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ANNEX

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the multiannual action plan for EU foreign policy needs on support to international cultural relations for 2024-2025

Action Document for Support to international cultural relations

MULTIANNUAL PLAN

This document constitutes the multiannual work programme within the meaning of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, within the meaning of Article 23 of the NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1 SYNOPSIS

1.1 Action Summary Table

1. Title CRIS/OPSYS business reference Basic Act	Support to international cultural relations OPSYS number: ACT-62915 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe)
2. Team Europe Initiative	No
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out globally
4. Programming document	N/A
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results	N/A
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	Public Diplomacy and international cultural relations
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG (1 only): SDG 17 – Partnerships to achieve the goal Other significant SDGs (up to 9) and where appropriate, targets: SDG 5 – Gender Equality SDG 8 – Decent work and economic growth SDG 9 – Industry, innovation and infrastructure SDG 13 – Climate action SDG 16 – Peace Justice and Strong Institutions
8 a) DAC code(s)	43010 – Multisector aid
8 b) Main Delivery Channel	60000 – Private sector 20000 – Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society

	40000 – Multilateral organisations			
9. Targets	<input type="checkbox"/> Migration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
10. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective @	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	11. Internal markers and Tags	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective
Digitalisation @		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
digital connectivity		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	/
digital governance		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
digital entrepreneurship		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
digital skills/literacy		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
digital services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Migration @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	Reduction of Inequalities ¹ @	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Covid-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BUDGET INFORMATION				
12. Amounts concerned	Budget line(s) (article, item): 14 02 03 30 (Foreign Policy Needs) Total estimated cost: EUR 10 000 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 10 000 000 The contribution is for an amount of EUR 9 411 156.08 from the general budget of the European Union for 2024 and for an amount of EUR 588 843.92 from the general budget of the European Union for 2025, subject to the availability of appropriations for the respective financial year following the adoption of the relevant annual budget, or as provided for in the system of provisional twelfths.			
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION				
13. Implementaton modality	Direct management through procurement			

1.2 Summary of the Action

This action will enable the EU to address short and medium-term foreign policy needs and opportunities by supporting innovative policies and initiatives, and by deepening EU relations and dialogues with target communities, forging alliances and partnerships. In particular, this action will enable the EU to foster the role of culture in EU external relations, building trust and enhancing mutual understanding through intercultural dialogue, promotion of shared values and co-creation collaborations.

1.3 Zone benefitting from the Action

The Action shall be carried out globally.

2 RATIONALE

2.1 Context

Enhancing the role of culture in EU external relations has been a priority of the EU ever since the adoption of the “European Agenda for Culture in a Globalised World”² in 2007. Since then, the approach to the role of culture in EU external relations has significantly developed, with culture increasingly perceived as strategic for political, social and economic development and contributing to external policy objectives. With the 2016 Joint Communication “Towards an EU Strategy for International Cultural Relations”³, the EU established a framework for cultural cooperation with partner countries.

Priority ‘Support to EU Film Festivals – Phase II’: Among the activities to reinforce EU cooperation in this field, the Joint Communication mentions the ongoing “Support to EU Film Festivals” initiative funded by the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation instrument – Global Europe (NDICI-GE), aimed to support the organisation of EU film festivals (EUFFs) worldwide. The EU’s Foreign Affairs Council conclusions

¹ For more information, please consult: [The European Commission inequality marker - Publications Office of the EU \(europa.eu\)](#) and [Inequality Marker – Complementary Guidelines Application of the I-Marker to SSC fiches and Action Documents | Capacity4dev \(europa.eu\)](#)

² [European agenda for culture in a globalising world | EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

³ [EUR-Lex - 52016JC0029 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

adopted on 8 April 2019 established the EU strategic approach to international cultural relations and a framework for action⁴. It acknowledged the need for a cross-cutting approach to culture, while aiming to strengthen the effectiveness and impact of its foreign policy by integrating international cultural relations in the range of its foreign policy instruments.

Priority 'Cultural Relations Platform': The “Cultural Relations Platform” (CRP), built on the previous “Cultural Diplomacy Platform” (CDP) 2016–2020 is among the implementing tools mentioned in the Joint Communication to strengthening the ability of the EU, in particular EU Delegations, to engage meaningfully with key target audiences and stakeholders worldwide in the field of EU's international cultural relations.

2.2 Lessons learnt

Priority 'Support to EU Film Festivals – Phase II':

The stand-alone evaluation of the Support to EU Film Festivals – Phase I confirmed the achievement of greater number and regular side-events involving local partners and an enhanced engagement with target audiences; a widened and diversified film repository; and strengthened capacities of EU Delegations. During this second phase, there is however room for improvement in terms of intra-EU coherence and coordination, country audience management strategies and the sustainability of EUFFs, as well as promoting business exchanges and commercial opportunities between European and local audiovisual professionals.

