



Open Call 2026: Cultural Complicity

Context From January to December 2026 the artists house Westwerk will be celebrating its **40th anniversary**. The history of this independent art space is a history of collaboration and cooperation between artists and other creative people in all media and disciplines. The non-commercial realisation and presentation of ideas, experiments and energies in this house say a lot about the opportunities and imperatives of networking and artistic collaboration. Over the coming year, Westwerk will shape its programme as an open platform for perspectives, permutations and models of such a collective process. Our aim is to create time and space for reflection, imagination and the development of strategies with which artistic work can be integrated into a society that is clearly in need of far more than just economic solutions.

»Within art, the concept of complicity is much more established than in business or politics, for example. Artists are very quick to say of themselves that they work in a quasi-conspiratorial way. And I think it's important to look at the skills in art and always consider: What can these skills actually achieve in other areas of society? What can art do apart from being art? I believe that art can do a accomplish deal and one of the major skills I have explored is indeed the ability to interact quickly and situationally related.«

(Gesa Ziemer, in: »Komplizenschaft – Neue Perspektiven auf Kollektivität«, 2013)

Whether situationally affective, yet goal-oriented, collaboratively cunning yet inventive, purposefully individual yet oriented towards community: We invite you as artistic accomplices to develop ideas and concepts for the future on the topics of »community, collective, cooperation, collaboration«.

Who is invited?

Our open call »Cultural Complicity« is aimed at artists, artist groups, curators and art theorists. We are looking for your projects that strengthen or embolden communities, explore new forms of collaboration and promote networking practices.

Ideas/focus

- Concepts that develop »complicity« as innovative forms of artistic collaboration and exchange
- Cultural models that involve and strengthen local communities
- Projects that promote situational dialogue and exchange between artists
- Art as a platform for dialogue and participation
- Networking collective ideas with social conditions
- Trust-based, non-commercial collaboration in dealing with social data and digital platforms

Art forms/media

All artistic disciplines and synergies between different media are conceivable. Projects at Westwerk can include the following forms of presentation: classical hanging, installation, performance, lecture, panel discussion, video and sound installation, concert

We look forward to your ideas and the chance to turn 2026 into an inspiring celebration of 40 years of artistic collaboration in Westwerk.

Submission details:

Period of »Cultural Complicity«: January to December 2026

Duration of individual selected projects: 3 days to 3 weeks

Duration of Open Call: Submissions from Tuesday, April 22, 2025

Deadline: Sunday, May 18, 2025, midnight (CEST)

Only digital applications will be considered: jemand@westwerk.org

Documents: one PDF file, max. 5 MB (videos as a link)

- Subject: **Open Call 2026**
- Beginning with: Names and contact details of those responsible, working title
- Idea outline for the submitted project (see [link to floor plan of Westwerk](#))
- Portfolio (short description of 5 to 7 previous projects with corresponding images, artist statement)
- Short tabular resumé (education, exhibitions, scholarships)
- Cost calculation (transportation, travel to and from the venue, production)

Please note

that Westwerk is a non-commercial, artists-run space with only a small budget. We cannot pay artists' or curators' fees, but a modest remuneration per exhibition is granted to artists and curators by the Hamburg Ministry of Art and Media. The Westwerk team will compile a shortlist of the projects from all submissions, probably by June 30, 2025, which we would like to invite to present their project at Westwerk during 2026.

Funding:

The Westwerk team works entirely on an **honorary** basis. In recent years, the venue's running costs have been covered by funding awarded by the Cultural Authority of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg (BKM). We hope to be receiving similar financial support again in 2026. If you are invited to participate in Westwerk's anniversary programme, we recommend that you independently apply for additional funding, whether from the BKM Hamburg or from art foundations.

Rights:

The submitter is responsible for clarifying the rights required to use the works in the context of the exhibition. He/she declares that he/she is authorised to allow Westwerk to use the work and that this does not violate the rights of third parties (e.g. copyright, personal rights, trademark rights) and, in particular, that the rights to any third-party material used (music, film, photos, texts, etc.) have been clarified for use. In this respect, the submitter shall indemnify Westwerk against all third-party claims arising from use within the exhibition and documentation. This also includes the necessary and reasonable costs of legal defence. There is no insurance cover for the exhibited works. The exhibition or presentation will be supervised during opening hours.

Data protection:

The protection and security of personal data is a high priority for us. We therefore adhere strictly to the rules of the current EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). We use the data collected exclusively in the context of the exhibition/project presentation and its documentation. The submitter agrees to the processing of the data and storage of his/her personal data (only for the purpose) of the application and possible participation in the exhibition to be shown in Westwerk.