

PROPOSED MISSION LETTER

CULTURAL DEAL FOR EUROPE PARTNERS CALL FOR A STRONG PORTFOLIO FOR THE FUTURE EUROPEAN COMMISSIONER FOR CULTURE

Following the European elections 2024, we, the undersigned partners of the [Cultural Deal for Europe](#), namely Culture Action Europe, Europa Nostra and the European Cultural Foundation, call on EU decision-makers to ensure that culture and cultural heritage are duly and visibly included in the next European Commission's priorities and in the portfolio of the next European Commissioner for Culture.

In support of our call, we propose the enclosed draft mission letter as an inspiration and encouragement for the future President of the European Commission to be sent to the next European Commissioner responsible for Culture, outlining the main priorities and principles of his/her portfolio. The proposed mission letter reflects the vision and the ambition of the very large number and wide variety of stakeholders that are active in the field of culture and cultural heritage and which jointly call for a Cultural Deal for Europe.

Culture Action Europe

Europa Nostra

European Cultural Foundation

PROPOSED MISSION LETTER TO THE NEXT EUROPEAN COMMISSIONER FOR CULTURE (2024-2029)

Dear Commissioner for Culture,

Your leadership comes at a crucial moment. In an increasingly polarised Europe, your mission is to champion culture as a true foundation and a positive force for the entire European project. Culture, both arts and heritage as well as creative sectors, are essential to our way of living together and building peaceful, cohesive and inclusive societies. Culture is a powerful vehicle for nourishing a sense of belonging and promoting a value-based Europe in which all citizens can thrive and shape a shared future.

YOUR MISSION

I entrust you with developing a **Cultural Deal for Europe**, with the aim of placing culture at the heart of the European project and contributing to the resilience and unity of our European societies. The Cultural Deal will stimulate the cultural, heritage and creative sectors and industries to further act as catalysts for peace, citizens' well-being and security, our society's cohesion and inclusion, sustainable socio-economic development and competitiveness, and, most importantly, to promote freedom, democracy and solidarity as founding values for building Europe's future.

The Cultural Deal for Europe should focus on co-creation, equally supporting the interests of artists, creators and cultural and heritage professionals as well as encouraging broad access to culture and heritage, audience engagement and cultural participation.

I want you to adopt a comprehensive, ambitious and robust **strategic framework for Europe's cultural policy** through structured dialogue involving European cultural stakeholders and civil society. The framework should, among other things, promote cultural democracy and the role of culture and heritage in peacebuilding and security, address the vital relationship between culture and the triple transformation: green, digital and social, leverage the potential of culture for cross-sectoral innovation, research and competitiveness as well as reassert Europe's global leadership role in championing the multiple values of culture and heritage for the society, the economy and the environment.

- You are tasked with duly taking into account and implementing the recommendations of the European Parliament [resolution](#) on an EU framework for the social and professional situation of artists and workers in the cultural and creative sectors. More specifically, I expect you to submit a proposal for a **Directive on decent working conditions** to accurately determine the employment status of artists and cultural and creative sectors professionals.
- Considering the invaluable wealth and diversity of Europe's cultural heritage, but also the increasing risks raised by climate change, over-tourism and the return of war on the

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European continent, you will **further enhance policies, programmes and projects related to heritage** and provide adequate financial support (public and private) to ensure a holistic approach to and participatory governance of the preservation and enhancement of Europe's heritage, in line with the ongoing efforts to ensure a lasting legacy of the European Year of Cultural Heritage. This assignment, which will include due response to the specific needs of heritage and heritage stakeholders in countries concerned by a potential enlargement of the EU, will be driven by the commitment to develop a more sustainable, green and inclusive society.

- You will be responsible for the **Creative Europe Programme**, and I ask you to secure it as a stand-alone EU programme tailored to the specific needs and concerns of the cultural and creative sectors as well as cultural heritage. You are equally asked to ensure due inclusion of a cultural component in other EU funding programmes and mechanisms, such as **Cohesion Policy funds, Horizon Europe, EU Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy instruments, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI)** and **Erasmus+**, with attention to the role of culture and heritage for regional and local development, arts education and creativity, and artistic research beyond the academic framework. I expect you to work towards simplifying procedures for applying for EU funding in these areas and adjusting them to the sector's needs. You will guarantee fair access for different beneficiaries, including civil society organisations, cultural institutions, higher artistic education institutions, independent artists, and creative businesses, both experienced and new, providing a broad thematic framework.
- Working closely with the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, I expect you to play a leading role in developing the **EU Strategy for International Cultural Relations**, which should address, among other considerations, decolonisation processes in culture and heritage, the growing weaponisation of culture by authoritarian regimes, support for artists, heritage and CCS professionals at risk in situations of armed conflict, as well as the securitisation of cultural heritage assets against deliberate destruction, looting and illicit trafficking, and the EU's competitiveness on international economic trade in cultural and creative sectors and industries.
- I ask you to ensure that the **implementation of the EU artificial intelligence policies** favours artists' rights and does not hamper their creativity by providing cultural workers with effective means to protect and monetise their works. In this regard, it is essential to strengthen CCS's agency in the digital domain, support initiatives on the European data spaces of creative works, boost digital upskilling among artists, and enhance the use of cultural data for better policy-making and audience development and engagement. To this cause, increased sectoral support through dedicated actions funded by the Digital Europe programme is required to ensure that the CCS can scale up their efforts to preserve Europe's cultural heritage.

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- Working hand in hand with the Commissioner in charge of the Internal Market, you will coordinate the work on examining the market and funding barriers that prevent the growth and competitiveness of cultural and creative sectors and industries. Your task will be to adopt measures that facilitate and enhance access to debt and equity finance, encourage philanthropy and social impact investments, and **deepen the EU single market for cultural and creative services**. I expect you to focus on the initiatives that promote European culture and heritage internationally and increase the global accessibility and discoverability of European works.
- Following the principles and values of cultural democracy reinforced in the Porto Santo Charter, you will champion European Cultural Citizenship and cultural participation. You will grant easy **access to diverse cultural experiences and arts education while safeguarding the artistic freedom** of European citizens. The European Union must ensure that children and youth, as well as people from rural areas and disadvantaged backgrounds, can participate in cultural practices that foster imagination, critical thinking, communities and democratic values.
- Finally, you will bring the **New European Bauhaus** initiative to the next level, by providing Member States and participating countries with adequate cultural tools to ensure a more beautiful, sustainable, and inclusive living environment. This initiative should strengthen the much-needed cultural dimension of the European Green Deal. In general, you will work closely with the European Commissioner responsible for Climate Action to promote and implement a culture-based climate action, in Europe and globally, with the view of accelerating the roadmap to achieving the vital goal of climate neutrality by 2050. I ask you to specifically ringfence investment under the EU Green Deal towards the safeguarding of cultural heritage assets.

THE WAY FORWARD

Your mission outlines a general direction, yet I anticipate your proactive and ambitious approach to nurturing and advancing culture and cultural heritage to build the future of a European project, based on our shared values, such as human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights. We must remain vigilant and resilient in safeguarding Europe and its values against both hybrid and physical threats: this also includes the continued support for the resilience, recovery and future rebuilding of Ukraine's cultural and heritage sector, following Russia's brutal and unjustified full-scale invasion.

In every respect, I encourage you to work in close cooperation with me and other Members of the College. Rest assured, you have my support during these challenging times, which hold the potential for significant positive change for Europe and its citizens.



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