

CREACT MED

CREATIVE MEDITERRANEAN

Funding opportunity

CALL FOR CULTURAL AND CREATIVE BUSINESS PROPOSALS

Guidelines for applicants

GRANT AGREEMENT: ENI/2019/412-505

Date: 19 July 2022

Author: Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association

Dissemination: Public



Funded by the
European Union
(90%, 2020-2024)

Co-Funded by the European Union
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Coordinated by the
Euro-Mediterranean
Economists Association

Do you have a start-up or small business active in the cultural and creative industries (CCI) in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine or Tunisia? Are you looking to expand your business, launch new products or services, or introduce innovation into your operations?

CREACT4MED is an EU-funded project which aims to strengthen businesses within the CCI, and is offering sub-grants to finance the implementation of CCI business proposals in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia.

Start-ups and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) are now invited to submit an application for a CREAT4MED sub-grant to finance their business proposal. Applicants must be an entity active in the cultural and creative industries and established in one of the target countries.

The call will close on **24th August 2022 at 18:00** (CEST).

These guidelines detail the context and scope of CREAT4MED, the objectives and priorities of the sub-granting activity, eligibility and evaluation criteria for applicants, and how to apply.

Index

About CREAT4MED	3
Objectives of this call	4
Financial allocation.....	5
Eligibility criteria.....	5
What's in it for entrepreneurs	12
Application process	12
Evaluation and selection process.....	13
Obligations of the beneficiary	17

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About CREAT4MED

CREACT4MED is an EU-funded project which aims to strengthen businesses within the cultural and creative industries (CCI). It seeks to support entrepreneurs, start-ups and MSMEs, create jobs, and foster sustainable economic growth in the Southern Mediterranean, with a particular focus on young people and women.

- **Project full name:** CReative Entrepreneurs ACTing FOR the future MEDiterranean
- **Grant agreement number:** ENI/2019/412-505
- **Project website:** creativemediterranean.org

CREACT4MED mission and goals:

- Boost CCI businesses and entrepreneurship in the Southern Mediterranean, increasing the capacity of CCI to attract investment, create jobs and foster inclusive economic growth.
- Empower current and potential entrepreneurs, in particular young people and women, to start or grow CCI businesses through tailored training and financing opportunities.
- Establish a regional CCI hub to bring together actors from North Africa, the Middle East and Europe, strengthening networking, exchanges and cooperation in the sector across the Mediterranean.

CREACT4MED is led by the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA). Partners and Associates include the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed), the Union of Mediterranean Confederations of Enterprises (BUSINESSMED), the Institute of Entrepreneurship Development (iED), Redstart Tunisia, Beyond Group, LUMSA University, the Federation of Mediterranean Businesswomen Associations (AFAEMME), Positive Agenda Advisory and MED Confederation.

The four main pillars of the project activities are:

- 1) **Mapping** of the CCI ecosystem in target countries
- 2) **Training** of aspiring CCI entrepreneurs, particularly young people and women
- 3) **Sub-granting** of Business Support Organisations (BSOs) and Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs)
- 4) **Advocacy and Engagement** to raise awareness of the importance, value creation and social impact of the CCI

Under the sub-granting pillar, one business incubator each in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Palestine has been selected to receive funding to implement incubation and acceleration services.

The present call now invites proposals from entrepreneurs and MSMEs in these countries to receive funding to launch or expand CCI businesses and market their goods, products and services. A maximum total of €360,000 will be awarded in sub-grants to MSMEs in the 6 countries. In addition to the funding, sub-grant beneficiaries will also benefit from the acceleration and incubation services implemented by CREAT4MED incubators.

Objectives of this call

The overall objective of the CREAT4MED funding scheme is to help selected MSMEs active in the CCI to overcome barriers to business development and market access, harness innovation, technology and creativity to improve business operations, and to increase their capacity to create jobs for young people and women.

The specific objectives of this call are:

1. To facilitate the development, launch and promotion of innovative business ideas in the CCI and improve access to local and international markets through the provision of funding and technical assistance services.
2. To foster social inclusion and create job opportunities, particularly for women and young people, in the provision or preservation of cultural and creative goods, products or services.
3. Create a hub to support young people and women involved in CCI entrepreneurship within the target countries, bringing together incubation, support, education, finance and other actors.