This second phase has already integrated some of the EU Delegations' requests during the first phase:

- Increased number of films (at least one film per country every year).
- More comedies/entertainment films, action films, gender-sensitive and family films.
- Small budget for local subtitles.
- Possibility to have double subtitles (i.e., English/Arabic).
- Increased budget for side events (events are essential to engage with local stakeholders and audiences and promote co-productions between the EU and partner countries).

Priority 'Cultural Relations Platform': Since the creation of the CDP in 2016, this initiative has been key to mainstream international cultural relations in the EU Global Strategy. The CRP has strengthened the capacity of many EU Delegations (and HQ), reinforcing the understanding of the role of culture and international cultural relations in supporting the EU foreign policy agenda and needs; has supported the EU Delegations to engage in the field of culture and added value to what Member States are doing locally; and has acted as strategic seed capital for sustained cultural relations initiatives.

CRP initiatives have also shown their capacity to bring together at the same table the cultural and creative sectors, small operators, civil society and high-level institutional actors.

The proposed CRP will be a key tool to support the current EU efforts on international cultural relations in third countries, including the implementation of the envisaged EU Action Plan on international cultural relations.

2.3 Problem Analysis

Short problem analysis:

Priority 'Support to EU Film Festivals – Phase II': The potential of cinema to communicate about Europe and to create spaces for intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding with citizens in partner countries is recognised by most EU Delegations. The continuation of this initiative addresses the main EU Delegations' needs when organising EU film festivals (EUFFs), in particular the absence of a centralised repository of films to allow a rich diversification and a larger number of quality films, the high cost of acquisition rights and the lack of internal resources to finance side events and transform the EUFFs into bigger and regular events. Addressing these needs would enhance the professionalisation and sustainability of EU film festivals, promote film exports through sales and distribution via

⁴ [EUR-Lex - 52019XG0607\(01\) - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

cinema theatres and online, as well as co-productions with local partners, thus reinforcing the attractiveness of the European audiovisual industry and creating positive trickledown effects in terms of jobs and growth (cultural and creative industries employ 8.7 million people in the EU, equivalent to 3.8 % of EU employment⁵).

Priority 'Cultural Relations Platform': The EU's Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions adopted on 8 April 2019 established the EU strategic approach to international cultural relations and a framework for action. It recognised the need for a cross-cutting approach to culture, while aiming to strengthen the effectiveness and impact of its foreign policy by integrating international cultural relations in the range of its foreign policy instruments.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action:

Priority 'Support to EU Film Festivals – Phase II': The key stakeholders include audio-visual professionals/associations from the EU and partner countries, Member States' cultural and film institutes and EUNIC clusters, independently organised EUFFs, citizens.

Priority 'Cultural Relations Platform': This initiative primarily aims to relate with a set of audiences/publics in third countries and multipliers that can allow reaching wider shares of third countries' audiences/publics. Relevant groups will include, but are not limited to, cultural stakeholders, artists, professionals in the creative and cultural sectors, foundations and the private sector, as well as specialised media to partner for communication. Youth and women are important target groups.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective of this action is to build trust and mutual understanding to support the achievement of the EU's foreign policy priorities, by strengthening the EU's ability to engage meaningfully in international cultural relations with different audiences, stakeholders and potential partners.

The Specific(s) Objective(s) of this action are to

1. Foster intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding, contribute to the sustainability of EUFFs worldwide and support the establishment and the strengthening of international professional collaborations and partnerships in the field of cinema.
2. Support cultural cooperation among cultural and creative sectors.

The Outputs to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives are:

1.1 contributing to Outcome 1 (or Specific Objective 1): Reinforced capacity of EU Delegations to organise EUFFs across the world; enhanced organisation of side events; improved understanding of the EU policies, shared values and principles by engaging with global audiences (general public attending the EUFFs and side events) and selected audiences (e.g., local cultural operators and artists, art organisations, business associations, women associations, youth networks, film students, etc.), which will facilitate future cooperation between the EU and partner countries; increased participation and collaboration between European and local professionals from the film industry, including engaging in co-productions; and successful development, integration and hand-over of the communication and training tools.

2.1 contributing to Outcome 2 (or Specific Objective 2): Maintaining the established policy platform focusing on the role of culture in EU external relations; strengthened skills of cultural managers from third countries and from the EU and strengthened network of cultural leaders; increased synergies with projects funded by Creative Europe, particularly cultural networks, the EU Prizes for Culture and European Capitals of Culture and with other EU programmes and initiatives on culture; enhanced evidence-based knowledge and consequently strengthening policy dialogues and cultural cooperation with partner countries, including exploring possible partnerships with the private sector in the field of international cultural relations.

