



THE MARTHA COOPER SCHOLARSHIP

FUNDING GUIDELINE (MCSF)

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1. FUNDING ACTIVITY, PRINCIPLES OF FUNDING

The foundation “Berliner Leben” (hereinafter: Foundation) is making up to 13 stipend placements available in the framework of the statutory foundation goals with the aim of giving artists the time, space and resources to work in the field of their creative work in which greater reflection or focus appears worthwhile.

A new living environment and meeting other artists not only offer the ideal prerequisites to further develop the artist’s own creativity but also for new artistic processes. With the 10-months grants, the scholarship holders (hereinafter: Grantees) are given the opportunity to acquire fresh impetus during their stay, to progress artistically by becoming involved in Berlin’s cultural life, and to gather important experiences for their future professional careers.

With the Fresh A.I.R. scholarships, the Foundation promotes innovative projects that are based in Urban and New Contemporary Art and that deal with the thematic complexes announced in the annually changing call for proposals.

Additionally, only projects that are compatible with the principles of Fresh A.I.R., the Stiftung Berliner Leben and the free democratic basic order in terms of content, implementation and planned outcome are eligible for funding. Projects with racist, anti-Semitic, queer-hostile or otherwise marginalising and denigrating content are excluded.

The Martha Cooper Scholarship (hereinafter: MCS), which is awarded exclusively once a year to a documentary photographer from a non-EU country, pursues the same aims and objectives. The organisational framework is explained on the following pages.

2. FOCUS TOPICS AND FUNDING PRIORITIES

The Foundation promotes innovative projects that

- 1) are related to a selected focus topic specified in the respective call for application.
- 2) are oriented towards the funding priorities local specificities, social commitment and originality of the Foundation “Berliner Leben”:

Local specificities

- Projects that reflect the charged relationship between locality and urbanity,
- Projects with a local connection,
- Projects that appear integrated in the districts.

Social commitment

- Projects that are positioned socially or societally,
- Projects that involve residents and/or visitors in a participatory way,
- Projects that work towards ensuring social diversity or equal opportunities in line with the foundation’s objectives resp. that are decisively directed against discrimination (e.g. against sexism, racism and antisemitism).

Originality

- Projects that are characterised by artistic autonomy, try out new artistic forms of expression or develop an independent design vocabulary,
- Projects that artistically visualize cultural, historic or time-specific phenomena,
- Projects that artistically deal with the present and future of urban society.

3. FUNDING PURPOSE, LEGAL BASIS

In the framework of the scholarships, the Foundation financially funds artists through one-off grants. The aim of the funding is to support artists with innovative project ideas through granting them scholarships. This is done taking into account the funding priorities. The funding is intended to help artists develop their ideas further and to realize them in the shape of a concrete piece of art.

The Foundation grants scholarships based on this guideline. This funding guideline does not warrant a legal claim to the funding by a stipend being granted. A right to information regarding the justification of a funding approval or rejection likewise does not exist. Recourse to the courts is thus excluded.

4. FUNDING WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE SCHOLARSHIP, APPROVAL OF THE SCHOLARSHIP

Included in the 10-months scholarship are:

- the rent-free provision of accommodation (1 bedroom, 1 living room/studio, internet connection, kitchen and bathroom including water, electricity, heating) in Berlin, Germany, for the duration of the stay,
- a monthly allowance for material costs as stated in the project proposal,
- a monthly allowance for mobility costs,
- the assumption of the second residency tax for the duration of the stay,
- a monthly allowance for living costs,
- the assumption of expenses for travel (arrival, departure) and the visa.

The approval of the funds will be done in a legally binding way solely in the form of a written confirmation letter. All other commitments or prior notifications on the passing of resolutions by the decision-making bodies are non-binding.

5. CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

The grant will be authorized to the applicant of the scholarship under the prerequisites laid down in Points 5.1 to 5.6.

5.1. GRANTEE ENTITLED TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION

The Foundation funds one artist per year from a non-EU country whose permanent residence is outside of Berlin, and who can prove they work in the field of documentary photography. The specific geographic focus region will be announced each year as part of the current public call for proposals.

The stipend has no age limit. However, applicants must have reached the full legal age. Furthermore, it is irrelevant whether the applicant has an academic degree. The scholarship is awarded to an individual artist. Former participants of the Foundation's scholarship programme are not eligible to apply again.

Applications with a project proposal that is not explicitly related to the thematic complexes of the call for proposals of the respective year are excluded. Co-funding of the project by another sponsor is excluded.

5.2. PROOF OF PRIMARY RESIDENCE

Proof of primary residence or proof of citizenship of the specific geographical region may be requested should an applicant be shortlisted by the selection committee.

