

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) on residencies and research trips

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Questions related to eligibility

1. What are the main criteria that are considered during the selection process?

- Convincing track record: artistic activity with a national/cross-regional reach
- Context-related motivation
- Sufficient knowledge of the respective foreign language(s)
- Concrete exchange project with a lasting impact

2. In what cultural field do I need to work to be eligible to apply?

Artists and cultural practitioners from the following fields may apply for a residency with our Liaison Offices or Venice: visual arts, design and interactive media, music, literature, and the performing arts, as well as artists with a transdisciplinary focus. You can, for example, be an artist, a curator, an event organiser or a cultural intermediary. For a residency in New York only arts practitioners from Visual Arts can apply. In any case, for all residency applications you need to have a convincing track record that shows artistic activity with a national/cross-regional reach in your field.

If you have a cross-disciplinary approach, you may mention it in the application.

3. Is there an age limit after which cultural practitioners are no longer eligible to apply?

There is no age limit. The residency programme is intended to support art practitioners who are willing to engage with other global contexts and cultural scenes.

4. What do you mean by «cultural practitioners from Switzerland» and «cultural practitioners from outside Switzerland»?

«Cultural practitioner from Switzerland» refers to a professional artist or cultural practitioner who is either a Swiss citizen or a permanent resident in Switzerland. Likewise, «cultural practitioner from outside Switzerland» refers to a professional artist or cultural practitioner who either holds citizenship or is a permanent resident in one of the countries Pro Helvetia is active in. For the complete list of countries, please consult the online information for residencies and research trips [here](#).

5. I am a cultural practitioner who comes from a country which is not on the country list on your website. Am I eligible for support?

No, at present, Pro Helvetia only supports residencies and research trips for cultural practitioners who come from one of the countries listed on our website.

6. I am a student. Do I need to have work experience in my field before I can apply?

Students are not eligible to apply, only professional cultural practitioners are eligible to apply for a residency or a research trip. As a student you are advised to build up your portfolio based on a substantial body of work and finish your studies before you consider applying.

7. I am an emerging artist. Am I eligible to apply?

Emerging Artists are eligible to apply, as long as the artistic activity has a national/cross-regional reach.

8. Is the residency programme open to physically challenged cultural practitioners?

Our programme is open to all. The jury selects the best candidate for the residency depending on merit and on being able to find an appropriate partner in the host country. Pro Helvetia is committed to diversity and equal opportunities. We promote professional equality of all genders and lifestyles. We are therefore particularly pleased to receive applications from physically challenged cultural practitioners as well as people with a different social or cultural background.

9. We are an artist duo, can we apply together for a residency?

Yes, you can apply as an artist duo. Please just send one single application, it is not necessary to apply separately. If you are selected for a residency opportunity, you will stay at the same hosting institution during your residency.

10. I was already supported by Pro Helvetia for a residency in the past. Can I apply again?

Yes.

11. Can I apply again if my application of the previous year was unsuccessful?

Yes, you can apply again and submit your application form for the next application process. For some regions we get a great number of applications and not all can be supported. Nevertheless, we recommend including new aspects in the application.

12. What language skills do I need to have?

A good working knowledge of English is essential. You do not need to know the language of the country for which you are applying for a residency or research trip.

13. How does the selection process work?

The decision on a support is made by the specialists in the respective disciplines at Pro Helvetia Zürich and the respective Liaison Office together.

Questions related to content

14. What is the difference between a residency and a research trip?

A residency (max. 3 months) gives cultural practitioners the opportunity to gain broad insight into a different cultural environment. The aim of the residency is to find inspiration, establish networks and continue existing projects or launch new projects or collaborations. The call is open once a year from January until the 1st of March. A research trip is shorter (max. 4 weeks) and enables cultural practitioners to carry out research. The aim of a research trip is to prepare an exchange project. You can apply at any time, but at least three months before the start of your project.

15. Who are the partner organisations that I can apply to work with?

A list of possible partners in Switzerland can be found in the guidelines on the [Pro Helvetia website](#). The partners in the regions of our offices abroad are listed on the websites concerned. There, you can also find reports by artists and contact details to reach out to:

- [Pro Helvetia Cairo](#) (Arab region)
- [Pro Helvetia Moscow](#) (Russia)
- [Pro Helvetia Shanghai](#) (China)
- [Pro Helvetia Johannesburg](#) (West Africa, Central Africa, East Africa and Southern Africa)
- [Pro Helvetia New Delhi](#) (South Asia)
- [Pro Helvetia South America](#)

If you have a specific idea for a residency place, you are free to mention that in your application. In general, residency partners are not limited and our offices are open to discuss the possibilities with you, after the decision is taken.

16. What shall I write in the motivation letter?

There are no specific requirements for the motivation letter. However, you should clearly articulate your goals and explain why it is important for you to be selected for a residency, and especially how the selected city or region would help you to fulfil the aims of your research. How would you develop your ideas, and get inspiration and input for your artistic work through the residency in question?

17. Which documents am I required to present in my application?

A brief explanation of the topic of your residency and a motivation are required for your application. In the portal "myprohelvetia" you can also add documents (as your CV and portfolio) and relevant links which could support the evaluation of your application.

