PRE-SELECTION REPORT

Nomination of the
European Capital of Culture 2018 in the Netherlands

Selection Panel

PRE-SELECTION REPORT

Amsterdam
29-30 November 2012

9 January 2013

1. Introduction

In accordance with the Decision 1622/2006/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing a Community action for the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) event for the years 2007 to 2019 (hereinafter referred to as "the Decision"), a competition has been established in the Netherlands for 2018. The Managing Authority of the ECoC competition in the Netherlands is the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (hereinafter referred to as "the Ministry"). The procedure for implementing this Decision in the Netherlands was set out in the document "Rules of Procedure – Competition for the 2018 European Capital of Culture title in the Netherlands" signed by the State Secretary responsible for Culture and published on the Managing Authority website on the 14th September 2012 (hereinafter referred to as "the Rules"). The Ministry has assigned SICA Dutch Centre for International Cultural Activities with the organization of the meetings of the panel and the report.

In accordance with the Decision and the Rules, the Dutch Ministry is responsible for the pre-selection and final selection meetings and coordination of visits of the representatives of the Selection Panel to the pre-selected cities. The European Commission provides guidance to the Ministry when necessary.

The Selection Panel was appointed by the Dutch State Secretary for Culture on 25 September 2012. According to Article 7 of the Decision establishing the first phase of the competition called "Pre-selection", the Selection Panel has to assess the applications in accordance with the criteria set out in Article 4 of the Decision, and following this assessment, agree on a shortlist of cities to be examined in greater depth and submit a report containing recommendations for those shortlisted cities.

The Ministry issued a call for applications for the title of European Capital of Culture for the year 2018 on 12 December 2011 with a deadline of 31 October 2012.

Five Dutch cities submitted applications by the deadline:

The Hague, Eindhoven, Leeuwarden, Maastricht and Utrecht

The applications (in English and - in some cases - additionally in Dutch) were forwarded to the members of the Selection Panel for examination.

The Ministry appointed SICA to organise the meeting on its behalf. SICA invited the Panel, and applicant cities, to a pre-selection meeting in Amsterdam on 29 and 30 November 2012. Twelve members of the Selection Panel were present – six of the seven members nominated by the European Institutions (one member was unable to attend due to other professional obligations) and the six members nominated by the Dutch State Secretary for Culture as set out in Article 6 of the Decision.
In accordance with Article 6 of the Decision, the Panel designated Dr Manfred Gaulhofer as the Chair and Mrs. Nynke Stellingsma as the Vice-Chair. SICA was nominated as the rapporteur for the meeting, working in close co-ordination with the members of the panel.

At the pre-selection meeting, applicant cities choose their own delegation. The Mayor, or deputy, led all delegations. Other members came from the organising institutions set up to prepare the bid, from civil society and from the business sector. Most delegations included representatives of the artistic sector.

Each applicant city had 30 minutes to present their bid, followed by 60 minutes of questions and answers. The Panel carried out a thorough assessment of the applications and the presentations and answers to the questions during the hearings. It appreciated the considerable efforts made by all cities to prepare and to present a convincing bid for the Dutch European Capital of Culture 2018. The Panel recognized the desire expressed by all cities to host the title and the work they had already undertaken – including a strong involvement of their local communities. The Panel noted that the proposed programmes were all very stimulating and quite different in scope and in the themes addressed. The Panel also noted that the work undertaken by each city would certainly have positive effects on the role and nature of its cultural life whatever the outcome of their bidding would be. It hoped that all applicants, regardless of the eventual winning city, would implement as much of their proposed programmes as possible.

To draw up the shortlist of cities to be put forward to the final selection stage, the Panel

- thoroughly evaluated the extent to which the candidate cities met the objectives of the European Capital of Culture initiative, as set out in Article 3 of the Decision, and the criteria defined in Article 4 of the Decision, namely "the European Dimension" and the "City and Citizens" dimension;
- assessed the accuracy and quality of the responses provided by the cities to the questions included in the application form;
- carefully assessed the presentation delivered by each city and discussed the applications with the delegations in order to gain a better insight into their respective proposals;
- evaluated the potential impact of each of the programmes designed by the candidate cities for the title-year of European Capital of Culture at the national and European levels;
- considered that in order to be pre-selected, the candidates would have to satisfy all requirements and show that they were capable of ensuring the delivery of the designed programme of the event in practice.

2. Presentation delivered by the cities and Panel's assessment

The five cities presented their respective programmes for the ECoC 2018 title to the Selection Panel.

