



ARTS
COUNCIL
MALTA

Call for a Curatorial Team for

The Malta Pavilion at the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia 2026

Issued by:
Arts Council Malta

Submission Date and Time: 6th May 2025 at noon (CET)

ARTS COUNCIL MALTA

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Section A

Definitions and Instructions

Arts Council Malta

- Arts Council Malta is the Commissioner and the Contracting Authority of the Malta Pavilion at the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia in 2026. The Commissioner/ Contracting Authority is here being referred to as 'Arts Council Malta'.

Call for a Curatorial Team

- The Call for a Curatorial Team for the Malta Pavilion at the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia in 2026, is here being referred to as a 'Call for a Curatorial Team'.

Curatorial Teams

- Curatorial Teams may be composed of a mixture of curators, artists, architects, designers, engineers, performers, set designers, fashion designers, script writers, project managers and curatorial assistants. Applicants are here being referred to as 'Curatorial Teams'.

Response to this 'Call for a Curatorial Team' is to be submitted online by not later than **Tuesday 6th May 2025 at noon CET** - *please see full details under Section B (6: Submission Instructions below.

Late submissions will not be accepted and will be deemed ineligible.

All submissions will be acknowledged and will be dealt with in strictest confidence.

Section B

General Information

1. Purpose

Any information received in response to this 'Call for a Curatorial Team' will assist Arts Council Malta in finalizing the scope of work and requirements which will be used in the selection of the winning proposal. Submitting a response to this 'Call for a Curatorial Team' is not a guarantee in any way that the applying Curatorial Team will be selected for the shortlisting and the pitching session, nor does it preclude any of the applicant Curatorial Teams from responding to future procurement opportunities.

The issuance of this 'Call for a Curatorial Team' does not constitute a commitment to issue a request for bids, award a contract or pay any costs incurred in preparation of a response to this 'Call for a Curatorial Team'.

2. Issuing Office

The issuing office, being Arts Council Malta, is the point of contact for this 'Call for a Curatorial Team'. Please refer any inquiries or request for clarifications to: Arts Council Malta, by sending an email to: venicebiennale@artscouncil.mt

Any clarifications and addenda/updates regarding this 'Call for a Curatorial Team' will be published on Arts Council Malta's website: www.artscouncil.mt. Any requests for clarifications may be sent to Arts Council Malta up to five days before the deadline of this 'Call for a Curatorial Team'.

3. Curatorial Team Presentations

Arts Council Malta may request the Curatorial Teams to provide a presentation on the information provided in response to this 'Call for a Curatorial Team'. All costs associated with such presentations will be borne by the Curatorial Teams.

4. Confidentiality and the 'Call for a Curatorial Team' Ownership

This 'Call for a Curatorial Team' is both confidential and proprietary to Arts Council Malta and Arts Council Malta reserves the right to recall the 'Call for a Curatorial Team' in its entirety or in part.

The Curatorial Teams shall not include or reference this 'Call for a Curatorial Team' in any publicity without prior written approval from Arts Council Malta. The Curatorial Teams accept all of the foregoing terms and conditions without exception. All responses to the 'Call for a Curatorial Team' will become the property of Arts Council Malta and will not be returned.

5. Disclosure of Proposal Contents

The cost and price information provided in information proposals will be held in confidence and will not be revealed or discussed with competitors, except to the extent required by law.

All other material submitted becomes the property of Arts Council Malta and may be returned only at Arts Council Malta's discretion. Information proposals submitted to Arts Council Malta may be reviewed and evaluated by any person other than competing Curatorial Teams at the discretion of Arts Council Malta. Arts Council Malta may share or disseminate conceptual or contact information subject to the written consent of the respective applicant/s.

6. Submission Instructions

Follow these steps to apply:

- a) Read this document very carefully;
- b) Press the link that will take you to the online application system;
- c) Create a profile for the Curatorial Team with Arts Council Malta by clicking on 'Register' and filling in the details;
- d) From the 'Open Calls' section, select the online application for this Call;
- e) Follow the instructions step-by-step. Fill in all the required information from the online application including the budget and attach the supporting documentation;
- f) Submit the application. You should receive an automatic acknowledgement by the system. If you do not receive such a notification, contact us on venicebiennale@artscouncil.mt.

Section C

Description of the Contracting Authority and Background information

1. Arts Council Malta

Arts Council Malta, under the auspices of the Ministry for National Heritage, the Arts and Local Government, has been entrusted to act as the Commissioner and the Contracting Authority, of the Malta Pavilion at the 61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia. Arts Council Malta is the national agency for development and investment in the cultural and creative sectors.

