

# cultural relations PLATFORM

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

**“RETHINKING THE INSTITUTIONAL DESIGN OF  
PROJECT-BASED PUBLIC FUNDING FOR CULTURE  
IN THE EASTERN NEIGHBOURHOOD REGION”**



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ONISIFOR GHIBU PUBLIC LIBRARY  
CHIȘINĂU, MOLDOVA

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for Culture in the Eastern Neighbourhood Region”

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**SUMMARY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS** of the participants  
of the International Workshop “Rethinking the institutional  
design of project-based public funding for culture in  
the Eastern Neighbourhood Region” to the working group  
for the elaboration of the Law on the Fund for Culture of the  
Republic of Moldova

**19**

FINAL REPORT

**INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP “RETHINKING  
THE INSTITUTIONAL DESIGN OF PROJECT-BASED  
PUBLIC FUNDING FOR CULTURE IN THE EASTERN  
NEIGHBOURHOOD REGION”**

Prepared by **Raluca Iacob**

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## PRESENTATION

The Cultural Relations Platform (CRP), in collaboration with the EU Delegation to Moldova, organised from 30 November to 2 December 2022 the international workshop titled “Rethinking the Institutional Design of Project-based Public Funding for Culture in the Eastern Neighbourhood Region” at the Onisifor Ghibu Public Library in Chisinau (Republic of Moldova).

The event was designed and held in partnership with the Coalition of the Independent Cultural Sector of the Republic of Moldova, together with the Belarusian Council for Culture and the Georgian Culture and Management Laboratory. The Ministry of Culture provided a strategic partnership to the project.

The international workshop was held in response to the local and regional need for up-to-date and adaptable solutions for the distribution of financial resources in the public interest, so as to achieve strategic societal goals and to strengthen the role of civil society organisations.

The programme included interlinked debates and workshops, which combined exchanges of ideas and case studies with workshops, leading to conclusions alongside general and principled recommendations, as well as concrete suggestions for a future regulatory framework for a Culture Fund in the Republic of Moldova.

The event was physically attended by around 50 culture professionals from Moldova, Belarus, Georgia, Estonia, Ukraine, Croatia and Romania, who were invited to share experiences, exchange best practices in the field of project-based public funding, institutional mechanisms and regulatory frameworks in the field of culture. The discussions could be watched online by those interested, and the recording remained online.

The international workshop was part of a long-term engagement process of the Independent Cultural Sector Coalition of Moldova, which continues to work on recommendations and carry out advocacy actions in the public interest to improve the vitality and diversity of the cultural ecosystem, so as to encourage synergies between public institutions and independent cultural professionals and to highlight opportunities for international cooperation for the benefit of Moldovan cultural actors, among others.



## NEED

The independent cultural scenes of the post-Soviet countries in Eastern Europe have the potential to provide a much larger contribution to cultural and socio-economic development overall.

One of its main challenges is linked to the functioning of existing public funding mechanisms for culture. In a context of competing policy priorities and limited public resources, oftentimes these are not able to properly support cultural actors in their local socio-cultural work and as players within the contemporary global creative scene.

It is therefore necessary to conduct an evaluation of their strategic outlook, their institutional design, and the regulatory frameworks in-place, so as to improve or develop new formats and instruments to support cultural actors efficiently, in accordance with public and cultural interest values.

Strengthening the role and sustainability of cultural civil society organisations and their initiatives entails a reconceptualization of the scope and tools of cultural policies towards an inclusive understanding of who the actors that work in the public interest are as well as the respect for human rights in a given society.

This needs to be conducted based on the recognition of diversity, participation, the value of socio-cultural work and the advantages of independence being a core value of civil cultural actors, while fostering a public interest dimension in the work of those start-ups involved in the cultural and creative industries.

There is an urgent need for up-to-date, adaptive solutions for a public interest-oriented, value-based distribution of financial resources to achieve strategic societal goals and to enhance the role of cultural civil society organisations.

## LOCAL CONTEXT

The problems of funding the cultural sector are linked to two distinct and interlinked issues: firstly, underfunding, and secondly, inflexibility and a lack of adapting funding regulations and policies, which do not stimulate performance and thus do not allow for development.

One finding of the evaluation of the Culture 2020 strategy found that the “analysis of expenditures reveals that more than 50% of resources are directed towards maintaining buildings and staff salaries. Very few funds (in the case of theatres and libraries) are allocated for the development of the sector, or in some cases none at all (in the case of museums and houses of culture) “.



Until 2010, financial resources were allocated exclusively to state programmes and projects. Since 2010, the Ministry of Culture has established a fund to support NGOs in the field, however this fund, like all funding for the sector, does not meet the current needs of cultural institutions.

The data demonstrates that the cultural ecosystem is not developing, with the rigid funding of the sector, according to the general financial rules and procedures, not allowing for an allocation of resources towards the development of a viable and free cultural scene. Additionally, there is no fund promoting the mobility of artists and cultural products.

