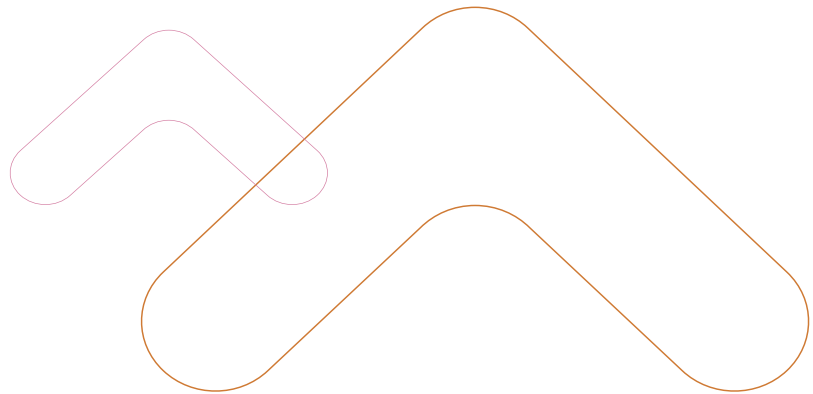
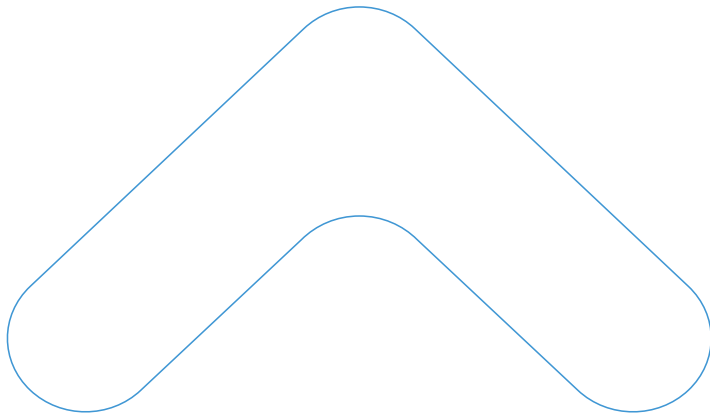




**European Capital  
of Democracy**



European Capital of Democracy

# Call for Applications

February 2022

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# 1. About the Initiative

**We are facing huge challenges in our societies. The pandemic is acting as an accelerator of substantial change. Democracy itself is transforming—as it must to thrive. In this environment, political visionaries and innovators are reshaping how we live together. The European Capital of Democracy (ECoD) Initiative will build a strong network of Cities that will foster participation; a platform for hope, and for exercising the will and power to change our world for the better. Together with citizens, politicians, and institutions we will improve our democracies.**

Recent reports on the state of democracy<sup>1</sup> have been quite sobering. The level of democracy enjoyed by the average global citizen is at an all-time low. But there is hope! Local democracies are proving to be strongholds, increasing democratic resilience and empowerment at the regional level, and providing a plethora of opportunities to be seized and best practice to be shared. **Democracy does work, and we want to act now to spread the word.**

**Cities are incubators for democracy.** They are best placed to safeguard and develop our self-government, protect the rule of law, and uphold human rights. This is because city administrations are closest to the needs, talents, and dynamics of their populations, and their scale makes them agile and flexible. They can tailor programmes, policies, infrastructure, and spatial development to fit their goals and budgets effectively. Cities and their citizens can create opportunity and innovation for improving quality of life.

To identify, address and interlink these spearheads of democratic innovation, **ECoD gemeinnützige GmbH<sup>2</sup> (hereinafter “ECoD NPO”) is creating a Network of Cities** within the Council of Europe member states. By joining forces for democracy, these Cities will share their expertise and their most innovative best practices in democracy promotion at the municipal level and apply for the annual Call for submissions. **One of these Cities will then be selected to take the lead for one year, and hold the title of European Capital of Democracy.**

European Capitals of Democracy will attract leading thinkers, highly motivated visitors, state-of-the-art technology developers, pre-eminent artists, and renowned journalists. Cities, after all, are the historic cradle of democracy. Joining the network and curating projects as a part of this process will in and of itself serve to enhance democratic practice:

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<sup>1</sup> Democracy Report 2021. Autocratization Turns Viral ([www.v-dem.net/democracy\\_reports.html](http://www.v-dem.net/democracy_reports.html), last checked 30 Jan 2022); Global State of Democracy Report 2021: Building Resilience in a Pandemic Era ([www.idea.int/gsod/global-report](http://www.idea.int/gsod/global-report), last checked 30 Jan 2022).

