

Open Call: Secretary General

Culture Action Europe (CAE) is the major European network of cultural organisations, artists, activists, academics, and policy-makers. We are looking for an experienced leader to join our growing network for the period 2023-2028 (renewable for a second period of 5 years).

Professional assignment

CAE is seeking an experienced professional with demonstrated leadership and expertise in the fields of arts, culture, and public policy to join our growing network and willing to continue developing a unique project. The appointment to the role of Secretary-General will be subject to the analysis of the network, its members and projects, the needs of the European cultural context, and the potential of the Culture Action Europe in relation to these needs.

The successful candidate will have a strong commitment to Culture Action Europe's values, a profound knowledge of the European cultural ecosystem, a strategic vision of the role of arts and culture in public life and in the political debate, and believe in the value of arts and culture for European citizens.

The new Secretary General will coordinate the overall work of the organisation in Brussels (Belgium), manage the CAE team and report directly to the Executive Committee, ensuring high-quality outputs and good communication of key messages to target audiences in official institutions and within the sector.

The work involves planning, fund-raising, reporting, writing and editing. The Secretary General also represents the organisation at meetings with senior decision-makers and at public events and conferences, and facilitates the work among its stakeholders to agree on joint positions and actions.

She/he/they will have demonstrated the capability to work collaboratively on research and advocacy with diverse organisations while exerting leadership to achieve political change.

She/he/they will have excellent knowledge of the EU institutions and their working methods, as well as of European networks and players operating in the field of culture at the EU level. This role requires a talent for brokering relationships, understanding the needs of stakeholders and integrating the organisation's membership into the development and delivery of CAE's work.

She/he/they will be an excellent written and spoken communicator in English and have a good working knowledge of at least one other European language. She/he/they will have to travel frequently, sometimes on weekends.

She/he/they will have experience in organisational management including a proven capacity of financial management and fundraising in the non-profit sector.

We are looking for a confident strategic operator and public speaker to work within cultural, political, and civil society circles to advocate for the essential role of culture in our changing world.

This is a challenging position, which requires the ability to provide direction in a complex environment and to work in a cross-sector logic, seeking to achieve changes in a wide range of policies that affect the arts and culture sector, across Europe.

We offer an inspiring working environment in the international art and cultural context and the opportunity to work creatively with a small but committed team.

The place of employment is in the office in Brussels (Belgium). The candidate must be based in or willing to move to Brussels.

We need her/his/they full dedication and engagement. Job sharing is a possibility if the applicants can motivate a joint position in their application.

Functions

The Secretary General shall be responsible for:

1. Managing the Association, including the necessary tasks required, hereunder comprising the management of the membership and grant applications, other official correspondence and public representation of the Association.
2. Executing all the powers of management and representation delegated by the Chairperson or the Executive Committee, hereunder including entering into contracts and the execution of all necessary financial operations, within the limits determined by the Executive Committee.
3. Managing CAE's team, supporting each member in the coordinated achievement of common objectives. CAE's team works under the principle of horizontal management and collaborative efforts between the Team and the Executive Committee.

CAE currently has a professional team of 4 people. The Secretary General will comply with the code of good professional practices in the cultural sector and ensure the physical and moral well-being of Culture Action Europe's workers, managing the network within our ethical and political principles and values. The Secretary General will have to examine the organisation chart of the association and the competencies of the team in order to improve, reorganise and/or expand the technical team as long as it responds to the needs of the association and the candidate's programme.

4. Organisational planning and project management (strategic plan, annual plan, report to the Executive Committee and the members).

The Secretary General will develop and optimise programmes, services, and projects, together with CAE's team and in coordination with the Executive Committee to:

- Explore cultural practices and cultural policies.
- Explore, generate and promote new services for CAE's community.

- Disseminate and make visible the work of CAE at European and international level.
- Co-design, develop and promote the strategic priorities of CAE.
- Co-draft policy papers and position papers on CAE's priorities and react to the topics on the EU agenda.
- Co-develop the programming of public activities (workshops, presentations, debates, meetings with cultural professionals and policy-makers, etc.).
- Connect project fields with project management, advocacy work, communication and network work, and finding synergies between projects and the CAE general strategy

5. Finance management (budget, annual accounts, financial reports, cash flow projections, internal controls). Prepare and propose the annual budget and income plan for the operation of the association, using both public and private resources, which will have to be approved by the Executive Committee and the Members.

