

Access City Special Mention Award 2019 – Guidance Note for applicants for the “European Year of Cultural Heritage” award

Please read these guidelines carefully before you register. You will find here all the necessary information that will help you fill in the sections in the application form correctly and describe your activities successfully.

BASIC INFO

Language: Preferably, English, but French and German will be accepted.

Mode of delivery of applications: [via the on-line tool](#)

Deadline: 16 September 2018, midnight Brussels time

HOW TO FILL IN THE APPLICATION

Your application should be written as clearly and concretely as possible so the national and European jury will be able to appreciate your efforts in the area of accessibility. Please focus on **facts and numbers**. Whenever it is possible give **examples** including **qualitative and quantitative data**. Make sure that you have **clearly presented** your **approach and strategy** in accessibility and that you have underlined all **innovative and extraordinary activities** that led you to success in this area. Indicate the timeframe of the activities: when they were launched, what the future developments will be.

The indicated maximum number of characters available for each reply includes spaces.

DEFINITION

Access to the cultural heritage comprises physical and intellectual access both to the containers (buildings, infrastructures, means of arrival and egress, services etc.) and to the contents (both physical, e.g. museum exhibits, descriptions, captioning and books, and virtual, e.g. multimedia installations, strategies of storytelling, interaction and experience-sharing, as well as online materials pertaining to the cultural heritage itself). For the purposes of this award, "accessibility" is construed as comprising both of these vital elements. Accessibility is about removing and preventing barriers which hinders persons with disabilities, including those with physical, psycho-social, intellectual and sensorial disabilities, in their full and effective participation in and enjoyment of cultural heritage on an equal basis with others.

A/ CITY IDENTITY

Short description of the cultural heritage of a city

Please include here some basic information about the cultural heritage of the city, its morphology and history as the accessibility of its cultural heritage sites and institutions needs to take account of these aspects.

Provide a brief description of the main cultural heritage sites and institutions (museums, monuments, archives, libraries, archaeological sites, historic theatres and other places, structures and venues of historic or cultural value such as squares or gardens etc.) in the city, identify the main accessibility solutions available for improving access and allowing everyone to fully enjoy the cultural experience, as well as key challenges faced to implementing these.

B/ SCOPE OF THE INITIATIVES

For each initiative/action/programme include its aim, objectives, beneficiaries, and partners, start date and end date, results, their sustainability so far and impact on future initiatives. Demonstrate the global approach and the ambitious vision for the future in tackling accessibility. Where possible, quantify the level or percentage of accessibility in display rooms, areas of a site, external landscape and gardens, interpretive information, public facilities, public transport, parking, the link with the city's accessible infrastructure, work environments, websites, buildings, public administration locations etc.

Description of initiatives in the following 4 areas of accessibility and their interrelation:

1. Built environment, public facilities and on-site services

Please describe how the accessibility of the heritage sites has been improved/ensured and to what extent: accessibility of the entrance, paths, staircases, buildings and natural sites. Please describe how this fits into the surrounding environments, describe how these innovative solutions ensure equal access and how they comply with heritage values and history.

Please describe the facilities available at each site (resting areas, toilets, cafés, shops, etc.), including resting facilities and indicate to which extent they are accessible, their frequency and strategic location along the path of the visit. Please illustrate how accessibility is reflected and integrated in these services. Please include whether staff have had proper disability-related training and if specific facilities are able to accept all types of disabilities (e.g. if the café caters for specific dietary needs).

2. Accessibility to transport and related infrastructure

Please describe measures related to the car parks, public transport, the accessibility of the transport or vehicles used at the site and other measures that enable access to the site. Is there assistance and guidance in these modes of transportation? Are the accessible transport solutions inclusive in addition to accessible?

3. Information and communication, including information and communication technologies

a. Access to information to plan the visit

Please describe the accessibility measures related to information to plan the visit, for example: opening hours, information about ease of reaching the heritage sites, accessibility of the sites and their facilities, accessible parking features, accessibility to information about ancillary activities (e.g. guided tours), their programmes and their accessibility measures. Please also describe the systems through which visitors can obtain this information (websites, social media, tourist information points and accessibility measures related to these systems).

Some questions that should be answered in advance of a visit through the systems mentioned above: Is a person able to visit the entire site without assistance? Is there assistance available? Will the entire collection be accessible? How much time is needed to complete the visit? To what extent can I interact with the cultural heritage contained in the venue? May I participate in workshops, conferences or educational activities? May I enter with a service animal? Are there any services available during the visit, places to rest, food, toilets etc.?

Please describe how visitors can easily access information about the different sites in the city and how accessible this information is.

b. Access to on-site information

Please describe how you ensure that information for guidance, including during emergency situations, inside the heritage sites is accessible (e.g. signage systems and wayfinding in general, maps, icons, colour coding, audio messages, and all that is needed to ensure visitors are able to guide themselves). Please describe whether communications solutions are provided the use of guides using sign language or availability of sign language interpreters) and if new technologies are used in accessible ways (e.g. mobile apps, web pages, audio and visual guides).

Some questions that need to be answered while on site: Is a person with disabilities able to visit the entire site or only the easy access areas? Will the assistance be proactively provided? Will the person with disabilities be able to access to terraces, external landscape or gardens? Are there step-free / barrier-free routes to visit points or objects of interest and collection highlights? Will the person with disabilities find benches and chairs to rest along paths, routes and trails? How much time is needed to complete the visit? Is there a map showing the place and directions to any accessible services during the visit, places to rest, food, toilets Will the services (e.g. flexible seats and large print menus in cafes and restaurants, etc) be accessible?