18. Should I apply with a specific new project for a residency / research trip?

You can work on new ideas or continue working on your existing projects. It is up to you to decide how the residency will help you to achieve your goals. In any case, we encourage you to apply with a specific cultural exchange project that promises to have a sustainable impact and brings an interest in global encounters and learnings.

19. Should I present a finished project at the end of the residency and is there a production support?

Residencies are not mainly project oriented support. The residency results can be new ideas, a new network of partners and collaborators, or a clearer understanding of your further artistic work. If you want to organise a public presentation, you are welcome to do so. However, many things depend on the hosting partner. Of course, in most cases the residency host is interested in presenting an interim result of your stay, and very often tends to organize an open studio day when visitors can view the artist's studio, or when an artist organises a public event at which they share some provisional results of their work.

Residencies serve to gain inspiration, to establish networks and to start thinking about projects. Mainly they are thought to support art practitioners to connect to other partners abroad. Some art practitioners nevertheless use residencies also to produce works - but this is not the main goal, therefore a production support is very limited.

20. What kind of support can I expect during my residency?

Pro Helvetia will cover the costs of accommodation, travel expenses (visa and travel insurance costs included), daily allowance, professional support, a workplace (on request) and production/material costs (on request). The hosts will offer certain assistance upon request and subject to mutual agreement. Mostly we will also assign a coach based on the research focus proposed by the artist, who will offer guidance and

advice if needed, and help the artist become familiar with the local art community. If the artist needs an assistant to produce their work, they need to search for and fund such a person on their own.

21. How does one select the starting and end dates of a three-month residency?

The dates of the residency can be suggested by the applicant based on their own preferences. Pro Helvetia will attempt to obtain residency spaces for the period requested, but this ~~also~~ depends on the availability of spaces.

22. What cities should I choose for my residency?

You are not obliged to choose a city for your application. Nevertheless, we encourage you to think about what topics are the most interesting for you and your research goals and if you would like to connect to a specific scene in a particular city or region. Such considerations might help you in your choice of city or region.

23. I am a cultural practitioner from Switzerland. Can I apply for more than one country within the same call?

Applications from cultural practitioners from Switzerland addressed to two different countries are possible. Two separate, complete applications must be submitted. However, a maximum of one application per person will be approved within the framework of one call for applications.

Questions related to practicalities

24. Can my family travel and live with me during the residency?

Pro Helvetia covers costs for the selected artists only. Spouses and children may join an artist only if the host institution agrees, and if the corresponding arrangements are made and the additional costs are borne by the artist.

25. Will Pro Helvetia assist me in obtaining a visa?

The artist is responsible for submitting all the required documents in time to obtain a visa. Pro Helvetia will provide assistance in the case of problems and financial support if need be.

26. Does the residency cover medical insurance for the duration of time spent in Switzerland?

Pro Helvetia covers the costs of medical insurance for the artist for the duration of time spent in the host country. However, the insurance company's terms and conditions apply. It is important that the artist shares any long-term medical condition prior to their departure.

27. How much is the «daily allowance» mentioned in the call for applications?

The «daily allowance» is an amount of money that you will receive monthly to cover your daily expenses during your residency. It is calculated based on the cost of living in the country concerned.

28. Can the Liaison Offices provide assistance in connecting Swiss-based artists with local contacts from their network before the application is handed in?

Pro Helvetia receives plenty of applications. Therefore, we are not able to provide a connecting support before a residency is positively decided. Once a positive decision is done, the respective Liaison Office team will help to connect the artists to the local scene. Examples and lists of partners are mentioned on the websites by the respective Liaison Offices. You can find a list of all websites under [point 15](#) in this document.

29. After a positive decision, how is the collaboration between potential partners and the Artist in Residence coordinated?

After a positive decision, the respective Liaison Office gets in contact with the artists to understand their needs and possible time frame. Then the colleagues in the Liaison Offices look for potential places and dates. Sometimes other places are offered to the artist (e.g. in case residency places don't have capacity or don't fit perfectly to the artist's idea).

30. How is Pro Helvetia dealing with the uncertainty caused by the pandemic?

In response to the global Covid-19 pandemic Pro Helvetia developed a «Home not alone» residency format. If travel restrictions prevent the artist from taking up their selected residency and no other way of realization is possible, Pro Helvetia can offer financial support and provide a mentor from the destination country. Support is available for the duration of the residency period with the artist working from home.

As international travel restrictions due to the pandemic have not improved as expected in China and many of the previously recruited Artists in Residence are still waiting to travel, Pro Helvetia Shanghai will only offer the "Home Not Alone" format in 2023.

Questions related to myprohelvetia

31. What browsers does myprohelvetia.ch work on?

The application runs on all commonly used browsers (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Opera, Google Chrome and Safari).

32. What data formats can I upload?

In principle, it is possible to upload all standard file formats; however, we strongly recommend that you only upload PDF documents.

33. Is there any restriction on the size of a file I want to upload?

Yes, there is. A single file may not exceed 10 megabytes. Depending on the speed of your internet connection, the upload of your documents may take a certain time.

34. Why can't I find the button to proceed?

In case you access myprohelvetia.ch from countries where a VPN connection is needed: Before applying on the website, please make sure you access the site via a valid VPN connection.

35. Does my account expire after I have submitted my application?

No, your account will continue to be active after applying.

36. Can I send my application by email?

No, we only accept applications via www.myprohelvetia.ch.