



Annex no. 3 to Decision IES-DEC no. 7 / 20.02.2023

Launch announcement of the *European Echoes* programme

on the non-reimbursable financing of cultural projects extending and strengthening the national cultural programme "Timișoara – European Capital of Culture in 2023". The European Echoes funding programme is implemented by the Center for Projects of the Timișoara Municipality, with funds allocated from the state budget, through the budget of the Ministry of Culture.

1. Context

Europe needs civically-engaged people and a connection to its fundamental principles. Culture can highlight shared values and a diversity of perspectives, engaging the public and cultural stakeholders, and inspiring the imagination and promoting the identities of those who participate.

Today, among the overarching European priorities are climate change and the need to develop adaptive behaviours to this transformation and reduce its negative impact on the environment, improving digital skills, promoting social equity and equal access to opportunities to increase quality of life, the impact of international relations, and strengthening democracy in Europe.

As regards the state of culture, current concerns at European level are oriented towards cultural diversity, sustainability in the field of cultural heritage and the role of culture as a factor for sustainable development, implementation of support measures for artists, cultural or creative professionals and European cultural content, gender equality issues and strengthening international cultural relations.

Through the European Capitals of Culture initiative, the European Union invites communities to create an original, strategic and systemic cultural response, linking the European context to the local situation, through a broad cultural programme, such as Timișoara – European Capital of Culture in 2023.

Through its Bid Book, Timișoara has proposed that audience development should be the main method for civic engagement in local communities and activating the role of culture in the wider European context. Moreover, the Cultural Programme recognises and highlights diverse local resources alongside elements of identity for cultural and social development. On a more general level, Timișoara aims to raise the city's international



profile through more intense interaction with other European cultures in terms of artistic excellence and cultural interdependence.

The national cultural programme "Timișoara – European Capital of Culture in 2023" gives confidence to citizens and creates the necessary context to provoke change through participation and involvement in culture, through audience outreach and international collaborations. Timișoara wants a wider international cultural profile. Professional innovation and international partnerships for co-production, exchange and dialogue are essential for a coherent and long-lasting development for the city, organisations, artists and professionals.

The national cultural programme "Timișoara – European Capital of Culture 2023" benefits from a lasting commitment from local, regional and national authorities. The Ministry of Culture has amended the national legislation that expressly regulates the funding of the national cultural programme "Timișoara – European Capital of Culture in 2023", with multiannual implementation for the period 2019-2024.

The *European Echoes* funding programme is implemented with funds from the state budget, through the budget of the Ministry of Culture, and supports small, medium and large-scale co-productions, as well as creations or artistic productions relevant to the national cultural programme "Timișoara – European Capital of Culture in 2023" or arising from it. Funded projects will create links, develop research, exhibitions and events that convey the spirit of a transforming local context and a more international content present in Timișoara. The overall aim is to develop audiences and cultivate connections between people as a creative force.

European Echoes is the international cooperation and exchange platform of the national cultural programme "Timișoara – European Capital of Culture in 2023", and funds projects to be carried out in Timișoara and other European venues:

- As an **outbound platform** (from Timișoara to Europe) the programme mainly aims to increase the international impact and the extent of cultural productions developed in the context of Timișoara 2023, with projects ranging from exhibitions, shows and performances to artistic research, residencies and co-productions. European Echoes can also generate the dynamism that encourages organisations to document, develop, coalesce and iterate their content at a European level.
- As an **inbound platform** (from Europe to Timișoara) the programme aims to strengthen European and international collaborations as well as local and Romanian stakeholders. In this sense, the programme will serve as a vital extension of the national cultural programme towards excellence and international vision.

An important objective of the European Echoes programme is the transfer of know-how to encourage learning and reflection, not just the presentation of imported cultural products. This programme will create opportunities for interaction, contact points and transfer of practices from the European to the local context. It also encourages projects



that facilitate the integration of new, local creations into the cultural economy and the European circuit.

