European Capital of Culture Info Day in Estonia
Some initial reading...

- Decision No 445/2014/EU of the EP and the Council
- The call for applications and the rules of procedure published in your country
- The guide to cities preparing a bid
- Internet: applications from former candidate cities / future ECOCs
What is a European Capital of Culture?
An ambitious event

• Not always a capital city

• A large scale cultural event of one year
... developed for the title and with a strong European dimension

• Not about what a city looks like or its past/heritage, but what it will do (programme) during the year

• A title awarded to one city in 2 Member States in 2024 + 1 city in a candidate country/potential candidate/EFTA/EEA country
A demanding and complex event

- One of the most visible and successful European cultural events: An honour and a responsibility

- A multi-faceted event with (sometimes) conflicting agendas

- Time is needed for a careful preparation and planning:
  - To embed the event in a cultural longer term strategy
  - To significantly engage your citizens and key stakeholders
  - To ensure the right infrastructure is in place

- Learn from previous experience

> You have to put in place a bid team
What are the objectives of the European Capital of Culture scheme?
At European level

• Main objectives:
  – Promoting cultural diversity and common features of cultures
    > "Sense of belonging to a common cultural area"
  – Fostering contribution of culture to long-term development of your city

• On a more operational level
  – Enhancing the range, diversity and European dimension of the cultural offering in cities, including through transnational co-operation
  – Widening access to and participation in culture
  – Strengthening capacity of the cultural sector + links with other sectors
  – Improving international profile of cities through culture
At local level

= Your own objectives

• On top of the EU level objectives

• Can be very varied, according to your own local priorities and circumstances

• Be clear about what you want to achieve

• Be realistic about what you can achieve
How to prepare your application?
Some formal conditions

• Be a city in Estonia

• Need to send a written application answering all the questions of the call by the deadline set in the call

• In English (+ another official language of the EU)

• Respect the size limit
  – 60 pages in A4 format for pre-selection
  – 100 pages in A4 format for final selection
  – All illustrations, graphs etc. included in the size limit
Six categories of award criteria (1)

• ECOC = high standards reflected in demanding criteria

• See the criteria as a tool to prepare your bid and – if elected – to plan the title-year

• Six categories with equal weighting – All are important to ensure a successful ECOC

• Advice: Be concise and sharp in your answers
Six categories of award criteria (2)

• Contribution to the long term strategy

• European dimension

• Cultural and artistic content

• Capacity to deliver

• Outreach

• Management
And then... what happens until the year of the title?
The monitoring phase

- Organised by the Commission with the assistance of the Panel to provide you with support and guidance + measure compliance and progress

- Three official monitoring meetings
  - Three years before the year (end 2020)
  - 18 months before the year (mid 2022)
  - Two months before the year (end 2023)

- On the basis of the final Panel's recommendation, payment of the Melina Mercouri Prize in early 2024
The Melina Mercouri Prize

• Only direct EU funding = 1,5 M from Creative Europe or successor programme

• Reinforced conditionality of the Melina Mercouri Prize

- Special attention will be given to:
  - The stability of the budgets
  - The independence of the artistic team
  - The European dimension
  - The visibility of the EU
  - The plans for monitoring and evaluation

- The Prize will be paid during the year of the title
Thank you for your attention

Sylvain Pasqua

sylvain.pasqua@ec.europa.eu