4. Accessibility to the cultural experience

Please describe measures for enabling access, explore and interact with each site's official information for each site, for instance: the accessibility of multimedia information, websites and applications that provide cultural context, the accessibility of cultural and contextual information about the cultural heritage site and its content, provision of assistive technology and inclusive ICT resources for cultural information.

Please keep in mind not only accessibility to the content but of the knowledge of it, allowing a better experience and understanding of the architectural, archaeological or artistic value and significance of cultural heritage, whether physically or digitally (e.g. information in Braille, large print, easy-to-read, pictogram formats). Please describe if there are alternative sensory solutions (e.g. tactile pictures or description of music).

Are the interpretive tools I will have at disposal available in accessible formats (braille, tablets, accessible apps, tactile models, easy to read, captions, guided tours, "meet the director/author"). To what extent can I interact with the cultural heritage contained in the venue? (e.g. tactile experiences, possibility to comment on the visitor experience in an accessible format, accessible workshop or "meet the director/author" events)? Are there virtual representations or alternatives to know more about artworks/points of interest with limited accessibility/barriers to access?

Please **explain how all these areas relate and interconnect to each other** in a seamless manner for the user so that they can have a coherent and complete accessible and inclusive experience.

C/ OWNERSHIP/LEVEL OF COMMITMENT

Describe your overall approach to accessibility and how the policy is implemented.

Please start describing the legal and policy framework in which your specific policies and measures are set. Are there national/regional/local laws, plans or regulations? Have you used guidelines or standards? Which ones? How do you monitor accessibility? Who is responsible? Is there a mechanism for visitors to complain if accessibility barriers are encountered? What do you do with this feedback and how do you remedy these problems?

Please demonstrate the policy on accessibility carried out at your site by presenting for instance: the inclusion of accessibility in a coherent strategy framework to implement/coordinate/monitor accessibility actions, the responsible department(s), the main actors involved, initiatives by the private sector (if any), resources and staff allocated, the monitoring and evaluation mechanism and if the city has carried out a cost-benefit analysis on implementing accessibility.

D/ IMPACT

Please include quantitative and/or qualitative data to support the impact and effectiveness of your initiative and the standards it sets. You are free to upload links, documents or audio-visual material (films or pictures) that demonstrate the results of the initiative and the changes that have resulted from it. The impact assessment must refer to initiatives mentioned in the Section "Scope of activities".

→ How has the sites' accessibility policy improved access for disabled persons to the site on an equal basis with other visitors?

Please provide examples as well as qualitative and quantitative data. It is important to mention project(s) - if any - involving people with intellectual disabilities.

→ Do you ask for feedback from visitors on accessibility?

E/ QUALITY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF RESULTS

1. How do you ensure the quality and sustainability of accessibility measures beyond minimum standards placed by legislation?

The quality of results is defined in terms of improvements made to the level of accessibility and feedback through qualitative evaluations carried out in consultation with visitors. Please, describe how you check compliance with standards and legislation and provide information on what you do on accessibility beyond compliance with minimum legislative requirements. You may also indicate whether your initiatives are related to any local, regional, national and European actions.

Where applicable, please present the evaluation and monitoring mechanisms set up in your city as well as the resources allocated.

2. What are your plans and initiatives to continue these efforts in the future?

Please describe and indicate the time-frame if possible. Please describe if you are receiving public or private funding to implement accessibility. Please indicate how accessibility would be monitored and maintained in a sustainable manner when funding specifically intended for accessibility is no longer available.

F/ INVOLVEMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND RELEVANT PARTNERS

1. Please describe the involvement of persons with disabilities, their representative organisations, and accessibility experts and other experiencers/stakeholders in the planning, implementation and maintenance of city's policies and initiatives aimed at increased accessibility of its cultural heritage.

Please describe these activities by providing examples. Where possible, include the views of persons with disabilities on the accessibility of the site and if this is done in a structured way.

2. Do you carry out awareness raising or information activities around accessibility? Do you exchange and share experiences and good practices with others at local, regional, national and/or European level?

Please give examples; you may also mention your membership of different kinds of organisations related to accessibility or you may have a consultative body of persons with disabilities, etc.

G/ WHY DOES YOUR CITY DESERVE THE AWARD?

Please provide a short presentation of your overall accessibility policy and actions. Explain why your results and your accessibility policy are extraordinary and why you believe your site deserves the Award.

Please state what makes your site unique. You may indicate what makes your accessibility policy distinctive and which measures are especially worthy of promotion as good examples for others.

H/ SUPPORTING MATERIAL

In addition to the information provided in this form, you are invited to upload – or send links to – a 10-slide PowerPoint presentation highlighting and illustrating (with pictures) the strong points of your application.

You can upload one file (maximum size of 10 MB) or one link. Accepted file formats are: doc, docx, rtf, pps, ppsx, ppt, pptx, xls, xlsx, pdf, zip, gif, jpeg, jpg and png. You can upload files in your national language. All files that are uploaded as support material must be appropriately named. The file name should be in English and should make it clear what the file represents or contains.

You may want to provide additional brief information about the content of the supporting documents in the field of the application form under this section.

I/ CONTACT PERSON, WEB LINKS AND POSTAL ADDRESS

Provide here all necessary contact details for the person in your administration responsible for this application.

Please include also links to your administration's website and, if available, to pages on disability and accessibility.

IMPORTANT: Please provide the postal address to which the Access City Award brochure and information about future Access City Award editions should be sent.