

Shared Knowledge:

Survival Guide for Emerging Audiovisual Media Artists

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Introduction

An artist working with reproducible media faces particular challenges, as markets have not yet developed as compared to those for more traditional artworks (e.g. painting, sculpture), which are considered unique. The coming years will reveal the extent to which the recently emerging NFT market will become a game changer. There are separate Shared Knowledge Transferrables on this subject on our website emare.eu/shared-knowledge.

More and more artists, however, are working primarily with audiovisual media.

In addition to art funding and the art market, there is also a funding landscape for film and other media carriers that follows a logic different from that of the art world and has been largely economically oriented since the 1990s.

With the increasing number of processes that have changed the media landscape in recent years, especially through digitisation and the growing use of audiovisual artworks in museums, film and media, funding is also opening up more and more mainly to artistically intended productions – if they can prove marketability. Above all, this includes the numerous international film festivals, where artistically ambitious productions are notably celebrated.

The overview presented here from the years 2020-22 attempts to list all forms of financing audiovisual artworks and artists' survival strategies that I have encountered in my 30-year career as a film and cultural producer, without claiming to be exhaustive. The art and media world is in a constant state of flux, so many website links may soon become obsolete. Adequate searches for funding instruments at regional, national and international levels should remedy these gaps rather quickly.

At the same time, I would also be grateful for any tips on new, creative ways people have found to produce art.

Peter Zorn

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In the section "Shared Knowledge" EMAP publishes results from internal conferences and workshops to share them with other cultural organisations and artists. The aim is to exchange and gain knowledge within the sector of media art.

Do you want to share knowledge?

Contact us: pr@emare.eu



All images:
Robertas Narkus –
Prospect Revenge
(2018, Videostills)

- cost- reduced living
- rich relatives (parents, spouse, etc.) or patrons
- social welfare
- looking for a solid, lucrative basic job which gives you enough time for your work
- trained and open to working in related professions as an organiser or teacher or in any design services

General advice

- Always research the profile of a funding body, festival, gallery, etc. BEFORE you submit an application. This saves time and sometimes even money for both sides!
- If possible call them before applying to make sure that you fit in their profile and go through the questions.
- Prepare a set of basic application material that you usually need. You may even have it on your website (downloadable pdfs, etc.)
- An updated CV in your language and in English, including your education, participation in festivals and exhibitions, prizes, etc.
- Examples of your best works with a short description, video and images (if on-line)
- Make sure that your website and social media profiles are accessible, videos working, links updated.

How to apply for future projects

- Project descriptions should be as precise as possible!
- Start with a short description (half an A4 page) and offer details in attachments.
- Including sketches, tech riders, timetables, budget estimations is very helpful.
- Hybrid Strategies (different versions to exploit your next work, i.e. as installation, performance, film for festivals, book, etc.)



Here is an outline of the European funding landscape in the art and media sector with particular focus on Germany. Depending on the type of work, other foundations and grants may also be relevant, e.g. the creative industries sector which may be part of the ministry of commerce or funds from the socio- cultural or ecological sector.

Art funding is the most precarious of all public funding (less than one percent of the budget of your state, previously only 0,5% of the EU budget).

So it is smart to look outside the box whenever possible ;-)

1. Art Funds

1a. Art funding at local and regional levels

(your academy/university, city, district, federal state) University grants and prizes, e.g. master student prizes, foreign exchange, etc.

- Academic exchange projects like DAAD in Germany daad.de (only about 5 years after graduation)
- There are several guides for PHD scholarships online. Here are two examples:
scholarshipdb.net/PhD-scholarships
scholars4dev.com/category/level-of-study/phd-Scholarships
- Keep a lookout for city or state funding such as project grants, travel and promotion grants (if you participate in exhibitions or festivals)

abroad), scholarships and residencies.

- Apart from public funding: scholarships from other institutions in your region
- Festivals, exhibitions and competitions in your region

1b. Art funding at the national level

In Germany there are 3 main bodies to fund the arts, but artists can only apply directly to the first one, or to the BKM only for residencies

- **Kunstfonds**
Offers project grants, scholarships and other support directly to artists.
kunstfonds.de
- **Kulturstiftung des Bundes (German Arts Council)**
For institutions and associations only,
funding between 50.000 – 250.000,- Euros;
20% must already be secured at the time of application)
kulturstiftung-des-bundes.de
- **BKM: Staatsministerium für Kultur und Medien**
Rarely funds artists directly but does support some funds like the Kunstfonds and offers to apply to some prestigious residencies like Villa Massimo in Rome
bundesregierung.de/breg-de/bundesregierung/bundeskanzleramt/staatsministerin-fuer-kultur-und-medien/kultur/kuenstlerfoerderung

Similar funding bodies in other EU countries:

- **Arts Council of England**
- **The Ministry of Culture or the National Centre for Culture in Poland**
- **The Ministry for Culture and Communication in France**

Just check for your country!