5.3. RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT

There is a residence requirement in the artists' residences. By taking up the scholarship, the applicant undertakes to live in the accommodation provided for the period applied for. In the scholarship period of 10 months, 25 days of absence from the programme are granted.

5.3.1. VISA AND REPORTING OBLIGATION

Scholarship recipient is obliged to apply for a visa at the German consulate/embassy in their home town immediately upon receipt of the confirmation letter. The foundation will provide assistance with the necessary documents and signatures if required. After arriving in Germany, it is obligatory for scholarship holder to either register with the State Office for Immigration (Landesamt für Einwanderung) and apply for a residence permit, or to register their residence at a citizen's office (depending on the country of origin). The Foundation provides support with administrative procedures in Berlin.

5.3.2. ABSENCE REQUEST

Absence requests must be submitted for periods in which the scholarship holder is absent for a longer time (excluding weekends and Berlin holidays). In a residence period of 10 months, 25 days of absence are granted without deduction from scholarship funds. For days of absence beyond this (excluding weekends and Berlin public holidays), the living subsidy will be waived in the amount of 10 Euro per day.

5.4. REGULARITY

The applicant chosen by the selection committee will only be sent the confirmation letter when the Foundation has received the signed contracts and forms necessary for the stipend (scholarship contract along with appendices, tenancy agreement along with appendices, other requested documents). Funds will be paid, in accordance with the payment procedure under point 8.4 AIRF and subject to the adherence to the conditions of approval under point 5 AIRF, subsequently after submitting the aforementioned necessary documents as well as after the scholarship holder has moved into the artist residence in Berlin.

5.5. ORIGINALITY OF THE PLANNED PROJECT

Funds will only be granted for such planned projects that have not yet started at the time of the application. An early start of the measure requires prior notification and consent.

5.6. THIRD-PARTY FUNDS AND SECONDARY EMPLOYMENT

The applicant must state whether the planned project depicted in the application has been simultaneously submitted to another institute with the aim of getting a decision on funding. In addition it must be stated which institution this application has been submitted to in the same or a similar form.

The applicant is obliged to provide information in writing, stating whether other grants have been requested from resp. authorized by other institutes (third-parties) unprompted.

Secondary employment is permitted to the extent that it does not jeopardise the project, its implementation or the cooperation work (see point 6 AIRF). The residency requirement mentioned under point 5.3 AIRF must also be reconciled with the secondary employment pursued. The awarding organisation decides on the matter on a case-by-case basis, which may even lead to exclusion from the scholarship programme.

5.7. OWN FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION

When moving in a security deposit amounting to 300 Euros is to be deposited for the furnished artist residence. This amount will be withheld from the grant in the first month of the scholarship. If no damages incur and the artist residence is returned in an orderly condition upon moving out, the amount will be transferred to the account of the grantee 2 months after moving out.

6. PARTICIPATION CONDITIONS

Grantees undertake

- to duly realise the planned project corresponding to the depiction in the application documents and to report any fundamental deviations from the project application in terms of content or budget
- to attend regular meetings with the professional supervisor and to prepare them accordingly,
- to provide the professional supervisor with an insight into the creative process and to inform them about the status of the project,
- to attend and contribute to events organised by funding partners and programmes of the Stiftung Berliner Leben (e.g. workshops, readings, panel discussions, etc.),
- to participate in a final presentation of the work results.

Each grantee further guarantees their willingness to take part in a cultural and artistic exchange with the foundation and Berlin artists and cultural organisations.

7. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

7.1. APPLICATION PROCESS

The application is free of charge and is submitted in due time via the online application portal. Applicants must fill out all required fields completely and enclose work samples. Required elements of the application (project outlines, budget plan) must be written in such a way that the Foundation can extract all necessary information from it. The principle of evaluation according to the file situation applies.

The following additional information (in German or English) are required:

- 1) **Artistic curriculum vitae:** Information on education and overview of the artistic career and stages up to now,
- 2) **Work samples:** A maximum of 4 work samples (JPG, PNG, PDF),
- 3) Detailed **project proposal**,
- 4) **Budget plan:** Breakdown of the expected use of the material grant up to a presentation-ready project implementation.

The application process is time-limited. The application deadline is published with the respective current call for applications

Applications that are submitted via e-mail instead of the application portal are excluded from the application process. After receipt of the application documents, the applicant will receive an automatic confirmation of receipt. The rejection of application documents not submitted on time and/or incomplete application documents shall be done in the framework of the current administration by email.

The Foundation welcomes project ideas that actively involve local participants and organisations. Potential partners (institution, organisation, 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 must be contacted immediately regarding potential cooperation.