The call will support start-ups and MSMEs from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia to develop, create, produce, expand, disseminate or preserve cultural, artistic or creative goods and services with high potential to generate innovation and jobs, in particular for young people and women. The expected maximum duration of funded projects is 8 months.

Support will be given to:

- Launch of a new product/service: seed funding given to recently established enterprises/organisations willing to kick-start their services.
- Expand a product/service: early-stage funding given to already existing enterprises/organisations willing to expand their services/operation.

Proposed actions should fall into one of these priorities:

- **Innovation/digitalisation**: businesses aiming to develop, certify or test new cultural and creative products/technologies, strengthen their IPR, improve their skills or acquire ICT solutions to stimulate the growth of their business and improve their competitiveness and market access.
- **Social inclusion & job creation**: businesses and social enterprises aiming to develop sustainable products/services with a high impact in terms of social inclusion and job creation for young people, women and minorities, aiming to maximise social wellbeing with activities based on cultural values or other artistic individual or collective creative expressions.
- **Internationalisation**: businesses active in the CCI aiming to deploy their products/services in foreign markets, increase their export capacity and/or create international business connections/partnerships.

With these interventions, the CREAT4MED sub-granting scheme is expected to result in:

- Improved production, competitiveness, access to markets, business sustainability and growth prospects for at least 24 cultural and creative goods/products/services in six Southern Mediterranean countries (R1);
- Increased job opportunities, share of young people and women in managerial positions in cultural and creative MSMEs, and contribution of cultural and creative expressions to social cohesion and wellbeing in the Southern Mediterranean (R2);
- Creation and consolidation of the CCI entrepreneurship support hubs in the Southern Mediterranean (R3).

Financial allocation

The overall budget available under this call is €360,000. The sub-grants will take the form of unit costs, and the maximum budget per action is €15,000. It is expected that 4 companies in each country will be awarded a sub-grant.

CREACT4MED reserves the right not to award all available funds. If the allocation per country cannot be respected due to insufficient quality or number of proposals received, the sub-grant Managing Committee reserves the right to reallocate the remaining funds to other countries.

The sub-grant is broken down into unit costs to cover expenses directly linked to the project expected outputs.

Eligibility criteria

Eligibility criteria for this call for proposals is divided into three aspects:

- Eligibility of the applicant
- Eligibility of the activities proposed
- Eligibility of costs

1. Eligibility of the applicant

In order to be eligible for funding under this call applicants must:

- Be a legal entity registered in the commercial registry of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine or Tunisia after 2012.
- Be a micro, small or medium-sized enterprise according to the definition in the country of registration¹
- Be active in the cultural and creative industries
- Be registered to the CREAT4MED Community Platform²

¹ Applicable definitions:

- Egypt: company with less than 200 employees and a turnover lower than EGP 200 million
- Jordan: company with less than 200 employees
- Lebanon: company with less than 100 employees and a turnover lower LBP 25 billion
- Morocco: company with a turnover lower than MAD 175 million
- Palestine: company with less than 250 employees* (OECD definition)
- Tunisia: company with less than 250 employees

² A guide to sign-up to the platform is available at <https://creativemediterranean.org> under Active Calls

- Be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the action, not acting as an intermediary

Being a legal entity is a mandatory requirement in order to sign the Sub-grant Agreement (SGA) and transfer any grants. In order to facilitate the application to the present call, submitting registration documents is not mandatory at the time of submission of the application, but it is highly recommended. Applicants that do not submit their registration document are required in the Application Form to declare their commitment to register the company within 30 days of being awarded the sub-grant. The award will be cancelled if these documents are not provided within the established period.

Applicants may not submit more than one application under this call. In case of receiving more than one proposal from the same applicant, only the last application received before the deadline will be considered for evaluation.

If you have had public sector support, you should have been notified in writing of any *de minimis* element when the aid was awarded. *De minimis* aid is small amounts of State Aid given to an enterprise/organization. These are exempted from state aid control as they are deemed to have no impact on competition and trade. This aid cannot exceed €200,000 over three fiscal years and it can come from any State body, agency or department.³

You are required in the application process to declare any such aid previously provided by a public body to your company or any company that you are linked to in order to assess your eligibility to receive assistance. Please note that having received previous aid under the *de minimis* regulation does not automatically disqualify you from receiving further *de minimis* aid from the CREAT4EMED project.

