

GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

S+T+ARTS IN THE CITY OPEN CALL



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S+T+ARTS IN THE CITY

OPEN CALL

CALL OPENS:

30 June 2023, 5 PM CEST

CALL CLOSES:

25 August 2023, 5 PM CEST

Partners:

GLUON (BE) (Coordinator), Ars Electronica (AT), Hac Te (ES), INOVA+ (PT), Kersnikova (SI), and MEET | Digital Culture Center (IT).

1. General Information

S+T+ARTS In the City launches a new S+T+ARTS residencies programme that aims at enhancing art-driven innovation at local level and human-centered technologies, such as artificial intelligence, robotics, new digital media, smart cities, high performance computing, data science, or biotechnologies, that will be able to put in the market products and services that have a positive ecological, societal, and ethical impact.

Globalisation, demographic change, climate change, secure, sustainable and competitive energy, and social polarisation, in addition to the economic and financial crisis, are the major challenges confronting Europe today, challenges of a medium and long-term perspective. In today's interconnected and globalised world, multilateral relations are no longer exclusively built on interstate dynamics. Faced with the concomitant forces of globalisation and localisation, many states are either too small or too big to adequately respond to the growing number of global challenges that are now emerging. This is one of the main driving forces for states to build regional integration schemes.

By combining arts and creativity with science and tech for good, S+T+ARTS in the City contributes to the emergence of ecologically conscious technology uses that answer the current challenges that regions are facing, in sectors such as green manufacturing, sustainable urban development, security, recyclable textiles, digital literacy, and more. The final aim is to develop thought-provoking artworks in the form of prototypes that seamlessly bridges between art and technology and propose solutions to a real-life issue that have both artistic and functional value.

S+T+ARTS In the City supports 11 artists through 5 Regional S+T+ARTS Centers, distributing a total amount of EUR 440.000 in the coming year. See more [here](#) on the project.

2. Timeline

S+T+ARTS In the City will support selected applicants through a programme that includes a 9-month residency starting in October 2023, as well as multiple exhibitions and events during the residency period and thereafter until November 2024.

The programme includes funding, guidance and support by the hosting Regional S+T+ARTS Center, access to experts provided by the Regional S+T+ARTS Center and training.

The duration of each residency is 9 months and includes 5 phases:

- Phase 1 (M1, 1 month): Reflection
- Phase 2 (M2-M4, 2 months): Development
- Phase 3 (M5, 1 month): Evaluation
- Phase 4 (M6-M9, 3 months): Production

A subsequent Phase 5 for outreach will take place after the end of the residencies. This will involve the presentation of a curated selection of the residency outcomes at SONAR+D in Barcelona, Ars Electronica Festival in Linz and/or the I Love Science Festival in Brussels, in 2024.



3. Who can apply?

In this Open Call, applicants can apply as individual artists or collectives. Applicants must be registered with VAT number and undertake artistic activities as a professional / job occupation.

The artist must have already produced enough artwork to assess their artistic experience. The artists will be asked to submit at least 2 (and maximum 3) projects as examples of previous work through the portfolio section in the application form. Previous experience with art-tech experimentation projects will be valued but is not a condition for participation.

Note that individual artists or collectives of individual artists from any country in the world are eligible, at the condition that they can travel to Europe for the S+T+ARTS In the City programme.

Other specifications can be asked according to the challenge. Please read the challenges description, as additional pre-requisites might be asked.

