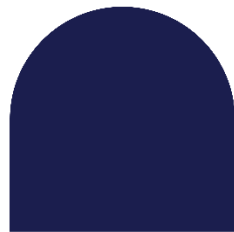


# **OPEN CALL FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE MUSIC CITIES CONVENTION 2025**

In collaboration with Sound Diplomacy

Guidelines and Regulations



**ARTS  
COUNCIL  
MALTA**

ISSUED: FEBRUARY 2025

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. About Sound Diplomacy**

Arts Council Malta announces an official partnership with Sound Diplomacy Events and Education for bringing a delegation of local music advocates to the upcoming Music Cities Convention in Fayetteville, Arkansas, USA.

Sound Diplomacy is a global music, culture and creative economy consultancy. They use research and data to demonstrate the economic and social value of creative industries, and provide strategic planning for cities, places and communities to maximize their impact. Their work unlocks new opportunities, fosters sustainable development and builds more dynamic, inclusive environments.

Comprised of consultants and experts worldwide, Sound Diplomacy has advised over 150 clients in over 30 countries, including the public sector such as cities, municipalities, governments, and international governmental organizations, and private entities in the real estate, investment and cultural and creative sectors.

Sound Diplomacy is creating the global standard demonstrating how investing in culture—and the people who make it—is the best path to economic and social growth. They provide world-class data and evidence so that culture, in all its forms, is incorporated into how they build, govern, and make decisions to invest in ourselves and our communities.

Sound Diplomacy owns and operates world-leading business conferences on music, culture and policy and produces insights and thought leadership with renowned partners.

Forming a multicultural team of economists, analysts, researchers, and consultants, with staff in the UK, Europe, North America, Asia, Africa, and Latin America, Sound Diplomacy bring a wealth of experience and expertise in the cultural economics, creative ecosystems, public policy, urban planning, and placemaking sectors.

### **1.2. Fayetteville Arkansas Music Cities Convention 2025**

From the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2025, the Music Cities Convention will be celebrating its 10th Year Anniversary in Fayetteville Arkansas.

The Music Cities Convention is the largest conference exploring the transformational power of music for cities. The Music Cities Events brand organizes the biggest international conferences on music cities, music policy, and music tourism. It produces the leading international awards ceremony on music cities, the Music Cities Awards, and runs the Music Cities Community, the first-ever platform for professionals in all industries using music to create more value in towns, cities, and places.

Under the theme of “Ten Years of Transforming Cities With Music”, this will be a three-day event which will include panels, presentations workshops, networking events and live music performances exploring best practices and latest trends on the crossroads of music with Diversity, Youth, Education, Health, Environmentalism, Economic Development, Night Time Economy, Real Estate and Technology.

Additionally, the opening night of the Convention will host the 2025 Music Cities Awards Ceremony, which is the most consolidated platform that rewards the best use of music in cities.

This is an event that will gather profiles such as City Mayors, Executives from the Music Industry, Grassroots Music Advocates, Musicians, Ministers of Culture, Festival Directors, NGO CEO's University Researchers, Investment Directors, Heads of Programming, Economic Development Offices Directors and more.

### **1.3. Apply to be part of a delegation attending the Convention**

Arts Council Malta is putting together a delegation to represent Malta’s music ecosystem at the event. Bringing a cohort of music advocates to the Music Cities Convention will be a significant step towards future proofing the benefits that music brings to our city.

Arts Council Malta is offering two places for delegates from the local music ecosystem to attend the event and participate in several activities that will help her/him discuss the latest trends in music cities topics and bring back that knowledge to its city. Alongside the two selected creatives, the delegation will additionally be formed by one representative of Malta and Gozo’s six Regional Councils, as well as the Regional Cultural Coordinator on behalf of Arts Council Malta.

The below costs are to be covered by Arts Council Malta:

- Travel expenses
- Accommodation
- Entrance to the convention

#### **1.4. Aims of attendance**

By attending the Music Cities Convention, selected applicants will have an opportunity to:

- Actively contribute towards Sound Diplomacy's programme of activities by bringing fresh perspectives to the dialogues within the network and influence the global musical arts sector on a long-term basis;
- Expand their international network and find new collaborators and partners across all horizons;
- Allow the opportunity for international visibility of alternative and/or innovative working models, practices and ideas developed in their professional local context and communities;
- Develop new skills and knowledge through peer-to-peer learning;
- Become inspired in their professional lives, which they can and will be expected to share with their communities locally.