2. Aim and objectives of the funding programme

2.1. Aim

The *European Echoes* programme is the funding mechanism, from the state budget, through the budget of the Ministry of Culture, for projects that extend and strengthen the national cultural programme "Timișoara – European Capital of Culture in 2023" through international collaborations.

This programme finances cultural projects that aim to support international collaborations of local and national cultural operators, to highlight local cultural resources at international level, with a focus on increasing the presence of cultural operators, artists and international cultural products in Timișoara.

European Echoes aims to increase the European impact of the National Cultural Programme, in relation to its specific vision and concepts.

2.2. Objectives

General objectives

1. Strengthening cultural practices based on partnerships and collaborations in the European area, which highlight local cultural resources.
2. Developing the capacity of local cultural actors to be present and work at European level.
3. To develop and engage local audiences through exposure to new productions with a European dimension.

Specific **outbound** objective

- Raise the international profile of the local cultural scene in relation to the European audience and cultural scene.

Specific **inbound** objective

- Increase the presence of cultural operators, artists and international cultural products in Timișoara.



3. Who can apply

The funding programme is addressed to authorised natural persons, individual/family businesses, companies or private or public legal entities, with the exception of public legal entities subordinated to the Timișoara City Council.

4. What cultural projects can be funded

A project can be selected for funding if it meets the following **conditions**:

4.1. **outbound projects** (from Timișoara towards Europe):

- the public events proposed by the project are mainly held outside Romania (specific activities of preparation and/or development of the project, such as exchanges of experiences and cultural practices, research, residencies, promotional events);
- the project meets at least two of the three general objectives of the funding programme;
- the project meets the specific objective of the outbound area;
- the project proposes the international exposure of local cultural products developed in the context and in the perspective of the concept and artistic vision of the National Cultural Programme "Timișoara – European Capital of Culture in 2023", in at least one public event;
- the project integrates the proposed partnerships in the design and organisation of cultural activities (the partnership statement will clearly mention the role of the partner in this respect);
- communication and promotion of the project summary and its most relevant activities is carried out in at least one international language.
- the project includes at least one European partnership;
- the project includes a cumulative budget dedicated to communication, promotion and mediation activities of at least 15% of the total budget, i.e. the budget including the requested grant funding and complementary sources of funding.

4.2. **inbound projects** (from Europe towards Timișoara):

- the public events proposed by the project are mainly held in Timișoara (specific activities for the preparation and/or development of the project can also be carried out abroad, such as exchanges of experiences and cultural practices, research, residencies, promotional events);
- the project meets at least two of the three general objectives of the funding programme;



- the project responds to the specific objective of the inbound area;
- the project integrates the proposed partnerships in the design and organisation of cultural activities (the partnership statement will clearly mention the role of the partner in this respect);
- communication and promotion of the project summary and its most relevant activities is carried out in at least one international language.
- the project includes at least one European partnership;
- the project includes a cumulative budget dedicated to communication, promotion and mediation activities of at least 15% of the total budget, i.e. the budget including the requested grant funding and complementary sources of funding.

5. Budget and characteristics

Total budget: 6,000,000 lei;

Funding caps per project category (maximum funding amounts):

- small-scale projects: maximum 50,000 lei
- medium-sized projects: maximum 200,000 lei
- large-scale projects: maximum 1,000,000 lei

Budget divided by thematic areas:

- **Outbound budget** (from Timișoara towards Europe): 700,000 lei, allocated as follows:
 - small scale projects: 300,000 lei
 - medium-sized projects: 400,000 lei
- **Inbound budget** (from Europe towards Timișoara): 4,300,000 lei, allocated as follows:
 - small scale projects: 300,000 lei
 - medium-sized projects: 1,000,000 lei
 - large scale projects: 3,000,000 lei

Appeals fund - inbound and outbound projects:

- 1,000,000 lei

Instalments:

- small and medium-scale projects:
 - 1st instalment: max. 85%
 - 2nd instalment: min. 15%



