

# EUNIC Cluster Fund call for projects in 2027

**Application deadline: 30 October 2026**

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## 1. The EUNIC Cluster Fund

EUNIC clusters are indispensable for the network to fulfil its strategic vision as defined in the [EUNIC Strategic Framework 2025-2029](#). Across the world, clusters play a key role in building meaningful links with civil society through local cultural relations initiatives. In this work, there is an opportunity through EUNIC to collectively place more effort on fairness, mutual respect, solidarity, and a shared commitment to cultural diversity in line with EUNIC's strategy and mission. To guide and support clusters to design and implement their project along these values, EUNIC has also developed [different tools and resources on fair collaboration](#).

Since its establishment in 2012, the Cluster Fund has been EUNIC's primary instrument to financially support collaborative cultural relations activities of the currently 143 clusters worldwide. EUNIC's inclusive understanding of culture covers, amongst many, the arts, creative industries, development cooperation, digitalisation, education, gender, heritage, human rights, language and multilingualism, social inclusion, sports, sustainability, tourism, youth, and others. Find out about the projects funded in previous editions of the EUNIC Cluster Fund on the [EUNIC website](#), and see an interactive catalogue of [projects supported throughout 2025 here](#).

To put EUNIC's Strategic Framework into practice, the Cluster Fund serves as a key instrument to support collaborations within EUNIC clusters. It provides financial support for initiatives that address the identified global priorities, including freedom of expression, the working conditions of artists and cultural professionals, sustainability, misinformation, and new technologies.



## 2. The 2027 call for proposals

The new call is an opportunity and invitation to cluster members to work more effectively together and to explore how they can collaborate with partners to proactively and creatively respond to key issues impacting local realities against a backdrop of fast changing and uncertain international relations.

### Purpose

The purpose of the 2027 edition of the Cluster Fund is to co-finance cluster projects that

- contribute to the network's shared commitment to the **international cultural relations approach** by encouraging people-to-people exchanges based on local consultation and dialogue, mutual listening and learning, co-creation and joint capacity building with all members and partners involved on an equal footing;
- **strengthen collaboration amongst members** and go beyond the projection and promotion of (the diversity of) European cultures;
- explore **hope-based, creative, and collaborative responses** to global issues impacting local communities, demonstrating culture's role in turning global challenges into opportunities through innovative formats and alliances;
- deliver **local cluster strategies** and contribute to the implementation of the EUNIC Strategic Framework 2025-2029;
- **raise the profile of EUNIC's mission** through impactful cluster projects worldwide.

Projects can take any format that goes beyond one-off events and events showcasing the diversity of European cultures within the realm of EUNIC's inclusive understanding of culture as outlined in the introduction. Projects may focus on research and capacity building initiatives benefitting the cluster and wider audiences, as well as networking and knowledge sharing activities. The call encourages contemporary and innovative cultural formats rooted in and addressing local realities and needs.

### Eligibility

- **EUNIC added value:** Only [established EUNIC clusters](#) approved by the EUNIC General Assembly can submit proposals. A **minimum of three Full EUNIC Members of the cluster** are involved in the project and the role of each of them in the design and implementation of the activities is clearly defined and described.
- **Strategic intention:** The **cluster needs to have a valid strategy** covering at least the implementation period of the project. The proposed project is aligned with the strategy. Clusters that have not submitted their cluster strategy to the EUNIC office yet need to provide a draft strategy when submitting their application. A [template and tips to create a meaningful strategy can be found here](#). Clusters are also encouraged to link their proposal to EUNIC's Strategic Framework and priority topics identified there.
- **Number of proposals:** **Only one application per cluster as the lead applicant will be accepted.** For projects with a regional dimension, clusters can be involved as an implementing partner in proposals submitted by other clusters in the lead. Grant amounts remain the same as for individual cluster projects.



## Total budget of the Fund

The total budget of the fund is based on voluntary contributions from EUNIC members' headquarters. The following EUNIC members have so far contributed or pledged to contribute to this call. More contributions might be made before the selection process.

Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation	50,000
Irish Department of Foreign Affairs	40,000
Goethe-Institut	35,000
Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs	23,000
Instituto Cervantes	15,000
Ifa – Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen	15,000
Adam Mickiewicz Institute	10,000
Institut français de Paris	10,000
Danish Cultural Institute	6,000
Arts Council Malta	5,000
Camões, I.P.	5,000
Czech Centres	5,000
DutchCulture	3,000
<b>Current total (as of 2 July 2026)</b>	<b>222,000</b>

## Financial aspects

Applicants **can request a maximum of EUR 20,000 for their project**. The requested amount can constitute up to 60% of the total budget of the project. **A minimum of 40% co-funding is required**. This can come from cluster members' own resources and contributions from project partners (e.g., local partner organisations or EU Delegations/European Commission Representations) or private sponsors. In-kind contributions<sup>1</sup> can be included but should not constitute more than half of the required 40% co-funding (e.g., for a grant request of EUR 20,000, co-funding needs to be at least EUR 8,000 of which in-kind contributions cannot exceed EUR 4,000). No additional funds from the Cluster Fund 2027 can be requested after the selection has been concluded and results communicated.

