EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY

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INTRODUCTION

The European Region of Gastronomy project aims to contribute to better quality of life in European regions, by high-lighting distinctive food cultures, educating for better health and sustainability and stimulating gastronomic innovation.

IGCAT (International Institute of Gastronomy, Culture, Arts and Tourism) is a network of global experts who select and award the title European Region of Gastronomy up to 3 regions each year, with the support of leading European Institutions.

All regions that bid for the title are part of a knowledge-exchange Platform of European Regions which collaborates on international projects and exchange knowledge.

THE EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY PLATFORM MEMBERS AIM TO:

- Showcase regional gastronomy at European level
- Build regional identities by giving visibility to traditional food ways
- Support local economies by stimulating public and private sector funding potential
- Create strong links between sustainable tourism and cultural sectors
- Provide a focus on innovation and learning to support smart growth
- Develop awareness on wider food issues for healthy living and sustainability

THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES UNDERPIN THE AWARD:

INVOLVE PUBLIC, PRIVATE, ACADEMIC AND THIRD SECTOR ORGANISATIONS

All regions taking part in the Platform need to demonstrate a strong stakeholder base incorporating public, private, third sector and knowledge institutions (symbolised by the four prongs of the fork in the European Region of Gastronomy logo). This stakeholder group must meet regularly and develop the bid together in an inclusive environment.

LONG-TERM COMMITMENT TO THE PLATFORM

The European Region of Gastronomy title is awarded to up to 3 regions each year as a stimulus to link food, hospitality, tourism, culture, health and sustainability, and to support economic, cultural, social and environmental development, as part of a long-term regional strategy. Regions that wish to hold the European Region of Gastronomy title are expected to commit to the Platform for a minimum of five years.

THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES UNDERPIN THE AWARD:

COLLABORATE AND SHARE KNOWLEDGE

agree to participate in all partner meetings, collaborate in joint-projects and support cross-marketing initiatives between the regions. They will also agree to carry out an evaluation so that good practice and knowledge-sharing will be transmitted through the Platform.

SUPPORT SMART, SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

a moral obligation to ensure improved food quality and food education as well as to stimulate innovation and showcase regional food cultures and identities.

EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY

FOCUS AREAS

FOCUS AREAS

FEEDING THE PLANET

- It is estimated that by 2050 the world's population will have risen to 9 billion people. The European Region of Gastronomy Platform and Award aim to stimulate debate about how we can produce sufficient food for everyone.

SUSTAINABILITY

- Sustainable local, regional and global food systems are important for all our futures. The European Region of Gastronomy Platform and Award aims to support smart strategies for sustainable and ethical tourism, as well as food and gastronomy practices with the aim to develop more environmentally, socially, culturally and economically sustainable food production and consumption.

FOCUS AREAS

EDUCATION

- The European Parliament recently called for gastronomy and food to be re-integrated into the education curriculum – a move that the European Region of Gastronomy Platform fully supports. The European Region of Gastronomy Platform works closely with education and knowledge institutions in the host regions and elsewhere to disseminate information about the importance of regional gastronomy in education.

FOCUS AREAS

HEALTH

- Food is vital for health, and gastronomy is the art of eating well. By showcasing regional and local foods that are wholesome and healthy, the European Region of Gastronomy Platform hopes to contribute to raising awareness of health issues and to promote healthy eating.

FOCUS AREAS

INNOVATION

- Local food cultures are an important source of innovation. Traditions developed over centuries form the vital 'DNA' of food cultures and regional gastronomy, and local knowledge is therefore an important potential source of new ideas and innovative products and experiences.

FOCUS AREAS

SUPPORTING SMES

- Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are the backbone of regional food production and the mainstay of gastronomic experiences. The European Region of Gastronomy Platform is designed to promote the work of SMEs and to help them achieve greater environmental, economic and cultural sustainability.

DIGITAL AGENDA

- The Digital Agenda for Europe aims to reboot Europe's economy and help Europe's citizens and businesses to get the most out of digital technologies and is part of the EU's strategy to deliver smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The digital economy is growing much faster than other sectors, but it requires new ways of working. The European Region of Gastronomy Platform recognises that this also applies to the food sector, which needs to add value to food products through the application of creativity and using digital technology.

