

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) on residencies and research trips

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Questions related to eligibility

1. What are the main criteria that are considered during the selection process?

- Convincing track record: artistic activity with a national/cross-regional reach
- Context-related motivation
- Sufficient knowledge of English or the respective foreign language(s)
- Concrete exchange project with a lasting impact

2. In what cultural field do I need to work to be eligible to apply?

Cultural practitioners from the following fields may apply for a residency or research trip: design, interactive media, literature (including poetry, comics, children's and youth literature), music (including podcasts), performing arts and visual arts (including architecture and photography), as well as cultural practitioners with a transdisciplinary focus. You can, for example, be an artist, a curator, an event organizer or a cultural intermediary. For all residency applications you need to have a convincing track record that shows artistic activity with a national/cross-regional reach in your field.

If you have a cross-disciplinary approach, you may mention it in the application.

3. Is there an age limit after which cultural practitioners are no longer eligible to apply?

There is no age limit. The residency and research trips programme is intended to support cultural practitioners who are willing to engage with other global contexts and cultural scenes.

4. What do you mean by «cultural practitioners from Switzerland» and «cultural practitioners from outside Switzerland»?

«Cultural practitioner from Switzerland» refers to a professional cultural practitioner who is either a Swiss citizen or a permanent resident in Switzerland. Likewise, «cultural practitioner from outside Switzerland» refers to a professional cultural practitioner who either holds citizenship or is a permanent resident in one of the countries Pro Helvetia is active in. For the complete list of countries, please consult the online information for residencies and research trips [here](#).

5. I am a cultural practitioner who comes from a country which is not on the country list on your website. Am I eligible for support?

No, at present, Pro Helvetia only supports residencies and research trips for cultural practitioners who come from one of the countries listed on our website.

6. What are the possible destinations for research trips?

For cultural practitioners from the countries covered by our Liaison Offices (complete list on [our website](#)), Switzerland is the only possible destination.

Cultural practitioners from Switzerland may apply for research trips worldwide. If the country you're applying for does not belong to a region covered by our Liaison Offices, you must suggest a local coaching partner (e.g. a festival/institution/museum/curator/collaborator) that enables you to build bridges to the local scene and that can guarantee assistance for the research. In this case, a letter of interest from the suggested local coaching partner is required.

7. I am a student. Do I need to have work experience in my field before I can apply?

Students are not eligible to apply, only professional cultural practitioners are eligible to apply for a residency or a research trip. If you are a student, we recommend to build up your portfolio based on a substantial body of work and finish your studies before you consider applying.

8. I am an emerging artist. Am I eligible to apply?

Emerging Artists are eligible to apply, as long as the artistic activity has a national/cross-regional reach.

9. We are working as a duo, can we apply together?

Yes, you can apply as a duo. Please only send one single application, it is not necessary to apply separately.

10. I was already supported by Pro Helvetia for a residency in the past. Can I apply again?

Yes.

11. Can I apply again if my application of the previous year was unsuccessful?

Yes, you can apply again. However, we recommend including new aspects in the application.

12. What language skills do I need to have?

A good working knowledge of English is essential. You do not need to know the language of the country for which you are applying for a residency or research trip.

13. How does the selection process work?

The decision on a support is made by the specialists in the respective disciplines at Pro Helvetia Zurich and the respective Liaison Office together.

Questions related to content

14. What is the difference between a residency and a research trip?

A residency (max. 3 months) gives cultural practitioners the opportunity to gain broad insight into a different cultural environment. The aim of the residency is to find inspiration, establish networks and continue existing projects or launch new projects or collaborations. The call is open once a year from January until the 1st of March. A research trip is shorter (max. 4 weeks) and enables cultural practitioners to carry out research. The aim of a research trip is to prepare an exchange project. You can apply at any time, but at least three months before the start of your project.

15. Who are the partner organisations that I can apply to work with?

A list of possible partners in Switzerland can be found in the guidelines on the [Pro Helvetia website](#). The partners in the regions of our offices abroad are listed on the websites concerned. There, you can also find reports by artists and contact details to reach out to:

- [Pro Helvetia Cairo](#) (Arab region)
- [Pro Helvetia Moscow](#) (Russia)
- [Pro Helvetia Shanghai](#) (China)
- [Pro Helvetia Johannesburg](#) (West Africa, Central Africa, East Africa and Southern Africa)
- [Pro Helvetia New Delhi](#) (South Asia)
- [Pro Helvetia South America](#)

If you have a specific idea for a residency place, you are free to mention that in your application. In general, residency partners are not limited and our offices are open to discuss the possibilities with you, after the decision is taken.

16. What shall I write in the motivation letter?

There are no specific requirements for the motivation letter. However, you should clearly articulate your goals and explain why it is important for you to be selected for a residency or a research trip, and especially how the selected city or region would help you to fulfil the aims of your travel. How would you develop your ideas, and get inspiration and input for your artistic work through the residency or research trip in question?

17. Which documents am I required to present in my application?

A brief explanation of the topic of your residency or research trip and a motivation are required for your application. In the portal [myprohelvetia](#) you can also add documents (as your CV and portfolio) and relevant links which could support the evaluation of your application.

18. Should I apply with a specific new project for a residency or research trip?

You can work on new ideas or continue working on your existing projects. In any case, we encourage you to apply with a specific cultural exchange project that promises to have a sustainable impact and brings an interest in global encounters and learnings.

