

RESIDENCIES: CHECKLIST FOR ARTISTS

compiled by

DutchCulture
| TransArtists

updated in cooperation with

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We provide a checklist for artists who are searching, applying and preparing for an international artist-in-residence program. This checklist will help you to match your wishes and expectations with those of the program you want to apply for, in order to save yourself unnecessary trouble and to avoid disappointment.

This list was originally compiled by DutchCulture | TransArtists and jointly revised and updated in 2025 together with the IGBK.

Find out more about:

- Motivations
- Searching & choosing
- Applying
- Funding check
- Practicalities you need to take care of

Motivations

Before diving into applications, pause and reflect: why do you want to do a residency? Knowing your reasons helps you choose the right program — and convinces selectors you're a good fit. Ask yourself the following questions:

Going for education

- Do you want to learn a new craft or technique?
- Are you seeking mentorship or feedback from curators, artists, or scholars?

Going for production

- Are you focused on completing a specific project?
- Do you need access to technical tools, facilities and resources?
- Do you want to make art works for exhibiting?
- Are you looking for orientation for future production in the region?

Going for solitude and space, for ...

- ... time away from daily distractions and obligations?
- ... engaging with a different environment and culture?

- ... anticipating new insights and inspiration?
- ... concentrating on work you have in mind already?

Going for collaboration and networking

- Do you want to meet local artists or other international residency artists?
- Do you like to work together with a community for realizing a project?
- Do you like to give lectures, workshops?

Going for professional growth

- Do you aim at exploring the arts in another country and culture?
- Will you contact artists' initiatives, galleries, museums, music distributors, publishing houses?

Just curious?

- Are you not sure what you're looking for yet? That's okay too — exploring residency databases can spark ideas.

Searching & choosing

Making a choice from thousands of residency programs can be quite a job. Here's how to narrow it down.

Which region & which discipline?

The most direct way of limiting your choice is to stick to a certain region in combination with a specific discipline, but:

- Don't be too specific while searching on region: if you can't find what you search for in Paris, there might be an opportunity just nearby.
- Don't be too specific while searching on discipline: there are a lot of multidisciplinary residency programs.
- Why going as far away as possible: think about international opportunities nearby too!

Which residency model?

Free surfing over the TransArtists' or IGBK's databases isn't as non-committent as it sounds. Actually, just roaming about might be very useful: it gives you an idea about the diversity of residency models from which you can choose.

- Check out which residency profile suits you.
- Do you like to be left alone or do you like to socialize?
- Which obligations and rules you have to comply with?
- Is the residency well connected to local communities or professional networks?
- Are the surroundings a good fit for you and your work— urban, rural, climate, access?

Which art facilities?

Make a list of facilities you need for your art practice.

- Do the offered facilities match with the ones you need for your art practice?
- Which tools do you need, which tools are offered?
- What materials do you need, are they present, can you use them?
- Where's the nearest art supply store?

- What kind of studio do you need?
- Are you sure you'll get the studio you want?
- Do you want to live and work in the same space or in separate spaces?

Are there possibilities to present your work?

Some residency places offer the possibility to present your work in an exhibition or to facilitate a workshop or an artist talk etc. Is that something that you are looking for? Or would you prefer to go somewhere where you can work in peace?

You know already where to go? Lucky you! But...

Imagine you just want to go for this specific residential art center. Because the photos on the website are so wonderful, because you think it's marvelous, because you think no other center can offer the same facilities or program, or because a friend has been there and told you how great it is. But still you can think it over:

- Check if the program you think is so marvelous, indeed matches with your wishes and expectations.
- Check if there might be opportunities around that offer comparable facilities that might suite you too, or even much better.

You are invited? Nice! But...

- You might be flattered, it's a generous offer! But is it what you want?
- Would you yourself ever have chosen this program?
- Check and ask why they want you for their program.

