

# ON THE ROAD CALL 2 IMAGINE CLIMATE DIGNITY: ARTISTIC COLLABORATIONS

(2023 — 2024)

EN

## International Call of the Directorate General for International Cultural Relations at the Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs and the Austrian Cultural Forums in cooperation with the Künstlerhaus Vereinigung

 Federal Ministry  
Republic of Austria  
European and International  
Affairs

 austria kultur<sup>int</sup>  
 KÜNSTLERHAUS  
VEREINIGUNG

“Without dignity, identity is erased. In its absence, men are defined not by themselves, but by their captors and the circumstances in which they are forced to live.” – Laura Hillenbrand

Austria Kultur International, the foreign cultural activities division of the Foreign Ministry, consists of a network of cultural forums abroad that is unique for a country the size of Austria. The project IMAGINE CLIMATE DIGNITY: Artistic Collaborations combines the most burning issue of our century with the idea of artistic collaboration between artists from Austria and other countries, especially EU candidate countries. IMAGINE CLIMATE DIGNITY: Artistic Collaborations is the follow-up project of the first joint call ON THE ROAD AGAIN (2021/23) with Austrian Cultural Forums.

Alexander Schallenberg,  
Federal Minister for European  
and International Affairs

*“The worldwide promotion of the work of artists from our country is one of the essential tasks of Austrian foreign policy and is also an important concern for me personally. With the open call ‘IMAGINE CLIMATE DIGNITY: Artistic Collaborations’, the Foreign Ministry is setting another active example of innovative cultural work abroad. The project is a follow-up to the successful open call ‘ON THE ROAD AGAIN’ and continues the close collaboration with the Künstlerhaus Vereinigung. Foreign cultural policy plays a crucial role, especially in times of crisis. With this soft power, we can open doors worldwide. In times of foreign policy upheavals and global challenges, familiar points of orientation and support are needed. In this respect, art and culture will play an increasingly important role as a unifying constant. I hope that this new open call will initiate sustainable artistic partnerships spanning the globe.”*

On the occasion of the anniversary year of 2023 – 50 years of international cultural work for Austria –, the Foreign Ministry dedicates its programs even more strongly to major themes of the future (“Future Culture”). As a key project of this anniversary, the “IMAGINE Arts & Ideas Initiative” was developed. “IMAGINE” is the aspiration to overcome our current crisis of imagination through artistic visions, inspiring ideas and a new culture of dialogue between the arts and sciences, incorporating the business community. “DIGNITY” was defined as the first general topic – in the spirit of Hans Jonas’ appeal that humans must give nature back its dignity in order to preserve their own dignity.

Against this background, the new international call is dedicated to one of the two focus areas of the initiative: IMAGINE CLIMATE DIGNITY. It will be implemented by the Directorate General for International Cultural Relations at the Foreign Ministry and Austrian Cultural Forums in cooperation with the Künstlerhaus Vereinigung.

The starting point for the call is a broad understanding of DIGNITY which is not limited to the dignity of human beings, but also considers the dignity of nature and its other species. CLIMATE DIGNITY means, on the one hand, that all people have the right to live in a sustainable world in which their health, freedom and livelihood are not adversely affected by climate change. In the spirit of climate justice, this applies specifically to people, communities, and countries that are or will be most affected by the consequences of climate change and are therefore particularly in need of protection. CLIMATE DIGNITY emphasizes, on the other hand, that the impact of human-induced climate change and the intertwined loss of biodiversity not only threatens human dignity, but also endangers nature and its flora and fauna. The “more-than-human” concept of CLIMATE DIGNITY thus focuses on the interdependence between humans and nature in all its manifestations. Whoever violates the dignity of nature, also damages human dignity.