4. What do we offer?

- Up to EUR 40.000 budget for artists residencies to cover the artist fee and other related costs (including but not limited to artwork/prototype production, participation to exhibitions, travel and accommodation expenses, insurance)
- Access to the regional residency host organisation and local expert group
- Access to the Europe-wide S+T+ARTS network
- Access to new technologies and R&D departments
- Considered participation in exhibitions showcasing the outcomes of the residencies at SONAR+D in Barcelona in June 2024, Ars Electronica Festival in September 2024 in Linz and/or I Love Science Festival in October 2024 in Brussels, as well as at regional locations of the Regional S+T+ARTS Centers upon selection
- Visibility through high impact communication activities to promote the artistic output and its innovation spillovers (including dissemination events foreseen from June to November 2024)

*Each residency will be facilitated by an **innovation catalyst** from the Regional Centre, who will accompany the artist throughout its whole implementation, by mediating the communication with the host organisation and the Local Expert Group, going through the administrative and financial questions, and preparing the dissemination events.*

5. Challenges

Challenge n°1: Going Wild in the City

While our modern cities have been progressively distancing us from nature, the latter has always remained an integral part of the urban landscape. How can we create more awareness that values the interconnectedness and interdependence of all living beings in the city?

Consortium Partner: **GLUON**

[Read more](#)

Challenge n°2: Reclaiming our Agency

AI's increasing presence in our daily lives brings transformative potential but also significant challenges, particularly in the domain of mental health.

How might we address the adverse impact of AI on mental well-being and explore the interplay between algorithms, recommender systems, and our mental equilibrium to shape healthier behaviors and thought processes?

Consortium Partner: **GLUON**

[Read more](#)

Challenge n°3: Where Our Food Comes From

How can we enhance transparency and collaboration in the Brussels food system, ensuring a seamless journey from farm to table? How can digital technologies be utilized to provide consumers with detailed information about the origin, production, and distribution of their food?

Consortium Partner: **GLUON**

[Read more](#)

Challenge n°4: The Value of Care

While the utilisation of technologies holds the promise of significant transformation within the healthcare sector, such as personalised data-driven treatments, it also presents numerous critical challenges. These challenges encompass a range of concerns pertaining to human-robot interaction, privacy, data ownership and sharing, and concerns about the patient-health care professional relationship. How can we reconcile developments within personalised healthcare with a patient's individual values? What could be a valuable interplay between technological automation and human interventions?

Consortium Partner: **GLUON**

[Read more](#)

Challenge n°5: Machine Sapiens and the City

How can we enhance the oracular power of AI to reveal needs and desires of the city, and translate them into possible heuristic governance solutions that can improve its well-being and resilience?

Consortium Partner: **MEET**

[Read more](#)

Challenge n°6: Regenerative AI for Urban Mining

How can we create nurturing and circular relationships between three different intelligences (human, artificial and natural) that want to communicate and collaborate symbiotically, allowing a "regenerative" AI to activate urban mining processes of materials and knowledge?

Consortium Partner: **MEET**

[Read more](#)

**Challenge n°7: The Future of Computing**

The growth of the bits that we generate with our information technology all over the planet requires an increasing amount of energy for their manipulation and storage. To solve these problems, artists and scientists are trying to use the knowledge about organically stored information, looking into solutions that already exist in biology, from molecules to cells, simple and more complex organisms and their exchanges. How can we imagine biocomputing as an alternative way of storing information and reducing energy consumption needed for computation nowadays?

Consortium Partner: **Kersnikova**

[Read more](#)

Challenge n°8: Driving Agricultural Sustainability - Empowering Smallholder Farmers with Digital Transformation

How might we contribute to a more sustainable agriculture through digital transformation and a greater collaboration between smallholder farmers?

Consortium Partner: **INOVA+**

[Read more](#)

Challenge n°9: Understanding and engineering photosynthesis for a more sustainable Europe

How might artists help plants to improve their photosynthesis? Can plants become even bigger allies in the fight against climate change? Unveiling the natural processes that govern nanoscale energy transfer could lead to promising advances in the fields of sustainable agriculture, solar fuels, organic photovoltaics, and carbon capture. Within this challenge, we would like to invite artists to contribute to helping plants become bigger allies in the fight of big cities like Barcelona against climate change

Consortium Partner: **HacTE**

[Read more](#)

Challenge n°10: Designing the Robots of the Future

How can the arts play an active role in improving the interaction between humans and robots?

