



Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency

**Creative Europe: MEDIA**

## **Creative Europe – MEDIA Sub-programme**

### **GUIDE FOR EXPERTS**

### **ON ASSESSMENT OF FILM EDUCATION ACTIONS**

**managed by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The European Commission's Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (the Agency) is responsible for the implementation of the Actions of the Creative Europe MEDIA sub-programme. The Agency is in charge of the selection of projects to be funded, it assesses projects with the assistance of independent experts to ensure that only those of the highest quality are selected for funding. Thus, the final decision on the selection or rejection of applications is taken by the Agency.

This Guide for Experts provides instructions and guidance for experts when assessing applications, in order to ensure a standardised and high quality assessment.

The Guide for Experts provides information on:

- the role and appointment of experts;
- the principles of the assessment;
- the assessment process in practice;
- information on how to assess the award criteria for each action and field.

## 2. THE MEDIA SUB-PROGRAMME AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Whereas earlier MEDIA programmes have concentrated on stimulating the cultural offer, Creative Europe - MEDIA will shift the focus on to the audience, through the new audience development strategy. The overall aim of audience development is to improve the circulation of European works, thus contributing to the diversity of European culture.

Developing European audience is necessary for three reasons. It brings cultural benefits for artists, cultural organisations and audiences as more contacts between artists and their works and audiences mean better interactions, and more incentives to create. It contributes to social inclusion by introducing new individuals and communities to culture, which is particularly important for less favoured groups or immigrants. Finally, it contributes to the exploitation of all possible economic opportunities for the cultural sectors; more public also means more revenues for creators, more exports possibilities, more cultural employment.

The *objective* of the audience development scheme is to support audience development as a means of stimulating interest in and improving access to European audiovisual works in particular through promotion, events, film literacy and festivals;

The MEDIA Sub-programme will provide support for:

- activities aimed at promoting film literacy and at increasing audiences' knowledge of, and interest in, European audiovisual works, including the audiovisual and cinematographic heritage, in particular among young audiences.
- facilitating the circulation of European films worldwide and of international films in the Union on all distribution platforms, via international cooperation projects in the audiovisual sector.

The audience development scheme includes two actions:

### **Action 1: Film Literacy**

This action looks for projects that can provide for better cooperation between film literacy initiatives in Europe, either by "exporting" good practices from one country to another, or by establishing new joint cross-border film literacy initiatives.

The expected outcome of this action is to support 5-10 high quality cooperation projects.

### **Action 2: Audience Development Initiatives**

Audience development initiatives focusing on innovative and participatory strategies reaching out to wider, especially young, audiences with European films.

The expected outcome of this action is to support 5-10 projects that can demonstrate new and innovative approaches to audience development in the digital age beyond traditional film festival and distribution practices.

### **3. EXPERTS**

#### **3.1 Role of experts**

The assessment and selection of grant applications is organised on the basis of impartiality and equal treatment of all applicants.

The role of experts is to provide a fair, impartial, and consistent assessment of project applications according to the objectives and the policy priorities of the Programme.

The assessment is an essential part of the selection procedure. Based on the experts' assessment, a list of grant applications ranked in quality order is established, which serves as a basis for the Agency to take the grant award decision, following the proposal of the Evaluation Committee.

Based on the experts' comments, the Agency provides feedback to the applicants on the quality of their application (see section 4).

#### **3.2 Appointment of experts, code of conduct and conflict of interest**

Experts are appointed on the basis of their skills and knowledge in the areas and the specific field(s) of the audiovisual sector in which they are asked to assess applications.

To ensure their independence, the names of the experts are not made public.

Experts are required to perform the assessment to the highest professional standards and within the deadline agreed with the Agency.

Through the appointment by the Agency experts are bound to a code of conduct as set out in the appointment letter or contract with the expert.

All information related to the assessment process is strictly confidential. Therefore, experts are not allowed to disclose any information about the applications submitted and results of the assessment and selection to the public. They must not have a conflict of interest<sup>1</sup> in relation to the proposals on which they are requested to give their opinion. To this end, they sign a confidentiality and conflict of interest declaration prior to beginning their work and adhere to it during and after the evaluation.

### **4. ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS**

#### **4.1 Preparation for assessment**

Before the start of the assessment, the experts are briefed by the Agency on the Programme and the action under assessment, as well as on the assessment process.

Experts are provided with the reference documents for the assessment and get access to the Online Evaluation Expert Tool (OEET), in which they perform the assessment using the standard quality assessment forms.

Before starting the assessment of applications, experts must:

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<sup>1</sup> Financial Regulation Art. 57(2): « ... a conflict of interests exists where the impartial and objective exercise of the functions of a financial actor or other person, ..., is compromised for reasons involving family, emotional life, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other shared interest with a recipient.»