The Hague

The Hague started with a short video to introduce the bid, presenting its cultural and social life as well as the main theme of the bid, namely a 'City without Walls, Haven for free thought'. It presented itself as the city of Peace and Justice, and explicitly as an 'open' city, the city that has been successful in tearing down the barriers that still exist in Europe and that welcomes external influences while also propagating European values such as peace, democracy, rule of law and freedom.

The presentation team argued that The Hague suited the title of ECoC 2018 very well because of its experience (The Hague as the political centre of the Netherlands and seriously committed to Europe), its intellectual drive (constantly exploring its cultural identity and assessing its own experiences) and the existing cultural infrastructure. Key in The Hague bid is the development of the new Cultural Forum on Spuiplein, the place that should bring together all the top cultural institutions for dance and (classical) music in town, such as the Koninklijk Conservatorium and the Netherlands Dance Theatre.

The bid for the title in 2018 is structured in six programme lines: ‘Open to the outside world: freedom to philosophise’, ‘Open to the outside world: freedom and democracy, ‘Open to the outside world: the free sea’, ‘Inclusion and opportunities for all: culture in a diverse city’, ‘Inclusion and opportunities for all: working on cultural citizenship’ and ‘Culture without walls: establishing connections’.

A core theme of the bid is cultural education which should play a more active part in the city's life according to the proposal, which also mentioned a "cultural education teaching guideline" that is meant to be integrated into the future school curriculum. It should help schools in developing their own visions of a continuous culture learning pathway.

The city plans to keep distances that residents and visitors will have to cover during the ECoC year short. In principle all major locations would be reachable by public transport within 15 minutes in the city and within 30 minutes in the region.

Concerning the financial scheme, a total budget of 50 million Euros is proposed for operating expenditure over the period 2013-2019, of which 61% would be allocated to the programme, 19% to marketing and promotion, 14% to wages, overheads and administration and 6% to monitoring and publications. The municipality's contribution to the operating expenditure amounts to 12 million Euros, while 10 million Euros are expected (but not secured) from the national government.

To prepare the event, The Hague 2018 Foundation was founded in 2010 as a small, flexible and independent organisation. The board and advisory board both consist of representatives from different sections of society. If The Hague were to be selected, the organisation would settle in the centre of the city, with branches established in the eight urban districts. Leadership of the programme would be under one Artistic Director and one Business Leader.

The Panel’s assessment

The panel was pleased with the scope of The Hague's bid and welcomed its concept of city without borders. It also praised the programme's close ties to the underlying values of justice and peace.

With regard to the European Dimension, the Panel felt that the bid rather suited the idea of an international, global, Capital of Justice and Peace – with its focus on the international values of which the city is the symbol – as opposed to a specifically European Capital of Culture. The common denominators of European cultures were not, some panellists felt, made apparent enough in either the bid book or at the presentation.

Concerning the "City and Citizens" dimension, the Panel felt that the multiculturalism of The Hague's population was well highlighted. However, although the bid comprises two programme lines under the theme of "inclusion and opportunities", the Panel missed reference to conflicts or tensions between different groups of society and precise proposals to actively involve the various communities living in the city in both preparation and implementation of the ECoC programme.

While the proposed budget appeared to be well suited to the programme proposed, it did not sufficiently transpire from the bid where the funds would actually come from. Until now, 12 million Euros seem to be committed by the municipality to cover part of the operating expenditure, while 10 million Euros are assumed (but not secured) from the national government. As with regard to the

remaining funds, they are apparently meant to be covered by the private sector, although no clear strategy was presented concerning the raising of these funds.

The management structure was presented in quite a general way with important details on the relationship between the different players involved, as well as the selection criteria for the future Artistic Director, remaining unclear.

Although the bid book presented interesting "visions" of possible projects under the various programme lines, the Panel's view was that the programme for the title-year was still very vague at this stage and did not provide sufficient evidence that an artistically extraordinary and outstanding mix of projects would be realised in the ECoC year.

All in all, the Panel felt that the city's application was lacking conceptual strength along both criteria defined in Article 4 of the Decision (“European Dimension” and “City and Citizens”) and left questions unanswered in relation to management structure and the financing of the event.

Utrecht

The delegation that presented the Utrecht bid was composed of members representing the political sphere, the artistic sector, the University and the business sector. The presentation reinforced Utrecht's preparedness to present itself as a European Capital of Culture that would create the "city of the next generation" based on culture as a driver of urban renewal.