## **2. Eligibility**

### **2.1. Application requirements**

- Applicants should have a minimum of three years of professional experience in the musical field of creative practice;
- Eligible applicants include those involved in the music sectors (such as: producers, performers, DJs, composers, conductors, music educators, sound designers, promoters, music therapists, recording engineers, music directors);
- It would be desirable if applicants also have experience and knowledge engaging with policymakers, local councils and authorities in the context of their music-related practices
- Applicants must be able to travel during the timeframe stipulated in section 1.2 of these guidelines.

2.2. Applicants are requested to submit the following documentation:

- i. Letter of interest, indicating the following:
  - Motivation, expectations and reasons for applying for attendance to the Music Cities Convention;
  - Relevance of their practices in their local context and willingness to share it with the international scene;
  - How their attendance to this event will impact their career and personal development;
  - Background, skills and relevant experience of the applicant's professional career.
- ii. Reference letter/s (at least two)
- iii. Curriculum Vitae
- iv. Any additional supporting documentation such as online portfolio etc.

Note: Failing to submit all necessary documents will make the application ineligible.

### **3. Outcomes**

Following attendance to the Music Cities Convention, selected delegates will be asked to:

- Present a detailed final report of their experience/s and how these will be applied to their individual, professional practice as creative practitioners locally; providing comprehensive insight into the contributions of CCSs to regional development and revitalization, thereby acting as catalysts for social cohesion and cultural identity, attesting to their role in uniting diverse communities within the Maltese islands.
- Contribute to and engage with the perpetuation of creative knowledge economies locally in relation to regional growth and governance; whilst incorporating an attempt to capture the multiplicity of realities concerning the structure, dynamism and pedagogy of creative economies locally;
- Take part in a series of sessions with ACM's Sectoral Representative Working Group (SRWG), alongside other independent representatives of the Cultural and Creative Sector (CCS), during which attendees will be able to share expert advice on the development and implementation of Arts Council Malta's strategic goals and actions, in line with their professional remits.

## 4. Evaluation Criteria

The Evaluation Board will base its decision upon the following criteria:

This criterion considers the merit of the applicant as well as their long-term objectives, professional development, applicability, in relation to the opportunity to attend the Music Cities Convention. This may also include experience in previous projects and/or productions and/or events etc., whether they are regular or new, relevant background information on the applicant/s, and envisaged impacts of their attendance to the Music Cities Convention. The application will also need to refer to any plans for professional development and capacity building in the letter of interest. Thus, the following questions are to be addressed:

- What are the specific objectives that inform the applicant's letter of interest? How will their attendance to the convention contribute towards their career development in the music sectors? (20 marks)
- What are the anticipated and desired outcomes of the applicant's attendance to the event? (20 marks)
- Are the applicant's qualifications and experience relevant to the outcomes of attendance stipulated in the open call? (20 marks)
- Has the applicant demonstrated impact of their work for communities over time? (20 marks)
- How has the applicant expressed a long-term interest in providing feedback to Arts Council Malta based on the experience from the Music Cities Convention? (20 marks)

## 5. Submitting the application

Follow these steps to apply:

1. Read these guidelines and regulations carefully.
2. Check whether you are eligible to apply and available to travel during the dates indicated in section 1.2 of these guidelines.
3. Press the [link](#) that will take you to the online application system.
4. Use your existing profile to apply. If you do not have a profile, create your profile with Arts Council Malta by clicking on Register Now and filling in the details.
5. From the open calls section, select the online application for this call.
6. Follow the instructions step by step. Fill in all the required information from the online application, including the budget, and attach the supporting documentation.
7. Submit the application. You should receive an automatic acknowledgement by the system. If you do not receive such a notification, contact us on [regionalculture@artscouncil.mt](mailto:regionalculture@artscouncil.mt).

**Deadline to apply:** Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2025 at 12:00 noon CET.

**Late applications will not be accepted.**

## **6. Evaluation Process**

This scheme is competitive and will be evaluated by a panel of relevant experts, according to established criteria.

As specified above, each criterion is allocated specific marks. In order to be considered applications have to obtain an average of 60 marks or more.

Applications will be evaluated according to the criteria established in these guidelines.

Applicants should be available to travel around the 14th and 18th of September 2025.

You will receive your result notification from Arts Council Malta via email on the 07th May 2025.

## **Need help?**

Arts Council Malta is the point of contact for this Open Call.

Please refer any queries by sending an email to: [regionalculture@artscouncil.mt](mailto:regionalculture@artscouncil.mt)

Or by calling us on 2334 7201/02 on weekdays between 09:00 to 16:00

More information on Sound Diplomacy and the Music Cities Convention can be found through this link: <https://www.sounddiplomacy.com/events-and-education>

Guidelines updated on **24<sup>th</sup> February 2025**