

CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE PRESENTATION OF THE SERIES CO-PRODUCTION DEVELOPMENT AWARDS IN THE FRAMEWORK OF CO-PRODUCTION MARKETS

I. INTRODUCTION

The Council of Europe Pilot Programme for Series Co-production is a three-year programme which aims to increase the geographical and thematic diversity of audiovisual storytelling by strengthening international co-production practices through financial support for independently produced high-quality series.

It is administered by Eurimages for the Council of Europe, with funding provided through Voluntary Contributions made by donors.

Donors may come from Eurimages and/or Council of Europe member states (footnote with current list of donors). The country of establishment of the Donor is considered as a Contributing country. The status of Contributing country¹ enables beneficiaries established in that country to apply.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 1 April 2022 in Strasbourg, Ministers of Culture through a joint declaration² expressed their concern about the challenges posed to cultural diversity and pluralism by the broad use of business models based on algorithmic recommendations, with specific reference to

¹ Belgium, Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Luxembourg, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain.

² Creating our future: Creativity and cultural heritage as strategic resources for a diverse and democratic Europe" Final Declaration, Council of Europe Conference of Ministers of Culture, Strasbourg, 1 April 2022 <https://go.coe.int/L3yd3>

the audio-visual sector. They took note of the dominant position of global audio-visual media services and their impact on content production ecosystems and on European intellectual property ownership.

Aware of the urgent need to further develop policy and mobilize the cultural and creative sectors in order to promote and foster cultural diversity, cultural participation and creative production notably in the digital environment, the Ministers invited the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to continue supporting the Budapest Drama Series Process³, launched in 2021, and to develop – through future work by the Steering Committee for Culture, Cultural Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP) and Eurimages – a new legal instrument to codify the rules of international drama series co-productions and a public financial instrument for these co-productions.

The public financial instrument takes the form of a pilot programme and operates with funding provided through the Council of Europe Voluntary Contributions system.

III. Budget available

The indicative available budget under this call for proposals is 200.000 € (two thousand Euros). Up to four partnering events shall be selected, each giving an award (the **Council of Europe Series Co-Production Development Award**) of 50.000€ (fifty thousand euros) within the framework of a co-production market.

The selected events will host the “Council of Europe Series Co-Production Development Award” aimed to facilitate independent producers’ access to series development funding and foster creative collaboration as foundations for future co-productions.

Proposals shall aim to produce an added value to the Council of Europe efforts in this domain.

³ Under the auspices of the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of Europe, an exploratory conference on “Preserving Independent Production, Diversity and Pluralism in Drama Series in Europe: Can International Cooperation be Part of the Solution?” was held in Budapest, on September 30th – October 1st, 2021. Acknowledging the groundwork carried out during this conference and the future steps to be taken during successive presidencies of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, the Hungarian authorities named this initiative “The Budapest Drama Series Process”. Conclusion paper: <https://go.coe.int/115m0>

1. Description of the organisation

The Council of Europe

The Council of Europe has played a pioneering role in the process of European integration. It was founded in 1949, in the aftermath of the Second World War, to ensure the political reconstruction of Europe based on a number of fundamental values. The Council of Europe works with its 46 member States to strengthen human rights, democracy and the rule of law throughout the continent of Europe and beyond. It has devised an effective system for the protection of rights, of which one the best-known bodies is the European Court of Human Rights. The Court was established by the European Convention on Human Rights, which has been ratified by all member states of the Council of Europe.

The Council of Europe advocates freedom of expression and of the media, freedom of assembly, equality, and the protection of minorities. It has launched campaigns on issues such as child protection, online hate speech, and the rights of the Roma, Europe's largest minority. The Council of Europe helps member States fight corruption and terrorism and undertake necessary judicial reforms. Its group of constitutional experts, known as the Venice Commission, offers legal advice to countries throughout the world.

The Council of Europe promotes human rights through international conventions, such as the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and the Convention on Cybercrime. It monitors member States' progress in these areas and makes recommendations through independent expert monitoring bodies. The work of the Council of Europe may therefore take a variety of forms such as the drafting and signature of international conventions, recommendations, or guidelines, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms or partial agreements on specific subjects (for example the Eurimages Fund).

