

Connect South Africa

Call for applications

Deadline: 26 of May 2021

1. Introduction

Since 2014 CERN, the European Laboratory for Particle Physics in Geneva, and Pro Helvetia Swiss Arts Council have worked together to foster experimentation through the arts in connection with fundamental science. In 2021 CERN and Pro Helvetia are launching Connect, a new collaboration framework that marks the extension of their joint efforts on supporting and promoting the dialogues between artists and scientists.

Arts at CERN, the Laboratory's arts programme, fosters significant exchanges between art and physics. Artists across all creative disciplines are welcome at CERN to experience the way the big questions about our universe are pursued through fundamental research.

In the context of its Arts, Science and Technology programme, Pro Helvetia specifically supports activities and projects exploring technological and scientific developments from an artistic perspective, in dialogue with researchers. The focus is on exploring and utilising the potential for mutual inspiration and collaboration.

2. Connect South Africa

Connect South Africa is part of the Connect collaboration. Connect serves as a global platform for interactions and dialogue between artistic and scientific communities across Switzerland, Chile, South Africa and India, which will be realised during the course of 2021-2024.

Connect South Africa supports artistic residencies in Switzerland and in South Africa that germinate new projects, which in turn feed into and animate an ongoing programme of professional exchange between artists and scientists across this international network. Each country is host to some of the most singular scientific facilities and minds in the world, dedicated to advancing our understanding of the origins and the evolution of the universe. Each context provides different and unique opportunities for artists to be confronted with the scale and reach and implications of cutting-edge experimentation in the scientific field.

Connect South Africa, the first edition announced in 2021, juxtaposes infrastructures and research which precisely complement one another: while CERN in Geneva, Switzerland, addresses itself to the very smallest particles, the recently launched Square Kilometre Array project and the array of optical and radio astronomy installations spread across South Africa attend to the very largest expanses and masses.

Connect South Africa is part of the Connect collaboration framework agreed between CERN and Pro Helvetia (2021-2024) and it is realised in collaboration with the South African Radio Astronomy Observatory (SARAO), and the South African Astronomical Observatory (SAAO), anchoring the scientific partnerships in South Africa.

Mónica Bello, curator and head of Arts at CERN, and Dr. George Mahashe, lecturer at the Michaelis School of Fine at the University of Cape Town, collaborate on the curation of the residencies. Mahashe acts as convenor of the South African residency in the context of the curatorial/research project *--defunct context*.

3. Connect South Africa. Description of the Call

Connect South Africa will grant a funded residency to one artist from Switzerland¹ and one artist from Southern, East or West Africa². Connect invites submissions from artists with a distinct interest in an interdisciplinary approach, and a keen engagement with scientific thinking and fundamental science.

The two selected artists will participate in a dual residency split between CERN, the European Laboratory for Particle Physics in Geneva, home of the world's largest particle accelerator, the Large Hadron Collider (LHC); and in the array of optical and radio astronomy observatories across rural and urban South Africa, concentrated particularly in the vast semi desert expanses of the Northern Cape. These include SARAO's MeerKAT radio telescope near the town of Carnarvon, as the precursor to the South African component of the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) telescope, as well as the Southern African Large Telescope (SALT), the largest of a number of telescopes operated by SAAO near the town of Sutherland.

In both residencies, the selected artists are invited to research and explore new expressions in connection with fundamental research and physics of the cosmos. The residency will involve a residency period of 3 weeks at CERN, Geneva and a residency of 5 weeks in South Africa. The goal of this research-led residency

¹ An artist will be considered "Swiss" if they hold Swiss nationality or have a right of residence in Switzerland.

² Artists from the following countries are eligible: Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Eswatini, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Cameroon, Kenya, Comoros, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Zambia, Sao Tome and Príncipe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Chad, Uganda, Central African Republic and Zimbabwe.

programme is to develop and realise new artworks in dialogue with the scientists, engineers and staff of the laboratories and observatories, and with the support of the combined curatorial team of Arts at CERN in Geneva and --*defunct context* in South Africa.

Artists interested in applying to Connect South Africa are invited to submit a project proposal that motivates a process of research and engagement across both the CERN community and the South African scientific organizations and contexts.