<sup>2</sup> ECoD gemeinnützige GmbH is a non-profit limited liability company established under Austrian federal law and registered under FN 568933t in the Commercial Register of the Commercial Court of Vienna. For specific terms and definitions, please consult the Glossary

- › **Citizens of Europe** have the opportunity to play a hands-on role in developing new forms of democratic politics: as committed representatives in civil society organisations, as jury members, as participants in exchange conferences, and as visitors.
- › **European politicians at all levels of government** are inspired by best practice. They participate in an open, personal network of political innovators. An international, non-partisan network encompasses all levels of policy-making.
- › **Partners of the ECoD Initiative** participate in launching a sustainable institution built to last for decades, which will make a substantial contribution to securing our European way of life.
- › **Cities joining the network** deepen the reach and impact of current and completed democracy projects through a fruitful exchange with citizens and international visitors. High-level events lay the ground for lasting cooperation and co-creation.

Being a member of the ECoD network strengthens a City's reputation and enhances its importance as a centre of education, innovation, and business. Cooperation with universities and think tanks carrying out research into democratic activities and projects is fostered under the umbrella of the Initiative.

The designated European Capital of Democracy, supported by the Innovation in Politics Institute and its partners, will in addition host a series of high-level international events. Significant networking events will bring together leading politicians, experts, and representatives from the world of arts and culture and the media representatives from across Europe and beyond. A thriving active civil society will engage in a deeper dialogue with the city administrations.

The launch event of the ECoD Initiative in September 2020 took place under the auspices and the participation of the Vice-President of the European Commission, Ms Dubravka Šuica, and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Ms Marija Pejčinović Burić.

ECoD is a non-profit limited liability company established under Austrian federal law supported by The Innovation in Politics Institute. Based in Vienna and Berlin, with partners in 15 countries, the Institute constitutes a Europe-wide network dedicated to improving democracy across borders and beyond party lines. You can learn more about ECoD NPO and The Innovation in Politics Institute in the factsheets included as annexes to this document. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with any questions or enquiries.

## 2. Why become a Capital of Democracy?

**A city holding this title will enjoy a wide range of benefits, such as an enhanced international reputation as a centre of education and innovation, the chance to host international events and meetings of leading European politicians, and of course a boost to civic pride. The media coverage will focus on democratic best practice. All cities joining the ECoD network will profit from mutual exchange of knowledge and experience, access to international expertise and cooperation.**

Together with the Innovation in Politics Institute and other partners, the designated European Capital of Democracy will present a year-long programme comprising various projects aimed at strengthening democracy in Europe and beyond. All Citizens are invited to participate and contribute to this endeavour together with city councils, scientific and academic institutions, NGOs, businesses, and associations. Visitors from all over Europe – politicians, experts, artists, citizens, and members of the media – will be invited to observe and to participate in these efforts.

Selected by 10,000 European Citizens, the European Capital of Democracy will host a lively programme, featuring established projects and events. Together with its cooperation partners, various organisations, foundations, and institutions, it will effectively bundle initiatives on topics vital to democracy, such as **Community, Empowerment, Participation, Sustainability** and **Technology**, as core elements of deliberative democracy.

The Innovation in Politics Institute's contributions to the selected European Capital of Democracy's Programme Year are designed to have a substantial impact. They aim to attract large audiences, sponsorship support, and media interest, and the intention is to hold them in every European Capital of Democracy. In addition to presenting and expediting its own outstanding projects, the European Capital of Democracy will also host high-profile international events<sup>3</sup> as part of the Programme Year:

- › The most innovative and outstanding **Participation Projects** will be showcased with best practice from other countries at an **International Exchange** event on citizens' participation.
- › **Climate Protection Action**—an event to support municipalities in their efforts to combat the climate crisis.
- › **The Art of Democracy**, an international exhibition on the theme of democracy featuring renowned artists and curated by preeminent art experts.
- › A politics jam including a **European Youth Parliament session** will attract young changemakers.

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<sup>3</sup> The events will be staged as live, digital or hybrid events according to the prevailing COVID-19 situation.

