

CONTESTED DESIRES: CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUES

Call for External Evaluation Expert

The Contested Desires: Constructive Dialogues (CDCD) consortium seeks an Evaluation Expert with experience of cultural exchange and participation to act as a critical friend and support the programme evaluation. This freelance role will consist of advising on data collection and contributing to reports, not conducting the evaluation itself, which will be carried out by the consortium.

CDCD is a three-year (2024-2026) programme, co-funded by the EU Creative Europe programme. It engages contemporary artists to consider the problematic legacy of European colonialism reflected in museum collections and heritage sites. CDCD will create space for conversations between artists, cultural professionals, researchers and visitors, exploring stories of the past and present from an intersectional perspective. The multi-partner project tests how artists and arts organisations can work with communities to create dialogue, exhibitions, events, and other activities that contribute to better understandings of the colonial past and its meanings for different citizens in a multicultural Europe.

Applicants should submit a written proposal according to the following Terms of Reference by June 28th, 2024 at 17:00 (CET) at the latest. Proposals must be written in English and sent to migone@ecom.it.

Terms of reference: External evaluation of CDCD project

Background and objectives

Recent years have seen a growth of public momentum calling for equality for all citizens, for a reappraisal of the relationships we have with each other and for the way in which our histories are edited and our heritage is presented. These demands are neither new, nor confined to one country. From the removal of historic statues and proposals for new memorials, to demands for educational reform, the repatriation of looted artefacts and reparations, citizens and experts are rightly questioning the connection between past and present, how national identities are crafted and what structures of domination are maintained.

In this context, the cultural, moral and political meanings of artefacts acquired through imperialism and colonisation are contested from different perspectives. Historical cultures risk being instrumentalised as part of 'culture wars' by populist governments intent on profiting from division. New scrutiny of the colonial past that arose during the pandemic alongside movements such as Black Lives Matter has been reignited by the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the conflict in other parts of the world.

Contested Desires: Constructive Dialogues (2024-2026) commissions 22 contemporary artists to consider the problematic legacy of European colonialism held in museum collections and heritage sites. CDCD will facilitate conversations between artists, curators, researchers and museologists, mindfully exploring the inequalities and gaps in current discourse, and encouraging participants to adopt an intersectional lens. The multi-partner project explores how artists and arts organisations can work with communities to create dialogical exchanges, exhibitions, events, and other activities that can build shared understanding of the colonial past and what it can mean to different citizens of a multicultural Europe. A focus on social inclusion and audiences will mean that each commission is a driver of innovation and change, and the new

interpretations and relationships will have a lasting impact on the partner institutions and their local communities.

A capacity-building programme for museum staff and artists will explore the experience of the commission so that the learning they produce is widely shared in good practice guidance, publications and online. The most important outcome of the project will be to provide heritage professionals with methods, resources and – above all – the confidence to use contested heritage as a focus for constructive, democratic dialogue that reflects the best of European and non-European values and so contributes to cultural reconciliation.

In full recognition of the complexities of heritage, and of how it provides identity and rootedness for some while generating alienation and distress for others, CDCD will co-create spaces for difficult conversations using a bottom-up, collaborative approach based on artistic processes and capacity building activities. To do this, heritage institutions and museums will work in equal partnership with arts organisations, communities and other partners to ask:

- **What kinds of stories are being told and by whom?** How are museums dealing with contested histories and the challenges of telling new stories of nation and Empire in a context of polarised debate? What can we learn from this work? What can museums do to overcome scepticism and ethically address the ways in which new stories, voices and perspectives are received and move towards fuller and more inclusive representations of the past in ways that generate reflection?
- **How can contemporary visual art contribute to this differentiated storytelling?** How are museums working with artists and harnessing contemporary art towards these larger societal aims? What part can contemporary art play in telling new stories in ways that generate reflection and support the inclusive transformation of cultural institutions? How can these activities create bridges with audiences which are normally excluded from cultural participation and engagement?
- **What examples exist of good practice in terms of positive dialogue and change?** How might artists and researchers work to expand the potential for social and cultural impact and what qualitative and quantitative tools and methodologies can be used to better capture it?