4. Criteria and Conditions of the Call

The Connect South Africa Call for Applications encourages the participation of artists interested in the ideas described above and who meet any of the following criteria:

- Artists interested in the cultural significance of scientific research and technology.
- Artists interested in extending their connection with the field of physics and sciences of the universe, and to enter in dialogue with scientists and engineers, and staff at CERN, and scientists of the observatories of SARAO and SAAO in South Africa.
- Artists pushing the traditional forms of dialogue with other fields of research, and keen to ask innovative questions across disciplines.
- Artists interested in the scientific community and the interaction with its social fabric and its history and narratives.
- Artists whose work and proposal aims to reflect on new models of social enquiry, the potential synergies between art and science, and to offer challenging methods of exchange and enquiry.
- Artists with a demonstrated ability to work collaboratively and flexibly across different social-cultural and institutional worlds.
- Artists from a discipline supported by Pro Helvetia (visual arts, music, literature, performing arts, design, and interactive media) and meeting the general Pro Helvetia criteria:
 - A convincing body of work and track record.
 - A significant footprint in the arts scene of the respective contexts of Switzerland and South, East and West Africa.

5. The Residency

Connect South Africa awards one individual artist from Switzerland and one individual artist from Southern, East or West Africa with a funded residency at CERN, Geneva, and at the South African contexts. The grant includes the following support and conditions for each artist:

- A production stipend of 6,000 CHF | US\$ 6,500.
- Living expenses in Switzerland and in South Africa.
- International travel costs and local travel, when required, and accommodation at CERN, Geneva, and across various locations in South Africa - principally Cape Town, Johannesburg, the Northern Cape.

6. Expectations of the Artist

The selected artists for the Connect South Africa residency will be expected to:

- Engage in research based on the proposal submitted in the context of this Call.
- Complete the period of the residency at CERN and in South Africa.
- Meet regularly with the scientific partner/s to discuss the process of artistic research, exploration and discovery, and additionally work with other scientists.
- Give one talk and/or workshop during the residency.
- Communicate regularly with the curators and teams of Arts at CERN and --*defunct context* in South Africa.
- Develop a concrete project resulting from the residency within the six months following the residency. Depending on the nature of the artists practice, this project proposal could be a fully realised artwork or the development of a preliminary stage or prototype of a project idea.
- Support the curators and project teams on the evaluation and report of the residency within the six months following the residency.

7. Application Submission

Artists intending to apply to Connect South Africa residency shall submit a proposal adhering to the criteria of the call. The application should be written in English and submitted via the online forms that can be found in the following websites:

- For Swiss artists, the submission form can be found at <https://arts.cern>
- For artists from Southern, East and West Africa, the submission form can be found at www.prohelvetia.org.za

The application should contain the following elements:

- Personal details: name, address, contact details.
- An artist dossier with the most relevant artworks or projects, including a brief statement and the artist's biography.



- A project proposal describing, in detail, the project that the artist intends to undertake during the residency at CERN, and in South Africa.
- A video statement (no longer than five minutes), defending the relevance of the intended project.
- If as a Swiss artist you are planning to participate in both open calls for Connect (Connect, and Connect South Africa), the projects shall be different for each submission.

The selection will be based on evaluation of the above material and reviewed by a jury of cultural experts and scientists drawn from both contexts of maximum seven members. The name of the jurors will be revealed after the call.

Submissions of entry in this competition automatically constitute the acceptance of these terms and conditions. The jury's decision will be final. The decision will be published on both Arts at CERN and Pro Helvetia's websites by the end of July 2021. Only the selected artist(s) will be notified by e-mail.

8. Current challenges presented by the global pandemic

The present circumstances of the COVID-19 crisis, the duration and impact of which are still uncertain, have a significant impact on the models of artistic residencies worldwide. These circumstances might prompt us to adopt a residency model that, while maintaining the principle of being based on interactions between artists and scientists, will combine an on-site residency with online exchanges. In such cases, the artist and the scientific partners, as well as the curators of Arts at CERN and *--defunct context* will be in remote contact over a period of up to six months or until the project is completed.

9. Key Dates

Deadline for the application: May 26th, 2021 (at midnight CEST, UTC+2)

Announcement of the jury's decision: By the end of July 2021

The timing of the residency will be discussed with the teams of Arts at CERN and the South African partners, with the intention to complete the residency by March 2022, bar exceptional circumstances.

10. Contact and Information

For information about the programme at CERN and for Swiss artists interested in applying, please contact: info.arts@cern.ch



For information about the programme in South Africa and for inquiries from artists from Southern, East and West Africa, please contact: applications-johannesburg@prohelvetia.org

In the preparation of submissions, applicants are advised to consult the websites of each of the partners in order to better understand the facilities and research associated with each, and identify potential lines of inquiry and project development for their residency:

CERN: <https://home.cern>

Arts at CERN: <https://arts.cern>

South African Radio Astronomy Observatory (SARAO): <https://www.sarao.ac.za>

Square Kilometre Array (SKA) project: <https://www.skatelescope.org>

South African Astronomical Observatory (SAAO): <https://www.sao.ac.za>