- › The **International ACT NOW Mayors' Conference** will be brought to the City, where local leaders, members of civil society, experts and young people from Europe and the MENAT region can meet.
- › The annual **Innovation in Politics Awards**, a ceremony for 500 guests, which showcases 90 best practice projects in 9 categories (e.g. Ecology, Democracy, Quality of Life...), will take place in the City.
- › Other partners, organisations and initiatives can also feature in the programme, according to the local institutional environment and the focus of the Programme Year.

To facilitate the management, coordination and preparation of the ECoD programme and accompanying events with the City-Designate, a Steering Board will be established six to nine months prior to the official opening of the ECoD Programme Year. Representatives of ECoD NPO, The Innovation in Politics Institute and the City will coordinate with the relevant stakeholders to plan and monitor the implementation of the individual activities, elements and projects.

ECoD NPO supports the City with its expertise and provides the framework for setting up the Initiative, The Innovation in Politics Institute and other partners contribute their established formats for inclusion in the programme, which create a Europe-wide impact and attract an international audience.

Please note that only the current and completed democracy projects, as laid out in the City's Call submission, have to be financed, organised and implemented by the City.

## 3. Stages and Timeline

**The ECoD Call will be announced in early 2022 and open no later than March - kicking off a unique selection process for the very first European Capital of Democracy.**

The following five stages will ensure a fair and open selection process for the title of European Capital of Democracy.

### **STAGE 1 Declaration of Intent**

With their binding Declaration of Intent to participate in the Call, Applicant Cities provide a technical, organisational and democratic self- evaluation (see prerequisites below).

### **STAGE 2 Admission to the Network**

ECoD NPO screens Declarations for admissibility and completeness, including a check of the prerequisites, and informs the Applicant Cities about the decision.

### **STAGE 3 Submission – Call Application**

After the admission to the network, Member Cities work on their submissions, including a Mission Statement, summary and project descriptions according to the criteria.

### **STAGE 4 Evaluation – Experts’ Jury**

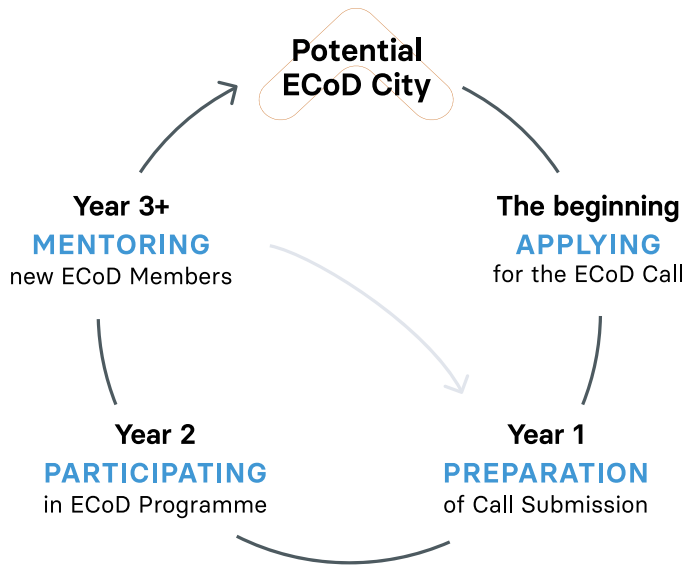
The Experts’ Jury evaluates all submissions, visits the most promising contenders and draws up a Shortlist of max. five Nominee Cities.

### **STAGE 5 Selection – Citizens’ Jury**

The Citizens’ Jury gets the final word on the selection of the Nominee Cities and chooses the City-Designate as the first European Capital of Democracy.

Cities must submit a binding Declaration of Intent by June 2022. ECoD NPO then checks the self-evaluation of technical and organisational prerequisites, which will be concluded by June 2022 latest. From May to September 2022, registered Cities have time to work on their Mission Statement, Executive Summary, current and completed democracy projects and project ideas, which will form part of the upcoming Programme Year.

After a formal check of all complete submissions, the Experts’ Jury will draw up a Shortlist of up to five outstanding contenders (the Nominee Cities) by November 2022. The 10,000-strong Citizens’ Jury will then select the (very first) European Capital of Democracy, to be publicly announced at the beginning of 2023.



Over the subsequent six to nine months, the first European Capital of Democracy will prepare for the Programme Year together with the Innovation in Politics Institute and its partners. The City will be inaugurated in an official opening accompanied by City-wide festivities no later than autumn 2023.