2. Description of the Council of Europe Series Co-Production Development Awards (SCPDA)

The SCPDA shall be granted, within the framework of a professional event such as co-production markets, to an international series (drama, documentaries, animation) co-production project of a season of maximum of 10 episodes and maximum of 600 minutes (in case of animations: 700 minutes with no cap on the number of episodes). The project

must be developed by one or more independent production companies established in a Eurimages member State⁴. The SCPDA will be granted to the applicant company, which must be an independent⁵ production company having creative control of the project.

The applicant company must have the intention of involving at least one other independent production company from a different Eurimages member State in the co-production.

One or more companies from one or more non-member States may also join the project up to a maximum total participation of 30% in development financing.

Any project having previously applied to the Council of Europe Series Co-production Support will automatically be excluded.

One award will be granted in each co-production market selected for the partnership. Special mentions are not foreseen. An agreement indicating the amount of the award and the conditions for its granting will be signed between the winner company and the Council of Europe.

3. Objectives and modalities of the call for proposals

The Council of Europe intends to select four events that organize series co-production markets, to host the **Council of Europe Series Co-production Development Awards** in accordance with the exclusion, eligibility and selection criteria defined below.

The selected event will sign a partnership agreement detailing the terms of its partnership with the Council of Europe. This partnership agreement will be signed for one edition of the event hosting the award falling within the period of 1 January 2024 – 20 December 2024 and it will not include any financial compensation from the Council of Europe.

⁴ [Eurimages' Member States - EURIMAGES \(coe.int\)](https://eurimages.coe.int/)

⁵ Independent production companies must be majority owned and continue to be majority owned, either directly or indirectly, by nationals of the Eurimages member states. Legal entities which are not able to show the composition of their shareholding are not eligible. A production company is considered independent when less than 25% of its share capital is held by a single audiovisual media service provider or less than 50% where several audiovisual media service providers are involved. Independence and ownership are verified up to the third level above the applying company.

a) Eligibility criteria for co-production markets

These are the mandatory minimum requirements for the co-production market and for the organisation of the award. Proposals that do not meet these minimum requirements will be dismissed as ineligible.

i. Nature, location and geographical extent

- The international series co-production market should have been in existence for at least 2 years prior the current call;
- The co-production market needs to be organised under a legal entity that is authorised to enter into a partnership agreement with the Council of Europe;
- The legal entity should be established in one of the Contributing Countries⁶;
- It should take place annually in one of the Contributing Countries⁷ preferably for at least two consecutive days;
- At a minimum, the event should have a gender equality policy
- and a sustainability awareness strategy. Ideally, it would also include a comprehensive policy on gender equality, diversity, and inclusion, as well as a detailed sustainability strategy;
- It is aimed at professionals in the audio-visual industry from a geographical area comprising a minimum of 5 countries, preferably Eurimages Member states⁸;

ii. Project selection

- The selection of the co-production market must include a minimum of 25% out of the total line-up of eligible projects for the Series Co-production Development Award as described under point 3. However, it should include at least 5 eligible projects for the Series Co-production Development Award as described under point 3.
- The selection must be made with due regard for gender balance.
- Once the project selection has been made by the co-production market, the documents that will be made available to the Council of Europe to establish the eligibility of projects for the award will include:
 - a synthetic material in regard to the artistic aspects of the series;
 - a development financing plan;

⁶ Belgium, Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Luxembourg, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain.

⁷ Belgium, Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Luxembourg, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Portugal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain.

⁸ [Eurimages' Member States - EURIMAGES \(coe.int\)](http://eurimages.coe.int)

- a declaration by the applying producer of compliance with the exclusion criteria according to a pre-established template provided by Council of Europe

iii. Presentation of the projects

- The presentation of the projects within the co-production market should allow for an exchange between the members of the jury and the team presenting the project in English through one-to-one meetings.

iv. The jury

- The jury of the Series Co-Production Development Award must include at least 3 members, i.e., a staff member of the Council of Europe and two professionals from the audiovisual industry (producers, sales agents, distributors, member of institutions or professional organisations, commissioning editors, etc).
- The jury should be gender balanced (i.e.: a jury of 3 members should have at least 1 female or male member) and be specifically composed for the Series Co-Production Development Award.
- The composition of the jury will be submitted to the Council of Europe for prior agreement.
- Each jury member will be requested to sign a declaration of conflict of interest using a pre-established template provided by the Council of Europe.
- The jury will select the project based on its artistic quality (pitch deck, bible as well as other audiovisual materials), the potential impact of the SCPDA for the development of the project and its prospects of becoming and remaining an international co-production involving at least two Eurimages member states.
- Plans for implementing sustainable measures to reduce the environmental impact of the development and co-production of the project will be taken into account.