The central motto of Utrecht 2018 is ‘Trust the future, Create your city’ which translates into the view of the city as a ‘Trust Factory’, a workshop for building trust and confidence in the city and in Europe. This motto is broken down in three central thematic lines: 'Habitat: Experiencing the strength of the city', 'Crossroads: Exploring the strength of culture and knowledge' and 'Playground: Investing in the strength of Europe'. The key building blocks of each line are imagination, connection and the young generation.

These central themes surrounded the focal point of the proposed programme: the expo "Create your City". The expo is foreseen to be located in ten locations in Utrecht where developments of the growing city are most visible. The ten spots are anticipated to be places of research and ultimately, in 2018, stages for exhibitions, performances, manifestations and debates. In 2018, the city would present itself as a human environment in transition, a learning environment and an international meeting place for culture and knowledge. The main venues of Utrecht 2018 would be spread in a (relatively) small perimeter, enabling participants to visit several locations in one day. The bid however includes the province of Utrecht with its 26 municipalities.

The Utrecht approach to programming for the ECoC year is based on co-creation, co-production and co-financing. The bid book provides for a selection of project proposals that are presented in an understandable way and are well in line with the programme lines. The delegation claimed that a large number of citizens across all spheres and levels of society were involved in the creation of the provisional programme presented in the bid book.

Utrecht’s proposed operating budget is 65,6 million Euros, of which 60,2% would be allocated to the programme, 19,4% to promotion and marketing and 20,4% to organisation and management. The

main sources of funding would come from the city (17,5 mio € or 26,7%), an expected but not secured contribution from central government (15 mio € or 22,9%) and the province (10,6 mio € or 16,2%) while 22,9% would come from sponsorship and donations. According to the bidding document, the city and the province would contribute an additional amount of 26,5 million Euros from the annual culture budgets to Utrecht 2018 projects over the years and even more funding would be generated through co-financing from project partners.

The preparation of the Utrecht 2018 bid has so far been overseen by the Treaty of Utrecht foundation, which has also been assigned by the municipality and province of Utrecht to organise the celebration of the tercentenary of the Treaty of Utrecht in 2013. The European Capital of Culture project would be overseen by an independent non-profit organisation, the Utrecht 2018 Foundation, which would become operational from 2014 onwards and build on the experience gained during tercentenary celebrations.

The Panel's assessment

The Panel praised the freshness of the bid book, its optimistic view of the future and the social approach to culture the Utrecht 2018 bid intended to address.

The Panel feels that the Utrecht bid is well structured and clear and gives a good insight into the intended content of the ECoC programme. The project had a solid social and inclusive dimension with a strong involvement of the local population, the University and the business community.

With regard to the "European Dimension", the Utrecht bid repeatedly and correctly underlines that issues that are important for Utrecht are also important for Europe as a whole. However, when it comes to highlighting the cultural diversity of Europe, the Panel misses a sufficient number of project ideas that would mirror this key requirement. Bringing common aspects of European cultures to the fore in the Utrecht bid mainly refers to three projects focusing on personalities of the (common) European history (Caravaggio, St. Martin and Pope Adrian 6).

Whereas the Utrecht 2018 approach to the "City and Citizens" dimension is only laid out very vaguely in the description thereof in the bid book, it transpires from other parts of the bid book and from the discussion with the delegation that citizens' participation and involvement have been part of the preparatory activities. Still, sustainability of the ECoC year as part of the long term cultural development of the city is poorly mirrored in the bid document as is the year's legacy in terms of know how transferred to the cultural sector. The panel also sensed a lack of passion and of urgency in the presentation.

Concerning the programme, the Panel missed an element of surprise and innovative project ideas reflecting the high degree of creativity present in the city according to the bid book. It felt there was a lack of artistic vision and the bid entailed too many conservative and established highlights. The overall feeling was that most activities included in the bid could be carried out without needing the ECoC title.

Concerning management and organisation, the bid does not provide a clear picture of the management structure and of the number and functions of the creative and financial managers Utrecht 2018 is

planning for. It remained quite vague how the “bird on your shoulder” principle Utrecht is intending to apply would be executed in practice.

The panel was pleased with the marketing and communication strategy with its focus on up-to-date ways and channels of communication, and the targeting of young people as well as those traditionally interested in culture.

In its overall assessment, the Panel felt that the city of Utrecht's application falls short of the “European Dimension” criterion, is very traditional and conventional in its cultural programme and lacks an exciting artistic vision.

