

UNESCO Transcultura calls for young Caribbean entrepreneurs in the handcraft field within the cultural and creative industries.

Call for an **Entrepreneurship incubator: *Export development and market opportunities in the handcraft sector.***

****Context and purpose****

This call for applications is launched in the framework of *Transcultura: Integrating Cuba, the Caribbean and the European Union through Culture and Creativity*, a four-year Programme implemented by the UNESCO Regional Office for Culture in Latin America and the Caribbean with the support of the European Union.

The overall purpose of the Programme is to deepen cultural integration in the Caribbean and to strengthen people-to-people cooperation and exchange within the region and with the European Union. In particular, the Entrepreneurship and Incubator component aims to strengthen capacities for the development of new cultural projects, self-employment and start-up/scale-up activities. The innovative and entrepreneurial project development supported by the Programme will improve beneficiaries' access to new knowledge, markets, management models and sources of funding.

In this context, the **entrepreneurship incubator: *Export development and market opportunities in the handcraft sector*** is an online incubator initiative which offers innovative framework for export development and increasing market opportunities. Through this initiative, creative and scalable project ideas within the handcraft sub-sector of the Cultural and Creative Industries and in their early stages of generation, will be able to strengthen their export promotion skills, new market entry opportunities and regional network building.

During this six-week program, from August 2023 to early September 2023, participants will engage in a variety of enriching activities designed to enhance Artisans entrepreneurial skills:

1. Online Entrepreneurship Capacity Building Course:

Over a period of six weeks, participants will enroll in a comprehensive online course covering essential topics such as:

- Product and services ideation,
- Pricing and marketing strategies,
- Export readiness and market entry into new territories,
- E-commerce,

- Regional networking and market integration,
- as well as pitching and fundraising techniques.

The course will be delivered online between August and early September 2023, with a total duration of eighteen (18) hours. Activities will be delivered every Thursday, three (3) hours each day.

2. One-on-One Online Mentoring with Expert Business Professionals:

Participants will have the invaluable opportunity to receive personalized guidance from experienced business professionals. Each participant will be paired with a dedicated mentor, who will provide expert advice and support tailored to their specific needs over a designated two-week period.

3. Online Trade Expo Event:

A highlight of the program will be a dynamic one-day online trade expo event. During this event, participants will have the platform to showcase their scaled-up product and service ideas to a targeted audience. They will deliver presentations that highlight the value and uniqueness of their offerings while also exploring potential new business opportunities that may arise from the event. By engaging in these activities, participants will gain valuable knowledge, receive personalized guidance, and will have the opportunity to showcase their entrepreneurial endeavors to a wider audience, ultimately empowering them to excel in their business ventures.

The incubator initiative is led by the Caribbean Export Development Agency (CEDA). Caribbean Export promotes trade and investment in the Caribbean region and supports the private sector. Caribbean Export focuses on increasing exports, attracting investment and creating jobs to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Established in 1996, Caribbean Export helps businesses expand nationally, regionally and internationally by enhancing their capacity and competitiveness. Caribbean Export prioritises areas such as e-commerce, digitalisation, green energy and the transition to a green and blue economy. In addition, Caribbean Export supports non-tourism service providers and the creative industries to promote entrepreneurship and capitalise on opportunities.

****Who can apply****

To be considered for the UNESCO Transcultura entrepreneurship incubator, applicants must meet the following requirements:

1. Age: Applicants must be between 18 and 35 years old.
2. Geographical scope: Applicants must be citizens and permanent residents of any of the following 17 Caribbean countries within the Transcultura Programme's geographical scope: *Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Monserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname or Trinidad and Tobago.*
3. Professional requirements: young entrepreneurs with an early-stage business initiative /project within the handcraft field of the cultural and creative sector.

Thirty-four (34) participants will be selected from this call. Incubation activities will be broken down in groups by language: English, Spanish and French.

****Application Process****

Applicants should apply through this **online application form** [Here](#) to provide personal data, and information on their handcraft business and / or entrepreneurship initiative / project.

At the time of application, candidates will also be asked to provide the following supporting documents:

1. Portfolio with evidence of work related to the handcraft field within the culture and creative industries sector.
2. Digital copy of your ID or passport.

The deadline for submitting the applications is **31 July 2023**, at 23:59 Paris time (UTC +2h)

****Selection Process ****

- Once all the applications are received, they will be subject to a rigorous selection process.
- A Selection Committee, comprised of experienced professionals from Caribbean Export and members of the UNESCO Transcultura team, will select a maximum of thirty-four (34) young Caribbean entrepreneurs, based on their background and business initiative/project.

Successful applicants will be notified no later than **18 August** 2023.

Please note that:

- Only fully completed applications will be considered and evaluated for suitability.
- Once all the applications are received, the Committee might request additional information. Applicants are invited to check their inboxes regularly, including SPAM boxes.
- The UNESCO *Transcultura* Programme reserves the right to use the applicants' information for the exclusive purpose of the implementation of the initiative and preserving confidentiality.

All passionate young Caribbean entrepreneurs within the handcraft sector are encouraged to seize this opportunity for personal and professional growth!

For any inquiries related to this activity, please contact Remorno Hamilton , Competitiveness and Export Promotion Consultant at rhamilton@carib-export.com copying dsinanan@carib-export.com.