

Press Release  
Linz, April 22, 2025

Open Call on art and resistance:

## State of the ART(ist): in the field of tension between art and human rights. Submissions now open

With State of the ART(ist), Ars Electronica and the Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs continue a joint initiative in 2025. For the fourth time in a row the call aims to support artists who are exposed to war, political persecution, environmental disasters, social inequality or restricted freedom of expression. The jury will award a Main Prize of 6,000 euros as well as two Awards of Distinction of 2,000 euros each and seven Honorary Mentions. Selected projects will be presented in a physical exhibition at the Ars Electronica Festival wherever possible. Individuals and collectives worldwide are invited to submit their work from today until May 31.

*"The freedom of art must be protected worldwide. Cultural diplomacy therefore has an important protective function towards artists who are unable to exercise their artistic freedom abroad due to social or political circumstances. With State of the ART(ist), together with Ars Electronica we have found a way to invite endangered artists from all over the world to the Ars Electronica Festival and make them visible. They not only present us with relevant art, they also show us how important and how fragile freedom of expression and artistic freedom are,"* says **State Secretary Sepp Schellhorn, who is responsible for foreign culture at the Foreign Ministry.**

*"State of the ART(ist) sheds light on the role of artists in times of profound change. With this initiative, we are supporting artists who, despite precarious living and working conditions, continue to make their contribution to shaping a different, better future,"* emphasizes **Gerfried Stocker, Artistic Director of Ars Electronica.**

## Submission conditions at a glance

We are looking for works, projects and actions in the field of tension between art and human rights. Performances, social software, AI projects and various forms of artistic expression are eligible. Individuals, institutions and collectives from the fields of art, literature, science or entrepreneurship who are working under existential threat can submit entries. An expert jury will decide on the basis of the artistic quality and message of the work. The winners will be announced in July 2025.

## Exhibition at the Ars Electronica Festival

In addition to financial support for the award winners, State of the ART(ist) offers analog and digital presentation opportunities as well as a stage for international networking - including the Ars Electronica Festival taking place from September 3 to 7 in Linz. Selected award-winning works will be shown in Linz as part of the festival, in keeping with this year's festival theme "PANIC - yes/no". Selected works can be found online in the Virtual Art Gallery (Spatial.io), where they will remain accessible in the long term. The tool is designed as an archive and space for artistic freedom.

## About State of the ART(ist)

State of the ART(ist) was jointly launched in 2022 by Ars Electronica and the Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs - at the time, as a direct response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Since then, the initiative has developed into a global platform that supports creatives whose artistic work is restricted by systemic threats - such as political, social or ecological conflicts.