

Danube Small Project Fund for Culture

Background

Within the framework of the INTERREG-Danube Transnational project CultPlatForm_21 (2017-19), a concept for the establishment of **low-threshold small-scale financing of art projects** in the Danube region was developed on the initiative of the Ministry of Science, Research and Arts Baden-Württemberg. This is what we call now the **Danube Small Project Fund for Culture**.

For the purpose of the study, cultural actors in the Danube region were interviewed regarding their needs, thus a demand-oriented concept was developed. The basic idea is to provide an uncomplicated funding platform for Danube-wide collaboration that can disburse even small amounts for the most important costs (travel expenses, organisation etc.) without major administrative hurdles. Such an uncomplicated small project funding scheme has been a long-term desire of the cultural sector in the Danube region since the very beginning of the European Union's Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR).

The intention of such funding is also confirmed by the fact that it has found its way into the new "Action Plan" of the EUSDR: "C) Examples of projects/activities (past, present or future): Small Project Fund" (p. 34). The Covid-19 crisis has once again clearly underlined the importance – indeed the necessity – of such a funding tool. The above mentioned survey stated some concrete features that shall be incorporated in the DSPF to meet the expectations of the cultural sector:

1. Easy access and application: One of crucial aspect of the identified demands is to provide a simple application procedure, which allows respective artists and institutions to access the funding instrument with the lowest possible barriers.

2. Exchange orientation: Respondents repeatedly stressed the importance of a network orientation that allows to fund the exchange horizontal exchange between artists as well as the vertical exchange across sectors.

3. Transparent and efficient reporting: Respondents demanded simple, transparent and efficient accounting and clearing procedures that are in line with the creative arts and cultural work. Bureaucracy has to be limited to the lowest level possible.

Funding

The Danube Small Project Fund for Culture in the Danube Region will be internally funded by financial contribution from various partners throughout the Danube area. The Ministry of Science, Research and Art Baden-Württemberg will contribute yearly

a lump sum to the fund. You can find all financing partners of the Danube Small Project Fund here. (Link to the PARTNERS page) The possibility of participation in this funding scheme programme is not exclusively limited to public entities such as ministries for cultures. We invite foundations, institutions, companies and also individuals to contribute to the fund as a PPP-construction. First private organisations in Ulm, Germany have already committed themselves to contributing to the fund.

Network structure

The construction of the network was inspired by the success of the international translation network Traduki using it as a role model. The stakeholders will be represented in the Steering Committee as the highest decision making level. At the same time, they can delegate members to the Programme Committee which will act as the jury. In addition, applications will be examined by independent external cultural experts.



The European Danube Academy non-profit GmbH in Ulm, Baden-Württemberg is acting as the managing organisation of the project. An auxiliary account by the European Danube Academy will pool the contributions of the partners. The contributions as well as all financial transactions will be transparently shared to the public to ensure the highest level of transparency.