

Alliance for Socially Engaged Arts Fellowship

Frequently Asked Questions

Applicant Eligibility

1. What do you mean by leaders?

Leaders are individuals in senior positions in their organisations who can influence decisions and drive meaningful change. These roles may include CEO, Director, or Head of Department. Leaders are responsible for guiding their teams, shaping strategies and advancing their organisation's mission.

2. Can I apply if I have less than 3 years of leadership experience but have been working at my current organisation for more than 3 years?

No. Applicants must have a minimum of 3 years in a senior leadership role within socially engaged arts.

3. What if I have 3 or more years of leadership experience, but less than 3 years in the socially engaged arts sector. Can I still apply?

No. Applicants must have at least 3 years of leadership experience within the socially engaged arts sector.

4. I'm in the middle of a job transition. Am I eligible to apply?

The Fellowship is intended for individuals currently embedded within an organisation and who have been in their role for at least one year. If you're transitioning into a new role, this may not be the right time to apply.

5. Can I apply if I have a part-time leadership role?

Yes. We welcome applications from both full-time and part-time applicants, as long as they feel confident about their ability to fully commit to the Fellowship's activities.

6. I work freelance as an independent artist, curator or leader. Can I apply?

The Fellowship is designed for individuals who are a key part of an organisation's leadership. We recognise that many organisations are structured around freelance employment. Freelancers may apply as long as they have a significant, ongoing role within the organisation.

7. I work for an initiative that is not legally registered. Can I apply?

No. This Fellowship is for organisations that are legally registered. Applicants will be required to provide the organisation's registration documents or articles of association as part of the application process.

8. What is meant by socially engaged arts organisations?

Socially engaged arts organisations draw on the arts to place social change and community engagement at the heart of their mission. Whether through visual arts, theatre, music, or other forms, they champion the power of the arts and creativity to address societal issues, foster inclusion, and create positive change. These organisations prioritise long-term, collaborative relationships with communities, developing participatory and co-creative artistic programmes that empower local people to shape the work, with the majority of their activities focused on socially engaged arts.

For example, this could include a neighbourhood arts organisation dedicated to developing creative programmes that engage local residents in reimagining the role of public services, fostering stronger relationships and building a more inclusive community. It might be a theatre company that co-creates productions with newly arrived communities to support integration and deepen a sense of belonging. These organisations prioritise social change and community engagement through artistic approaches.

9. What is meant by arts organisations driven by community engagement and social change across Europe?

Social change refers to the positive social impact your organisation seeks to create within its community, particularly in areas like social equity, inclusion, and well-being. The Fellowship is suited to organisations whose mission is to address specific social issues and are driven by a commitment to championing the power of art for social transformation, with clear links between their strategic goals and the social impact they aim to achieve.

10. My organisation has been running socially engaged arts activities for over 5 years, but was only recently legally registered. Am I still eligible to apply?

Yes. The Fellowship is open to organisations with a track record of a minimum of 5 years running socially engaged arts, but it does not require them to have been legally registered for that entire period. The organisation's track record can include the time it operated as a project before becoming legally registered.

11. Which countries are eligible?

The Fellowship is open to applicants from all countries in the [Council of Europe](#) and Kosovo.

A number of places are reserved for organisations operating in France, Lombardy Region in Italy, Portugal, Spain and Switzerland.

12. I am based outside of the Council of Europe or Kosovo but my work impacts the region. Can I still apply?

No. The Fellowship is for organisations legally registered and operating in these eligible regions.

13. Can grantees who are currently in receipt of funding or involved programmes run by partnering foundations apply?

Yes, current grantees of partnering foundations are eligible to apply, provided they meet all other eligibility criteria.

14. Is English proficiency required?

Yes. As all sessions and training are conducted in English, a strong understanding of the language is essential.

Application process

15. What is the application process?

The application process consists of three complimentary stages, which include:

- Stage 1 – Expression of interest: During the first stage of the application process, applicants submit a concise expression of interest.
- Stage 2 – Submission of full application: Candidates who are longlisted will be invited to submit a full application, providing more in-depth detail about their experience.
- Stage 3 – Interview: For the final stage in the process, shortlisted candidates are invited to attend a final interview with the selection jury.

Following the interviews, candidates will be notified of the final decision and outcome of their application. For more information, please see the application guidance [here](#).

16. How will my application be assessed?

Applications will be reviewed by a selection committee with the Alliance's programme staff, representatives from the partner foundations and external jury members. Eligible applications will be assessed by at least two individual jury members against specific selection criteria.

17. Can I apply in other languages?

No. Applications must be submitted in English.

