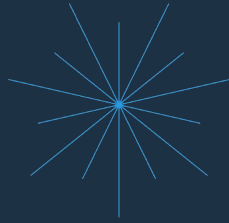


City Workshops | Call for Applications to become ECoD 2026



**European Capital  
of Democracy**

# ECoD in a Nutshell



## We foster Innovation

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The Innovation in Politics Institute and European Capital of Democracy create places to further develop and strengthen democracy.



## We build Networks

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Between citizens, civil society organisations and political decision-makers.



## We make an Impact

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Cities and municipalities are particularly suitable for piloting and rolling out effective measures quickly.

# What does being European Capital of Democracy mean?

- Every year a **different city**
- Applications are evaluated by an **Experts' Jury**
- The winning city is selected by a **Citizens' Jury**
- Title-holding City will host a **Democracy Year** in close cooperation with civil society
- ECoD NPO bring **key events** to the Capital of Democracy
- Member Cities showcase existing and **develop new democracy projects**
- **Civil society plays a crucial role**

# Dimensions of Democracy



## Community

Community projects contribute to remarkable services, protecting the city's inhabitants from harm by future-oriented policies and long-term planning.



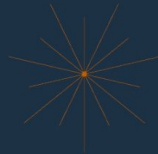
## Participation

Participation projects provide the city's inhabitants with access to a range of tools to become an active part in decision-making processes.



## Technology

Rapidly developing technology will profoundly shape the future of democracy. The opportunities presented by digitisation are infinite and so are the challenges it poses.



## Empowerment

Empowerment projects enable the city to establish and maintain strong partnerships with civil society, academia and other relevant stakeholders.



## Sustainability

Sustainability projects aim to foster an international discourse, supporting citizens and other cities in ensuring that radical climate transformation is a democratic, and not just a technocratic process.

# Which Cities are we looking for?

- **Within Council of Europe** member states + Kosovo
- Population of **over 100,000 inhabitants**
- **Valuing democracy**
  - free, fair and regular elections
  - rule of law
  - independent elected municipal government
- **Implementation capacity**
  - 3 existing democracy projects
  - 3 project ideas
- **Democracy Year capacity**
  - international connection
  - infrastructure
  - venues etc.

*Cities with Municipal elections between ECoD announcement & launch of Democracy Year (March '25 - January '26) undergo a risk assessment by the Experts' Jury and ECoD NPO.*



# ECoD Process



**1. APPLICATION - CALL SUBMISSION**



**2. ADMISSION TO THE NETWORK**

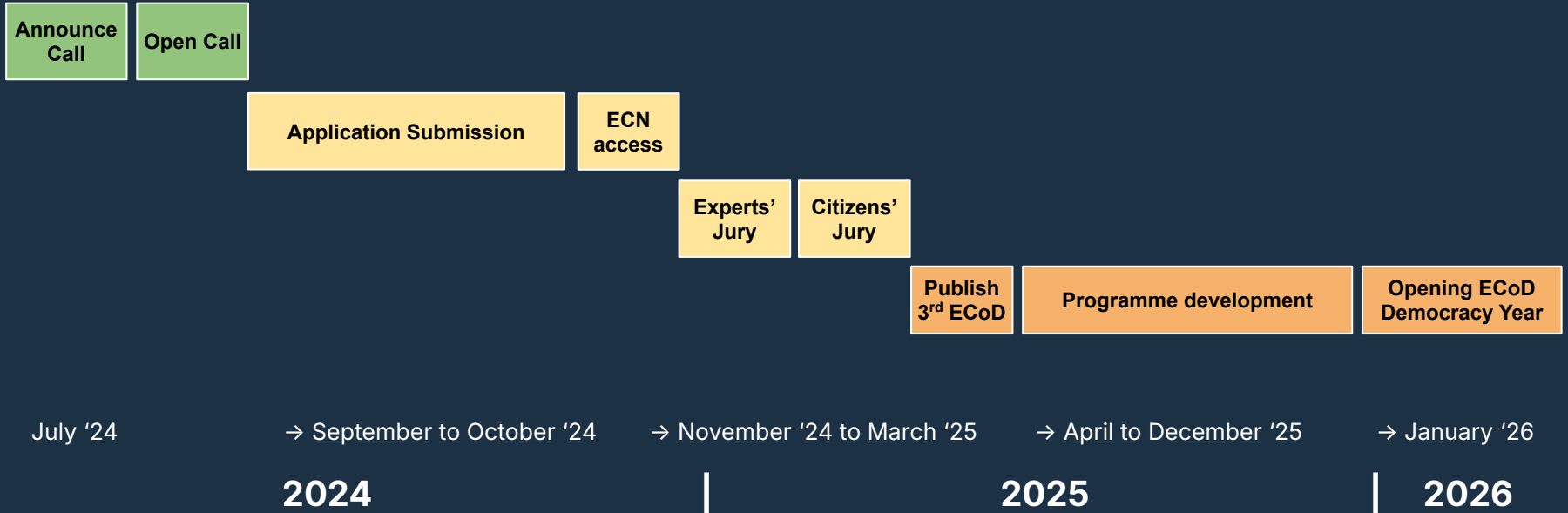


**3. EXPERTS' JURY - EVALUATION (SHORTLIST)**



**4. CITIZENS' JURY - SELECTION**

# Timeline for Cities to become European Capital of Democracy 2026!





# Evaluation Criteria

- **Collaboration:** active partnership with other organisations, institutions and stakeholders
- **Exchange:** communication, dissemination and sharing of local initiatives
- **Innovation:** ambition and appeal of the programme and its main activities
- **Organisation:** management capacity, project and budget resources
- **Output:** planned activities and dissemination measures, how effectively target audiences, media and citizens are reached

These 5 evaluation criteria are assessed in comparison to the **ambition and scope of the City's mission Statement.**

# ECoD City Network

21 Member Cities  
from 13 European  
Countries

Barcelona is the first  
ever European Capital of  
Democracy

In November 2024,  
Vienna takes over!



# European City Network

All Cities that submit a full application become members of the ECoD Network and benefit

from:

- **Collaboration** between member cities at regular in-person meetings
- **Training**, knowledge sharings, peer learning & capacity building
- **Access** to international expertise as well as Democracy Year events
- **Exchange** of best practices in a supportive & inspiring environment
- **Participation** in European Funding Calls, such as the Network of Towns

[Check out our members' profiles here!](#)

# The Democracy Year

## The Winning City Develops & Finances:

- Showcase of existing democracy projects
- New project ideas (pitches)
- Local events & co-finances joint formats (see below)

## ECoD NPO and its Partners Contribute:

- Existing formats, like the Innovation in Politics Awards & ACT NOW Mayors' Conference
- New events, like the Art of Democracy & Truth, Lies & Democracy
- Europe-wide media attention & audience

# Contact Us...

**Stefan Sindelar**  
**CEO, ECoD NPO**

**[shs@capitalofdemocracy.eu](mailto:shs@capitalofdemocracy.eu)**

**Laura Thomas**  
**City Network Manager, ECoD NPO**

**[lt@capitalofdemocracy.eu](mailto:lt@capitalofdemocracy.eu)**

**[Register your interest here!](#)**