
ETC CO-OP PROGRAMME 2023

Co-branding of promotional campaigns

Terms and Conditions

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GLOSSARY

- **Applicants:** Partners who jointly submit an application to the programme.
- **Consortium:** A group of a minimum of two and a maximum of six partners that jointly submit an application, co-fund and implement the campaign.
- **Coordinator:** The partner who leads the consortium and is responsible for submitting the application and liaising with ETC on behalf of all other partners in the consortium.
- **FIT:** Free Independent Traveller.
- **KPI:** Key Performance Indicator.
- **Passion community:** A group of individuals who are connected by a common passion or interest.
- **Passion point:** An emotional driver of consumer choice that plays a big role in determining the products they buy, the content they consume, the brands they embrace and the places they travel to.
- **Partner(s):** A legal entity (either a public, private or public-private body) that contributes to co-fund the campaign by means of its own financial resources.
- **Supplier(s):** A third party that sells goods or services to the partners for the implementation of the campaign.

1. INTRODUCTION

The European Travel Commission's (ETC) co-operative programme "Co-branding of Promotional Campaigns" supports Europe's tourism sector by investing in industry-led communication and promotional initiatives across Europe that foster cooperation and sustainable growth.

The programme is presented by ETC in the framework of an ad-hoc grant of the European Commission (EC) with the aims to build a distinctive image of Europe as a travel destination, maintain its market share and better disperse travellers' flows across the continent. Initiatives that receive support from this programme shall produce an added value to ETC and the EC's efforts in the joint promotion of Destination Europe.

1.1. About the European Travel Commission

The European Travel Commission¹ (ETC) is an international non-profit making association of official National Tourism Organisations (NTOs) in Europe. The organisation was established in 1948 and is headquartered in Brussels (Belgium).

ETC's mission is to support the promotion of Europe as a tourist destination. For its member NTOs, ETC also provides a broad portfolio of market intelligence services and encourages the sharing of best practices. ETC is established as a private body (AISBL) under the law of Belgium.

1.2. Objectives

The overall objectives of the co-operative programme are to **reinforce consumer travel confidence** to and around Europe, **increase awareness** of extraordinary travel experiences in lesser-known European destinations, and contribute to **building a distinctive image** of Europe as a travel destination, in line with the message of ETC's consumer campaign "*Europe invites the curious*"².

The specific objective of the programme is to foster transnational public-private partnerships that leverage resources for the joint promotion of Europe.

1.3. Budget available

The total available budget under this programme is 1,115,000 EUR (one million one hundred and fifteen thousand euros). The above-mentioned amount is in no way binding on ETC. Subject to the availability of funds, ETC reserves the right not to allocate all available funds,

¹ Further information about ETC can be found on the website: www.etc-corporate.org

² <https://visiteurope.com/en/i-am-curious/>

and/or to redistribute the available funds in a different manner depending on the number and quality of applications received.

2. REQUIREMENTS

ETC is seeking to co-invest into communication and promotional campaigns, hereinafter referred to as **co-branding promotional campaigns**, conceived, developed, and implemented by a consortium of public or private partners that contribute to reach the objectives outlined in *1.2 Objectives*. These co-branding promotional campaigns must comply with the following requirements:

2.1. Themes

The co-branding promotional campaigns must showcase experiences and stories that focus on one of the following pan-European themes that appeal to the passion points of niche global communities of travellers:

- **Nature and the Outdoors:** Inspiring experiences and stories framed around human or nature-powered journeys that connect with the outdoors in line with the ethos of the **Slow Adventure movement**³. This includes nature experiences that provide a better understanding of the environment, but also of the local culture, food, people and traditions, especially in rural areas (ecotourism).

This passion point connects with the community of **Immersive Explorers**⁴; 18-34-year-old couples with children, and solo travellers (male bias) who find togetherness in the wilderness and enjoy experiencing nature at their own pace. They want to learn about new cultures, experience new adventures and expand their perspectives from what they learn when travelling.