Financing of the sector, with a focus on the private and independent sector, is faced with the following challenges, among others:

- **lack of flexibility in the funding model**, which does not allow for resources to be allocated to the development of the cultural scene;
- **centralisation of the sector**, which does not provide equal opportunities for the development of civil and private cultural actors who do not have sufficient access to state support;
- **lack of special programmes for the development of the creative industries**, apart from the limited support given to publishers through a specialised programme;
- **lack of funds for the mobility of artists and cultural products.**

Problems faced by the cultural sector in terms of funding include the rigid funding mechanism, which does not stimulate competition and does not support the role of the independent cultural sector, as well as the inability of managers to manage funds and generate additional income.

The establishment of the “Fund for the Development of National Culture and Art” appeared as early as 1993 in a Decision of the Government of the Republic of Moldova on the “Approval of the State Programme for the Development of Culture for the years 1993-2000 and ensuring the social protection of people of culture”.

The attention paid to the independent cultural sector was recognized at the governmental level in 2014 through the Culture Development Strategy titled “Culture 2020”. Its mission was “to provide the cultural sector with a coherent, effective and pragmatic policy framework based on priorities” with the vision of creating by 2020 a “strengthened, independent and creative cultural sector with a protected cultural heritage integrated into national and regional public policies, including sustainable development activities: educational, social, economic, touristic and environmental”.

Policy opportunities for improving regulations on the project-based financing of culture are represented by the inclusion of this need in the most important strategic documents at the governmental level in the Republic of Moldova:



- Prioritisation of the action of “developing the legislative and regulatory framework for project-based financing and priorities of the sector (OBJECTIVE 3. Increase the economic weight of the cultural sector and creative industries; Specific objective 3.2. Implement flexible funding models to support cultural policies and priorities of the time, so that the share of independent institutions in the sector receiving budget funding increases by 3% per year, and by 2020 it constitutes at least 21% of the “Culture 2020” Strategy).
- Inclusion of the “elaboration of the public policy proposal on the creation of the Culture Fund” by November 2022, in the context of the broader action of “creation of alternative support mechanisms for culture” in the Government Action Plan 2021-2022.

*(Analysis based on Veaceslav Reabcinschi’s presentation at the event)*

## KEY MESSAGES

The most important message from the speakers was that the role of culture for development depends on the general recognition of the value of culture by society, the funding allocated to it and the status of cultural workers, primarily artists. The role of a harmonious development of the cultural sector in general, with the contribution of the independent cultural scene, was highlighted, because not only the results and the impact on territories or audiences, but also the following of principles and values are signs of the vitality of the cultural dynamic in society and of democratic reforms in the medium and long term, in the spirit of European integration and respect for human rights.

*The element of development must be present whether the project concerns a particular activity or action, as we need to see how the action in question develops or contributes to changing a particular process for the better or perhaps for the worse, and we must conduct this analysis in order to understand what we want to finance through our projects. This is perhaps where we have the greatest need, to think of culture as an element of development and not just as an element of fun activities, including in the perspective of European integration. (Andrei Chistol)*

*The solution offered by the founding the Culture Fund is not truly a solution if we do not change anything else as well, and the main problem of culture funding is the low priority given to culture in general. There needs to be a more substantial commitment from the state budget to fund culture, as it is important that we do not rely only on external money in the cultural sector, as we need everyone to understand that culture creates economic development, that it is part of our identity, something we must confirm through consistent funding. (Dumitru Budianschi)*

*The comparative approach, which is specific to this event, brings added awareness to the systemic structural problems that are shared by a couple of the Eastern Partnership countries and some of their regional neighbours. Together we are looking for principles and solutions to ensure conditions for the*

*harmonious development of the cultural sector in general with the contribution of the independent cultural scene. Independent culture has an extremely important role to play and can be the driving force behind many essential changes in terms of funding reform and cultural policies in general, as has happened in Romania. It contributes to the democratisation and pluralism of forms of cultural expression and is a bearer of values that need to be transformed into concrete regulations and administrative practices. We need a sustainable and independent cultural scene, just as we need independent and predictable funding for culture. Cultural funding processes have this strategic value dimension that is extremely important for the democratic development of our countries. (Raluca Iacob)*

*There is no single 'European model' which can be taken off the shelf and be parachuted into Moldova or any other country, to do the job of reform that is required. There is however rich and varied European experience on which a country can draw. Real reform - not simply one-off changes - is needed to the current system of cultural funding and management. There is a need for a transition from the inherited, lingering, albeit mutated, former model of state funding to a forward-looking European-style public funding system. (Levan Kharatishvili)*

## MAIN IDEAS

This section follows the three main thematic clusters that have guided the structuring of the event. The most important ideas expressed by the speakers are mentioned below, thus mapping the core concepts, perspectives and debates that emerged.

