

OPEN CALL

Schwindelfrei Festival 2024

for artists from Mannheim and the Rhine-Neckar Metropolitan region
Deadline: November 30, 2023.

The Schwindelfrei Festival is a point of contact and a platform for the independent performing arts in Mannheim and the Rhine-Neckar Metropolitan region. The upcoming festival will take place in Mannheim from July 11 – 14, 2024.

[→ More about the festival](#)

Open Call

Individual artists and groups from all disciplines in the independent performing arts scene who live or work in Mannheim and the Rhine-Neckar Metropolitan region are invited to apply for the following formats:

1. Format: Residency for Artistic Development Theme: Focus: Now. Expressing the Urgent

This residency entails a 3-week focused work phase for up to four artists per residency to allow artists to develop their own projects within the given thematic framework. The residency provides a per person budget, a workspace, as well as technical and dramaturgical support and will end with a presentation of the work.

THEME: FOCUS: NOW. EXPRESSING THE URGENT

The performing arts can produce more than just fleeting aesthetic moments: it can open free spaces for thought, create other worlds and give voice to what has been repressed. As an event that is experienced together, “theater” is always encountered in the immediate present thus making dialog possible. The performing arts is an experimental field for the artists, audiences and staff members and therefore

functions as a mirror and laboratory of and for our society – in all of its paradoxes, inequalities and open questions. As a pioneer always at the forefront of the times, theater provides space for utopias, can intervene, and as a collective practice, initiate changes in the local social context.

We are looking for project proposals that address urgent social issues artistically. What is motivating you here and now? What moves you? What do you want to say and how do you want to express it? What is being silenced or forgotten and has to be shown? What has to change and what should be preserved? Where do you refuse to cooperate and what is your strategy of resistance?

We are especially seeking out concepts that deal with current social conflicts and aspects of social and ecological sustainability. Making art means being actively involved. This is why it is also crucial to hold ourselves responsible for the sustainability of our own actions. Therefore, it is important for us that working methods are reflected upon during the residencies and mentoring sessions.

[→ More information](#)

2. Format: Mentoring Program – topic of your own choice

We understand mentoring as consultation and guidance that is given by an experienced expert in a particular field. The mentoring program affords artistic exchange, and allows you to draw on experience and expertise for your projects. In short, your chosen mentor(s) can help you take your artistic practices to the next level. The method of working and how goals are set during your mentorship is up to you. Mentorships in combination with a residency will be given priority, but it is also possible to apply for a mentorship without applying for a residency. There will be a final presentation during the festival.

[→ More information](#)

About the Festival

The Schwindelfrei Festival is conceived of as a meeting point for the independent performing arts in Mannheim and the Rhine-Neckar Metropolitan region. Through this biennial festival, the Mannheim Office of Culture can present current working methods and forms of expression by artists from the regional independent art scene. Schwindelfrei opens up spaces for artistic processes, initiates exchange between the local and regional scenes, seeks out connections to local neighborhoods and the audiences in Mannheim. You can find out more about the festival and past programs here: www.theaterfestival-schwindelfrei.de.

The upcoming festival will take place in Mannheim from July 11 – 14, 2024.

The focus of the upcoming festival is the exploration of urgent, existential topics through artistic means. From July 11 – 14, 2023, visitors to the festival will gain insights into the work of the artists participating in the residency and mentoring programs by attending their final presentations. In addition, productions that have emerged from previous Schwindelfrei residencies will also be given a platform to present their work. The festival program will also be supplemented with other formats such as guest performances, concerts, workshops, discussions, etc.

The Theaterfestival Schwindelfrei is a project from the Office of Culture of the City of Mannheim. The festival director is Nicole Libnau from the Office of Culture. The artistic director and curator is Dirk Förster. Partner venues for this festival are the EinTanzHaus, the Theaterhaus G 7, the Theatre Felina-Areal and zeitraumexit.

1. Residency for Artistic Development

For us, residencies are focused phases of artistic work that we can support within the framework of the festival by providing workspaces and a budget.

Work processes, research, and room for experimentation all play an important role in the performing arts. We would like to make this part of the artistic process transparent in the Schwindelfrei Festival.

The Schwindelfrei Festival will award up to four residencies for artistic research on the theme of **Focus: Now. Expressing the Urgent**. The final presentation will be performed during the festival between July 11 – 14, 2024.

WHO CAN APPLY?

- Individual artists and groups from all disciplines in the independent performing arts scene who live or work in Mannheim and the Rhine-Neckar Metropolitan region.

WE OFFER:

- A 3-week work residency for artistic development, research, and experimentation.
- The provision of a rehearsal space in Mannheim – please note that the residency rehearsal spaces are not technically fully-equipped stages.
- June 24 – July 10, 2024: work phase.
- Assistance during the work phase by the curator and a technical expert.
- The residency will conclude with a presentation of your work / work-in-progress or a lecture performance of at least 20 minutes during the festival from July 11 – 14, 2024. We are not looking for a fully completed piece.
- Remuneration for a max. of 4 persons for 3 weeks per residency. The remuneration per person has been set at €2,250.

