

Perform Europe

Perform Europe call for performing arts companies, artists, collectives, venues and festivals

In a nutshell

Perform Europe is a pilot scheme funded by the European Commission. Its aim is to support experiments to make touring of performing arts works in Creative Europe countries more sustainable and inclusive. The project is an 18-month journey, which includes a research phase, testing a grant-giving programme, and designing policy recommendations.

We are currently getting ready to start testing the Perform Europe grant-giving scheme. For that, we will soon launch the Perform Europe digital platform – a space for collective learning, experimentation and networking. Then, we will open the application process, divided in two steps:

1) In the **first step**, all interested producers (artists, collectives, companies and presenters that have produced an artistic work) and presenters (festivals, venues, and other organisations offering a presenting context) are invited to apply to be part of Perform Europe's process of collective learning and networking organised by Perform Europe and supported by its digital platform. **The call is detailed below and will be open for applications on 15 June.** Applicants, selected in this step, will be invited to join two events, providing space for mentorship, pitching ideas, and sharing best practices of more sustainable and inclusive touring practices.

2) In the **second step**, while and after participating in the learning and networking process, applicants will shape partnerships among each other, co-create touring and distribution proposals and apply for Perform Europe grants. The total budget available is € 1,5 million; grant amounts will range from €10,000 to €100,000. **The second call will be published at the end of July only for those selected in the first step** (see a more detailed timeline of the Perform Europe application process at the very bottom of this announcement).

We are happy to announce the **first step** of Perform Europe's application process. **The application for this first step will be open from 15 June to 7 July 2021 on the Perform Europe digital platform.** Since this first call will be **open only for three weeks**, you can start preparing today. Just get a deeper insight of what it's all about below.

Perform Europe is co-initiated by a Consortium of 5 organisations and funded by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union

Call for performing arts companies, artists, venues and festivals

This is a call for performing arts **producers** and **presenters** motivated to shape cross-border partnerships meant to explore and test alternative ways of bringing **artistic work(s)** to people and places.

- By **producers**, we mean performing arts companies and collectives, individual artists, or presenters which have produced an artistic work or developed an artistic concept that can be implemented in various contexts. By **presenters**, we mean venues, festivals or other types of organisations offering a presenting context.

Applicants may apply **in a double capacity**: both as a presenter and a producer.

- By **artistic work**, we mean productions and artistic initiatives and concepts that are ready to be applied and practiced in different environments. Perform Europe does not support production costs.

Please note that Perform Europe's research showed that there is a strong will in the European performing arts sector to reinvent the touring and distribution practices. Artistic work should be brought to people and places in ways that cherish artistic values, create just relations, empower diversity of voices, care for the environment, and are meaningful and inspiring for local communities and artists.

The current landscape of performing arts collaboration in Europe is not balanced and inclusive enough, neither is it sustainable. There are some gaps - lacks, issues, obstacles - which prevent a dream picture from becoming a reality. Here are some of the most evident gaps experienced by the performing arts organisations and professionals touring across borders or willing to tour:

- money,
- time,
- infrastructure,
- skills and capacities,
- knowledge and awareness,
- visibility and recognition,
- connectedness and collaboration,
- curiosity and inclusivity,
- solidarity and fairness,
- equity and equality

In this first step, we are eager to discover organisations and artists with bold and courageous visions and ideas on how to innovate cross-border touring and distribution in a truly fair, inclusive, ecological, and human-centred way. These new ways should try to bridge the current gaps (above) in the cross-border landscape of showing artistic work and bring change to our performing arts ecosystem.

Whom are we looking for in the first step?

We are longing to hear from organisations and freelance professionals that

- work in the performing arts: theatre, dance, performance (including amateur performance), circus and street arts. Please note that live music performances (including opera or musicals) are not covered by Perform Europe, except for music theatre.
- **for producers:** have an artistic work or artistic initiatives they would like to bring to other countries – physically, digitally or in a mixed way, between October 2021 and the end of June 2022;
- **for presenters:** have a festival or a space, or other context which would present an artistic work from another country between October 2021 and the end of June 2022;
- are based in one of the Creative Europe countries* or in the United Kingdom;
- have a vision on how to collaborate across borders through sharing resources, practicing fairness and solidarity;
- are already practicing alternative and innovative touring and distribution practices and can demonstrate it, and also those that
- are eager to innovate their practices and have a vision on how to do it, but might experience too many constraints.

We especially encourage presenters and producers that have less visibility in the cross-border artistic landscape to apply for this call. We welcome applications from women, artists and organisations based in rural areas, those having disadvantaged socio-economic or ethnic backgrounds, identify as LGBTQIA+, have disabilities and any other people that identify as part of an underrepresented group within the performing arts landscape.

What will you be asked in this first step opening on 15 June?

- General information about your organisation;
- General information about your **artistic work(s) (for producers)** or your **presenting context(s) – festival, venue, outdoor space – (for presenters)**, which you'd like to be part of a collaboration proposal;
- Your vision and ideas on sustainable and inclusive ways of bringing artistic work to people and places (400 words);
- How your artistic work / presenting context, which is part of your application, fits this vision (250 words);
- What you would like to gain from being part of a Perform Europe granted partnership (250 words) and what you would be willing to share (skills, knowledge, money, visibility, infrastructure, experience, etc.) (300 words)

How can you apply? The call will be open on 15 June 2021 – please [subscribe to our newsletter](#) to get notified. In the meantime, you can already get ready by reflecting on the points shared above and even anticipating the second application step (see below).

What solutions will we be looking for in the second step?

More information about the second step of the open call will be published at the end of July. However, artists, companies, festivals and venues applying for this first call should be open and motivated to enter the second step, where they will be exploring how to do things differently, look for like-minded partners, and then come up with exemplary innovative proposals of showing work and collaborating across borders.

We see such proposals to be based on **sharing resources and empowering each other**, in order to bridge the existing gaps. The envisaged projects might be happening in a digital realm, physical world, or a hybrid setting.

The proposals for the second application step will aim to explore how to:

- practice solidarity and fair attitudes and models;
- practice just relations between people,
- give visibility to those who don't have it but deserve;
- create time and use it in a way that would be meaningful for everyone involved;
- care for the environment, artistic value, and human well-being,
- share resources in a just way and use them with ecological concerns in mind;

- inspire viable economic models,
- create stronger links - between people, places, projects, skills, cultures; links that would make our ecosystems more sustainable;

and finally,

- create skills to be able to do all of the above again and again.

Those aspirations are certainly interconnected, but they don't have to be met all together. We'll be happy to receive proposals which are focused on some aspects deeper than on others. At the same time, proposals that are only about one aspect are not what we are looking for.

The timeline

15 June - 7 July 2021 (3 weeks)	First step of the online application process
End of July 2021	Applicants selected in step 1 are informed via email and the second step of the call is announced
Early September - early October 2021	Applicants selected in step 1 enter the learning and networking period, co-create proposals and apply for step 2. Selected partnerships will be informed via email in October.
October 2021 - End of June 2022	Touring and distribution proposals selected in step 2 receive grants and are implemented

* Creative Europe countries include: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Serbia, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Tunisia, Ukraine. As mentioned, the UK is also eligible to take part in Perform Europe.

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