

**Mobility**

**First!**

A travel grant for artists  
and cultural professionals  
in Asia and Europe

# **Application Guidelines**

**2020**

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# Overview

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The [Asia-Europe Foundation \(ASEF\)](#) promotes understanding, strengthens relationships and facilitates cooperation among the people, institutions and organisations of Asia and Europe. ASEF enhances dialogue, enables exchanges and encourages collaboration across the thematic areas of culture, education, governance, economy, sustainable development, public health and media.

With culture being one of ASEF's priority areas, [Mobility First! – ASEF Cultural Mobility Initiative](#) – our travel grant for artists and cultural professionals, supports the mutual cultural practice of those working in the arts.

We invite eligible arts practitioners from Asia and Europe to apply to our periodic competitive open calls through an individual application. International travel support is then granted to selected cultural professionals in Asia and Europe to participate in activities that are integral to their professional development; that would initiate a multiplier effect to others and benefit the society. Mobility support is provided to selected applicants for travel from Asia to Europe and Europe to Asia.

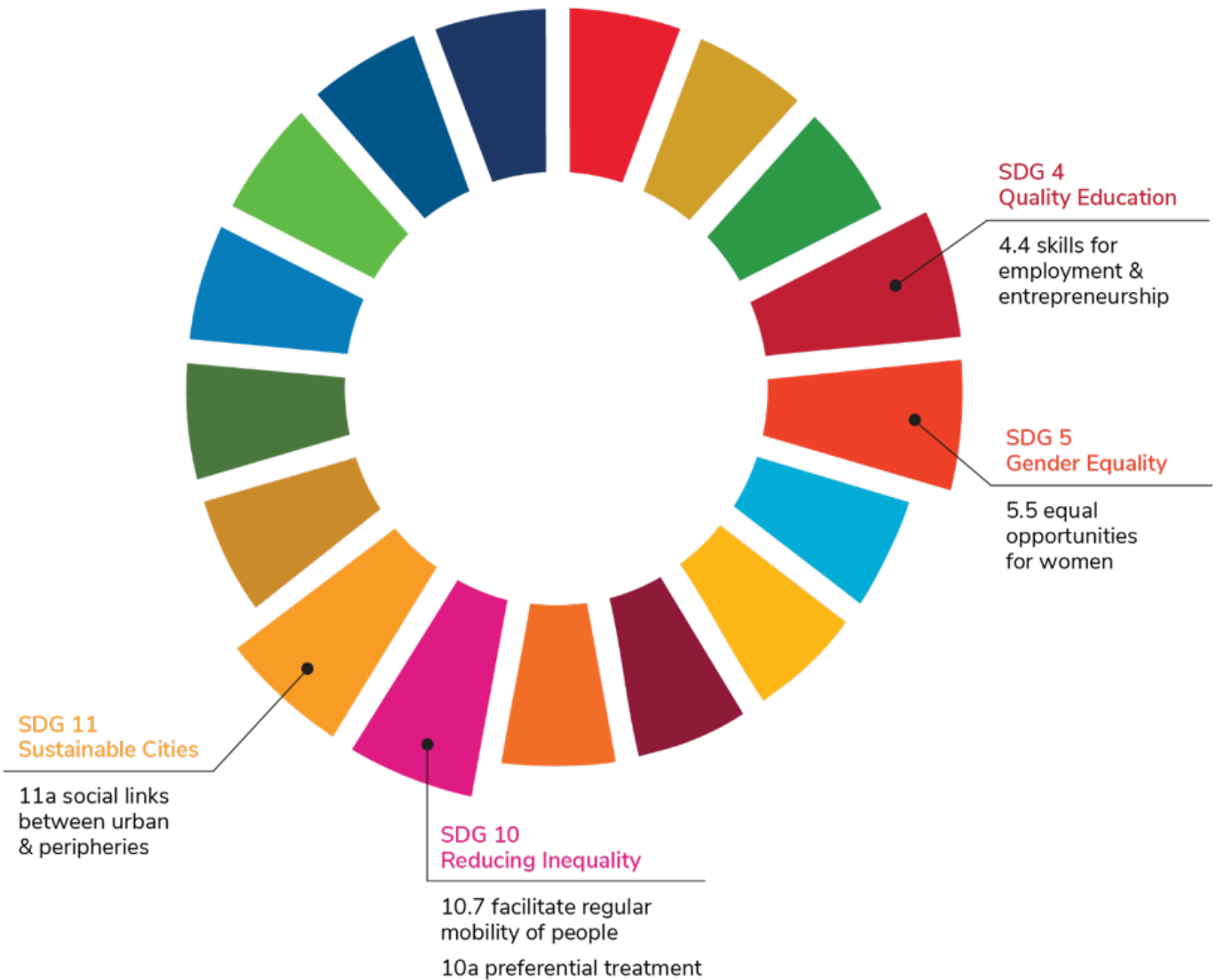
In 2017, *Mobility First!* was recognised in [UNESCO's Reshaping Cultural Policies Report \(2nd edition\)](#), as a “success story” in bridging existing funding gaps to support cultural mobility in the Asia-Asia and Asia-Europe contexts.