Consortium Partner: **HacTE**

[Read more](#)

Challenge n°11: Immersive and Digital Narratives for Climate Change

How might climate-aware and sustainable art practices help a city like Barcelona prepare for the climate crisis?

Consortium Partner: **HacTE**

[Read more](#)

[DOWNLOAD CHALLENGES BOOKLET](#)

5. Application process and conditions

- **Deadline and form**

Applicants should submit a proposal through the following online form (through Jotform). The call is open until **August 25th, 17:00 (Brussels time)**. **Any application received after the deadline will be automatically rejected.** Upon receipt of each proposal, the system will send you a confirmation of your submission. Get in touch with us (aurelie@gluon.be) if this is not the case.

- **Requirements and restrictions**

All mandatory sections of your proposal must be completed. It is also not possible to add any further information after the deadline. The only exception for editing the application after the deadline is if a mistake has been made in the key administrative data (e.g. contact mail or phone, name of the company, etc.). In this case, the applicants must contact us at aurelie@gluon.be indicating the proposal ID, their username and the data that needs to be corrected. The data provided must be updated, true, complete and should allow us to properly assess the proposal. Additional material, not specifically requested in the online application form, will not be considered in the evaluation. All mandatory sections must be written in English for the proposal to be eligible. Only parts written in English will be evaluated. We don't accept entities that are under liquidation or are an enterprise under difficulty according to the Commission Regulation No 651/2014, art. 2.18, or that are excluded from the possibility of obtaining EU funding under the provisions of both national and EU law, or by a decision of either national or EU authority.

- **Multiple submissions**

Though applicants are allowed to submit proposals for multiple challenges (max. 3), neither team members nor any legal entities can be funded twice by S+T+ARTS In the City. In case that more than one of the submitted proposals from the same applicant is among the selected projects, the applicant will be allocated to their prioritized residency. One applicant can submit one proposal addressing one challenge. In other words, if you submit a unique proposal for a challenge, you can submit a maximum of three proposals. It is not permitted to submit the same proposal for multiple challenges to increase your chances.

- **Conflict of interest**

We will take into consideration the existence of potential conflicts of interest among you and one or more of the S+T+ARTS In the City Consortium partners. Consortium partners, their affiliated entities, employees and permanent collaborators cannot take part in the S+T+ARTS In the City programme. All potential conflicts of interest will be assessed case by case.



- **Intellectual Property**

Your project should be based on your original work or your right to use the IPR must be clear.

Going forward, any foreseen developments must be free from third party rights, or those third-party rights must be clearly stated.

**If you want to discover the application offline and prepare your answers,
you can download the [application form here](#).**

