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CULTURE HELPS SOLIDARITY – OPEN CALL FOR PROJECT GRANTS, ROUND 2

MEMORY IN ACTION

SUPPORT FOR PROJECTS IN THE FIELDS OF (TACTICAL) COMMEMORATION, HISTORICAL AND ARTISTIC DOCUMENTATION, SOCIAL AND NON-INSTITUTIONAL ARCHIVES AS CULTURAL HERITAGE

AUGUST – OCTOBER, 2026

Culture Helps Solidarity supports arts and culture professionals from Ukraine to sustain creativity, resilience, and community connection during and after the war. Running until 2028, the project combines three grant schemes - individual grants, thematic project grants, and collaboration grants - with a rich programme of mentoring, learning, and peer exchange. The project is co-funded through the Creative Europe programme and implemented by the European Cultural Foundation (Amsterdam), an independent foundation fostering European belonging through culture, together with Insha Osvita (Kyiv), a Ukrainian NGO and professional learning community developing educational and cultural programmes; zusa (Berlin), an international NGO fostering collaboration and collective learning for social and cultural change; and the VETERANKA Movement (Kyiv), Ukraine's leading community of women veterans advocating for women's rights, leadership, and reintegration.

At least 60 Project Grants will be awarded across four thematic calls, with a minimum of 15 projects supported in this second round. Each project may receive up to €7,000. More information about the upcoming themes can be found at the end of this call for proposals.

INTRODUCTION & THEMATIC FOCUS

The second call for Projects Grants of Culture Helps Solidarity focuses on memory and commemoration projects that work responsibly with the lived experiences of people affected by Russia's war against Ukraine. The call will support cultural and community-based initiatives that create meaningful forms of remembrance, documentation (both analog and digital), public reflection, and commemoration while respecting the dignity, safety, and agency of those whose stories and losses are represented.

We are especially interested in projects that engage with the experiences and stories of women veterans, servicewomen, all veterans, families of the fallen, witnesses of wartime events, local residents, people who have experienced loss, captivity, injury, displacement and others directly connected to places, events, or histories of war.

This call approaches commemoration not as a formal gesture, but as an ethical and community-centered practice. Supported projects should be attentive to trauma-informed principles, informed consent, privacy, emotional safety, and the responsible use of personal materials such as photographs, letters, messages, oral testimonies, family archives, objects, and memories both in analogue and digital formats. Applicants are encouraged to think carefully about

how stories are told and represented, whose perspectives are centered, how people are invited into the process, what should remain private, and how to avoid extractive or harmful forms of representation.

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

This call supports small-scale cultural projects that engage with the experiences, memories, and histories of people directly affected by Russia's war against Ukraine, including but not limited to women veterans, families of the fallen, displaced communities, local residents, people who have experienced loss, captivity, injury, or displacement, and witnesses of wartime events. We invite cultural workers, artists, researchers, community organisers, memory practitioners, and civil society initiatives based in Ukraine and across Europe to develop projects that approach remembrance as a careful, inclusive, and community-led practice. Through artistic, educational, research-based, or participatory formats, projects should create meaningful opportunities for reflection, strengthen local and collective memory across generations, amplify diverse voices, and help people feel seen and heard. Ultimately, the call seeks to support cultural practices that contribute to a more responsible public conversation about the ongoing impact and aftermath of Russia's war against Ukraine, both within Ukraine and across Europe.

We prioritise cultural projects that work with people and communities whose experiences, memories, and histories have been shaped by Russia's war against Ukraine, including:

- women veterans, servicewomen, and all veterans;
- families of the fallen and those living with loss;
- people who experienced captivity (civilians and military) including those who experienced illegal imprisonment in occupied territories;
- displaced communities and people affected by forced relocation;
- witnesses of wartime events;
- other individuals and groups connected to places, events, landscapes or histories of war.

Projects may take many cultural forms, such as co-creation processes, participatory or collaborative art, community storytelling and archiving, exhibitions, audio or visual storytelling, artistic documentation, community gatherings, local acts of remembrance, publications, educational art formats, and other cultural practices that help people process loss, preserve memory, and speak about the war with care.

What matters above all is that activities approach remembrance as an ethical, inclusive, and community-centered practice. Projects should create meaningful opportunities for Ukrainians and all Europeans to reflect on and share experiences connected to Russia's war on Ukraine, while demonstrating sensitivity to trauma, informed consent, privacy, and emotional wellbeing. We are also interested in initiatives that strengthen collective memory among Ukrainians and all Europeans, amplify diverse voices, and contribute to more thoughtful and responsible conversations about the ongoing impact of war.

WHAT DO WE OFFER?

We offer project grants of up to €7,000.

The Project Grants can cover a large variety of costs including production costs, marketing and advertising costs, rental and running costs for studios and cultural venues, IT, communication and production tools and materials, and - upon special request and where appropriate (e.g. when lost/destroyed) - purchase of other goods, means, or services necessary for the implementation and execution of the project.

Grants can also be used to cover travel costs, expert fees, artists' honoraria, legal services, staff - and operational costs. However, these amounts must all be proportionate and justifiable.

Although co-financing is not mandatory, it is recommended that the grant is used to cover a maximum of 80% of the total project budget.

The project timeline may be up to 6 months. Activities related to the project may not take place before the start date (1 February 2027).

The submission deadline for proposals is Tuesday, 6 October 2026, 13:00 Amsterdam time/ 14:00 Kyiv time.

