

# Introduction

*In 2020 we launched the Culture of Solidarity Fund as a rapid response tool to cross-border initiatives of solidarity in times of uncertainty and lockdowns. Since March 2020 the world seems to have been caught up in a never-ending crises cycle. In addition to Covid-19, there is a climate pandemic, a pandemic of inequality, a pandemic of polarisation, also manifesting in Europe. Together, these individual pandemics are creating unpredictable dynamics further exacerbated by the war that re-emerged in Europe on 24 February. Besides suffering and destruction in Ukraine, the war brings inflation, energy crisis and recession. Crises and crises responses are the new normal.*

At the time of launching the fund our director Andre Wilkens wrote: "We want to support the citizens reaching out to each other, practicing small and often imaginative human gestures of everyday solidarity. These acts unite us, across balconies, social networks, cities and countries.

It is human hope and shared culture without much ado that makes us feel together and that is all worthwhile! This is the culture of solidarity we ought to grow out of this pandemic crisis. This is a European moment, a European moment of solidarity, a European moment of citizens."

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## European Cultural Foundation

*The various rounds had differing objectives.*

### **Our first round COS1 (April 2020)**

Our first round supported big and small initiatives that would grow a European culture of Solidarity and support partners and grantees flexibly in the redesign of their activities in response to the Corona Crisis. The first round also supported new imaginative ways of sustaining people-to-people contacts and human interaction across European borders during travel restrictions and social distancing.

### **COS2 (June - July 2020)**

In the second round, we looked for projects which grew immediate crisis responses into more future-oriented solutions and extended from local levels to building cross-national alliances and pan-European initiatives. It was a time for local initiatives to join forces, to unite across reopening borders, for the benefit of all Europeans and for finding solutions collaboratively. On their own, they can and do have an effect in their local contexts, but if they work together, build strong coalitions and pull resources, they can reach a collective impact at a European level.

### **COS3 (October - November 2020)**

The third round was our first one with partners: the Fondazione CRC and Fondazione CRT from Italy. In this round we invited organisations from the Piedmont and Aosta Valley regions to submit project ideas and proposals that connect local work with a real pan-European dimension. This round of the Fund sought to support imaginative cultural initiatives that reinforce pan-European solidarity and the idea of Europe as a shared public space from a regional and cross-border perspective.



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## European Cultural Foundation

### **COS4 (March- May 2021)**

Nearly a year after launching the Culture of Solidarity Fund, solidarity remains a major cultural challenge, particularly in the field of media. Europe needs a shared public space where a culture of solidarity can be practiced. It is there where the ongoing infodemic can be combated. This round had a two-step approach, inviting possible applicants to team up together. This round focused on the work the European Cultural Foundation carries out in its SHARE programme: the development of a European public space.

### **COS5 (July - September 2021)**

This fifth round was open to cultural organisations as well as organisations from other fields of work and public institutions that are based and/or active in Eastern Germany or in European regions similarly affected by deindustrialization, population decline, social dissolution, failing public infrastructure, and ecological crises.

### **COS6 (2022)**

The recent sixth round was launched as a pan-European effort right at the beginning of the war in Ukraine to respond to local cultural emergency needs. As a result of their long-standing programmes work in Ukraine and Eastern Europe, the team of the Culture of Solidarity Fund and its partners have relied on a widespread network of cultural initiatives in Ukraine to identify and answer such immediate emergencies.

