

European Commission and European Investment Fund announce new coronavirus measures for businesses under the €251 million Cultural and Creative Sectors Guarantee Facility

The European Investment Fund (EIF) and the European Commission are launching new coronavirus support measures under the Cultural and Creative Sectors Guarantee Facility (CCS GF) to enhance access to finance for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and Small Public Enterprises in the cultural and creative sectors.

- The European Investment Fund (EIF) and the European Commission are launching new COVID-19 support measures under the Cultural and Creative Sectors Guarantee Facility (CCS GF)
- Enhanced guarantee terms under the CCS GF for the benefit of over 2,500 businesses active in the cultural and creative sectors impacted by COVID-19
- Call for Expression of interest including the updated terms launched today.

In concrete terms, the new measures will incentivise financial intermediaries to provide more flexible terms and conditions to SMEs and Small Public Enterprises, in order to alleviate the resulting working capital and liquidity constraints caused by the COVID-19 crisis. EIF will provide guarantees and counter-guarantees to financial intermediaries to continue providing financing to SMEs and Small Public Enterprises hit by the economic consequences of the coronavirus pandemic.

The new features will be accessible to existing financial intermediaries already working with EIF as well as new providers, supporting more than 2,500 companies. Existing financial intermediaries can access the COVID-19 support measures without having to submit a new application, while new financial intermediaries can file an application via the open call for expression of interest available on EIF's website.

To-date, EIF has made available EUR 1.55bn of debt financing for CCS and has supported 2,071 enterprises in the cultural and creative sectors across Europe, providing valuable support across a wide range of the cultural and creative sub-sectors including – news media, audiovisual, design, visual arts, music or architecture.

European Commissioner for Internal Market, Thierry Breton said:

The social and economic shock caused by the coronavirus pandemic is unprecedented in our generation. The creative and cultural sector has been particularly hard-hit a sector that touches our daily lives and helps to form our opinions, values, and our culture. That is why the revision of this financial tool is vital, to help this industry more easily access financing and thus weather the current storm.

EIF Chief Executive, Alain Godard said:

Now more than ever SMEs in the cultural and creative sectors need support in accessing affordable debt financing for their projects. We all know the importance of the cultural and creative sectors and we are acutely aware of the difficulties these sectors face, particularly during economic and financial crises. This is why we are launching a new set of measures to ensure business support and mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the economy.

This announcement follows up on the Commission's commitment of 13 March to bring immediate relief to hard-hit enterprises and is part of the package of measures announced by the EIB Group on 16 March to rapidly mobilise support for Europe's SMEs and mid-caps.

Next steps

The CCS GFCOVID-19 Support Measures will be made available to the market from August 2020 but retroactive as of 1 April 2020 and rolled out based on an amended CCS Call for expression of interest published on EIF website.

Financial intermediaries with existing (counter-)guarantee agreements under the Cultural and Creative Sectors Guarantee Facility will be able to also benefit from enhanced guarantee terms via amendments to their agreements upon their request.

CCS enterprises will be able to apply directly to their local banks and lenders participating in the scheme, which will be listed on www.access2finance.eu.

The Commission and the EIB Group will continue to work on additional measures and will use all the tools at their disposal to help contain the coronavirus pandemic and address its economic consequences.

Background information

The **European Investment Fund** (EIF) is part of the European Investment Bank group. Its central mission is to support Europe's micro, small and medium-sized businesses by helping them to access finance. EIF designs and develops both venture and growth capital, guarantees and microfinance instruments which specifically target this market segment. In this role, EIF fosters EU objectives in support of innovation, research and development, entrepreneurship, growth and employment.

About the Cultural and Creative Sectors Guarantee Facility and Creative Europe

Set up under the cross-sectoral strand of the Creative Europe programme and supported by the Investment Plan for Europe, the Cultural and Creative Sectors Guarantee Facility is the first EU financial instrument specialised on the support of the cultural and creative sectors and covering such a wide range of cultural and creative sub-sectors. Creative Europe is a 7-year programme (2014-2020) which has a budget of EUR 1.46 billion for the duration of the period. The objective of Creative Europe is to promote cultural diversity, encourage the circulation of European culture and creativity and strengthen the competitiveness of the cultural and creative sectors. For additional information refer to EIF's Cultural and Creative Sectors Guarantee Facility (CCS GF)

For more information:

European Coordinated Response on Coronavirus

Coronavirus website

EIB Website

EIF Press Release

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