Applicants are informed that, should they be in one of the situations of early detection or exclusion according to article 136 of the Financial Regulation⁴, personal details (name, given name if natural person, address, legal form and name and given name of the persons with powers of representation, decision-making or control, if legal person) may be registered in the early detection and exclusion system, and communicated to the persons and entities concerned in relation to the award or the execution of a grant contract. In the declaration included in the application documents, the applicant must declare not to be in any of these situations.

2. Eligibility of the activities proposed

In order to be eligible for funding, activities proposed must:

Duration:

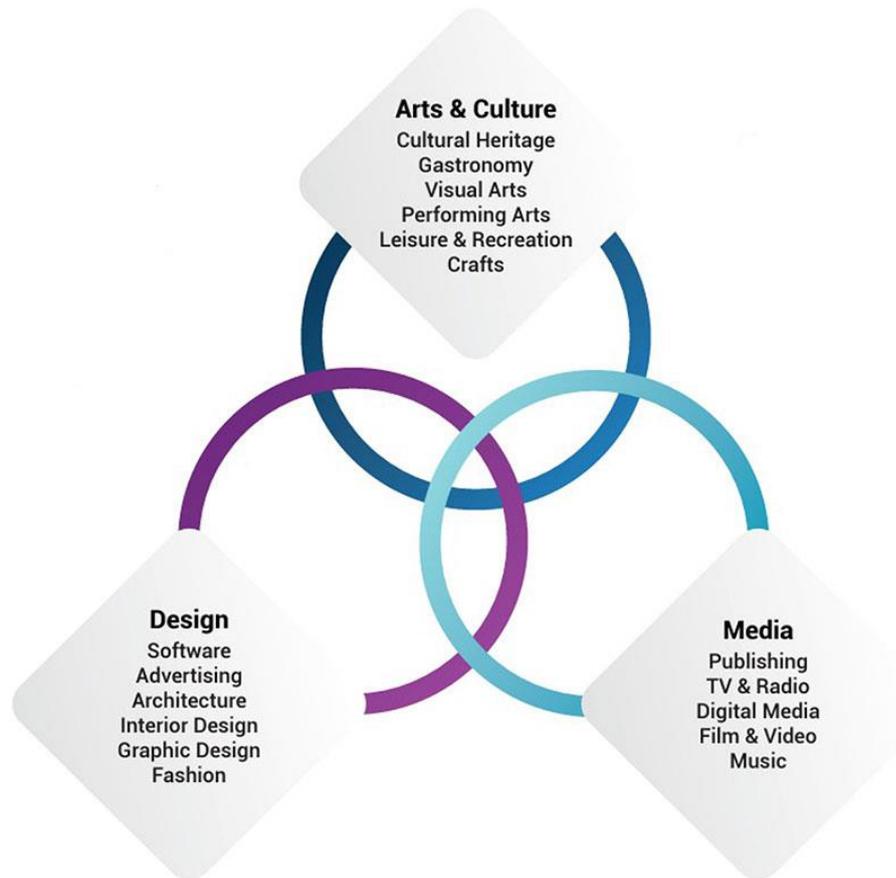
- Have an initial planned duration of 8 or less months.

³ More information about the regulation is available at https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM%3A0802_2

⁴ Financial regulation applicable to the general budget of the Union is available at <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/e9488da5-d66f-11e8-9424-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-86606884>

Sectors:

- Focus on one or more of the following sectors:

**Themes:**

- Focus on the development, testing, production or reproduction, promotion, distribution or marketing of goods, services and activities with content derived from cultural, artistic or heritage origins.
- Address the call's objectives and priorities specified in section 1 and the action's eligibility criteria.
- Have potential for innovation and/or job creation.

Location:

- Take place in one or more of the target countries: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia.
- Specific activities can also be implemented in other Southern Mediterranean or European countries if they fit with the scope of the action.

Type of actions:

This call will fund the following actions:

1. Innovation and digitalisation:
 - a. Development, testing, certification or launch of new products/services/technologies
 - b. Development or acquisition of ICT solutions (hardware, software, web services) to further business goals
 - c. Development and deployment of strategies to protect intellectual property rights
 - d. Development or improvement of ICT skills and competences of entrepreneurs or staff
2. Social inclusion and job creation
 - a. Development, testing, certification or launch of business ideas with a high impact in terms of social inclusion and job creation for young people and women
 - b. Development or acquisition of equipment, raw materials or supply chain solutions to facilitate the production, reproduction, preservation, promotion, distribution or marketing of goods and services based on cultural values or other artistic individual or collective creative expressions.
 - c. Development and deployment of strategies to improve the businesses' ability to generate sustainable revenue
 - d. Development or improvement of skills and competences of social entrepreneurs and staff
3. Internationalisation
 - a. Development and deployment of internationalisation strategies to enter foreign markets
 - b. Validation of innovative products or services to be launched in foreign markets (technical support, prototyping, regulatory support, usability validation, scale-up, etc.)
 - c. Establishment of international business connections/partnerships