Interested Cities enter the process by applying for admission, will work on their submissions for the Call, and present their current and completed democracy projects and new project ideas as part of the Programme Year in the title-holding City.

### Timeline of the Call for submissions

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>MARCH 2022</b>          | Call for submissions opens   |
| <b>JUNE 2022</b>           | Admission Phase for Applicant Cities ends                                      |
| <b>MAY–SEPTEMBER 2022</b>  | Member Cities work on their submission   |
| <b>OCTOBER 2022</b>        | Experts' Jury evaluates submissions  |
| <b>NOVEMBER 2022</b>       | Experts' Jury presents the Shortlist of Nominee Cities                         |
| <b>DECEMBER 2022</b>       | Citizens' Jury reviews Shortlist and selects the European Capital of Democracy |
| <b>JANUARY 2023</b>        | Designated European Capital of Democracy is announced                          |
| <b>JANUARY–AUGUST 2023</b> | The Programme Year is prepared, coordinated by a Steering Board                |
| <b>SEPTEMBER 2023</b>      | Opening ceremony of the European Capital of Democracy                          |



## 4. Declaration of Intent

### 4.1 Eligibility

#### **Find out if your City can become a European Capital of Democracy.**

This Call is open to Cities with a population of over 100,000 within the member states of the Council of Europe: (Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom), and Kosovo.

In individual cases worthy of special consideration, the ECoD NPO may also admit cities with a population of just under 100,000 to the Call.

Cities are defined as local administrative units with forms of legal self-determination and budgetary autonomy and with an elected or democratically appointed executive leadership, including metropolitan areas and conurbations.

There shall be no scheduled municipal elections in the Applicant City between the Admission Phase and the end of the following ECoD Programme Year (the subsequent 24-27 months). In particular, the Applicant City must confirm that it meets the following three criteria relating to the fundamentals of democracy:

- > Multiple parties compete in free and fair elections that are held on a regular basis in the City.
- > Elected municipal governments can operate without interference from unelected bodies.
- > State institutions, e.g. the legislature, the judiciary and specific oversight agencies, oversee the local government to ensure checks between institutions and to prevent the abuse of power.

Please refer to the **Exclusion Criteria** (see Annexes) before submitting a proposal.

## 4.2 Prerequisites

**In order to fully benefit from holding the title of European Capital of Democracy, Applicant Cities need to be prepared for the challenges that come with implementing the year-long series of events and activities. A non-partisan approach and broad political support are the best basis for a successful implementation of the European Capital of Democracy Programme Year.**

Becoming a European Capital of Democracy is a unique opportunity for Cities to showcase democratic milestones and innovative ideas that take democracy to a new level. A European Capital of Democracy therefore needs to have a City government with a clean track record regarding democratic processes. The **Democracy self-evaluation** (see Annexes) element of the process is based on the Council of Europe's "European Label of Governance Excellence" (ELoGE). Please note that Cities which have ELoGE accreditation are not required to complete the Democracy self-evaluation.

The Innovation in Politics Institute will complement the City's Projects by holding events in established formats such as the Innovation in Politics Awards and the ACT NOW Mayors' Conference in the title-holding City to ensure a Europe-wide impact. To successfully host these events, provide a vibrant stage and foster international exchange, the City needs to meet specified technical and organisational prerequisites. The following overview will help prospective Applicant Cities to identify whether they have the necessary facilities and infrastructure.

The self-evaluation of technical and organisational prerequisites covers, in particular, the following aspects with regards to the ECoD Programme Year (September to August in the respective year after the Call, see Annexes – **Example Programme** for ideas):

➤ **Regular (major) events**

Provide a complete list of events which are regularly held in the City and which would also be held during for the Programme Year.

➤ **ECoD related events**

Provide a complete list of events that could be relevant for the Programme Year, and their connection with the ECoD projects and event formats.

➤ **Facilities and infrastructure**

➤ **Venues**

Provide a list of between five and ten relevant event venues and their availability for each month of the Programme Year.

➤ **Transport**

Describe your City's transportation situation with regard to both ease of accessibility for national and international visitors and transportation within the City. Highlight the months with the highest public transport and road traffic volumes within the Programme Year.

> **Accommodation**

State the direct (within the City area) and indirect (within the local area) accommodation capacities for 3 and 4 star rooms. Mark the months with the highest occupancy rates within the Programme Year.

> **Significant Construction projects and road works**

If applicable, provide an overview of the most relevant and substantial urban and infrastructure projects scheduled for the ECoD Programme Year.