Additionally, some countries offer art funding through lottery funds, bank houses and/or their foundations, corporation foundations, i.e. **Migros Kulturprozent** in Switzerland or **Siemens Culture** programme in Germany

1c. Art funding at EU and international levels

- **Creative Europe Culture**
For organisations only! The smallest programmes usually need partners from at least 3 EU countries
creative-europe-desk.de
- **ERASMUS**
Programs i.e. for stays abroad
erasmusplus.de
- **Grundtvig Programme**
Lifelong learning, stays abroad
eacea.ec.europa.eu
- **European Culture Foundation**
culturalfoundation.eu
- **Ars Baltica**
Provides information on grants, etc. for northern European countries
ars-baltica.net
- **Daniel Langlois Foundation**
For international organisations and at times artists too
fondation-langlois.org
- **Pamela Jennings report on New Media Funding Models for the Rockefeller Foundation**
pamelajennings.org

2. Media funds

Media funds exist in almost all EU member states.

Most of them are industry orientated, but some support art film projects as well but generally with smaller grants.

In many cases, they are given as a loan and meant to be paid back after a film is commercially successful, which rarely happens at least in Germany.

Therefore, film funds usually demand more work than an application to an art funding body. They want to see an exploitation concept, recoupment plan, contracts or at least letters of interest by broadcasters, distributors or world sales, which make them rarely available for projects by artists, although in some regions and cases they are.

In most cases, you will first have to find a producer / production company, which will apply for the media funds and will consequently keep most or all copyrights of your project – if not negotiated otherwise.

2a. Media funds in Germany

All federal states have their own media funding or connected to other federal states.

- **Kuratorium des jungen deutschen Films**
Covers first, second, third production up to 45.000,- €
kuratorium-junger-film.de
- **BKM: Federal Ministry of Culture and Media**
Also funds short films up to 30.000,-
bundesregierung.de/breg-de/bundesregierung/bundeskanzleramt/staatsministerin-fuer-kultur-und-medien/kultur
- **FFA Filmförderanstalt**
Economically oriented
ffa.de
- **Deutscher Film Fernseh Fonds DFFF**
German film and television funds offers up to 25% of the production costs for very high budgeted productions
dfff-ffa.de

2b. European and international Media funds

International film funding & guides:

documentary.org/funding/grants

moviesthatmatter.nl

- **Creative Europe Media**
Demands min. 3 production companies from 3 EU countries
creative-europe-desk.de
- **Euroimages**
Coproduction funds for films from 70 min. fiction, doc., animation
coe.int/en/web/eurimages

Various festivals award production grants:

- **Hugo Bals Fund Rotterdam**
iffr.com/en/hubert-bals-fund-0
- **World Cinema Funds of the Berlinale**
For films from Africa, Asia, Latin America
berlinale.de/en/wcf/home/welcome.html

3. Support for intercultural relations (travel and projects abroad)

All countries have an embassy or institution to support the travels of their artists to other countries and may even have special programmes to support artists from other regions, i.e. Eastern Europe, for example:

- **Goethe-Institut**
With headquarters in Munich and more than 150 institutes worldwide, they support artists abroad through their own programmes and scholarships as well as on request, preferably from local partners (long-term planning, best to inquire before September of the previous year)
goethe.de
- **IFA (Institute for Foreign Relations)**
Scholarships and participation in exhibitions abroad, only as an alternative to the Goethe-Institut
ifa.de
- **Institut Francais**
- **Pro Helvetia** (key in Switzerland)
- **Mondriaan Stichting** (key in the Netherlands)

And so on...

4. Further Scholarships, Grants & Residencies

- **Akademie Schloss Solitude**
Provides about 90 prestigious residencies per year for all art sectors
akademie-solitude.de
- **Edith Russ Haus Oldenburg**
Offers one residency for 10.000,- Euros per year
edith-russ-haus.de
- **European ARTificial Intelligence Lab**
Offers residencies to artists to explore AI
ars.electronica.art/ailab/en
- **European Media Artists in Residence Exchange EMAP/EMARE**
Our European Media Art Platform EMAP offers 11 residencies per year to 11 different organisations to support media artists
emare.eu
- **Transartists**
Provides information on about 1.000 residencies in all art sections around the world
transartists.org

- **Touring Artists**
touring-artists.info
- **Res Artis**
A network of over 400 centres and organisations in over 70 countries; its website includes a list of residencies worldwide
resartis.org
- **On the move**
Valuable information on training, residencies and travel grants
on-the-move.org
- **European Fund Finder by ietm.org**
creative-europe-desk.de/files/downloads/European_fund_finder.pdf

Bear in mind that some hosts charge for a residency, others provide free accommodation or even grants. This is not a comprehensive list.