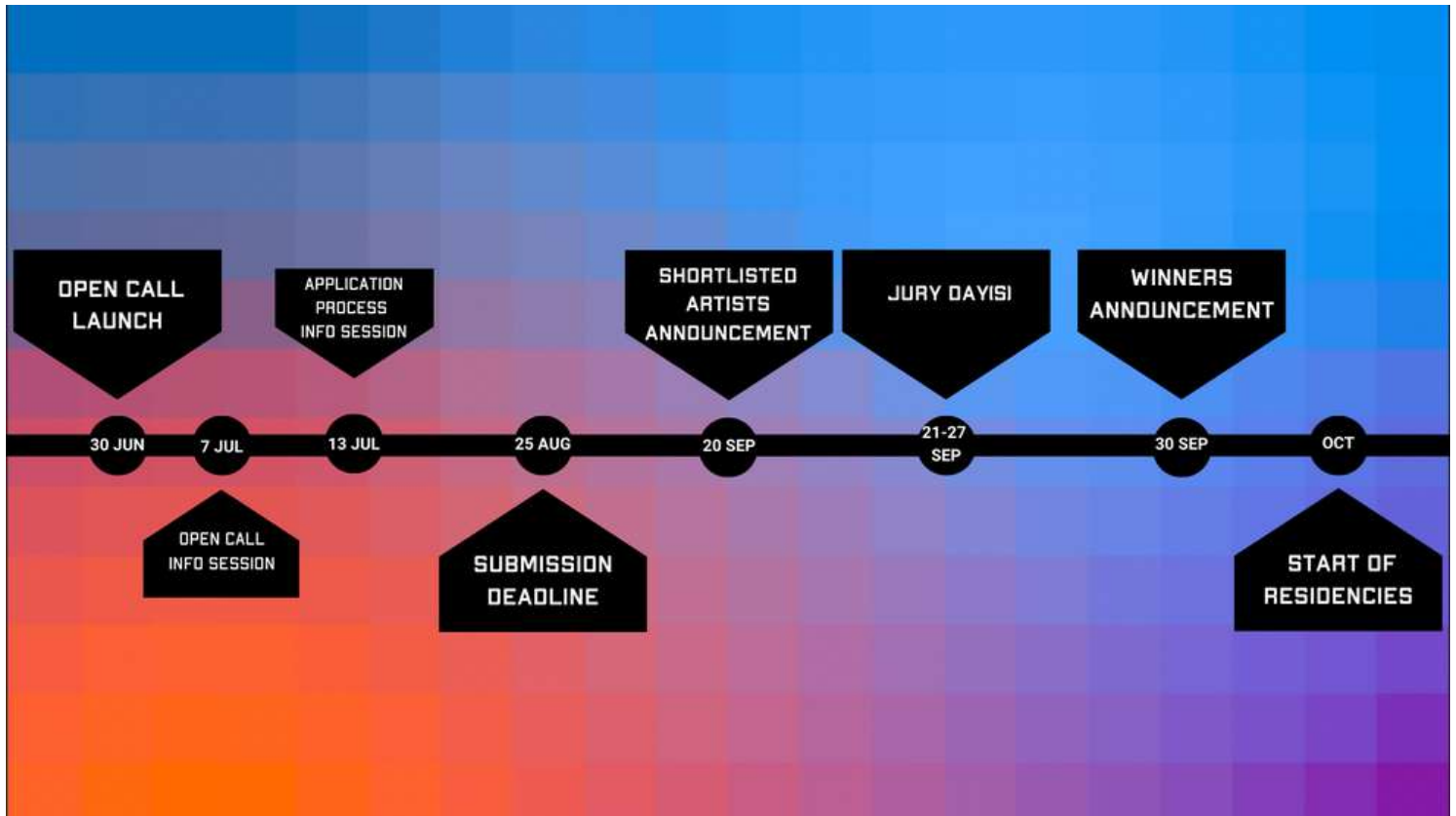
- **Evaluation process**

Our evaluation process is transparent, fair and equal to all our participants. For this call, we are committed to an inclusive selection process, with an explicit focus on increasing the ethnic, socio-economic, and gender diversity within the project.

The evaluation of the proposals consists of the following steps:

- Proposal submission
- Eligibility checks: Proposals that do not comply with the eligibility criteria will be excluded
- Internal evaluation by the Regional S+T+ARTS Centers: individual evaluations of submitted proposals, resulting in a 'ranking list'
- Local Expert Group (LEG) meetings: The LEG Committee will review the proposals with the best score in the previous phase and select the finalists
- Jury Day where finalists will be invited to present their proposals to the jury (physical/online).
- After Jury Day, once formal checks and validations have been completed, each selected artist will sign a Sub-Grant Agreement with their Regional S+T+ARTS Center

APPLY NOW!



Eligibility check

The eligibility check will be done on all proposals submitted before the deadline. All eligibility conditions are listed below. The projects that do not comply with those criteria will be excluded and marked as ineligible.

We will inform all applicants about the results of the eligibility check.

