



No4. – March 2023

# CREACT4MED NEWSLETTER

CReative Entrepreneurs ACTing FOR  
the future of the MEDiterranean



**CREACT**  **MED**

CREATIVE MEDITERRANEAN



## Prof. RYM AYADI

EMEA's Founder and President

# Foreword

The cultural and creative industries must become a priority vector of economic development to create economic, social, and community value, essential for healthy, flourished and resilient societies. With this in mind, the CREAT4MED project continues to make impactful contributions to the CCI ecosystem in the Southern Mediterranean to build its capacity as a catalyst for job creation and economic growth, societal transformation and innovation, and wellbeing.

In the last 6 months, CREAT4MED has made significant headway in its aim to provide financial support to women and young entrepreneurs. The project has held 6 pitch sessions under the call for subgrants launched in July 2022 and has selected 24 creative and cultural entrepreneurs under that call. This is the beginning of an exciting journey for these small and medium enterprises, and civil society organisations to scale up, innovate, and create employment for young people and women. They will be accompanied through the process by the 6 selected Business Support Organisations.

As well as providing financial support, CREAT4MED has completed its first training cycle with over 200 participants. A second cycle is to come this year, transferring knowledge and skills of business management in creative industries.

Finally, we continue to advocate and engage with CCI actors in the region to put a spotlight on the major contributions, value creation, and social impact the cultural and creative industries have. The mapping and research carried out under the project are conducive to making the necessary changes in policy. We look forward to valuable discussions and continued dialogue with stakeholders from all sectors in the upcoming months.



# About CREAT4MED

CREACT4MED is an EU-funded project which aims to strengthen businesses with the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) in the Southern Mediterranean. It seeks to support entrepreneurs and start-ups, create jobs, and foster sustainable economic growth, with a particular focus on young people and women.

**Project full name:** CReative Entrepreneurs ACTing FOR the future MEDiterranean

**Grant agreement number:** ENI/2019/412-505

**Budget:** €2,220,675 (90% funded by the EU Commission)

**Timeline:** 1st March 2020 – 31st August 2024

## CREACT4MED Goals:

- Boost CCI businesses and entrepreneurship in the Southern Mediterranean, increasing the capacity of CCI to attract investment, create jobs and foster inclusive economic growth.
- Empower current and potential entrepreneurs, in particular young people and women, to start or grow CCI businesses through tailored training and financing opportunities.
- Establish a regional CCI hub to bring together actors from North Africa, the Middle East and Europe, strengthening networking, exchanges and cooperation in the sector across the Mediterranean.

CREACT4MED is led by the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA) and implemented by a consortium of partners from across Europe and North Africa.





# News and updates

CREACT4MED's activities are split into 4 main pillars:

- Mapping the CCI ecosystem in target countries
- Training aspiring CCI entrepreneurs
- Sub-granting business incubators, MSMEs, and Civil Society Organisations
- Engagement and Advocacy on the importance and social impact of CCI

## Mapping

The CREAT4MED project has published country reports on the social and economic significance of the CCI ecosystem in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia have been published (available on the website), mapping key players, legal and regulatory frameworks, and national and regional initiatives, including those introduced to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Research for Algeria and Israel is ongoing, and publications will be coming soon. Compiling the policy recommendations from each country, a regional policy paper will be published in April 2023.



As part of the mapping pillar, the CREAT4MED project has created a data observatory to collect and show reliable available data on the significance of the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) in the CREAT4MED target countries: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia, plus Algeria and Israel, as well as providing a regional perspective. It covers a broad definition of CCI stretching from gastronomy to performing arts, to gaming and music, to advertising and fashion. The Data Observatory is freely available on the CREAT4MED website and a work in progress with 2 more country reports to come, plus social dialogue events. The output of these seminars and the Observatory is to influence policy and generate an action plan to strengthen the CCI ecosystem.

The Data Observatory was created and launched at the CREAT4MED Annual Conference 2022 by Dr. Yeganeh Fourouhshfar, Researcher at the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association.

A second element to the mapping pillar is the call for nominations of Best Practice, which was launched by the project in February 2022. The next call will be launched in Spring, 2023 to expand the dataset. The identification of these Best Practices has the aim of highlighting key figures, actors, initiatives, cultural infrastructures, opportunities, and threats in each of the territories, with a view to uncovering and raising awareness of unexploited opportunities for entrepreneurship and employment and developing relevant support initiatives and policy recommendations. The best example nominated will be awarded a prize at the project's Final Conference in 2024.