- **Creative Cities:** Inspiring experiences and stories framed around the local cultural scene and lifestyle, with a focus on contemporary arts, architecture and design, handicrafts, fashion, music, festivals, gastronomy, street and performing arts (creative industries) as well as high-end products in small or medium-size urban areas.

This passion point connects with the community of **City Life Enthusiasts**⁵; 18-34-year-old couples with children, and solo travellers (female bias) who swap landmarks for local life, trade the well-worn path for a secret side street and crave a culture of creative

³ Please see the Slow Adventure Guide for a detailed overview of the ethos of the Slow Adventure movement: https://etc-corporate.org/uploads/2020/03/The_Slow_Adventure_Guide_compressed.pdf

⁴ For further information on the profile the community of Immersive Explorers see <https://etc-corporate.org/reports/tourism-passion-communities-immersive-explorers/>

⁵ For further information on the profile the community of City Life Enthusiasts see <https://etc-corporate.org/reports/tourism-passion-communities-city-life-enthusiasts/>

contrast and artistic reinvention. They want to “live like a local” while developing their own creativity and put emphasis on the atmosphere of the places they visit.

- **History and Ancestry:** Ancestry and heritage-related experiences and stories in connection with historical places and events (places of memory, contemplation and commemoration) which exerted an influence on world history.

This passion point connects with the community of **Explorers of Cultural Identity and Roots**⁶; 35+ year-old couples with children and empty nesters (Male bias) who step beyond borders into the theatre of world history, learning from the stories of yesterday with a desire to discover their own roots.

In addition to the above themes, the co-branding promotional campaigns may also showcase experiences and stories that relate to local gastronomy and lifestyle. Particular focus can also be given to experiences across all themes that promote sustainable modes of transport (e.g., cycling/hiking) and rail travel in particular.

2.2. Geographical scope

For the purpose of this programme, Europe is defined as the ensemble of the following countries:

- A) EU Member States⁷
- B) ETC Member States⁸

The geographical scope of the co-branding promotional campaigns must encompass **at least two of the above countries**, with **one of those being an EU Member State**.

Co-branding promotional campaigns that have a broader geographical scope (i.e., three countries, with at least two of those being EU Member States) **will be given priority during the selection procedure** (see 4. *Selection Procedure*).

Note that the campaign must be based on a clear European narrative and not on just the addition of individual local/national narratives.

2.3. Target groups

Within each of the interest-based communities described above (see 2.1 *Themes*), the co-branding promotional campaigns must specifically target high-net-worth **Free Independent Travellers** (FITs) or semi-FITs from urban “melting pots” travelling for leisure. A FIT is an individual or a small group (<10 individuals) who travel independently

⁶ For further information on the profile the community of Explorers of Cultural Identity and Roots see <https://etc-corporate.org/reports/tourism-passion-communities-explorers-of-cultural-identity-and-roots/>

⁷ Including the outermost regions of the European Union.