FOCUS AREAS

GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS

- The European Region of Gastronomy Platform and Award are designed to underline the distinctiveness of Europe's food cultures and practices, enabling food products and experiences to compete effectively with those from other areas of the world. The European Region of Gastronomy Platform and Award see regional foods as being one of the major strengths that Europe can use to profile itself globally (both in terms of products and tourism services), which is why we are exploring gastrodiplomacy and collaborating with the Tasting Europe programme. (www.tastingeurope.eu)

FOCUS AREAS

LINKING URBAN AND RURAL

- Recent years have seen a growing divide between Europe's rural and urban areas, particularly in the area of food. Young city dwellers are often no longer aware where their food comes from. The European Region of Gastronomy Award provides an opportunity for regions to re-connect their rural and urban environments, bringing the countryside to the city, and the city to the countryside. The European Region of Gastronomy Platform and Award also stimulate debate between urban and rural dwellers about the future of food and gastronomy.

FOCUS AREAS

CULTURE AND FOOD DIVERSITY

- Regional gastronomy provides a wealth of diversity, not just in terms of a vast range of different foods, but also in the many ways of eating, presenting and serving foods around Europe. Through the European Region of Gastronomy Platform and Award, we hope to conserve local food cultures and help to promote the diversity of food, culture and creativity.

JOINING PROCESS AND COSTS

JOINING THE EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY PLATFORM

In order to be able to bid for the title European Region of Gastronomy, regions need to have been a member of the platform for a minimum of 2 years. This section outlines the process of becoming a Platform member:

Prospective regions should first convene a stakeholder meeting in the region to create a stakeholder group. Preferably the founding stakeholder group should be made up of at least one public (normally the region), one private, one third-sector and one knowledge institution (normally a university). Later this group must grow to include many more stakeholders.

The region should then send a letter to IGCAT, stating their interest and potential to become a member. As the coordinating body, IGCAT will consult the current members, and on agreement that the region is eligible (see FAQs regarding what constitutes a region), IGCAT will then proceed to allocate the applicant region an existing member region, who will act as mentor throughout the application process. All existing members must give their approval in order for applications to be successful.

The founding regional stakeholder group must sign a collaboration agreement with IGCAT (the administrative body for the European Region of Gastronomy Platform). Only one or two representing institutions need to sign the agreement on behalf of the regional stakeholder group.

By signing the collaboration agreement with IGCAT, the regional stakeholders agree to jointly join the Platform, promote the Award and take part in three partner meetings per year.

Two representatives for the regional stakeholder group must be selected and their contact details sent to IGCAT.
These representatives agree to share information from the Platform with all regional stakeholders. The regional group should keep IGCAT informed regarding the full list of stakeholder institutions.

Applications are open throughout the year.

Once a membership has been approved, an invoice will be sent to the applicant region, and once payment has been received, their membership to the European Region of Gastronomy platform will be finalised. Normally membership mayments are billed in February of each year, however if a regions join from July onwards they will be billed 50% for the current year as well as the joining fee.

The minimum time commitment to the Platform is 5 years, though it is hoped that regions will remain members for a much longer extended period.

COSTS RELATED TO JOINING THE EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY PLATFORM

The region will be expected to pay a joining fee and membership fee. The membership fees are normally payable in full in the first 6 months. For this purpose, the paying institution name, address and fiscal number needs to be forwarded to IGCAT.

€15,000 One-off joining fee

The joining fee benefits include:

a. visibility on the European Region of Gastronomy website,

b. entitlement to use the European Region of Gastronomy logo always with the heading CANDIDATE, the region's name and the year (if known) that the region proposes to hold the title.

€7,500 Annual membership fee (minimum commitment of 5 years)
The membership fee benefits include:

a. the above joining fee benefits

b. entitlement to attend at least three Platform meetings organised by IGCAT and hosted by the partners each year

c. entitlement to take part in collaborative projects with the other partners

d. participation in joint funding applications with the partner regions.

Membership fees are billed in February and payable by June each year.

3 **VARIABLE amount** – it should be noted that the membership fee does not cover travel and accommodation costs at meetings. These are additional variable costs that need to be covered by the member regions.

COSTS RELATED TO BIDDING FOR THE AWARD

€25,000 Bidding fee – This is payable to IGCAT, who will select and pay independent experts to act as jury members and coordinate as well as pay for their travel. This fee covers:

a. the jury's fees and travel costs
b. IGCAT's coordination costs.

VARIABLE amount – a budget needs to be agreed to host the jury visit which will include:

a. accommodation costs
b. meals
c. visits
d. local transport

VARIABLE amount – a significant budget needs to be established and set aside to host the year. This will need to be outlined in the regions bid book.