Practicalities

The success or failure of your stay may depend on many basic practicalities that have nothing to do with art. When searching you could think about the following:

- Can you bring your partner, children, pets?
- Do you need to apply for a visa? If so, how long can you stay?
- What kind of transportation is provided for?
- Do you need a driving license, is there public transport, do you need to take a car or bike with you?
- Will there be language barriers?
- Are there any age restrictions?
- Do you have any special needs due to a disability?
- Do you need special medical care?
- Can you bring your own food, cook your own dinner?
- Does the voltage for electricity match with your laptop?

Regional AiR networks

No database or platform is complete. If you are looking for residences in a specific country or region, check if there is a regional or national AiR network to gain more insight into the AiR-scene.

Austria: [AWAY](#) project around residencies

China: [China Residencies](#)

Finland: FAIRE Finnish Artist Residency Network – [Website](#)

Flanders & Brussels: Residencies – [Online tool](#)

Germany:

- IGBK [Residencies Mapping](#) (visual arts)

- touring artists [database](#)
- Goethe-Institut – residencies in Germany – [Fine art residencies](#) – [Theatre and dance residencies](#) - [Music residencies](#)
- Japan: [AIR-J](#)
- Luxemburg: [Guide to residencies in Luxembourg](#)
- The Netherlands: [AiR NL](#)
- USA: Artist Communities Alliance – [Resources for artists](#)
- Taiwan: [Taiwan Art Space Alliance \(TASA\)](#)

TransArtists – [Networks, platforms and mappings](#) - International

Applying

Application procedures differ enormously. Each institute has its own policy of adjudication. Usually, artists are requested to send in documentation, a curriculum vitae, a motivation and, if necessary, a project proposal. Participation is planned a long time in advance, usually six months, sometimes years ahead.

- When do you want to go?
- Are you flexible?
- Do you have enough time to prepare (visa, funding, logistics)?
- Double-check the deadline — and time zone!
- What to submit: project proposal, motivation letter, CV and portfolio
- Be sure about the criteria.
- Check if there is an application fee.
- Review any obligations tied to the application—do you agree with the terms?
- Is it yes or no, or can you be placed on a 'waiting list'?
- If accepted, get a written confirmation or a contract

Funding check

Staying at an artists' residence costs money. Some residency programs cover all costs, some residency programs don't cover any costs at all. In general, residential art centres will partly cover the costs, which always makes it necessary to find additional funding. Be sure about the budget before you go!

- touring artists: [Funding, opportunities and open calls](#)
- [Read more](#) for an overview of different funding guides at the TransArtists webpage.

Alternative ways to finance your stay:

- Can you sublet your apartment while you are away?
- The [DIY section](#) at the TransArtists website offers space to sublet your studio

Your application was successful? Practicalities you need to take care of

If you are going abroad for a temporary stay, administrative questions and procedures may be relevant. The following questions, which are related to specific topics, may provide some orientation.

- **Visa/ residence**
Is a visa needed for the entry?
Is a national working permit or the like needed for planned working activities?
- **Transport/ customs**
Are you going to another customs territory? What needs to be considered with regard to customs when taking equipment, musical instruments etc. with you?
Which documents are needed, which fees will be charged?
- **Taxes**
Do you earn an income abroad? Where is this income taxed?
Do you issue invoices abroad? Are you required to charge value added tax? What should the invoice look like?
Under which circumstances does the reverse charge procedure apply?
- **Social insurance**
How is health insurance coverage being regulated, when working abroad?
- **Other insurances**
Must additional insurances be taken out for working activities abroad?

Here you can get help with administrative questions

Mobility Information Points (MIPs) are organisations that help artists and culture professionals with the administrative issues of cross-border mobility, through free information and consultation services. Key issues include visas, social insurance, taxes, and customs. Ten MIPs are working throughout Europe and one in the US at the moment. All of them are members of [On the Move](#). [Find out about the MIPs](#).

****Think before you print****

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