To identify possible bottlenecks, a quick check will be carried out regarding the most complex programme formats and events which attract significant numbers of visitors. It will assess how well the City's infrastructure can cope with set maximum visitor numbers with respect to transportation and accommodation during given timeframes.

## 5. Admission & Phases

**The ECoD Team checks if the Applicant City is suitable for participation in the process, fulfils the formal criteria and meets the organisational and technical prerequisites. Qualified Cities will be admitted to the ECoD Network and officially enter the Submission Phase for the Call. With the admission to the ECoD Network by the ECoD Team, the Applicant City becomes a Member City. Until that time, the process is kept confidential from outside parties.**

In order to assess the fulfilment of the formal criteria, we ask Applicant Cities to upload the specified documents using the Participant Portal. The Applicant City nominates a representative responsible for providing the following documents and information:

### **Admission Phase**

- › Filing of the Declaration of Intent
- › Evidence of support for participation in the European Capital of Democracy Call from the City's highest political representative, e.g. (First) Mayor
- › Self-evaluation of the technical, organisational and democratic prerequisites (online questionnaire)

### **Submission Phase**

- › Adoption of a City Council resolution (or similar) for the participation in the European Capital of Democracy Call
- › Establishment of a representative (single point of contact) for the City
- › Establishment of a project team and its responsibilities
- › Submission of programme proposals<sup>4</sup> (in the predefined form and structure), including an executive summary, comprising details of
  - › mission
  - › current and completed projects
  - › project ideas

All Application submissions that have been in full and on time will, after screening by ECoD NPO, be forwarded to the Experts' Jury for evaluation.

### **Preparation and Implementation Phase (City Designate only):**

- › Confirmation of the representative's power to act and sign on behalf of the City
- › Designation of representatives for the ECoD Steering Board

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<sup>4</sup>The All information must be provided in English (with certified translations provided where necessary), and must be correct and complete, readable, accessible and printable. Proposals must not contain classified information, and must comply with ethical principles, including compliance with the highest standards of research integrity, in particular, avoiding fabrication, falsification and plagiarism.

## 6. Call Submission & Programme

**In order to compete for the title of European Capital of Democracy, Member Cities have to submit a strong Mission Statement, a convincing selection of five proven and innovative democracy projects, and two pitches for new projects in the pipeline, to be co-developed further during the Programme Year.**

### 6.1 Mission Statement

Before laying out the individual proposed activities for the ECoD Programme Year, the City should provide an outline of its aspirations, presented in a compelling Mission Statement. Where does the energy for democratic innovation and drive for engaging more citizens come from? Where does it draw inspiration from?

The Mission Statement is a declaration of what makes your initiatives important. It is intended to guide the actions of the administration and draw in citizens by explaining what the City sets out to accomplish:

- > Keep it short and concise – provide a summary of the City's mission in just a few sentences
- > Think long-term – the Mission Statement is an investment in your City's future
- > Do not make it too limiting – your plans could be relevant to other cities in your country or abroad

Cities should focus on the following four key considerations when preparing their Mission Statements:

- > Value – what is the value to both citizens and public administration?
- > Inspiration – why should citizens want to participate in these projects?
- > Plausibility – make it sound reasonable
- > Specificity – tie it back to the City's activities

The Mission Statement should include:

- > A title and a teaser
- > A brief summary
- > Detailed descriptions of
  - > the City's ambitions with regards to democratic innovation and participation
  - > achievements with regard to democratic innovation, documented by current and completed projects
  - > future challenges, to be addressed in the project ideas

## 6.2 Democracy Projects

The projects submitted by the Cities should make a substantial contribution in the five areas targeted by ECoD Initiative. All projects must therefore tackle issues related to one or more of the five **Dimensions of Democracy** (see Annexes): **Community, Empowerment, Participation, Sustainability** and **Technology**. Please note that at least one of the projects must tackle the issue of climate change.

## 6.3 Current and completed projects

By presenting five of their most ambitious and successful democracy projects, Cities make a valuable contribution to the ECoD Network, and provide the basis for the Programme Year's content. When choosing the projects, it is essential that the projects and their accompanying activities have potential for application on a larger scale elsewhere with a sizeable impact. These projects can either be on-going, in an evaluation phase or successfully completed with defined follow-up measures.

