

Press release

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INITIAL – Akademie der Künste awards special grants to artists

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, damage on an as yet unforeseeable scale has been caused in all areas of art production. Numerous artists now find themselves in precarious situations. As part of the NEUSTART KULTUR programme launched by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, the Akademie der Künste is awarding the **INITIAL special grant** for the research and development of art works. The purpose of the grants is to safeguard and facilitate art production and to provide the basis and incentive for long-term artistic projects whose preparation and development have been hampered during the pandemic.

"The independent arts scene is among the main groups affected by the COVID-related restrictions. The crisis does not end with the containment of the pandemic. With the INITIAL special grant, we can support art production. The Akademie der Künste will devote all its energy and expertise to the implementation of this grant programme. We need the arts – they are the memory of humanity, our collectively lived present and future," says **Jeanine Meerapfel, President of the Akademie der Künste**.

Minister of State Monika Grütters says: "In our society, artists epitomise diversity and innovation. They are particularly hard-hit by the effects of the COVID pandemic. With the INITIAL special grant programme, we are safeguarding space for new ideas and long-term projects. We want to not only support freelance artists of all disciplines financially, but also encourage their creative work. In this respect, INITIAL is also a beacon of hope and a key element of the NEUSTART KULTUR funding programme."

Based on the six sections of the Akademie der Künste, the grant is targeting artists working professionally in the fields of the visual arts, architecture, literature, music, performing arts, and film and media art, as well as up-and-coming artists who have arrived on the scene with their first works. The programme is worth a total of EUR 5 million. 791 grants of EUR 6,000 will be awarded for a period of 4 months (October 2021 to the end of January 2022). The selection is made by juries composed of Akademie members. A specially created online application portal at www.adk.de/initial will go live on 15 June. Applications can be submitted from 15 June to 15 July 2021.

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