

CREATIVE EUROPE PROGRAMMES EVALUATION

QUEST's answer to the European Commission

Answered on the 18th of July, 2024

In your opinion, are there areas of the Creative Europe programme that should be reviewed and/or improved for the next iteration of the programme (due in 2027)?

Transversally, we believe a stronger mention of education should be made in the different calls of the programme, bridging education as a long-term investment for the sustainability and awareness of European culture and media. Indeed, Culture and Media are educational opportunities for children and young people to develop technical and life skills, while ensuring the transmission of good practices within the industries in the long-term.

We also encourage the promotion of learner-led activities and learner-led project design within the Programme, as Creative Europe projects tend to retain a top-down approach, bringing down knowledge and results to participants rather than including them in the decision making and implementation process as a learning opportunity itself.

The administrative burden and the complexity of the application process restrains Creative Europe's access to youth organisations, schools and young ngos. While we appreciate the introduction of small and medium scale applications to help these types of organisations, it remains inaccessible for a majority. Indeed, the time and resource allocation needed to prepare the application, notably because of its highly specialised and multidimensional aspect, means the need for one dedicated team member, which might not always be available in schools, youth organisations or young ngos. Additionally, the co-financing rate tends to leave young organisations without the possibility to apply, as they lack the means to fully contribute, and facing inequality in partnerships on the onset of projects with technical partners requiring expensive rates while young organisations have to compensate with supplementary free working time. We therefore recommend special assistance to schools, young ngos, youth organisations and first-time applicants (an additional guidance, administrative facilitation, a different co-financing rate, less dependency on technical partners).

On this point we recognise the benefit of Creative Europe for young organisations and schools to develop technical skills through partnership with a broad variety of

technical partners, which can later be transmitted to children through education. This accentuates the need for an education perspective within the programme, as schools and learners would benefit greatly from an openness to culture and media around the EU.

While we understand the relevance of additional support given to some European industries (extra points are given for projects with technical experts coming from specific European countries), it is important to acknowledge, in the case of projects involving education and/or children, that the further the geographical location of the technical partner, the harder the creation of sustainable links with learners. Fostering partnerships between learners and local technical experts can indeed benefit their long-term employment opportunities in the cultural and media sectors. In that regard, the creation of a list of technical partners in different EU countries and their respective rates could deepen transparency, equitable treatment and facilitate the project design phase for young NGOs, schools and youth organisations.

The importance given to the concretisation of a material (tangible) project result, viable economically, also reduces the spectrum of both education and research possibilities for organisations seeking to promote culture and media industries. It is notably the case for organisations advocating for change in the cultural and media sector on the national and EU political stage, through awareness raising or policy work. This demand for concrete results also discourages cross-sectoral projects, such as linked to education. We recommend more flexibility in that regard.

Finally, we believe a cooperation call would also be meaningful for the Media strand of the programme, to promote EU-level cooperation and cross-sectoral projects regarding the media industry.

In your opinion, are there cultural and creative sectors that are currently not properly covered and/or reached out and for which a specific focus should be included for the next iteration of the programme (due in 2027)?

While we highly appreciate Creative Europe's flexibility and scope, we see a missed opportunity in the absence of education, children's rights and participation within the Programme. We believe a specific funding call should be proposed on education for both Culture and Media strands of the Programme. Doing so, would foster Creative Europe projects' sustainability, as children would develop the technical and life-skills they would later need in employment, to strengthen the cultural and media industries. It would additionally see more children and young people benefiting from the programme, which means including 20% of the EU population not accessing it today.

Are there key challenges or opportunities facing the Audiovisual and cultural creative sectors that any future Creative Europe programme should aim to address which the current programme doesn't?

The first challenge we see is the tendency to “ageism” towards children. In some educational spheres, but also in the cultural and media sectors, children tend to see their interests considered as secondary in face of strict curriculums or imposed activities. In so doing, by repetition, creativity losses occur over time as well as missed opportunities for children and young people to express their multidisciplinary potential. Creative Europe can be the place for children to be free to experience new things, develop their potential and express themselves through culture and media, while developing their long-term skills and well-being.

Following this idea, a second challenge concerns the mental, emotional and physical well-being of Europeans, which has been put in jeopardy with the past Covid-19 pandemic, recurring geopolitical conflicts, a threatening climate crisis and a fast-evolving digitalised world, notably for young people and people with fewer opportunities. A focus on Culture and Media as a source and opportunity for long-term well-being could make a great difference in that regard.

A third challenge concerns the fragility of Media and Cultural sectors in face of political change, therefore the need for democratic values to spread throughout the EU. By this it is important to note the term “democratic values”, which should not be misunderstood as EU citizenship promotion, but rather as the promotion of long-term values supportive of democracy as defined in 2002 by the UN Commission on Human Rights. Inscribing these values from early ages on, and in a continuum throughout adult life, through culture and media can promote healthy European societies in the long run.