

Open Call for the initiative

Demokratie leben

Together for a pluralistic, liberal and tolerant society, a free art and culture scene and a living together in solidarity in Austria!

We are looking for artistic subjects for a cooperation between Gewista and the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna on digital Citylights in public spaces.

Initial situation

At least 70% of people in our country want a peaceful, respectful coexistence and a cosmopolitan climate of diversity for our living together now and in the future! Lived values such as tolerance, equal opportunities for minorities and the freedom of art should continue to have a high priority and be protected and defended in our democracy. For this reason, Gewista and the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna came together in a cooperation to launch an initiative with artistically designed subjects on digital citylights. The aim is to send a strong signal for democracy and to accompany the public in their everyday lives and encourage them to think about how we want to live together in our country.

Project description

In July, the initiative *Demokratie leben* was launched with an invited competition, which ran over the summer on various Gewista Citylights in public spaces in Vienna and on all of the institutions' digital channels. An open call for all students, alumni, and teachers of the academy has now been announced for the continuation of the series in January and February 2026. Once again, a jury of experts will select six artistically designed subjects from the submissions that deal with the topic of democracy in terms of content and have implemented their idea for a visually meaningful subject.

Submission

Only nominated artists may submit:

- one or two artistically designed, static poster subjects on the theme *Demokratie leben*
- in portrait format in 300 dpi
- as a TIF or JPG file, max. 5 MB
- suitable for 1080 x 1920 px resolution
- File name: Name_First_name_Demokratie_leben_Subject
- A brief description of the concept, approx. 600-1000 characters

The release for the Citylights displays are structured in two stages, i.e. a full-surface art motif and then a text motif for the initiative *Demokratie leben* (layout by Studio Beton) with the name of the artists and the title of the work – see enclosed. The design may contain lettering or typographic elements.

Deadline for submissions: November 25, 2025, 5 p.m.

The subject designs must be uploaded via the Academy's submission system
<https://calls.akbild.ac.at/calls/AKOE26/>

The submitters assure that they are the owners of the rights to the designs. They agree to the publication of their submitted poster motifs as part of the *Demokratie leben* initiative by Gewista and the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, naming the authors.

Honorarium

The jury will select six subjects from all submissions, which will be published as part of the initiative in July and August and awarded a prize of EUR 1000 each.

Jury

The jury for the selection of the six subjects for the *Demokratie leben* initiative is composed of Gewista Managing Director Franz Solta, Rector Johan F. Hartle, Vice rector Ingeborg Erhart, Barbara Horvath, Curator, Karin Schönhofer, Corporate Communications Gewista, Alistair Thompson, Executive Creative Director Demner, Merlicek & Bergmann, and the project manager of Academy | Art | Public Sphere, Claudia Kaiser.

Contact

Enquiries and information on submission by e-mail and by telephone on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays or by appointment:

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