



Swiss
Cultural Fund
Albania

2021 Grants Call

Application guidelines

A project of the Swiss Agency for
Development and Cooperation SDC



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

**Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC**

Implemented by:



Center for Business
Technology and Leadership

Important dates

Launch of call: 04.05.2021

Deadline for applications: 04.06.2021

Deadline to submit questions: 24.05.2021

Answers to be published by: 26.05.2021

Deadline for project implementation: November 2021

Background

Community feedback

During March 2021, Swiss Cultural Fund invited actors across the Albanian independent cultural scene to participate in an information and discussion session. The objective of the session was to exchange information and feedback about SCF's support scheme and about the cultural sector's vulnerability and resilience under pandemic circumstances.

Around 110 artists registered to take part in the session, by filling an online survey.

The results of the survey concluded that:

- The three most vulnerable culture disciplines under pandemic restrictions are:
 - theatre and performing arts;
 - cultural heritage;
 - music.
- The three most resilient project models are:
 - web and/or documentation projects in cultural heritage,
 - production and exhibition projects in visual arts,
 - documentary and short film production.

Some of the artists who completed the survey, participated in a discussion about the survey's results. Based on their own experience and knowledge, the artists expressed concerns about

how the pandemic restrictions affected their projects, but also proposed solutions based on their own experience or knowledge.

The community agreed that cross-disciplinary collaboration could ensure support for vulnerable disciplines through successful project models as well as enhance networking and collaboration opportunities.

Geographical focus

During the first phase of SCF, around one third of supported projects' main activities were developed in locations outside of Tirana, such as Gjirokastra, Durrës, Elbasan, Shkodra, Kruja and Polena.

As recommended in the Review and Expert Opinion on the Effectiveness of the first phase of the Swiss Cultural Fund, the project will foster geographical decentralisation of cultural activities.

Multidisciplinary approach

During the first phase of the project, SCF funded projects from a comprehensive range of disciplines, sometimes in innovative fields, such as 360° film or virtual tours.

Through this call, SCF aims to continue supporting artists or cultural actors from a wide range of disciplines, including new ones.

Gender balance

During the first phase of the project, SCF supported projects implemented or led by women on an equal scale to projects implemented and led by men.

Through this call, SCF aims to continue providing equal access opportunities for both genders.

Call's objectives

Based on the above-mentioned information, this call's objectives are:

- to provide support for young and emerging artists and cultural actors who are impacted by the pandemic;

- to foster collaboration and networking between artists across various disciplines;
- to encourage geographical decentralisation;
- to support a comprehensive range of disciplines;
- to continue promoting equal access opportunities to all genders.

Eligibility criteria

Target group

This call is open to applicants that fall under one of the following categories:

- Young or emerging artists or culture experts (individuals) whose activity is related to the Albanian independent cultural scene;
- Informal groups of young or emerging artists or culture experts. In this case, one single individual must represent the group;
- Organisations whose activity and scope of work are related to the Albanian independent cultural scene. Organisations are required to design proposals that involve young or emerging artists or culture experts;

Please kindly note that applications from state institutions will be excluded from the evaluation process.

Budget

Maximum grant amount

The maximum grant amount is 1.000.000 Lek. Please kindly note that applications which request more than the above-mentioned sum will not be considered.

Eligible costs

The following costs are considered eligible and they should be presented as follows:

- In the budget section A. Production Costs - any material costs and services for direct realization of the project (including materials, printing costs, rent of venue, rent of equipment etc.);
- In B. Fees and Copyrights - fees for project participants involved in the project implementation;

- In C. Administrative/Organizational Costs – all organizational costs (travel costs, bank charges, etc.) and for organizations only – some administrative costs (fees of the management project, partial office and running costs, accounting, etc.);
- In D. Other Costs – other costs that are not included in the previous sections (e.g. communication and promotion costs etc.);

Non-eligible costs

- VAT is not an eligible expense and should be covered by other means of finance.
- Purchase of equipment with a total cost higher than CHF 250 is not an eligible expense.

