

Call for applications for the programme “Engage in dialogues” by the Agency for International Museum Cooperation

As of: October 2025

Programme description

Engaging in international dialogue, broadening perspectives, learning together – these are the goals of our “Engage in dialogues” programme. We support exchange formats that connect museum professionals from Germany with colleagues around the world. In doing so, we open spaces for critical reflection and diverse viewpoints and help museums develop their practice through international dialogue.

Museums address global questions through their collections and exhibitions. Equally important are the overarching practical challenges of international museum cooperation. Addressing these issues in a forward-looking way requires a perspective that extends beyond borders.

Through your cooperation, you can provide impetus and demonstrate how museums can work internationally, collaboratively, and with social relevance. We fund workshops, working meetings, and training sessions to establish or strengthen long-term partnerships that extend beyond individual projects.

This call is open to museums of all disciplines, exhibition venues with or without collections, and memorial sites in Germany, as well as their partner institutions worldwide that seek to advance international cooperation. We particularly

welcome projects that bring together diverse perspectives, explore new forms of collaboration, and strengthen the visibility of museums in international discourse.

Who is the programme “Engage in dialogues” for?

The programme is directed at museums, exhibition venues, and memorial sites in Germany and abroad that wish to work with partner institutions worldwide to deepen their international engagement.

At least one partner institution based in Germany and one partner institution abroad must be actively involved in the cooperation. Both new initiatives and the continuation of existing partnerships are welcome. Either partner may submit the application.

What is the goal of the programme?

We aim to create new opportunities for German museums to connect internationally. The programme funds exchange formats for museum professionals to discuss current issues in museum practice, reflect on existing approaches, develop and test new ones, and build or strengthen partnerships.

What do we fund?

- Workshops, working meetings, and training sessions
- On-site events as well as digital or hybrid formats

Do you already have an initial idea and are still in the exploration phase? Then please contact us before applying – we are happy to support you!

Funding guidelines

1. Purpose and objectives

Through the “Engage in dialogues” programme, the Agency for International Museum Cooperation (museum agency) supports dialogue-based formats enabling museum professionals in Germany and abroad to exchange ideas on current issues in museum practice, learn together, and initiate or deepen specific collaborations.

We fund workshops, working meetings, and training sessions that may take place on site or as digital or hybrid events. These focus on open and critical discussion, reflect on existing practices, and bring together diverse perspectives – with the goal of advancing museum practice through international dialogue and fostering new partnerships.

Cooperation between more than two institutions is possible. At least one partner institution based in Germany and one partner institution abroad must be actively involved. Existing partnerships may be advantageous but are not required. The programme is also open to initiatives in very early stages, provided a clear shared working interest is evident.

2. Legal basis

Funding is provided in accordance with our funding guidelines, § 44 of the Bundeshaushaltsordnung (BHO, German Federal Budget Code), and the related administrative regulations (VV). The funding is provided by the Federal Foreign Office on an expenditure basis and is subject to the supplementary provisions ANBest-P and ANBest-AA in their applicable versions.

3. Scope of funding

We fund projects that:

- build or strengthen international cooperation among museum professionals
- provide new impetus for international museum work, and
- contribute to professional exchange and knowledge transfer.

The following expenses incurred in the planning and implementation of workshops, working meetings, and training sessions are eligible for funding:

- Travel and accommodation expenses for participants in accordance with the Bundesreisekostengesetz (Federal Travel Expenses Act)
- Fees and remuneration for external experts and moderators

- Publicity and documentation activities
- Venue rental and catering expenses during events
- Interpreting and translation services
- Visa and insurance expenses, if necessary and appropriate for project implementation

Project partners should use resources in an environmentally conscious and resource-efficient manner. If air travel is unavoidable, carbon offset expenses may be included in the budget and financing plan.

4. Funding eligibility

Who can apply?

- Museums of all disciplines
- Exhibition venues with or without collections
- Memorial sites

Applications may be submitted by any participating institution, whether in Germany or abroad, provided that at least one partner institution based in Germany and one abroad are actively involved. Partnerships involving multiple institutions are expressly welcome.

