

# TANDEM

# WESTERN BALKANS

## **APPLY NOW!**

You and your initiative, organisation, institution or social enterprise can apply until September 20, 2019 (23:59 CET).

### **WHAT IS TANDEM WESTERN BALKANS?**

Tandem Western Balkans is a one-year learning by doing programme that enables cultural operators to kick-start long-term regional collaboration in the Western Balkans. The Tandem platform supports social change through strategic cultural action and is envisioned as a space for project initiators to acquire new skills, develop innovative practices and connect to regional networks.

For our first edition of Tandem Western Balkans, we are looking for cultural managers, activists, architects or artists, as well as young professionals connected to civil society organisations, public institutions or creative enterprises to apply and participate. Applicants might come from a range of diverse backgrounds, from young, small-scale community activators engaged in collectives to experienced curators working in museums. Potential participants share a strong enthusiasm for peer-to-peer learning beyond their own national borders, sectors, artistic disciplines or generations and find joy in connecting with regional counterparts in inspiring trans-national encounters. By joining Tandem Western Balkans, you will be a part of and help build a growing community of deeply engaged cultural, political and social change makers interested in shaping the future of the region in the broader European context.

### **IS TANDEM FOR ME?**

Do you, as an individual from an organisation, local administration or creative enterprise engage in cultural work or community based activities that tackle burning local and regional issues? **Then we encourage you to apply!**

For the upcoming round of Tandem Western Balkans we aim to convene passionate pioneers and their groundbreaking initiatives from different sectors and generations. We are looking for participants whose creative work directly or implicitly addresses burning regional issues, taking into account the wider European context.



Selected Tandem Western Balkans participants are very motivated to explore unconventional ways of working together with a regional partner they don't yet know, and are strongly interested in designing new formats and ideas for cultural-social work that engage citizens in re-shaping their current and future realities.

**WHO IS ELLIGIBLE TO APPLY?**

Individuals engaged with non-profit organisations, public institutions, local authorities, grassroots initiatives, local administrations as well as with creative or social. They have good command of English and are based in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.



**HOW DOES IT WORK?**

Up to 24 applicants and their colleagues are invited to participate in the Tandem Western Balkans Partner Forum from November 12-16, 2019 in Belgrade. During the Partner Forum, they will find new networking opportunities and most importantly – their potential Tandem partner.

Next, these potential Tandem partners apply jointly to take part in the full programme. Their application should include an idea for a collaboration activity and a first sketch of the Tandem partnership they envisage. Once all applications are submitted, 16 participants (8 Tandems) are selected. Each of the 8 collaborations will benefit from a placement opportunity at their Tandem-partner's organisation abroad, three peer-to-peer learning and networking meetings as well as financial and mentoring support for prototyping collaboration ideas.

**➤➤ If you like what you have read so far and you are interested in applying, please continue to read the full call.**

### **WHAT IS TANDEM?**

Tandem is a collaboration programme that strengthens transnational connections among civil society actors in Europe and beyond. It offers a space to build sustainable relationships that can grow through shared interests, enthusiasm for creative discovery and the joy of making things happen together. By supporting proactive local initiatives to reach out and connect across borders, Tandem aims to support meaningful change locally. We strongly believe that mutual engagement with colleagues from other countries inspires the cross-pollination of new ideas conceived locally, generating new regional solutions that can have a long-lasting impact on a higher pan-European level.

The programme was co-created by the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) and MitOst in 2011 and so far has supported more than 600 cultural organisations, local administrations and socially orientated enterprises from over 300 local - urban and rural - communities inside and outside the EU.

### **WHY TANDEM WESTERN BALKANS?**

The political geography of the Western Balkans today was forged in the 1990s. This emergence was highly troubled, as reflected in the bloody wars that marked the breakup of Yugoslavia and the suboptimal transition from authoritarian, single-party regimes to liberal democracy that in most places still has not taken deep root. While sweeping ethnic violence no longer seems to be a threat, ethnic tensions still play a significant role in the politics of the region, distracting from chronic problems of corruption, unemployment, poverty, and resulting mass emigration. Along with governments' lack of respect for human rights, freedom of the media and judicial independence, this loop makes it ever more difficult to steer clear of populism. Furthermore, the region's position as a kind of eastern entry-point for refugees and other migrants seeking to reach the European Union has not only led to tensions, militarisation of borders, rising xenophobia and further stretching of already underfunded social welfare systems, but also been used as chip by authoritarian politicians seeking favours from the EU as if it were a game.

Yet, initiatives on the ground are experimenting with innovative projects that try to reshape the destructive patterns and offer alternatives for addressing these burning issues in their local and regional working fields. They show imaginative power for finding new answers and fresh approaches to the current challenges in our societies. They put forward pioneering ideas, new alliances and the alternative financing and collaborative working models necessary to influence change in the prevailing system.