2. La Biennale di Venezia

Established in 1895, the International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia is the foremost global presentation of visual art, with an unrivalled international reputation for excellence in the sector. It attracts an audience of over 700,000 visitors and around 6000 international press during launch week. It is arguably the most important contemporary visual arts event in the international arts calendar. Inclusion in the Biennale can have a substantial impact on an artist's international

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career. During the six and a half months of the Biennale, Venice becomes a showcase for international contemporary art. Its audience consists of curators, artists, leaders of global museums, collectors, gallerists, journalists, critics and a diverse public audience. Association with the Biennale brings huge international exposure to artists creating new global audiences, platforms and opportunities for them and their work.

The declared aim of the Malta Pavilion is to offer a platform through which the best Maltese contemporary artistic practices can be exposed and presented to an international audience. The successful curatorial team will work closely with the artist(s) selected to represent Malta and they will work closely with the Malta Pavilion Commissioner (Arts Council Malta) to successfully deliver the exhibition in Venice.

3. The 61st International Art Exhibition

The 61st International Art Exhibition will take place from April 2026 to November 2026.

The Swiss-Cameroonian curator Koyo Kouoh has been appointed curator of the 61st edition of the Biennale Arte. Since 2019 she has been executive director of the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (MOCAA) in Cape Town, South Africa, which holds the continent's largest collection of contemporary art. She was previously also the founding artistic director of Raw Material Company, an art centre in Dakar, Senegal.

4. The Malta Pavilion

The Malta Pavilion is approximately 270 square metres. It is located at the Artiglierie in the Arsenale Area and it is adjacent to the location which hosted the Malta Pavilion during the 57th, 58th, 59th and the 60th International Art Exhibition at the Venice Biennale in 2017, 2019, 2022 and in 2024. Details of the Malta Pavilion can be found in Section E.

The Biennale di Venezia shall provide the following for the Malta Pavilion in 2026:

- Technical supervision of the installation through the Biennale's offices in order to guarantee the consistency with the restrictions related to historic buildings, in order to obtain authorizations from the competent local institutions;
- Technical assessment of the exhibition project by the Biennale offices in order to verify the compliance with the current Italian security and safety regulations;
- A basic electrical system and general lighting system (a 3Kw power socket located inside the exhibition space);
- Daytime surveillance of outdoor spaces during the closing hours of the Exhibition;
- Armed night surveillance of outdoor areas, including video surveillance;
- Maintenance of the security and electrical systems;
- Fire prevention service provided by the Fire Brigade as required by Italian law;
- Exhibition signage (within the Exhibition's signage) indicating the Countries located in the Arsenale area.

5. Theme

Immersive, performative, multidisciplinary and interactive narratives that are emotional, inspiring and thought provoking, reflecting the world's new contemporary realities. If the applicants are including live performances the application needs to include a detailed plan of when the performances will be held, whether they will be held during the full duration of the exhibition or for example for the press week launch, closing and/or during certain periods of the exhibition such as during Biennale Danza, Cinema or Teatro.

The Malta Pavilion must also take into consideration the Sustainable Development Goals as well as the actual space in which the installations will be set up in.

The Sustainable Development Goals are the blueprint for achieving a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace

and justice. Arts Council Malta believes that the arts can lead the way and have a constructive dialogue on sustainable development. Thus, proposals which adopt sustainable practices in line with these principles will be given preference. For more information refer to: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>. This is also in line with Arts Council Malta's Strategy 2025. For more information refer to: <https://www.artscouncilmalta.org/pages/guidance-advice/acm-publications/strategy-2025/>.

6. Set Budget

The allocated budget for the Curatorial Team to successfully deliver the exhibition at the Malta Pavilion is EUR170, 000 and will be secured by Arts Council Malta. Please also refer to Section D (3) below.

7. Curatorial Team Requirements

- The Curatorial Team shall have a strong international track record;
- Multi-national Curatorial Teams must include Maltese individuals in the team and must include Maltese artist/s or performers;
- The Curatorial Team shall be answerable to Arts Council Malta;
- Following the announcement of the selected Curatorial Team, the team will be requested to attend regular update meetings with Arts Council Malta and any changes or additions to the submitted proposal need to have the written approval of Arts Council Malta.