- large-scale projects:
 - 1st instalment: max. 70%
 - 2nd instalment: max. 15%
 - 3rd instalment: min. 15%

The beneficiary will identify and attract **complementary sources of funding** (percentages of the **total** project budget, i.e. the budget including the requested grant funding and complementary sources of funding):

- small and medium-scale projects: min. 5%
- large-scale projects: min. 10%

One applicant may:

- submit a single application to this funding programme;
- may submit a maximum of two applications in the funding session of which the programme is part (session which includes the funding programmes *European Echoes, Grow Timișoara 2023, Inside Timișoara 2023*);
- may apply for a maximum of two grants under the following cultural programme funding programmes: *Onboard, European Echoes, Grow Timișoara 2023, Inside Timișoara 2023*. The contracted projects must have clearly/evidently different aims, objectives and duration, stated distinctly and unequivocally.

The complementary source of funding for the project and the activities it includes cannot be another project funded by contract with the Center for Projects of the Timișoara Municipality.

6. Calendar

6.1. Calendar for small and medium-scale projects

Period	Activity
22 February - 15 March, until 16:00	Small and medium-sized project application period.
16 March - 6 April	Stage 1: Checking the administrative compliance and eligibility of small and medium-sized projects submitted. Stage 2: Evaluation and selection of small and medium-sized projects submitted.



7 April	Publication of the results of stages 1 and 2.
> 10 April	<p>Submission of the documents required for contracting the projects declared successful following the publication of stages 1 and 2.</p> <p>Signing of funding contracts for the projects declared successful following the publication of the results of stages 1 and 2.</p> <p><i>Please note: Expenditure for which funding is requested can only be incurred after the date of signature of the contract, during its execution.</i></p>
10 - 12 April	Submission of appeals concerning the results of stages 1 and 2.
13 - 24 April	Period for the settlement of appeals concerning the results of stages 1 and 2.
25 April	Publication of the results after the resolution of appeals.
> 26 April	<p>Sending the necessary documents for the contracting of the projects declared successful following the settlement of the appeals.</p> <p>Signing of the grant contracts for the projects declared successful following the resolution of appeals.</p> <p><i>Please note: Expenditure for which funding is requested can only be incurred after the date of signature of the contract, during its execution.</i></p>
> 10/26 April - 31 December 2023	Implementation period/duration of the cultural project - the period of time, specified in the grant application, between the start date of the first and the end date of the last specific activity addressed to the final beneficiary audience of the cultural project.
30 January 2024	Deadline for submission of the final statement.

6.2. Calendar for large-scale projects

Period	Activity
22 February -	Large-sized project application period.



22 March, until 16:00

23 March - 6 April Stage 1: Checking the administrative compliance and eligibility of large projects submitted.
Stage 2: Evaluation and selection of large project applications.

7 April Publication of the results of stages 1 and 2.

> 10 April Submission of the documents required for contracting the projects declared successful following the publication of stages 1 and 2.

Signing of grant contracts for the projects declared winners following the publication of the results of stages 1 and 2.

Please note: Expenditure for which funding is requested can only be incurred after the date of signature of the contract, during its execution.

10 - 12 April Submission of appeals concerning the results of stages 1 and 2.

13 - 24 April Period for the settlement of appeals concerning the results of stages 1 and 2.

25 April Publication of the results after the resolution of appeals.

> 26 April Sending the necessary documents for the contracting of the projects declared successful following the settlement of the appeals.

Signing of the grant contracts for the projects declared successful following the resolution of appeals.

Please note: Expenditure for which funding is requested can only be incurred after the date of signature of the contract, during its execution.

> 10/26 April - 31 December 2023 Implementation period/duration of the cultural project - the period of time, specified in the grant application, between the start date of the first and the end date of the last specific activity addressed to the final beneficiary audience of the cultural project.