**What are the values underpinning the formation of a cultural fund and how does it relate to strategic policy objectives and other existing funding instruments? How is the idea of public interest and public value of cultural activity translated into funding policies? What is the role of civic cultural organisations in Eastern Europe and in particular in the Eastern Neighbourhood countries for a public cultural policy?**

*One of the most important ramifications of reform in the direction of a European public funding model is the question of a new role and new responsibilities of a re-invented Ministry. The Ministry of Cultures' removal from direct decision-making on individual grants and other non-strategic financial matters will remove what is currently a time-consuming and sometimes politically damaging responsibility. It will free up time and energies for focusing on what should be the real responsibilities of a modernised ministry: policy development, strategy, planning, legislative issues, monitoring, research, coordination, information and communication. (Levan Kharatishvili)*



*Principles of European-style Public Funding Model (Levan Kharatishvili):*

- *Revised and more comprehensive governance structures and rules that meet European standards;*
- *A commitment at a policy, legislative and practical level to de-centralised, arm's length mechanisms*
- *Ministry funding to be progressively delegated as much as possible but according to a realistic timetable;*
- *Looking at the option of increased use of certain LEPLs as strategic and operational funding mechanisms;*
- *Commitment to fairness, appropriateness and transparency by the Ministry and by those organisations / mechanisms with delegated funding powers;*
- *Introduction of publicly available codes of practice and service-level agreements related to all aspects of public funding;*
- *Design of a very serious and appropriate (it need not be complicated) monitoring system which makes any disburser and every recipient of public funding fully accountable;*
- *Introduction of 'two-way' accountability with written funding contracts and a performance management system for all who are in receipt of public funding.*

*Two key areas critical to the development of a National Culture Fund: the absolute integrity of its governance, and to be national - „open to all”: Shedding some of the traditional notions and restrictions of a state funding system - ideas and bids from the independent, private and commercial cultural sectors should be treated the same as those from state or local government-funded entities and individuals. The Fund should be inclusive with everyone and everything treated on its merits but of course within the framework of the Fund's selection criteria. (Levan Kharatishvili)*

*A Fund for Culture creates a financial tool that removes some of the pressure on the state budget. It can be predictable, and it enables a medium term cultural strategy. (Irina Cios)*

*In setting up a Fund for Culture it is important to have the legal expertise for drafting a law, and to engage in inter-ministerial collaboration (finance, education, economy etc.). Any specific new piece of legislation has to comply with existing laws (the law of Finance, the law of Public Acquisitions etc.). There is also a need to set expectations and prioritise in terms of identifying feasible solutions, considering that creating a Fund for Culture will not solve all the existing problems in supporting culture in the respective country. (Irina Cios)*



*The motivations for funding culture need to be fundamentally the recognition of access to culture as a fundamental human right. Secondly, it needs to recognize that culture defines national identity, and that culture and heritage hold a prominent role in sustainable development! (UNESCO agenda 2030). (Irina Cios)*

*The most important challenge for the establishment of the Culture Fund is to find a solution that works regardless of the political context - the mechanisms, the legal provisions must take this into account. It is also important that it is a flexible mechanism that can be improved. It doesn't have to be perfect from the start. It is more important now to take the decision, not to delay it. (Irina Cios)*

*The Kultura Nova Foundation Support Programme adopts a couple of Horizontal Values: (1) balanced regional representation of cultural and artistic programmes of CSOs active in the field of contemporary culture and art; (2) fostering artistic and cultural practices that are less developed and/or marginalised; (3) development of the artistic/cultural/social community; (4) fostering the ecological transition in the cultural sector. (Marijana Jurcevic)*

*Contexts are different and each country has a different solution, but we have something in common. They are stable, predictable funds and are a model of sustainable financing. These values are important for any country and they get passed on to projects. (Margus Allikmaa)*

**What are possible approaches to the eligibility of public, non-profit (civic) and commercial organisations for cultural funding, including individuals? What tools and approaches for project evaluation and selection are appropriate? What is the role of evaluation in cultural funding programmes (impact assessment) in relation to the desired outcomes of cultural funding for the cultural sector and society?**

*The Kultura Nova Foundation was established as a result of an advocacy initiative led by civil society organisations. The Law on Kultura Nova Foundation was adopted by the Croatian Parliament in 2011, and it functions since as a public foundation based on arm's-length principle, with full autonomy in decision-making principles. Its mission is to provide professional and financial support to civil society organisations in the field of contemporary arts and culture in the Republic of Croatia, and to encourage a strong, stable and diverse civil society in the fields of contemporary arts and culture that creates new artistic praxis and praxis of critical public activism and entice positive social changes. (Marijana Jurcevic)*

*There is a necessity for the introduction of a European "two-way accountability" principle. This would involve the development of a simplified European-style performance management system, which would be put in place for any institution, organisation, group or individual in receipt of public funding. (Levan Kharatishvili)*

*The standard procedures developed in UN, EU and USAID projects for evaluation and selections are: (1) Development of application forms and guidelines; (2) Announcement of a call for proposals (deadlines*



*or rolling-based, one-stage or two-staged); (3) Appointment of a Selection Committee (responsible, independent and competent people who have serious motivation in the selection of quality projects). (Tatiana Poshevalova)*

*The IMACON methodology of project appraisal uses criteria related to both the project and the organisation's institutional development and capacity building, focusing on the following aspects: (1) analysis of the situation and actors, (2) goals and planned changes, (3) activities and resources, (4) management system and partnership, (5) monitoring and evaluation, (6) project logic and methodology. These parameters form the basis of the scales by which a qualitative assessment of the project is made. (Tatiana Poshevalova)*

*One of the most important dilemmas of funders is between: (1) a project that is very well prepared in terms of documentation, but failed due to the incompetence of the team of performers, and (2) a project that is poorly designed, but contains a creative, innovative idea that has serious potential if the application is finalised. (Tatiana Poshevalova)*