ASEF's *Mobility First!* grant is publicly funded by 51 Asian and European countries, the European Union and the ASEAN Secretariat in the framework of the [Asia-Europe Meeting \(ASEM\)](#), an intergovernmental process established in 1996 to foster dialogue and cooperation between Asia and Europe.

2020 marks the fourth year of *Mobility First!* and to date, we have supported **312** cultural professionals to facilitate cultural exchange between 48 ASEM countries.

Have a look at the testimonials from our [2018](#) and [2019](#) *Mobility First!* grantees.

*Mobility First!* also contributes to the pursuit of the United Nations' [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), in particular:



# About ASEM

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The [Asia-Europe Meeting \(ASEM\)](#) is an intergovernmental process established in 1996 to foster dialogue and cooperation between Asia and Europe. Presently it comprises 53 Partners: 30 European and 21 Asian countries, the European Union and the ASEAN Secretariat. ASEM addresses political, economic, financial, social, cultural, and educational issues of common interest in a spirit of mutual respect and equal partnership.

The initial ASEM Partnership in 1996 consisted of 15 EU Member States and 7 ASEAN Member States plus China, Japan, Korea and the European Commission.

The ASEM Summit is a biennial meeting between the Heads of State and Government, the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the Secretary-General of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

# About ASEF

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The [Asia-Europe Foundation \(ASEF\)](#) promotes understanding, strengthens relationships and facilitates cooperation among the people, institutions and organisations of Asia and Europe. ASEF enhances dialogue, enables exchanges and encourages collaboration across the thematic areas of culture, education, governance, economy, sustainable development, public health and media.

ASEF is an intergovernmental not-for-profit organisation located in Singapore. Founded in 1997, it is the only institution of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).

ASEF runs more than 25 projects a year, consisting of around 100 activities, mainly conferences, seminars, workshops, lectures, publications, and online platforms, together with about 150 partner organisations. Each year, over 3,000 Asians and Europeans participate in ASEF's activities, and much wider audiences are reached through its various events, networks and web-portals.

# Eligibility

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Applications are welcome from **individual** artists/cultural professionals who are:

- nationals/citizens of any ASEM partner country (*This is based on the list of ASEM partner countries as shown in the 2 tables on page 6*)
- working in any artistic genre (such as visual arts, performing arts, film, heritage etc.)
- at least 18 years old at the time of travel
- seeking support for travel within the ASEM region
- seeking travel support to participate in any of the 6 types of eligible activities listed below in the section on *What types of activities are supported?*
- **not** recipients of the *Mobility First!* grant in 2019

Note: *Mobility First!* will not be accepting re-application for a period of **1 year** from the following categories of applicants:

- Past successful 2019 grantees – both individuals and arts and cultural organisations
- 2019 grantees who have been awarded the *Mobility First!* travel grant under a successful arts
  - ↳ organisation grantee and are intending to submit an individual application
- 2019 grantees who have been supported by our special open calls with Cambodian Living Arts, Prince Claus Fund

For the holding period of 1 year, this would mean that if your application to *Mobility First!* was successful in 2019, you will only be allowed to re-apply in 2021. However, if your application to us has not been successful, you are welcome to apply again.

# Travel Regions

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*Mobility First!* supports international travel for the following mobility route: Asia to Europe and Europe to Asia.

Applicants should be seeking support for travel within the ASEM region (*This is based on the list of ASEM partner countries as shown in the 2 tables below*)

The list of ASEM partner countries are:

## ASIA

Australia	Indonesia	Mongolia	Singapore
Bangladesh	Japan	Myanmar	Thailand
Brunei Darussalam	Kazakhstan	New Zealand	Viet Nam
Cambodia	Korea	Pakistan	
China	Lao PDR	Philippines	
India	Malaysia	Russian Federation <sup>1</sup>	

## EUROPE

Austria	Finland	Lithuania	Slovakia
Belgium	France	Luxembourg	Slovenia
Bulgaria	Germany	Malta	Spain
Croatia	Greece	Netherlands	Sweden
Cyprus	Hungary	Norway	Switzerland
Czech Republic	Ireland	Poland	United Kingdom
Denmark	Italy	Portugal	
Estonia	Latvia	Romania	

<sup>1</sup> Note: Russian Federation is considered as a country in Asia in the ASEM context

# What types of activities are supported?

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ASEF supports the mobility of artists and cultural professionals for participation in the following 6 types of activities:

1. Workshops or trainings
2. Conferences or forums
3. Festivals, biennales, or international exhibitions
4. Artists' or writers' residencies
5. Partner meetings to set up or maintain an existing partnership
6. Practice-led research

Regardless of the type/format of activity you intend to participate in, the activity should closely fulfil *Mobility First!*'s guiding principles and priorities.