## Training

The CREAT4MED Training Academy aims to equip young, aspiring entrepreneurs with the knowledge, skills and resources they need to make their business idea a success. The Academy was inaugurated in May 2022 by Professor Rym Ayadi, Founder and President of EMEA and Director of the CREAT4MED project.

During the first cycle which took place in May-July 2022, 229 participants enrolled in the training programme. The course received positive feedback with 83% stated that the content fulfilled the objectives, 83% stated that the training helped them develop new skills and 90% found the training very relevant to their needs.

The training academy will be back in 2023 for a second cycle with an improved curriculum based on the feedback received. The training will be made available in Arabic, French, and English to ensure full accessibility for all our participants in the Southern Mediterranean.

Finally, the project will hold a week-long "Management of Creativity" Summer School in 2023 in Barcelona inviting the 24 selected entrepreneurs under the call for subgrants. The school will consist of lectures, workshops, and teambuilding between participants on a range of topics from resilience in the CCI industries, to Intellectual Property Rights, to tactics for internationalisation and community building.

## Sub-granting

A key pillar of the CREAT4MED project is providing subgrants to Business Support Organisations and entrepreneurs. In our last newsletter, we announced the winning BSOs. In this newsletter, we are happy to announce the winning MSMEs and Civil Society Organisations from all 6 countries. Keep an eye out for our upcoming Special Edition Newsletters where we will delve deeper into the winning proposals.

The process began in July of last year when the call for subgrants for CCI projects was launched. The call offered the subgrant of €15,000 for entrepreneurs in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Lebanon, Tunisia, and Palestine. Following the close of the call, the evaluation of the written proposals was carried out and of the 156 written proposals received, 60 were invited across the countries to a hybrid pitch session before the panel of experts. Each entrepreneur had 6 minutes to present their proposal and then submitted to a question-and-answer session. The jury consisted of the CREAT4MED technical assistance team, our local BSO partners, and at least 2 local experts. From each country, 4 MSMEs were selected to receive the subgrant – 63% of them being led by women.

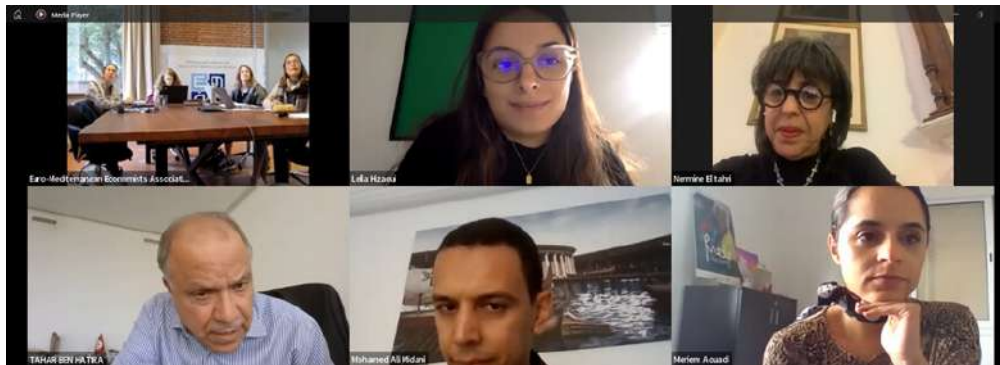
Before proceeding, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who took part in the call and look forward to seeing all business proposals thrive to contribute to a flourishing CCI ecosystem in the region.



The pitch session in Lebanon was held on the 28th October 2022. The entrepreneurs selected to pitch were: Cezar Projects, ClimberSpace, Diwan of Culture, Design & Innovation, Ecoconsulting, Ettijahat, Independent Culture, Mlouk Productions, Moodfit, Plastic Lab, Studio Kunukke, Yaraqa and Tourific.

The WINNING entrepreneurs were:

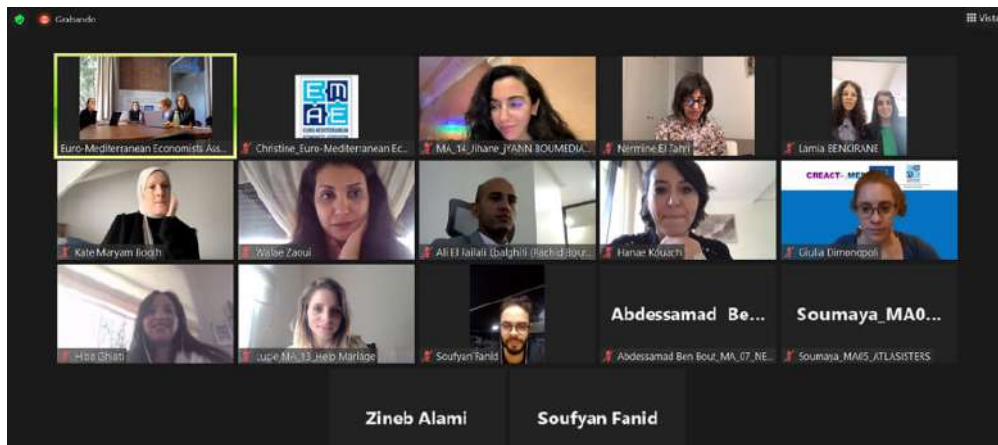
- Cezar's Projects
- ClimberSpace
- Mlouk Productions
- Toufif