*A project/program/policy evaluation is an analytical tool or procedure designed to measure the direct effects, performance and long-term consequences of the implementation of government programs, sectoral policies, impact, as well as development programs, non-profit sector projects, corporate programs. In order to assess the impact of a program, we need interdisciplinary research using economic, sociological, political science methods. (Tatiana Poshevalova)*

**What are the potential sources of income for the Fund? What are the possible scenarios for the relation between the management and the board? What is the role of consultation and participation of cultural actors to decision-making on different levels - governance, priorities etc?**

*There is a multitude of opportunities, a puzzle that creates this system of funding culture and what is important is first of all to establish those rules of the game for each beneficiary and structure and how well they interact and how they work with each other. That whole approach starts from a framework. Whether it is the Ministry of Culture or other instruments that the Government has at its disposal to support the development of the cultural field to support the implementation of projects in the cultural field, we have to consider what the role of the Ministry of Culture is, not to double or triple certain roles, which maybe it should not have. The Ministry is responsible for the development of public policies, and the implementation part must certainly be independent of the development process. For example, the competition for cultural projects and the competition for publishing projects, and now also the competition for projects of theatrical institutions, all of these somehow hinder the very process of elaboration and the very process of good functioning if you like of the Ministry in general. (Andrei Chistol)*



*We need to establish those steps and elements that must lead to a modernization of the funding system, we need to have that clear analysis of all the elements that make up this funding system, the factors involved, the resources involved, the processes and methods or tools that we use to achieve a certain result that we all want. (Andrei Chistol)*

*The most important thing is to think right in the sense of having the best platform and the best examples, based on which we can develop ourselves that tool which is the most appropriate. It is important that we develop our local resource of evaluators and make it a dedicated part of the development process. (Andrei Chistol)*

*The sources of funding for national funds vary, but all of them usually include direct or indirect state funding. In some countries new funding streams were created by using hypothecated taxes e.g. part or all of a tax on gambling, cigarettes, alcohol, cultural goods, advertising etc is allocated to the fund. In other cases extra money might come from a national lottery or similar. In yet other cases there is a levy on copyright royalties. In some cases funds are set up so that they can receive individual donations and bequests, corporate philanthropy and business sponsorship with the donor sometimes being able to specify in which area or how in general they want the donation to be spent.*

*Ideally the Fund should be financed from diverse funding sources including the state budget, philanthropic donations, voluntary contributions, endowments and bequests by individuals, organisations, businesses, foundations and by any legal entities and in any other way not prohibited bylaw. Funding could come from foreign sources both from individuals and from foreign legal entities, again as long as not in any way prohibited by law. (Levan Kharatishvili)*

*To accumulate a budget for the Fund, it is not good to go to very many sources, maximum 2-3 sources, in order not to put pressure on the collection. The collection of funds from taxes on vice can compete with the idea that we want anti-vice programmes. Cultural professionals could attract businesses to fund as well, and here the credibility challenge of managing the funds comes in: whether the money would be given correctly. If this were done, the Fund could also become a symbol of citizen and business participation in culture. (Dumitru Budianschi)*

*The financial support of Kultura Nova Foundation is aimed at securing more stable working conditions for organisations (covering operating costs, salaries etc.) In this sense, it is complementary with the existing financial sources, such as the Ministry of Culture and Media, the National Foundation for Civil Society Development, and the Office for Cooperation with NGOs.*

*The financial resources of the Kultura Nova Foundation come partly from the national lottery games on chances, and partly on other resources (EU funds, basic property income, donations). (Marijana Jurcevic)*

*The most important aspects for the functioning of a Culture Fund are: (1) the autonomy in decision-making and selection process; (2) the importance of transparent and fair process of evaluation and*



*selection; (3) clear and firm basis: what, who for, how?; (4) experts from the field involved in the selection process; (5) partnership with the beneficiaries: ask for opinion, analysis the actual needs, evaluate the programme/strands you offer; (6) professional support to beneficiaries: capacity building, education etc; (7) flexibility: open to changes in the approach and adaptation to trends/ actual needs. (Marijana Jurcevic)*

*The Romanian National Cultural Fund was established in 2008. It is based on income from 21 sources, and was created for funding cultural projects. Some example of sources for its income are: 5% - income from selling reproductions or copies of heritage objects/monuments in public property; 5% - commissions from art auction sales; 2% - commissions from heritage real estate & monuments sales; 1% - income from fairs & exhibitions other than cultural charging entrance fee; 1% - income of businesses located in monuments; 10% - cost of holographic marks of video/audiograms; 2% - income of the National Lottery; 0,5% - income of gambling. (Irina Cios)*

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. The establishment of a National Fund for Culture in the Republic of Moldova is not only a necessity of procedural reform, from the perspective of good governance, but it is a decision with strategic value and a country project.** The National Fund for Culture can and must have an impact on cultural vitality, the harmonious development of the cultural ecosystem and the type of public culture present in society, which makes a fundamental contribution to the processes of reform and democratic transition of the Republic of Moldova, development and ensuring the realisation of fundamental human rights, first and foremost access to culture.
- 2. The opportunity for the creation of the National Fund for Culture, determined by the course of Moldova's integration into the European Union, is manifold.** As with other European countries that have followed this process, the accession process involves support for capacity building, skills and reforms and positions the institutions, organisations and experts involved in a context of learning, exchange of experiences and the assumption of democratic values in functional policies and regulations. Even if the field of culture per se is not part of the *acquis communautaire*, the open method of coordination and in general the formative, deliberative and funding frameworks for cultural cooperation projects and networking, among others, created by the European Union create the appropriate platform for value-aligned and goal-oriented changes in the Republic of Moldova. These objectives and values include respect for cultural and linguistic diversity, protection of human rights, the rule of law and good governance.