- have a sound knowledge of the Film Education Guidelines<sup>2</sup> which provide all necessary information to potential applicants on the actions for which they can apply for a grant;
- have an in-depth understanding of the award criteria applicable to the applications under assessment (cf. section 4.3);
- be familiar with all the reference documents and tools provided by the Executive Agency.

Experts have to read the whole application carefully before completing the assessment form. It is recommended to read several applications before assessing any one of them in full: this allows experts to benchmark answers in different sections of the applications.

Each expert works individually and independently, gives scores and comments for each criterion and summarises his/her assessment in the assessment form.

The eligibility criteria are assessed by the Agency in the first phase of the selection process. Only eligible projects are sent to experts for evaluation. Each eligible project is sent to two experts for an independent evaluation.

#### **4.2 Assessment forms**

Experts carry out their assessment in English, using the Online Expert Evaluation Tool (OEET). The applications to be assessed as well as the evaluation forms are accessible through OEET. Experts are provided with technical instructions for the use of OEET by the Agency as part of their briefing.

Experts examine the issues to be considered under each award criterion, enter their scores for each applicable criterion and provide comments on each award criterion and on the application as a whole (cf. section 4.3).

On completion of the assessment, experts validate the individual assessment in the Online Expert Evaluation Tool, thereby confirming that they have no conflict of interest with respect to the assessment of that particular proposal.

#### **4.3 Assessment of award criteria and scoring**

Experts assess applications only against the award criteria defined in the Guidelines. These award criteria are listed and further explained in Annex 1 of this Guide.

Each award criterion is defined through several elements which must be taken into account by the experts when analysing an application. These elements form a list of points to be considered before giving a score for the given criterion. They are intended to help experts to arrive at the final assessment of the criterion in question.

In order to give clear guidance to experts as to how individual elements of analysis should be assessed, further information is provided in annex 1.

When assessing applications against the award criteria, the experts make a judgement on the extent to which applications meet the defined criteria. This judgement must be based on the information provided in the application. Experts cannot assume information that is not explicitly provided. Information relevant for a specific award criterion may appear in different parts of the application and experts take all of them into account when scoring the award criterion.

An application can receive a maximum of 100 points for all criteria relevant for the action. The table below shows the relative marks of each criterion:

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<sup>2</sup>[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/funding/film-education\\_2017\\_en](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/funding/film-education_2017_en).

	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Definitions</b>	<b>Max. points</b>
1	Relevance and European added value	This criterion assesses the relevance of the content and the European added value of the action vis-à-vis the objectives of the Call for proposals. It will assess in particular the European dimension of the project and the capacity of the project to reach audiences.	30
2	Quality of the content and activities	This criterion assesses the overall quality of the project, including the methodology, the format, the target group, selection and pedagogical methods, the feasibility and cost efficiency and the innovative aspects of the projects, including the strategic use of digital technology and different distribution platforms.	40
3	Dissemination of project results, impact and sustainability	This criterion assesses the impact of the dissemination of the project's results and the impact of the project on the promotion, circulation and interest in European audiovisual works.	20
4	Quality of the project team and the grouping	This criterion will take into account the extent of the partnership and the exchange of knowledge within the partnership vis -à-vis the objectives of the action.	10

Within the maximum number of points per award criterion, ranges of scores are defined that correspond to a fixed definition of the expected quality standard so that as coherent approach as possible is implemented, across experts as well as across schemes. The score cannot include decimals. The standards on a 10 points scale are as follows:

- 9-10 Very good – the application addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question convincingly and successfully. The answer provides all the information and evidence needed and there are no concerns or areas of weakness.
- 7-8 Good – the application addresses the criterion well, although some small improvements could be made. The answer gives clear information on all or nearly all of the evidence needed.
- 5-6 Acceptable – the application broadly addresses the criterion, but there are some weaknesses. The answer gives some relevant information, but there are areas where detail is lacking or the information is unclear.
- 3-4 Fair – the application addresses the criterion, but there are many weaknesses. The answer gives some relevant information, but there are several areas where detail is lacking or the information is unclear.
- 1-2 Very weak – the application fails to address the criterion or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information. The answer does not address the question asked, or gives very little relevant information.

- 0 No evidence –the application fails to include a minimum amount of evidence to enable the criterion to be evaluated.

N.B. Although indicated on the scoring scale, experts should avoid "0" which relates to "no evidence". For obvious particular cases, experts should contact the agency staff à priori.

Experts are expected to give comments on each award criterion and, in their comments, refer explicitly to the elements of analysis under the relevant criterion. The comments on each award criterion have to reflect and justify the score given for it. Experts are advised to translate their assessment into a list of explicit "bullet points" (or equivalent) instead of complete sentences in order to win time and facilitate the consolidation with the other expert. This will allow easy rephrasing of opinions in the consolidated assessment.

