Dear Culture Action Europe Members,

**Culture Action Europe asks you to send letters to your national ministers to help secure funding for culture in EU programmes for competitiveness and research.**

**Context**

The European Commission [published](https://cultureactioneurope.org/news/proposed-e8-6-billion-for-culture-and-democracy-in-the-next-eu-budget/) its proposal for the next EU long-term budget (Multiannual Financial Framework, 2028–2034) on 16 July 2025. This proposal now needs to be agreed upon by other EU institutions, specifically the European Parliament and the Council, which represents the national governments of member states.

While the initial proposal for the culture programme in the next MFF, AgoraEU, is a positive step, Culture Action Europe wants to ensure that culture can also benefit from other EU funding programmes.

**What to do**

We ask you to engage your national ministers responsible for competitiveness and research (who will play a key role in the budget negotiations) to guarantee that culture is eligible for funding under the European Competitiveness Fund and the Horizon Europe programme.

A template letter is below.

**Instructions**

**1. Please send your letters by 31 October 2025.** Member states will present their position by the end of the year, so if we want to influence it, we need to act now.Most ministries should have a publicly available contact email.

**2. The letter should be signed by members of your regional hub, but it can (and should!) also be open to other cultural organisations in your country.** We encourage you to mobilise as many signatories as possible, including those outside of Culture Action Europe.

If you're not a Culture Action Europe member but came across this template and would like to get involved, please write to luiza@cultureactioneurope.org, maya@cultureactioneurope.org and rhys@cultureactioneurope.org. Let us know your organisation and country, and we’ll connect you with the coordinators of the relevant regional hub.

**3. This letter is addressed to two ministers: one responsible for competitiveness and economic development, and the other for research and innovation.** Please check who holds these portfolios in your country, as their titles may vary. Also, make sure to copy your national ministries of finance and culture when sending your email.

**4. Please translate the letter and adapt it to fit your country**’**s context,** if needed. You know best how to reflect the national situation and political climate. However, please keep the core message clear: we urge the ministers to ensure that culture has its own structural components with dedicated financial envelopes in the European Competitiveness Fund and Horizon Europe.

Remember that you are writing to the ministers responsible for competitiveness and research; therefore, the language in the letter is focused on economic arguments.

**5. To strengthen your letter, include data on the contribution of the cultural and creative sectors and industries to GDP and employment in your country, if available.**

**6. Before sending the letter, check the official requirements for letters in your country.** Some ministries may require a full name, surname, contact details, date, and signature from the sender.

Please include the name and contact details of the person the ministries can reach out to for further information.

**7. When you send your letters, please share them with us!** We may feature them in our communications as an example to inspire other hubs. And of course, share your letter in your social media.

Here is an example of a successful past campaign, when Culture Action Europe hubs sent letters to national finance ministers, for your inspiration: <https://cultureactioneurope.org/advocacy/cae-hubs-send-letters-to-national-finance-ministers-ahead/>

**Thank you! We**’**re counting on your swift action.**

T E M P L A T E L E T T E R

To:

Minister responsible for competitiveness and economic development

Minister responsible for research and innovation

Copied:

Minister of culture

Minister of finance

Dear Minister [name of minister responsible for competitiveness and economic development],

Dear Minister [name of minister responsible for research and innovation],

We are writing to you as a group of cultural organisations from [your country], deeply engaged with EU policy.

As the European Union institutions begin negotiations on the next long-term budget, the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028–2034, we understand that, as members of the Competitiveness Council configuration (Internal Market, Industry, Research and Space) of the EU, you will play an important role in shaping the future of EU funding for competitiveness and research beyond 2027.

**We therefore call on you to support the inclusion of dedicated structural components for culture and the cultural and creative sectors and industries within both the European Competitiveness Fund and Horizon Europe, which are closely interconnected.**

Our analysis of the European Commission’s initial proposal for the next MFF, particularly regarding the European Competitiveness Fund and Horizon Europe, shows very limited opportunities for EU competitiveness and research funding to meaningfully support culture and creativity.

For example, while the current Horizon Europe programme includes a dedicated ‘Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society’ cluster ([which in 2025 saw an 80% increase](https://rea.ec.europa.eu/news/over-3400-project-proposals-submitted-five-horizon-europe-calls-2025-10-01_en) in applications compared to 2024, and nearly 250% more than in 2021), this cluster is entirely absent from the [new Horizon Europe proposal](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52025PC0543&qid=1753802854776).

Similarly, [the draft European Competitiveness Fund](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52025PC0555&qid=1753802586340) refers to ‘creative industries' only once under the ‘Digital Leadership’ window, with no structural provisions or financial guarantees to ensure continued and consistent support for the sector.

Overlooking culture is hard to justify, especially when €1 invested in the cultural and creative sectors and industries returns up to €11 in GDP, according to the [European Parliament Research Service](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2023/734690/EPRS_STU%282023%29734690_EN.pdf#page=188). The sector creates high-quality jobs, stimulates innovation, and drives economic growth, with additional spillover effects for other sectors such as education, technology, and tourism.

In [your country], the cultural and creative sectors generate xx% of GDP and employ xx million people. Strengthening the sector’s access to EU competitiveness and research funding would not only multiply its economic and social impact but also support its entry into new markets and access to new audiences, foster innovation, and directly contribute to the single market in services and intellectual property.

Funding research in cultural and creative sectors and industries and supporting their access to markets is not a major expenditure line; it is a strategic, low-risk investment with cross-sectoral impact.

We therefore urge you to consider the following concrete proposals in the Council’s position regarding the next MFF:

**1) Establish a dedicated structural window for cultural and creative industries within the European Competitiveness Fund, with a guaranteed financial envelope.** This window should aim to improve access to finance for cultural and creative businesses for prototyping, production, distribution and internationalisation; foster innovation and the adoption of digital tools within value chains; enhance creativity, entrepreneurial skills, digital competences, intellectual property management and quality employment; strengthen clusters, studios, venues and shared infrastructure; and promote the cross-border circulation of creative works and services, SME collaboration and their integration into EU value chains.

This new window should be aligned with the structure of Horizon Europe, which currently mirrors the European Competitiveness Fund and faces similar gaps in its recognition of the cultural and creative sectors.

**2) Establish a dedicated structural component for culture and creativity under Part II ‘Competitiveness’ of the Horizon Europe programme, with a guaranteed financial envelope.** This component would support collaborative research and innovation activities across the fields of arts, culture, and creativity, and would sit alongside the four existing components currently [envisioned](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52025PC0543&qid=1753802854776#:~:text=Article%204%0A%0AProgramme%20structure) in the proposed Horizon Europe Regulation.

**3) Ensure that Part II ‘Society’ of the proposed Horizon Europe programme explicitly covers culture-related research,** namely support for activities to tackle global societal challenges in the areas of upholding the social and democratic role of culture and the cultural and creative sectors, and safeguarding cultural heritage.

Nearly 2000 artists and cultural professionals across Europe [have endorsed the call](https://cultureactioneurope.org/projects/cultureactionnow/endorse-the-campaign/) to strengthen cultural funding in the next MFF. We ask you to align with this shared position and ensure that culture plays a meaningful and strategic role in [your country’s] and Europe’s future competitiveness, research, and innovation.

Thank you for your attention and leadership ahead of these important negotiations.

Kind regards,

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