18. Do I need to present a budget proposal in my application?

No. You will not be required to submit a budget proposal as part of the application process. However, if you are successful in the first stage and are invited to submit a full application, you will be required to indicate how the grant might support your organisational development needs and address your 'leading question'. This will help us understand where you think the

grant might add value. Fellows will receive support to develop their budget plans during the Fellowship.

19. Why do you need governance or board-level approval at this stage?

Governance or board-level approval demonstrate that Fellows have full support and endorsement from their organisation to participate in the Fellowship with necessary resources and time. It also demonstrates governance-level support to the leaders' professional development.

As part of the application process, you will be required to provide a letter from governance-level demonstrating their endorsement of your application. This will be requested at the second stage in the selection process, and only once you have been invited to submit a full application.

20. What financial documentation do I need to submit with my application?

Applicants advancing to Stage 2 in the application process must submit recent financial statements for their organisation, including:

- A balance sheet for 2023 and 2024 detailing assets and liabilities.
- An income statement for 2023 and 2024 outlining income and expenses.
- An audit report, if available.

If a balance sheet is unavailable, a year-end bank statement showing the organisation's balance, along with a list of receivables and debts, may be submitted instead, along with an explanation as to whether these amounts have been resolved by the date of submission. This is important to ensure the organisation's financial stability to participate fully in the Fellowship.

21. Do you accept applications in other formats?

We are committed to ensuring the application process is accessible and may consider applications in alternative formats when necessary. If you require assistance or would like to submit your application in a different format, please get in touch with us at contact@allianceforsociallyengagedarts.org.

22. Will I receive feedback on my application?

Unfortunately, we cannot provide feedback for applicants who do not reach the interview stage. However, if you are interviewed and not selected, we can offer feedback via email.

23. How will my data be processed?

When you give us personal information, we take relevant steps to ensure that it is treated securely. All data you include in your application form will be used to inform the selection process. Your information will be shared with all reviewers and jury members involved in the assessment of your applications

and as part of any due diligence checks. We may also use your data for monitoring and evaluation purposes. If we do so, your details will be anonymised and aggregated, unless you have consented to us handling your information differently.

We keep our retention periods for personal information under review. We are legally required to hold some types of information to fulfil our statutory obligations. We will hold your personal information on our systems for as long as is necessary for the relevant activity, or as long as is set out in any relevant contract or agreement you hold with us. We routinely update our data to ensure those who are not engaged in our work are removed. You can always contact us with the request to remove your data. You can read our full privacy notice [here](#).

The Fellowship

24. What personal and professional opportunities will I gain from the Fellowship?

The Fellowship provides a unique opportunity to focus on your personal growth and organisational development while building meaningful connections with peers across Europe. You will embark on a transformative journey to reflect on the complex challenges faced by socially engaged arts organisations and explore the changes needed within your communities and beyond.

Through online workshops, self-paced learning, mentoring, in-person residencies, travel visits, and more, the Fellowship creates a dynamic and supportive learning environment. This space will empower you to define your leadership goals and 'leading question', while taking tangible steps toward achieving them.

Your organisation will also receive support to enhance your ability to communicate impact and influence key stakeholders. With a focus on advocacy, the Fellowship will equip you with the skills and insights necessary to serve as ambassadors for socially engaged arts. You will engage with stakeholders, participate in policy discussions, and advocate for the social value of the arts, becoming ambassadors for socially engaged arts in Europe.

25. How will the Fellowship impact my leadership, my organisation, and the wider context?

The transformative impact of the Fellowship will be felt across three interconnected levels:

- Individual Level: You, as a Fellow, are at the heart of this programme with the knowledge, confidence and skills to address complex challenges within your organisation and wider context, setting the foundation for broader transformation.
- Organisational Level: Your learning and insights will directly inform your organisation's strategies, addressing specific needs, structural gaps, or future aspirations. By translating your development into organisational capacity-building, you'll strengthen your organisation's ability to champion socially engaged arts and communicate its value effectively.
- Collective Level: The Fellowship brings together voices from across Europe to foster a unified movement. Your individual and organisational transformations will contribute to a collective effort to drive systemic change, reshape narratives, and advocate for the arts at local, national, and European levels. Together, the Fellows will explore shared challenges, amplify the sector's voice, and chart a course for sustainable change.

26. If selected for the Fellowship, what would I be expected to commit to?

Over 18 months, Fellows will dedicate around 20 hours per month, including self-directed work to support their organisation's growth and participation in 3-5 hours of online sessions and workshops. Fellows will also attend two full-time in-person residentials, totalling 9 days. Additional commitments may include travel for study visits or knowledge exchange.

