

FAQs

About the PhD in Practice program:

What does PhD in Practice mean, and what is the relationship between artistic/curatorial and theoretical work?

This PhD is in „arts-based research,“ which means that we employ and develop artistic/aesthetic means to do research. You are not asked to do research and afterwards develop art works out of your findings, or the other way around.

What is the working language of the program?

English. i.e. applications, coursework and thesis are all in English.

Who are the addressees of this program?

Artists, researchers, curators, educators or cultural workers who have an artistic practice. Candidates are expected to have a well-founded interest in pursuing and expanding their practice.

Can I contact the supervisors for consultation on my project or application submission?

We encourage you to go through [Candidates and Staff Page](#) to read abstracts of projects and know more about the artistic concerns of the current and past candidates in the programme. Please take a look also at the curriculum of the [PhD in Practice Curriculum](#) and decide if the programme might be meaningful for your practice/s.

However, due to a high volume of applications and in order to maintain equal treatment for all applications, **unfortunately discussion on individual projects is not possible with the professors.** Phone conversations with individuals are not possible for the same reason.

Who supervises the participants?

The PhD project is supervised by one or by both professors of the PhD in Practice program – Anette Baldauf and Renate Lorenz. We strongly advise you to take both professors as your supervisors.

If the interdisciplinary nature of the respective PhD project requires a second supervisor from outside the program, a second supervisor can be appointed. This supervisor needs a qualification to supervise doctoral candidates at another recognized Austrian or international institution of post-secondary education.

How many years does it take to complete a PhD in Practice program?

A minimum of four years.

How is the study structured?

- Focus weeks: October – January; March – June, one week per eight months of the academic year.

- Candidates in 1st and 2nd years are expected to join 16 focus weeks. Candidates in other years join with interest in the collective exercises or events organised as a part of the focus weeks.
- In 3rd and 4th year the focus remains on completion of dissertation and consolidation of the project.
- Each term, one focus week specifically addresses the needs of the more advanced candidates of the third and fourth year.
- Regular discussions and presentations of the work in progress in the PhD program, a public presentation at the Academy (“Fantastic Wednesday”), a trial defensio (“Mini Defensio”) and the final Defensio are important milestones of the programme that each candidate is expected to complete.

To what extent is the study expected to be theoretical-scholarly?

The amount of theoretical work is not standardised but depends on the character and profile of each project. However, expanding one’s theoretical and analytical skills certainly is an important aspect of the program. We recommend that such a development and extension of your art practice should relate convincingly to the line of inquiry in your thesis.

What exactly do I need to complete the PhD in Practice program?

- The PhD project is supposed to provide the candidate’s independent contribution to arts-based research. It comprises an arts-based research project and a dissertation.
- The candidates choose the format and/or medium of the arts-based research project.
- Most generally, the dissertation is a text that serves as proof of the candidate’s ability to handle research issues independently. It might reflect on the methodology and context of the arts-based research project. The curriculum does not further specify a required length or format of this text.
- In the end you have to hand in a documentation of your arts-based research project and the written dissertation. You will get the opportunity to exhibit/present, discuss and defend your arts-based research project on the occasion of the defensio.
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Where is the PhD in Practice program located?

The program is located at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, Room DG06, Schillerplatz 3, 1010, Vienna.

Where do I find information about all doctorate studies at the academy?

Please read [here](#).

About the Application Process:

How do I apply?

Please click [here](#) for information on the application procedure.

What is the basic requirement to apply?

- The basic requirement for every application is a degree – MA, MFA, diploma level – from a recognized/accredited university. **Please be aware that a one-year MA degree with a limited amount of ECTS points might not always meet the requirement of the Austrian University law.** Please investigate.
- If you are not sure whether your degree is accepted, please contact the “Studienabteilung” of the Academy (Studienabteilung@akbild.ac.at).
- The program is particularly interested in participants who have already acquired experience as practitioners. We generally consider it to be of some advantage if you finished your studies already a while ago and had the chance to work in fields outside of the academic environment in which you studied.

When does the application process start each year?

Tentatively:

- Open call: February.

**The application is made available online when the call opens officially

- Deadline: February or Mid March.
- Application process is completed at the end of May.
- Accepted candidates enrol and begin the program in October.
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What to include in the application?