The Member City must provide the following information for each democracy project, paying particular attention to their degree of Collaboration, Exchange, Innovation, Organisation & Output (for details see section 7.1):

- > **Title**  
Informative and compelling
- > **Project type**  
Best practice, event, information campaign, strategy, or tool
- > **Description**  
Concise summary and detailed description of the project
- > **Contribution**  
How does the project contribute to the overall Mission Statement?
- > **Target group(s)**  
Who is this activity targeted at? How many people will it reach? Does the project have potential for application in other parts of the country or abroad?
- > **Collaboration**  
Who are your partners in the development, financing and implementation of this project?
- > **Communication**  
Description of the measures for advertising to and communicating with the target audience. How are these measures monitored and evaluated?
- > **Project setup**  
Which departments and employees are part of the project team? Which external partners are on board and in what roles?
- > **Civil Society**  
Are Civil Society organisations or representatives involved in the project?

› **Duration and time frame**

Is it a one-off, regular or permanent project? When is it running?

› **Budget**

Please provide a breakdown of the project budget.

How is the City funding the project?

## 6.4 Project ideas

The Member City must also convincingly demonstrate how it will ensure substantial democratic progress beyond its current and completed projects during its year as titleholder. To this end, the City describes a minimum of two additional concrete measures that improve local democracy in relation to one of the defined Dimensions of Democracy (see below), to be started within the City's European Capital of Democracy year, and which will have a lasting positive impact on the quality of the local democracy. These project ideas must have the support of the City's council (or equivalent) and be included in the city budget.

The City provides a short written pitch for each project idea, including a self-produced video. The pitch should be structured as follows:

› **Challenge:**

- › Description: What challenges are your citizens facing? Are they unique to your city?
- › Pain point: Of these challenges, what is the single most significant challenge that your citizens face?
- › Key trend: What democratic trend is your project connected with?

› **Solution:**

- › Benefits: What do citizens stop losing out on?
- › Advantages: If citizens decide not to participate in the project and opt for taking the conventional route, what will they miss out on?

› **Impact:**

- › Target: When would citizens use the services that your project provides or become a part of your project?
- › Size: What level of engagement among the inhabitants of your city and the surrounding area could be achieved (how many people)?
- › Traction: What existing data shows there is a need for your project?

› **Execution:**

- › Rollout: How will you distribute and disseminate your project to your citizens?
- › Financing: Can the project be implemented within existing budgets at the planned scale?
- › Future milestones: What is the nearest, most exciting accomplishment that you are aiming for?

› **Support:**

- › What does the project need, e.g. in terms of consulting, financing and partners?

The Innovation in Politics Institute and its partners will support the title-holding City to develop these project ideas during the course of the Programme Year, using innovative and structured methods and tools such as design thinking, local labs or other co-design and co-creation methods/formats (and potentially with financing via third parties and/or institutional partners). In addition to the City's efforts regarding its own projects, events and activities, the Innovation in Politics Institute will showcase the most outstanding European participation and citizens' projects within the scope of its established event/competition formats like the Innovation in Politics Awards and the ACT NOW Mayors' Conference, which will foster international exchange. To generate interest in the core elements of the Programme Year, a lively launch event should take place, co-designed by the City, ECoD NPO and the Innovation in Politics Institute to kick off the series of events, conferences, workshops and exhibitions.

### Programme highlights (example)

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2023</b> | Official opening & citizens' events for the very first European Capital of Democracy         |
| <b>FEBRUARY / MARCH 2024</b>    | Local Labs to expedite democracy project ideas   |
| <b>MARCH - MAY 2024</b>         | Art of Democracy exhibition<br>Innovation in Politics Awards – conference & evening ceremony |
| <b>JUNE / JULY 2024</b>         | Exchange Conference on Climate Change  |
| <b>JULY 2024</b>                | European Youth Parliament  |
| <b>JULY / AUGUST 2024</b>       | Truth, Lies & Democracy Challenge  |
| <b>AUGUST 2024</b>              | Closing Ceremony   |

The Programme Year in the title-holding City forms the heart of the ECoD Initiative, and provides each year with a unique setting and character. Successful implementation of the projects, events and activities, the smooth operation of the events, and close cooperation with the Innovation in Politics Institute and third parties is therefore essential for the launch and implementation of the programme. A joint Steering Board, including representatives of the City Designate, ECoD NPO and The Innovation in Politics Institute, will be set up to plan, coordinate and monitor all aspects of the ECoD Initiative.