Duration and timelines

Maximum duration

Proposed projects must have a maximum duration of 5 months.

Implementation time frame

The activities of proposed projects must take place within the deadline mentioned in this document.

Locations, applicant nationality, international collaboration

- Every project must be fully implemented in Albania.
- Applicants must hold Albanian nationality.
- Collaborations from other countries are allowed to be part of a project as long as their role is not central to the project and their involvement is clearly justified.

Co-financing

Please kindly note that projects that are co-financed by government institutions do not fall under our definition of independent cultural scene, therefore they are not eligible to be considered for evaluation.

Thematic areas

In compliance with this call's objectives, SCF invites eligible applicants to submit proposals based on the following thematic areas:

1. Collaboration across disciplines

- a. Collaboration between filmmakers and performing artists for the production of filmed performances;
- b. Collaboration between visual artists and performing artists for the production of art projects that involve film or video installations;
- c. Collaboration between cultural heritage researchers, performing artists and filmmakers for the re-enacting and documentation of intangible cultural heritage.

2. Theatre outside of a theatre building

3. Documentation and promotion of Albanian contemporary artists

4. Production, documentation and exhibition of digital art projects

1. Collaboration across disciplines

This call is open for proposals of artistic and cultural projects that are designed to be implemented through artistic collaboration between artists from different disciplines.

a. Collaboration between filmmakers and performing artists for the production of filmed performances

As a result of COVID, performance venues in most parts of the world closed their doors. Many performing artists, not only lost their access to the audience, but also lost most of their income. In the meantime, the popularity of recorded live performances surged. Performances can be recorded in a studio, in empty auditoriums, in cultural heritage sites or in nature.

Location: Albania.

Objectives:

- To help performance artists reach the audience through filmed live performance;
- To provide performance artists with a tool that is helpful to promote their skills to international festivals and producers.

Applicant profile:

- Performing artists in collaboration with skilled videographers;
- Organizations with a focus on culture who represent the artists.

Requirements:

- The artists must be able to perform live in front of the camera;
- The performance must be produced according to high technical and creative standards, such as professional sound recording, good lighting, at least three camera angles, detail shots, etc.
- The duration of the production must be at least 20 minutes.
- The production must be available to the audience on Youtube and other similar platforms.

Project deliverables:

A filmed performance of at least 20 minutes that includes full credits;

Application documents:

- Completed and signed application form;
- Demo recording of the material;
- CVs of all project participants;
- Portfolios of the main creative team members;
- Moodboard and director treatment;
- Pictures of the filming location.

b. Collaboration between contemporary artists and performing artists for the production of art projects that involve film or video installations;

Many contemporary artists break the boundaries of traditional art forms by expressing themselves through a mixture of physical and multimedia materials, such as video and sound. Video installations, for example, combine video and installation art, by utilizing all aspects of the physical environment to affect the audience.

Location: Preferably outside of Tirana.

Objectives:

- To help artists enrich their artistic expression through collaborative and innovative mediums;
- To provide economic opportunities for performance artists who are affected by the pandemic restrictions.

Applicant profile:

- Artist groups;

- Art spaces who represent the artists;

Requirements:

- The artists must be able to explain in detail the concept and theme of their work;
- The artists are encouraged to explore a combination of multiple mediums (ie. video and mixed media, video and photography, etc.);
- The work must be exhibited for at least one week in a contemporary art gallery outside of Tirana.

Project deliverables:

- A video production that involves one or more performance artists, complete with a clear concept of the physical features of the installation that will contain it (ie. type of screen, number of screens, projection size, audience arrangement, etc.);
- An exhibition in an art gallery outside of Tirana, featuring the produced work, alongside related works from the same project (ie. drawings, photographs, paintings, objects, etc).

Application documents:

- Completed and signed application form;
- Artist bios;
- Artist portfolios;
- Photos of the exhibition space;
- Preliminary drawings, plans or renderings of the exhibition space;
- In the case of artist individuals or groups, a letter of confirmation from the exhibition space is required.

c. Collaboration between cultural heritage researchers, performance artists and filmmakers for the re-enacting and documentation of intangible cultural heritage.