These are exactly the initiatives we want to welcome to the first round of Tandem Western Balkans, where 16 multi-sectoral cultural and social initiators and their organisations will step up their strategic game. They will act and reflect on their practices and explore together how they can further contribute to safeguarding the idea of a stable, connected Western Balkans region rooted in common values, strategies and goals.

### **WHAT IS TANDEM WESTERN BALKANS?**

Tandem Western Balkans is a localized Tandem, tailor-made and co-created with local partners, among them one alumna organisation. All partners are strategically, as well as practically, working on ideas and projects that offer space for reflecting on the political, economic and social realities of the region, taking into consideration the wider European context.

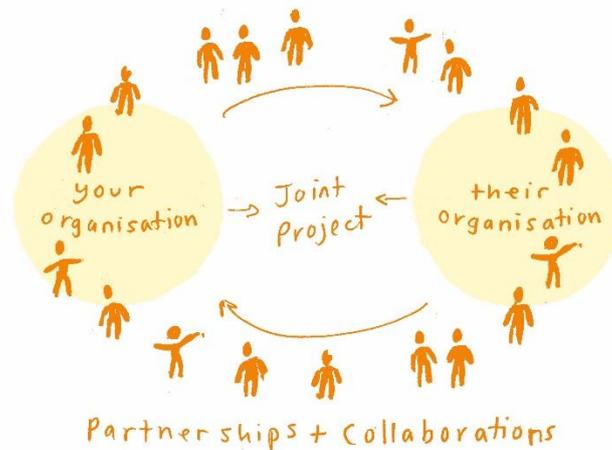
It is a one-year learning by doing programme that enables creative initiatives to kick-start long-term collaboration on a regional level. The programme offers participants a working placement with a partner abroad and the chance to engage their organisations in a joint innovation or strategic development project of their choice. Up to 24 participants gain international know-how while realising up to 8 Tandem pilot projects that serve as prototypes for future tactical collaborations. Obtaining new insights from the region and beyond strengthens participants' impact locally and increases their operational and financial resilience.

### **HOW DOES IT WORK?**

For one year, up to 24 participants from 6 countries of the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia) will form up to 8 cross-border Tandems. In November 2019, participants and their colleagues join the Tandem Partner Forum where they can form a new regional partnership with another participant of their choice. After the Partner Forum, a jury will select the 8 most promising Tandem proposals for participation in the main programme phase.

Throughout the following year, selected participants are hosted in a work placement at their new Tandem partner organisation where they become directly involved in their partners' organisational working environments and get hands-on insights into local socio-economic, political and cultural realities. The placement provides participants with the necessary working time for co-designing, testing and realising their pilot co-initiatives. Each Tandem

will receive modest start-up funding (€ 3,000) to bring their idea to life. At the end of the programme, outcomes will be showcased locally and in a presentation organised by Tandem.



Project initiators from the 8 Tandems selected will attend Tandem group meetings (at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the process) to facilitate mutual exchange of collaboration experiences with all other programme participants. The programme team will individually accompany and mentor all 8 Tandem collaborations from inception to completion. Following the programme, participants and their organisations will be able to build on viable regional relationships to scale up their Tandem pilot ideas towards broader impact. At the same time, participants will become part of the growing Tandem network, connecting them to cultural and social change makers all over Europe and beyond.

### WHO IS IT FOR?

We are looking for project initiators (managers, activists, architects, researchers, educators, public servants, entrepreneurs, curators, artists...) representing civil society organisations, public institutions, non-profit initiatives, local administrations or social enterprises who:

- ✦ Engage in cultural activities that tackle political, social or economic challenges or reflect on cultural or societal questions locally, regionally and/or beyond;
- ✦ Design new constructive formats for engaging people in re-shaping the local environment;
- ✦ Explore unconventional ways of working on a small scale while contributing to larger questions of public good;
- ✦ Develop creative solutions for sustainable development of their communities, cities or regions that are based on local needs;
- ✦ Are highly motivated to extend their cultural work to new working areas and expand their perspective;

- ✦ Are interested in finding new structural solutions, strategic development opportunities and alternative financing models for their organisations;
- ✦ Are ambitious to engage in strategic and lasting cooperation across national, cultural and mental borders;
- ✦ Are early-to-mid career staff members with some decision-making responsibilities and/or senior professionals who are strategically involved with the core mission of their organisation;
- ✦ Are socially committed, empathic, highly motivated, dynamic, open-minded personalities;
- ✦ Are eager to experiment, ready for structural change, seize new opportunities, and have the courage to take risks and fail forward;
- ✦ Have sufficient skills, experience and resources to engage in an intense international learning and reflection process that requires a minimum time investment of 10 working weeks throughout a one-year-long process, and are fluent in English;
- ✦ Are based in one of the 6 Western Balkans countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia).