4a. Grant Application Example

EMARE

call.emare.eu

- EMAP offers a 2-3 months residency, which includes a grant, accommodation, production budget, lab studios and facilities, expert consultation, travel
- You are applying not just to one but 15 organisations, therefore at EMARE, you always have to create a priority list of the host centres you want to apply to, as this determines the order for the jury.
- Additionally, about 60 or more international media art organisations have access to the submission database with your permission and can search for your work there.
- Besides the 7 questions (including a timetable and technical rider) and a taxonomy of your submission and your reference works, you should upload your CV and portfolio.
- If you include links: Make sure everything is updated and in English on your website and ready for download as PDF (e.g. portfolio).
- Write a concise description of the project you are planning. Further details can be attached in a pdf.
- Select your best 3 works as references.
- Do not apply at the last minute!

Other ways to finance Art Projects



- **Commission or artist fee from festivals, museums, galleries, institutions**
- **Co-production**
Mostly for film and interactive media related projects
- **Creative/Venture Capital**
If your project has some exploitable market potential
- **Crowdfunding**
If you have a huge supportive network of friends and family etc.

Please let me know if you have discovered other ways...



- **Art market:**
Runs mainly through galleries and fairs, limited editions of 7 to 10 pieces generally. It is mostly only about the license to show them publicly as 99% of the buyers are public museums and collections.
- **Cinema market:**
It does not really exist independently in most of Europe because everything is subsidised, i.e. almost no German film can be financed through cinema revenues alone.
- **TV Market:**
Difficult for anything unconventional, broadcasting slots for artistic documentaries are rare and usually shown after midnight. The French-German broadcaster arte or Channel 4 and BBC sometimes commission art films.
- **Internet:**
Who earns money on the internet with films or art online apart from Amazon and Netflix? Nevertheless, there are some providers for VOD like Eyz Media realeyz.de, re-voir.com, etc. but unfortunately hardly any revenues...



Trainings

International training and pitching forums (usually for a fee)

see Media Training at **Creative Europe Media**
creative-europe-desk.de/get-trained

A selection:

- **EAVE** (European Audiovisual Entrepreneurs)
eave.org
- **Documentary Campus**
documentary-campus.com
- **Berlinale Talents**
berlinale-talents.de
- **Ex Oriente Film Workshop**
dokweb.net/activities/ex-oriente-film/2022/about
- **Biennale College Cinema VR**
collegecinema.labiennale.org/en/2020-bcc-virtual-reality-presentation

Film festivals

Festivals could become your most important market even though only a few pay a screening fee and many ask for a submission fee. But you can win prizes and for funders festival successes are as relevant as revenues.

You can first exploit your film or sometimes even installation at an A-festival, which asks for a premiere, e.g. Berlinale, and after the world and international premiere (2 different things), you can submit it to any of the thousands of festivals worldwide.

A-festivals receive the most attention and usually also have markets that other festival curators and broadcasters will attend. Smaller festivals may be more charming and hospitable but are usually attended by fewer professionals.

It is important that you research the festival's profile before you apply, because it doesn't make sense, for example, to submit an arty documentary to a fiction only festival.

You will find guides for all kinds of film festivals online.

Media Art at Festivals

There are also hundreds of media art related festivals. Even among EMAP members and partners (emare.eu), you will find some of the most important ones such as ars electronica in Linz or transmediale in Berlin.

Some film festivals also have other sectors and are open to experimental work, i.e.:

- **Rotterdam International Film Festival**
iffr.com
- **Berlinale Forum Expanded**
berlinale.de/en/festival/sections/forum-and-forum-expanded
- **IDFA**
idfa.nl/en
- **European Media Art Festival**
emaf.de
- **Sheffield Documentary Festival**
sheffdocfest.com



Different security and support services for artists exist only in a few EU countries, e.g.:

- ❑ **Germany: Kuenstlersozialkasse**
Includes Health Insurance, Social Services and Pension depending on your income as an artist
- ❑ **France: Maison des Artistes**
Offers special social security conditions for artists
- ❑ **The Netherlands: Wet Werk en Inkomen Kunstenaars (WWIK)**
Especially supports emerging artists with an income for maximum of 4 years within a 10 years period

Golden Rule & Conclusion

I hope this guide gives you a bit of orientation and kicks off of your research on financing your projects and career.

Now don't be scared to start your career as a media artist. As with everything, it will take some time but in my experience: If you are talented and determined enough to undertake the materially deprived but fulfilling path of creativity, you will find a way.

Make yourself visible at festivals, (self organised) exhibitions, internet, etc.) and just get started. Don't wait for anyone to "discover" your genius. First of all "genius" is outdated and second there is no one to discover your talent but you.

And in the bigger picture:

Historian Yuval Noah Harrari writes that 90% of our self-made reality and world is fiction. So nothing has to be the way it is. Especially the politics of funding landscapes. Even if it sometimes sounds a bit outdated: I still believe that we can determine the world we are living in – at least tiny bits and pieces of it.

Most likely, it can only be changed through joint efforts.

Therefore: **Empower yourself,
unite and fight for change!**

European Media Art Platform

The European Media Art Platform (EMAP), initiated by werkleitz and co-funded by Creative Europe since 2018, is a consortium of leading European media art organisations specialised in Digital and Media Art, Bio Art and Robotic Art.

emare.eu
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