WE EXPECT:

- Mandatory availability of all artists during the work phase and throughout the festival from June 24 – July 14, 2024.
- Transparent work practices that afford the festival team the possibility to visit rehearsals.
- Openness towards artistic exchange with the festival team and other artists participating in the festival.

- July 11 – 14, 2024: a public final presentation of at least 20 minutes.
- The final presentation will take place in the rehearsal space where you have been working. We are looking for insights into your work methods and perspectives, excerpts from scenes and an active dialog with the audience.

HOW CAN I APPLY?

- Briefly introduce yourself. (max. 10 lines)
- Present your project for the residency – how do you want to work and what do you hope to accomplish? (max. 1 page)
- Who will participate? List all participants in the residency project (name, function, where they live and what their work focuses on).
- If you wish to have a mentor for your residency, answer the question guide for the mentorship.
- Send us links to websites / other materials (if applicable).
- Let us know who your contact person is and send us their contact information.

DATES:

November 30, 2023 OPEN CALL Application deadline (by email)

January 2024 OPEN CALL Decisions and expected announcements

June 24 – July 10, 2024 Working phase in the residency

July 11 – July 14, 2024 Festival period with residency presentations

2. Mentoring Program

We understand mentoring to be the consultation and guidance provided by an experienced expert.

Often between projects and their realization, overarching questions arise about structural issues and art that cannot be dealt with because of time or space restrictions. The Schwindelfrei Festival wants to do something about this by offering artists, groups and institutions the possibility of working together with a mentor on a particular issue.

The Schwindelfrei Festival will award up to four mentorships. Within the framework of the festival, from July 11 – 14, 2024, insights into this mentoring process will be shared with the public.

WHO CAN APPLY?

- Individual artists and groups from all disciplines in the independent performing arts scene who live or work in Mannheim and the Rhine-Neckar Metropolitan region.

WE OFFER:

- The chance to work together with a mentor on a topic of your choice.
- The option of working with your mentor anywhere between March 1 and July 10, 2024.
- A paid contribution to cover expenses of up to €1,500.

WE EXPECT:

- Independent planning of the mentorship.
- The chance to take a look at your collaboration during the festival from July 11 – 14, 2024 (the format will be chosen together with the festival team and the other mentoring groups).
- A one-page report about the experience from the perspective of the mentees and the mentors – due by September 15, 2024.

HOW CAN I APPLY?

- Briefly introduce yourself. (max. 10 lines)
- What type of mentor are you looking for?

- Where do you need the support of a mentor? (max. 1 page)
- Do you already have a particular mentor that you would like to work with? If so, who is it?
- Provide a rough sketch of your project plan.
- Let us know who your contact person is and send us their contact information.
- Do you have special requirements? If so, please let us know.

DATES:

November 30, 2023	OPEN CALL Application deadline (by email)
January 2024	OPEN CALL Decisions and expected announcements
From March 3 – July 10, 2024	Working with mentor (freely selectable)
July 11 – July 7, 2024	Festival period with mentoring presentations

Selection criteria

- Convincing and coherently presented artistic approach.
- Whether the residency could play an important role in your own artistic development.
- Urgency.
- Relevant thematic focus.
- Reflected positioning and approach to your work.
- Socially and ecologically sustainable methods of working.

Submissions

Please send your application via email to:
kulturamt.schwindelfrei@mannheim.de

Your submission must include the following:

The answers to the questions given in “How do I apply?”

Your submission can be sent as a PDF, as an audio file or as a video link depending on what format would be the most convenient for you.

Incomplete submissions cannot be considered.

Application deadline: November 30, 2023

Questions about our OPEN CALL can be addressed at:
kulturamt.schwindelfrei@mannheim.de

Contact

Please send all open questions, suggestions or any other queries to:

Nicole Libnau

Email: kulturamt.schwindelfrei@mannheim.de

Tel.: 0621 / 293-9367

Please take a look at our FAQs / Frequently Asked Questions

Decision on your application

The curator will make the final decisions by the end of January 2024. Aside from the application requirements, important factors in this process are the artistic assessment and the organizational feasibility of your project within the framework of the festival.

Advisory Board

An advisory board will support the preparations of the festival. The members of the board will advise the festival director and curator on matters of discrimination in structural issues – particularly about topics of diversity, anti-discrimination, accessibility and barrier-free access. The members of the advisory board will be informed about the applications received and the final selections. The advisory board members are volunteers.

How we work

We want to make artistic processes and experiments possible, present a diverse palette of working methods and results and put them up for discussion. We think in an interdisciplinary manner, extending our reach outside of our own region in order to form networks. We like working with each other without hierarchies. We strive for clarity, openness and transparency. We would like to make our festival accessible to everyone.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is it possible to co-finance my project also through third-party funding, e.g., when I would like to work with more than four artists?