- The application is online only.
- Applications cannot be accepted after the Call for application closes.
- From experience we know that if people upload their material on the day the application deadline ends, unexpected troubles can make it impossible to finish the application process. Therefore it is highly recommended that you upload your material early enough to clear potential disturbances.
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The application must contain:

- Application: completed web application form in English submitted during the open call. Any applications sent after the deadline cannot be accepted.
- Curriculum vitae: including a list of exhibitions the applicant has contributed to and of publications or other artistic and scholarly work that has been published; pdf
- Project proposal: 10 pages max; 1.5 line spacing, pdf, 5MB max): we recommend that this proposal is more than a rough draft. This proposal is the key object of discussion in case you will be invited for an interview by the admission commission. There are no hard rules. In some instances it might be helpful to submit a short bibliography (included in the ten pages max. length of the proposal), and you also might want to refer to artists and/or art works that are an important reference for your work. A formal time-table is not necessary, but you have to convince the commission that the project proposed can actually be realized, and finished, in the course of the four year study.
- Abstract of the project proposal (1 page max, 1.5 line spacing; pdf)
- Digital Portfolio (a single pdf document, 5 MB max).
- Scan of the certificate(s) which proves that you received a degree (Magister, MA or Diploma) from a recognized/ accredited university or academy

- Diploma Supplement (if available) and Transcripts (mandatory): of the highest academic degree completed (including length of program and credits/ECTS) must be provided.
- The online application form will be available during the call at <https://calls.akbild.ac.at>
- If film/video is an important part of your application, please upload your material on vimeo.com and enclose the link(s) to your online-application.
- For additional documents that are required, please check the current call for applications, which is usually published at the end of a calendar year.
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What do we expect from an abstract?

The abstract is an important instrument for the jury to find a first entry point into your PhD project. Written in an accessible way, it should comprise the most important concept(s) of your project as well as your methodology, the artistic means and aesthetics you are planning to use in the course of your research.

How should the portfolio look like?

The portfolio is an important instrument for the jury to understand your practice. Please do not send an online link only but provide a PDF. If your portfolio entails text, please make sure that it is written in English, since this is the shared language of all jury members. Please indicate, if you did not produce a certain work as an individual artist but as a curator or as part of a collective. Choose works that are connected to what you are planning on doing in your PHD project, but also give an overview of your work. The portfolio should help the jury to understand the amount and characteristics of your artistic/curatorial practice so far.

Is it possible to apply with a project, which relies on collaboration?

- If the PhD project is based on joint work, each candidate's contribution is to be clearly identified and assessed independently.
- Your collaborator(s) don't have to participate in the program. You can of course apply together with your collaborator(s), but since there are only a few positions available every year, it is unlikely that both/all of you would be accepted.

What happens after I submit my application?

All applications are reviewed by the application jury. The jury is composed of the two supervisors of the program Anette Baldauf and Renate Lorenz as well as two representatives of the PhD candidates, two additional staff members from within the Academy, a member of the committee for equal treatment as well as an external member from outside of the Academy. The jury selects the candidates that will be invited for an interview, and after the degree requirements are confirmed it finally selects the candidates invited to enrol in the program.

About Available Funding:

Do the selected candidates receive funding?

There are funded and unfunded PhD positions available. Funded positions include a 75 percent employment contract with a duration of four years. Unfunded positions are

student-only positions (low residency scheme, does not require moving to Vienna). Interested applicants can apply for one of the two possible positions.

Both positions require participation in all PhD in practice activities, as well as on-site participation in classes held once a month, eight times a year in Vienna for the first two years of study, or sixteen times.

1. Application with employment contract

- PhD positions are available with a 75 percent employment contract with a duration of four years – University Assistants (prae docs). These positions require residency in Vienna and participation in further research, teaching and administration in the realm of the PhD-in-Practice program.
- Employment is bound to a continued enrollment in the PhD-in-Practice-program.

2. Application without funding (student only)

- Additionally, PhD positions are available without funding (student-only, low residency scheme, does not require moving to Vienna).
- This position does not include any financial support or subsidies.

Can I apply for both, a funded and an unfunded position at the same time?

No, during the process of submitting via the online platform you are asked to decide if you are applying for a funded or an unfunded position.

What are the tuition fees?

- For the tuition fees please check the Academy website:
<https://www.akbild.ac.at/en/studies/general-study-information/tuition-fees>
- For those who have to pay tuition fees, the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna offers a social stipend in the amount of the paid tuition fees, if you have a registered residence in Vienna.
- All students have to pay a non-refundable Students' union fee (ÖH-Beitrag) every semester. This fee is currently less than € 20.

For other questions you may have, please feel free to write to us at phd-in-practice@akbild.ac.at