



Partner search form

For Creative Europe project applications

Call	Creative Innovation Lab 2025
Strand or category	Support to European Cooperation Projects

Cultural operator – who are you?

Name of organization	Сдружение "Лагера" (Lagera Association)
Country	Bulgaria
Organisation website	Lagera.org
Contact person	Kalin Stoimenov, kalin.stoimenov@lagera.org or kalin.m.stoimenov@google.com, +359898241343
Organisation type	Cultural & Community Non-profit civil society organisation (registered association)
Scale of the organization	Number of employees: 20 (volunteers and part-time); Latest annual turnover: 26000 EUR
PIC number	864710090
Aims and activities of the organisation	<p>Сдружение "Лагера" (Lagera Association) is a community-based non-profit organisation rooted in the Lagera neighbourhood of Sofia, Bulgaria. We bring together residents, local activists, cultural workers, and creative professionals to protect, celebrate, and sustain the cultural and natural heritage of our neighbourhood.</p> <p>The Balkanton Mural Project: Balkanton was Bulgaria's central music production institution for decades - the country's primary recording studio and state record label, responsible for producing, archiving and distributing the vast majority of Bulgarian music output throughout the 20th century. The Balkanton compound is located in the Lagera neighbourhood of Sofia. It has now been purchased by private developers who plan to demolish it and replace it with residential apartment blocks. Once Balkanton is razed, a defining chapter of Bulgarian cultural memory will be permanently lost.</p> <p>In response, Lagera Association has secured the permission of Electrohold (the national electricity distribution company) to transform more than 15 large neighbourhood electrical substations into open-air mural art installations. In partnership with Graffiti Tour Sofia and local artists, these substations will be painted as large-scale murals depicting the legacy of Balkanton and the music history of Bulgaria. The substations will become permanent public monuments, anchoring an urban cultural tourism walking route through the neighborhood and ensuring that Balkanton's story remains visible, accessible, and alive — long after the building itself is gone.</p> <p>Our core activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community organising and neighbourhood advocacy in Lagera, Sofia • Cultural heritage preservation and urban memory projects

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban public art initiatives and collaboration with local artists and graffiti/mural practitioners • Lagera Praznuva - a two day festival where we organize musicians from all over Bulgaria to come to our park and play, with over 15 000 people in attendance. Lagera Sportuva - the largest neighborhood sports holiday with chess, volleyball, street basketball and table tennis tournaments. And many more including a winter holiday. • Developing neighbourhood cultural tourism routes and community-based visitor experiences • Environmental advocacy: protecting urban green spaces and promoting ecological awareness in Lagera. We managed to push for a park to be constructed in a disused area of the neighborhood to protect the ever-dwindeling urban forests.
<p>Role of the organisation in the project</p>	<p>Lagera Association will act as the project initiator and lead applicant (or co-applicant), responsible for overall concept, community anchoring, local partnerships, and project coordination on the Bulgarian side. Our specific contributions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project concept and narrative: Developing the Balkanton mural concept, its historical and artistic framing, and the urban tourism route design • Local partnerships and permissions: Managing the existing agreement with Electrohold (substation access) and the collaboration with Graffiti Tour Sofia and local artists • Cultural heritage research and content: Gathering archival materials, oral histories, and visual documentation of Balkanton’s legacy for integration into the murals and accompanying educational materials • Community engagement and visibility: Organising public events, neighbourhood consultations, and outreach around the mural installations • Urban tourism development: Designing and promoting the Balkanton Mural Route as a walkable cultural tourism experience anchored in the Lagera neighbourhood <p>We are seeking experienced EU-based partners who can bring expertise in mural/street art production, cultural tourism, or heritage documentation to strengthen the consortium and support a successful Creative Europe application.</p>
<p>Previous EU grants received</p>	<p>No previous Creative Europe grants received. Lagera Association is a young but active civil society organisation. We have successfully managed community projects funded through Bulgarian national municipal grants and private donations. We have also engaged in EU-level partner networking and attended Creative Europe information events (including the Sofia Lab x Creative Europe session, April 2026). We are prepared to work with an experienced EU lead partner or cultural operator who can assist with grant management requirements.</p>

Proposed Creative Europe project – to which project are you looking for partners?

