The Europe Challenge

The Europe Challenge 2024: Libraries, Communities and Democracy

Frequently Asked Questions

About the call

What is the call about?
The Europe Challenge is a programme initiated by the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) to address the various challenges faced by Europe, such as social isolation, disinformation and climate crises, by supporting community-led local change.The programme equips libraries across Europe with the resources to develop creative solutions that enhance the democratic participation and the social and environmental wellbeing of the community. The programme supports libraries and their communities by offering a small grant to implement their project and the opportunity to take part in a mentoring programme with alumni of the Europe Challenge.

What does the Europe Challenge offer to participants?
The programme offers selected challenge teams* the following opportunities:
- a series of online and in-person workshop and mentoring sessions
- funding of up to EUR 10.000 (optional) to implement the creative solutions
- additional peer-to peer exchange opportunities, networking and travel

*a challenge team is made up of one library and one community representative

What is the duration of the Europe Challenge 2024?
The Europe Challenge 2024 runs from January to September 2024.

Will the call be reopened next year?
Yes, there will be an open call next year for the Europe Challenge 2025.

What is the time commitment needed to participate in the learning programme?
To participate in the learning programme, you will need to set aside a total of 10 hours to attend obligatory online sessions between January and September 2024. In addition, you will attend two in-person meetings in March 2024 in September 2024 (with all travel and accommodation costs covered - hybrid participation available). Exact dates, times and locations of all the sessions will be shared with you at the start of the programme. Please keep in mind that these time commitments do not include the time needed to implement your proposed challenge project in your local setting.

About the application

Who can apply?
The applicant must be a library and community group from an eligible country with a shared vision of how to change their community for the better. The library and community group have identified a local challenge, and are ready to turn their ideas into a practical solution.

What are the eligibility criteria?
- A main partner (usually the library) is designated to receive the (optional) funding. The partner community group can request that the grant be paid to them if this is easier for the library's administration.
- The library is based in an eligible country.
- The applicant must be registered as a legal entity and represented by individuals who are at least 18 years old.
- Proposals involving political parties or affiliated organizations are ineligible.
- An awareness of environmental, social, and cultural sustainability standards in the project design and implementation.
- Experience in diversity, equality, and inclusion.
- Working proficiency in English is required for full participation.
- Neither partner has previously participated in the Europe Challenge.

Which countries are eligible?

A	Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan
B	Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria
C	Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic
D	Denmark
E	Estonia
F	Finland, France
G	Georgia, Germany, Greece
H	Hungary
I	Iceland, Ireland, Italy
K	Kosovo
L	Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg
M	Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro,
N	The Netherlands, Northern Macedonia, Norway
P	Poland, Portugal
R	Romania
S	San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland
T	Turkey
U	Ukraine, the United Kingdom

What is the deadline for applications?
Applications must be submitted by 16 October 2023 9.00 CEST

Where can I find further information about the call and application?
An online Q&A session to answer your questions about the call and the application will take place on **Facebook discussion thread** on **19 September at 15.00 CEST**. All the relevant information about The Europe Challenge is available on our **website**.

About the proposal

What are the selection criteria?
- **Local relevance** – the proposal addresses an urgent challenge for both the library and the local community. Additional involvement of local government or other local institutions is recommended but not mandatory.
- **Creativity** – the proposal presents fresh, creative and innovative ways to address a local challenge.
- **Inclusivity** – the proposal reflects the shared ambitions of the library staff and community members.
- **Scalability** – the proposal is practical and tangible (e.g. a publication, a campaign, a game, a spatial intervention, a new library service implemented locally but with the potential to be scaled or replicated elsewhere).
- **Sustainability** – the proposal embodies a convincing understanding of fair and green ("just") transition in Europe and its implementation is feasible.
- **European values** – the proposal complies with European values of democracy, transparency and openness.
- **Impact** - the proposal is able to explain (and quantify) how it will have a positive impact on people and/or the environment.

What is the composition of the jury?
The selection is undertaken by a committee consisting of representatives from the European Cultural Foundation, partnering foundation(s) and public libraries who participated in previous editions of the Europe Challenge.

When will the results of the proposal selection be communicated?
The results of the proposal selection will be communicated during the week of 20 November 2023.

Is personal feedback available for unselected proposals?
Unfortunately, the ECF is unable to provide feedback.

About the timeline

When and where will the Europe Challenge 2024 events take place?

All selected challenge teams are expected to attend an online kick-off meeting in January 2024, a series of online and hybrid events between March and August, and a live 2-day event in Amsterdam in September 2024.

What are the key dates in 2024?

Exact dates, times and locations of all obligatory sessions will be shared with you at the start of the programme. The following timeline gives you an indication of time commitments between January and September 2024:

- **January**: Kick-off meeting (online, 3 hours)
- **February:** Kick-off meeting for late starters (online, 3 hours) - optional
- **March:** Regional meeting (live and online, 2 days, location in Europe tbc)
- **April:** Elective module (online, 1 hour) - optional
- **May:** Learning summit (online, 3 hours)
- **June:** Elective module (online, 1 hour) - optional
- **August:** Learning summit (online, 3 hours)
- **September:** "The Marketplace" at OBA, Amsterdam (live and online, 2 days)

About the grant

How much funding can the library and community apply for?

There is a maximum amount of 10.000 EUR available for each library and community. Given our limited budget, applicants are encouraged to consider how much funding they actually need to complete their project. We want as many libraries across Europe as possible to take part in the programme. Requesting funding as part of joining the programme is optional, applicants can also apply to take part in the learning programme only.

Who receives the payment?

If your application is successful, which applicant (library or community group) should receive the grant ("i.e be the main partner")? This is normally the library, but if this is not feasible, the community group can be designated as the main partner, and receive the funding.

What kind of reporting & financial administration is involved?

The grant is administered in three installments: The first on signing the grant agreement; the second on submitting a mid-term report; the third on completing the project and submitting a final narrative and financial report.

Contact the Europe Challenge team at **theeuropechallenge@culturalfoundation.eu**