Furthermore, **actions should:**

- Be relevant to the local context
- Comply with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of the EU financing (see the [Communication and Visibility Requirements for EU External Actions](#)).
- Be designed according to a mainstream approach towards cross-cutting issues (youth, gender equality, rights of persons with disabilities, environmental sustainability, cultural respect and understanding, equal opportunity employment)
- Take into account lessons learned and sustainability/scale-up potential
- Include risks assessment and related mitigation measures
- Include monitoring and evaluation tools to measure the proposed impact of the action.

The following types of action are **ineligible:**

1. Actions which have already been completed
2. Actions commenced prior to the award of the sub-grant
3. Actions already financed by other EU programmes
4. Actions considered only or mainly as the purchase of big infrastructure and equipment
5. Actions discriminating individuals or groups on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, disability, marital status or sexual orientation

3. Eligibility of costs

The sub-grant shall take the form of unit costs and shall be output-based. Therefore, costs must be directly linked to the milestones, activities and outputs of the proposal outline and be necessary for their achievement. Where possible and appropriate, unit costs and flat rates shall be determined in such a way to allow their payment upon achievement of concrete outputs and/or results. A justification must be provided for each of the costs claimed under the project, and an explanation of how these costs have been estimated must be provided in the proposal outline.

Sub-grant costs will be calculated in euro. Conversion from other currencies shall be made using the monthly official accounting exchange rate of the European Commission for the month of application to this call.⁵

This grant will contribute to the payment of the following cost categories:

Human Resources	<p>The project will contribute to the payment of staff costs of the beneficiary's legally employed personnel dedicated to implementing the project. Applicants are required to indicate the real daily costs of personnel that will be dedicated to the project up to a maximum of:</p> <p>Egypt €30 x day of work Jordan €65 x day of work Lebanon €60 x day of work Morocco €50 x day of work Palestine €55 x day of work Tunisia €40 x day of work</p> <p>In their application, applicants must indicate the real average daily cost of personnel that will be involved in the action (to be validated prior to Sub-grant Agreement signature with the employment contract and payslips). If these values are above the maximum daily contribution, the rates indicated above will be applied. The estimated number of days that will be dedicated to the preparation, implementation and achievement of each project output must be specified in the proposal outline. Actual time dedicated for each output will be assessed through the submission and review of project outputs and monthly timesheets providing detailed explanations of the tasks carried out each day for which costs have been declared.</p>
Equipment and raw materials	<p>The project will contribute to the purchase of equipment and/or raw materials <u>necessary to achieve the specific project outputs</u>. The maximum contribution for this type of costs will be €2,500. Requests exceeding the maximum contribution will not be accepted. The final amount to be paid will correspond to the real cost of the equipment and raw materials acquired up to the maximum cost of €2,500. Applicants are invited to request a contribution below these amounts in their proposals based on the real estimated cost. Payments will be subject to the submission of documented proof of the purchase and its use to attain the project outputs (i.e. invoice, proof of payment, pictures, reports, etc).</p>

⁵ InforEuro Currency Converter is available at https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/procedures-guidelines-tenders/information-contractors-and-beneficiaries/exchange-rate-infoureuro_en

