



Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency

Creative Europe: MEDIA

Creative Europe – MEDIA Sub-programme

GUIDE FOR EXPERTS

ON THE ASSESSMENT OF FILM EDUCATION ACTIONS

Call for proposals EACEA/14/2017

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 FILM EDUCATION SCHEME

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

Developing European audiences 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 Film Education support is to stimulate the interest of the audiences, in particular young audiences, in European films and audiovisual works. The aim is to promote film literacy and film education in order to increase audiences' knowledge of European films and their interest in these films, including works of the audiovisual and cinematographic heritage. It will also address the contribution that film and other audiovisual works can make to education.

The MEDIA Film Education 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.

This action looks for projects that can provide mechanisms for better cooperation between film education initiatives in Europe, with the aim to improve the efficiency and European dimension of these initiatives and to develop new and innovative projects, especially using digital tools. Projects should provide mechanisms for increasing the contribution of films and audiovisual works to education, including curated catalogues of films. The afore-mentioned objectives might be achieved 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 up to 10 high quality cooperation projects.

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 interest¹ 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:

- have a sound knowledge of the Film Education Guidelines² which provide all necessary information to potential applicants on the actions for which they can apply for a grant;

¹ 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».

² https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe/funding/film-education_2017_en.

- 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 (OEEET). The applications to be assessed as well as the evaluation forms are accessible through OEEET. Experts are provided with technical instructions for the use of OEEET 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:

	Criteria	Definitions	Max. points
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. Code of Conduct of Experts

Annex 1	FILM EDUCATION– Award Criteria
----------------	---------------------------------------

	Criterion	Definition	Max. Weighting
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

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	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

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, or 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	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

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 as 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 practices?

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 to collect data and analyse its results? How effective are they likely to be? Is there a strategy to ensure the sustainability of the project?

	Criterion	Definition	Max. Weighting
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

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 ability of the team to execute the project has already been assessed at the Selection stage. It should not be called into question when assessing this criteria.

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_2018_en

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EXPERTS**ARTICLE 1 – PERFORMANCE OF THE CONTRACT**

1. The expert works independently, in a personal capacity and not on behalf of any organisation.
2. The experts must:
 - (a) carry out their tasks in a confidential and fair way, in accordance with the EACEA guidelines for submission of proposals and the related evaluation, selection and award procedures
 - (b) assist the contracting party or relevant service to the best of their abilities, professional skills, knowledge and applying the highest ethical and moral standards
 - (c) follow any instructions and time-schedules given by the contracting party or relevant service and deliver consistently high quality work.
3. The expert may not delegate another person to carry out the work or be replaced by any other person.
4. If a legal entity involved in a proposal approaches the expert during the evaluation of this proposal, s/he must immediately inform the contracting party or relevant service.

ARTICLE 2 – OBLIGATIONS OF IMPARTIALITY

1. The expert must perform their work **impartially**. To this end, the expert is required to:
 - (a) take all necessary measures to prevent any situation of conflict of interest;
 - (b) inform without delay the contracting party or relevant service of any conflicts of interest arising in the course of their work including of any proposal competing with the proposal where the expert may have a conflict of interest;
 - (c) confirm there is no conflict of interest for each proposal s/he is evaluating by signing a declaration in the electronic evaluation system.
2. **Definition of the conflict of interest:** Such situation arises where the impartial and objective performance of the Contract is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, familial or emotional ties, or any other shared interest.

For a given proposal, a conflict of interest exists if an expert:

- (a) was involved in the preparation of the proposal
- (b) stands to benefit directly or indirectly if the proposal is accepted
- (c) has a close family or personal relationship with any person representing an applicant or participating legal entity
- (d) is a director, trustee or partner or is in any way involved in the management of an applicant legal entity
- (e) is employed or contracted by one of the applicant legal entities³ or any named subcontractors

³ However, the contracting party or relevant service may decide to invite an expert who is employed or contracted by one of the applicant legal entities or any named subcontractors to take part in the panel review session, if the expert works in a different department/laboratory/institute from the one where the work is to be carried out, and if the constituent bodies operate with a high degree of autonomy, and if

(f) is a member of an Advisory Group set up by the Commission to advise on the preparation of EU work programmes related to, or in an area related to, the call for proposals in question

(g) is a National Contact Point

(h) is a member of a Programme Committee

In the following situations the contracting party or relevant service will decide whether a conflict of interest exists, taking account of the objective circumstances, available information and related risks.

when an expert:

(i) was employed by one of the applicant or participating legal entities in the last three years

(ii) is involved in a contract or grant agreement, grant decision or membership of management structures (e.g. member of management or advisory board etc.) research collaboration with an applicant or participating legal entity or a fellow researcher, or had been so in the last three years

(iii) is in any other situation that could cast doubt on their ability to participate in the evaluation of the proposal impartially, or that could reasonably appear to do so in the eyes of an external third party.