6. Increase and diversify the economic resources in the following three aspects: public subsidies, sponsors/patronage and own resources. Fund-raising strategies and their implementation including contacting donors or writing or editing proposals and projects are the responsibility of the Secretary General in close work with the team and the Executive Committee.

7. Manage and strengthen existing external relationships and generate new ones. She/he/they will be involved generating and maintaining relationships with institutions, policymakers and with the associative and cultural fabric at the European and international level, which includes speaking in national and international meetings and project meetings and advocacy presentations and briefings to diverse audiences.

8. Lead the consolidation of agreements, network relations, and research projects, facilitating the development of the organisation, networking with other stakeholders and implementing strategic partnerships, and finding synergies between specific projects and CAE's strategy.

9. Explore and promote new forms of advocacy, networking, and knowledge aggregation of all kinds of cultural practices together with the team. Commission and oversee production of position papers and research reports by staff and consultants.

10. Edit and improve draft articles, research reports, position papers, and project reports by staff. Review all activity reports.

11. Support and assist the Executive Committee in the exercise of its functions. Communicate with the Executive Committee and coordinate between EC and the team.

Professional profile and requirements

The professional profile of the Secretary General is that of a natural person with expertise in cultural management and a good overview of cultural policies, willing to face the professional assignment defined above, and with the following requirements:

Required:

Advocacy, Representation and Networking

- Deep knowledge in the field of cultural practices in a wide sense and the cultural sector in Europe.
- Knowledge of the European cultural context and the European institutions and other relevant international cultural policies.
- Knowledge of major debates on cultural policy issues.
- Understanding of global issues that impact culture.
- Strong sense of political strategy.
- Excellent interpersonal skills.
- Diplomatic skills to facilitate meetings and processes to secure agreement by diverse participants.
- Ability to represent Culture Action Europe in all areas.

Organisation and Management

- Strong organisational management skills and project management capacities including financial management, strategic and operational planning, and management.
- Demonstrate experience in the management of cultural projects, international relations, and communication.
- Demonstrate experience in economic management, and strong fundraising skills.
- Strong compromise to secure ethical and fair remuneration policies.
- Have communication, negotiation, and planning skills.
- Ability to lead, work as part of a team, and delegate functions.
- Have the ability to work horizontally and in networks.
- Ability to prioritise and work under pressure.

Language and computer skills

- Excellent spoken and written English.
- Ability to understand, speak and write at least one additional European language. French is an asset.
- Ability to edit, summarise and synthesise complex written material in English.
- Computer literacy including usage of collaborative IT tools, and communication tools such as video conferencing (Zoom, Jitsi, etc.)

Desirable:

- Relevant contacts in NGOs, universities, research networks.
- Connections with officials in Europe and other regions.
- Proven competence in Internet communications strategies.

Conditions

We offer an inspiring working environment in the international art and cultural context and the opportunity to work creatively with a small but committed team. The place of employment is in Brussels, Belgium.

Remuneration of 67.000 € gross per year. The package includes annual holiday entitlement and 20 days of annual leave, 6 grace days, and the official Belgian public holidays.

Starting transfer phase on December 1, 2022 at the latest. Full incorporation as Secretary General in Brussels as of January 1, 2023. The mandate of the Secretary General will be assessed periodically by the Executive Committee.

Contract specifications will be discussed with the short-listed candidates.

Specific accompaniment may be provided by the Executive Committee in areas where a successful candidate needs support.

Applications

Those interested in participating in this contest will have to submit the following documentation:

- Curriculum vitae.
- A letter of motivation addressed to the attention of Inês Câmara, president of Culture Action Europe, the maximum length of 1 page.
- A proposal of action based on the "professional assignment", between 3 and 5 pages in length.
- Documentation (certificates, texts, publications, etc.) that accredits the professional profile, the fulfillment of the requirements and the rest of the aspects to be evaluated.
- Letter(s) of recommendation and or references from employer(s) or relevant professional(s) would be appreciated but are not required.

All documentation must be sent in a single pdf document (maximum 20 MB) indicating the subject "Open Call for the Secretary General position of CAE" to the following e-mail address: **opencall2022@cultureactioneurope.org**

Candidates will be sent an email confirming receipt of the application and documentation submitted, without prejudice to its subsequent review.