	<p>Selected beneficiaries will be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present at least 3 official quotes and a justification of the selection of the provider to the CREAT4MED Technical Assistance team before proceeding to the purchase of any equipment or raw materials - Present the proofs of purchase and pictures of the equipment or raw materials purchased - Keep all the documents related to the purchase (e.g. quote, contract with the supplier, invoice, proof of payment, reports) for 5 years after the end of the project and to send it to the project's coordinator upon request. <p>Proposals considering the purchase of big infrastructure and equipment as the main objective will be rejected. Requests for equipment and raw materials not considered necessary for the achievement of project outputs will be rejected.</p>
<p>Training and consulting services</p>	<p>The project will contribute to the purchase of training and consulting services <u>necessary to achieve the specific project outputs</u>. The maximum contribution for this type of costs will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Training</u>: €500 per employee and course or €2,500 as global price for several employees - <u>Consulting services</u>: €2,000. The services must result in consulting reports describing the status of the company/a problem the sub-grant beneficiary is facing, an examination of the status/problem from the consultant's perspective and recommendations and/or solutions to the project. <p>Requests exceeding the maximum contribution will not be accepted. The final amount to be paid will correspond to the real cost of the training/consultancy service received up to the maximum cost of €2,500 and €2,000 respectively. Applicants are invited to request a contribution below these amounts in their proposals based on the real estimated cost. As with the previous cost category, selected beneficiaries will be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present at least 3 official quotes and a justification of the selection of the provider to the CREAT4MED Technical Assistance team before proceeding to the enrollment in the training or the selection of the consulting services provider - Present proof of participation to the training and/or the consultancy services received (e.g. enrollment confirmation, certificate of participation, consulting report, invoices, pictures, etc) - Keep all the documents related to the service (e.g. quote, contract with the supplier, invoice, proof of payment, reports) for 5 years after the end of the project and to send it to the project's coordinator upon request. <p>Requests for training and consultancy services not considered necessary for the achievement of project outputs will be rejected.</p>
<p>Other direct costs</p>	<p>Further direct costs limited to a maximum overall amount of €2,500 may be claimed for other products and external services <u>necessary for the achievement of the project outputs</u>. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Venue rental & technical services (up to €1,500 per day)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Product certifications (up to €1,000) - Patent application (up to €1,500 excluding lawyer costs) - Marketing and advertising costs (up to €1,500) <p>Requests exceeding the maximum contributions will not be accepted. The final amount to be paid will correspond to the real cost of the products/services acquired up to the maximum cost of €2,500. Applicants are invited to request a contribution below the maximum amounts in their proposals based on the real estimated costs. As in the previous cases, selected beneficiaries will be requested to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present at least 3 official quotes (when possible) and provide a justification of the need of the product/service and the selection of the provider to the CREAT4MED Technical Assistance team before proceeding to the acquisition of the product/service. - Keep all the documents related to the purchase (e.g. quote, contract with the supplier, invoice, proof of payment, reports) for 5 years after the end of the project and to send it to the project's coordinator upon request. <p>Requests for other direct costs not considered necessary for the achievement of project outputs will be rejected.</p>																																																								
Travel	<p>The project will cover national and international travelling necessary for the achievement of project outputs up to the following amounts:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="501 1059 1348 1626"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Transport/flights</th> <th colspan="2">Daily allowance</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Distance band (in km)</th> <th>Return trip (in EUR)</th> <th>Country</th> <th>Daily per-diem</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>400-600 km</td> <td>€196</td> <td>Egypt</td> <td>€266</td> </tr> <tr> <td>601-800 km</td> <td>€209</td> <td>Jordan</td> <td>€289</td> </tr> <tr> <td>801-1,200 km</td> <td>€221</td> <td>Lebanon</td> <td>€260</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1,201-1,600 km</td> <td>€230</td> <td>Morocco</td> <td>€203</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1,601-2,000 km</td> <td>€295</td> <td>Palestine</td> <td>€148</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2,001-2,500 km</td> <td>€343</td> <td>Tunisia</td> <td>€141</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2,501-3,500 km</td> <td>€433</td> <td>EU countries</td> <td>€180</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3,501-4,500 km</td> <td>€527</td> <td>United States</td> <td>€343</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4,501-6,000 km</td> <td>€637</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>6,001-7,500 km</td> <td>€720</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>7,501-10,000 km</td> <td>€961</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>10,001-Max</td> <td>€1,101</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>List of applicable per diems is available here.</p>	Transport/flights		Daily allowance		Distance band (in km)	Return trip (in EUR)	Country	Daily per-diem	400-600 km	€196	Egypt	€266	601-800 km	€209	Jordan	€289	801-1,200 km	€221	Lebanon	€260	1,201-1,600 km	€230	Morocco	€203	1,601-2,000 km	€295	Palestine	€148	2,001-2,500 km	€343	Tunisia	€141	2,501-3,500 km	€433	EU countries	€180	3,501-4,500 km	€527	United States	€343	4,501-6,000 km	€637			6,001-7,500 km	€720			7,501-10,000 km	€961			10,001-Max	€1,101		
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	<p>Proposals including travel costs must specify the travel origin and destination and the distance between them using the Erasmus+ Distance Calculator, as well as the number of travelers and the number of nights to be spent. Travel costs must be calculated according to the rates above. For example:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>Travel from Cairo to Barcelona (2,942.33km), 3 people, 3 nights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Flights: €433 * 3 people = €1,299 ○ Daily allowance: €266 * 3 people * 3 nights = €2,394 ○ Total = €3,693 </div> <p>The final decision for the amount of grant related to the travel will be made by the Sub-grant Managing Committee. Requests for travel costs not considered necessary for the achievement of project outputs will be rejected.</p>
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The Sub-grant Managing Committee will decide whether to accept the proposed amounts or rates on the basis of the provisional budget submitted by the applicants, by analysing factual data of similar actions or other projects carried out by the applicants. Final unit costs will be defined and approved following checks to be done preceding the signature of the Sub-grant Agreement in order to ensure that the costs correspond fairly to the actual costs incurred by the beneficiaries, are in line with their accounting practices, no profit is made and the costs are not already covered by other sources of funding. The checks may give rise to requests for clarification and may lead the contracting authority to impose modifications or reductions to address such mistakes or inaccuracies. **It is not possible to increase the sub-grant value as a result of these corrections.**