3. Consequences of a situation of conflict of interest:

If a conflict becomes apparent at any stage of the evaluation, the expert must immediately inform the contracting party or relevant service staff. If a conflict is confirmed, the expert must stop evaluating the proposal concerned. Any comments and scores already given by the expert will be discounted. If necessary, the expert will be replaced.

If it is revealed during an evaluation that an expert has knowingly concealed a conflict of interest, the expert will be immediately excluded, and sanctions will apply (see Articles 14, 15, 16 and 18 of the Contract or in the Financial Regulation and its implementing rules).

ARTICLE 3 – OBLIGATIONS OF CONFIDENTIALITY

1. The contracting party and the expert must treat confidentially⁴ any information and documents, in any form (i.e. paper or electronic), disclosed in writing or orally in relation to the performance of the Contract.

such a role is justified by the requirement to appoint the best available experts and by the limited size of the pool of qualified experts. In this case, the expert must not take part in any detailed panel discussion (or electronic forum) of the proposal involving the legal entity concerned or in any hearings concerning the proposal.

In exceptional duly justified cases, experts in the circumstances described above may also participate in the consensus group for the proposal in question, provided valid reasons are given. The contracting party or relevant service will inform the other experts in the group of the affiliation of the expert concerned.

⁴ In this context, the term 'confidentiality' should not be taken as equating to the security classification 'EU CONFIDENTIAL'. The procedures related to 'EU CONFIDENTIAL' documents apply only to information and material the unauthorised disclosure of which would harm the essential interests of the EU of one of its Member States (Commission provisions on security (Commission Decision 2001/844/EC, ECSC, Euratom of 29 November 2001 amending its internal rules of procedure (OJ L 317, 3.12.2001, p. 1).

2. The expert undertakes to observe strict **confidentiality** in relation to their work. To this end, the expert:

- (a) must not use confidential information or documents for any purpose other than fulfilling their obligations under the Contract without prior written approval of the contracting party
- (b) must not disclose, directly or indirectly, confidential information or documents relating to proposals or applicants, without prior written approval of the contracting party.

In particular, the expert:

i. must not discuss any proposal with others, including other experts or contracting party or relevant service staff not directly involved in evaluating the proposal, except during the formal discussion at the meetings moderated by or with the knowledge and approval of the responsible contracting party or relevant service staff

ii. must not disclose:

- any detail of the evaluation process and its outcomes or of any proposal submitted for evaluation for any purpose other than fulfilling their obligations under the Contract without prior written approval of the contracting party
- their advice to the contracting party or relevant service on any proposal to the applicants or to any other person (including colleagues, students, etc.)
- the names of other experts participating in the evaluation.

iii. must not communicate with applicants, beneficiaries or any person linked to the applicant or participating legal entity on any proposal:

- during the evaluation or on-site visits, except in hearings or on-site visits between experts and the applicants or beneficiary organised by the contracting party or relevant service as part of the evaluation process;
- after the evaluation.

3. If the proposals are made available electronically to the expert who then works from their own or other suitable premises, s/he will be held personally responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of any documents or electronic files sent, and for returning, erasing or destroying all confidential documents or files upon completing the evaluation as instructed.

4. If the evaluation takes place in premises controlled by the contracting party or relevant service, the expert:

- (a) must not remove from the premises proposals, copies or notes on evaluation, either on paper or in electronic form
- (b) will be held personally responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of any documents or electronic files sent, and for returning, erasing or destroying all confidential documents or files on completing the evaluation as instructed.

5. If the expert seeks further information (for example through the internet, specialised databases, etc.) to complete their examination of the proposals, s/he:

- (a) must respect the overall rules for confidentiality for obtaining such information
- (b) must not contact applicants, beneficiaries or any person linked to the applicant legal entity
- (c) must not contact third parties without prior written approval of the contracting party.

6. These confidentiality obligations are binding on:

(a) the contracting party (see Regulation No 31 (EEC), 11 (EAEC), laying down the Staff Regulations of Officials

and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy Community⁵10

(b) the expert during performance of the Contract and for five years starting from the date of the last payment made to the expert unless:

- i. the contracting party agrees to release the expert from the confidentiality obligations earlier
- ii. the confidential information becomes public through other channels
- iii. disclosure of the confidential information is required by law.

⁵ OJ 45, 14.6.1962, p. 1385.