



The voice of blind and partially sighted people in Europe

Creative Europe (2021-2027) Including people with visual impairment

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The European Commission's recent first calls for proposals under the Creative Europe Programme for 2021-2027 shows some very positive developments for persons with a visual impairment.

The call for proposals 'Films on the Move' underlines that the MEDIA strand shall provide support namely for encouraging the use of subtitling, dubbing and where applicable, audio description tools. It further indicates that "special attention will be given to applications presenting adequate strategies to ensure gender balance, inclusion, diversity and representativeness". This counts for up to 5 of 45 points in the award criteria for relevance. By comparison, similar calls under the previous period of the Programme did not mention inclusion in the award criteria.

"It is a concrete and encouraging result of our campaigning for MEDIA funding to the film industry to promote equal access to culture for persons with visual disabilities", EBU President Rodolfo Cattani declared. "It remains to be seen to what extent audio description and audio subtitling will effectively benefit from Creative Europe."

A similar approach is taken in the calls for proposals 'Tv and online content' and 'Audience Development and Film education', albeit without explicit mention of audio description. Also noteworthy is the call for proposals 'Networks of European Cinemas' which, among expected results, includes adjusting the business practices of European cinema theatres in terms of inclusion.

Background information

In our [press release](#) of 16 December, we had already welcomed the political agreement on the new Creative Europe programme

(2021-2027) – eventually adopted on 19 May – which now says that the programme’s objectives shall be pursued in a way that encourages inclusion, equality, diversity and participation and, where appropriate, through specific incentives that ensure access to culture and creative sectors for groups at risk of social exclusion and marginalisation, namely people with disabilities, and encourage their active participation in those sectors.

In our [position paper](#) of September 2020, we made the case for Creative Europe/MEDIA funding to the film industry to address inclusion of persons with visual disabilities through audio description and audio subtitling, and made recommendations to the European Commission.

Ends

The European Blind Union (EBU) is a non-governmental, non-profit making European organisation founded in 1984. It is one of the six regional bodies of the World Blind Union, and it promotes the interests of blind and partially sighted people in Europe. It currently operates within a network of 41 national members including organisations from 25 European Union member states, candidate countries and other countries in geographical Europe.

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