8. The Curatorial Team shall be responsible to:

- Deliver the concept, design, production and execution of the Malta Pavilion, including but not limited to any materials, equipment, lighting and other technical requirements to produce and deliver the project;
- Select the artwork/ installation/ performances to be exhibited in the Malta Pavilion;
- Handle the communication and contracts with the selected artist/s and/ or organisations, including any ancillary intellectual property agreements with third parties;
- Appoint a project manager, who will also be part of the proposed curatorial team. The project manager will be working very closely with the curator and the rest of the team on the logistics, the administration, the fundraising, the accounting, co-ordination, organization and production management of the Malta Pavilion, and any other requirements needed for the successful delivery of the exhibition;
- Curate the exhibition catalogue, including choice of contributors, and liaise directly with the publishing house with regards to layout and other editorial requirements as necessary. The design, production and printing of the catalogue will also be the responsibility of the curatorial team in close consultation and agreement with Arts Council Malta;
- Rent and co-ordinate the space for the mock-up of the Malta Pavilion in Malta, if needed, prior to its transportation to Venice;
- Purchase the insurance and the transportation service of all objects and materials required for the Malta Pavilion;
- Be responsible for the travel and accommodation arrangements of the curatorial team in Venice;
- Setting up and dismantling of the Malta Pavilion as determined by the rules and regulations of the Fondazione La Biennale di Venezia;
- Co-ordinate the interns and/or site officers running the Malta Pavilion in Venice;
- The Curatorial Team, as well as the artists, shall be expected to participate in media interviews and any promotional activities;
- Assist and support marketing, PR requirements and communications as required by Arts Council Malta and make sure to mention Arts Council Malta as commissioner in all the communications;
- Document and advertise the Malta Pavilion through social media in liaison with Arts Council Malta's International Cultural Relation Directorate and its communications team;
- Attend Vernissage Week (the Biennale's launch week) in Venice to promote the exhibition to the press and lead guided tours of the Malta Pavilion;
- Demonstrate that they have a history of working collaboratively on significant projects;

- Nominate a main contact person from the Curatorial Team, based in Malta and provide telephone and email contact details;
- Fulfil any other requirements needed for the successful delivery of the exhibition.

Section D

Details of Information Requested

1. Proposals

Proposals are to be submitted online and as explained under **Section D (6) Submission Instructions**.

They also need to include the following information:

Exhibition Concept

- The proposed curatorial concept;
- Supporting designs/ imagery/ sketches/ power point presentations/ videos;
- An understanding, as well as a reflection of the Maltese contemporary artistic scene;
- Clarity on who the selected artist (s)/ performer (s) is/are and the artwork (s)/ performance to be exhibited;
- Exhibition catalogue overview;
- An educational outreach programme;
- The proposed timeline;
- Any other information relevant to and required for a better and comprehensive understanding and evaluation of the submitted proposal.

Curatorial Team

- Clarity of the roles of each member of the curatorial team, including the details of any additional team members who will be involved in the project e.g.: technical assistants, project managers and administrators, curatorial collaborators, performers, set designers and exhibition catalogue contributors and designers;
- An organisational chart for the team members showing clear reporting lines and division of responsibilities amongst team members;
- A full curriculum vitae for each team member including that of the curators, artists, performers, set designers, architects, designers, engineers and any other members of the project management team, highlighting previous experience in similar high-profile, international projects, as well as the capacity to undertake an exhibition of this international significance.

Budget

A draft budget breakdown detailing how the budget will be allocated that must include the following:

- the proposed curatorial fees, and the fees for each member of the project management team (these should not exceed 10% of the total budget);
- the proposed artists' fees (these should not exceed 10% of the total budget);
- exhibition/ performance production costs including materials, fees for specialist labour etc.;
- estimated freighting costs (during production phases and getting the work to and from Venice);
- insurance costs;
- costs for mounting and dismantling of the exhibition;
- catalogue costs, including fees for its design, printing, freight, duty and taxes;
- travel and accommodation expenses for the curatorial team members in Venice;
- any other expenses.

If additional budgets are required, the proposal shall also include how these will be sourced by the curatorial team, through private sponsorship as required in response to their submitted proposal. The proposal needs to also indicate a strong track record on how additional resources in similar projects were sourced.

Video Pitch

The aim of the Video Pitch is to create an opportunity for applicants to further present their projects to the evaluators.

Should the Evaluation Board have any questions, the applicants will have the opportunity to provide their feedback, latest insights, and additions to the already submitted project description via e-mail.

The Video Pitch can be presented in a variety of formats, including but not limited to visual aids, PowerPoint presentation, audio, models etc... and should not be longer than 20 minutes. During the Video Pitch, applicants are expected to explain the project's artistic vision and communicate how the project will be implemented as well go into detail on the roles of each team member.

2. Evaluation Process

The call is competitive. Submitted proposals will be initially screened for eligibility, after which, the eligible candidates will be further assessed by a board composed of international and local experts, purposely appointed and chaired by Arts Council Malta. All applicants will be notified by email of the results.

3. Criteria

The evaluation board shall be guided by the following criteria throughout the process leading to the final selection:

Criterion 1. Exhibition Concept (40 marks)

This criterion considers the artistic idea(s) of the proposal and the relevance of the concept with regards to the theme set in this open call.