27. I can't commit to all the dates, can I still apply?

No. Full attendance is mandatory for all Fellowship activities to ensure a cohesive and comprehensive learning experience.

28. How will I balance the time commitment required for the fellowship with my work and other responsibilities?

This is a rare chance to focus on your leadership, transform your approach, and build lasting connections with peers across Europe. Running from June 2025 to November 2026, the Fellowship requires a commitment of approximately 20 hours per month, plus attendance at two in-person residentials. While it requires a significant time commitment, the programme is designed to be flexible and self-led, allowing you to adapt your involvement around your work and personal responsibilities.

The Fellowship provides financial support for the Fellow and their organisation to engage fully in the Fellowship. Half of the €60,000 grant can support some core costs to sustain or scale the operations of your organisation during your participation.

If you're not able to fully commit to the Fellowship at this time, we encourage you to apply when your schedule allows you to engage meaningfully. This

Fellowship is for those ready to dedicate time to their growth and leadership journey.

29. What is the 'leading question' in the Fellowship?

The 'leading question' refers to an issue, opportunity or project that you will address during the Fellowship, whether at an organisational or sector-wide level. It should be connected to your organisation's mission and align with the wider goal of creating social impact through the arts. Your 'leading question' forms the basis for your self-led work and advocacy efforts, and during the Fellowship, you will develop actions or projects to address it, with support from the programme team to implement concrete plans.

30. Is the Fellowship for an individual or an organisation?

The Fellowship supports individual leaders of socially engaged arts organisations in developing their skills, confidence, and impact while driving meaningful change within their organisations. Fellows engage in activities designed to strengthen both personal and organisational growth, all in alignment with their organisation's mission and the broader goals of socially engaged arts. The grant is awarded to the organisation, ensuring that the impact reaches beyond the individual and creates lasting change.

31. How will my organisation be involved in the Fellowship?

The Fellowship benefits both the individual leader and their organisation. Fellows will gain new leadership skills, insights, and connections that can be applied within the organisation. The programme also provides funding to support their organisation's capacity-building efforts, helping it to sustain and expand its social impact. While the Fellowship is primarily focused on one representative from each organisation, we encourage the Fellow's organisation to actively support their involvement. There may also be opportunities for other team members to participate in specific activities.

32. What costs are covered by the two funding grants totalling €60,000?

Fellows receive two grants to support the development of their work.

The first grant of €30,000, agreed on at the start of the programme, will go towards organisational development and core costs. Each organisation will have different needs and we are not prescriptive at this stage, but expect the grant to enable the organisation to continue delivering or scale its impact while the Fellow participates in the programme.

The second grant of €30,000 will support the Fellow and their organisation in developing actions to address the 'leading question' they will bring to the Fellowship. Fellows will be supported to develop specific plans for this grant during the first half of the programme.

33. When can we expect the grant payments to be made?

The first payment instalment of €30,000 will be made within the first months of the Fellowship commencing and once Fellows have submitted an approved budget proposal.

The second payment instalment of €30,000 will be in early 2026, once Fellows have developed specific actions to address the 'leading question' and submitted an approved budget.

34. What costs do you cover and are not included in the €60,000 grant?

In addition to the grant, the Fellowship covers travel and accommodation for in-person residencies and provides a €5,000 mobility bursary for study visits or exchange trips. There is an additional access budget available to assist Fellows with specific access needs or caring responsibilities.

35. How is the Fellowship funded?

The Fellowship is funded by an alliance of [11 philanthropic foundations](#) across Europe.

36. Who is designing and delivering the activities of the Fellowship?

The Fellowship is designed and delivered in partnership with [The Audience Agency](#), [Culture Action Europe](#) and [Fitzcarraldo Foundation](#), a consortium of partners specialising in capacity-building and advocacy in the arts sector.

37. Why is advocacy important, and how are Fellows expected to engage in it?

Advocacy amplifies the visibility and impact of socially engaged arts practices, helping drive systemic change. Advocacy can be carried out in various ways, from organising campaigns and rethinking policies, to measuring impact and crafting narratives through storytelling.

Fellows are expected to act as ambassadors and advocates for socially engaged arts by engaging with stakeholders, participating in policy discussions, and communicating the value of social impact through the arts. Fellows will also be supported to build their capacity to communicate impact effectively and influence key stakeholders.

38. Do I need advocacy experience at the policy level?

Policy-level advocacy experience is not required. However, Fellows should understand advocacy's potential to amplify impact and commit to developing these skills during the Fellowship.