

WORK PACKAGE FOUR LOT 2



Funded by the
European Union

Deadline: 31 August 2026

CALL FOR PROPOSAL

**VISUAL ARTS: COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH
& CRITICAL DISCOURSE**

AFRICA-EUROPE PARTNERSHIPS FOR CULTURE

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Implemented by:



GOETHE
INSTITUT



EXPERTISE
FRANCE
GROUPE AFD



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INDEX

1. Programme Background.....	1
1.1 About the Sub-Saharan Africa, Connect & Create Component.....	1
1.2 Programme Approach.....	1
1.3 Work Package 4, Lot 2: Research and Critical Discourse.....	2
1.4 Target Groups.....	2
2. What This Call Funds.....	3
2.1 The core offer.....	3
2.2 What success looks like.....	3
3. Eligibility.....	5
3.1 Who can apply.....	5
3.2 Who can not apply.....	5
3.3 Eligible countries.....	6
4. Eligible Costs.....	7
4.1 Eligible cost Categories.....	7
4.2 Budget Requirements.....	7
5. Evaluation Criterion.....	8
6. Application Process	
6.1 What you can submit.....	10
6.2 Language.....	11
7. Timeline & Selection Process.....	12
7.1 Important dates.....	12
7.2 How we select.....	12
8. Support during your project.....	13
9. Contact and support.....	13
10. Key Deadlines and Rules.....	13
11. Legal Information.....	14
12. Frequently Asked Questions.....	15

1. PROGRAMME BACKGROUND



1.1 About the Sub-Saharan Africa, Connect & Create Component

The Sub-Saharan Africa, Connect & Create Component of the Africa-Europe Partnerships for Culture programme is implemented by the Goethe-Institut in partnership with Expertise France and Institut français. This €8 million programme runs for 42 months (2025–2028) and promotes genuine dialogue and cooperation between African and European cultural actors, fostering peer learning exchange, co-creation and mutual understanding.

1.2 Programme Approach

This component recognises that cultural innovation and professional development strengthen when visual arts professionals engage across borders. We prioritise peer learning exchange, positioning African practitioners as knowledge creators who shape continental cultural futures. This reflects our commitment to genuine equal-footing partnerships.

We acknowledge that operating within European Union funding structures creates ongoing tensions between partnership rhetoric and institutional realities. We commit to honest engagement with these dynamics and to prioritising the voices, agency and knowledge of Sub-Saharan African visual arts practitioners throughout programme implementation.

1.3 Work Package 4, Lot 2: Research and Critical Discourse

Objective

This call supports teams undertaking collaborative research and critical discourse projects that generate and publish knowledge about visual arts. We fund rigorous inquiry into visual arts practices, contexts, histories, and ecosystems. We believe African visual arts knowledge must be documented, analysed and circulated so that African practitioners are recognised as intellectual leaders, not merely artists or subjects of study.

This is **NOT** an artistic creation call. **NOT** a documentation project serving artistic production. **NOT** a capacity-building programme. We fund teams conducting rigorous research and producing published critical work.

1.4 Target Groups

This grant supports team-based collaborative research projects by art historians, researchers, curators, critics, archivists and visual arts professionals, with particular attention to emerging scholars, women, non-binary persons and persons with disabilities.

2. WHAT THIS CALL FUNDS

2.1 The Core Offer

Up to €4,000 per team to support rigorous collaborative research and critical discourse on visual arts, resulting in published or archived output.

Project Duration: 10 months (1 October 2026- 31 July 2027)

What We Fund: Everything required to conduct research together, including co-research processes, art critique grounded in theory, context and methodology, collaborative analysis of findings and the publication and dissemination of results. This includes archive access, interview costs, travel for research, translation, art publication (editing, design, and production) and platform development for sharing outcomes.