Deepen Your Understanding – Watch the Webinar

(Tactical) Commemoration/Artistic documentation; Social/heritage archive

A webinar related to the thematic focus of this call was held on **23 June 2026**. If you were unable to attend, you can now watch the recording and access the materials to gain a deeper understanding of key topics such as:

- **Key Principles of Trauma-Informed and Ethical Interaction When Collecting Testimonies and Personal Stories**, by Larysa Denysenko;
- **Case study of the project "Skulpturnyi": Artistic Engagement with Vulnerable Groups**, by Marta Syrko;
- **Case study: Contemporary Approaches to Memory Projects and Engagement with Communities Directly Connected to This Memory**, by Kateryna Semeniuk;
- **Specific Aspects of Cultural Projects for, about and with Women and Men Veterans**, by Kateryna Demerza.

Link to watch: https://youtu.be/fZIoSIzIkAQ?si=r3NWI5_R-MRcs7Z5

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- Applications must be submitted in English or Ukrainian and must include a complete application form and budget;
- Applicants must be above 18 years old;
- This call is open to and civic, public or private[1] organisations based in Ukraine or in any of the Creative Europe countries (which include the 27 EU member states and more countries participating in Creative Europe) and operate in the cultural, creative, or civil sector;
- We welcome individuals with strong project ideas to apply. However, in order to smoothly navigate the administrative requirements of Creative Europe and the local tax authorities and to facilitate a prompt start of your project, we strongly recommend individual applicants to apply with an eligible civic, public or private organisation that can serve as their legal entity for concluding grant agreements;
- The proposed project must not receive funding from any other Creative Europe scheme;
- Proposals submitted by political parties will not be considered;
- Strictly humanitarian initiatives or individual requests for cost-of living support will not be considered.

SELECTION CRITERIA AND PROCESS:

- **Relevance to the thematic focus —** Does the project engage with the experiences and memories of people directly affected by war through cultural, artistic, educational, or participatory practices? Does it contribute to meaningful and inclusive forms of remembrance in Ukraine and across the rest of Europe? Does it amplify the voices of people and communities connected to places, events, or histories of war, and strengthen collective memory? Does it demonstrate a thoughtful, ethical, and community-centered approach, including sensitivity to trauma, informed consent, privacy, and the responsible representation of personal experiences and materials?
- **Capacity and competence of the applicant —** Does the applicant demonstrate relevant experience, expertise, and motivation to work with communities affected by war and remembrance processes? Does the applicant show an understanding of ethical and trauma-informed approaches, including informed consent, privacy, and the responsible use of personal stories and materials? Is the team composition (if applicable) appropriate to deliver the proposed activities in a safe, respectful, and meaningful way?
- **Quality and coherence of the proposal —** Are the aims, methods, and results well-articulated and realistic? Does the proposal demonstrate understanding of the communities involved, the sensitivities associated with memory, loss, and wartime experiences? Are the proposed methods appropriate to the project's aims and

1 Private organisations must have a non-commercial status and must be able to prove the project's charitable status.

grounded in ethical and community-centred practice? Is the timeline feasible and the budget justified?

- **Authenticity and experimentation —** Does the project offer a thoughtful approach to remembrance, memory work, or artistic documentation? Does it use creative, participatory, or community-led methods to engage with experiences of war in meaningful and respectful ways? Does it demonstrate care in how stories, testimonies, and memories are collected, shared, or preserved?
- **Sustainability of action —** Does the project show potential for continued impact beyond the grant period? Is there consideration of environmental responsibility?

Following an eligibility check, proposals will be assessed by a team of internal and external experts from a wide range of geographic, cultural and professional areas. At least fifteen projects will be selected for support in this round.

TIMELINE:

18 August 2026	call for proposals open
6 October 2026	call closed
End November – Beginning of December 2026	proposals assessed and selected
1 February 2027	start date of selected projects
31 July 2027	end date of selected projects
31 August 2027	submission deadline for final reports

Projects may **not** begin before **1 February 2027**.

HOW TO APPLY?

You can find more information - including the budget template - and submit your application via this link: https://culture-of-solidarity-fund.grantplatform.com/

We are organizing an **online info session** on the **2nd of September at 15:00 Amsterdam time / 16:00 Kyiv** time where participants can enter into a Q&A session with the partners regarding the application process and criteria. You can register via this link: https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/qLwzxAw8RO6tSbMMY-U1eg

Applicants are encouraged to develop their proposals through human expertise, critical thinking, and artistic or professional judgment. Proposals that rely primarily on AI-generated content or concepts may be given lower priority in the assessment process.

Should you have further questions, please contact us at chs@culturalfoundation.eu.

Culture Helps Solidarity / Культура допомагає: Солідарність is co-financed by the EU Creative Europe Programme and implemented by the European Cultural Foundation (NL), Insha Osvita (UA), zusa (DE), and the VETERANKA Movement (UA).

LOOKING AHEAD: FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUR WORK

As you consider this call, here is a glimpse of what's next. Over the course of the Culture Helps Solidarity programme, we will launch two additional thematic calls, each paired with a webinar to deepen your practice and connect you with peers across Ukraine and Europe. Please keep an eye on the upcoming announcements that may (better) resonate with your experience, your community, or your artistic approach.

Call & Webinar No. 3: Community Spaces as Safer Environments — January 2027
In this round we will examine how community spaces serve as anchor points for people in displacement. The focus is on creating environments where belonging is nurtured and integration becomes a shared responsibility between newcomers and local residents.

- **Key themes:** Defining "safer spaces" intergenerational resilience, guidelines for working with people with combat experience, and destigmatizing mental health through open conversation.

Call & Webinar No. 4: Ecologies of Care — May 2027
The final call addresses the ecological rupture caused by war. We invite cultural initiatives to respond to the destruction of Ukraine's ecosystems not only as a human tragedy but as an opportunity to reimagine our interdependence with the "more-than-human" world.

- **Key themes:** Living with damaged landscapes, ancestral knowledge, and regenerative futures.