the Creative Europe Programme that you need to download and to read. And as regards again to good practices regarding these two Cross-cutting issues. You see here that there is this "gender mainstreaming toolkits and guides" is a guide that relates to the inclusion. It's a very comprehensive and very good publication that has very concrete examples. And also, besides the "Study on the Greening of the Creative Europe Programme" there is this "Good environmental practices guide" that you can consult. Here it is, I downloaded it. It gives you examples of projects that

addressed this priority very well with very specific tips, etc. and here a very, very good skeleton of how to approach this. There are five steps. The first steps that you need to take into account when you are approaching this priority.

That was very, very brief. I suggest that you go to the platform, check the information and I will upload here my email, and our website (mk@ecpr.org.cy), if you want to ask for more information. Just reach out, we are here to help you. My name again is Michalis Karakatsanis, this is my email. Any questions that you have, or anything else that you would like to ask I am here. I will be here after we finish, but also reach out through email and we can arrange for a meeting to exchange ideas. Our job is to support you to apply. So, we go through all the application process with you and help you in terms of questions and answers, etc. but keep in mind that we are not here to provide guidance on the content of the application. We are only here to provide guidance for the process of applying for the projects and for implementing the projects. Thank you very much for your time and your attention and I wish all the success to all the other events that are planned for this great festival and if you have any questions, please. Yes.

Question

Are there any other countries outside EU that can benefit from Creative Europe Funding?

Michalis Karakatsanis

If they are part of the list of the counties. I will show you which are

the countries that are currently participating in the Creative Europe Programme. Let me find it. Here it is. So, this is the list of third countries participating in the Creative Europe Programme, as you will see the EFTA countries. Acceding countries, candidate, countries, potential candidates: Albania, Bosnia, Georgia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine. Turkey has started negotiations to participate. I am not sure if they actually completed the whole process and European neighbourhood policy countries: Armenia, Tunisia, etc. These are the countries that can apply as partners as I said earlier. Of course, an activity of a project can take place into any country you like. The only thing that you have to take into account is that invoices and all expenses need to be addressed and paid by a participating partner not an organisation in a country that is not a partner. So, if you want to organise a conference in Egypt you can work together with a partner there, even if Egypt is not part of the programme, but if the organisation that participates in the project pays for everything, that's okay. Other questions?

Question

Why are there no large-scale programme calls this year?

Michalis Karakatsanis

This is a big issue. It was decided to go through this because – at least for this year – there's no decision that they would abandon the large scale, but because of many organisations that were applying for the large scale are also applying for other calls, let's say for the network funding, the network support calls, they decided that for this year and because there was this huge interest for the medium scale and

many organisations were very disappointed last year because they had really good applications, they got very good marks, but because of the high number of applications they couldn't be funded they decided that for 2024, they will allocate the money to the medium and the small scale. Also, there was an increase on the small scale. So, I think it's around five million for this year. So, we are talking about 25 more projects will be funded at the small scale this year. That's the general idea. Yes.

Question

How can we cover the remaining budget?

Michalis Karakatsanis

Actually, we are the lucky ones here in Cyprus because there is a very specific funding stream by the Deputy Ministry of Culture regarding successful applications at the Creative Europe Projects, where if you're successful you apply for co-funding from the Deputy Ministry of Culture here in Cyprus and the Deputy Ministry supports with a rate of around 60–65% of the remaining amount, but this is only for the organisation from Cyprus, not from the whole project. Also keeping in mind that when you are applying, the project is divided to each organisation. It's not the total budget. Each organisation, each partner has its own budget in the application.

Question

Is the funding allocated to each partner?

Michalis Karakatsanis

Yes. One organisation has to lead the application, the legal leader.

The organisation is signing with the commission the agreement. So, there is this grand agreement that will also be responsible for allocating the funding to the other partners.

Sophia Antoniadou

There is a leading organisation who is reliable for everything towards EU and then there is a consortium between the leader and other partners. There is a binding agreement between the leader and each one of the other partners.

Question

Is this for small project grants as well or only medium scale for the funding offer from the government?

Michalis Karakatsanis

Yes, for all.

Question

Can in-kind contribution be estimated and assessed in budget?

Michalis Karakatsanis

Actually, there is no consideration of in-kind contribution because of the way that the projects are structured now. As we said earlier, it's not based on invoices, but it's based on work packages and deliverables. So, you will not need to showcase any invoices in order to get the money. What do I mean by that, let's say salaries. If someone works for free or if someone gives you a venue for free.

Question

Referring to the in-kind contribution, let's take the example of renting the venue. If let's say you don't actually need to pay for renting the venue, can you include in the budget the cost of the venue in case you would need to hire it?

Michalis Karakatsanis

If you, for example, apply for a project and you include the amount that you would need to pay, for the venue, let's say, €1,000 but if you do not pay them but you include this in your budget you are free to do it; you are okay. If you implement the project according to what you have promised, if you deliver the event, as you said, nobody will come to check if actually this €1,000 were actually paid. So, you don't include this as a transaction in your budget, it's not a transaction, you include this as a cost that you might need to pay if needed. So, this is the way they deal with the idea of in-kind contribution. You include the amount in the budget but you know, you don't end up paying it and nobody asks for the invoices.

Question

So, there is a way to include potential expenses which will not be actual expenses.

Michalis Karakatsanis

The Commission trusts you. Just to clarify something also keep in mind that as we said for Cyprus you have the opportunity to apply for the rate around 60-65% for the co-finance and also you have the 7% of indirect cost. As we said, that you included in the project,

but nobody will ask anything about that 7%. So, pretty much if an organisation from Cyprus is successful, they can get all the money from the European Union and from the Deputy Ministry of Culture to implement that project. So, you can all move to Cyprus and do projects here.

Question

Do we have to submit invoices of expenses?

Michalis Karakatsanis

You need the invoices either way for your purposes already. So, you still need to follow the procedures and legislations in your country so you will keep them anyway, but there is no financial control afterwards. Only if something went so wrong, let's say, and you got the money and you did not deliver anything, then you need to give back the money. In that situation, yes, you might need to go through an audit. Any other questions?

Question

Is there audit regarding the quality of deliverables?

Michalis Karakatsanis

There is no audit in this kind of way for the project itself. There is no audit. If you deliver what you promise, you get the money and there is no audit. You get audited only if you do not deliver.

Question

What about the level of allocated funds?

Michalis Karakatsanis

Going through all these project proposals, the European Union has come into a kind of understanding of the rates for funding. The money, the total amount for fees and that's why they say you have to be realistic in your application. Let's say they kind of compare different applications in terms of expenses and if they see that something is really not realistic, they will not reject you from the programme; they will communicate with you during the preparation for the annual grant agreement and they might ask you to lower some cost or allocate some more money, some budget lines, let's say, for flight tickets, etc. And there is also a kind of guide that was written for the Erasmus project, that kind of lays out in terms of daily rates of fees. Experts in this kind of stuff that are included in the project for each country. So, you can also consult this guide for lump-sums that lays down the approach, that the commission takes when they are assessing your application. There is no strict rule, as I said earlier, but okay, you need to be realistic. If somebody lies in an application and says they will hire an expert and I give them €15,000 a day to do something this will ring a bell to the evaluators, and come back to you and ask more questions. Why you need this amount of money? etc.

Apostolos Kouroupakis

Anybody else? Thank you all for today's discussion.

Sophia Antoniadou

I just want to thank everyone for being here and staying to the very end. I hope to see you tonight at the exhibition opening, and the other three days of the festival. Thank you again everyone for your presence and patience today.