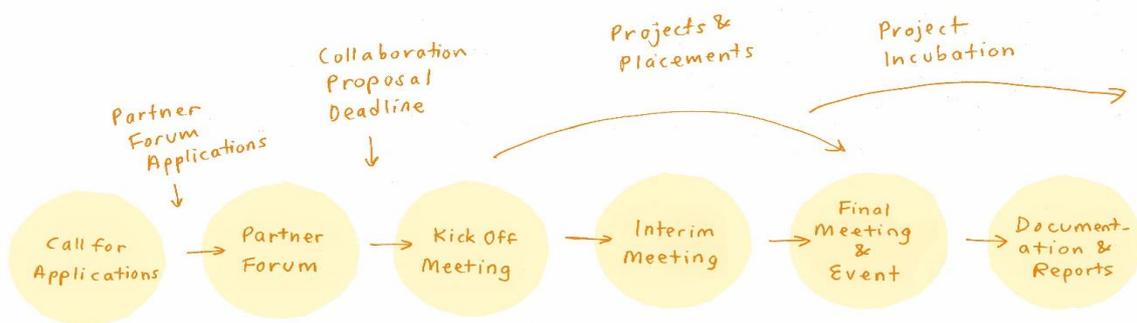
#### **WHAT DO WE OFFER?**

- ✦ Participation in a Partner Forum with up to 24 participants from Western Balkans (one applicant per organisation for the whole meeting, plus one colleague for the last two days of the meeting)
- ✦ 10 days abroad for a working placement at a new partner organization
- ✦ 3 group meetings, including peer-to-peer learning sessions and workshops with experienced trainers on organisational development
- ✦ Reimbursement of travel costs and living expenses during project events and placements
- ✦ € 3,000 start-up funding for testing a shared pilot collaboration idea
- ✦ Expert-facilitated mentoring of pilot collaboration initiatives from inception to completion
- ✦ A public showcase event to present the outcomes of all pilot collaboration initiatives
- ✦ Access to a growing Tandem alumni network of cultural initiatives across Europe and its neighbourhood

#### **MAIN PROGRAMME EVENTS INCLUDE:**

- a 4-day Tandem Partner Forum in Belgrade, November 12-16, 2019
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- a 3-day kick-off meeting including workshops in Skopje, February 2020

- >> self-organised vocational placement at individual Tandem partner locations across the region between December 2019 and October/November 2020
- >> a 3-day interim meeting in Prizren, May 2020
- >> a 3-day final meeting in Sarajevo, October/November 2020



## HOW DO WE SELECT PARTICIPANTS?

Selection of Tandem candidates to the Partner Forum is based on the quality of their individual applications. The programme team and partner representatives will preselect up to 24 project initiators from Western Balkans whose organisations and initiatives represent a balanced mix of working fields, professional backgrounds, strategic interests, original ideas and the socio-economic challenges they address. The deadline for submitting applications to participate in the Tandem Western Balkans Partner Forum is September 20, 2019 (23:59 CET). Successful candidates will be informed by mid October.

At the Partner Forum (mid November 2019), the Tandem team will guide all 24 participants and their colleagues through an interactive mix of informal matchmaking and presentation sessions. All candidates will have sufficient time to identify and get to know their potential Tandem partner before they actually form pairs and start drafting a concrete proposal for their collaboration plans and pilot initiatives. In the first two days, the applicant takes part in the Partner Forum individually. In the last two, her colleague joins the Forum to test the new-found partnership and assist with the Tandem application. Shortly after the Partner Forum, potential Tandem pairs will submit their written proposals for assessment. The second selection process will be carried out by an external programme jury who will choose the 8 most promising Tandem proposals for participation in the main programme phase.

## FURTHER READING

- 📌 Mirror Images: Cultural Collaboration and Civil Society: an essay by Francois Matarasso reflecting on the impact of the Tandem programme on participating organisations and individuals.
- 📌 The Tandem Approach to Social Innovation: an introduction to the tools and methods used in Tandem to create change.

**The deadline for submitting your application is Friday, 20 September 2019 (23:59 CET). Do you want to know more? Browse the Tandem website, read the FAQ or contact Marta Klepo, project manager or Anton Sienknecht, project assistant at MitOst in Berlin.**

M: [klepo@mitost.org](mailto:klepo@mitost.org)

M: [sienknecht@mitost.org](mailto:sienknecht@mitost.org)

T: (+49) (0) 30 31 51 74 88

W: [www.tandemforculture.org](http://www.tandemforculture.org)

F: @TandemforCulture

*Tandem is a programme developed by the [European Cultural Foundation](#) (Amsterdam, Netherlands) and [MitOst](#) (Berlin, Germany). [Tandem Western Balkans](#) is co-financed by [European Cultural Foundation](#) and [Open Society Foundations](#). It is implemented together with the [Balkan Museum Network](#) (Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina), [Balkans let's get up](#) and [Centar za kulturnu dekontaminaciju](#) (Belgrade, Serbia), [Lumbardhi Foundation](#) (Prizren, Kosovo) and [Jadro](#) (Skopje, North Macedonia) as conceptual and organizational partners.*