Maastricht

The core of the Maastricht 2018 approach is to re-visit the Maastricht Treaty twenty-five years after it entered into force and to fill its lost chapter on culture with a new European identity, in order to make it a "*contrat culturel*" for all European citizens. The Maastricht bid is submitted by the city and the Meuse-Rhin Euregion which covers 10.000 km² in three countries and has a population of 3,9 million.

The presentation that was made by a team with a strong artistic bias alongside its political members quite convincingly confirmed Maastricht 2018’s ambition to turn the cultural diversity of the Euregion into an asset and to make the whole region live Europe in day-to-day life, at street level. It also underlined the will of Maastricht 2018 to provide for a better future for “Génération Maastricht”, i.e., young people born after 1992, by making the best of their talents and empowering them.

Under the motto "Europe revisited" the project is divided in the four programme lines "Speaking in Tongues", "Remembering the future", "Mirroring Europe" and "Living Europe" which build on Maastricht's location at the intersection between Northern and Southern Europe and between Romanic and Germanic cultures, transcending borders, and involves partners from the whole Meuse-Rhine Euregion. The programme is intended to foster the emergence of a transnational life that is based on everyday culture of citizens who are living Europe with all its cultural diversity. It will be structured into a core programme, a city programme for these partner cities and a satellite programme for the smaller cities in the Euregion.

The Maastricht 2018 bid also puts a strong emphasis on the creative industries and their role in smaller towns and regional markets.

The bid states that the process of programme development is a core element of the Maastricht 2018 approach and that they do not yet know which route they will take to get to final destination. Still, the examples of projects the bid book provides, are well in line with the programme principles and mirror well the cultural diversity of the countries, regions and cities being part of the bid.

Regarding the funding of the event, the proposed operating budget is 80 million Euros of which 65% (52 mio €) would go to the programme itself, 20% (16 mio €) to promotion and marketing, and 15% (12 mio €) to wages, overhead and administration. 70 million Euros (i.e. 87,5% of the budget) - with an assumption of 8,5 million Euros from the Dutch government - would come from the public purse, 10 million Euros from the private sector. 60 million Euros of the public funding would be divided equally between the city of Maastricht, the province of Limburg and the other cities, provinces and

regions of the Euregion. These amounts are secured according to repeated statements by members of the Maastricht delegation at the pre-selection meeting.

An independent foundation representing 13 partners from the Euregion was set up in February 2011 with the view to first develop the candidacy plan and then – if Maastricht were selected – to prepare and implement the event.

The Panel's assessment

The Panel praised the well structured concept of Maastricht 2018 with its solid and clear European focus. It also appreciated the enthusiasm of the presentation and the evident synergy between the members of the presentation team representing the various players on both the political level and in the cultural sector.

While appreciating the highly motivating inspiration underlying the bid, the Panel also had some concerns regarding the ability of Maastricht 2018 to transform the concept into an outstanding programme of highest artistic quality taking into consideration the complexity of the institutional setting (three countries, five regions, three languages, and a number of cities) and the ambitious objective of the overall endeavour.

However, it transpired from the bid document and from the discussion that the enthusiasm of the bidding team is paired with a high degree of realism and experience on the side of the persons and institutions involved on political and on managerial level.

Although the European Dimension is at the core of the Maastricht concept, the Panel felt it needed a broader interpretation than the one provided in the bid book. The Panel would have liked to see more evidence of the capacity of Maastricht 2018 to actually deliver such results as, e.g., to efficiently fight youth unemployment by the means laid out in the proposal. It also feels that the Maastricht bid is focusing too much on the immediate cross-border aspect as compared to the wider concept of the European Dimension as laid out in the Decision. The Panel felt that references to the “power of Dutch culture” did not sit easily with the cross-border concept and indicated that more thought needs to go into the regional versus city analysis.

This also applies to the “City and Citizens” dimension. While it transpired from the bid that citizens, artists and cultural operators have been involved into the creation of the bid to quite an important extent, there are concerns concerning whether the results of the “experimental research lab” Maastricht 2018 will actually materialise in the shape of tangible, sustainable effects on the people living in the region.

The planned funding is clearly and understandably explained in the bid book and seems to be secured in wide parts. Still, the Panel did not really feel comfortable with the way in which the financial contributions by the Euregion partners are intended to be distributed. It feels this issue might be subject to possible conflicts between the Maastricht 2018 Foundation and the Euregion partners involved.