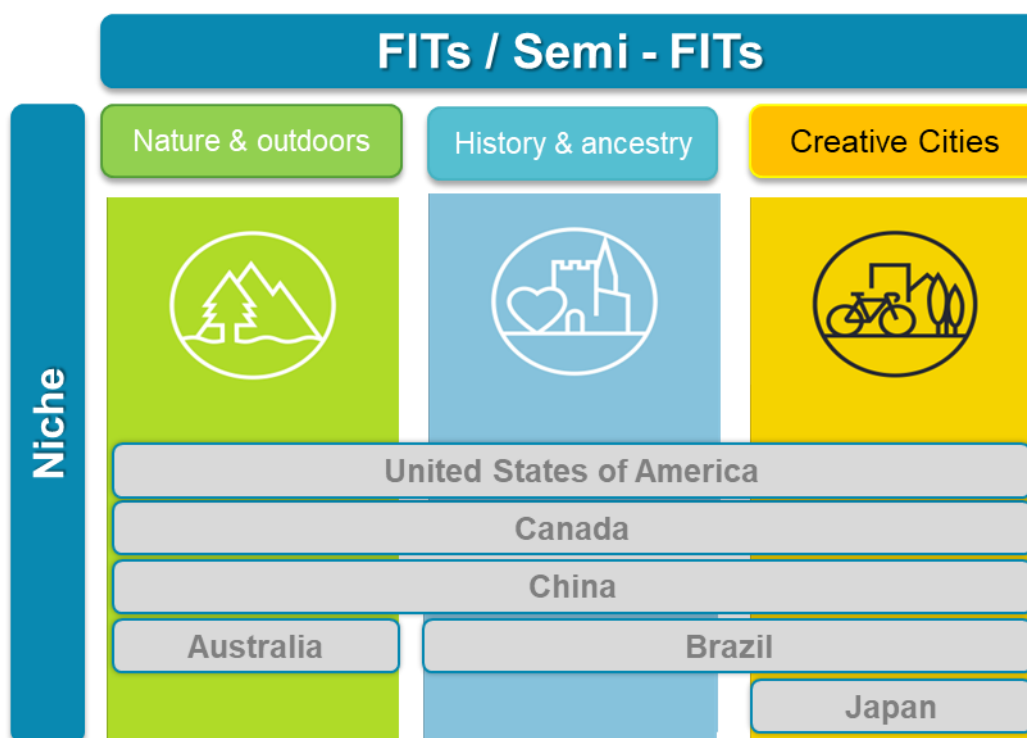
⁸ <https://etc-corporate.org/our-members/>

(not in an organised group) and books individual products and services specifically arranged by a tour operator or advisor for use by independent travellers.

The co-branding promotional campaigns must target (semi-)FITs who are at the **dreaming, consideration and/or sharing stages** of their travel cycle and shall help drive them down the path to purchase. There is a preference for engaging repeat visitors to Europe as opposed to first time visitors.

The co-branding promotional campaigns must target consumers in one or more (multi-market) of the long-haul outbound markets per theme listed in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Global target groups



The list of long-haul markets in Figure 1 is not exhaustive, and applicants may propose to target other relevant long-haul⁹ outbound markets as long as they can provide sound research evidence to support their case.

⁹ By long-haul outbound market, ETC understands non-European outbound markets. Outbound travel from the Russian Federation is not considered long-haul.

2.4. Types of actions

The co-branding promotional campaigns must use the right messages, channels, and tactics to effectively engage the target audience. The following actions are examples of activities which are eligible to receive support:

- **Digital consumer marketing activities.** These include communication and promotional activities using consumer digital channels and tactics, such as:
 - Content marketing
 - Video
 - Social media
 - Influencer marketing
 - Programmatic display advertising
 - Email marketing
- **Trade activities.** These include communication and promotional activities using travel trade and other business-to-businesses (B2B) channels and tactics, such as:
 - Content marketing
 - Videos and webinars
 - Email marketing
 - Bespoke B2B sales events (workshops, roadshows, etc.)

See examples of past co-funded campaigns in the links below:

- [Creative Cities and Wild Soul of Europe campaigns](#)
- [Pan-European promotional campaign in China](#)

The following types of actions will not be considered:

- Familiarisation trips for media or travel trade
- Product or destination development activities
- Academic conferences and seminars
- Offline activation consumer events
- Fairs and exhibitions
- Expenses concerning participation in business or consumer events (i.e., registration fees, travel expenses, etc) either online or offline
- Actions not focusing on the priority themes (see 2.1. *Themes*)
- Actions not focusing exclusively on Europe (see 2.2. *Geographical Scope*)
- Actions already completed or ongoing
- Actions not being measurable and result-focused
- Actions with an explicit commercial purpose or effect of producing a profit
- Actions providing financial support to third parties (re-granting schemes)

2.5. Implementation period

The implementation period is expected to start in **January 2023** and shall not extend beyond the end of **December 2023**, unless otherwise agreed between ETC and the consortium of partners.

Within this period, applications must specify the expected timeframe for the roll-out of the campaign based on the type of campaign, its goals and in general when it is expected to have the highest impact.

