

Light Art Residency - Rottal Spring 2027
Lower Austria, Austria

Hosted by Cultural Association VEIK

The Light Art Residency at Rottaler Zollhäuser is an artistic research and production programme dedicated to international artists working with light and media. The residency provides a space for experimentation, collaboration and reflection on the relationship between art, technology, natural environments and sustainability.

About VEIK

VEIK (German for Association for Experimental and Interdisciplinary Art) is a non-profit cultural association founded in Austria in 2012. The organisation promotes interdisciplinary artistic practices that connect light, art and nature, encouraging experimentation and intercultural exchange.

VEIK develops artistic projects, festivals and educational programmes with a special interest in public and natural spaces and collaborates with artists, cultural institutions and festivals internationally.

Major projects include:

Blockheide Leuchtet – international light art festival in Blockheide Nature Park, Austria.

Lichtspektakel im Naturpark Sparbach – light and sound installations in Austria's oldest nature park.

Niños Consentidos – experimental and interdisciplinary art festival in Buenos Aires, Barcelona, Vienna and beyond.

In 2023, VEIK received the Recognition Award for Folk Culture and Cultural Initiatives from the Province of Lower Austria.

The Residency Vision

The Light Art Residency in May 2027 aims to create a laboratory for artistic experimentation at the intersection of light, media and nature.

Over 28 days, from 3 May to 30 May 2027, the programme brings together a small group of four international artists to collaborate on a site-specific artwork developed in dialogue with the surrounding landscape and natural environment.

The residency encourages artists to:

- explore interdisciplinary practices
- experiment with new media and technologies
- exchange perspectives across cultures
- reflect on sustainability and climate issues
- develop collaborative artistic processes

The resulting work may potentially be presented at the 10th anniversary edition of the Blockheide Leuchtet festival in August 2027.

The Location

The residency takes place at the Rottaler Zollhäuser, historic rural buildings located in the countryside of Lower Austria near the Czech border. The houses were acquired by the organisation with the

intention of transforming them into a space dedicated to artistic research and residency programmes, preventing them from entering the speculative real-estate market and giving them a new cultural function.

Surrounded by forests, fields and natural landscapes, the site offers a quiet environment for focused work and site-specific experimentation. The forest is directly accessible from the property, while nearby rivers and lakes could potentially be used as additional spaces for exploration and inspiration.

Workspaces and Facilities

Residents have access to a variety of workspaces and technical resources. The facilities include an atelier and coworking space, a workshop equipped with power tools and electronic tools, storage space for materials, indoor and outdoor tables and workbenches, and sufficient electrical infrastructure for testing installations.

A range of materials is available for the development of artistic projects, including wood, aluminium structures, cables, ropes, belts, carabiners, screws and tapes. There is also a selection of technical equipment available, including lighting and audio equipment, fog machines, and filming equipment such as a drone, photo and video cameras.

The surrounding natural environment is an integral part of the working infrastructure and provides additional space for testing and experimentation. Workspaces and accommodation are located on the same premises, allowing a fluid connection between living and working areas.

Accommodation

Residents are accommodated directly on the premises. The house also includes a shared living and coworking space, kitchenette, bathrooms, an outdoor balcony and two garden terraces.

Additional facilities include high-speed Wi-Fi throughout the house, heating and laundry facilities. Residents also have access to a sauna and an outdoor shower.

The house is surrounded by a 3,000 m² garden, offering space for relaxation and outdoor experimentation. A vegetable garden provides part of the food during the residency, and residents may participate in its care if they wish.

Nearby towns include:

Litschau, 6 km away in Austria

Nová Bystřice, 4 km away in the Czech Republic

Bicycles are available for local transportation, and a shared car can be used for scheduled visits. A restaurant located 600 metres from the residency collaborates with the programme and may provide food during the residency.

Residency Programme

The residency lasts four weeks and begins with introductory sessions where residents present their work and discuss artistic approaches, sustainability and environmental topics. An experimentation phase follows, during which participants test ideas using indoor and outdoor spaces. Based on these explorations, the group collectively defines the concept and direction of the process. The creation phase then continues until the process is completed.

The focus of the residency is not on the final result, but on the process itself.

Regular meetings and mentoring sessions support artistic development, technical problem-solving and collaborative decision-making throughout the residency.