The Panel also expressed some concerns regarding the complexity of the governance structure which involves public authorities from 13 public partners coming from 3 different countries and speaking 3

different languages. This is clearly a risk factor as making such a complex governance structure work over a four year period from the official designation as ECoC to the title-year would be a big challenge.

However, all in all, the Panel felt that Maastricht 2018 presented a concept with a sufficient number of strong points that deserve to be considered further. It is highly ambitious in its organisational, cross-border complexity and in its aim to add a belated cultural chapter to the Maastricht Treaty and it presents a promising combination of great potential and some risk.

Leeuwarden

Leeuwarden-Ljouwert 2018 builds on the concept of "Mienskip", which is deeply rooted in the Frisian minority culture and refers to a sense of shared community thinking that has developed over the centuries to face collectively the challenges resulting from the threat of the forces of nature, in particular the sea. This concept was well illustrated at the presentation of the Leeuwarden 2018 team with its good balance between political, managerial and artistic representation.

The Leeuwarden 2018 programme develops around three main programme lines: the sustainability of culture and ecology (as represented by the concept of water); the relationship between the city and the countryside (as represented by the concept of land), and ethnic and cultural identity and diversity (as represented by the concept of horizon). Water, land and horizon translate into flow, stability and flight.

The theme of “Mienskip” as the core principle of the Leeuwarden 2018 approach is accompanied by the conceptual metaphor of the “terp” (mound in Frisian): to build a terp needs solidarity and co-operation of the people in the region and from the terp, one overlooks the land and the water, and thus raises the horizons.

While the city of Leeuwarden is the applicant together with the five surrounding municipalities, the project includes the provinces of Drenthe and Groningen as well as the two German regions of Nordfriesland and Ostfriesland. The project has also the support of the Frisian community in Denmark. A further transnational dimension will come through the involvement of Waddenland and the global connection with the Frisian community around the world.

The operating budget of Leeuwarden 2018 amounts to 56,5 million Euros, of which 70% (39,3 mio €) will be allocated to the programme, 16% (9,3 mio €) to promotion and marketing and 10% (5,8 mio €) to wages, overheads and administration. 4% of the budget is regarded as a reserve. 68% of the planned funding will come from the public sector and 32% from the private sector (including sponsorship, merchandising, co-branding and ticket-sales). The assumed contribution from the national government amounts to 10 million Euros. At the time of the presentation, there was no secured budget from the public purse, but a decision from the city of Leeuwarden – representing 10% of the overall budget – was pending. According to the bid document, the planned budget is based on the current difficult economic situation in the European Union and might increase if the economy develops in a more positive way than expected today.

The current Lwd2018 foundation was set up for the candidature only. It would be replaced by a new foundation should Leeuwarden get the title. The authorities would have no right to appoint members

of the board of the new Foundation. Members would be independent: people with formal ties to the city, province or national government would be ineligible.

The Panel's assessment

The Panel was pleased with the well-founded, forward-looking overall approach of Leeuwarden-Ljouwert 2018 and with the enthusiasm and authenticity proved by the team during the presentation. It appreciated the ambition and originality of the bid, which touches upon major strategic European issues such as the integration of ethnic minorities, the need to further promote cultural and environmental sustainability, and a re-evaluation of the relationship between city and countryside.

However, while fully understanding the potential of the themes chosen by Leeuwarden-Ljouwert 2018, the Panel had the feeling that this potential is not fully exploited in the bid. The European dimension as laid out in the bid book is too hidden and not sufficiently put to the fore. The focus seems to be on purely economic, ecological and agricultural issues without mentioning the cultural facets. However, the subsequent discussion with the Leeuwarden team showed that the cultural elements of the European Dimension are understood and are at the core of their bid.

With regard to the “City and Citizens” dimension, the bid document is quite vague and only provides very general remarks about how various groups of stakeholders are meant to be involved and to participate in the ECoC endeavour. It is not specific enough about the programme’s sustainability and how it forms an integral part of the city’s long-term development. The participation of artists and cultural operators as well as citizens seems to have been very strong as the bid had originally been initiated by artists and ordinary citizens. The Panel appreciated the strong involvement of the city residents in the preparation of the bid as well as the very strong volunteer culture of the city on which Leeuwarden 2018 plan to build.