What We Don't Fund:

- Artistic creation or production
- Exhibition or residency hosting
- Artistic documentation (unless it's part of documented research output)
- General capacity-building or training

2.2 Success Looks Like This

By the end of 10 months, your team will have:

- Designed rigorous research methodology together
- Conducted collaborative research (archival research, interviews, fieldwork, analysis)
- Produced documented research output (peer-reviewed article, publication, archived research resource, curatorial toolkit, policy brief, etc.)
- Published or archived that output in accessible form
- Engaged relevant professional and scholarly communities with your findings



3. ELIGIBILITY

3.1 Who Can Apply

Teams only. Minimum 2 members; no maximum.

All team members must:

- Be 18 years or older
- Be researchers or professionals in visual arts scholarship/discourse: art historians, independent researchers, curators with research focus, art critics, archivists, cultural theorists and scholars, museum professionals, visual arts scholars, other visual arts research professionals
- Be currently based in Sub-Saharan Africa or the European Union
- Commit to equitable, dialogue-based collaboration on research

Team lead (primary applicant) must:

- Be based in Sub-Saharan Africa, OR
- Have demonstrated substantial, ongoing professional engagement with Sub-Saharan African visual arts sector (research partnerships, professional networks, publications on SSA visual arts, etc.)

Geographic composition:

- Teams may be from the same country, provided the team overall reflects intercontinental cooperation
- At minimum, team must include members from Sub-Saharan Africa or Europe, or team lead must demonstrate substantial SSA engagement as noted above

3.2 Who Cannot Apply

Applications will be rejected if:

- Any team member is under 18
- Any team member is staff or family of Goethe-Institut, Expertise France, Institut français, or EU Commission
- Any team member is under EU restrictive measures
- Any team member has been excluded from previous EU-funded projects
- Team members are based outside Sub-Saharan Africa or EU (except team lead provision above)
- Team lead cannot evidence SSA location or substantial professional engagement



3.3 Eligible Locations

- **Sub-Saharan Africa:** All countries in Sub-Saharan Africa
- **European Union:** All EU Member States

Sub-Saharan African Countries

East Africa: Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

West Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo

Central Africa: Angola, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Republic of Congo, São Tomé and Príncipe

Southern Africa: Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa

Note: Countries covered by other components of the Africa-Europe Partnerships for Culture programme are included for coordination purposes but may have specific arrangements.

All 27 European Union Member States

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden

4. ELIGIBILITY COSTS

Budget ceiling: €4,000 per team over 10 months.

All costs must be necessary, proportionate and justified. Your budget narrative must explain why each line item is needed and what it supports.

4.1 Eligible Cost Categories

Research Costs

- Archive access and fees
- Interview and consultation costs
- Transcription of interviews
- Travel and accommodation for research (archival research, fieldwork, interviews)
- Research software and data analysis tools
- Research materials and resources

Publication and Dissemination

- Writing and editorial services
- Design and layout for publication
- Printing and production costs
- Translation of research materials
- Open-access publishing fees (if applicable)
- Digital platform development for research dissemination
- Distribution costs

Documentation and Preservation

- Photography and documentation of research materials
- Digitisation of archives or research materials
- Metadata development and cataloguing
- Digital archival preservation

Professional Networking (Research-Related)

- Workshops or seminars presenting research to professional communities
- Professional networking related to research dissemination

4.2 Budget Requirements

- Use the GAP budget template provided—do not use your own
- All costs must be in EUR
- Lump sums acceptable for research travel if justified
- Cost estimates should reflect realistic market rates for your region
- All budget lines must be justified in narrative form

5. EVALUATION CRITERION

Equitable Partnership – (25%)

- All collaborators (researchers, artists, critics) engaged in genuine intellectual and creative labour.
- Shared project design reflecting both scholarly and artistic perspectives.
- Co-authorship or co-credit demonstrates equal contribution.
- Complementary expertise (academic, artistic, curatorial, critical) clearly articulated.

Quality and Rigour – (30%)

- Research or critique question clearly articulated.
- Methodology or critical framework sound and well-described.
- Evidence gathering (archival, visual analysis, interviews, practice-based research) clearly explained.
- Analytical framework evident, addressing potential bias in both research and art criticism.
- Appropriateness of methodology or critical approach to the chosen question or artistic work.