- 3. A new model of project-based public funding of culture implies changes both in the functioning of the procedures associated with these processes and in the vision of the type of impact that culture is intended to have in society.** There are many European experiences in this respect, and a number of observations and principles were captured by participants in the International Workshop debates, see in particular the intervention of Levan Kharatishvili.
- 4. The main institutional effect of the existence of a National Fund for Culture lies in the redefinition of the role of the Ministry of Culture.** This aspect, underlined by several participants in the debates, implies an estimated concentration of the Ministry of Culture on its regulatory, strategic planning and other tasks related to the public culture network, delegating or outsourcing the actual implementation components of the project-based funding policy to the National Fund for Culture.
- 5. The culture of evaluating the results and impact of funding policies, together with, in general, the use of data and findings from studies and research for informed cultural public policy and management decisions is essential to the foundation and functioning of the National Fund for Culture.** It not only grounds decisions that are more timely and better connected to reality, but develops a sense of confidence in the rationality of these decisions, alternating the perception of arbitrariness, professionalising decision-making processes and reducing the risks associated with subjectivism and interference of politics or other external actors in setting priorities for culture.
- 6. With regard to the governance of the National Fund for Culture in the relationship between the executive and decision-making levels, it is recommended that the management of this type of institution be associated with the executive function, complemented by a deliberative Board that sets the activities, strategy and priorities of the institution.** The latter should be composed of representatives of the administration alongside those of the non-governmental cultural sector, the latter being in a numerical majority.
- 7. The focus of public funding from the National Culture Fund must take into account the need to boost and activate those essential and fragile areas that are extremely vital to the cultural ecosystem.** This primarily concerns independent cultural production and that of public institutions (from the list of those not supported by the state), but also grants for national and international mobility, and training (for individuals) and expenses for organisational development, salary costs, rental of premises and other administrative expenses.
- 8. The capacity and integrity of the evaluators, together with the design of the evaluation processes of cultural projects, determine crucially the quality of the public culture thus funded.** Project submission and evaluation must be carried out in a digital environment, with a minimum bureaucratic burden, strictly for the needs of ensuring good governance of funding policy. Projects submitted for selection and evaluation must be judged by independent expert evaluators with a minimum of 3-5 years' experience in the field of cultural management and cultural projects, who will be remunerated for their work and will participate in regular training and evaluations.





- 9. The National Fund for Culture must thus be strategically and procedurally designed to be independent, stable, predictable and sustainable in relation to the political factor, the cultural actors and their beneficiaries.** In the words of Irina Cios, “the most important challenge for the establishment of the Culture Fund is to find a solution that works regardless of the political context - the mechanisms, the legal provisions must take this into account. It is also important that it is a flexible mechanism that can be improved.”
- 10. The funding sources of the National Culture Fund must support this desire for predictability, stability and sustainability.** The two recommended options are: 1. Sources from the budget, by setting a % of an economic parameter (e.g. gross domestic product); 2. Sources from the budget, by setting a % of certain taxes paid by economic agents to the budget. In both options, it is also appropriate to include additional direct sources and the possibility of operating with own revenues, from own sources or from own activities.

## SPEAKERS AT THE DEBATES

*in alphabetical order*

### *Margus Allikmaa (Estonia)*

Margus Allikmaa is an Estonian civil servant and top manager, head of the Estonian Cultural Foundation, former minister of culture and chairman of Estonian Public Broadcasting Company. He graduated from the Tallinn Polytechnic as a radio technician and in 1985 from the Tallinn Polytechnic Institute as an electronic engineer. As a theatre manager, he has improved his skills in Los Angeles, Denmark, etc. He worked in various positions at the Estonian Drama Theater, general manager of media company AS Trio LSL, the chancellor of the Ministry of Culture, Estonian Minister of Culture, the deputy mayor of Tallinn, director of the Russian Theater, and member of the Estonian Reform Party.

### *Dumitru Budianschi (Republic of Moldova)*

Dumitru Budianschi is Minister of Finance of the Republic of Moldova since August 2021. He has a degree in mathematics and cybernetics (bachelor’s level), a Master’s degree in economics, public finance and taxation and a PhD in economics and management (Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, 2008). He has worked in the public and private sectors, and from 2011-2021 he was Director of the programme “Public Sector: Economics, Finance, Management” for the Independent Analytical Center “Expert-Grup”. He has produced several scientific articles and multiple research/analyses on various economic topics.



### *Andrei Chistol (Republica Moldova)*

Andrei Chistor is State Secretary in the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Moldova. He previously held the position of Secretary of State in the Ministry of Culture from 2014 to 2017, then from 2017 to 2020 - in the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research. He was also an advisor in the office of the Minister of Education, Culture and Research from September to December 2019, and from June to October 2021 he was head of the Tourism Promotion Department at the Investment Agency. He is a career civil servant, mostly responsible for policy development, monitoring, administration; coordinating the field of national minorities and European integration (Association Agreement, sectoral projects) in the field of culture. Andrei Chistol holds a bachelor's and a master's degree in International Relations.