For project ideas that can only be realised in cooperation with a project partner (institution, organisation, association, public figure), written proof of this partner's willingness to cooperate must be submitted by email 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 professionals, etc.) or are known to such a network and plan to involve this network as essential external partners in their project. In addition, a backup should always be considered in order to replace absent cooperation partners if necessary.

7.2. APPLICATION REVIEW, APPROVAL PROCEDURE

The received project proposals will compete against each other. The Foundation shall review the formal prerequisites and the compatibility in terms of content of the requested project with the funding priorities laid down in point 2 resp. the focus topic specified in the call for proposals. Moreover, the realisation of the requested projects will be reviewed, amongst other things, in terms of organisational and financial viewpoints as well as those requiring an official permit.

If necessary, the Foundation will conduct talks to assess the applications and to determine the eligible expenditure. In the process of application review, the Foundation can request further explanations from the applicant. The "Conditional Admission" rule comes into effect if a project application has been positively evaluated but the information submitted is not sufficient for the selection panel. Applicants are requested to submit the information requested by the selection committee within 14 days of the date of notification. The project application will then be re-evaluated within 7 days. In the case of exceptional project concepts, the Foundation reserves the right to have the necessary expertise of the applicant confirmed by up to two letters of reference. References from abroad can be submitted as long as they are written in English. The Foundation likewise retains the right to have project applications assessed by external experts. It shall choose the experts corresponding to the requirements of the individual applications from various disciplines, universities and institutions.

An internationally composed selection committee will decide on the awarding of the scholarship. The selection committee is free to make decisions and is not subject to the principle of equal treatment. Only complete applications will be submitted to the selection committee. The selected grantee will be informed about the granting of the stipend and the rights and obligations associated with this in writing. Reasons for the decisions by the selection committee will not be given.

7.3. CONTRACTS, OBLIGATIONS

By signing the contracts (scholarship contract, contract of loan), the grantee accepts the obligations associated with the stipend (residence obligation, production obligation, information obligation, obligation to participate in events by the Stiftung Berliner Leben).

The scholarship may only commence when the foundation has received the complete signed contracts and the grantee has undertaken to explicitly adhere to the contractual terms.

8. FUNDING

The grants in the context of the scholarship are within the following range.

8.1. TYPE

The allowances will be granted by means of the project funding.

8.2. FORM

The allowances will be granted as non-repayable grants.

8.3. AMOUNT

The scholarship amounts to a total of up to 2,100.00 Euros per person and month.

It will be divided monthly for the duration of the stay as follows:

- rent-free living (incl. electricity and internet) valued at up to 1,000.00 Euros,
- cost of living subsidy of 700.00 Euros,
- material costs according to the budget plan as part of the project application (max. 360.00 Euros per month)
- cost of mobility subsidy of 100.00 Euros (fares in Berlin and surroundings), as well as
- the one-time coverage of travel and visa expenses (upon presentation of receipts).

8.4. PAYMENT PROCEDURE

The cost of living and the mobility cost subsidy will be transferred monthly by the 15th onto the bank account stated in the scholarship contract.

The material grant for a ten-month project amounts to a maximum of 3,600.00 Euros and will be paid out according to the amount authorised in the scholarship contract in a separate payment cycle to the bank account specified in the scholarship contract. Items in the budget plan that cannot be directly allocated to the project plan (e.g. "other costs", "unforeseen expenses") can be denied by the funding organisation. In this case, the approved amount for the material costs grant will be reduced by these positions accordingly. If additional costs arise in the budget planning during the course of the project implementation, a request for financial support can be submitted to the funding organisation with sufficient advance notice.

9. OTHER FUNDING REGULATIONS

The cooperation with partners (e.g. art production, publishers) in operative projects requires the written application and consent of the Foundation. The Foundation retains the right to stipulate the regulations necessary for the cooperation. The period to implement a cooperation with partners must therefore be planned allowing sufficient time.

The foundation does not provide any technical equipment necessary for the implementation of the project (e.g. camera, lenses, tripod, light meter, studio lighting, etc.) as part of the scholarship and does not have any premises specifically for photography (photo studio, darkroom, etc.). The scholarship holder must bring and insure their own equipment, or purchase and manage it on site using the material budget specified in the contract, or borrow it at their own responsibility. Costs for renting equipment or premises must also be taken into account in the project budget.

Aids to prepare the works of art (technical appliances, moveable objects, etc.) that are purchased with the granted financial means generally become the property of the

grantee. The proper storage and safekeeping as well as possible maintenance of the appliances are to be guaranteed. The running costs of the appliances (operating costs) such as maintenance, repair, spare parts, etc. will only be assumed in the framework of the approved budget plan of the planned project. Individual terms are to be agreed with the Foundation Berliner Leben.