All applicants should submit a **standardised budget form** with their application form, estimating the costs of implementation of the proposed project. A budget template is provided for that in the application pack.

**Eligible costs** are those related to the implementation of the project and its actions (e.g., fair honorariums for artists and experts, travel and accommodation, production and transportation costs of art works, rights fees, catering, rental of venues, printing material, communication costs, etc.), including hiring of a project coordinator or external consultants to carry out certain components of the project (e.g., mapping of resources, PR/communication costs, coordination of activities, etc.).

**Costs not eligible** for funding under the Cluster Fund are overhead costs (organisational costs not directly linked to the project), the cluster members' permanent staff costs unrelated to the project, as well as costs related to the development of infrastructure.

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<sup>1</sup> In-kind contributions are non-monetary contributions such as goods or services provided, for instance use of venue or allocation of staff time to the management of the project.



Selected projects will be asked to **sign a grant agreement** in January 2027. **Payments to awarded clusters will be split into two instalments:** the first upon receipt of a request for pre-payment of 80% of the total grant (before 28 February 2027) and the second upon receipt of a request for final payment of the remaining 20%, accompanied by the final reports and budget, no later than 15 December 2027. Funds not claimed by that date will expire unless otherwise agreed with the EUNIC office. If a cluster reports an underspend of the grant in the final budget, it will either need to return the amount to the EUNIC office or EUNIC will subtract the underspend from the second instalment.

In prior agreement with all project partners, any participating cluster member can receive and manage the payments, not just the member submitting the application. That member is responsible for the correct financial administration of the project.

### Selection criteria

All applications will be evaluated based on the same selection criteria below. These reflect – alongside questions such as on objectives, target groups, and proposed activities – the questions in the application form. The maximum points that can be scored per criterion are included in the application form.

Criteria	Maximum points
<p><b>Relevance to local context</b> The proposal is rooted in its local societal and cultural context, describes it and its specific challenges clearly. The target group(s) and their needs are clearly identified and addressed. The project’s objectives and activities are clearly defined and outlined, and they fit the identified target group(s). Chosen format(s) are creative and offer new, contemporary perspectives of global issues impacting local communities, demonstrating culture’s role in turning global challenges into opportunities through innovative formats.</p>	25
<p><b>Collaboration of EUNIC members</b> The proposal explores new ways of European and international collaboration beyond the projection of individual European national cultures and strengthens co-creation amongst EUNIC members. Participating members are actively involved in the proposal and have ownership in the design and implementation of the proposed activities. The proposal clearly describes the role, responsibilities and added value of each participating cluster member. The proposal also demonstrates how the project will impact and strengthen the cluster dynamics and benefit member collaboration beyond the duration of the project.</p>	20
<p><b>Fair partnerships</b> An inclusive approach of working with all partners in a spirit of fair collaboration and co-creation on equal footing is at the core of the design and implementation of the proposal. The proposal creates opportunities for continuous dialogue and transfer of skills on the basis of mutual listening and learning amongst all stakeholders involved. It aims to establish lasting partnerships. The proposal clearly lists each partner and describes the role, active involvement and added value of each. Projects should demonstrate collaboration with a variety of local partners avoiding relying solely on institutional partners. Partners can be civil society organisations, public bodies, municipalities, universities, cultural and artistic organisations and potentially the EU Delegations/European Commission Representations or other international organisations and programmes.</p>	20



<p><b>Impact and sustainability</b> The proposal states concrete, feasible, realistic and sustainable foreseen results and includes activities and expected results that will last beyond the timeframe of the project that clearly link back to the context and challenges described as well as to the cluster’s strategy. Mid- or long-term impact on societies, local cultural scenes, and other target groups are anticipated. The proposal includes concrete mechanisms and indicators to monitor and evaluate the project. Possible risks are taken into account and mitigation is foreseen. The proposal demonstrates how the objectives, activities and impact contribute to sustainability in its different forms by addressing the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>2</sup></p>	20
<p><b>Visibility</b> The project proposes a convincing and bespoke communication and documentation plan (including objectives, target groups, tools, channels, media, and timeline). Communication around the project should explain the project’s impact in terms of scope (at local, regional, national and international level) and extent (beyond the end of the project). The communication plan foresees ways to share achievements and lessons learned with a wider audience. The project enhances the cluster’s reputation and role in the local context, as well as that of the EUNIC network as a whole. Proposals demonstrate the EUNIC dimension and selling point.</p>	10
<p><b>Environmental sustainability</b> Environmental sustainability is taken into account in the design and implementation of the project, measures undertaken to reduce the project’s environmental impact are described in detail. Clusters are strongly encouraged to use the <a href="#">EUNIC Sustainability Toolkit</a> for all project phases.</p>	5
<p><b>Total</b></p>	<b>100</b>

