

Call for Applications for the programme “Find constellations” by the Agency for International Museum Cooperation

Version: June 2026

Programme description

Facilitating international exhibitions, setting collections in motion, forging new connections – that is the essence of our funding programme “Find constellations”. We support museums based in Germany in realising joint exhibition projects at international partner institutions, where works and objects from German collections are placed in new contexts. Museums tell stories through their collections – about cultures, societies, and historical interconnections. How these can be expanded, reinterpreted and renegotiated through international exchange is a key question that makes such collaborations productive. By placing collection objects in unexpected constellations, new readings emerge – for instance by bringing together works that have never, or only rarely, been shown alongside one another, or through a relational approach to collections that reveals new perspectives on familiar holdings.

The programme does not fund exhibition production itself, but rather a crucial prerequisite for it: the physical mobility of collection objects. We fund transport and logistics expenses associated with packaging, shipping, customs, insurance, restoration, and conservation. In this way, the “Find constellations” programme

facilitates the shared use of collections and helps make the holdings of German institutions accessible worldwide.

The exhibition projects are developed in close collaboration between the participating institutions. The curatorial expertise of the lending institutions in Germany is central to the conceptual development of each project.

Through your constellations, you can set new directions and show how collections can be shared and presented internationally in ways that are contemporary and meaningful. We fund the mobility of objects from German collections as a prerequisite for these co-curatorial approaches.

Who is the programme “Find constellations” for?

The programme is directed at museums, exhibition venues, and memorial sites based in Germany that hold their own collections and wish to realise exhibitions together with international partner institutions, presenting their holdings in new curatorial contexts.

What is the goal of the programme?

The programme aims to increase the mobility and visibility of works and objects from German collections. By funding transport and logistics expenses, it facilitates international exhibition projects and strengthens exchange between museums and exhibition venues worldwide. At the same time, it brings collection holdings into closer engagement with global discourses.

What do we fund?

- Shipping expenses for the transport of art and cultural objects abroad (outbound, onward, and return shipments)
- Packaging expenses
- Customs expenses
- Insurance expenses
- Restoration and conservation expenses to ensure transport readiness

Are you already planning an exhibition project featuring objects from your collection holdings with an international partner institution and would like to know whether our funding programme is a fit for you? Get in touch before submitting your application – we are happy to advise!

Funding guidelines

1. Purpose and objectives

Through the “Find constellations” programme, the Agency for International Museum Cooperation (museum agency) supports museums, exhibition venues, and memorial sites with their own collections based in Germany in realising exhibition projects with museums, exhibition venues, and memorial sites abroad that draw on objects from German collections. The aim is to increase the visibility and curatorial integration of objects from German collections and to enable their presentation in international exhibition contexts. This gives rise to new curatorial constellations and new points of connection to German collection holdings, as well as to questions that concern Germany’s historical, cultural, and social interlinkages. It also makes previously little-known holdings accessible to audiences worldwide.

The programme promotes international cooperation between museums and exhibition venues worldwide.

The realised exhibitions make it possible to:

- Make the holdings of German institutions internationally visible and accessible, particularly objects that have previously been rarely shown or insufficiently explored
- Bring these holdings into new curatorial and scholarly contexts, opening up alternative perspectives and lines of inquiry
- Highlight social, (art) historical, or cultural connections to Germany from a range of perspectives and bring them into critical dialogue
- Test forms of collaboration and resource-sharing between institutions (e.g. cost-sharing models)

The funding specifically supports the international mobility and visibility of German collection holdings within the framework of joint exhibition projects.

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 German Federal Foreign Office on an expenditure basis and is subject to the supplementary

provisions ANBest-P and ANBest-AA in their currently valid versions. There is no legal entitlement to funding.

3. Purpose of funding

We fund transport and logistics expenses for loans from collections in Germany, incurred in the context of international exhibition projects. Funding may also be sought for transport and logistics expenses relating to exhibitions already in the planning stages. The prerequisite being that the expenses for which funding is being sought are not yet the subject of a concluded contract.

Eligible expenses are those related to objects from collections held by German institutions as part of international exhibition projects during the funding period, including:

- Shipping expenses for the transport of art and cultural objects abroad (outbound, onward, and return shipments)
- Packaging expenses
- Customs expenses
- Insurance expenses
- Restoration and conservation expenses to ensure transport readiness

Expenses related to co-productions involving more than two institutions, including projects with multiple exhibition venues, are also eligible for funding. Presentations in Germany may be included, provided that at least one presentation within the overall project takes place outside Germany.

Non-eligible expenses include, among others:

- Personnel expenses
- Loan and handling fees
- Exhibition production expenses
- Travel and accommodation expenses for project participants
- The respective share of expenses and measures that is already covered by public funds or other funding sources
- Projects that receive funding from the German Federal Foreign Office or its grantees

The transport of individual objects outside the framework of a clearly defined exhibition concept with a sound curatorial rationale is not eligible for funding. Likewise, standalone return shipments to Germany are not eligible.