10. APPLICATION OF FUNDS, PROOF OF USE

The granted financial means are appropriated corresponding to the specified grant types. The grantee undertakes to adhere to the intended use of the received grants. The granted financial means can neither be assigned nor seized.

11. QUALITY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES, PUBLIC RELATIONS, REPORTING, PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND DOCUMENTATION

The Foundation retains the right to make the project of the grantee itself as well as the funding decision made by the selection committee the object of a public announcement. The grantee expressly agrees to this.

The Foundation considers it very important to communicate the project through active press and public relations work. All public relations activities of the grantee concerning the project must contain a reference to the funding by the Foundation. They must be coordinated with the Foundation within the first four weeks after the start of the scholarship. In addition, reference must always be made to the funding organisation in connection with the project results created at Fresh A.I.R., even after the scholarship has ended. This applies to media coverage as well as to the subsequent use of the works, e.g. in follow-up exhibitions etc.

The grantee is obliged to provide information about the status of the project at any time upon the request of the foundation. Furthermore, they are to report on events, without having to be requested to do so, that significantly change the schedule of the implementation, the thematic focus or the financial feasibility of the project.

The grantee is responsible for their own projects and for the recruitment of participants. It is expected of the grantee that they make contact with possible cooperation partners autonomously and that they maintain this contact for the further course of the project.

Quality management promotes a culture of quality at Stiftung Berliner Leben and takes into account the needs and expectations of the grantee and other stakeholders.

A regular review of the artistic progress and the relevance of the work's content by selected supervisors ensures that the scholarship remains appropriate and that a supportive and effective working environment is created for the scholarship holder.

A denial of insight into the artistic project at regular intervals, a false statement in the application about prior artistic achievements as well as the development of an unsubstantial project may lead to the exclusion from the scholarship programme.

The foundation attaches great importance to the distribution of the achieved results. For this purpose, the grantee is obliged to submit further meaningful text and image material upon the request of the Foundation.

The public presentation of the project will take place in the 4th quarter of the calendar year. By the specific deadline announced in due time, the grantee will provide the Foundation with finished work(s) of art for the purpose of a final presentation. The final presentation is for the purpose of presentation and not for the purpose of sale. Within the framework of the public presentation of the project, the sponsored artist may submit a request for financial support to the artistic director in order to be able to finalise and present their project comprehensively. The request will be reviewed by the Chairman of the Foundation's Board of Directors and the artistic director.

In addition to the visual documentation of the project, it is possible that external authors produce a text that makes the work more accessible to the public. For this purpose, the grantee undertakes to provide the author with sufficient insight into the creative process.

12. EXCLUSION FROM SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

The Foundation reserves the right to exclude a scholarship holder from the programme before the end of the scholarship period with a notice period of one month or immediate termination in the case of violations of this funding guideline (MCSF) and repeated violations of contractual agreements as well as in the case of actions that oppose the principles of the Stiftung Berliner Leben and Fresh A.I.R. or the liberal democratic basic order. Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis by the funding organisation. The scholarship holder will be given the opportunity to comment.

13. FORMAL STATUS

The granting of the scholarship does not constitute any employment relationship with the sponsor. The scholarship does not represent any salary in particular in terms of § 14 Sozialgesetzbuch IV (Social Security Statute Book) and is not subject to any social security. The grantee is obliged to guarantee their own health insurance and must prove this upon the request of the foundation. The scholarship is a tax-free income that is not subject to wage or income tax.

14. RIGHT OF REVOCATION

The foundation can revoke the allowance and demand the repayment of already paid allowances if an important reason exists, in particular if

- the grant was given due to incorrect or incomplete information stated in the application, there was or is a breach of the conditions of approval or requirements associated with the grant,
- the financial means were or are not used corresponding to the purpose, were not settled on time, not properly or incompletely, the contractually regulated obligations are or were not observed, or if
- the project implementation was not started within 2 weeks after the official welcome ceremony.

15. PERIOD OF VALIDITY

The new version of this guideline comes into force on the day after its publication.

16. RECOGNITION OF THE GUIDELINE

With the submission of the signed contracts, the grantee acknowledges the terms of this guideline as well as all other grant conditions expressed up to the time of the sending of the confirmation letter. These are an integral part of the stipend agreement.

17. COMING INTO FORCE

The new version of the guideline comes into effect on 17 January, 2026, and is to be used for all applications from the funding year 2026.

Berlin, 16 January, 2026

Signed p.p. Janine Arndt