The following table provides an indicative timeline for the programme:

Table 1: Timeline

Issuance date	16 September 2022
Deadline for submitting applications	16 November 2022
Evaluation of applications and notification to applicants	December 2022
Implementation period	January 2023 – December 2023
Signature of agreements with partners	January 2023 – February 2023
Procurement of third-party suppliers	January 2023 – March 2023
Deadline for completing reporting requirements	30 calendar days after the completion of the campaign

2.6. Publicity

The co-branding promotional campaign must clearly acknowledge ETC's and the European Union's financial contribution. In this respect, the partners are required to give prominence to the following logos on all communication materials (videos, posters, publications, reports, etc.) produced in the framework of the co-branded campaign:

Logo of Europe-visiteurope.com



Name and emblem of the European Union



The guidelines for the use of the Europe-visiteurope.com logo and the EU emblem as well as the respective graphic files are available for download at the following link:

- <https://etc-corporate.org/publicity-guidelines/>

In addition, ETC may request the use of specific visuals, hashtags and/or handles on communication materials in order to maximise cross-promotion and leverage opportunities with ETC's umbrella promotional campaign "*Europe invites the curious*".

If these requirements are not fully complied with, ETC's financial contribution to the co-branding campaign may be reduced.

2.7. Co-funding requirements

Applications must be accompanied by an estimated budget (see *Annex 1. Budget Form [Excel file]*). The estimated budget must be coherent, complete and cost-effective, in light of the activities proposed.

In line with the principle of co-funding, ETC will not fund the entire cost of the promotional campaign. The partners must contribute to fund the campaign by means of their own financial resources. The amount of the financial contribution from each partner should be indicated in the sheet "Contributions" of the budget form.

The sum of the contribution from each campaign partner must at least match the requested contribution from ETC to a 50/50 ratio. In any case, the contribution of ETC to the promotional campaign shall be a minimum of EUR 45,000 (forty-five thousand euros) and a maximum of EUR 200,000 (two hundred thousand euros).

The expenditures foreseen for the implementation of the campaign should be indicated in the sheet "Costs" of the budget form. These expenditures must relate to third party suppliers, different from the campaign partners. Note that costs related to the staff of the partners (i.e., salaries, travel expenses, per diems, etc.) are not eligible costs.

ETC reserves the right to invest a lower ratio than what is stated above depending on its evaluation of the application, the overall availability of funds and demand for funding.

2.8. Payment and administration requirements

ETC shall be responsible for the overall administration of the co-branding promotional campaigns and the supervising of its implementation. This includes conduction of public procurement procedures, when applicable, according to the public procurement procedures of ETC¹⁰ and contractual agreements with all third-party suppliers. Any

¹⁰ The partners should consider public procurement procedures for the selection of suppliers when planning their campaign. Note that public procurement procedures may take up to 50 calendar days to complete depending on the amount of the contract with the supplier. Please contact ETC for further information.

decisions on the technical requirements of the procurement, the selection of suppliers and award of contracts will be managed by the partners in coordination with ETC, unless otherwise agreed. The partners will be responsible for the execution and reporting of the campaign.

ETC is also expected to execute all payments to suppliers and other third parties in relation to the expenses of the campaign, covering with its own financial resources (which are partly co-funded by the European Union) its part of the contribution to the campaign (see 2.7. *Co-funding requirements*).

Note that ETC will not be able to make advance payments to suppliers to, for example, kick off the campaign. ETC's contribution should, therefore, be expected to be part of intermediate and/or final payments to suppliers.

ETC shall invoice each campaign partner separately or the consortium coordinator in full (see 4.2. *Eligibility criteria*) for the amount in Euro (EUR) of their contribution to the campaign. [The contribution from each campaign partner will be fully due and payable shortly after the signature of the agreement between ETC and the campaign partners.](#)

2.9. Reporting requirements

The partners and the third-party suppliers will be expected to provide ETC with regular updates on work progress as well as a final implementation report, including a detailed overview of the activities performed, description and justification of any changes in the work programme, description of all campaign outputs and related supporting documents¹¹ (deliverables), results against set goals and KPIs as well as expected future impacts to be generated by the campaign. A final report must be submitted to ETC no later than 30 calendar days after the completion of the campaign.