## Mobility First's guiding principles and priorities

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*Mobility First!* support is given depending on how well the application has managed to:

- Convey specific and well thought out purpose of journey and their mobility objectives
- Closely fulfil one or more of *Mobility First!*'s focus areas of skills transfer/knowledge exchange, innovation in arts and culture, local cultural development and art and society

### Purpose of mobility

In your application, you will need to:

- Provide a description of the activity you intend to participate in and its main objective
- Describe what you are intending to do during the proposed activity
- Explain what your personal and professional objectives are for participating in the proposed activity and the impact of the activity on your professional development
- Illustrate how this mobility will impact on your arts ecosystem and on the host organisation/ collaborator/destination community and arts ecosystem you are intending to travel to



### Focus areas

The mobility of the applicant should deliver on one or more of the following focus areas, regardless of the type/format of activity you intend to participate in.

The following focus areas will be prioritised for the *Mobility First!* open call:

#### Skills transfer / knowledge exchange

Activities which encourage sharing and acquiring of new/ additional knowledge and skills, allowing applicants to perform at a greater capacity that would contribute to their professional growth and development.

#### Innovation in arts and culture

Activities which demonstrate a strong and complementary intersection between art/culture and other sectors or would inspire new and unique methods and strategies that can be emulated into the applicant's own artistic practices.

#### Local cultural development

Activities which involve aspects of community engagement and would have a positive impact on the arts ecosystem of the applicant and the destination city he/she is visiting. This also includes activities that would benefit periphery cities.

#### Art and society

Activities that invoke new, interesting and progressive approaches using the arts to discourse on local and global issues that are relevant to our society. These approaches should contribute to discussing, creating awareness of and finding solutions for key issues of our times.

**Note:** The activity which you are intending to participate in does not need to tackle all four focus areas.

## Grant Coverage

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The *Mobility First!* grant is intended for covering international travel and visa costs only.

Accommodation and any other costs (such as per diem, registration fees etc.) are excluded from the grant amount.

The grant amount provided by ASEF will be **capped at 50%** based on the mobility route and destination country which you are intending to visit.

# Timeline

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The mobility call will be open and accepting applications from **Monday, 20 January 2020**.

Applicants have the autonomy to decide when they want to apply, as long as they are confident that they have sufficient time to purchase their flight tickets and for their visa application process.

All travel should take place between **20 January to 30 November 2020**.

# Assessment Process

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The *Mobility First!* Selection Committee assess applications based on:

- Quality and content of the applicant's purpose of journey and mobility objectives
- Relevance of the proposed activity to one or more of *Mobility First!*'s focus areas of skills transfer/knowledge exchange, innovation in arts and culture, local cultural development and art and society

Successful applicants will be notified via email with an official letter of offer.

# Application and reporting processes

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1. Applicants should read the **Application Guidelines** and **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)** before submitting an application.
2. Individuals should complete an online application form which will be made available on <https://mobilityfirst.asef.org>.

The following documents must be included with your application:

- Curriculum vitae
  - Invitation letter/supporting documents from activity organisers
3. Applicants can expect to hear feedback about their application in **2 cycles** – March and May (tentative). Upon successful application, ASEF will request for a scanned passport copy from each grantee.
  4. For successful grantees, ASEF will issue:
    - An **official letter of offer**
      - ↳ The letter of offer can be used as the supporting document to facilitate the visa application process
    - **Terms of Reference (ToR)**
  5. Grant amounts
    - Each applicant will have the opportunity to request for a grant amount in the application form (for air travel and visa costs)
    - ASEF will decide the final grant amount to be offered to successful applicants (this may be less, equal, or more than the grant amount requested)
  6. Payment of grants
    - 100% of the allocated grant amount will be transferred in a single tranche post-travel and after completion of online post-event report
  7. All artists and cultural professionals receiving mobility support are expected to complete an **online post-event report** no later than **4 weeks** after travel has ended.

# Waitlist system

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While the *Mobility First!* Selection Committee will make an initial selection of successful applicants, we are introducing a waitlist system in 2020, where we may offer the grant to the next deserving applicant. This case is applicable should funds become available because of previously selected grantees not being able to travel (due to visa rejections or health reasons) or if events have been cancelled or postponed.

The evaluation of applications is done through an internal scoring system based on merit and how closely the application fulfills *Mobility First!'s* focus areas. Applications that score just below the selected grantees will automatically be placed on the waitlist. Only applicants who have been moved up from the waitlist will be informed via email for a grant offer. See our **Frequently Asked Questions** for more information.

## Questions?

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Check out our *Mobility First!* 2020 [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)

or

Drop us an email at [mobilityfirst@asef.org](mailto:mobilityfirst@asef.org)