It is therefore in the applicants' interest to provide a **realistic and cost-effective budget**.

What's in it for entrepreneurs

Successful applicants to this call will benefit from:

- A sub-grant of up to €15,000 in order to implement their project proposal
- Technical Support Services to be implemented by [CREACT4MED incubators](#). Please read carefully the specific call for your country for more details about the services that will be offered.
- Networking opportunities offered through the Mediterranean CCI HUB
- Visibility through the project's website, events and other initiatives

In addition, sub-grant beneficiaries will be invited to travel to Barcelona for the final CREAT4MED project event in 2024.

Application process

Registration to the CREAT4MED Community Platform is mandatory in order to apply to this call. Please fill in the registration form before submitting your application.

Interested candidates are invited to apply to this call by submitting the following application documents using the models available at <https://creativemediterranean.org>:

- (1) Application Form and Proposal outline: word form to complete with information about the applicant and the proposal to be funded. Milestones, activities, outputs, sources of verification and the costs associated to each output must be specified in the Proposal outline.
- (2) Mandatory attachments:
 - a. Signed declaration of honor on exclusion criteria and selection criteria
 - b. *De minimis* self-declaration
 - c. Registration document (applicants unable to provide a registration document are requested in the Application Form to declare their commitment to register the company within 30 days of the award of the sub-grant).
- (3) Optional attachments:
 - a. Business Model Canvas **or** Pitch Deck
 - b. Certificate of participation to a training/capacity building program relevant to the implementation of the proposal
 - c. Collaboration agreement(s) with other stakeholders

Documents must be submitted in PDF format and signed by the legal representative (except optional attachments).

Interested candidates must submit the documents before **24th August 2022 at 18:00h** (CEST).

Applications must be sent to creact4med@euromed-economists.org using the provided models and indicating clearly the reference of the call⁶, the country and the full name of the applicant entity on the message title.

Applications may be submitted in English or French, but the ability to communicate in English is required in order to implement the funded projects. Further indications on how to fill in the application documents are available in the templates.

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 10 days before the deadline for submission of applications to creact4med@euromed-economists.org, indicating clearly the reference of the call for sub-grants. The project coordinator, the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association, has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, the project coordinator cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of applicants and the action. No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the evaluation procedure will be published on the website as the need arises. It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

Evaluation and selection process

Applications will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria:

⁶ C4M_MSME_EG (Egypt), C4M_MSME_JO (Jordan); C4M_MSME_LB (Lebanon); C4M_MSME_MA (Morocco); C4M_MSME_PS (Palestine); C4M_MSME_TN (Tunisia);

1 – Administrative check

An administrative check of all the proposals received will be performed by the Sub-grant Managing Committee to confirm that applications satisfy the eligibility criteria specified in these guidelines. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that sole basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The following criteria will be assessed in this first step:

- The applicant submitted all the application documents before the deadline
- The application satisfies all the eligibility criteria (eligibility of the applicant, eligibility of the activities proposed and eligibility of costs) specified in these guidelines. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application might be rejected on that sole basis and the application will not be evaluated further.
- The applicant company is registered to the CREAT4MED Community Platform

2 - Evaluation of the application

The applications that pass the opening and administrative checks will be further evaluated by an Evaluation Committee composed by representatives of the Sub-grant Managing Committee, the six incubators engaged as local partners and independent experts.