## 7. Selection by the Juries

The unique selection process is designed to ensure methodological credibility as well as the adherence to the rules and procedures of the ECoD Initiative.

### 7.1 Experts' Jury – Shortlist selection

The Experts' Jury is made up of highly respected experts and practitioners in the field of political and social science. Its members will assess the level of ambition, innovation and creativity of each Member City's democracy projects based on the fair and transparent selection process, taking particular account of the respective local objectives, circumstances, and priorities of the specific City. Acting as a pre-selection panel, the members of the Experts' Jury audit all of the Cities' submissions, conduct on-site interviews, and draw up the Shortlist of the Nominee Cities. The Experts' Jury will evaluate the organisational capacity and infrastructure required for the implementation of the City's ECoD projects in the following areas:

| CRITERIA             | DESCRIPTION   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>Collaboration</b> | Active partnerships with other organisations, institutions and stakeholders   |
| <b>Exchange</b>      | Communication, dissemination and sharing of local initiatives   |
| <b>Innovation</b>    | Ambition and appeal of the programme and its main activities  |
| <b>Organisation</b>  | Management capacity, project and budget resources   |
| <b>Output</b>        | Planned activities and dissemination measures, and how effectively they will reach the target audiences, media and citizens |

Performance in these areas compared to the ambition and scope of the City's Mission Statement will be crucial in the overall assessment of the submission. The Experts' Jury will seek to make contact with the City if further clarification is required on important aspects relating to the criteria. The Cities are therefore asked to provide relevant references and contacts via the submission platform. To find out more about the current members of the Experts' Jury, visit the **ECoD Initiative website** ([www.capitalofdemocracy.eu](http://www.capitalofdemocracy.eu)).

### 7.2 Citizens' Jury – Final selection

As a living example of participatory practice, a jury of around 10,000 citizens from the member states of the Council of Europe will make the final decision. The Citizens' Jury will select a City from the Shortlist based on its members' considered judgment. Voting takes place online in English via a secure platform. The Citizens' Jury consists of a cross-section of society and it is selected by ECoD NPO to be as representative as possible so that the decision of the Citizens' Jury is transparent, objective, and fair.

## 8. Legal Notice

By submitting the Declaration of Intent, the Participants declare that they are aware of all the contents and legal conditions of the present ECoD Call and its Annexes, which form an integral part of this Call, and that they accept them as unrestrictedly binding at each stage of its participation in the ECoD Initiative.

## 9. Miscellaneous

At each stage of its participation in the ECoD Initiative as a Participating City, the Interested City declares by submitting the Declaration of Intent, that it fully accepts all the contents and legal conditions of the present ECoD Call and its Annexes as binding, as they form an integral part of the Call.

### 9.1 Advisory Board

The Advisory Board serves as an independent sounding board for ECoD NPO and contributes by providing the experience and know-how of its members. It provides advice, suggestions and recommendations regarding the programme and its projects.

The Advisory Board will provide consultation on all relevant ECoD Initiative activities and collect suggested learnings for upcoming European Capitals of Democracy. It will also issue a yearly report and advise on the development of the ECoD Initiative.

For more information and details of the Advisory Board's current members, visit the **ECoD Initiative website** ([www.capitalofdemocracy.eu](http://www.capitalofdemocracy.eu)).

### 9.2 Monitoring

In addition to measuring and tracking all actions and output related to the Call internally, ECoD NPO will appoint a partner institution to provide academic assistance and will constantly monitor and evaluate the European Capital of Democracy Initiative over the years.

### 9.3 Points of Contact

When contacting ECoD NPO's Office, please use the email address **office@capitalofdemocracy.eu** for all requests regarding the Call and the ECoD Initiative. For reasons of professional conduct and impartiality, please refrain from getting in touch with members of the Jury and/or Advisory Board directly.

## 9.4 Sustainability

We recognise that a healthy planet is a prerequisite for upholding our values of human rights, social balance and democracy to be upheld. We, therefore, aim to reduce our carbon footprint by pursuing the objective of net carbon neutrality.

