



# HORIZON EUROPE



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## THE EU RESEARCH & INNOVATION PROGRAMME

2021 – 2027

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**CLUSTER 2**  
**InfoDay Work Programme 2026**  
**26 March 2026**

**Rickard Bucksch**  
Policy Officer  
Directorate-General for Research and Innovation  
Unit 'Democracy, Equality and Culture'

# Horizon Europe Cluster 2, Work Programme 2026: **CULTURAL HERITAGE AND CCIS**



## **EXPECTED IMPACT**

The full **potential** of cultural heritage, arts and cultural and creative industries and sectors as drivers of both sustainable **innovation** and a European **sense of belonging** is realised through a continuous **engagement** with society, citizens and economic sectors.

### **EUROPE'S SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY AND COMPETITIVENESS**

*Unlock the innovative power of our cultural heritage and CCIs*

- “Artistic intelligence”: The power of the arts to boost innovation and competitiveness
- Creative startups for disruptive innovation
- AI integration in CCSI work practice
- Cultural and creative content in the era of generative AI
- Creative alliances: Global partnerships for CCI innovation

### **SUPPORTING PEOPLE, STRENGTHENING OUR SOCIETIES AND OUR SOCIAL MODEL**

*Cultural heritage, the arts and the CCIs for resilient and socially sustainable societies*

- Safeguard linguistic diversity
- Prevent illicit trafficking of cultural goods

# HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-HERITAGE-01: RIA

*“Artistic intelligence”*: harnessing the power of the arts to address complex challenges, enhance soft skills and boost innovation and competitiveness



~3 projects

## Expected outcomes

- Better understanding of **Art-Science-Tech innovation potential**; guidance, toolkits, methodologies
- Strengthened Art-Science-Tech networks; expanded artist opportunities in science-technology engagement
- **AND one focus** to be chosen:
  - Approaches and methods for integrating arts and creativity to **enhance soft skills** across sectors
  - **3 low-TRL pilots on emerging technologies** developed by interdisciplinary teams including artists

## Scope

- Artistic research fosters inter- and **transdisciplinary thinking** and **creativity-driven innovation** across policy areas. EU initiatives (SciArt, S+T+ARTS) show art-science-tech collaborations enhance scientific progress, bring human-centred perspectives to emerging technologies, make complex concepts accessible.
- Need to consolidate understanding of transformative potential, develop evaluation methods, **distill insights for policy application**.
- Consortia must include artists/creatives. Financial support to third parties up to €60,000 available

# HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-HERITAGE-02: IA

## *Boosting creative startups for disruptive innovation*



*~2 projects*

### Expected outcomes

- Deepened **knowledge of specific factors favouring the growth of creative startups**, in particular those with potential for **disruptive innovation**
- Effective **methods to favour the growth of creative startups** are developed and put in practice
- Depending on the option chosen, **at least one creative startup** supported via the action:
  - a) **becoming a scaleup** or
  - b) succeeding in **bringing a disruptive innovation to the market**

### Scope

- The CCIs count a high rate of startups, and those are among the early adopters of new technologies
- However, few European creative startups scale up and contribute to disruptive innovation
- To better support European creative startups to grow into scaleups and multiply their potential as high-impact disruptive innovators, additional measures are needed
- These measures should build on and improve existing knowledge and support systems

# HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-HERITAGE-03: IA

*AI integration in CCSI work practice: catalysing innovation and competitiveness*

€ 15.0  
million

~3 projects

## Expected outcomes (all required)

- **Insights, guidelines, methods and tools** supporting full AI integration in CCI practices
- **Scenarios for CCI-tailored and co-created solutions** using quality data, federated data sources, digital infrastructures, inclusive cooperation
- **Ethical AI-powered solutions** and tools that benefit creators, cultural professionals, and society
- CCI empowered as drivers of innovation, competitiveness and societal wellbeing through ethical and inclusive AI mastery

## Scope

- Despite AI's transformative potential and increasing use by CCI, **comprehensive understanding is lacking of enabling frameworks and what's missing** in terms of data, standards, infrastructures, computing power, tools, knowledge, and capacity for CCI to fully embrace AI opportunities.
- Proposals should **assess CCI AI readiness, investigate barriers, develop tailored scalable tools, and pilot innovative solutions** (in one or both options: value chain innovation, or accessibility and inclusion)

# HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-HERITAGE-04: RIA

*Towards a fair and transparent market for cultural and creative content in the era of generative AI*

€ 12.0  
million

~3 projects

## Expected outcomes

- **Deep socio-economic analysis** of generative AI impacts on CCI: creators' rights, value chains, consumption patterns, market dynamics
- Scenarios, standards and agile **solutions for transparent, trustworthy generative AI supply chains**: from provenance detection, to rights management to long-term preservation of AI-generated works
- **Adaptive policy frameworks** embedding ethical considerations in AI developments relevant for CCI and their market
- **Systemic innovation framework** enabling agile experimentation for sustainable, future-proof CCI

## Scope

- Gen. AI's impact on CCI is complex and multifaceted. While offering new possibilities, it raises concerns about copyright, manipulation, revenue models and employment.
- Novel frameworks and solutions for managing AI-generated cultural and creative content and establishing business models, infrastructures and policies for a fair market are needed.
- **Transparency is key**; challenges include access to quality data, content accuracy, identification of copyright holders and rightsholders, and ensuring fair compensation.

# HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-HERITAGE-05: RIA

*Creative alliances: Fostering global partnerships in cultural policies and CCI innovation*

€ 15.0  
million

~4 projects

## Expected outcomes

- **Comprehensive evaluation** of cultural policy models, CCI ecosystems and promotion strategies worldwide; identification of opportunities for cross-regional collaboration and global CCI development
- **International partnerships** established for knowledge exchange, and/or for boosting CCIs and facilitating collaborative productions across world regions
- **Actionable strategies** for cross-regional collaborations to leverage creative innovation for resilience and Global Europe.

## Scope

International partnerships strengthen cultural and creative innovation while supporting sustainable development and global relations. Proposals should examine innovative approaches that benefit partners while enhancing Europe's global standing.

**Focus 1:** CCI innovation beyond borders – pilot projects for cross-regional CCI cooperation

**Focus 2:** International cultural relations for global resilience – testing innovative forms of ICR, cultural diplomacy, intercultural dialogue, and mutual understanding

*Priority regions:* Africa, Far East, South-East Asia, Latin America

# HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-HERITAGE-06: RIA

## *Safeguarding linguistic diversity in Europe*

€ 11.5  
million

~2 projects

### Expected outcomes

- Enhanced understanding of **how to encourage multilingualism in society**;
- Strategies and policy recommendations for promoting multilingualism and **safeguarding linguistic diversity**;
- Citizens empowered and engaged in the sustainable management of their own linguistic heritage;
- Maps and visual presentations showing the linguistic diversity in Europe.

### Scope

- Linguistic diversity as a fundamental part of Europe's cultural heritage, and of cultural diversity;
- Knowledge and culture are lost when languages are lost;
- Aim: document and map the situation of linguistic diversity in Europe;
- Consider existing frameworks, initiatives and working terminology established by the Council of Europe and UNESCO.

# HORIZON-CL2-2026-01-HERITAGE-07: CSA

## *Preventing and fighting illicit trafficking of cultural goods*



*1 project*

### Expected outcomes

- **Cross border and cross domain** cooperation with **uptake** by Law Enforcement Authorities and experts
- Increased **evidence collection** and **intelligence** with **actionable solutions**
- **Consolidation** of existing solutions, tools and platform with operational systems and methodologies
- Capacity building, practical learning materials and trainings
- A robust and long-term **operational sustainable plan**

### Scope

- Building on existing proven expertise develop a mature and highly integrated market ready ecosystem based on LEA systems, operational interfaces, developed among LEAs and relevant stakeholders to ensure effective and measurable impact
- Strengthen collaboration between relevant stakeholders to boost capacity in cataloguing and provenance
- Improve data quality & data governance between the different players and access to interoperable critical databases
- Open source intelligence and interpolation of diverse datasets to provide evidence



**DEADLINE TO APPLY**  
**23 September 2026**  
**17:00 - Brussels time**



# Tips



Read the **topic text**, the **general introduction** and the **general annexes** carefully!



Start **early** and submit **before** the deadline



Connect to the **live InfoDay 26 March** and ask questions via **Slido**



Ask your National Contact Point (NCP) for **help** and **use** the brokerage platform



# Thank you!

## # HorizonEU

<http://ec.europa.eu/horizon-europe>



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