All reports and supporting documents must be written in English in a clear, concise and accurate manner.

In addition to the above, ETC reserves the right to run an independent assessment of the brand impact of the co-funded campaign, in particular of digital consumer marketing activities (see 2.4. *Types of actions*). ETC will directly deduct the cost of such assessment (estimated cost EUR 5,000 - five thousand euros) from its financial contribution to the campaign budget.

¹¹Such as any campaign visuals, promotional materials, content, etc.

3. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Partners must jointly apply as a consortium. Applications must be written in English and should be **concise and clear**, so there can be no doubt as to word meaning and figures. Applications should include detailed information of the campaign objectives, target audience, key message(s), creative idea, tactics, channels, and expected outputs. Furthermore, a specific emphasis should lie on the monitoring and evaluation of the campaign performance. Therefore, the application must include a table of expected key performance indicators and their specific targets.

3.1. Documents to be submitted

Each application must contain the following documents:

- 1) Completed online application form (see *reference document 1. Online Application Form*¹²)
- 2) Budget form (see *Annex 1. Budget Form [Excel file]*)
- 3) Project timeline (no template provided)

3.2. Deadline for submission

Applications (together with the documents listed above) must be submitted via the online application on ETC's website:

<https://etc-corporate.org/co-branding-campaigns-registration/>

Applications must be received by **16 November 2022 at 23:59 (CET)**. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered.

Applications must be valid for at least three months after the submission deadline.

4. SELECTION PROCEDURE

The applications will be assessed by the staff members of ETC. ETC reserves the right to seek the European Commission's approval of the selection of partners and the scope of the campaign. For that purpose, ETC may share the information about the partners and the documents of the application with the European Commission.

The selection shall be based on the fulfilment of the criteria listed in sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 below

¹² Only intended for reference, to help you plan your application. Do not submit this form. Please complete the form online to submit your application.

4.1. Exclusion criteria

Applications shall be excluded if they fail to comply with the requirements described in *section 2. Requirements* as well as with any of the following underlying principles:

- **Non-profit rule.** The proposed campaign may not have the purpose or effect of producing a profit.
- **No double funding.** The campaign shall rely on European Union financing exclusively deriving from this programme. In no circumstances shall the same expense be funded twice by the European Union budget. In this regard, applicants shall inform ETC about any sources and amounts of European Union funding applied for the same campaign or for part of the campaign.
- **Non-retroactivity.** No campaign that has already been completed will receive funding from ETC. Co-funding by ETC may be given for an activity which has already begun, provided applicants can justify the need to start the action before the agreement is signed. In such cases, costs eligible for co-funding may not have been incurred prior to the date of submission of the application. In any case, such costs must be approved by ETC.

Furthermore, individual applicants shall be excluded from the programme under the following circumstances:

- have been sentenced by final judgment on one or more of the following charges: participation in a criminal organisation, corruption, fraud, money laundering;
- are in a situation of bankruptcy, liquidation, termination of activity, insolvency or arrangement with creditors or any like situation arising from a procedure of the same kind, or are subject to a procedure of the same kind;
- have received a judgement with *res judicata* force, finding an offence that affects their professional integrity or constitutes a serious professional misconduct;
- do not comply with their obligations as regards payment of social security contributions, taxes and dues, according to the statutory provisions of the country where they are established.

Applicants shall declare on their honour that they are not in any of the above-mentioned situations. In this regard, ETC reserves the right to ask applicants to supply supporting documents at a later stage.

