



INT-GEN no. 49 / 29.10.2021

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## Report of the selection committee

International open call for the formation of a collective responsible for the artistic coherence and strategic coordination of the Timișoara 2023 - European Capital of Culture Programme

### Members of the committee:

Adriana Babeți, Ștefan Ghenciulescu, Ovidiu Hrin, Constantin Petcou, Raluca Voinea

Number of candidates: **70**

Number of applications: **74** (some of the candidates have applied for more than one position)

Number of candidates who selected stage 2 (interviews): **19**

Applications for each position:

- Curator of the “People” Territory: **12** candidates
- Curator of the “Places” Territory: **11** candidates
- Curator of the “Connections” Territory: **14** candidates
- Expert in cultural production management: **14** candidates
- Expert in communication and marketing strategies: **6** candidates
- Expert in cultural education and mediation: **10** candidates
- Expert in community relations and social inclusion: **7** candidates

The 70 candidates live and/or work in: Armenia, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Holland, Hungary, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Macedonia, Palestine, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden, and Ukraine.

## Introduction

The preparation process for Timișoara 2023 - European Capital of Culture has reached a major milestone through the election of a team of curators and experts to coordinate and develop this event on a local, regional and national scale. The launch of this open call has had great success, with 70 candidates from Romania and abroad applying. This level of interest foretells the importance and the catalytic role the event will have in 2023, at various geographic scales. The large number of candidates and their quality have impressed the members of the committee and obliged them to make sure they choose professionals with skill sets and roles which are both specific and complementary. Most of the members of the selected team have a very good knowledge of the large-scale cultural strategies, as well as a knowledge of the local scene and cultural dynamics. The national and international networks most of the members are involved in will help secure an international impact; as a whole, all members will focus their efforts on making sure



that the dynamics, the energy and the investments involved in this major event of 2023 will have sustainable medium and long-term cultural outcomes.

## **Stage 1 | Preselection. The evaluation of the applications by the selection committee**

Before the evaluation, the members of the committee have agreed unanimously on the points corresponding to the selection criteria proposed in the call Regulation paper, as well as the minimum points to be obtained in stage 1 (pre-selection) in order to be admitted to stage 2 (interviews), as follows:

- experience in implementing or monitoring cultural programmes and projects: 12 points;
  - relevance of the portfolio submitted to the specific position for which the candidate applies: 13 points;
  - the candidate's contribution to the cultural programmes and projects in the portfolio: 15 points;
  - breadth of the programmes and projects in the portfolio in terms of national/international artistic and cultural participation: 12 points;
  - breadth of the programmes and projects in the portfolio in terms of audience attraction and involvement: 9 points;
  - involvement in various local / national networks: 7 points;
  - involvement in European / international networks: 9 points;
  - knowledge of the local cultural context as well as the local cultural scene: 12 points;
  - knowledge of the "Timișoara - European Capital of Culture" bid book: 6 points;
  - involvement in strategic processes specific to a European Capital of Culture: 5 points;
- Total: 100 points.

Stage 2 criteria:

- communication skills: 14 points;
  - synthesis skills: 15 points;
  - initiative and creativity: 16 points;
  - complexity and diversity of activities: 13 points;
  - judgement and impact of decisions: 14 points;
  - coordination and monitoring: 11 points;
  - ability to find solutions in crisis situations: 17 points;
- Total: 100 points.

Minimum score to be obtained in stage 1 (pre-selection) for admission to stage 2 (interviews): 70 points.

In the first stage of the evaluation process, the committee members studied and scored each of the 74 applications individually, based on the agreed evaluation grid. Any differences in scoring were discussed and revised to the point where there was no difference of more than 15 points / applicant between the scores awarded individually by the panel members.



No case of incompatibility or conflict of interest was found among the 70 candidates.

In addition, in order to fully support an objective process, there were also some abstentions from the committee members, such as Stefan Ghenciulescu's abstention in the case of Cosmina Goagea, candidate for the position of curator for the "Places" Territory. Ștefan and Cosmina are part of the team that built the Zeppelin magazine and platform and have collaborated on various projects in the past. They are currently not in any kind of patrimonial relationship, nor are they related. In this case, Ștefan abstained from scoring Cosmina Goagea, the average being based on the scores given by the other 4 members of the selection committee.

## **Stage 2 | Individual interviews with the preselected candidates and final results**

Based on the scores awarded in Round 1, 19 out of the 74 applications scored over 70 points and qualified for stage 2.

All 19 candidates took part in individual interviews and answered the questions of the selection committee.

There were abstentions from scoring for the same candidates whom there were abstentions in stage 1.