### *Irina Cios (Romania)*

Irina Cios a cultural manager, curator, art writer and lecturer based in Bucharest. She is the director of the Administration of the National Cultural Fund since November 2014, the main public funder of cultural projects in Romania. Previously, she managed for over 15 years the International Center for Contemporary Arts, Bucharest, and was involved in several European cultural networks. She is a member of the International Art Critics Association – AICA (president of the Romanian section 2006 – 2012), and she contributes with studies, interviews, essays in art magazines, catalogues, art publications in Romania and internationally.

### *Rusanda Curcă (Republica Moldova)*

Rusanda Curcă is a cultural, environmental and civic activist based in Hîrtop village, Republic of Moldova. She is the co-founder of the Centre for Cultural Projects Arta Azi and the directrice of the Coalition of the Independent Cultural Sector from the Republic of Moldova, an umbrella organisation that unites the representatives of the independent cultural scene in order to consolidate it and which aims to improve the legislation in the field of culture through advocacy activities.

### *Raluca Iacob (Romania)*

Raluca Iacob is a cultural manager and public policy analyst with 15 years of experience working with NGOs, local and central government institutions and authorities at national and international level. She is interested in the dynamics of cultural ecosystems, in supporting participatory and data-driven governance and in adopting audience-friendly management and curatorial practices. She has contributed to advocacy for public culture, coordinated a number of projects that developed collaboration between cultural operators and schools, worked on several public and institutional strategies, and conducted independent analysis and research through the MetruCub Association, which she co-founded in 2012, as well as independently. Since July 2022 she is a member of the Coordination Council of the Timisoara City Project Centre, as an expert in monitoring and evaluating the results and impact of projects and funding programmes, the priority of her work at the moment being the “Timisoara 2023- European Capital of Culture” Programme.



### *Tamara Janashia (Georgia)*

Tamara Janashia is the founder and director of the Tbilisi, Georgia based non for-profit organisation Culture and Management Lab (CML), which is active in the realm of arts, cultural exchange and works on the issues of cultural policy and strategic development of creative industries in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. In parallel to running CML she currently also serves as a coordinator of the Tbilisi Architecture Biennial which she joined as a team member in 2020. She has a long-term diverse experience of management of cultural projects and consulting in Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia as well as Central Asian countries and Europe. Since 2021 she works as a consultant of the professional development program for cultural managers in Kyrgyzstan. In 2018-2019 Ms. Janashia coordinated a capacity building program for the cultural managers from the five Central Asian countries for the Goethe Institute Uzbekistan. In 2012-2017 CML served as a General Administrator of the Regional Art and Culture Program for the South Caucasus for the Swiss Cooperation Office. Ms. Janashia completed her MBA studies at the University of Maine, Orono (2005-2007) and holds a BA from the Tbilisi State University in the field of classical philology (Old Greek and Latin languages).

### *Marijana Jurcevic (Croatia)*

Marijana Jurcevic works as a Support Programme Senior Associate in Kultura Nova Foundation. She holds an MA in Russian Language and Literature and Art History from the University of Zagreb (Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences). Over the past few years, she worked independently on several EU projects in culture. In 2016-2017 she worked in the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency – Creative Europe Unit as part of a traineeship programme.

### *Levan Kharatishvili (Georgia)*

Levan Kharatishvili is an internationally renowned expert in cultural policies and creative industries strategies, CEO & Founder, Creative Strategies Lab. He has conducted evaluations, cultural policy reviews, projects and trainings, has given speeches and advised governments or cultural operators in more than 15 countries around the world. Levan worked at the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia in 2013-2021 as a Deputy Minister and was responsible for Culture and Creative Industries, Strategy Development and International Relations. His name is associated with elaboration and adoption of the first culture strategy document – Culture Strategy 2025 and its action plans. He was Chair of the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape of the Council of Europe as well as Vice-Chair of the Governing Board at the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. He is working as a cultural and creative sectors expert at the EU-Eastern Partnership Culture and Creativity Programme, advising governments, cultural operators and other stakeholders from Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Belarus.



### *Marcela Nistor (Republica Moldova)*

Marcela Nistor is a member of the Moldovan parliamentary committee for culture, she worked on the promotion of the cash rebate law, the introduction of the notion of house of culture in the law on culture and the cultural voucher programme. The cultural voucher is a “non-refundable digital ticket” worth 1,000 lei, with which holders can go to concerts, theatre performances or the cinema and buy books, until the amount is used up, within a year. It is designed to make it easier for young people to access cultural products, as all young people who have reached the age of 18 can benefit from the voucher.

### *Tatiana Poshevalova (Belarus)*

Tatiana Poshevalova is a programme manager of the International NGO EuroBelarus (Lithuania), consultant, trainer, expert in the field of fundraising, project drafting and management in the non-profit sector. Tatiana Poshevalova has over 25 years’ general professional experience, and over 16 years’ experience in senior management and expert positions (international projects financed by EU, Sida). Since June 2021 she is working as an organisational development officer in the Belarusian Council for Culture.