At the end of the assessment, experts give overall comments on the application as a whole. In the comments, experts must provide a thorough analysis of the application highlighting its relative strengths and weaknesses.

As their comments will be used by the Executive Agency to provide feedback to applicants, experts must pay particular attention to clarity, consistency and appropriate level of detail. All evaluation reports are to be written in English.

The Executive Agency monitors the quality of expert assessments and can request the expert to revise the assessment should the necessary quality standard not be met.

Experts must assess all applications in full, regardless of the score given to any award criterion.

#### **4.5 Possible problems with applications**

Experts are under no circumstances allowed to contact applicants directly. In case any problems arise during the assessment, experts should contact the Agency. The Agency decides whether the applicant will be asked to provide additional information or clarifications or if the application should be assessed in the form it was submitted.

Moreover, if during the assessment the experts notice indications of possible double submissions and overlaps (the same or similar text appears in two or more submitted applications, as well as any other indications), they should inform the Agency immediately.

#### **4.6 Panel of experts, consolidated assessment and final score**

Once all applications have been assessed by two experts, the experts meet in the Agency to fulfil the following further evaluation steps:

**First phase of the Expert panel:** Consolidation of each assessment between the two experts.

In this phase, the two experts having assessed the project compare their evaluations and agree on a consolidated score. In case the two experts fail to agree at the consolidation stage (e.g. discrepancy between two assessments is too large), the project will be discussed collectively by the expert panel in a second phase of evaluations.

**Second phase of the Expert panel:**

During the second phase of the Expert panel, the following evaluation steps will be carried out by all experts:

- discuss the projects for which the consolidation stage has failed;
- validate scores of all projects that have been subject to consolidation process;
- discuss any issues/questions related to projects;
- confirm the ranking of all projects.

The consolidated assessment is considered to be the final assessment of a given application. The consolidated assessment forms the basis for ranking the application on the list of eligible grant applications.

## **5. Feedback to applicants**

As explained in the Guidelines, the Agency notifies the applicant in writing of the selection result once the grant award decision is taken and provides the relevant information on the assessment scores and comments.

In case of a request for further information or appeal by an applicant, the Agency may request the expert involved in the assessment to provide additional elements of information on the assessment as necessary.

### **Annexes:**

1. Award criteria
2. Reference documents on policy priorities in the audiovisual field
3. Template for the Declaration of absence of conflict of interests and of confidentiality

	<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Max. Weighting</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Relevance and European added value</b>	This criterion assesses the relevance of the content and the European added value of the action vis-à-vis the objectives of the Call for proposals. It will assess in particular the European dimension of the project and the capacity of the project to reach audiences.	30

**Elements of analysis of the award criteria:**

In order to decide which score to attribute, the experts will have to check the following aspects and answer the following questions:

- **Relevance (15 points)**

What is the project’s potential to promote and increase audiences' knowledge of, and interest in, European films, including non-national and/or heritage movies? Does the project provide mechanisms to increase the contribution of films and audiovisual works to education?

- **The European dimension/European added value (15 points)**

How does the project improve the efficiency and European dimension of the concerned film education initiative in terms of partnership, content, languages covered and diversity of European films? What is the European added value of the project compared to the core activities of the applicant and their partners' and compared to already existing practices? Is the grouping/partnership presenting a new project or just the sum of their usual activities?



	Criterion	Definition	Max. Weighting
2	<b>Quality of the content and activities</b>	This criterion assesses the overall quality of the project, including the methodology, the format, the target group, selection and pedagogical methods, the feasibility and cost efficiency and the innovative aspects of the projects, including the strategic use of digital technology and different distribution platforms.	40

**Elements of analysis of the award criteria:**

In order to decide which score to attribute, the experts will have to check the following aspects and answer to the following questions:

- **Overall quality of the project (25 points)**

You are requested to assess the adequacy of the projects' methodology to its objectives, including its format and participatory features. You are also requested to assess the adequacy of the projects' pedagogical methods: is for instance the choice of speakers, experts and/or tutors and the selection of films, the learning resources, coherent with the content and objectives of the project? How well have the audience's needs been identified? How well are they likely to be met?

Does the project foresee self evaluation mechanisms?

- **Feasibility and Cost-efficiency (5 points)**

What is the overall feasibility of the project? Is it realistic? Is it cost-efficient in relation to the scope of the action and the objectives to be reached?

- **Innovation (10 points)**

Does the project present innovative approaches to film education?

To which extent does it tap into digital technologies?