Concerning the programme, the Panel was pleased with the view of the projects as “terps” which would be implemented by existing and new cultural organisations outside the Leeuwarden 2018 foundation that would however oversee them. Still, the Panel felt that more emphasis has to be laid on the issue of artistic excellence of the programme. There was a need to add some major "top-class" events to attract an international audience. It would also have liked a clearer picture of the concept and the actual outcomes expected of the two working methods that are intended to be applied: the @dykes-method or “culture below sea level” and the @work-method or “raising creativity in public and private sector”.

The Panel recognized the strong link between the programme designed for Leeuwarden-Ljouwert 2018 and regional policy, focusing on the potential of lightly populated, peripheral and ‘green’ European regions as habitats for new types of business and city-dwellers, redefining the relationship between city and countryside in an age both urban and digital. This is a strong asset of the bid. However, more specific information on the actual co-operation within the region would have been welcome.

The Panel was impressed with the detailed and thorough management focus in the bid from the target group analysis, the specific quantifiable and measurable objectives to the evaluation process.

The Panel expressed concerns regarding the adequacy of both the governance and the management structure of the future Leeuwarden 2018 foundation for an event of the scope and scale of a European Capital of Culture. It feels that the “terp” concept of project realisation would need to be revisited with regard to the management resources needed to make it run properly.

The Panel regarded the Leeuwarden bid as a well thought through approach with a number of innovative aspects concerning the potential of lightly populated, peripheral and ecologically sound European regions as habitats for new types of dwellers that would be worthwhile being considered further.

Eindhoven

Under the slogan “Imagination designs Europe” the city of Eindhoven presented itself together with the four other cities and the region of Brabant as a “mosaic metropolis”, a “cityside” and a network city of the future. The core of its approach is the concept of “proeftuinen” (best to be translated by “experimental gardens”) that would act as laboratories with ample room for experimentation and in which cultural and societal innovation would be generated. This process may also be of use to other European cities.

The presentation of the Eindhoven 2018 team, with a strong representation of the artistic sector, tried to make the theoretical concept of the “proeftuinen” more tangible and gave further insight into the programme structure. The central theme of the programme “we explore the future” is intended to be developed alongside the two programme lines “we make the city” and “we connect people” under which “proeftuinen” for many types of projects will be organised. In a Europe in crisis, the aim is to set in motion a transition towards new solutions through the creativity of the arts and culture sectors working in close connection with as many other sectors as possible. Projects are planned to be realised every year from 2014 to 2020.

The core geographical area for the preparation and the implementation of the programme would be 'Strijp-S', the former Philips industrial site also called “the hidden city”, which the City is redeveloping into a new creative heart for new media, design and cross-pollination between art and technology. Eindhoven is developing its programme in a network with the cities of Breda, Helmond, 's-Hertogenbosch and Tilburg, as well as with the province of Noord-Brabant.

The operating budget of 2018 Eindhoven/Brabant amounts to 141,5 million Euros, of which 75,3 % (106,6 mio €) will go to the programme, 12,4% (17,5 mio €) to marketing and communication, 10,2% (14,4 mio €) to staff and organisation, and 1,4% (2 mio €) to research. 50 million Euros will come on an equal footing from the five cities involved and 50 million Euros will come from the province. These 100 million are already secured, while it is assumed that the national government will contribute 20 million Euros. It is also planned that sponsorship (in cash and in kind) will amount to 20 million Euros. In this regard, 2018 Eindhoven/Brabant intends to build up with business partners from as many different sectors as possible new and unconventional relationships on a long-term basis that would ultimately generate cultural and social value.

The organisation will rest with the 2018 Eindhoven/Brabant Foundation that was set up in 2012 by the relevant public authorities. The foundation operates independently under its own management and board of directors which is composed of representatives of the business sector and academia.

The Panel's assessment

The Panel appreciated the bold intellectual and forward looking concept put forward by 2018 Eindhoven/Brabant. It appreciated the innovative combination between arts, creative industries, science and technology as part of a major urban and transurban regeneration project which is at the core of the bid.

While welcoming in principle the idea to have "experimental gardens" flourishing across the cities (and beyond) as a key element of the programme, the Panel was concerned about the actual realisation of the concept on day-to-day work level. The Panel sees a certain risk that the conceptual strength of the idea might hide weaknesses as with regard to the concept's manageability. The main questions will be how and by whom the topics of the proeftuinen will be selected and how the 2018 Eindhoven/Brabant Foundation will secure results from the activities of the respective proeftuin.

The Panel sensed a risk of the European Dimension being overlooked in local bottom-up projects if the 'proeftuin' led projects happened to be unrelated to issues of European relevance. This is even more important since the "European Dimension" is not dealt with in a satisfactory way in the bid document.