All members and partners of the European Capital of Democracy initiative shall join us on this mission by:

- > making sustainability an important factor in all purchasing decisions and communicating to all suppliers that we seek climate-friendly options
- > avoiding unnecessary travel, choosing low carbon means of transport where feasible and compensating for emissions from air travel
- > using renewable energy to power offices and reducing energy use as far as possible.
- > offering carbon-neutral options as a default
- > reducing the amount of waste to a minimum
- > making all events, activities and formats as green and resource-efficient as possible

## 10. Annexes

Any form of participation in the ECoD Initiative, regardless of the stage of participation and including the present Call, is only possible subject to the binding conditions contained in the following enclosures:

- A. Factsheet: ECoD NPO
- B. Factsheet: The Innovation in Politics Institute
- C. Legal Framework Conditions
- D. Auditing Guidelines
- E. Compliance Guidelines
- F. Confidentiality Agreement
- G. CI/CD Guidelines
- H. Data Security Guideline and Data Processing Agreement
- I. Dimensions of Democracy
- J. Diversity and Inclusion Guidelines
- K. Exclusion Criteria (incl. Conflict of Interest declaration)
- L. Example Programme
- M. Declaration of Intent
- N. State of Democracy self-evaluation

## 11. Glossary

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Advisory Board</b>                | The Advisory Board serves as an independent sounding board for ECoD NPO and contributes with the experience and know-how of its members   |
| <b>Applicant City</b>                | A City applying for admission to the European Capital of Democracy Network and Call by submitting the Declaration of Intent and the self-evaluations.   |
| <b>(ECoD) Call</b>                   | The Call invites Cities to join the ECoD Network and submit their bid to become European Capital of Democracy for a year  |
| <b>Citizens</b>                      | All inhabitants of a city, regardless their age, gender, socio-economic and legal status  |
| <b>Citizens' Jury</b>                | A Jury of 10,000 citizens from all member states of the Council of Europe, to select the next European Capital of Democracy   |
| <b>City</b>                          | Local administrative unit with forms of legal self-determination and budgetary autonomy and an elected or democratically appointed executive leadership, including metropolitan areas and conurbations  |
| <b>Civil Society (Organisation)</b>  | Collectivity of all citizens with political and social commitment and engagement for democracy and the common welfare that is independent from the state (legally organised for a common purpose and committed to public interest)                                  |
| <b>Declaration of Intent</b>         | Declaration of an Applicant City in the form as listed in Annex M.  |
| <b>Democracy Project</b>             | An initiative, project or policy planned or implemented by a City which strengthens democracy.  |
| <b>Democratic innovation(s)</b>      | An innovative (re-)design of political institutions that increase and deepen participation in the political decision-making process   |
| <b>ECoD Initiative</b>               | European Capital of Democracy is a non-profit initiative to strengthen and innovate Democracy in Europe of which this Call forms an integral part. The term ECoD Initiative covers all stages of participation.   |
| <b>ECoD Network</b>                  | A group of Member Cities sharing their experiences and best practices in the most relevant fields of democracy and participation, inspiring each other and multiplying the reach and impact of their innovative projects.   |
| <b>ECoD Team</b>                     | The team that leads the ECoD Initiative   |
| <b>European Capital of Democracy</b> | The title-holding City during its Programme Year as a European Capital of Democracy   |
| <b>Experts' Jury</b>                 | Group of experienced practitioners in the field of democracy, innovation and participation evaluating submissions and creating a Shortlist for the Citizens' Jury   |
| <b>Member city</b>                   | A City that has been admitted to the ECoD Network and the Call  |
| <b>Monitoring</b>                    | Active City support and monitoring during the preparation phase of the upcoming European Capital of Democracy, coordinated by the Steering Board  |
| <b>Nominee City</b>                  | A City that has been added to the shortlist by the Experts' Jury  |
| <b>Open Government</b>               | A comprehensive redesign of politics and administrative activities according to the principles of Public Governance with a focus on transparency, participation, and collaboration  |
| <b>Participants</b>                  | All Applicant Cities, Member Cities, Nominee Cities or City-designates, regardless of the stage of participation. Participants also include legal entities acting in the name of and on behalf of Cities in connection with the ECoD Initiative including the Call. |
| <b>Programme Year</b>                | Period during which the selected city holds the title of European Capital of Democracy, starting with the official opening of the Programme Year.   |
| <b>Shortlist</b>                     | Pre-selection of the five outstanding Member Cities by the Experts' Jury  |
| <b>Social Cohesion</b>               | The creation and preservation of coherence in a community by removing inequalities and promoting welfare  |
| <b>Steering Board</b>                | Project management group for the current ECoD term with representatives of ECoD NPO, The Innovation in Politics Institute and the City  |