



Netzwerk freier Berliner Projekträume und -initiativen e.V.
www.projektraeume-berlin.net

Statement on the modified call for proposals "Award for Artistic Project Spaces and Initiatives 2022".

Berlin, February 2022

In 2021, the network of independent Berlin project spaces and initiatives looked back on many years of good and trusting cooperation with the Senate Department for Culture and Europe. Together, we developed the "Award for Artistic Project Spaces and Initiatives" 11 years ago, which has since been repeatedly adapted to the needs of the project space scene. Since the expansion of the funding structure to include a two-year basic grant for project spaces and initiatives in 2020, the award has been maintained on a smaller scale (100,000 euros in total). Planned by the Senate Department were 5 prizes of € 20,000 each; demanded by the network a broader distribution of 10 x 10,000 euros each. Due to the Corona crisis, the Senate Administration decided in 2020 to award 10 prizes of €10,000 each.

The Corona crisis is not over yet.

However, the current call for proposals for the award of artistic project spaces and initiatives 2022 was unilaterally and for reasons we do not understand staggered by the Senate Department for Culture and Europe into three prizes of 20,000 euros each and four prizes of 10,000 euros each. In addition, for the first time the network was deprived of its right to have a say in the composition of the jury. This decision was insufficiently justified and after several mediating discussions this decision was not taken back. For the members of the network, this participation, which we had developed years ago together with the Senate Administration and practiced for many years, is an enormously important participation opportunity and achievement.

We therefore demand the resumption of the Network's participation in the jury selection process!

A staggering of the award for artistic project spaces and initiatives into three, if you will, "first" and four "second places" during the still existing Corona crisis will lead to project spaces and initiatives being unnecessarily played off against each other.

Equal treatment of applicants cannot be guaranteed, since the call for proposals does not specify any criteria for distinguishing between "first" and "second" prize winners. From the network's point of view, a transparent and comprehensible award is therefore in no way guaranteed. Due to the lack of criteria, the subsequent selection appears arbitrary, the application to be prepared for the applicants is made more difficult, since the focus of the award is incomprehensible. Upon request, we were informed that the jury will only determine the criteria during the jury meeting.

We call for the immediate suspension of tiered pricing and a return to a consensual, fair award of 10 prizes of 10,000 euros each.

For years, the network of independent project spaces and initiatives in Berlin and the coalition of the independent scene have publicly opposed any form of lighthouse funding and advocated for a broad distribution of the insufficient

funding. The fact that the Senate Department for Culture and Europe has now decided to stagger the awarding of artistic project spaces and initiatives during the Corona crisis, without any feedback from the network of free Berlin project spaces and initiatives, surprises us to a high degree. Especially against the background of the new coalition agreement, which promises under point 15 Culture and Media (page 96) a "commitment to the participatory process and to want to involve Berlin's cultural creators cooperatively at eye level", we are highly irritated by such solo approaches. Since the beginning of its existence, the network of free Berlin project spaces and initiatives has had the entirety of the project space scene in mind. Our concern is and always has been the preservation and further development of as many project spaces and initiatives as possible in Berlin. At a time when many project spaces are working in constant insecurity due to rising rents, and the non-existent commercial tenant protection, we adhere to a broad solidary distribution of funding. The Corona crisis and the limited funding do not allow any other approach. A clear majority vote in the network of free Berlin project spaces and initiatives supports this mandate. Based on the feedback within the project space and initiative scene and many conversations, the network has already developed a jury guideline for the awarding of the basic funding 2020 and the award in 2019, and submitted it to the Senate Administration as a proposal.

We demand a return to the participatory process!

Unfortunately, with the expansion of the funding structure, the participatory procedure was also abandoned without consulting the network of free Berlin project spaces and initiatives. We see this as an instrument that contributes significantly to a transparent awarding process and obtains an opinion from all approved applicants. This instrument had and has a great acceptance in the project space scene!

In the spirit of the new coalition agreement and the official promise to work participatively and at eye level with the associations, we would like to bring back this important instrument.

Network of Berlin Independent Project Spaces and Initiatives e.V