The new call IMAGINE CLIMATE DIGNITY: Artistic Collaborations is thus strongly oriented towards climate and environmental issues. It calls for the imagination of visual artists (including those working in cutting-edge media) as to how the dignity of nature and the dignity of people can be permanently reconciled. Submissions could specifically address one or more of the following questions:

- ① What do sustainable models of life look like that enable people to live in dignity while respecting the dignity of nature?
- ② How should an economic culture based on CLIMATE DIGNITY be designed and what concrete changes are needed for its realization?
- ③ Which climate mitigation and climate adaptation measures seem most urgent and how can artistic concepts contribute to the effective implementation of these measures?
- ④ How can artistic concepts support the protection of biodiversity?
- ⑤ What is the role of digital technologies for CLIMATE DIGNITY, especially artificial intelligence?
- ⑥ How can we succeed in ushering in a new age of comprehensive regeneration based on a lasting balance between humanity and nature? How could our lives improve in this future regenerative modernity?

In addition to this central future topic, a new element is the requirement of artistic collaborations. The call is an invitation for artistic collaboration between artists living and working in Austria and artists living and working outside of Austria.

Collaborations with artists from EU candidate countries (currently Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye, and Ukraine) are particularly welcome (but not mandatory). Artistic collaborations can reach a wide range, from the conception of double exhibitions to the creation of joint works.

Submissions are welcome by visual artists living and working in Austria (including art in cutting-edge media) and should outline the concrete collaborations planned with artists living and working outside of Austria. In each submission, an Austrian Cultural Forum must be indicated as priority for implementation of the submitted project, supplemented by two additional Cultural Forums.

The following Austrian Cultural Forum destinations are planned: Belgrade, Brussels, Istanbul, Cairo, London, Madrid, New Delhi, New York, Beijing, Prague, Rome, Sarajevo, Tel Aviv, Tokyo, and Warsaw.

The jury will select the winning projects from the submissions for the 15 destinations mentioned above. In addition to the relevance of the content as well as the artistic quality and stringency of the planned collaboration, the inclusion of scientific findings and the consideration of interdisciplinary aspects also have relevance for the evaluation.

Details, funding, terms and conditions of the call:

All applicants are invited to apply for one of the above-mentioned destinations (with two alternate destinations). Each application must include project descriptions, sketches (if possible), CVs and portfolios of the submitting artists living and working in Austria as well as the respective artistic partners, and indicate the priority destination and two further preferred destinations.

The selection and announcement of the winners will take place in mid-January 2024.

The selected artists will be provided with a budget by mid-April 2024. This budget amounts to 12,000 euros per successful submission and includes the artists' remuneration, the realization costs of the artistic works including necessary transportation expenses (if capacity of diplomatic courier service is exceeded) as well as the support of the respective artistic presentation at the Künstlerhaus.

Due to the topic, artists are encouraged to ensure a low ecological footprint in their productions and, wherever possible, to work in a circular fashion.

The projects themselves will be taking place until the end of 2024 with the support of the selected Cultural Forums that are willing to cover

travel and accommodation costs. Depending on the destination, the premises of the Cultural Forums themselves or those of their exhibition partners will be available to realize the project.

Details about the call and the submission process are available on the website [www.ontheroadcall.at](http://www.ontheroadcall.at)

Procedure and  
deadlines:

Publication of call for applications: September 30, 2023  
Application deadline for artists: November 15, 2023

The jury is composed as follows (subject to change):

Silvie Aigner, Editor-in-chief PARNASS art magazine  
Günther Oberhollenzer, Artistic Director Künstlerhaus Wien  
Tanja Prušnik, Artist and President Künstlerhaus Vereinigung  
Deborah Sengl, Artist  
Christoph Thun-Hohenstein, Director General for International Cultural Relations, Austrian Foreign Ministry

The jury will create shortlists for the 15 destinations by mid-January 2024 and subsequently, in collaboration with the respective Cultural Forum, determine the final winning project.

The implementation of the winning projects will take place in coordination between the winning artists and the Cultural Forums in the course of 2024. In spring 2025, the project will be concluded in a group exhibition of all selected projects at the Künstlerhaus Wien. In the run-up to the submission, the Foreign Ministry and the Künstlerhaus Vereinigung are happy to assist artists living and working in Austria in their search for artistic partners for their submission, especially from EU candidate countries.

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