Following the calculation of the final scores (as an arithmetic average of the scores obtained in the 2 selection stages), the following 7 candidates were selected:

**Corina Oprea** is the curator selected by the jury for the "People" Territory. In addition to her outstanding professional experience and the international scope of her projects, Corina brings to the Timisoara 2023 project a vision based both on the involvement and support of the local scene and on building transperipheral alliances. The jury noted her ability to situate this project in the current perspective, one of crises of all kinds (health, climate, identity) and to propose responses based on participatory ecologies; they also appreciated her diverse practice of working with socially engaged art projects and multi-disciplinary projects, as well as her non-linear perspective on recent history and post-colonial geographies. Corina Oprea's co-optation in the project team represents for "Timisoara 2023 - European Capital of Culture" the opportunity to bring to fruition a truly inclusive project, open to the communities living in the city, including the marginalized and discriminated ones.

**Cosmina Goagea**, who won the position of curator for the "Places" Territory, has over 20 years of experience in publishing, research, curating and building cultural projects. These range from international programmes to museum projects in Romania or community actions in the public space. She is co-author of projects that have received international awards (e.g. DASA of the European Museum Academy for the National Museum of Romanian Literature and the Anton Pann Memorial House or the nomination to the European Prize for Public Space for the Magic Blocks programme) and more than 20 awards and nominations at Biennials and Architecture Annuals in Romania. The curatorial vision proposed through her candidacy emphasizes the right to the city - including for disadvantaged groups, regeneration of spaces and buildings, activation of heritage



and building long-term tools, projects and collaborations. In this vision, the Timisoara 2023 projects should also contribute in generating a policy for the city's architecture.

**Matevž Čelik Vidmar** has been selected by the committee for the position of curator for the "Connections" Territory. Although by training he is an architect, his work is not strictly about architecture, but (or more specifically) about researching the relationship between city, architecture, design and society, and building and adapting institutional models that go beyond the boundaries of a discipline and are part of a 21st century cultural vision. Examples of this are the development and internationalisation of the MAO Museum of Architecture and Design in Ljubljana, which in a very short time became one of the most important institutions related to space and city in Europe, and the building of cultural platforms and policies. Matevž Čelik Vidmar also brings regional openness (especially concerning Central and South-Eastern Europe) and the potential support of an impressive international network. His experience of ongoing collaboration, working in challenging cultural, social and organisational contexts and managing existing resources will serve him in managing a complex curatorship.

The professional firmness gained through years of experience and the clear vision of the entire production process of the large-scale cultural event are just two of the qualities that have propelled **Silviu Scrob** to the position of favourite of the selection committee for the position of expert in cultural production management. In addition to his extensive track record and investment of energy in the development of this profession, he also managed to impress with his discursive coherence, succinctly mapping out the set of strategies he will activate in the timeframe he has available in 2023. This encouraged the committee members to unanimously give him their vote of confidence for the position of cultural production expert on the Timisoara 2023 team of curators and experts.

With a long experience as a communication consultant, cultural manager and press officer, **Oana Boca-Stănescu** has all the qualities required by the profile of the position for which she applied - expert in communication and marketing strategies. The committee's choice was supported by her rich CV, which attests to her involvement as an organizer in major national and international media campaigns, as the initiator of the first communication agency in Romania. The selection committee also appreciated Oana Stănescu's ability to act creatively in crisis situations, as well as her very good knowledge of the local and regional cultural context. Her teamwork skills, her assiduous involvement in projects, her flexibility in adapting to different situations and environments, her broad general knowledge, her persuasive force, all these qualities recommend her as a desirable and necessary partner in the team of curators and experts of the project "Timișoara 2023 - European Capital of Culture".

**Corina Bucea** has been selected by the committee for the position of education and cultural mediation expert. Her contribution to the development of the local cultural scene in Cluj-Napoca, as well as the national one, is undeniable, as proven by the institutions and programmes in which she has been involved in various roles (management, training and mediation, curatorship etc.): the Cluj Cultural Centre, the Paintbrush Factory, Romania's participation in the Venice Art and Architecture Biennials in recent years. Working on a large scale with extended teams and coordinating extremely diverse local, national and European networks and partnerships are strengths that Corina Bucea brings to the Timisoara 2023 team. In addition, her perspective on cultural mediation as a content-creating direction, not just a tool for cultural programming, and her interest in critical pedagogies will ensure an integrated and dynamic contribution to the project team.



**Theodora Borghoff's** involvement to develop and implement strategies for the development and participation of a broad and diverse public in the "Timisoara 2023 - European Capital of Culture" programme made her a very good option due to her training and competences in social development practice, adult education and, at the same time, professional experiences in civic participation, inclusion and community development. Its multiple experiences at local, national and international level are an additional guarantee to creatively boost local resources and ensure the implementation of innovative education and cultural mediation tools in a period marked by the negative social impact caused by the current pandemic.

We are confident that this team will succeed not only in bringing "Timisoara 2023 - European Capital of Culture" back to the forefront as one of the major cultural events in Romania in the next two years, but also in building a project with long-term impact, a project that will revive the civic and creative energy of all citizens and the places where they live.

**The selection committee,**

Adriana Babeți,  
Ștefan Ghenciulescu,  
Ovidiu Hrin,  
Constantin Petcou,  
Raluca Voinea