



THE MARTHA COOPER SCHOLARSHIP

CALL FOR APPLICATION

The **Martha Cooper Scholarship** (MCS) offers a unique opportunity for an individual from Africa or Latin America to dedicate themselves for eleven months to an artistic project through the medium of photography. With the newly announced MCS, the Foundation Berliner Leben acknowledges the importance of documentary photography and purposefully offers a production scholarship for documentary photographers with an ethnographic focus to apply for this scholarship, seeking projects that critically and thoughtfully engage with the places, communities, and social realities they document. Prioritizing work that captures the context between people and their environments, we support projects that reflect everyday life, shifting cultural landscapes, and the ways communities adapt and change. The scholarship encourages applications from photographers whose work offers fresh, honest perspectives on lived experience, community, and identity with depth and optimism. The scholarship is based on the annual topic of Fresh A.I.R., the scholarship programme of Stiftung Berliner Leben. It addresses social and political developments that affect us in the present, and highlights the diversity of human experience and perception of the world.

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The chosen photographer will be invited to live and work in one of our Fresh A.I.R. residencies in Berlin Schöneberg. The current call is for the **11th class** starting in **February 2026** and ending in **November 2026**.

Thematic Call: »FUTURE VISIONS: Artistic Approaches to Peace«

We are facing complex challenges that jeopardize sustainable and peaceful coexistence. Questions about security, peace and future-proof social models are dominating social discourse. How can art contribute to a more optimistic view of the future, promote awareness of a peaceful future and inspire people to stand up for a peaceful co-existence? What artistic means are suitable for furthering the discourse on the greatest challenges for peace now and in the future? And what new, interdisciplinary collaborations between art and science, technology or activism are conceivable in order to imagine forward-looking ideas and solutions?

We invite artists and cultural practitioners to apply with innovative projects that look optimistically towards the future and in which future-oriented and forward-looking narratives, scenarios and concepts are developed.

Funding will be provided for:

- Projects that take a critical look at the present and develop ideas for new political and social structures and propose alternative models.
- Projects that contribute to promoting self-involvement and/or strengthening personal self-efficacy, resilience and frustration tolerance as well as social support.
- Projects that address complex, multinodal relationships between security structures and the conditions for long-term peace and stabilization and develop possible scenarios for the further development of the security architecture to meet future challenges.
- Projects that involve actors from science, technology and social movements and promote and demand open dialog on global issues.

Application for a scholarship in 2026

Application deadline: **Sunday, 16th March, 2025**

Applications are only accepted via Email: **FreshAIR-office@stiftung-berliner-leben.de**

For a successful application please hand in the following documents:

- Curriculum vitae
- Project outline / description
- Budget plan

You can find further information about Fresh A.I.R. at
<https://urban-nation.com/artist-in-residence-scholarships/>

Important Information

We solely fund projects of which content, implementation and planned outcome are compatible with the principles of Fresh A.I.R., the Foundation Berliner Leben and the free democratic basic order. Projects with racist, anti-Semitic, queer-hostile or otherwise exclusionary and denigrating content are excluded.

We welcome project ideas that aim to actively involve the active involvement of local participants and organizations. Potential partners (institution, organization, association, public figure) should therefore be researched and named as part of the project application. If the project is approved by the foundation, these partners should be contacted immediately regarding cooperation. In addition, a backup should always be considered to replace any missing cooperation partners.

For project ideas that can only be realized in cooperation with a project partner (institution, organization, association, public figure), written proof of this partner's willingness to cooperate must be submitted by e-mail at the time of application, stating the applicant ID. The same applies to applications from people who belong to a network (e.g. artists, scientists, cultural workers, etc.) or who are associated with such a network and plan to involve this network as external partners in their project. In addition, a backup should always be considered in order to replace missing cooperation partners if necessary.