4.2. Eligibility criteria

Applicants must meet the following criteria to be eligible for receiving financial support from ETC:

- 1) be a legal entity (either a public, private or public-private body) properly constituted and registered under the National Law of an EU Member State or a third country (non-EU) participating in the Single Market Programme¹³;
- 2) be either a Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO), a governmental entity with a clear mandate to promote a European destination; a tourism-related association, a non-profit organisation or a private sector company;
- 3) have sufficient financial capacity¹⁴ (stable and sufficient sources of funding) to maintain its activity throughout the period of campaign implementation;
- 4) have sufficient operational and professional capacity¹⁵, including staff, to carry out activities described in its campaign application;

Eligible applicants must jointly apply as a consortium. Note that applicants that meet all eligibility criteria except for criterion 1 above may still be part of a consortium and contribute to co-fund the campaign by means of their own financial resources, however the amount of their contribution will not be considered to calculate ETC's financial contribution ratio to the campaign (see 2.7. *Co-funding requirements*).

Eligible consortia must comprise **a minimum of two and a maximum of six eligible applicants**. Consortia do not need to have a given legal form to be allowed to apply. All entities in the consortium shall agree upon appropriate arrangements between themselves for the proper management and implementation of the co-branding promotional campaign and shall assume joint responsibility towards its completion and final delivery. Multiple applications from the same partners or consortium of partners are allowed.

The consortium must be led by one of its partners referred to as the **coordinator**. The coordinator shall be responsible for submitting the application and liaising with ETC on behalf of all other partners in the consortium, for administrative matters and overall command of operations.

¹³ https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/smp/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_smp_en.pdf

¹⁴ In this regard, ETC reserves the right to ask applicants to supply supporting documents at a later stage.

¹⁵ *ibid*

4.3. Award criteria

Applications will be assessed against the quality and financial criteria and the relative weights assigned to each of them as described in Table 2.

Table 2: Award Criteria

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Key elements to be assessed</u>	<u>Weight</u>
Quality Criteria	Relevance and strategic fit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The nature, experience and capacity of the partners for implementing the campaign; The extent to which the campaign is in line with and able to contribute to the objectives of this programme. 	20%
	Pan-European thematic dimension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which the campaign scope ensures a clear thematic approach in line with the target groups of this programme; The extent to which the campaign scope pursues appropriate geographical coverage of Europe and a solid European narrative. 	20%
	Clarity and creativity of the campaign approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The level of detail, coherence and practicality of the campaign tactics and methodology; The extent to which the campaign demonstrates a creative, innovative, and sustainable approach; The extent to which the campaign outputs, KPIs and the estimated impacts on target groups are verifiable and well-defined; The level of detail and coherence of the timeline and the budget. 	40%
Financial Criteria	Value for money The extent to which the campaign makes the most effective use possible of the budget, calculated as the ratio between its overall quality (quality criteria) and total campaign costs.	20%

4.4. Notification of the decision and signature of the agreement

ETC envisages that the selection procedure will take up to 4 calendar weeks after the submission deadline to complete (see 2.5. *Implementation period*). Upon completion of the selection process, ETC will notify in writing the final decision and next steps to undertake to each application coordinator.

The selected applicants will be required to sign an agreement (see reference document 2. *Draft Model Agreement*) with ETC within 45 days following the notification to the coordinator. If this agreement is not signed within deadline, ETC reserves the right to cancel its financial support to the co-branding campaign. [Potential applicants are strongly advised to read the draft agreement, in particular its requirements in terms of payment and reporting.](#)

5. MISCELLANEOUS

This document is in no way binding on the European Travel Commission. Any contractual obligation commences only upon signature of the particular agreement with the selected consortium of partners.

ETC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications received as well as to negotiate with all qualified applicants or to cancel this programme, either partially or totally. In the event of cancellation of this programme, this should not entail any financial obligation from ETC towards any applicant.

Submission of an application implies acceptance of the terms and conditions set out in this document.

6. HELP DESK

Potential applicants are encouraged to contact ETC if they need assistance in finding suitable partners, planning and submitting their application or in case they have any enquiries about applicable public procurement procedures or any other matter relevant to the information contained in this document.

Enquires must be made in writing and sent via the contact form on the website <https://etc-corporate.org/co-branding-campaigns-help-desk/>

Brussels, 16 September 2022

European Travel Commission

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