Any queries during the opening period of this competition will be resolved exclusively via e-mail at the same address.

Candidate selection process

- Formal validation of the digital documentation submitted and admitted.

- Pre-selection of candidates according to the application submitted.
- Personal online interview.
- Final selection of a maximum of 5 finalists.
- Personal interview with the finalist(s).
- Selection of candidate(s).

The selection will be made up of the members of the Executive Committee of Culture Action Europe. CAE's team will be involved in the selection process.

CAE will be responsible for travel expenses in the case of being selected for a personal interview in Brussels.

Deadlines

Deadline for submission of applications: until 24:00 h on Friday 2nd of September 2022.

Date of communication to short-listed candidates: 19 September 2022.

Online interview date for first round candidates: 23 September 2022.

Live interview in Brussels date for second round candidates: 5 October 2022.

Latest date of decision and communication to the successful candidate: 14 October 2022.

The latest date of incorporation at CAE's office in Brussels is the 1st of January 2023.

Resolution

The resolution of this competition, which will correspond to the Executive Committee and cannot be appealed, will be made public through the usual communication channels of Culture Action Europe.

The decision will be final and the competition may be declared void.

Confidentiality

All persons involved in the candidate selection process undertake to guarantee the absolute confidentiality of all their personal and professional data, and ensure that the participation of those not selected will be kept within the scope of the Executive Committee's knowledge and assessment.

About Culture Action Europe

Culture Action Europe (CAE) is a major European network of cultural organisations, artists, activists, academics, and policy-makers. Our mission is to put culture at the heart of the public debate and decision-making by raising awareness about the contribution of culture to the development of sustainable and inclusive societies. CAE aims at enhancing cooperation and exchange, engagement, and dialogue between various players across arts and policy sectors.

CAE is the only cross-sectoral network representing all sub-sectors in culture: from performing arts, literature, visual arts, design, and cross-arts initiatives to community centres and more through over 180 members from more than 30 countries.

Culture Action Europe explores cultural practices and trends in European cultural policy and creates and shares knowledge. We connect cultural players from local to regional to European and offer an international platform for collaboration.

The EU institutions and the European cultural ecosystem see CAE as the first port of call for informed opinion and debate about arts and cultural policy in Europe, given that it is the biggest umbrella organisation representing the cultural sector at a European level, in constant dialogue with the cultural sector and the decision-makers.

CAE believes in the value and values of culture and its contribution to the development of sustainable and inclusive societies.

CAE's new strategy for 2022-2024, approved by the General Assembly, defined the following focus areas: 1) Culture, environment and sustainability 2) Well-being (and well-living), with a specific focus on access to and participation in culture and cultural rights 3) Welfare and living conditions in the cultural ecosystem 4) Actions upon the current European policies

What makes us unique is a combination of actions:

- We operate within a trans-European territory and beyond, both in rural and urban areas. This puts us in a unique position to interact with and mediate geographical, political, economic, societal, technological, legal, and environmental frontiers
- We draw from the knowledge and experience of our members – networks, institutions, projects, associations, and individuals who are active on a national, regional, or local level, providing an active network of engagement across cultural forms
- We create an understanding of different cultural needs, practices, and applicable policies within a diversity of contexts
- We facilitate effective policy-level communications between the European institutions, Member States, regional and local authorities, and cultural actors.
- We generate debate beyond the usual spheres and create peer-to-peer relations with other sectors by positioning the critical value of contemporary culture in relation to the production of knowledge

- We embrace the principles that protect human dignity as enshrined in international law, with a special focus on the legal instruments that are specific to EU Law (primary and secondary legislation) as well as the European Convention on Human Rights
- We advocate for the intrinsic value and positive role of culture in European societies

What inspires us?

CAE has adopted the following principles as operational ethics and philosophy:

- We are a community with people at its center and active policies of care, and a network that works at the service of culture and cultural practices.
- We identify plural, inclusive, accessible, free, and sustainable practices in order to question and transform cultural policies, production models, and structures
- We create common spaces for the fair sharing of knowledge based on the diversity of cultural practices, structural forms, and interests of the different members
- We make resources accessible, share them equally and empower members
- We are constantly in search of diversity to reduce vulnerability and to learn from the multiple nature of cultural practices
- We think of ourselves as a community of practices with a decentralised leadership, diverse skills, and different levels of expertise and participation