## Selection process

The EUNIC office will carry out a preliminary eligibility check of all the submitted proposals. Following this and based on the selection criteria, a jury composed of 4 representatives of EUNIC members will make the final project selection, signed off by the EUNIC Board of Directors. Results will be communicated at the EUNIC General Assembly in December 2026. Afterwards, all clusters will be informed about the selection results by e-mail in December.

## 3. Timeline

2 July 2026	Publication of the EUNIC Cluster Fund call for proposals 2027
23 October 2026	Last day to request optional feedback from the EUNIC office
<b>30 October 2026 (11:59 pm CET)</b>	<b>Deadline for submission of proposals</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> half of November 2026	Jury meeting: selection of projects
Beginning of December 2026	Publication of selection results
January – December 2027	Implementation period
28 February 2027	Deadline for selected projects to send first invoice
15 December 2027	Deadline to submit final project report and second invoice

<sup>2</sup> [UNESCO’s Culture 2030 Indicators](#) could serve as guiding framework to support the wider sector & civil society’s movement to include culture directly within the UN’s SDGs.



## 4. Implementation of projects

The implementation period is from January to December 2027 unless explicitly agreed otherwise. The EUNIC office must be informed of any unforeseen changes to the implementation of the project's activities.

### Communication requirements

Each project should propose a convincing and **bespoke communication and documentation plan** including clear and measurable objectives, target groups, tools, channels, media, and timeline. Communication outputs can include press reviews, interviews, social media campaigns, publications, videos, factsheets with results, and other creative formats.

**All awarded project teams are obliged to follow EUNIC's communication guidelines and [visual identity](#) and to share project related media material.** Additionally, selected clusters will be asked to submit a short article about the project [for publication on the EUNIC website](#). Detailed communication requirements will be shared with all the selected projects in January 2027.

### Reporting after completion

All awarded clusters are required to prepare a final project report and budget in order to receive the final 20% of the awarded amount. More information including the templates for the final report and budget form will be shared with the awarded clusters in early 2027.

## 5. How to apply

### Documents required

The following documents need to be submitted in English:

- Online application form submitted [via this link on Fillout](#)
- Estimated budget (in EUR) attached to the online application
- Draft Cluster Strategy (only if not already submitted to the EUNIC office; template available [here](#))

**All necessary documents, including the full call, budget and cluster strategy template, and guiding application form template can be found in the [Cluster Fund application package online here](#).** Please note that the application form template is provided as a Word document for reference only in order to guide and support collaborative work on the application. However, **only final applications submitted online via the Fillout form will be accepted.**

### Online submission

Here are the steps to complete your application:

- To get an idea of the questions to be filled in, have a look at the [application form template here](#).
- We advise clusters to **use this Word file for collaborative work and to save your written progress** in this document. Only use the online form for final submission.
- Once final, **complete your application [via this link on Fillout](#)**. Your progress will be automatically saved and it will be linked to the IP address with which you started the application.
- Make sure to **attach the completed budget template** and the cluster's current (or new draft) **strategy**.
- Submit your final application online!

Complete application packages must be submitted by **Friday, 30 October 2026 (at 11:59 pm CET)**. Once submitted you will receive an automatic confirmation and a summary of your submission. Kindly note that **only complete applications submitted online by the deadline will be considered.**



## 6. EUNIC office support

You can contact the cluster team at [clusters@eunicglobal.eu](mailto:clusters@eunicglobal.eu) if you have any questions about the call or the application process. Please note that the team can respond to individual requests until Friday, 23 October 2026.

Request for feedback is optional. We encourage you to start working on the application as early as possible to be able to resolve any potential issues in time. In case the EUNIC office receives a high demand of requests for feedback, the team will respond on a first come first serve basis. If as a project applicant you don't receive feedback before the submission deadline, you are still responsible to submit your application on time.

The EUNIC cluster team also provides further information on the call and assistance to clusters interested in applying through dedicated **webinars**. A first series of information webinars took place on 23 June 2026. The [recording and slides used can be found under this link](#). More information on the next webinars in September 2026 will be shared through the monthly [EUNIC newsletter](#) and with clusters directly via e-mail closer to the date.