Intangible cultural heritage is a high-risk discipline. In Albania, public funding is insufficient for proper research and documentation of intangible cultural heritage, such as dances and rituals. Because of lack of documentation and because of social changes, such as migration, this part of cultural heritage risks not being passed on to younger generations.

Location: Outside of Tirana.

Objectives:

- To research, document, re-enact and promote Albanian cultural heritage;
- To provide economic opportunities for performance artists who are affected by the pandemic restrictions.

Applicant profile:

- Groups of cultural heritage researchers, performers and video artists;
- Cultural organizations representing the above-mentioned professionals.

Requirements:

- The project's cultural heritage expert must demonstrate a high level of knowledge in regards to the project's subject;
- Tools, costumes, accessories, masks, musical instruments and any other necessary props must be guaranteed for the filmed performance;
- The performing artists must be part of SCFs target group of young or emerging artists.
- The performance must be produced according to high technical and creative standards, such as professional sound recording, good lighting, at least three camera angles, detail shots, etc.

Project deliverables:

- Research publication;
- Video production in a duration of at least 5 minutes.

Application documents:

- Completed and signed application form;
- Artist bios;
- Artist portfolios.

2. Theatre outside of a theatre building

As a result of the COVID pandemic restrictions, theatres in Albania closed their doors. Many actors, not only lost their access to the audience, but also lost their source of income. The matter exacerbated in May 2020 when the building of the National Theatre was demolished by the state under an ongoing lockdown. However, experience has showed that certain genres of theatre and certain plays can be successfully performed in spaces outside of a theatre building.

This call is open for proposals of theatre projects that set the performance in alternative spaces such as cultural heritage landmarks, nature, quiet public spaces, abandoned industrial buildings, etc.

Location: Outside of Tirana.

Objectives:

- To provide an opportunity for theatre artists to reach audiences and gain income.
- To encourage theatre directors to explore and experiment with the possibilities that are given by alternative spaces.
- To enrich the cultural life of other cities outside of the capital.

Applicant profile:

- Troupes of young and emerging theatre artists;
- Cultural organizations representing the above-mentioned professionals.

Requirements:

- The director must demonstrate a high level of knowledge about the play;
- The play must have a duration of at least 30 minutes;
- The director must explain in detail how and why the concept of the proposed play is related to the chosen spaces for performance.
- The applicant must demonstrate that they have permission to use the proposed spaces

Project deliverables:

- At least one full performance of the play;
- A full video recording of the play with good quality audio;
- A short trailer of the play, published on Youtube and social media.

Application documents:

- Completed and signed application form;
- Artist bios;
- Sample of previous works/performances;
- Proof of permission to use the proposed space (if applicable);
- Synopsis of the play;
- Description of the director's creative approach to the play's mise en scene.

- Photos of the proposed spaces

3. Documentation and promotion of Albanian contemporary artists

Promotion and networking opportunities in cultural community in Albania are often limited to blogs or social media channels. In the meantime, young Albanian artists and creatives have exposure limited to their own social media channels, and rarely to web portals.

Collective approaches such as websites, podcasts, print publications, etc. are excellent tools to foster networking, promotion, documentation and collaboration between artists.

Location: Albania.

Objectives:

- To provide opportunities for networking and promotion of young contemporary artists in Albania.
- To document information about artists and artist works.

Applicant profile:

- Collectives of artists and cultural workers;
- Cultural organizations representing the above-mentioned professionals.

Requirements:

- The applicant must have an insightful knowledge of the contemporary arts scene in Albania.
- The project must represent creative methods of documentation and promotion of the artists, thus being attractive for a wider audience;
- The results of the project must be available to the audience for at least one year through web, libraries, bookstores or other related channels.