30 January 2024 Deadline for submission of the final statement.



7. Evaluation

7.1. Evaluation process

The selection of cultural projects is carried out by **committees** set up at the level of the funding authority, made up of:

- a) representatives of the funding authority with experience and/or responsibility for the local cultural sector;
- b) specialists with at least three years' experience or, where appropriate, at least two years' experience in the management and/or evaluation of cultural projects in the fields for which the selection session is being organised.

The work of the evaluators consists of the evaluation of the cultural projects, which is followed by the committee's harmonisation meeting by reference to the general objectives of the funding programme and the **ranking of the cultural projects on the basis of the scores obtained**, calculated by the arithmetic average of the scores awarded by each member of the committee, according to the value and organisational criteria set out in this notice.

A series of **administrative and strategic eligibility criteria**, listed in chapter 4 of this notice and relevant to the specificity of the funding programme, i.e. the thematic area, are **mandatory conditions** for a project to enter the evaluation phase. The verification of these conditions is carried out by the Secretariat of the funding programme on a Yes/No basis.

After publication of the results of stages 1 and 2, applicants have the right to submit an **appeal** to the way in which the procedure for organising and conducting the selection stage has been followed, within a maximum of 3 working days from the date on which the selection result is notified to them.

In order to prepare an appeal, the eligibility checklists for the applicant and the cultural project, as well as the evaluation grids, can be requested and will be made available electronically by the secretariat of the funding authority.

Submission of the application is not conditional on the request of the grids.

In order to deal with appeals submitted by applicants, appeal panels will be set up at the level of the authority.

Appeals should be sent electronically to **proiecte@centruldeproiecte.ro**.

Please note that the **appeals fund** can only be accessed by applicants who, following the publication of the results of stages 1 and 2, submit a challenge.

The appeals fund is accessed in order of scores, regardless of project category or funding area.



Projects for which appeals are submitted are re-evaluated by appeal panels made up of members other than those who were part of the selection committees.

Projects shall be selected for funding within the budget and characteristics referred to in Chapter 5.

If, after centralisation of the results of stages 1 and 2, the budgets allocated to a given project category or funding area are not exhausted, then the funds remaining in that project category or funding area shall be added to the appeals fund.

7.2. Evaluation criteria

I. Valuation criteria	Maximum score
I.1. Relevance to the <u>overall objectives</u> of the <i>European Echoes</i> funding programme	
Objective 1: Strengthening cultural practices based on partnership and collaboration in the European area, highlighting local cultural resources.	
Objective 2: To develop the capacity of local cultural actors to be present and work at European level.	20
Objective 3: Develop and engage local audiences through exposure to new productions with a European dimension.	
<i>Maximum 10 points for each objective. Arguments will be given for two of the three general objectives.</i>	
I.2. Relevance to the <u>specific objectives</u> of the <i>European Echoes</i> funding programme	
Outbound specific objective	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise the international profile of the local cultural scene in relation to the European audience and cultural scene; 	10
Inbound specific objective	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the presence of European cultural operators, artists and cultural products in Timișoara. 	



I.3. European dimension

The project highlights European cultural diversity, aiming to promote art and creativity, intercultural dialogue and better understanding between European citizens through:

- highlighting common aspects of European cultures, heritage, values and history;
- supporting European integration and addressing contemporary European issues through art and culture;
- cooperation of European artists with Timișoara artists through transnational partnerships with operators in one or more European cities.

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The applicant will argue for a maximum of 2 options from the above list, which will be highlighted in the application in the dedicated section. Each option will be awarded a maximum of 10 points. Please note that in order to be selected, the cultural project must score at least 5 points for this criterion.