	Criterion	Definition	Max. Weighting
3	<b>Dissemination of project results, impact and sustainability</b>	This criterion assesses the impact of the dissemination of the project's results and the impact of the project on the promotion, circulation and interest in European audiovisual works.	20

**Elements of analysis of the award criteria:**

In order to decide which score to attribute, the experts will have to check the following aspects and answer to the following questions:

- **Dissemination of knowledge and impact (15 points)**

How does the project foresee to disseminate the results in order to strengthen film education at European level? ? Have the right stakeholders been involved so to maximise the project's impact and eventually inform policy and practice? Does the project have the potential to continue and use its results beyond the end of the funding period and become an example of best practice?

What is the potential impact of the project on the promotion of, and interest in, European audiovisual works?

- **Sustainability and strategies for collecting data and analysing the results obtained (5 points)**

Does the project present methodologies for collecting data and analysing the results? How effective are they likely to be? Is there a strategy to ensure the sustainability of the project?

	Criterion	Definition	Max. Weighting
4	<b>Quality of the project team and the grouping</b>	This criterion will take into account the extent of the partnership and the exchange of knowledge within the partnership vis-à-vis the objectives of the action.	10

**Elements of analysis of the award criteria:**

In order to decide which score to attribute, the experts will have to check the following aspects and answer to the following questions:

Is the international, technical and managerial expertise of the team members appropriate to the objectives pursued by the action? Does the grouping/partnership create synergies, including in exchange of knowledge, tasks division and allocation of resources?

**The Legal basis of Creative Europe:**

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013R1295>

**Film Education Guidelines:**

[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/funding/film-education\\_2017\\_en](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/funding/film-education_2017_en).



Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency

### Declaration of absence of conflict of interests and of confidentiality

Title of Call for proposals: Support for Audience Development [ ]

Reference: Call for proposal [include reference here]

#### I. Conflict of interests

I, the undersigned [Surname, family name], having been appointed as an expert for the abovementioned call, declare that I am aware of Article 57 of the Financial Regulation, which states that:

*"1. Financial actors and other persons involved in budget implementation and management, including acts preparatory thereto, audit or control shall not take any action which may bring their own interests into conflict with those of the Union.*

*Where such a risk exists, the person in question shall refrain from such action and shall refer the matter to the authorising officer by delegation who shall confirm in writing whether a conflict of interests exists. The person in question shall also inform his or her hierarchical superior. Where a conflict of interests is found to exist, the person in question shall cease all activities in the matter. The authorising officer by delegation shall personally take any further appropriate action.*

*2. For the purposes of paragraph 1, a conflict of interests exists where the impartial and objective exercise of the functions of a financial actor or other person, as referred to in paragraph 1, is compromised for reasons involving family, emotional life, political or national affinity, economic interest or any other shared interest with a recipient."*

I hereby declare that I do not fall under any of the following circumstances in which a conflict of interests might exist. I confirm that, if I discover before or during the evaluation that a conflict of interests exists, I will declare it immediately to the Agency.

#### **1/Disqualifying conflict of interests:**

- Involvement in the preparation of the proposal;
- Direct benefit in case of acceptance of the proposal;
- Close family relationship with any person representing a participating organisation in the proposal;
- Director, trustee or partner of a participating organisation;
- Current employment by a participating organisation;
- Current involvement in a contract or collaboration with a participating organisation;
- Any other situation that compromises my ability to evaluate the proposal impartially.

#### **2/Potential conflict of interests:**

**Annex 3 Declaration of absence of conflict of interests and confidentiality**

- Employment by one of the participating organisation within the previous three years;
- Involvement in a contract or collaboration with a participating organisation within the previous three years;
- Any other situation that could cast doubt on my ability to evaluate the proposal impartially, or that could reasonably appear to do so in the eyes of a third party (*Ex. Past or current personal relationships, nationality, political affinity, etc.*).

I hereby declare that I fall under one or more of the above circumstances (please specify which and explain)\* :

*\*Ex. In case of employment by a structure including different departments or institutes, please specify the degree of autonomy between them.*

I hereby declare on my honour that the disclosed information is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.<sup>3</sup>

**II. Confidentiality and personal data protection**

I also confirm that I will keep all matters entrusted to me confidential and will process the personal data I receive only for the purposes of the performance of the present evaluation. If unnecessary or excessive personal data are contained in the documents submitted by the applicant, I will not process them further or take them into account for the evaluation of the proposal. I will not communicate outside the panel any confidential information that is revealed to me or that I have discovered. I will not make any adverse use of information given to me.

Signed: .....

Date/Place:

Name (in capitals):

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<sup>3</sup> In case of false, incomplete or incorrect statements or failure to provide information in an attempt to obtain the contract or any benefit resulting therefrom, or where this was the effect of the action, this constitutes a breach of the contract between the Agency and the expert. The Agency may decide to terminate the contract and to recover any sums paid to the Contractor under the order (cf. Article 8 of the General Conditions).