<p>Sector or field</p>	<p>Urban Cultural Heritage, Public Art & Mural Art, Community Memory, Music Heritage Preservation, Urban Tourism, Cultural Placemaking, Neighbourhood Identity, Open-Air Art Installations</p> <p>This project is about rescuing a community’s memory before it disappears.</p>
<p>Description or summary of the proposed project</p>	<p>Project Title: Balkanton Lives: Mural Heritage Routes for Urban Memory and Cultural Tourism</p> <p>Project Summary: Balkanton was Bulgaria’s most important institution of music production for over half a century — a state recording studio and record label that shaped the country’s musical identity. Located in the Lagera neighbourhood of Sofia, the Balkanton compound has now been sold to private developers who plan to demolish it and construct residential apartment buildings. Once the buildings are gone, a defining chapter of Bulgarian cultural and social history will be permanently erased from the physical landscape.</p> <p>This project responds to that threat by transforming 15+ large neighbourhood electrical substations — with the formal permission of Electrohold (the national electricity distribution operator) — into permanent open-air mural installations celebrating the legacy of Balkanton and the broader music heritage of Bulgaria. Executed in collaboration with Graffiti Tour Sofia and a network of local and European artists, the murals will become a lasting public monument anchoring a walkable cultural tourism route through the Lagera neighbourhood.</p> <p>Project objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve and transmit the cultural memory of Balkanton through large-scale mural art embedded permanently in the neighbourhood’s public infrastructure • Create a replicable European model for using urban public art to anchor cultural heritage tourism in residential neighbourhoods • Facilitate cross-European exchange between mural artists, urban heritage practitioners, and cultural tourism professionals • Develop educational and documentary materials (publications, audio-visual content, guided tour materials) connecting Balkanton’s music legacy to European cultural history • Strengthen community identity and civic pride in Lagera while generating a new cultural tourism offer for the city of Sofia <p>Format: Small-scale Creative Europe Cooperation Project (minimum 3 partners from 3 countries, up to €200,000 at 80% co-funding). Open to medium-scale if the right consortium forms (5 partners from 5 countries, up to €1,000,000 at 70%). Deadline: 5 May 2026.</p>

Partners currently involved in the project	Bulgarian partners confirmed: Graffiti Tour Sofia (mural/street art tours and artist network, Sofia), Electrohold (infrastructure permission for 15+ substations). EU partners: INSIGHT Italy, seeking a third - see below.
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Partners searched – which type of partner are you looking for?

From country or region	All Creative Europe eligible countries. Priority interest in: Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, France, Spain, Portugal, Czech Republic, Romania, Greece – particularly organisations with existing experience in mural/street art, urban heritage, or cultural tourism projects.
Preferred field of expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mural & street art organisations – Organisations experienced in large-scale mural production, public art commissioning, and artist collaboration. Ideal profile: organisations like The Street Art Foundation (Netherlands), Les Murs Ont La Parole-type groups (France/Belgium), or similar. ● Cultural heritage preservation organisations – Organisations working with endangered heritage sites, intangible cultural heritage, community memory, or place-based storytelling. Music heritage focus is a strong plus. ● Urban cultural tourism operators – Organisations developing walking routes, neighbourhood tourism itineraries, or creative placemaking experiences in urban contexts. ● Cultural NGOs or municipalities with Creative Europe experience – Partners who can contribute experience in EU project management, reporting, and grant administration, especially organisations who have previously led or co-led Creative Europe Cooperation Projects. ● Research or documentation partners – Universities, cultural institutes, or documentary/media organisations able to contribute archival research, oral history collection, audio-visual documentation, or academic validation of the project’s heritage component.
Please get in contact no later than	April 25, 2026 (to allow time for consortium formation before the May 5, 2026 Creative Europe deadline).

Projects searched – are you interested in participating in other EU projects as a partner?

Yes / no	Yes
Which kind of projects are you looking for?	<p>Yes. We are open to joining other Creative Europe projects as a partner where our competences as a community cultural organisation and our direct access to a neighbourhood context, artist community, and urban infrastructure can add value. Relevant project types include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Public art, street art, and mural projects in European urban contexts ● Cultural heritage documentation and community memory projects ● Urban regeneration and creative placemaking initiatives ● Music heritage and popular culture preservation projects

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community engagement and participatory cultural projects in neighbourhood or grassroots settings
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Publication of partner search

This partner search can be published?*	Yes (This allows more potential partners to find us through Creative Europe Desks).
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