### *Veaceslav Reabcinschi (Republica Moldova)*

Veaceslav Reabcinschi is director of the Centre for Cultural Policies, PhD in sociology, university lecturer and trainer. He is the author of more than 30 research articles in the field of cultural policies, published in journals in Moldova and abroad. Areas of interest in scientific activity - cultural policies, arts management, strategic planning for cultural organisations. Author and co-author of 4 books. Worked in the field of culture for about 30 years. In 1994-1997 he was director of the “Luceafărul” Theatre in Chisinau, in 1998-2001 - director of the “Eugene Ionesco” Theatre, since 2002 - director of the Centre for Cultural Policies, since 2014 - university lecturer at the Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts. Among the important events he has coordinated are the International Festival of Performing Arts Biennial of the Eugene Ionesco Theatre, “Eugene Ionesco” (1997 and 1999 editions), the Festival “Under the Hat of Guguță” (1998 and 2000 editions), international projects - scientific-practical conference “Innovative Cultural Policies for the Republic of Moldova” (2019), cultural animation projects “ZOOM on houses of culture” (2016).

### *Vladimir Us (Republic of Moldova)*

Vladimir Us is an artist and curator based in Chișinău, Moldova, founding member of Oberliht Young Artists Association and the Coalition of Independent Cultural Sector of the Republic of Moldova . He studied art, curating, cultural management, and cultural policy in Chișinău, Grenoble and Belgrade. His cultural activism work is focused on the development of the public spaces as part of democratic infrastructure of the city, but also on the development of the art education curricula through in the production of the new art practices and theoretical modules, as well as on building a resilient independent culture scene in Moldova and in the region.



## SUMMARY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

# **of the participants of the International Workshop “Rethinking the institutional design of project-based public funding for culture in the Eastern Neighbourhood Region” to the working group for the elaboration of the Law on the Fund for Culture of the Republic of Moldova**

Prepared by **Veaceslav Reabcinschi**

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In order to discuss the experience of the functioning of different models of Cultural Fund institutions and to elaborate recommendations for the working group from the Republic of Moldova, the International Workshop “Rethinking the institutional design of project-based public funding for culture in the Eastern Neighbourhood Region” took place from 30/11 to 02/12/2022 in Chisinau. International and local experts in cultural policies, managers of Cultural Funds, as well as representatives of the cultural sector in Moldova participated in the framework of the Laboratory.

During three panel discussions, moderated by Raluca Iacob (Romania) and Veaceslav Reabcinschii (Moldova), the following topics were discussed: *Strategic perspectives, values, principles and motivations of cultural funds* (participants: Andrei Chistol, Secretary of State, Ministry of Culture, Republic of Moldova; Marcela Nistor, Member of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Member of the Parliamentary Committee for Culture; Levan Kharatishvili, CEO and founder of Creative Strategies Lab (Georgia)), *Evaluation and selection practices of projects submitted to Cultural Funds* (Participants: Tatiana Poshevalova, Programme Manager of the international NGO EuroBelarus (Lithuania), Beehive project in Belarus; Tamara Janashia, Founder and Director of Culture and Management Lab (Georgia); Marijana Jurcevic, Senior Program Support Associate at Kultura Nova Foundation (Croatia)) and *Principles of Culture Fund Administration* (Participants: Budianschi Dumitru, Minister of Finance, Republic of Moldova; Margus Allikmaa, Director of the Estonian Cultural Fund (Estonia); Irina Cios, Director of the Administration of the National Cultural Fund (Romania)).

The discussions on the issues addressed included the participation of 22 persons, of which: by work function: 1 Member of the Parliament (MP), 1 former MP, 6 managers of cultural institutions, 5 scientific researchers, 2 former officials of central state institutions, 7 others; by type of organisation: 9 representatives of central and local cultural institutions, 13 representatives of the non-governmental sector; by territory: 14 persons from Chisinau and 8 from other regions of Moldova.

On the basis of the information presented, as well as the analysis of the local context, the participants workshop, organised in the framework of the of the Laboratory, formulated a **series of recommendations to be taken into account in the process of elaborating the model of activity for the Culture Fund in the Republic of Moldova:**

1. The mission of the Culture Fund is the harmonious development of the cultural field in the Republic of Moldova, by increasing the role of the non-governmental sector and making the state sector’s activity more efficient, encouraging creators, artists and professionals in the field by supporting cultural projects. The Culture Fund must ensure stable funding for cultural activity in the country by coupling governmental resources with private and international ones.
2. In order to ensure a proper functioning of the CF, a regulation is needed, complemented by an operational manual (drawn up at the initiative of the Board Committee and approved by the Government) and a regulation for the selection of CF beneficiaries and the reimbursement of eligible costs, approved by the Board Committee. Such a regulation will clarify the support of:



- national and international mobility and training grants (for individuals), with a focus on emerging artists and cultural workers at the beginning of their professional careers;
- support for organisational development costs in project proposals for non-governmental/non-commercial organisations, having as eligible costs, beyond project implementation costs, salary payments, the rental of premises, utilities, equipment and furniture, among others;
- support for cultural activities which are not included in the list of those supported by the State for public institutional projects.