The funding does not preclude cooperation agreements between the participating institutions or the application of loan or handling fees by the lending institution, provided that these do not relate to the subject of the present funding.

4. Funding eligibility

Who can apply?

- Museums of all disciplines with collections based in Germany
- Exhibition venues with collections based in Germany
- Memorial sites with collections based in Germany

Eligible applicants are institutions based in Germany that are realising an international exhibition project and contributing a significant number of objects from their own collections. Institutions based outside Germany are not eligible to apply.

For co-productions involving multiple German partner institutions, the application may only be submitted by one institution based in Germany.

Institutions of any legal form (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.

5. Type, scope, and amount of funding

- Funding is provided as project funding in the form of a non-repayable fixed-amount grant covering eligible expenses, in order to ensure a straightforward and predictable administrative process.
- The funding amount is determined during the application review process as a fixed sum taking into account the budget and financing plan as well as the applicant's own contribution. The funding amount is determined on the basis of the scale and logistical complexity of the project and the eligible transport and logistics expenses set out in the application. Grants of up to 100.000 € may be awarded.
- Applicants must contribute and demonstrate at least 10% of the eligible transport and logistics expenses as own funds. This contribution may come from institutional funds or from third-party sources. Non-cash, in-kind contributions cannot be used to fulfil this share.
- Transport and logistics projects that receive other funding from the German Federal Foreign Office or its grantees are not eligible for support.

- The transport and logistics projects applied for must not have commenced at the time of application, in particular, no service contracts may have been awarded or concluded. Eligibility for funding is determined by whether the transport and logistics services are rendered within the funding period. If, for example, the return shipment falls outside the funding period, support may be limited to the outbound or onward transport.
- The funding period begins on 1 January 2027 and ends on 30 September 2027. The earliest possible date for commissioning and providing services, and consequently for invoicing and payment, is the start date of the transport and logistics project. An early start to activities may, upon request, be approved from the date of the funding decision.
- Funding is earmarked and must be used exclusively for transport-related costs associated with the loans specified in the application. A maximum of one application may be submitted per exhibition project.

6. Application process

Applications must be submitted via our application platform (<https://apply.museumsagentur.de>). After your registration, you have the opportunity to fill out, save, and submit the project proposal and the budget and financing plan for the transport and logistics project.

The project proposal includes information about the applying institution and the partner institution(s), details of the exhibition project and curatorial concept, as well as a preliminary list of works.

The following documents must also be uploaded:

- Copy of the applying institution's official registration document (e.g. excerpt from the association, commercial, or foundation register, or excerpt from the relevant legislation or similar, depending on the legal form of the institution)
- Quotes for the services for which funding is being sought (generally including three comparative quotes or market research)
- Full project budget for the exhibition
- If applicable, written confirmation of additional funding sources

Publication of the call: 22 June 2026

Application deadline: 30 September 2026 (18:00 CEST)

Notification of funding decision: November 2026

Funding period: 1 January – 30 September 2027

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 jury evaluates the applications qualitatively according to defined funding criteria. Only complete applications submitted by the deadline can be considered.

Overview of funding criteria:

- Feasibility
 - Plausibility and practical viability of the transport and logistics planning
 - Appropriateness and transparency of the requested funds
- Relevance and impact of the collection objects
 - Significance of the objects from German collections for the exhibition project
 - Integration of the collection objects into the curatorial concept
 - Visibility of the collection objects, particularly holdings that are rarely shown
- Quality of the curatorial concept
 - Potential of the constellation to open up new perspectives on collection holdings
 - Quality of the international cooperation and co-curatorial collaboration
 - Nuanced presentation of social, historical, or cultural connections to Germany
- Sustainability
 - Prospects for cooperation beyond the exhibition project
 - Consideration of environmental aspects in transport and logistics planning

8. Use of funds and documentation

- Funds must be used for the approved purpose and in a resource-efficient, economical, and prudent manner during the funding period.
- Recipients are required to submit a final report within six weeks after the end of the funding period. The final report must comprise a factual summary and a financial statement including a list of receipts as well as photographic documentation. The review will assess whether the fixed-amount grant has been used for its intended purpose and whether the expenses incurred are reasonable. Full documentation of all project-related expenses is not required.
- All publications relating to the exhibition must visibly display the note "Supported by the Agency for International Museum Cooperation with funds

from the German Federal Foreign Office” along with the logo of the Agency for International Museum Cooperation.

9. Validity of funding guidelines

These funding guidelines are valid from 17 June 2026. Revisions and updates may occur.

10. Processing and transfer of personal data

To process and evaluate applications and make funding decisions, the museum agency and the jury appointed by it must process and store personal data of the persons involved in the project. Furthermore, the museum agency is required, as part of its reporting obligations, to forward this data to its 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 contract fulfilment.

Contact

Do you have questions, or would you like to find out whether the “Find constellations” programme suits your project?

Get in touch – we look forward to speaking with you!

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