⁵ [Data on the cultural sector - Culture and Creativity \(europa.eu\)](https://european-council.europa.eu/media/en/press-communications/infographic/Pages/infographic-cultural-creativity-2019.aspx)

3.2 Indicative Activities

Activities relating to Output 1.1:

Setting up a curated repository of European feature films, documentaries and short films, securing worldwide non-commercial screening rights; supporting the organisation of side events, including support in branding and communication activities; organisation of offline and online trainings on film festivals management addressed to the EU Delegations and local stakeholders involved in the organisation of the EUFFs.

Activities relating to Output 2.1:

Support/technical assistance on cultural policy in external relations and international cultural cooperation via local meetings, conferences, workshops and trainings and in conducting research, studies, mappings; facilitating people to people (P2P) exchanges, developing schemes for residencies, co-creation collaborations and museum cooperation; promotion of EU initiatives and prizes; running a global training programme for cultural managers worldwide.

3.3 Mainstreaming

This action mainstreams the following cross-cutting issues: Multilateralism (building alliances) contributing to a global order based on international law, EU principles and values (democracy, rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality, including gender equality, and solidarity), Resilience and Innovation.

3.4 Risks

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
The film repository does not meet the needs of the EU Delegations and the films available in the catalogue are not used	Risk 1	Low	High	Ensuring a clear and smooth coordination during the selection process (i.e., clear definition of roles and responsibilities, clear definition of selection criteria, etc.). It is also imperative that the selection of the catalogue is flexible, responds to the EU Delegations' needs and local sensitivities, and can be adjusted throughout the duration of the action.
Digital inequalities leading to difficult screening conditions	Risk 2	Medium	Low	The professionalisation of the equipment – Digital Cinema Packages (DCPs) and

				Blu-rays - minimises the impact.
Lack of interest from the European and local film industry to cooperate leading to difficult rights negotiations or unwillingness to provide reasonable prizes	Risk 3	Low	Low	Constant engagement with sales agents is ensured throughout the implementation to build prospect relationships.
Insufficiently planned and coordinated Cultural Diplomacy/international cultural relations activities have a negative impact on the credibility of the EU abroad	Risk 5	Low	Medium	Increased planning and coordination & creation of networks of trust, by moving away from cultural diplomacy/showcasing/propaganda to the principles of shared values and co-creation.

4 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with a partner country.

4.2 Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 84 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3 Implementation Modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures⁶.

4.3.1 Direct Management (Procurement)

The procurement will contribute to achieving specific objective 1 and 2 in section 3.1.

4.4 Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components⁷	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Implementation modalities – cf. section 4.3.1	
Objective 1 - Support to EU Film Festivals – Phase II	2 000 000
Procurement (direct management) – cf. section 4.3.1	
Objective 2 – Cultural Relations Platform	8 000 000
Procurement (direct management) – cf. section 4.3.1	
Totals	10 000 000

4.5 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

A strong policy steering and monitoring of the action will be ensured by the EEAS and FPI in coordination with other relevant Commission services. The EU Delegations worldwide will also ensure direct contacts with the implementing partners and monitoring of the activities.

Dedicated Steering Committees may be established to act as advisory and reporting mechanism in order to provide the strategic and policy guidance needed to ensure smooth project implementation. Steering Committees will define the priority work streams to be addressed. Steering Committees will review and endorse annual work plans, monitor project outputs and achievements, and not least provide advice on how to address obstacles and challenges identified during implementation. Steering Committees, whose composition will be further detailed in the legal commitments, will comprise representatives of the European Commission services, the EEAS and relevant EU Delegations.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action and may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, for the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action and ensuring effective coordination

5 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1 Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix (for project modality) and the partner's strategy, policy or reform action plan list (for budget support).

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

Roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring:

5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the importance of the action, a final evaluation may be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission.

It will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision). The Commission shall inform the implementing partners/contractors at least 3 months in advance of the dates envisaged for the evaluation missions. The implementing partners/contractors shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports may be shared with the partners and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, apply the necessary adjustments.

The financing of the evaluation may be covered by another measure constituting a Financing Decision.

5.3 Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The 2021-2027 programming cycle will adopt a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

In line with the 2022 “[Communicating and Raising EU Visibility: Guidance for External Actions](#)”, it will remain a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union’s support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. This obligation will continue to apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, partner countries, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU member states.

However, action documents for specific sector programmes are in principle no longer required to include a provision for communication and visibility actions promoting the programmes concerned. These resources will instead be consolidated in Cooperation Facilities established by support measure action documents, allowing Delegations to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with sufficient critical mass to be effective on a national scale.