Evaluators will, independently from each other, carry out the assessment of the proposals in a consistent manner by applying the same methodology, interpretation and understanding of the objectives and criteria described in these guidelines.

The selection of candidates will be made in full compliance with the principles of transparency, proportionality, equal treatment and non-discrimination. Eligible proposals will be examined and evaluated according to the following criteria:

Applicant profile (20 points)

- Does the applicant have sufficient technical, financial, and managerial capacity to implement the proposed action? (Based on experience, number of employees, yearly profit) (3pts)
- Is the entity active in the CCI, and is its mission aligned with CREAT4MED goals? (3pts)
- Is the problem/need clearly identified, and does the product/service address it effectively? (4pts)
- Is the target market well-identified and specific? Is the product/service well-tailored to the target market? (4pts)
- Does the product/service have a viable revenue model? Are there any alternative revenue streams for the business? (4pts)
- Does the proposal demonstrate valuable, new and/or innovative solutions that go beyond the existing practice in the sector or in the concerned countries and can increase the applicant competitiveness and sustainability? (2pts)

Quality, relevance and feasibility of the proposal (40 points)

- Are the objectives of the intervention clearly stated, measurable, attainable and linked to one or more of the call priorities? Is the proposal structure likely to achieve these objectives? (5pts)

- Is the structure of the proposal outline (milestones, activities, timeframe, and outputs) consistent, concrete, and logical? Is the action plan clear and feasible and includes reliable monitoring tools and sources of verification that will allow for the assessment of project results? (12pts)
- Are the project outputs and indicators clear, relevant, and realistic? Are they achievable, and will they effectively measure the achievement of the objectives? (12pts)
- Are monitoring tools and sources of verification relevant for the assessment of project outputs and results? (4pts)
- Does the proposal include effective measures to ensure the sustainability of the goods/services beyond the grant and incubation? (4pts)
- Does the proposal consider relevant collaborations with other stakeholders? If the proposal falls into the internationalization priority, are cross-border collaborations foreseen under the intervention? (3pts)

Cost-effectiveness (30 points)

- Does the budget structure follow the rules of the call? Are the costs necessary, realistic for the local context and properly justified? (15 points)
- Is the budget consistent with the proposed work plan? Are costs properly distributed across activities/outputs? (8 points)
- Is there a high impact/budget ratio? (7 points)

Each criterion will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows:

- 5 = VERY GOOD: the proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.
- 4 = GOOD: the proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.
- 3 = ADEQUATE: the proposal addresses the criterion well, but several shortcomings are present.
- 2 = POOR: the proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.
- 1 = WEAK: the criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.

The corresponding weight will be applied to calculate the score of each applicant out of a maximum of 90 points. A maximum of 10 additional points will be awarded as bonus to proposals that:

A maximum of 10 additional points is awarded to proposals that:

- Show outstanding potential for job creation for young people or women (1 point)
- Are led by a woman (1 point)
- Are led by a young person (under 35) (1 point)
- Provide a certificate of participation to one or more of the following activities (maximum 3 points):
 - CREAT4MED Training Academy
 - The Creatives Hub Bootcamp pitch session
 - MINASSA's incubation program

- Other programs relevant to the implementation of the project proposal, provided applicants submit a certificate of attendance, a list of the contents of the program, and a justification of its relevance for the project
- Submit relevant and high-quality attachments with their application (up to 4 points):
 - Business model canvas (up to 2 points)
 - Pitch deck (up to 2 points)
 - Collaboration agreements (0.5 points each up to a maximum of 3 points)

After the evaluation, a table will be drawn up listing the applications ranked according to their score. The 10 proposals receiving the highest score per country will be invited to a local pitch competition to take place on the weeks of September 26-October 7, online. In addition, a reserve list will be drawn up and used in case any of the applicants selected for the local pitch competition withdraw their application.

3 - Local pitch competition

The 10 best proposals receiving the highest score per country on their application will be invited to pitch in a local pitch session that will take place virtually during the weeks of September 26-October 7. The invitation will be sent at least 1 week before the date of the pitch event.

During the session, pre-selected candidates will pitch their company in front of a jury composed of project partners, CREAT4MED incubators, finance actors and/or independent experts. Applicants will pitch their company for a maximum of 6 minutes, followed by 6 minutes of questions and answers with the jury.