3. The Culture Fund in its activity and operations will be based on the following principles:

- Working based on the “at-arm’s length principle”: this involves ensuring a clear separation of responsibilities between different levels of management so that decisions on project funding are taken objectively and in the general interest with broad professional and societal participation. This principle can help prevent corruption and favouritism in the funding process;
- Transparency: work based on a transparent process for managing finances and decisions so that they are easily understood by beneficiaries and the public;
- Participation: participation of culture in solving social problems and participation of society in supporting cultural activities;
- Equity and inclusion: ensuring equal access to funds for all social groups, promoting cultural diversity, and supporting disadvantaged areas and social groups facing financial obstacles;
- Competitiveness: encouraging organisations and artists to develop cultural skills, supporting innovation and the creation of quality cultural products, encouraging transparency and accountability in the funding process;
- Evaluation and monitoring: assessing the social and cultural impact of funded events and projects and monitoring the correct use of funds.

4. The main destinations of the cultural fund vary depending on the country’s cultural policies. These destinations are clearly defined by the administration of the cultural fund to ensure that resources are used efficiently and effectively. Some of the destinations of the Fund for the Republic of Moldova may include:

- financial support in the form of grants to public and civic legal entities as well as individuals;
- support for projects and programmes in all fields of culture and the arts according to the annual priorities set by the Board Committee;



- support for study, training, research and cultural mobility activities;
- supporting the development of the production and organisational capacities of the beneficiaries of funding programmes.

5. Ineligible activities:

- Loan provision or retroactive funding;
- religious or political activities;
- projects for which there are separate public funding programmes.

6. Beneficiaries of the Culture Fund can be organisations and projects that aim to improve the cultural and artistic life of communities or society as a whole, including:

- Non-governmental organisations, which need funding to carry out cultural events and ensure sustainability in their activities;
- Artists and cultural creators, who need support to develop and promote their work;
- Cultural institutions, which need require support to fulfil their mission and provide public access to works of art and cultural heritage;
- Local communities, who need support to promote and develop cultural and artistic activities in the community.

The Culture Fund carries out training programmes for members of the cultural community, alongside analysis and research on the cultural situation.

7. The projects submitted to the competition should be judged by a board of competent expert evaluators with a minimum of three-to-five years' experience in cultural project management, who will be remunerated for their work. The experts would be selected through a competition and entered into a database that would expand over time to include experts from different fields. The experts in the database would receive regular training and periodic evaluations.

Projects would be evaluated on the basis of regulations with clear scoring criteria (which would assess different aspects of the project, not just its artistic value), minimising the risk of subjective decisions. The experts would also have the role of explaining and commenting on the scores awarded. In the case of unjustified scores, it should be possible to lodge an appeal, which would be examined under the terms laid down in the Regulation.

8. The evaluation and selection committees will be appointed by the Board Committee on an ad hoc basis, depending on the topic of the projects and will be comprised of experts, culturologists, and



analysts - persons with extensive experience in the field of arts and culture.

Applications for grants from the Culture Fund will be examined and selected by evaluation and selection committees, set up in accordance with the Regulations of the CF and according to the criteria established by the Board Committee and communicated to the public.

The list of selected applications, accompanied by the evaluation sheet for each application, shall be approved by the Board Committee and forwarded to the Executive Director for signature of the grant contract.

The list of applications selected by the committees and the amount dispensed through the contracted grants shall be made public.

9. The Fund's own income consists of:

- a) annual allocations from the state budget, the amount of which shall not be less than 0.05% of the approved GDP;
- b) funds obtained within the framework of international cooperation;
- c) donations, sponsorships and legacies from individuals and legal entities in the country and abroad;
- d) other revenue not contrary to legislation.

Grants from the state budget are part of the Fund's income and are not returned at the end of the financial year if not spent.

10. The Fund shall be governed by the Board Committee, as a deliberative body, which shall determine the annual strategy and priorities, and by an Executive Director, chosen through competition by a committee appointed by the Board Committee and the Government, who shall ensure the operational management of the Fund.

The Board Committee shall decide annually on:

- a) funding priorities;
- b) the budget;
- c) the distribution of the budget according to the priorities set;
- d) funding and co-financing limits, depending on the budgetary resources available;
- e) the number of competition sessions and their timing.



f) the structure of the evaluation and selection panels by area and their nominal composition, based on open competitions.

11. The Board Committee shall consist of seven members:

- Three of the members of the Board Committee shall be proposed by the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Finance and the Government of the Republic of Moldova.;
- Four persons shall be appointed by the Government on the basis of proposals from the non-governmental sector supported by the largest number of organisations.

The nominal composition of the Board Committee shall be approved by the Government.





# cultural relations PLATFORM

The [Cultural Relations Platform](#) is project funded by the Partnership Instrument (Service for Foreign Policy Instruments, European Commission) launched in April 2020 to support the European Union to engage in international cultural relations within the framework of the [EU strategy for international cultural relations](#).

The CRP follows up on the previous [Cultural Diplomacy Platform](#), CDP (2016-2020). It provides a renewed approach based on a set of shared principles and new activities, aiming to promote and facilitate sustainable cultural exchanges, people-to-people activities, and co-creation processes between Europeans and citizens from countries all over the world.