I.4. Audience development

The project addresses the audience development criterion in a specific way and adapted to the project objectives through the following possibilities and proposes a concrete action plan with appropriate methods, channels and materials for this purpose:

- addresses one or more levels of expansion and diversification of the target audience categories;
- addresses participation/involvement components of the target audiences in project activities;
- stimulates critical thinking, inspires self-expression, facilitates audience-generated cultural content, develops co-creation or encourages active ageing;
- involves and trains volunteers;
- includes activities for vulnerable groups or addresses social issues;
- develops an educational component, by actively involving schools, promoting cooperation with European educational entities and platforms or through lifelong learning;
- promotes open and shared platforms for cultural and artistic content, giving citizens the opportunity to acquire skills in producing, accessing and distributing cultural products.

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The applicant will give arguments for a maximum of 4 options from the list above, which will be highlighted in the grant application in the dedicated section. Each option will be awarded a maximum of 5 points.



Please note that in order to be selected, the cultural project must score at least 5 points for this criterion.

I.5. Cooperation between established cultural institutions and emerging local and international groups or artists

The project includes cooperation with medium to long term impact, in that:

- it proposes collaborations, partnerships, exchanges of practices, experiences, creative or research processes between established cultural institutions/organisations and emerging local or international groups or artists; 10
- provides support or promotion from established cultural institutions/organisations for emerging artists/curators/cultural managers or emerging artist groups, locally or internationally.

Please note that in order to be selected, the cultural project must score at least 5 points for this criterion.

I.6. Interdisciplinary artistic excellence and/or originality

- The project creatively combines different art forms on the one hand and art, culture and other different fields - social, educational and economic - on the other; 10
- The fusion of traditional art forms with new, innovative and experimental expressions will be encouraged.

Please note that in order to be selected, the cultural project must score at least 5 points for this criterion.

I.7. Culture as a promoter for development and innovation

- the project promotes new forms of cultural and creative initiative and entrepreneurship, contributing to the transformation of Timișoara and Banat into a centre of cultural creativity;
- the project promotes the integration of new, local creations into the cultural economy and into European exhibition circuits; 10
- the project strengthens the sense of belonging, reinforces communities, increases social cohesion;
- the project contributes to raising the international profile of Timișoara.

Please note that in order to be selected, the cultural project must score at least 5 points for this criterion.

Total I* 100



II. Organisational criteria	Maximum score
II.1. The project is coherent, clear and eloquent in its logical and feasible interrelation of objectives, activities, outputs, timetable and allocated resources.	15
II.2. The justification of the project is convincingly argued through a description of the context in which the cultural project will take place, the needs or opportunities addressed by the project, including in relation to the existing cultural offer.	10
II.3. The applicant and partners have relevant organisational and managerial capacity and the project team has the necessary skills, expertise and experience to successfully implement the project.	15
II.4. The budget is adequate, timely, balanced, well-founded and explicit and aims at an efficient allocation of resources, the costs included in the budget are realistic, related to the activities of the cultural project and in line with market prices.	15
II.5. The grant funding requested is relevant and effective in relation to the expected results at the level of the direct beneficiaries of the cultural project.	15
II.6. The risk management plan is based on the realistic and objective identification of risks that may affect the achievement of objectives and includes feasible measures/solutions to prevent/mitigate them.	5
II.7. Data collection methods and tools are appropriate for the evaluation of expected results. The proposed indicators are relevant to the activities and realistically sized in relation to the intended outcomes.	10
II.8. The communication plan includes channels and materials appropriate to the objectives of the cultural project and relevant to the target audiences. The project has allocated the necessary human resources and includes appropriate costs in the budget.	15
Total II*	100



***The final score is calculated as the arithmetic average of the scores obtained from the 2 sets of criteria - value and organisational.**

Proposals will be selected for grant funding which:

- **obtain a score of at least 5 points for each of the value criteria I.3, I.4, I.5, I.6 and I.7;**
- **score a minimum of 70 points in each of the two categories of criteria (value and organisational), out of a maximum of 100 points.**

All information and documents related to the funding programme are publicly available on the website **centrodeproiecte.ro/finantari**.

Official communication with the Center for Projects of the Timișoara Municipality regarding the implementation of the funding programme is carried out via the e-mail address **proiecte@centruldeproiecte.ro**.