With regard to the "City and Citizens" dimension, the Panel appreciated the many workshops organised by 2018 Eindhoven/Brabant to prepare the candidacy and the strong involvement of the local residents into the process. It was also pleased to hear that there was a high level of awareness among the population residents about the candidacy and that most people were supportive. However, the Panel would have appreciated a more detailed explanation of the planned participation of artists, cultural operators and "ordinary" citizens in the proeftuinen. The bid repeatedly mentions the importance of the involvement of "everybody" under the regime of "co-creation" but does not provide a clear picture of how this is meant to work in concrete terms.

The Panel also shows concern regarding the role of the Artistic Director in programme management. Experience shows that this role cannot be reduced to the one of a simple programme and project co-ordinator as proposed by Eindhoven. Even if this seems to fit well the proeftuin concept, this kind of programme management will neither provide for a sufficiently clear programme structure nor for the high artistic quality that is one of the core requirements of a European Capital of Culture.

Regarding the funding, the Panel expressed concerns over the very high contribution assumed from national government. It took note of the innovative strategy to attract sponsors and to develop strong and long term relations with the business sector while raising some doubts about the acceptance of this concept by the private sector.

All in all, the Panel felt there is enough substance, originality and innovative spirit in the Eindhoven bid for it to be considered further.

3. General Conclusions

After a thorough discussion of the bid documents, the presentations and the subsequent question and answer sessions, the Panel, by a large majority, decided to recommend to put forward the cities of

Eindhoven, Leeuwarden and Maastricht

to the final selection stage for the Dutch European Capital of Culture 2018.

4. Recommendations

The Panel was impressed with the bid books presented by all three successful candidates in the first round. They demonstrated the well-known Dutch excellence in graphic design and supported the general principles of each bid. The Panel in the end was in favour of three concepts that approach the concept of ECoC in a new way, showing the most potential for conceptual, organisational, cultural and urban innovation.

After a careful assessment of the bidding documents, the presentation and discussions during the question-and-answer session, the Selection Panel felt that all three bids needed to be worked on intensely in order to reach the level of quality required of such a demanding event as the European Capital of Culture and to succeed.

Common recommendations to all pre-selected cities

The following points were raised by the Panel and apply to all three pre-selected cities:

1. The Panel emphasises that their consideration is based on content of the bid books and not their design; there is no need to reprint amended versions. For the final selection the panel is anxious to limit administrative expenditure and requests that all three cities follow the guidelines for the competition and produce:
   A single document not exceeding 120 pages (A4 format, characters Times New Roman 12 pt minimum) which follows the questions asked in the guidance notes issued by the Ministry on advice from the European Commission. Illustrations are permitted but must be within the 120 page limit. The limit also applies to any annexes or further additional information. For the eventual ECoC 2018 this revised bid book will form the basis of subsequent monitoring by the Monitoring panel. The degree of adherence to the bid will be a factor in the decision in 2017 to award the Melina Mercouri prize.

2. European Dimension. All three cities have identified strong European issues in their bids; trans-border cooperation; small town/rural areas and a lesser used language and the interaction of science, arts and creative innovation. However at this stage the proposals are too inward looking in their local context within the city, region and the Netherlands. The Panel would wish to see a considerably greater widening and deepening of the programmes to ensure the European Dimension criteria was met.

3. All three bids offer an interesting new approach to the idea of ECoC, but nevertheless this remains a *cultural* capital. The three cities should set out their artistic programme more clearly.

4. All bids should be accompanied by more realistic budgets which clearly indicate the degree of certainty on each item. The Panel hopes that guidance may be forthcoming from the national government on its approach to financial contributions so that each application makes the same assumption.

5. The Artistic Director is a key role in any European Capital of Culture; the selection of the Artistic Director before final selection (and appearance at that meeting) is to their advantage.

6. All three cities are involving their broader region. They should therefore confirm that the city will continue to be the clear leader, including if they win the title, and explain how they will maintain broad cross-party political support during and up to the year itself, and how they will deal with any disagreements within their governance structure.

7. All three cities should elaborate further how they intend to engage with the various EU programmes including bidding for project funding. These programmes extend well beyond the proposed Creative Europe programme.

Recommendations per city

The Panel selected the three cities for the reasons stated above and is confident that each of the contestants has the potential of developing a winning final proposal. However, each of the proposals should benefit from a stronger focus, clearer choices and stronger organisational and financial foundations. To assist the cities in the further development of their proposals, the Panel gives the following recommendations.