- What is the curatorial concept? **(10 marks)**
- How is the concept referring to the Sustainable Development Goals? **(10 marks)**
- How do you intend to develop the proposed concept into a narrative which is immersive, performative, multidisciplinary, interactive, inspiring, thought provoking and experiential? Give an overview of the selected artworks/audio-visuals etc. of the proposed project. **(10 marks)**
- Will your concept reflect Malta and have an impact internationally? How do you intend to do that? **(10 marks)**

Criterion 2. Curatorial Team (40 marks)

This criterion considers the level of commitment, the track record of all team members, as well as the proposed plan to deliver and achieve the aims targeted. Applicants are to include timeframes, workplan with collaborators involved, the skills and track record of the individual/group managing and participating in the project, their role(s) within the project, possible risks envisaged and contingency plans, health and safety measures.

- In what way(s) do you as a team intend to lead to a level of artistic excellence in the delivery of the proposed concept? Do the curators have a strong international profile and are they considered by the sector to be at the 'top of their game'? **(20 marks)**
- Explain the strengths and merits of the artist(s)/ performer (s) whose works you are selecting for the Malta Pavilion exhibition, with a particular focus on their track record. **(20 marks)**

Criterion 3. Budget (20 marks)

This criterion considers how well-planned and realistic the presented budget plan is. To make a stronger case in terms of this criterion, applicants are required to provide quotations where possible, to substantiate the budget items

- Is the project budget and logistics well planned and realistic? Is the project likely to achieve its ambitions and meet its targets? **(20 marks)**

4. Eligibility

Proposals with missing information, as specified in this call in the section under 'PROPOSALS', will be deemed ineligible (i.e. proposals with, for example, missing curriculum vitae, or with a missing budget forecast will be deemed ineligible.)

Applicants must qualify as one of the following:

- Creative professionals/individual artists
- Entities registered with the Malta Business Registry (including companies, partnerships, foundations and organisations/associations)
- Groups, collectives and consortia
- Registered cooperatives
- Voluntary Organisations enrolled with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations.

Applicants who are applying as a registered entity must provide their registration number in the application together with a most recent Good Standing Certificate (this document is renewed annually by the Malta Business Registry and is proof of compliance).

Applicants who are applying as a voluntary organisation must provide their VO number and submit a signed statute in the application.

N.B. The chosen team will not be able to change their applicant category after the selection process is completed. Members of the Curatorial Teams responsible for the Malta Pavilion in Venice in 2019, 2022 and in 2024 and / or members of the Design Team representing Malta for the London Design Biennale in 2023 and 2025 are not eligible to re-apply together as a team or as part of a team to curate the Malta Pavilion at the 2026 Biennale edition so that the opportunity is given to other Curatorial Teams.

Prospective applicants are to also note Arts Council Malta's upcoming participation at the Gwangju Biennale in South Korea taking place in 2026. Applicants are to note that whilst it is permissible to apply for both the Venice and the Gwangju Biennales, the same Curatorial Team or members from the same team, shall not be awarded both participations.

Response Format

Responses are to be straightforward, clear, concise and specific to the information requested. In order for submissions to be considered complete, Curatorial Teams must provide all the requested information mentioned in this document as well as any other comments, observations or suggestions which potentially may assist Arts Council Malta in shortlisting the applicants.

5. Complaints procedure

Filing a complaint will not affect your chances of receiving support from Arts Council Malta in the future. All complaints will be treated with confidentiality.

Grounds for complaints

Applicants can make a complaint regarding procedural anomalies and irregularities during the submission and evaluation process in terms of the procedures stipulated in these guidelines and regulations. Complaints cannot be made concerning:

- The Arts Council's or Government's policies and procedures
- The merits of the application in terms of the criteria stipulated in these guidelines and regulations.

Only applicants may file complaints concerning their project.

Filing a complaint

Complaints must be made in writing and must be as clear as possible. The complaint must state the grounds and the reasons for the complaint, providing a detailed explanation and justification supported by relevant documentation or testimonials as to why the complainant deems that irregularities were committed in the procedure/s stipulated in this call or in standard good governance rules and regulations governing the public sector. The decision at the end of the complaint process shall be final. Complaints need to be made to the Director of Funding and Strategy, Arts Council Malta within five (5) working days of receipt of your result. You will normally receive a reply to your complaint within ten (10) working days.

In case you are not satisfied with the reply, Arts Council Malta will convene a Board that will discuss your complaint further. If you approach our complaints procedure, then you are accepting that we can use information about your project to address the complaint. The decision of the Board is final.

Clarifications and FAQs

For Clarifications and FAQs, potential applicants should refer to the Arts Council Malta website or send an email to venicebiennale@artscouncil.mt.

Section E
The Malta Pavilion 2026