Innovation in Critical Thinking – (20%)

- Project generates new knowledge or reframes existing understanding in art or research.
- Identifies and addresses gaps in the field of art history, criticism, or interdisciplinary research.
- Challenges existing assumptions in both scholarly and artistic discourse.
- Originality of analytical or aesthetic perspective.
- Contribution to critical and creative discourse across disciplines.

Dissemination and Professional Impact – (15%)

- Clear, realistic pathway for publication, exhibition, or archival dissemination.
- Target venues identified (academic journals, art magazines, curated exhibitions, digital archives).
- Strategy for reaching relevant scholarly, artistic, and professional communities.
- Accessibility of outputs (open access, bilingual publications, inclusive exhibition formats).

Project Design and Feasibility – (10%)

- Realistic timeline for 10-month research, critique, and/or publication/exhibition.
- Budget proportionate to scope of both research and artistic engagement.
- Team demonstrates capacity through prior experience in research, art practice, or criticism.

Cross-Cutting Balance:

Selection ensures:

- Geographic diversity across Sub-Saharan Africa and Europe.
- Gender balance (50% female/non-binary target).
- Inclusion of researchers, artists, and critics with disabilities and those from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Linguistic diversity across research and art communities.
- Sectoral diversity (academia, independent art practice, curatorial work, publishing).
- Career-stage balance, supporting both emerging and established voices.

6. APPLICATION PROCESS



6.1 What to Submit

In the GAP portal, you will provide:

1. Team Information

- Names, locations, professional roles of all team members
- CV or professional biography for each team member (max 2 pages per person)
- Copy of proof of identity document of all team members
- Evidence of prior collaboration OR explanation of complementary expertise
- Confirmation of each member's current location
- Portfolio or example of previous work for all team members

2. Your Research Question (max 400 words)

- What are you investigating and why?
- What gap in visual arts knowledge or discourse does this address?
- Why is this research important now?
- What will your research reveal or reframe?

3. Your Methodology (max 500 words)

- How will you gather evidence? (Archival research? Interviews? Analysis of existing materials?)
- What analytical framework will you use?
- How will all team members contribute to the research process?
- How will you address potential bias in your approach?
- What are your data sources or research materials?
- What ethical approaches will guide your implementation process (particularly) when engaging communities?

4. Your Partnership Approach (max 400 words)

- How will decisions about research direction be made together?
- What is each team member's role in the research process?
- How will conflicting interpretations or perspectives be addressed?
- What evidence of equitable intellectual partnership can you provide?

5. Your Publication and Dissemination Plan (max 500 words)

- What form will your output take? (Peer-reviewed article? Publication? Archived research toolkit? Policy brief? etc.)
- Which journal, publication venue, or archive?
- How will research reach relevant professional and scholarly communities?
- Who is your intended audience?
- What timeline for publication?

6. Your Timeline (realistic monthly milestones)

- Month 1: Research design finalisation and planning
- Month 2-6: Research execution (fieldwork, interviews, archival work, analysis)
- Month 7-8: Analysis and writing
- Month 9-10: Publication/archival and dissemination

7. Budget (using GAP template)

- All costs in EUR
- Line-by-line justification for each category
- Explanation of cost reasonableness
- Top-up request cost breakdown

8. Supporting Documents

- Evidence of archive access agreements or interview confirmations (if available)
- Documentation of research partnerships (if applicable)
- Previous publications or research samples (recommended)
- Passport scans for all team members (not required at application, may be requested at contracting)

6.2 Language

Applications must be submitted in English. If your team's primary working language is not English, you may submit in your original language with an English translation, but both count toward word limits.

Language support: If language is a barrier, contact eup-ssa@goethe.de before 21 August 2026. We provide support.

7. SELECTION PROCESS



7.1 How We Select

Step 1: We check that your team meets eligibility requirements and that your application is complete.

