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# Tirana Art Residency Vila 31 x Art Explora

## **Residency Programme**

## **Open Call 2027**

**Deadline: May 15, 2026**

# About the Residency

VILA 31 X ART EXPLORA  
OPEN CALL PRESENTATION

The Tirana Art Residency – Vila 31 x Art Explora is an international residency programme supporting **contemporary artistic creation** and **research**, with a strong emphasis on engagement with the cultural, social, and political contexts of the Balkan region.

Located in Vila 31, the former house of Albanian dictator Enver Hoxha, the residency offers **artists, researchers, curators, and writers** the opportunity to develop their work in dialogue with the region and beyond.

The residency encourages transdisciplinary practices and intergenerational exchange, welcoming projects that engage with contemporary issues such as **social transformation, ecology, technological innovation, and cultural memory**.

Following the successful inauguration of Vila 31 x Art Explora and its first full year of programming in 2025, the residency has hosted *29 artists* from *15 nationalities* and presented *over 100 public activities*, welcoming more than *30,000 visitors*. In 2026, the programme will continue with *27 artists* from diverse backgrounds, alongside ongoing public cultural and educational activities.

Within this context, Vila 31 x Art Explora is establishing itself as an **emerging cultural hub**, organizing exhibitions, workshops, screenings, performances, talks, symposiums, and festivals in collaboration with local institutions, schools, associations, and cultural actors, fostering meaningful encounters between residents and audiences.

The Tirana residency programme embodies Art Explora's growing recognition as a key expert in artist residencies and contemporary art networks on an international scale. Alongside its Paris residencies, developed in partnership with the *Cité internationale des arts*, and its cross-residency programme through the Mediterranean, following the travelling Art Explora Festival, Vila 31 plays an integral role in a dynamic ecosystem that fosters artistic exchange, transcultural dialogue, and the circulation of ideas beyond borders.

Building on the artist residency model, Vila 31 x Art Explora is also launching a dedicated *Curators' Programme*, hosting curators and researchers for short residencies during which they immerse themselves in a growing artistic community and develop innovative projects. This initiative aims to strengthen cultural exchange and creative dialogue among curators, artists, researchers, and audiences.

# Residency Programmes

## **SOLO Programme**

For individual artists and writers working across visual arts, performance, digital practices, literary works, or other experimental disciplines.

## **COLLECTIVE Programme**

For collectives of artists, writers, researchers, and curators working collaboratively on interdisciplinary, experimental, or research-based projects.

**Residencies last 3 MONTHS, and applicants may apply for one of the following sessions:**

**Session 1:** January – March 2027

**Session 2:** May – July 2027

**Session 3:** September – November 2027

## Eligibility Criteria

*The residency programme is open to artists, researchers, curators, writers of all nationalities, with no age limit.*

### **Applicants should demonstrate:**

- A minimum of five years of professional activity, with work and research presented at a national or international level
- A project proposal that demonstrates a connection to the Balkan region

### **Research areas may include:**

- Humanities and social sciences
- Environmental and ecological research
- Technological innovation
- Cultural studies and history

### **Eligible artistic disciplines include:**

- Visual arts
- Performance and live arts
- Digital and media arts
- Writing and literary practices
- Interdisciplinary practices

# Selection Process

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Up to 30 residents are selected each year. In addition to evaluating the candidate's professional background, the committee members pay particular attention to the quality of the project, its connection to the themes of the residency, and the importance of its location in Albania for its development.

## Applications are evaluated based on:

- *Artistic Profile:* Career achievements, participation in international exhibitions, inclusion in public or private collections, and awards received.
- *Project Quality:* Creativity, originality, and conceptual strength of the proposed project.
- *Impact and Innovation:* Social or environmental relevance, as well as technological innovation.
- *Residency Relevance:* Necessity of being in Tirana/Albania to realize the project.