The pitch session in Tunisia took place on the 7th November 2022. The entrepreneurs selected to pitch were: Digital Cultural eXperience, KLINK, Maft Studios, Mraabila, Moovin 360, MNARA Hub, Nqollek Haja, Ourghema, The Virtual Art Gallery, and Tunis International.

The WINNING entrepreneurs were:

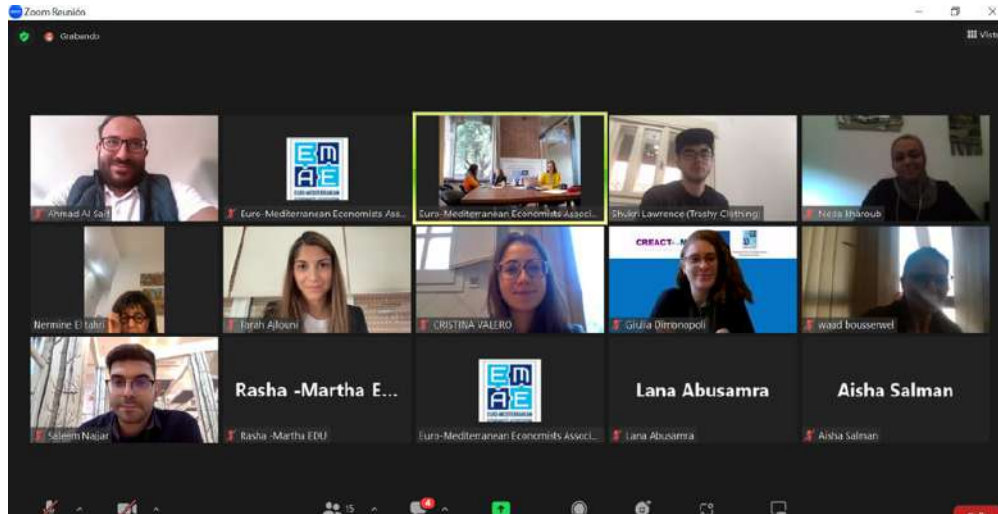
- Digital Cultural Experience
- KLINK
- Moovin 360
- The Virtual Art Gallery



The pitch session in Morocco took place on the 11th November 2022. The entrepreneurs selected to pitch were: ANYA, ATLASISTERS, CineLink, CRÉ ARTISANAT, Felicity, H.Kids, Help Mariage, jYANN, Moor Morocco Ltd, Neqra, and WAR ENTERTAINMENT SARL.

The WINNING entrepreneurs were:

- CRÉ ARTISANAT
- Felicity
- Help Mariage
- H KIDS



The pitch session in Jordan took place on the 14th November 2022. The entrepreneurs selected to pitch were: Alfredo Books, BySolaar, GIOIA, M. Barroq Design & Media Production, Martha EDU, Puppets World for Development of Children, Sharqi, Studio Raa, Talaween, Trashy Clothing, Viavii, and WARAGAMI.

The WINNING entrepreneurs were:

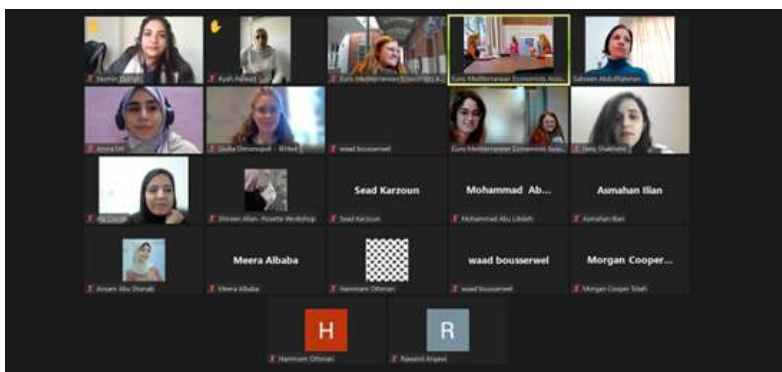
- GIOIA
- Puppets World for Development of Children
- Talaween
- Viavii



The pitch session in Egypt took place on the 12th January 2023. The entrepreneurs selected to pitch were: Almah (Egyptian Clothing Bank), Azem (Duma Toys), Cotton Town, Dawar, Habu for Arts and Handicrafts, KEMET Incubator, Mulberry Tree, Nakoll Eats, Reform Studio, Teatro Alsaed for Theater and Arts, and Visionario.