The travel and subsistence expenses of the Council of Europe secretariat member on the jury must be covered by the co-production market.

v. Publicity and awards ceremony

The co-production market should ensure the best possible visibility for the Council of Europe Series Co-production Development Award by mentioning its partnership with the

Council of Europe in its promotional material and by publishing the visual of the prize in its catalogue.

It also undertakes to produce a “diploma” to be awarded to the winner during the awards ceremony.

The name of the winner will be officially published as soon as possible and made available to the Council of Europe with the motivations of the jury and pictures of the awards ceremony.

b) Award criteria

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

A. References/Track record and experience	50
Prominence of the industry event within which the series co-production market is organised	15
Quality of the workshops, meetings, training or other professional actions organised within the industry event concerning development, production, and distribution of series	15
Outreach of the co-production market in the Contributing Countries and Eurimages' member States including associate members	10
Editorial line of the co-production market and results obtained/achievements	10
B. Proposal to host a Series Co-production Development Award	50
Criteria for the selection of series co-production projects, which should include regard for gender balance, diversity and inclusion	15
Selection criteria for jury members (including regard for gender balance)	10
Quality of the communication strategy vis-à-vis the public, the industry and the Council of Europe	10
Quality of the organisation of the co-production market including method of presentation of the projects (one-to-one, pitches...)	10

Quality of gender equality policy as well as if appropriate its diversity and inclusion policy.	3
Quality of sustainability strategy.	2
C. Final score = A+B	100

Co-production markets will be selected based on the above criteria by the Council of Europe on the recommendations of the Evaluation Committee.

Council of Europe will select co-production markets according to a fair geographical and calendar distribution. Council of Europe will do its utmost to ensure the representation of different types of series works (drama, documentaries, animation).

All meeting reports and deliberations relating to this selection are confidential.

c) Exclusion criteria

Co-production markets shall be excluded from the call for proposals for the Series Co-production Development Award if they, or, where applicable, their owners or persons having powers of representation or decision-making:

- have been sentenced by final judgment on one or more of the following charges: participation in a criminal organisation, corruption, fraud, money laundering, terrorist financing, terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities, child labour or trafficking in human beings;
- are in a situation of bankruptcy, liquidation, termination of activity, insolvency or arrangement with creditors or any like situation arising from a procedure of the same kind, or are subject to a procedure of the same kind;
- have received a judgment with res judicata force, finding an offence that affects their professional integrity or serious professional misconduct;
- do not comply with their obligations as regards payment of social security contributions, taxes and dues, according to the statutory provisions of their country of incorporation, establishment or residence;
- are an entity created to circumvent tax, social or other legal obligations (empty shell company), have ever created or are in the process of creation of such an entity;
- have been involved in mismanagement of the Council of Europe funds or public funds;
- are or appear to be in a situation of conflict of interest or a potential conflict of interests;
- are retired Council of Europe staff members or are staff members having benefitted from an early departure scheme;

- have not fulfilled, in the previous three years, their contractual obligations in the performance of a contract concluded with the Council of Europe leading to a total or partial refusal of payment and/or termination of the contract by the Council of Europe.

4. Content of the proposal

The proposal shall be submitted exclusively online via the dedicated platform and must include the following elements:

- A declaration relating to the exclusion criteria duly completed and signed (see Appendix I);
- Legal registration documents for the organizing body if it is established under civil law or a declaration that it has the authority to enter into the partnership with the Council of Europe if it is a public authority;
- A description of the series co-production market and its main activities (maximum 5 pages) indicating:
 - a description and a history, including its location, frequency and date;
 - the existence of workshops, meetings, training or other professional events in the audiovisual industry;
 - international aspects, geographical scope, countries involved and their number in the co-production market;
 - the public and professionals targeted by the co-production market, including a description of its editorial line;
 - gender equality policy and, if appropriate, its diversity and inclusion policy
 - sustainability strategy.
- A description of the proposal to host and organize the Council of Europe Series Co-production Development Award (maximum 5 pages) indicating:
 - project selection criteria and method;
 - criteria and method for selecting jury members;
 - method of presentation of the projects (one-to-one, pitches...);
 - communication vis-à-vis the public, the industry and the Council of Europe;
 - logistics and organisation of the co-production market (including gender equality policy, and, if appropriate, its diversity and inclusion policy and sustainability strategy);
 - working language(s).