Pitches will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Go to market (36 points)

- Does the company target a real market? Are the target groups clearly identified? (12 points)
- Is the solution proposed creative and does it present a competitive advantage against competitors? (12 points)
- Is the business model sufficiently elaborated and feasible? (12 points)

Use of the sub-grant (24 points)

- Did the company clearly present their current needs and how the grant will be used? (8 points)
- Are the resources requested appropriate for the attainment of the expected sub-grant outputs? (8 points)
- Is there a high impact/budget ratio? (8 points)

Impact of the support (16 points)

- Is the proposal likely to contribute to key CREAT4MED goals, in particular fostering innovation and employment generation through the CCI? (8 points)
- Is the company likely to benefit from the incubation and coaching services provided through the project? (8 points)

Pitch (24 points)

- Did the presenter(s) deliver a clear, engaging, concise and well-paced pitch? (12 points)
- Did the presenter(s) provide well-reasoned and overall satisfactory answers to questions from the jury? (12 points)

Each criterion will be scored by the members of the jury, adding up to a maximum score of 100 points.

The final score will result from the addition of the score received in the first stage of evaluation (Application and proposal outline, 40% weight) and the score received in the second stage (Pitch, 60% weight), applying the following formula:

$$\text{FINAL SCORE} = \frac{(\text{Application and proposal outline score} * 40) + (\text{Pitch score} * 60)}{100}$$

The 4 highest-scoring proposals per country will be included in a provisional list of projects selected for funding. CREAT4MED reserves the right not to award all available funds. If the allocation per country cannot be respected due to insufficient quality or number of proposals received, the Sub-grant Managing Committee reserves the right to reallocate the remaining funds to other countries.

4 - Notification of the results

Following a final assessment of the proposals eligibility and consistency and the clarification of any doubts that may have arisen during the evaluation process, applicants will be notified of the provisional results of the selection process no later than 10 days after the day of the pitch session.

Any requests for clarification or complaints against the selection process must be submitted by the concerned applicant to creact4med@euromed-economists.org within 5 calendar days after the announcement of the Call results. The email should indicate the name of the applicant, the contact person name and details, the object of the complaint and evidence of the alleged breach. Complaints will be examined by the Regional Selection Committee on the basis of the information provided, who will inform the applicant of the decision taken within the following 15 calendar days.

5 – Signature of the Sub-grant agreement

Selected applicants will each sign a Sub-grant agreement with the Project coordinator, including details on the contractual obligations of sub-grant beneficiaries, outputs to be delivered and payment arrangements.

Obligations of the beneficiary

Absence of conflict of interest

The applicant must not be affected by any conflict of interest and must have no equivalent relation in that respect with other applicants or parties involved in the actions. Any attempt by an applicant to obtain confidential information, enter into unlawful agreements with competitors or influence the evaluation committee or the project sub-grant management committee during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating and comparing applications will lead to the rejection of its application and may result in administrative penalties.

Respect for human rights as well as environmental legislation and core labour standards

The applicant and its staff must comply with human rights. In particular and in accordance with the applicable act, applicants who have been awarded contracts must comply with the environmental legislation including multilateral environmental agreements, and with the core labour standards as applicable and as defined in the relevant International Labour Organisation conventions (such as the conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining; elimination of forced and compulsory labour; abolition of child labour).

Zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and sexual abuse:

The European Commission applies a policy of 'zero tolerance' in relation to all wrongful conduct which has an impact on the professional credibility of the applicant.

Physical abuse or punishment, or threats of physical abuse, sexual abuse or exploitation, harassment and verbal abuse, as well as other forms of intimidation shall be prohibited.

Anti-corruption and anti-bribery

The applicant shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations and codes relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption. The project's Sub-Grant Managing Committee and the Programme bodies reserve the right to suspend or cancel the sub-grant if corrupt practices of any kind are discovered at any stage of the award process or during the execution of the contract. For the purposes of this provision, 'corrupt practices' are the offer of a bribe, gift, gratuity or commission to any person as an inducement or reward for performing or refraining from any act relating to the award of a contract or execution of a contract already concluded.

Breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud

The project's Sub-Grant Managing Committee and the Programme bodies reserve the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud. If breach of obligations, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the contract, the project beneficiary may refrain from concluding the contract.