The WINNING entrepreneurs were:

- Almah (Egyptian Clothing Bank)
- Azem (Duma Toys)
- Reform Studio
- Teatro Alsaed for Theater and Arts



The pitch session in Lebanon was held on the 28th October 2022. The entrepreneurs selected to pitch were: Cezar Projects, ClimberSpace, Diwan of Culture, Design & Innovation, Ecoconsulting, Ettijahat, Independent Culture, Mlouk Productions, Moodfit, Plastic Lab, Studio Kunukke, Yaraqa and Tourific.

The WINNING entrepreneurs were:

- Cezar’s Projects
- ClimberSpace
- Mlouk Productions
- Toufid

In 6 Special Edition Newsletters focused on each country, we will be presenting the selected entrepreneurs and their projects. They will be released in the coming months.

## Kick-off Events: Country visits

Following selection of the subgrantees, the CREAT4MED technical assistance team travelled to Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, and Tunisia to meet the entrepreneurs and kick-off their projects between December 2022 and February 2023. The final remaining visit to Palestine is planned for May 2023.

In the 2-day kick-off events, beneficiaries of the subgrant were presented with the CREAT4MED roadmap and given one-to-one guidance on the grant implementation by María Ruiz de Cossío, the CREATMED Project Manager. Beyond administrative information sessions, the visits included opportunities to brainstorm synergies, an inspirational talk, a networking session and visit a cultural centre in the local country.



### Morocco: 6th and 7th December 2022

The CREAT4MED team were in Casablanca, Morocco on the 6th and 7th December 2022 and were hosted by the BSO, LaStartupStation. The inspirational talk was given by Madame Leïla Doukali, President of the Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Morocco discussing women in business and how the CREAT4MED entrepreneurs contribute towards the construction of a strong CCI community. The group then visited the Institut Français de Casablanca, which works for cultural dissemination throughout Morocco and supports the production of innovative projects in the artistic, digital, or academic fields.

### Jordan: 13th and 14th December 2022

The visit to Jordan took place on the 13th and 14th of December 2022, hosted by TTI Innovation. The brainstorming session was led by Neda Kharoub, Business Consultant and Co-founder of TTI Innovation (Rennes for Training and Development). The participants also had the chance to visit Tech Works, a hub for bringing together youth, ideas, and resources to jump-start successful innovations and strengthen the country’s innovation capabilities, on the second day.







### Tunisia: 23rd and 24th January 2023

To kick off the entrepreneurs in Tunisia, the CREAT4MED team were hosted by Minassa INCOTunisie in collaboration with RedStart Tunisie on the 23rd and 24th January 2023. We were joined by The brainstorming session was led by Douja Gharbi, CEO of RedStart Tunisie, partner of CREAT4MED, with the participation of Ouafa Belgacem, Culture Funding Watch. The event ended with a visit to Ennejma Ezzahra design hub located at the Arab and Mediterranean Music Centre in Sidi Bou Said. It is a place of exchange, support and training for craftsmen and designers who want to improve their skills.



### Egypt: 7th and 8th February 2023

The visit to Cairo, Egypt took place on the 7th and 8th February 2023 and the team were hosted by the local BSO NilePreneurs Initiative. The inspirational talk came from Dr. Heba Labib, Director of NilePreneurs Initiative as she discussed the importance of creativity and the skills needed to succeed as an entrepreneur. The cultural visit took the group to FabLab Egypt (Fabrication Laboratory). FabLab is a space where creative individuals test out their ideas and turn them into prototypes. The FabLab team gave a tour of the premises and led an activity for our "maker" entrepreneurs.

### Lebanon: 23rd and 24th February 2023

The final visit to report is that of Lebanon which took place on the 23rd and 24th February 2023. The CREAT4MED team were hosted by Nucleus Ventures in Beirut Digital District, and we were joined by Lynda Achkouty Mouawad, Action Coach, for an inspirational talk and Sophie Makzoume, Globinvest, for the brainstorming session. The day closed with a networking event where entrepreneurs had the opportunity to talk with the speakers of the event and other successful entrepreneurs. On the second day, we had a tour of Beirut Digital District (BDD). BDD is an all-inclusive professional urban development space in Lebanon, designing hubs where the creative digital community work together.