19. Should I present a finished project at the end of the residency and is there a production support?

Residencies are not mainly production oriented. The residency results can be new ideas, a new network of partners and collaborators, or a clearer understanding of your further artistic work. If you want to organise a public presentation, you are welcome to do so. However, this option also depends on the hosting partner. In most cases, residency hosts help to organize a public event such as an open studio.

Since the main goal of residencies is to gain inspiration and establish networks, the production support is rather limited.

20. What kind of support can I expect during my residency?

Pro Helvetia will cover the costs of accommodation, travel expenses (visa and travel insurance costs included), daily allowance, professional support, a workplace (on request), production/material costs (on request) and a financial support for cultural practitioners with minor children (on request, more information under [question 24](#)). The hosts will offer certain assistance upon request and subject to mutual agreement. Pro Helvetia will assign you a coach based on the research focus proposed, who will offer guidance and advice if needed, and help you become familiar with the local cultural and art community. If you need an assistant to produce work, you need to search for and fund such a person on your own.

21. How does one select the starting and end dates of a three-month residency?

The dates of the residency can be suggested by you, based on your preferences. Pro Helvetia will attempt to obtain residency spaces for the period requested, but this depends on the availability of spaces.

22. What cities should I choose for my residency or research trip?

You are not obliged to choose a city for your application. Nevertheless, we encourage you to think about what topics are the most interesting for you and your research goals and if you would like to connect to a specific scene in a particular city or region. Such considerations might help you in your choice of city or region.

23. I am a cultural practitioner from Switzerland. Can I apply for more than one region within the same call?

Applications from cultural practitioners from Switzerland addressed to two different regions are possible. Two separate, complete applications must be submitted. However, a maximum of one application per person will be approved within the framework of one call for applications.

Questions related to practicalities

24. Is there any support for selected cultural practitioner who are parents?

As part of a pilot programme, Pro Helvetia supports cultural practitioners with minor children participating in residencies or research trips by offering additional financial support.

The amount of maximum 1000 CHF per month may be used to co-finance the following expenses:

- Additional childcare, e.g. to support the parents while they are working
- Additional travelling cost for children and caregivers, e.g. a partner or a family member
- Accommodation for children and additional caregivers

Please note:

- Pro Helvetia operates in a global context. Regulations and visa restrictions for international travel may apply. Pro Helvetia cannot guarantee the approval of visa applications for accompanying children, partners, family members or caregivers.
- Pro Helvetia collaborates with many different partners and facilities worldwide and not all of them are able to host children.

Please find more information [here](#).

25. Will Pro Helvetia assist me in obtaining a visa?

The selected cultural practitioners are responsible for submitting all the required documents in time to obtain a visa. Pro Helvetia will provide assistance in the case of problems and financial support if needed.

26. Does the residency cover medical insurance for the duration of time spent in Switzerland?

Pro Helvetia covers the costs of medical insurance for the duration of the travel. However, the insurance company's terms and conditions apply. It is important that any long-term medical condition are communicated prior to the departure.

27. How much is the «daily allowance» mentioned in the call for applications?

The «daily allowance» is an amount of money that you will receive monthly to cover your daily expenses. It is calculated based on the cost of living in the destination country.

28. Can the Liaison Offices provide assistance in connecting Swiss-based artists with local contacts from their network before the application is handed in?

Pro Helvetia receives plenty of applications. Therefore, we are not able to provide a connecting support before an application is positively decided. Once a positive decision is taken, the respective Liaison Office team will help to connect the cultural practitioner to the local scene. Examples and lists of partners are

mentioned on the websites by the respective Liaison Offices. You can find a list of all websites under [question 15](#) in this document.

29. After a positive decision, how is the collaboration with potential partners at the destination coordinated?

After a positive decision, the respective Liaison Office gets in contact with the selected applicants to understand their needs and possible time frame. Then the colleagues in the Liaison Offices look for potential places and dates. Sometimes alternative places are offered (e.g. in case residency places don't have capacity or don't fit perfectly to the project).

30. How is Pro Helvetia dealing with the uncertainty caused by the pandemic?

In response to the global Covid-19 pandemic Pro Helvetia developed a «Home not alone» residency format. If travel restrictions make it impossible to take up a residency or research trip and no other way of realization is possible, Pro Helvetia can offer financial support and provide a mentor from the destination country. Support is available for the duration of the residency period with the cultural practitioner working from home.

31. How are residencies and research trips between Russia and Switzerland affected by the war?

For residencies and research trips of cultural practitioners from Switzerland to Russia and vice versa, applications are available for physical or digital formats. However, undertaking the trip to Russia remains an individual decision that must be made consciously and in compliance with the FDFA recommendations at the time of the trip. Pro Helvetia cannot foresee or take responsibility for possible restrictions in international travel. For more information, please consult the website of [Pro Helvetia Moscow](#) or contact the local team at moscow@prohelvetia.ru.

Questions related to myprohelvetia

32. What browsers does [myprohelvetia](#) work on?

The application runs on all commonly used browsers (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Opera, Google Chrome and Safari).

33. What data formats can I upload?

In principle, it is possible to upload all standard file formats; however, we strongly recommend that you only upload PDF documents.

34. Is there any restriction on the size of a file I want to upload?

Yes, there is. A single file may not exceed 10 megabytes. Depending on the speed of your internet connection, the upload of your documents may take a certain time.

35. Why can't I find the button to proceed?

In case you access [myprohelvetia.ch](#) from countries where a VPN connection is needed: Before applying on the website, please make sure you access the site via a valid VPN connection.

36. Does my account expire after I have submitted my application?

No, your account will continue to be active after applying.

37. Can I send my application by email?

No, we only accept applications via [myprohelvetia.ch](#)