Eindhoven

The Panel recommends that the bid reconsiders the balance between ‘central’ flagship projects and those emerging through 'proeftuin'. The questions posed in order to trigger 'proeftuin' events need to include the two criteria of the ECoC programme, in particular the European dimension. As 'proeftuin' is a relatively new concept and accordingly comes with increased risk, the Panel suggests that Eindhoven reconsider the balance between 'proeftuin'-developed projects and other more formally managed projects

The Panel recommends that the information concerning the management should be made much clearer in the renewed bid. The 'proeftuin' method offers opportunities to come with new types of managing in this regard.

The Panel recommends Eindhoven to come up with a more realistic funding plan, in particular as regards the contribution from the Dutch government, which appears over-estimated. It also encourages the city to see how it could increase the level of private funding.

The revised bid should include information on specific, quantifiable and measurable objectives (beyond tourism) with milestones between 2013 and 2018/9.

Eindhoven should be the driving force behind the bid more visibly. A clear distinction between Brabant as the participating region and Eindhoven as the leading partner should be made. Furthermore, evidence of the Brabant region support should be given in the revised bid.

Leeuwarden

The Panel recommends that the European dimension be made more apparent in the revised bid. In this regard, the relationship with the cultural diversity of Europe as well as the connection Leeuwarden can make with other European regions facing similar problems and opportunities should, in particular, be made more prominent. The bid should be seen as a way to prepare Leeuwarden and Friesland for the multicultural society that is more and more of a reality for Europe and that is already transpiring in Leeuwarden itself. The Panel would like to see worked out how the bid deals with the 'new' citizens of Leeuwarden.

The Panel recommends that Leeuwarden better explains in its revised bid how culture can help face the urgencies it wants to address as part of its programme for the title-year, and that the revised bid has a stronger focus on culture as well as a clear artistic programme, including major 'top-class' events.

The Panel recommends Leeuwarden to come up with a more secured funding plan, in particular as regards the contributions expected from the various public authorities.

Finally, the Panel was impressed with the considerable volunteer based concept but will seek further assurance that Leeuwarden will be utilise sufficient experienced professional managers and curators given the size and depth of an ECoC.

Maastricht

The Panel recommends that Maastricht work to close the gap between the concept and the actual programme that should follow. The title could give the city great opportunities to show what Europe means, but the next revised bid must figure out a middle layer of ideas and a more complex artistic programme.

The Maastricht bid struck the Panel as very Christian and traditional in its content. The next stage should demonstrate how citizens with other cultural and religious backgrounds in the region, and across the EU, are involved in the programme, to reflect contemporary Europe. The diversity of citizens living in the cities in the region should be given more prominence and a higher degree of interaction rather pursued than parallel programmes.

The bid is centered on the cross-border concept which has relevance for many other similar areas of the EU. The Panel recommends that the programme engage with other border areas in the EU (and not only in the Western part of the EU) to assist in the development of the European Dimension criterion.

The revised bid should include information on specific, quantifiable and measurable objectives (beyond tourism) with milestones between 2013 and 2018/9.

Maastricht showed the energy for the 3 countries approach, but the management needs to be waterproof with this very complicated construction. At this point, the three countries do not seem to be connected enough to really deliver. Additionally, the Panel urges Maastricht to be more precise in describing how Maastricht and the Euregion have really divided roles and tasks within the organization and will solve any eventual problems between the parties.

5. Final selection

The deadline for submission of revised applications to the Ministry is **12 July 2013**. Four members of the Selection Panel will pay a visit to the three pre-selected cities on 2, 3 and 4 September 2013 to obtain more complete information for the final selection process. During the visits, the members of the Selection Panel will be accompanied by representatives of the European Commission and the Ministry.

The final selection meeting will be held on 5 and 6 September 2013. The Panel will make a recommendation to the Ministry at the end of this meeting.

Amsterdam, January 2013

The Selection Panel:

Dr. Manfred Gaulhofer – Chair
Mrs. Nynke Stellingsma – Vice Chair
Mrs. Christine de Baan
Mr. Constantin Chiriac
Sir Jeremy Isaacs
Mrs. Margot Gerené
Mr. Steve Green
The Hon. Minister Erna Hennicot-Schoepges
Mr. Dingeman Kuilman
Mr. Jordi Pardo
Mrs. Janneke van der Wijk
Mrs. Elisabeth Vitouch (excused)
Mr. Rutger Wolfson