



EFFE SEAL
for Festival Cities
and Regions



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ROADMAP

The EFFE Seal for Festival Cities and Regions is a proposal developed by **seven cities and their festival communities**: Belgrade, Bergen, Edinburgh, Ghent, Krakow, Leeuwarden, and Ljubljana.

This proposal builds on the goals and the achievements of the EU funded **EFFE programme**: Europe for Festivals, Festivals for Europe, started in 2015.

The EFFE Seal seeks to enhance prosperous and innovative **co-operation between cities and their festivals**.

Cities are the recipients of the EFFE Seal in **recognition** of their achievements towards their festival community.

The goals, principles and values of the EFFE Seal will be established in a founding **Charter** signed by the European Festivals Association and the 7 founding cities.

The EFFE Seal's key concepts are **creativity, sustainability, internationalism, and resilience** (resilience to discord).

Applying for the EFFE Seal is a signal of **commitment** to the continued engagement with the aims of the Seal, as well as to the readiness of sharing experiences with peers.

Attachment to the EFFE Seal is attested in a **Memorandum of Agreement** signed by the representative of the city (or region) and of the European Festivals Association.

Recipients of the EFFE Seal will be entitled to a **Festival City Portrait** of their own at the FestivalFinder.eu portal, through which their festival and potential will reach out to millions across Europe and beyond.

The EFFE Seal is planned to **benefit** cities, festivals, residents, artists, audiences, tourism and other businesses, media, academia and politics alike.



EFFE SEAL

for Festival Cities and Regions

Founding Charter

The EFFE Seal for Festival Cities and Regions is a recognition and an invitation to cities that wish to associate and integrate their development and image with a strong festival, cultural – and European – commitment.

The initiative aims to develop exchanges between different layers including cities, audiences, artists, and other involved players, based on a joint action plan and a common set of values.

The EFFE Seal for Festival Cities and Regions is a proposal developed by seven cities and their stakeholders: Belgrade, Bergen, Edinburgh, Ghent, Krakow, Leeuwarden, and Ljubljana.

In detail

Festivals are some of the most present and effective cultural platforms to realise social results in a community. They have an impact on tourism, urban development, economy, well-being, and education, among others. Taking a global perspective, festivals can be a resource for the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Festivals are a reflection of the identity of cities and regions, a natural space where the best features and elements of urban identity, way of life, forms of expression, ambition, creativity, and openness accumulate.

Festivals have the power to help shape their environment. This power can be made into a joint endeavour by the festival community and local government.

The EFFE Seal has a twofold character:

- 1.** Cities are the recipients of the EFFE Seal in **recognition** of their achievements towards their festival community.
- 2.** At the same time, subscribing to the EFFE Seal is a **commitment** to the continued engagement with its aims and values and signals a readiness of sharing experiences with peers.

Receiving the EFFE Seal is authenticated in a Memorandum of Agreement, signed by the city and by EFA. It is not a competitive process but a commitment to a range of principles, values and requirements that a city applies in its strategy and its daily work.

The EFFE Seal leads to the establishment of a community of cities and their festivals that share these ambitions and features and stimulate others to join. It develops an action programme on topics on which the community wants to work and exchange.

The EFFE Seal is part of the ongoing ambition of EFA to bring arts to audiences worldwide.

A communication campaign on FestivalFinder.eu itself and promotional and media platforms will contribute to the visibility of the EFFE Seal.

A broader scope: “festival regions”

The EFFE Seal has been designed to include all sorts of local and territorial entities (like cities, towns, villages, rural areas, districts, regions, islands, valleys, or others) that define and administer themselves and which feel attracted by the values and want to use the benefits of the EFFE Seal.

With this broad scope in mind the word city stands for the variety of entities listed above. We call them “festival regions”. In specific circumstances the Memorandum of Agreement will be signed by one of the entities (as a festival region).



Europe for Festivals, Festivals for Europe

Festivals and cities are twins. They facilitate the need to experience the arts and culture together, to assemble, motivate societies – urban and regional communities alike – to join in celebrating life and creativity: celebration in our cities.

The European Festivals Association (EFA) is convinced of the importance of **the collaboration between a city and its arts festivals**. This relationship can unfold festivals' potential in tackling the most important challenges of our era, including climate responsibility, social inequalities, humanitarian crises, crises of representative democracy and so on.

We also assume, in our long-standing collaboration with 'A Soul for Europe', that a city together with its festivals has a responsibility towards Europe. We believe in the creative power of art and culture to strengthen the possibilities for and willingness of citizens to become active in the future development of Europe.

There is a necessity for festivals and cities to connect with each other to give communities a temper, a spirit, a face, a soul.