Project deliverables:

One or more of the following:

- Website
- Booklet

- Documentary
- Podcast series
- Video interview series

Application documents:

- Completed and signed application form;
- Bios and portfolios of the featured artists;
- CVs of project staff;
- Sample of similar works in the past (if applicable);
- Previews of the design and content (if applicable);

4. Production, documentation and exhibition of digital art projects

Digital arts have broadened the sphere of creative opportunities. The impact of digital technology has transformed activities such as painting, drawing, animation and sound art.

Digital artists utilize technology (such as computer programs or electronic devices) as an integral part of their creative process. Many young Albanian artists practice digital arts, more often as computer generated visual art (ie. digital illustration, photo or video manipulation, etc.). While social media has resulted successful in promoting Albanian digital artists (through platforms like Instagram, Behance, Vimeo, etc.), due to lack of support, very few attempts have been fruitful in promoting digital arts to audiences in art galleries or independent culture centers. Often, digital artists are not able to afford the costs of printing, screening or displaying their work in art galleries.

Location: Albania.

Objectives:

- To provide opportunities for Albanian digital artists.
- To enrich the knowledgebase on the production of digital art.

Applicant profile:

- Albanian digital artists as individuals or groups;
- Cultural organizations representing digital artists.

Requirements:

- The applicant must have a solid understanding on the production of digital art;
- The applicant must be able to explain their concept and creative process;

Project deliverables:

- Production of one work or a series of works around a chosen theme in one of the following forms: still imagery, animation, interactive media, sound art, web art, virtual reality, etc.
- A short video documentary where the artist presents their chosen theme, the creative process, and the technical process in the production of their work.
- An exhibition in an art gallery or cultural space.

Application documents:

- Completed and signed application form;
- Bio, portfolio and/or website of the artist;
- CVs of project staff;
- Preliminary sketches, storyboards, demos or any other mediums that clearly explain the project's concept and expected results;

Questions and answers

Applicants are encouraged to submit any questions they might have in written form in SCF's email address, within the designated deadline.

Please kindly note that based on the rules that regulate the application process, the SCF team does not privately answer to submitted questions. All the questions will be publicly answered in a Q&A format in SCF's website within the deadline mentioned in this document.

Submission process

Application form

A filled and signed application form is mandatory for an application to be considered eligible. Applicants are free to choose between Albanian and English for the language of their submission.

Please make sure that the text inside the application form is selectable.

Additional documentation

In addition to the completed application form, applicants are required to submit all the documentation required under their chosen thematic area.

File handling

Please make sure that the total weight of the files submitted by email attachment does not exceed 10 MB.

For files that exceed this size, please use cloud hosting services such as Google Drive or Dropbox.

PLEASE NOTE THAT:

- In case the links are inaccessible (ie. no access rights, invalid link, empty folder) applicants will not be notified and their application will be considered non-eligible for further evaluation.
- SCF will not accept application materials sent through download platforms such as Wetransfer, Sendspace, etc.
- SCF will not accept any physical applications.

Evaluation

Each application will go through two stages of evaluation:

1. Administrative Evaluation

- a. Does the applicant fulfil the eligibility criteria?
- b. Has the applicant submitted all the required documentation?

2. Technical Evaluation

- a. Budget efficiency 25%
- b. Proposal quality, concept and relevance 30%
- c. Clarity of description 15%.

d. Applicant's background 30%

Selection of candidates

Winning proposals are selected by a trilateral board that represents SCF, SDC and external independent experts.

Every applicant will receive an email notification about the result of their application.

Additionally, successful applicants will be announced on SCF's website and social media channels.

Complaints

Applicants have the right to file a complaint, which must be made no later than five calendar days from the date of dispatch of information through written notice from SCF or publication of the list of selected projects on the official website of SCF and should clearly describe the problem/complaint base. The complaint must be made directly by the applicant and not by his or her legal representative or mediator to our email address. SCFA will provide an answer to the complainant no later than 15 days from the deadline set for filing the appeal.

Contact

Please use the following address to submit your questions or proposals:

info@swissculturalfund.al

For proposal submissions, please use the following code in the beginning of the subject line:

GC21_A

For questions, please use the following code in the beginning of the subject line: **GC21_Q**