Internal evaluation by Regional S+T+ARTS Centers

After the eligibility check, each eligible proposal will be evaluated by 3 internal experts, appointed according to the specific characteristics of the regional challenges. The best 10 proposals will be presented to the Selection Committee of each residency. The Selection Committee will select the top 3 candidates for each residency. The top 3 candidates will be invited for the Jury Day. The evaluation criteria will consider all (but not limited to) the following aspects:

EXCELLENCE:

- **Fit:** the proposal demonstrates a deep understanding of the challenge it responds to and fits with the vision, needs and the goals defined by the Regional S+T+ARTS Center
- **Innovative potential:** the quality and strength of the proposal's link with concepts of innovation a/o sustainability
- **Approach:** The proposal demonstrates a clear and credible approach to deliver (a) demonstrable artistic outcome by the end of the residency term

**IMPACT:**

- **Artistic potential:** the proposal demonstrates a clear and credible approach to deliver (a) presentable outcome by the end of the residency term
- **Regional innovation potential:** novel/ innovative character of the proposal, potential for links with Regional Innovation policies

IMPLEMENTATION:

- **Resources:** the proposal and expected outcome(s) is feasible to achieve within the given time and budget.
- **Art-Tech congruency:** synergy between technological challenges and artistic thematic and methodological approach
- **Artistic quality:** an evaluation based both on previous work and on the vision developed in the proposal including the proposed use of (digital) technology in tackling the selected regional challenge
- **CV/Artistic portfolio:** the artist background must match in terms of needs and goals of the proposal, proving the artists' ability to go from the conceptual to the development stage within a project

All applications will be assigned a score from 0 to 5 for each criterion which will be recorded by the evaluators in an Individual Evaluation Report. The threshold for each criterion is 3.

The overall threshold, i.e the sum of the three individual scores, is 10 .

0 = Proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information

1 = Poor – criterion is inadequately addressed or there are serious inherent weaknesses

2 = Fair – proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses

3 = Good – proposal addresses the criterion well, but shortcomings are present

4 = Very good – proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present

5 = Excellent – proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

Local Expert Group (LEG) Consensus Meeting

The Selection Committee, consisting of the Local Expert Group in each Regional S+T+ARTS Center and 2 external experts, will decide by consensus (or a majority vote of $\frac{2}{3}$ of members) and based on the ranking obtained because of the Evaluation, the list of finalists to go to the next phase.



Jury Day

A Jury Day will be organised in each of the 5 Regional S+T+ARTS Centers, to which finalists will be invited to present their proposals to the Selection Committee. After the event, the jury will select the winners and include them in the Provisional List of recipients.

The Jury will select the final beneficiaries considering the following **'Awarding Criteria'**:

- Artistic quality: an evaluation based on both previous work and on the vision developed in the proposal (including the proposed use of (digital) technology in tackling regional challenges).
- Regional challenge analysis: quality and expectation of the success of the collaboration proposed between artist, LEG, residency partner to work towards the goals of sustainable innovation
- Quality and strength of the proposal's link with concepts of innovation and sustainability: willingness to experiment and prototype to achieve innovation spillovers.
- Realistic planning and budget allocation.

The Selection Committee will decide by consensus (or a majority vote of 2/3) the Provisional List of Recipients, and Reserve List. We will communicate the results to the applicants by email, by September 20th 2023.

Finalists will be invited to present their projects to the Jury between September 21st – 26th 2023. Each Regional S+T+ARTS Center independently determines whether the jury day(s) will take place online or in-person and on which day.

7. Support Programme and Payment Arrangements

The selected grantees will receive a fixed lump sum of up to EUR 40.000. The fixed lump sum is a simplified method of settling expenses in projects financed from EU funds.

It means that the grantee is not required to present strictly defined accounting documents to prove the cost incurred (e.g. invoices) but they are obliged to demonstrate the implementation of the project in line with the milestones set for it.