# How many applications were received

COS1

2,433

COS2

2,248

COS3

Italy

102

COS4

Infodemic

51

COS5

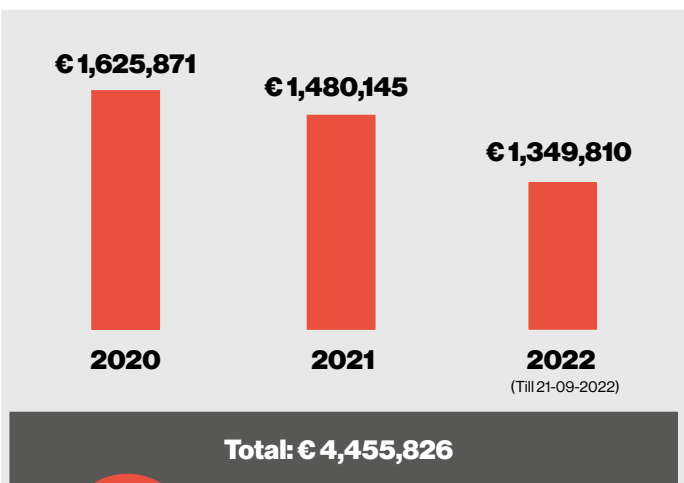
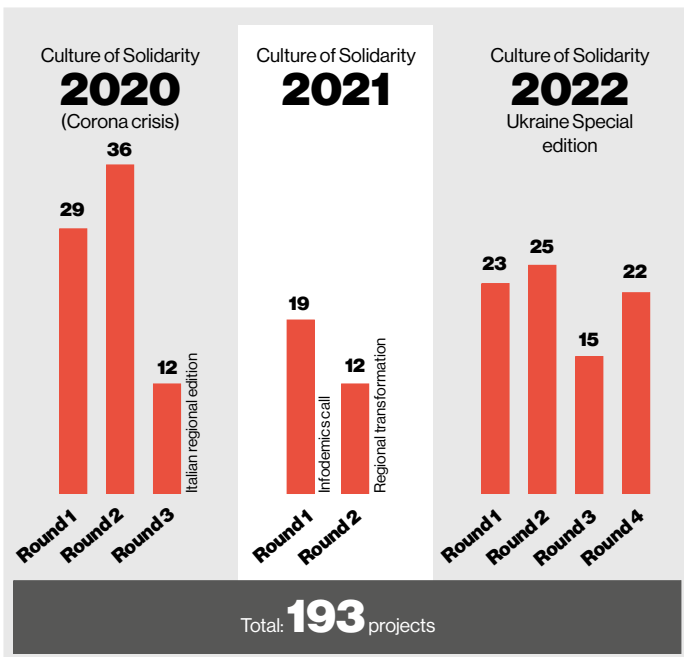
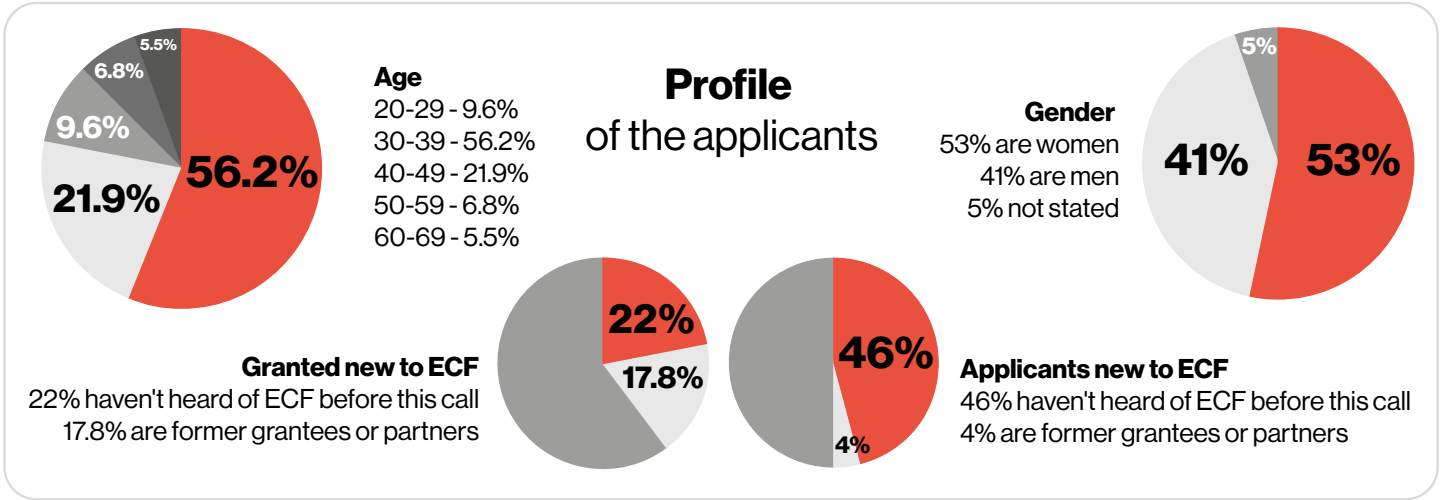
regional transformation

60

COS6

Ukraine

395



**15**

co-funding partners