Residents also visit local cultural spaces and natural sites to gather inspiration and connect with the local context.

Who can participate?

The participating artists and cultural professionals must be legal residents of any of the Creative Europe countries, other than the country where the residency project takes place, in this case Austria. If you are Austrian but live in another Creative Europe country, you are eligible to be resident.

Funding and Financial Support

The residency is supported by Culture Moves Europe, a European Union funding programme, and implemented by the Goethe-Institut. The funding provides financial support to participating residents to help cover travel and daily subsistence costs during the residency.

Daily allowance: Each resident receives a fixed allowance of €30 per day to contribute towards daily expenses such as food and local transportation. Travel days are not included in the daily allowance.

Travel allowance: This is the compensation for travel expenses. The travel allowance is calculated based on the distance between the resident's place of legal residence and the main location of the residency.

Less than 5,000 km: €400

5,000 km or more: €800

Each resident is responsible for organising and purchasing their own travel tickets.

Travel distance and means of transport: Your travel distance is calculated as the one-way distance between your place of residence and the residency location, measured in a straight line. If your travel distance is less than 600 km, you are required to travel using a sustainable means of transport, meaning any form of transport other than air travel. Exceptions apply if you have a disability that prevents you from travelling by other means, or if you live on or need to travel to an island that can only be reached by air. You do not have to travel directly to the residency location and may include stopovers. However, your journey must start from your legal place of residence, and you must provide complete proof of travel from your place of residence to the residency location, including any stopovers.

Depending on your individual circumstances, you may be eligible for additional financial support:

Green Mobility Top-Up: €400 per resident

You are eligible if the distance between your place of residence and the residency location is 600 km or more (measured in a straight line) and you travel by a means of transport other than airplane. Participants are expected to travel sustainably when feasible and possible.

OCT/OR Top-Up: €175 per resident

Available if you legally reside in, or have your destination in, an Overseas Country or Territory (OCT) or an Outermost Region (OR) of the European Union.

Visa Top-Up: €120 per resident

Available if you require a visa to enter Austria for the residency.

Family Top-Up: €200 per child

Available if you have children under 18 years of age at the time of the residency. The support amounts to €200 per child, per resident.

The host organisation will request the applicable top-ups on your behalf and provide guidance on the required documentation.

Mentorship

The residency is mentored by Leonardo Bettinelli, an artist and cultural producer with nearly 15 years of experience working with light art, media installations and site-specific works in natural and public environments.

He has directed major light art festivals and collaborated with international artists and institutions.

His mentorship focuses on both creative and technical guidance, supporting collaborative artistic processes and helping residents develop ideas that integrate light, media and environmental awareness.

Sustainability

Environmental sustainability is central to the residency. The programme promotes green travel whenever possible, reduced material consumption, the reuse and repurposing of existing materials, and low-impact approaches to artistic production.

The reuse of the historic Rottaler Zollhäuser buildings reflects this philosophy, giving new life to existing structures rather than building new ones. Artistic exploration also engages with themes such as climate change and our relationship with nature.

Selection Process

The open call for this residency is open until **13 September 2026 at 23:59 CET**. Until then, you can submit an informal application by email, explaining your motivation for participating in the residency and including a short biography (2 pages max).

Please also provide the following information:

- Full name
- Address
- Nationality
- Country of residence
- Date of birth
- Website (if applicable)
- Social media profile (if applicable)

On Monday, **21 September**, short-listed participants will be notified and invited to a video call during the same week. If you are selected, all relevant documents required to participate in the residency must be submitted to us by **28 September** at the latest, so that we can forward them to the funding institution on time. This includes:

Official national identification: ID card or other official document that proves one's identity. In any language.

Short Curriculum Vitae: A one-page document summarising the personal information, contact details, relevant education, and professional experience. In English.

Artistic and creative portfolio: A document that focuses on your artistic and creative work, including examples of personal creations, projects, ideas, etc. In English.

Proof of legal residence: A document proving your country of residence and showing your name and address at the time of application. The following documents are accepted:

- a valid registration certificate
- a valid ID card, if it includes your address
- a current rental or lease agreement

The following documents are also accepted, provided they are dated within the last 12 months:

- documents issued by state or tax authorities
- bank statements
- electricity, water or gas bills
- insurance documents
- payslips

These documents can be submitted in any language.