** All amounts quoted here reflect current fees (as of January 2017) and may be subject to change in future years.*

BIDDING FOR THE EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY TITLE

During their time as members of the European Region of Gastronomy Platform, regions will be advised and supported by former awarded regions to develop their programme and bid for the title.

Regions hoping to bid for the title have to produce a bid book (each year a call will be launched for subsequent years). The bid book should be approximately 20 pages in length and outline the stakeholder group, regional challenges to be addressed during the year, an events and projects programme, evaluation plan, budget, etc.

The selection criteria (see below) provides the framework and questions that the regions need to answer in their bid book. These include:

- **Title and brief description of the programme (preferred year)** Basic information about the planned programme, particularly relating to the timing of the activities (start and end dates), theme and proposed title.

- **Organising body and main partners.** The European Region of Gastronomy project particularly promotes the development of partnerships between public sector, commercial sector and education/research organisations. Candidates should indicate how they intend to develop such partnerships, and what types of collaboration this will involve.

- Bids must be submitted from a **consortium of stakeholders** (including representatives from academic, third sector, public and private institutions). The bid should clearly list the stakeholder group and names and contact details of their representatives.

- **One partner** will be responsible for managing and organising the programme of activities – this may be a new organisationset up for the purpose of or the most appropriate organisation with the means and structure to manage the programme.

- **Relationship to the aims and objectives of the European Region of Gastronomy title.** Candidate regions should demonstrate how they propose to support the aims and objectives (see Focus Areas) of the European Region of Gastronomy Platform. This should include a discussion of how the theme and programme of the year reflects the Focus Area, and which of these objectives will be particularly highlighted and how.

- **Cross-collaboration with other ERG partners.** An important aim of the European Region of Gastronomy Platform is to promote collaboration between the different regions in the network. Prospective partners should outline how they intend to collaborate with other European Region of Gastronomy regions, and which activities in the European Region of Gastronomy year will involve joint activities with other partners.

BIDDING FOR THE EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY TITLE

- **Sustainability and legacy.** How will the region ensure that the activities organised for the European Region of Gastronomy year will be sustainable over the longer term? What lasting legacy is envisaged from the European Region of Gastronomy process? How will the European Region of Gastronomy contribute to sustainable food and gastronomy practices in the region?

- **Citizen Inclusion.** How will the citizens of the region be involved in the development, organisation and execution of the programme? Are there any specific target groups who are envisaged as key beneficiaries of the programme?

- **Education.** How will the programme develop greater awareness and knowledge about local and regional food, issues of nutrition, health and sustainability? How will school children and others following educational courses be involved in the programme?

- **SMEs.** Which steps will be taken to ensure that SMEs are involved in the European Region of Gastronomy programme and also benefit from its outcomes?

- **European content and actions.** As the European Region of Gastronomy is designed to increase the visibility of regional gastronomy at European level, it is important that specific European elements be built into the programme. This should include the projection of your regional gastronomy to the rest of Europe, but also linking people in your region to different aspects of European food cultures and gastronomy. Particular attention should be paid to the existence of foodways linking your own gastronomic traditions with other European regions, as these are key elements of the UNESCO intangible heritage in the realm of gastronomy.

- **Economic provision.** What is the total budget for the activities foreseen in the European Region of Gastronomy year and any other associated activities? What are the funding sources that will be used to support the European Region of Gastronomy activities? Which body will have responsibility for the financial management of the European Region of Gastronomy?

- **Marketing and communication plan.** Who are the maintarget groups during the European Region of Gastronomy year, both inside and outside the region? What are the main means of communication with these groups? Outline the proposed marketing and communication budget required to support these activities.

- **Evaluation programme.** Describe the evaluation programme, including the assessment of short term impacts and longer term effects of the European Region of Gastronomy programme. Who will be responsible for undertaking the evaluation and producing the report for the region and the European Region of Gastronomy Platform?

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The European Region of Gastronomy project is a long-term evaluation programme, which aims to advocate the benefits of recognising gastronomy as a mean to stimulate innovation and showcase regional food cultures and identities. Therefore, the evaluation criteria has been developed to assess the potential of each region and what their legacy might be over the long-term.

