

PRESS RELEASE

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STRENGTHENING MEDIA ART AND DIGITAL CULTURE IN NRW

MINISTRY FOR CULTURE AND SCIENCE OF NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA TO FUND COOPERATION PROJECTS WITH A TOTAL OF 940,000 EURO AS PART OF TWO NEW FUNDING PROGRAMS

As of now, NRW-based institutions and independent initiatives in media art and digital culture whose project plans deal artistically and culturally with current technological change and its effects on society can apply for funding. With the newly developed funding lines “Medienkunstfonds” (“Media Art Fund”) and “Medienkunst fellows” (“Media Art Fellows”), the Ministry of Culture and Science of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia is supporting new collaborations and projects with a total volume of 940,000 euro.

For decades, artists, institutions, and independent initiatives in media art and digital culture have been exploring the impact of digital technologies on contemporary society. The use of media technologies as a means of information and communication has become a matter of course in recent years. Especially in the last year, their already strongly progressed influence has become clear against the background of the Corona pandemic. With the current technical innovations, however, new political, social, economic, and ecological issues are also becoming evident.

By employing experimental and documentary, speculative and critically questioning strategies, media art, as a unique, multifaceted art form, addresses, explores, and translates the ambiguity of technological change. Hardly any other artistic field has such a variety of media possibilities at its disposal as media art and digital culture. It can assume a variety of forms and serve as a vehicle to convey the paradoxes of our time. In doing so, it is a participant observer in the socio-political debate, whose spectrum can range from visual art, film, music, and performance to newer media forms such as virtual reality and immersion. In doing so, new formats of engagement and exchange evolve, responding to the necessities of a multi-voiced debate.

The Ministry of Culture and Science of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia considers it an essential goal of cultural promotion in NRW to strengthen cooperation and innovative approaches to media art in the long term: “Media art has a long tradition in North Rhine-Westphalia. For example, the Academy of Media Arts in Cologne was founded 30 years ago, and the Hartware MedienKunstVerein in Dortmund can also look back on more than 25 years of exhibition practice in the field of media art. The aim of the new funding programs is to financially reinforce the landscape of media art in North Rhine-Westphalia, which has grown over many years, and to provide a specific impetus for the further development of innovative approaches,” says Culture and Science Minister Isabel Pfeiffer-Poensgen. “One focus is on networking North Rhine-Westphalian initiatives with supra-regional and international media art players. In addition, we want our funding to stimulate interconnections between different working methods and bodies of knowledge.”

THE FUNDING PROGRAMS ENCOMPASS TWO CORE AREAS

MEDIENKUNSTFELLOWS (MEDIA ART FELLOWS)

The “Medienkunstfellows – Fellowships für Kunst, Technologie und Gesellschaft” (“Media Art Fellows - Fellowships for Art, Technology and Society”) are each based on an invitation issued by an institution or independent initiative in NRW to an artist, scientist, activist, publicist, or curator to live in NRW for a certain period of time, to contribute impulses and to conduct open and unbiased research. The fellowships are funded with a total volume of 240,000 euro (2021 - 2023).

MEDIENKUNSTFONDS (MEDIA ART FUND)

The “Medienkunstfonds - Fonds zur Förderung neuer kooperativer Prozesse” (“Media Art Fund - Fund for the Promotion of New Cooperative Processes”) aims to support cooperation between institutions and independent initiatives from the fields of art, culture, science, and society in North Rhine-Westphalia that explore contemporary technological change in a newly developed project proposal. Support is provided for artistic and artistic-research cooperation projects with a total volume of 700,000 euro (2021 - 2023).

The medienwerk.nrw office, as an interface between cultural institutions, initiatives, and the Ministry of Culture and Science, advises, supervises, and accompanies interested parties in submitting their project ideas.

INSTITUTIONS AND INDEPENDENT INITIATIVES ARE INVITED TO SUBMIT THEIR PROJECT IDEAS NOW UNTIL APRIL 15, 2021 (MEDIA ART FELLOWS), AND APRIL 19, 2021 (MEDIA ART FUND), AT FOERDERUNG.MEDIENWERK-NRW.DE.

ABOUT MEDIENWERK.NRW

For 20 years now, the medienwerk.nrw network has been working to strengthen media art & digital culture in NRW, participating in joint projects, cultural policy initiatives, and debate on current issues in the field of technology and society from the perspective of art and culture. Since 2013, the network has been supported by the medienwerk.nrw office (located at Hartware MedienKunstVerein, Dortmund). The office coordinates network events, conceives and monitors funding opportunities from the state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), oversees the state of NRW's scholarship for female media artists, and organizes international conferences and festivals.

**THE OFFICE MEDIENWERK.NRW IS SUPPORTED BY THE MINISTRY
OF CULTURE AND SCIENCE OF THE STATE OF NRW.**

CURRENTLY, THESE INSTITUTIONS ARE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN MEDIENWERK.NRW:

Akademie für Theater und Digitalität (Dortmund), Bielefelder Kunstverein, FFT Düsseldorf, Filmwerkstatt Düsseldorf, Hartware MedienKunstVerein (Dortmund), imai – inter media art institute (Düsseldorf), Internationale Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen, Kultur-Initiative Emscher-Lippe (Gelsenkirchen), Kunsthochschule für Medien Cologne, Lehmbruck Museum (Duisburg), mex – intermediale und experimentelle Musikprojekte e.V. (Dortmund), Museum Ludwig (Cologne), Netzspannung.org, NRW-Forum Düsseldorf, PACT Zollverein (Essen), Schauspiel Dortmund (Dortmund), SK Stiftung Kultur (Cologne), Skulpturenmuseum Glaskasten Marl, Stiftung Künstlerdorf Schöppingen, super_filme e.V. (Witten), Temporary Gallery (Cologne), Universität Siegen, Lehrstuhl für Mediengeschichte, Universität Witten/Herdecke, Fakultät für Kulturreflexion, Videonale (Bonn), Zeitkunst e.V. (Cologne)