Step 2: A jury of visual arts researchers, scholars and professionals from Sub-Saharan Africa and Europe reviews all eligible applications using the rubric in Section 5. They assess research rigour, intellectual innovation, partnership quality, and feasibility.

Step 3: Jury recommends grants, ensuring geographic, gender and sectoral diversity across all awardees.

Step 4: We notify you of results and invite successful teams to a mandatory orientation in October before project launch.

8. SUPPORT DURING YOUR PROJECT

Selected teams participate in:

- Peer learning workshops with other awardees on research methodologies and publication strategies
- Mentorship from visual arts researchers and scholars in Sub-Saharan Africa and Europe
- Critical dialogue forums exploring visual arts research contexts and emerging scholarship
- Professional development on research ethics, academic publishing, and knowledge dissemination

9. CONTACT & SUPPORT

General Inquiries: eup-ssa@goethe.de

Technical (GAP portal): support.gap@goethe.de

Queries must be submitted by **21 August 2026** to receive responses.

Africa-Europe Partnerships for Culture, Sub-Saharan Africa, Connect & Create

Parktown Quarter, 2193, Johannesburg, South Africa

10. KEY DEADLINES & RULES

- Application deadline is hard: **31 August 2026, 23:59 CAT**. No late submissions accepted.
- Incomplete applications will be rejected. Ensure all mandatory sections are completed.
- False information may lead to exclusion and grant recovery.
- You can save your application on GAP and return to it before the deadline.

11. LEGAL INFORMATION

Governing Law: German law and EU regulations

Data Protection: GDPR applies. Personal data used only for this call and grant selection. You have rights to access, correct and delete your data (subject to legal retention).

Language: English version is legally binding.

Funding: This call is issued under the Multi-Partner Contribution Agreement between Goethe-Institut e.V. and the European Commission. Grants subject to EU Financial Support to Third Parties regulations and Goethe-Institut procurement policies.

12. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - LOT 2

Q: I'm an art historian, but I've never done academic publishing. Can I still apply?

A: Yes. You don't need to be published already. If this is your first publication, team up with other professionals you have synergies with, describe your research rigorously and identify a realistic publication pathway. We're looking for rigorous thinking, not previous publication record.

Q: Can my team include both researchers and practitioners (e.g., a curator and an art historian)?

A: Yes. Teams with complementary expertise are valuable. An art historian conducting interviews and a curator providing contextual knowledge is a strong collaboration.

Q: We want to research visual arts in our region, but we're not sure which archive to access yet. Can we still apply?

A: Yes, but indicate what archives you've already contacted or plan to approach. If you're developing partnerships, show what progress you've made. We understand that some archival access arrangements develop during project implementation.

Q: How much can we budget for translation?

A: Budget realistically for the translation you need. If you're publishing in English but want to translate research materials or your publication into an African language for broader reach, that's eligible. Cost depends on language pairs and length.

Q: What if our target journal rejects our article?

A: Contact your programme officer. We can discuss alternative publication pathways (different journal, publication as research report, etc.). Publication doesn't have to be peer-reviewed to be valuable—if it's rigorous, documented and accessible, it's legitimate output.

Q: Our team is in the early stages. Can we still apply?

A: Yes. New research teams are welcome. Explain your complementary expertise and how you'll work together. We value emerging researchers.

Q: Is there a maximum team size?

A: No maximum. Larger teams are fine if roles are clear budget is within the maximum amount and all costs is justified for the team size.

Q: We want to apply but we're worried about language barriers in the application.

A: Contact eup-ssa@goethe.de before 21 August 2026. We provide language support.

Q: Can our topic focus on historical visual arts practice, or does it have to be contemporary?

A: Both are welcome. Historical research, contemporary analysis, archival documentation of historical practices—all are eligible if rigorous and contributing to critical understanding.

Q: Do we need to be affiliated with an academic institution to apply?

A: No. Independent researchers, archivists, curators, critics—all are welcome. You don't need institutional affiliation.