# Engagement and Advocacy

The final pillar of the CREAT4MED project is raising awareness of the importance, value creation and social impact of CCI, and advocate for this to be reflected in public policy. The project seeks to create a CCI Mediterranean Hub, bringing together key players such as BSOs, entrepreneurs, financial actors and NGOs to strengthen the sector and unleash its economic potential. In the past 6 months, the CREAT4MED project has held and participated in several events to strengthen the CCI ecosystem in the Southern Mediterranean.

Firstly, the CREAT4MED Annual Conference was held in Sant Pau Recinte Modernista, Barcelona on the 28th and 29th November 2022, and invited over 40 members of the CREAT4MED community including project beneficiaries and expert speakers from across the world. The Conference showcased the project's achievements to date, set forth goals for the coming year, and provide a space to discuss innovative ideas for programmes, policies, and financial models to support CCI entrepreneurs and businesses in the Southern Mediterranean. Preparations are underway for the Annual Conference in 2023.



Also in November 2022, the project held its first EU-Southern Neighbourhood Dialogue event. Gathering 12 members of the CCI community across Europe and the CREAT4MED region, including the CREAT4MED incubators, the space allowed for knowledge exchange and potential collaborations between the CCI Hubs.

The CREAT4MED Team has participated in many events to advocate for CCI in the Southern Mediterranean. In September 2022, manager of the CREAT4MED project, María Ruiz de Cossío, Project Manager at the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA), participated in the RM Digithon in the panel event: CCI Ecosystem Building.

A few months later in February 2023 the team travelled to Cairo, Egypt and took part in the Start-Ups Without Borders Summit as Community Partners. The Summit gathered 3,000 people, 120 speakers, 88 talks and workshops, and 460 investor pitches, including talks on Creative Frontiers: The Intersection of Diversity, Multicultural Talent, and Cultural Edge.





The President of the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association – EMEA and Director of the CREAT4MED project, Prof. Rym Ayadi, participated at the Creative Industries Forum CIF-2023, which was organised by UN – ESCWA (Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia). The Forum was held on 21-22 February 2023, at the W Hotel in Amman, Jordan. Prof. Ayadi participated at the “Inspirational panel: Creative Arab businesses’ success stories” which aimed to showcase inspirational creative businesses from the Arab region that have crossed borders and scaled up regionally and internationally.

Prof. Rym Ayadi, also participated as facilitator at the first meeting of the Social-Ecological Creativity Metrics Workgroup. The Workgroup aims to gather scientists, artists, business leaders, and policymakers to begin outlining quantitative creativity metrics in order to build stronger quantitative connections between outcomes in creativity, innovation, and workplace wellbeing.

Finally, EMEA researcher, Dr. Yeganeh Forouheshfar, participated at the Mediterranean Tech Women Festival. Organised by Womenpreneur Initiative and co-hosted with CAWTAR Center of Arab Women for Training and Research, Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), EBSOMED, Entrepreneurship Academy by Sanad and Day of the Mediterranean the event took place on Wednesday 30 November 2022 in Madrid. Dr. Forouheshfar intervened in the panel on “the Mediterranean Hub for the future” and highlighted the main challenges entrepreneurs and SMEs encounter given the current global macro-economic shocks, the importance of tackling the digital divide in the region and to ensure women getting similar access to digital infrastructure and digital training.

Work is ongoing to organise an online Med CCI Hub networking event to take place in Spring 2023 in collaboration with Culture Funding Watch, an arts funding and resource mobilization platform based in Tunisia. Furthermore, preparations are being made for the CREAT4MED Social Dialogue events, which bring together private and public sector representatives to exchange information and negotiate on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy. Finally, the project will hold Regional Alumni Network events, which will offer graduates of the CREAT4MED Training Academy opportunities for networking, peer-to-peer learning, and professional development.

Lastly, we are pleased to say that the CREAT4MED community continues to grow with over 500 members on the CREAT4MED platform. We have almost 250 startups, 100 SMEs, 120 support organisations, and 50 creative individuals from over 20 countries. Over 50% of our members are under 35, and over half are women. If you’re not already signed up to be part of this wonderful community, you can do so [here](#).





# Partners & Associates



## EMEA - Project Coordinator

The Euro-Mediterranean Economist Association, EMEA, is a Barcelona based regional think-tank that serves as a leading independent and innovative policy research institution; a forum for debate on the political and socio-economic reforms in the Mediterranean and Africa; and a promoter of actions and initiatives that fulfil objectives of sustainability, inclusiveness, regional integration and prosperity.

## Our Partners



## Our Associates









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Co-Funded by the European Union (90%, 2020-2024)



Coordinated by the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association

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