Simply speaking: it means that we will assess your progress and quality of your work during interim reviews, not your accountancy. The milestones (deliverables and KPIs) will be fixed in the individual residency plan elaborated at the beginning of the residency programme.

The lump-sum does not release the grantee from the obligation to collect documentation to confirm the costs under national and European fiscal regulations.

For ease and transparency, the Financial Support will be paid against specific deliverables (which will be included in the individual residency plans). Each grantee will receive the funds as follows:

- 40% of the fixed sum (EUR 16.000) at the signature of the contract
- 30% of the fixed sum (EUR 12.000) at the end of the residency term, after completion of Phase 4 of the residency
- 30% of the fixed sum (EUR 12.000), after completion of Phase 5 (Exhibition), by June 2024.

The hosting Regional S+T+ARTS Centre will make the final decision and approve/deny the payments accordingly.

8. Contact Us

In case you need help

If, after reading the present Guide for Applicants and the FAQs on the starts.eu website, you have further questions regarding our Open Call process, please send us an email at aurelie@gluon.be. In case of any technical issues, please include the following information in your message:

- your name, telephone number and your email address;
- details of the specific problem (error messages you encountered, bugs descriptions, i.e. if a dropdown list isn't working, etc.);
- screenshots of the problem.

For updates and project news, please visit www.starts.eu.

If you have complaints

If, after receiving the results of one of the evaluation phases (when foreseen), you consider that a mistake has been made, you can send us your complaint. To do so please send us your complaint in English by email at aurelie@gluon.be including the following information:

- your contact details (including email address)
- the subject of the complaint
- information and evidence regarding the alleged breach.

Please submit your complaint within **3 calendar days starting** from the day of receipt of the grounds for rejection. We will review your complaint within seven calendar days from its reception. If we need more time to assess your complaint, we will inform you by email about the extension.

We will not review anonymous complaints or complaints with incomplete information.

Please consider that the evaluation is run by experts part of the S+T+ARTS In the City consortium. We do not interfere with their assessment, and therefore, we will not evaluate complaints related to the results of the evaluation other than those related to mistakes in the evaluation of the eligibility criteria.

9. Final Provisions

Any matters not covered by this Guide for Applicants will be governed by Belgian law and rules related to EU grants.

Please note that we make efforts to keep all provided data confidential. However, you are solely responsible for indicating your confidential information as such.

Your IPR will remain your property. Concerning the IPR generated during the residencies, the following rules apply:

- the licensing of IPR of the newly developed artistic works shall be agreed upon between the Regional S+T+ARTS Center, residency partner(s) and the Artist.
- the IPR shall remain available for non-profit research and development activities.

Grant beneficiaries will agree that information regarding the projects selected for funding can be used by the S+T+ARTS in the City consortium for communication purposes.



For the selected grantees, the agreement will include the set of obligations towards the European Commission (for example: promoting the project and giving visibility to the EU funding, maintaining confidentiality, understanding potential controls by the EC/ECA and OLAF).

The S+T+ARTS In the City Consortium might cancel the call at any time, change its provisions or extend it. In such a case, we will inform all applicants about the change. The signature of the agreement is an initial condition to establish any obligations among applicants (concerning the obligation of confidentiality of the application).

Did not find what you were looking for? You might want to check the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on our website.

10. Artist Info Sessions

To help artists get a better understanding of the open call we plan a live-streamed info session on **July 7th 2023 at 10:00-11:30 CEST** and **July 13th, 2023 at 10:00-11:30 CEST**.

During these sessions, the partners of S+T+ARTS in the City will present the open call, the 11 challenges, the expectations from artists, the foreseen outcomes (session 1) and the application process, requirements, budget questions and submission (session 2).

The sessions will be recorded and available in the Youtube startseu channel (STARTS in the City playlist).

Register to info session 1 [here](#)

Register to info session 2 [here](#)

If you have questions please consult our [FAQs](#).

STARTS in the City is a European project which has received funding from the European Commission's Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology under grant agreement LC-01984766.