POTENTIAL INDICATORS (developed by member regions)

- Food and gastronomy education (number of courses/students)
- Patents related to food – innovation
- Attendance level at food-related events (inclusion difficult to assess)
- How many small producers in the programme
- Number of tourists in gastronomy tourism projects
- Press coverage
- Gastronomic experiences
- Website usage

INDICATORS (POTENTIALLY AVAILABLE FROM EUROSTAT)

Economic indicators

- Gross domestic product (GDP)
- Employment level - in hospitality /gastronomy sector
- Gross value added at basic prices
- Patent applications to the EPO by priority year by NUTS 2 regions – innovation
- Number of food related businesses

Education

- Students in tertiary education (ISCED 5-6) by NUTS 2 regions (food, gastronomy, hospitality)

Agricultural activity

- Economic accounts in agriculture
- Agricultural labour input statistics
- Unit value statistics for agricultural products

Organic food

- Certified organic products
- Organic livestock by type of species
- Certified registered organic operators processing products issued from organic farming Production of organic animal products by type of products

Health indicators

- Life expectancy by age and gender
- Healthy life years
- Health by sex, age and educational attainment level

Tourism

- Occupancy of tourist accommodation establishments
- Capacity of tourist accommodation establishments
- Employment in the accommodation sector

FUTURE COLLABORATION PROGRAMMES

The European Region of Gastronomy Platform is an umbrella project for many different initiatives. A number of these are already being explored and are listed below. This list is non-exhaustive, new regions are welcome to join existing projects and are encouraged to elaborate new ones.
As European-collaborative actions, these initiatives might also be eligible for European Union funding.

Young Chef Award

Regional Young Masterchef competitions in each region are often held. The European Region of Gastronomy Platform proposes that winners are sent to a European final held in one of the regions holding the title that year. The aim is to encourage the use of seasonal and local products and encourage innovation of traditional recipes.

Map of Europe

The European Region of Gastronomy Platform proposes to develop an online map which represents local products from each regions. Such an initiative already exists in East Lombardy, Catalonia and Marseille so these individual actions could become part of a larger online collaborative project.

Joint Master Degree Programme

Academic Institutions from European Region of Gastronomy Platform stakeholder groups propose to develop an international component in current Master Degree programmes operating in the partner regions. And, to support the introduction of Master Degree programmes in regions that do not have one yet.

International Conferences and Seminars on Gastronomy and Culture

The European Region of Gastronomy Platform members each have the opportunity to host a partner meeting and capitalise on the knowledge platform to host a larger conference or seminar to extend the debates on Gastronomy and Culture.

Market Place

The European Region of Gastronomy Platform members share information on their gastronomic fairs and where possible facilitate the participation of SME's from other partner regions in order to showcase their local products.

European Region of Gastronomy Stamp

The European Region of Gastronomy Platform members have the possibility to distribute a European Region of Gastronomy Stamp to quality local producers and service providers that support the aims and principles underlining our work.

FAQs

What is meant by the title 'Gastronomy' – does this mean only high-end cuisine?

No, 'Gastronomy' here is used to refer to a holistic approach which includes agriculture and food culture relating to place, hospitality, eating, food production, food ways, food traditions and how one feels about their food culture.

What is meant by 'Region' – who can apply?

A 'Region' can be a province, county, country and/or other territory defined by the partner presenting the bid. It is important that the territory chosen has the support of multiple municipalities (not just one) and that it is able to gain support from multiple academic, third sector, public and private partners.

What are the starting dates and end dates if we bid for the European Region of Gastronomy title – is it a full year of activities starting in January?

Since the European Region of Gastronomy is a bottom-up initiative, the regions will decide the starting time of the events of their European Region of Gastronomy year according to their schedule but a range of events should be spread over several months.

What happens after you have held the title of European Region of Gastronomy?

The awarded region will have to complete its 5 year commitment to the European Region of Gastronomy Platform if this has not already been done. Beside the lasting legacy of the award, the region will have the option to remain in the European Region of Gastronomy Platform beyond the year of their title.

How many regions can hold the title each year?

Up to 3 regions will be selected each year by an external jury of experts. By holding the title the regions selected will act as ambassadors for the project and agree to collaborate with one another.

What is the title that will be awarded?

The awarded title will be '[REGION NAME] - EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY – [YEAR]'. This is similar to European Capitals of Culture and therefore the title can be used as a long-term legacy of the event and each region awarded the title for a year would be able to patent the title and year for posterity.

CONTACT

For more information about the programme please contact:

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Alternatively, you can reach IGCAT, the administrative body of the European Region of Gastronomy project:

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The European Region of Gastronomy award and platform aim to contribute to better quality of life in European regions by highlighting distinctive food cultures, educating for better health and sustainability, and stimulating gastronomic innovation.

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