Proposals must be written in English. A French version may be provided in addition.

IV. Provisional Calendar

Phases	Indicative timing
Publication of the call	02.10.2023
Deadline for submitting applications	17.10.2023
Information to applicants on the results	October – November 2023
Signature of the partnership agreements	November – December 2023
Implementation period	January – June 2024

Annexe I – Declaration of compliance with the exclusion criteria

Council of Europe Series Co-production Development Awards

Declaration on the Exclusion Criteria

Done in [\[Click here to insert the place name\]](#)

On [\[Click here to insert the date\]](#)

I, **the undersigned**, [\[Click here to insert the first name and family name of the signatory of this document\]](#)

acting as the representative of the company/organisation

Name and legal form: [\[Full official name and official legal form\]](#)

Address: [\[Full official address\]](#)

VAT No.: [\[VAT registration no. \(if any\)\]](#)

for the co-production market: [\[Click here to insert the name of the project\]](#)

hereby declare that:

- a) neither the company/organisation I represent nor its owners or any of the persons having powers of representation or decision-making have ever been convicted by final judgment for any of the following offences: participation in a criminal organisation, corruption, fraud or money laundering, terrorist financing, terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities, child labour or trafficking in human beings;
- b) neither the company/organisation I represent nor its owners or any of the persons having powers of representation or decision-making is bankrupt, being wound up, no longer allowed to trade or subject to a judicial insolvency procedure or an arrangement with creditors or in any similar situation resulting from a procedure of the same type or subject to a procedure of the same type;
- c) neither the company/organisation I represent nor its owners or any of the persons having powers of representation or decision-making have ever been convicted by a final judgment for serious professional misconduct or any other offence relating to professional conduct;
- d) the company/organisation I represent or its owners or any of the persons having powers of representation have fulfilled all obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions, taxes and duties under the legislation of the country in which it is established;
- e) neither the company/organisation I represent nor its owners or any of the persons having powers of representation or decision-making are in a situation of a conflict of interests or a potential conflict of interests in relation to this call for proposals or, to the best of my knowledge, to any sub-contractors to be used for the realisation of the proposal; the company/organisation I represent or its owners or any of the persons having powers of representation have been notified

and understand that a conflict of interests may arise, in particular, from economic interests, political or national affinities, emotional or family ties or any other type of shared relationship or interest;

f) neither the company/organisation I represent nor its owners or any of the persons having powers of representation or decision-making have ever engaged in misconduct in connection with an earlier application for support or partnership that led Council of Europe to justifiably terminate a support or partnership agreement or to exclude the company/organisation concerned from the support or partnership agreement;

g) neither the company/organisation I represent nor its owners or any of the persons having powers of representation or decision-making are included in the lists of persons or entities subject to restrictive measures applied by the European Union (available at www.sanctionsmap.eu).

h) the information provided to the Council of Europe under this procedure is complete, correct and truthful;

i) if my company's/organisation's proposal is retained, I will provide the Council of Europe with the following documents upon request:

- In relation to the matters referred to in sub-paragraphs a), b) and c) above, a recent extract from the criminal record or an equivalent recent document issued by a judicial or administrative authority in the country of origin or provenance, showing that the requirements referred to have been met. If the national law of the country in which the company or organisation is established does not provide for such documents to be supplied to legal persons, these documents shall be requested for natural persons concerned, such as the administrators or any person vested with powers of representation, decision or supervision on the company's/organisation's behalf;
- In the case referred to in sub-paragraph d) above, recent certificates or letters from the relevant authorities of the state concerned are required. These documents must provide proof of payment of all the taxes, duties and social security contributions owed by the applicant including VAT, corporation tax and social insurance contributions.

If necessary, where one of the documents referred to above is not issued in the country concerned, it may be replaced by a sworn or, failing that, a solemn statement made by the interested party before a judicial or administrative authority, a notary or a qualified professional body in the applicant's country of origin or provenance.

In signing this form, I acknowledge that I have been notified that if any of the statements made or information provided prove to be false, the Council of Europe reserves the right to exclude the proposal concerned from this call for proposals or to terminate any existing contractual relations related to the latter.

Signature.....

[Click here to insert the name of the signatory (e.g. J. Smith)]

Date :

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