# Selection Committee

*The selection committee brings together distinguished international figures from the fields of art, curation, and research:*



**Alicia Knock (France)**  
Head Curator in the Contemporary Creation and Prospective Department of the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Pompidou, Paris



**Nora Razian (Lebanon)**  
Deputy Director and Head of Exhibitions and Programmes, Art Jameel; Co-Artistic Director, Diriyah Contemporary Art Biennale 2026



**Adela Demetja (Albania)**  
Director of the National Gallery of Arts, Albania; founder of Tirana Art Lab – Center for Contemporary Art; curator and author



**Lucia Pietroiusti (Italy)**  
Head of Research & Emergence at Hartwig Art Foundation, Amsterdam; Curator of the 6th Autostrada Biennale; programmer and strategist



**Adam Szymczyk (Poland)**  
Director of S AM Swiss Architecture Museum, Basel; Curator at the Büro für geistige Mitarbeit at the Kunsthaus Zürich; author and editor



**Raphael Fonseca (Brazil)**  
Curator and Head of the Department of Modern and Contemporary Latin American Art, Denver Art Museum; researcher and writer

# Residency Conditions

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## Each resident benefits from:

- 3 months residency at Vila 31 x Art Explora, Tirana, Albania
- A fully equipped studio-apartment at Vila 31 x Art Explora (approximately 50-60m<sup>2</sup>)
- A monthly living grant of 800EUR
- A production grant of up to 1500EUR
- A round-trip travel grant to/from the residence
- Access to production facilities and local networks

## For Collectives

The living grant (up to 1200EUR) and the production grant (up to 1500EUR) is shared between members. One studio-apartment is provided, designed to accommodate collaborative work. The studio can host two residents (*shared bed*). If separate sleeping arrangements are required, two accommodation spaces will be provided.



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# Residency Life

## Curatorial Support and Professional Encounters

Residents benefit from ongoing curatorial support provided by the Art Explora team and invited professionals.

Throughout the residency, artists have the possibilities to participate in:

- *Studio visits* with curators, artists, and cultural professionals
- *Mentorship sessions* with international figures from the art world
- *Informal discussions and critical exchanges* with fellow residents

These encounters are designed to support the conceptual development of residents' projects and expand their professional networks.

## Public Engagement

***Art Explora Foundation's major aim is to promote access to art and culture for all. Public engagement is a core component of the residency programme.***

Residents are expected to share their research and practice through formats such as open studios, artist talks, workshops with schools and local communities, as well as screenings, performances, and discussions.

These activities are designed to foster meaningful exchanges with local audiences and to expand access to contemporary artistic practices across diverse publics.

## Partnerships

The Tirana Art Residency – Vila 31 x Art Explora collaborates with local institutions, archives, schools, universities, and cultural organisations to support residents' research and foster connections with the regional cultural scene.

These partnerships may provide opportunities for research collaborations, production support, public programming, and educational initiatives.

# General Agreements

Residents are required to comply with the residency's general rules and regulations and to accept the dates assigned by the selection committee.

The programme is designed to support a project in its entirety or at a specific stage of its development; no final outcome is required at the end of the residency.

Residents are expected to **actively participate in the life of the programme** and **engage with the local artistic and cultural ecosystem**, as well as with **broader communities**.

Participation in the Vila 31 x Art Explora Open Studios, held at the end of the third month of the residency, is mandatory.



# Application Process

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**Registration is free of charge. Applications must be submitted online via the Art Explora platform. Once submitted, the application cannot be modified.**

**Applicants must submit the following documents (*in English only*):**

1. A project proposal describing the work to be developed during the residency (general description, project steps; maximum 2 pages) Please explain why being in Albania is necessary for the development of the project (conceptual, geographical, practical, social links, etc.)
2. A portfolio of previous work relevant to the project (maximum 15 pages)
3. A CV detailing experience (maximum 2 pages)
4. A short description of previous public engagement activities (workshops, collaborations with communities, educational projects, etc.) (maximum 1,500 characters)

**Apply for the 2027 residency programme here: [APPLICATION](#)**

**Deadline: May 15 2026, 11:59pm (GMT +02:00) Europe/Tirana**

*Selected residents will be contacted in July 2026.*

**For further questions, please contact us at:  
[residencies-tirana@artexplora.org](mailto:residencies-tirana@artexplora.org)**