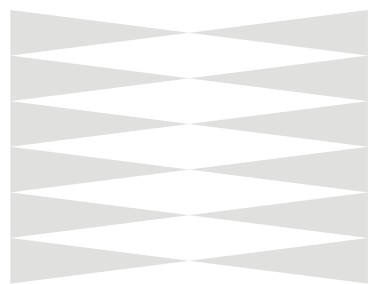
The wealth of suggestions, of perspectives from artists, festival makers, curators, mayors, city representatives and thinkers originating from all parts of Europe is the basis on which EFA and 'A Soul for Europe' has launched **the Festival Cities Initiative**.

The website **FestivalFinder.eu** was launched in 2019 as an online search tool to discover arts festivals, from music to theatre, streets arts to dance, literature and more, in 45 countries in Europe.

Its main purpose is to guide audiences, festival makers and lovers, artists, travellers, academics, journalists, bloggers, policy makers, city developers and all stakeholders through the world of Europe's diverse cultural space. It is rooted in and steered by the festivals community with the support of the European Union.

Today FestivalFinder.eu is extending to become a platform that facilitates and stimulates stronger collaboration between festivals and their municipalities, regions, and tourism offices.

The proposal for an EFFE Seal for Festival Cities and Regions builds on the goals and the achievements of **the EFFE programme**: Europe for Festivals, Festivals for Europe. The EFFE acronym has become a symbol of European co-operation between cultural festivals: a recognised brand. This is why the current proposal has the word EFFE in its name.



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The EFFE Seal

When a city subscribes to the EFFE Seal, it takes a pledge

| | |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Pro Primo | to observe certain principles , |
| Pro Secundo | to adhere to specific values , and |
| Pro Tertio | to follow particular requirements of conduct. |

PRO PRIMO

The principles to establish and maintain a spirit of organic conviviality with festivals. In this spirit the city:

- 1 applies a comprehensive approach to the festival community, sharing a balance between
 - commercial, non-profit initiatives, as well as the city's own festivals,
 - attracting visitors from outside and catering for residents,
 - the hard spinoff in terms of jobs and revenue, and the soft benefits to liveability and harmony
- 2 takes the potential of festivals into consideration in all policy decisions (including especially tourism, communication, education, environment, health and social issues) and develops a participatory decision-making process by involving cultural stakeholders in the city.
- 3 helps festivals to maintain and improve their quality standards without interfering but remaining attentive to feedback from professionals and inhabitants.
- 4 acknowledges the inherent flexibility of the festival scene (festivals emerge, transform and sometimes expire), respecting meanwhile the legacy embodied in festivals with the longest record.
- 5 offers the necessary support and other assistance to all festivals, contributing to further development, collaboration, and network, locally, nationally, and internationally.

No numerical or other 'objective' measures will be associated with these requirements. Stakeholders – such as the festival communities of the respective cities – will informally monitor these principles. Unless serious breaches are reported, the status of the EFFE Seal will be re-confirmed every three years.

PRO SECUNDO

There are **two classes of values** to be respected.

- 1 On a general level, subscribing to the EFFE Seal confirms a will to enhance the fundamental European values of inclusion, tolerance, justice and solidarity, and the conditions of freedom, democracy, equality, human rights and dignity.

From this broad pool of overarching concepts the partners in this proposal have distilled the following key values: creativity, sustainability, internationalism, and critical thinking.

- 2 On a specific level the festivals' offerings in the city should consider following the ten features listed in the EFFE Label application.



A festival with an EFFE Label is embedded in the European artistic, cultural and social ideal and:

- 1** presents a coherent, curated artistic programme including international artists.
- 2** supports on-going artistic development.
- 3** provides opportunities for emerging or innovative artists to create or to be presented in the programme.
- 4** is rooted in its local community, fostering local connections in the programme and among the performers and performances.
- 5** helps to increase access to culture and attract a diverse audience through, for example, the use of new technologies.
- 6** takes measures to make the festival more sustainable by developing new business models through innovative approaches to funding, production and management.
- 7** helps to shape, encourage and promote intercultural experience for audiences and artists.
- 8** embraces inclusivity as a core principle and practice.
- 9** invests in innovation and capacity building.
- 10** engages with the audience through educational programmes.

PRO TERTIO

The requirements from affiliated cities to the EFFE Seal:

- 1** A decisive share of the festivals in the city needs to be registered on FestivalFinder.eu.
- 2** Festivals are encouraged to keep their profiles updated on FestivalFinder.eu, which is recommended as the single point of information.
- 3** Festivals are encouraged to be ambitious when using the EFFE Label and to upgrade their performance for an EFFE Award.
- 4** The city should endeavour to craft a collective presence at the FestivalFinder.eu portal (a Festival City Portrait that goes with the name of the city, see below), the content of which should be kept updated at all times.
- 5** Representatives of the city's administration and festivals should follow the affairs of the EFFE Seal and take an active part whenever possible (among other ways, by participating in the annual Arts Festivals Summit, including a festival cities' working platform).
- 6** Feel invited to undertake 'EFFE Seal' actions locally and share them with the community in regular online meetings.
- 7** Brand themselves as "EFFE Seal for Festival Cities" holders in all relevant communications.