A: Yes, co-financing with third-party funding is generally possible.

Q: Will travel expenses and accommodations for artists who must travel from outside of the region, but are participating in the project be compensated?

A: The open call for applications was explicitly directed to artists from the region. Therefore, the festival cannot cover travel and accommodation expenses. However, co-financing through third-party fund could also be possible. Contact us to discuss individual cases.

Q: How should the results from the residency be presented?

A: We would like to have a presentation of your work / work-in-progress or a lecture performance of at least 20 minutes. We are not looking for a fully completed piece. The presentation format can, in consultation with the curator, be chosen freely. The presentations should offer insights into your artistic process, your point of view and your methods. Here, there is no pressure to succeed. For example, you could perform three different versions of a scene in front of an audience to test them and reflect upon the results. The presentation of your own artistic themes and approaches are just as important as creating a dialog with the audience.

Q: Can I apply for residencies and mentoring simultaneously?

A: Yes, if mentoring and residency are interconnected. A residency can be additionally supported by mentoring.

Q: The language we use for collaborating is English. Does the presentation have to be in German?

A: The presentation can also be in English. Please contact us so that we can find a way to make your work accessible to those who do not speak English.

Q: In order to apply for a mentorship, do I already have to name a specific mentor?

A: No, the specific person does not have to be appointed yet. If you need help finding a mentor for a particular issue, let us know.

Q: How should the results from the mentorship be presented?

A: We wish to present insights into the collaboration with the mentors. The format will be designed in coordination with the festival team and the other mentoring groups.

Q: What do you mean by 'structural issues'?

A: This has to do with, for example, questions of diversity, accessibility, sustainability, work and production processes, dramatic direction or digitality. This should be a topic that you are directly working on or are confronted with in your project.

Q: Can I make other suggestions?

A: Yes, please! We are open to ideas for our program, suggestions for musical or other artistic contributions, topics for workshops, discussions, etc. Just write us an email: kulturamt.schwindelfrei@mannheim.de

Q: I have created a digital project, installation or film and would like to present it in the festival. Would you be interested?

A: Yes. Just let us know what your project is and how you think it could be presented in the festival. Please be aware that Schwindelfrei is a festival for the performing arts – your project should have something to do with this or has been developed out of another form of performance.

Q: Can I apply even if I am still a student?

A: Those who are actively producing art at a professional level, but are also studying on the side can apply.

Q: I would rather send my application by post. Is that possible?

A: No. Please send your application per email as a PDF/ as an audio or video file.

Q: Do I need to send letters of reference?

A: No, letters of reference are not necessary.

Q: Will there be an application interview?

A: No. Application interviews will not be held.

Q: What criteria will be used by the curator to evaluate my application?

A: Has the planned project been convincingly presented? Could a residency actually help the group with their project? (For instance, a literature research project does not require a rehearsal room, but an exploration of movement would.) How urgent is the residency for the particular group in respect to other groups? Does the selection of the projects as a whole exhibit artistic variety?

Q: Is there a possibility to receive feedback in the case that my application has been rejected?

A: If the number of applications allows, the curator will make a short, individual statement on each of the submissions.

Q: Is there a possibility of childcare?

A: Unfortunately, we cannot offer childcare because of legal reasons.

Q: Are the working spaces barrier-free?

A: Unfortunately, the workspaces are only partially barrier-free. For more information, please contact Nicole Libnau - email: kulturamt.schwindelfrei@mannheim.de, telephone: 0621 / 293-9367

Q: When will I find out if I have been selected to participate?

A: Participants will be informed by the end of January 2024 at the latest.

Q: Can I submit more than one application?

A: No. You can only submit one application.

Q: How often will the presentations be shown?

A: Each presentation is expected to take place once.

Q: Will the presentations be filmed or photographed?

A: The presentations will be filmed and photographed by a person designated by the festival team.

Q: Are the people I will be working with during my residency familiar with issues such as racism, ableism and gender identities? Will they show sensitivity regarding these issues during our collaboration?

A: When it comes to the issues you mentioned, the festival team and the staff working for our cooperation partners have varying levels of knowledge. However, we are collectively striving to constantly increase our sensibility to these issues through workshops, continuing education and working on our own self-image.

Q: Is there a budget for technology and material expenses?

A: The festival has a general total budget for these types of expenses. There is not an extra budget for residencies to cover technology or material expenses.

Q: Does the festival have an awareness team? Is there an awareness concept?

A: The festival has a designated awareness officer. We will continue to work on the concept of awareness from festival to festival.

Q: I have more questions. Who do I talk to?

A: Please contact Nicole Libnau - email: kulturamt.schwindelfrei@mannheim.de, telephone: 0621 / 293-9367