The project is implemented by a consortium led by ECCOM (Italy), in partnership with D6:EU (Cyprus), Xarkis (Cyprus), Interarts (Spain), La Bonne (Spain), H401 (Netherlands), Creative Court (Netherlands), the National Museum of Natural History and Science (Portugal), Museo delle Civiltà (Italy), Museo Egizio, [Turin](#) (Italy), Pro Progressione (Hungary), La Fabrique (Tunisia), Biennale des Jeunes Créateurs de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée (Belgium); associated partners D6 Culture in Transit (UK), European Capital of Culture Larnaka 2030 (Cyprus) and Cyprus University of Technology (Cyprus).

External Evaluation Expert tasks

To assure the project's quality, the consortium seeks an External Evaluation Expert to support the project monitoring and evaluation. ECCOM is responsible for the design and implementation of the CDCD project and impact assessment, which includes: 1. Quality assessment of the project, including technical and administrative/financial components such as effectiveness, efficiency and relevance; and 2. Impact evaluation, including assessment of the coherence and progress between the project's objectives and outcomes, evaluation of the main activities, results and overall impact and long-term sustainability, taking into account the SoPHIA model for Holistic Heritage Impact Assessment. The methodology for this is being finalised in an Evaluation Plan. In this context, the role of the Evaluation Expert is to provide an external and independent perspective to the evaluation and involves the following tasks:

- Reviewing relevant documentation and evaluation data generated through the project;
- Participating in online meetings with ECCOM and other partners to consider the evaluation processes and methods, contribute to data interpretation and advise of relevant issues;
- Participating in four in-person project activities and events and drafting short reports (5 pages each) for each of them;
- Reviewing the CDCD Evaluation Plan and 2 internal interim reports drafted by ECCOM and providing feedback regarding the quality and impact assessment of the project;
- Participating in drafting the final evaluation report, including identification of key insights and recommendations for follow-up actions and future projects related to CDCD topics.

The project does not require a defined time commitment, but the contract will specify the maximum input, time scale and deadlines in agreement with the selected expert.

Eligibility criteria

Eligible candidates will fulfil the following requirements:

- Proven professional experience (>5 years) in project evaluation, focusing on quality and outcomes, utilising both qualitative and quantitative methods. While experience in evaluating EU-funded projects and familiarity with participatory approaches to evaluation are desirable, they are not essential.
- Professional experience in projects with a similar focus to CDCD. Participation in projects in the fields of cooperation and development or cultural projects and programmes and familiarity with the Creative Europe programme and objectives are welcome but not essential.
- High interpersonal skills, including the ability to listen actively and provide constructive feedback, to cooperate well with diverse stakeholders and bring a positive, flexible attitude to collaborative problem-solving.
- Residency in an EU country or in the UK.
- Excellent writing and communication skills in English (level C1). All data will be provided in English, and the evaluation process will be carried out and reported in English to the consortium.

- Flexibility to travel (trips will be arranged in advance) during the external evaluation period (September 2025 to December 2026);

Proposal submission

Candidates are invited to submit their proposals, including the following documents:

- Introductory letter, presenting yourself, your experience and suitability, and your interest in the project's themes and the evaluation (max. 2 pages, PDF format)
- CV in English, including contact details and highlighting relevant experience and qualifications (max. 3 pages, PDF format)

Remuneration

A total remuneration of 10,000 euros (VAT and social charges included) is considered for the external evaluator. All travel and accommodation and associated expenses will be covered by the consortium apart from this fee.

Timeline

Proposal submission deadline: June 28th, 2024

Interviews with candidates: July 8th to 12th, 2024

Selection and contact of external evaluator: July 26th, 2024

Start of external evaluation: September 2nd, 2024

End of external evaluation: December 31st, 2026

Should you have any inquiries or require additional information, please contact Pascuala Migone: migone@ecom.it.