Benefits

EFFE Seal Festival City Portrait

Cities with an EFFE Seal will be entitled to chapters of their own on FestivalFinder.eu – an EFFE Seal Festival City Portrait with the name of the city (or festival region).

- The city and FestivalFinder.eu are co-owners and co-editors of this digital space.
- The Festival City Portrait defines and shows the festival offer of the city on FestivalFinder.eu in a continuously updated manner.
- Beyond the current concrete opportunities, the Portrait will display the general potential that the city provides to festival organisers and visitors.
- The content of the Portrait is mirrored on the website of the city (and/or its tourism sites), using the variety of technical interfaces that the FestivalFinder.eu will offer.

Benefits for cities

- The EFFE Seal highlights the enormous variety of impacts festivals generate for their urban, rural and regional environments,
- The EFFE Seal offers an additional dimension to the city brand, aligning with other facets and projects of city branding,
- Intercity and international relations can be carried out on wider interfaces by the involvement of festival stakeholders, including businesses and civil society,
- On the conceptual level, familiarity with peers in the network helps to define the city's own festival strategy,
- On a short term practical level, festival schedules, logistics and marketing can be adjusted better,
- The common data pool provides statistical benchmarks for the quantifying of festival strategy,
- The EFFE Seal is one more anchor from the city to the common European project.

Benefits for festivals

- Festivals – individually and together – become more embedded in the social and cultural ecosystem of the city,
- The national and international exposure increases the relevance of the festivals in the city, adding to their inherent assets,
- Belonging to a broader project boosts festivals' self-reflection,
- Festivals can capitalise on the structured relationship with peers in the network in terms of programming, marketing, logistics, and even in administrative and legal issues,
- Contributing to and learning from the common data pool facilitates the proficiency of festivals' self-improvement.

Benefits for artists

- Artists – residents in the city and "outsiders" alike – in the festival programme get increased visibility and chances to access other cities' festivals,
- The common pool of information adds to artists' familiarity with all aspects and conditions of being involved in festivals in Europe.

Benefits for residents

- A common perception of the city's festivals offers more chances for residents to feel or factually become their stakeholders,
- Collectively, and in an international perspective, issues of festivals' effects on local life – including negative challenges – can be identified and



handled better.

Benefits for audiences

- Information on festivals presented in harmonised, standardised fashion makes orientation and choice easier,
- The EFFE Seal provides a quality pledge for the audience.

Benefits for tourism

- The EFFE Seal is of great help to municipal tourism boards as well as business agencies in tourism.
- International tourism operators can rely on festivals with solid reputations and can consider cities as destinations on a broader scale in terms of content, timeframe and possibly space.

Benefits for other businesses

- Joint perception of the festivals in the city provides synergy for businesses in accommodation, traffic, catering, crafts and souvenirs, event security, ticketing etc.
- They also profit from the increased number of visitors that adherence to the EFFE Seal creates.

Benefits for media

- When covering a city, the attention of media will be attracted to festivals thanks to their more systematic and fuller exposure,
- Local and wider media will be inspired to communicate the full scale of festivals.

Benefits for academia

- The harmonised ways of presenting festivals – and their self-presentation – enables and prompts researchers to apply a variety of comparative approaches to analysing festivals in Europe,
- Festivals will win greater prominence in urban studies.

Benefits for politics

- The EFFE Seal helps politicians – incumbent and prospective alike – to identify and exploit the potential in festivals in the areas of city branding, social cohesion, economic prosperity and external relations.

Benefits for Europe

- Arts and culture became a field within European policies that showed positive results in pursuing the Union's aim for peace and integration. The EFFE Seal helps to make Europe 'tangible' for people and make an emotional and personal connection: It helps to allow citizens' active participation: Europe is alive and lives in festivals' communities.
- The EFFE Seal is a tool for Europe to involve the thousands of arts festivals and their cities to be active contributors in promoting Europe's cultural diversity and artistically vibrant space towards Europe's citizens and audiences worldwide

The EFFE Seal is an initiative of the European Festivals Association, in collaboration with a Steering group of 7 cities and stakeholders from the cities of Bergen, Belgrade, Edinburgh, Ghent, Ljubljana, Krakow and Leeuwarden and the participation of the Budapest Observatory of Summa Artium in the framework of FestivalFinder.eu (a)Live Now.

FestivalFinder.eu (a)Live Now is a project implemented by the European Festivals Association in partnership with the City of Bergen, Italiafestival, Summa Artium, EURACTIV Media Network and publiq, and co-funded by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union.



Co-funded by the
Creative Europe Programme
of the European Union