



Since 2015, the SCHLOSSLICHTSPIELE Light Festival Karlsruhe has inspired artists to explore new creative paths in order to captivate audiences. For four weeks every evening between mid-August and mid-September, the over 170-meter-long façade of the Karlsruhe Baroque Palace transforms into a grand stage for artistic contributions in projection mapping.

Since 2023, the dm-Award *connecting worlds* has been honouring outstanding projects that connect the digital and analogue realms, extending the projections beyond the palace façade into the audience and the city centre.

dm-Award *connecting worlds*

As a member of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, Karlsruhe is committed to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, and we have found the perfect partner in dm-drogerie markt—a sustainable and future-oriented company from Karlsruhe. The call for entries for the dm-Award *connecting worlds* is open internationally to artists, who may apply individually or as collectives. Submitted projects are intended to be realized as part of the SCHLOSSLICHTSPIELE Light Festival and the exhibition *Media art is here*. Both events will take place over four weeks between mid-August and mid-September 2026. During the SCHLOSSLICHTSPIELE, several projection mappings of varying content and lengths between 3 and 15 minutes will be presented each evening. The awarded project can be integrated into this program or function as an independent highlight.

We are seeking innovative projects that connect the digital space of the SCHLOSSLICHTSPIELE projection mappings on the façade with the analogue space in front of the palace and extending into the city. Concepts that go beyond the immediate event location—involving the city centre or extending into it—are especially welcome.

Projects must therefore consist of two elements: A digital element on the palace façade (projection mapping) and an analogue element that can also function independently of the projection. Submitted projects must take place outdoors or be accessible in the urban public space, be freely available, and open to the public. The presentation can take place throughout the entire duration of the SCHLOSSLICHTSPIELE Light Festival 2026 or be limited to specific time periods.

Possible formats and content include, but are not limited to:

- Interactive elements where the audience interacts with the façade
- Installations or media artworks relating to the palace
- Stagings of the square in front of the palace or other places, squares, or buildings in the city
- Combinations of other art forms with projection mapping (e.g., concerts or performances over multiple days)
- Interactive projects involving audience participation
- 3D experiences or immersive formats
- Integration of new technical possibilities
- Inclusion of dm-markets as part of the project
- Creation of new spatial experiences and public interaction

The UNESCO City of Media Arts Office in the City of Karlsruhe's Department of Cultural Affairs awards the **dm-Award *connecting worlds*, endowed with €10,000**, in partnership with dm-drogerie markt GmbH + Co. KG as sponsor, the ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe, and KME Karlsruhe Marketing und Event GmbH as organizers of the SCHLOSSLICHTSPIELE Light Festival Karlsruhe. In addition to the prize, the production costs of the winning project will be funded with **up to €20,000 net** to enable the realization of the concept. Curatorial support and technical assistance from the project partners (Department of Cultural Affairs, KME, and ZKM) are included in the award. The production budget covers all costs incurred during production, such as fees, technical equipment, and travel expenses for the winners. The technical requirements and available infrastructure of the SCHLOSSLICHTSPIELE are detailed in the production guidelines. Any changes or additional technical requirements must be planned by the participants themselves.

PARTICIPATION CONDITIONS

The application period closes on **24 November 2025 at 1:00 PM CET**. Before submitting your application, please read the following information carefully. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact our team at: cityofmediaarts@kultur.karlsruhe.de

Production guidelines: <https://cloud.zkm.de/s/NLW8YmXWcifLZyr>

Model Data and photos: <https://cloud.zkm.de/s/gT3JPemYxNJwHMH>

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Applications must be submitted as a **single document** in German or English and include:

- **Details about the artist or group** (name/company name, email address, postal address, phone number, nationality/residence, short biography)
- **A concise but compelling project outline**, including a storyboard, ideas for presenting the project (max. 1,500 characters including spaces), and a list of required materials, technical equipment, personnel (security, supervision, etc.), and usage rights.
- **Visual material** such as renderings, photos, illustrations, or video material: up to 5 images, 3 video clips, or audio examples (each max. 5 minutes) or up to 5 links.
- Text information must not be submitted as images, as this hinders further processing of applications.

Important notes:

- Already implemented projects are excluded.
- Employees of the organizing institutions, sponsors, and the awarding partner of the prize, as well as jury members, are not eligible to participate.
- Applications must be submitted to: cityofmediaarts@kultur.karlsruhe.de.
- Due to file size, applications must be sent **via download link**.
- **Submissions that do not meet the above requirements will not be admitted to the competition and will not be presented to the jury.**

We welcome applications from all people, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, cultural, ethnic, or social background.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Participants must be reachable at the address they provide.
- By participating in this call for entries, participants agree to the publication of the information they provide about the submitted artwork.
- Awarded works will be published through various media and communication channels. Therefore, participants are requested to compile the audio, visual, and textual components with the utmost precision and care.
- All submitted works will be archived. By submitting, participants agree to the archiving of their contributions.
- Data submitted in connection with the application will be processed for the purpose of conducting the competition. Project implementation can begin upon registration and in coordination with the UNESCO City of Media Arts Office of the Cultural Office of the City of Karlsruhe.
- The project must be completed **by 11 July 2026** to ensure it can be presented in time for the SCHLOSSLICHTSPIELE Light Festival. Even if the project is not presented at the start of the SCHLOSSLICHTSPIELE in mid-August, timely completion is requested to allow sufficient time for the installation of the artwork and planning.

IMPORTANT DATES

- **October 9, 2025:** Start of the application period
- **November 24, 2025, 1:00 PM CET:** Application deadline
- **Mid-December 2025:** Notification of applicants
- **January 2026:** Public announcement of the winners
- **Mid-August – Mid-September 2026:** SCHLOSSLICHTSPIELE Light Festival 2026

SELECTION PROCESS

A professional jury will select the winners of the award from the submitted projects. The jury is chaired by Dr. Dominika Szope, Director of the Department of Cultural Affairs, and is composed of representatives from the curatorial circle of the SCHLOSSLICHTSPIELE. The jury will decide based on curatorial and technical criteria which project will receive the award and be realized.

Decisions will not be made public. Legal recourse is excluded.