Institutions with various legal forms (e.g. foundations, associations, public or private entities) are eligible to apply, provided that the institution is publicly accessible and contributes to society in a way that is not primarily profit-oriented. Applications from individuals cannot be considered under this programme.

5. Type, scope, and amount of funding

- Funding is provided as project funding in the form of deficit-financing.
- In general, we support projects with funding amounts between 5,000 EUR and 25,000 EUR.
- Applicants must contribute at least 10% of the total budget as own funds.
- In-kind non-cash contributions may count toward this share.
- Projects may not have already commenced at the time of application. However, new projects between already collaborating institutions are eligible.

- Only stand-alone projects are eligible for funding. The budget and financing plan must show all expenditure related to the project. Individual measures are not eligible for funding.
- Funding is available for projects that begin no earlier than April 1 2026 and are completed no later than December 31 2026. Expenses can only be incurred after the funding period begins.

Projects that receive other funding from the Federal Foreign Office or its grantees cannot be funded.

6. Application process

Applications must be submitted by email. Templates for the project proposal and budget and financing plan are available on our website.

Please submit the following documents in one email to programmes@museumsagentur.de:

- Completed application form "Project proposal"
- Completed template "Budget and financing plan"
- Letter of intent from partner-institutions
- Copy of your institution's official registration document (e.g. an extract from the association, commercial, or foundation register, depending on the legal form of the institution)
- If applicable, written confirmation of additional funding sources

Funding will be awarded in two application rounds per year.

Publication of the call:

22 October 2025 / April 2026

Application deadline:

1 December 2025 (23:59 CET) / June 2026

Notification of funding decision:

March 2026 / October 2026

7. Selection process and funding criteria

The selection process takes place in two stages. In the first stage, applications are formally reviewed. In the second stage, an independent, international selection committee evaluates the projects in qualitative terms based on established criteria. Only complete applications submitted by the deadline can be considered.

Overview of funding criteria:

- **Relevance of the project in the context of international museum work**
The project addresses current issues in international museum practice and develops new perspectives.
- **Quality of exchange and cooperation approach**
The collaboration is equal, dialogue-based, and contributes to the development and strengthening of cross-border partnerships.
- **New perspectives on collections, exhibitions, and museum practice**
The project offers new perspectives on museum content and collections, engages diverse target groups, and reflects varied approaches to cultural heritage. It brings together international perspectives and stimulates discussion on museum practice in order to broaden knowledge and strengthen cooperation.
- **International networking and potential for future collaboration**
The project establishes lasting connections between German and international partners, enhances mutual visibility in international discourse, and lays the groundwork for continued collaboration.
- **Feasibility**
The project idea and concept, timeline, budget, and implementation expertise of those involved are coherent, transparent, and appropriate.

8. Use of funds and documentation

- Funds must be used for the approved purpose and in a resource-efficient, economical and prudent manner.
- Recipients are required to submit a final report within six weeks after the end of the funding period.
- 10% of the grant will be paid only after successful review of the final report.
- The final report must include a factual summary, a financial statement, a list of participants, and photographic documentation. Templates will be made available on our website.
- All publications must visibly display the note "Supported by the Agency for International Museum Cooperation with funds from the Federal Foreign Office" along with the agency's logo.

To ensure transparency, all selected projects will be published on our website www.museumsagentur.de

9. Validity of funding guidelines

These funding guidelines are valid from 22 October 2025. Revisions and updates may occur.

10. Data protection

To process and evaluate applications and make funding decisions, the museum agency must collect and process personal data of the persons involved in the project. We are also required, as part of our reporting obligations, to forward this data to our funding authority or to third parties commissioned by that authority for external auditing, if necessary. The legal basis for this data processing is Article 6 (1)(e) GDPR in conjunction with § 3 BDSG, as such processing is necessary for the performance of a public task.

Contact

Do you have questions or would like to find out whether the “Engage in dialogues” programme suits your project? Get in touch – we look forward to speaking with you!

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