



# ARS ELECTRONICA 2022

Festival for Art, Technology & Society

## Welcome to Planet B

A different life is possible!  
But how?

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7.–11. Sept.  
In Kepler's Gardens  
at JKU Campus Linz

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## Press conference 4/7/2022

**Gerfried Stocker** (Artistic Director Ars Electronica)

**Martin Honzik** (Chief Curatorial Officer von Ars Electronica und  
Managing Director Ars Electronica Festival/Prix/Export)

**Veronika Liebl** (Managing Director Ars Electronica Festival/Prix/Export)

**Christl Baur** (Head of Ars Electronica Festival)



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**Gerfried Stocker**

Artistic Director Ars Electronica

## Welcome to Planet B A different life is possible! But how?

A festival takes on the challenging search for answers to the contradictions of our time.

Neither naive escapism into virtual worlds, nor the technological ultra-topia of space colonization will save us from facing the big, uncomfortable questions. How will our life on this planet have to look to prevent ecological super disaster? What actions must we take and what consequences must we accept? How much persuasion, how much effort, how much pressure, how much coercion will be necessary, and what “collateral damage” will be involved?

*The United Nations has declared the current decade the  
“Decade of Restoration” of our ecosystems.*

How can we make such a fundamental and far-reaching change? After all, it is not enough to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. We now have robust data on what our world will look like if we don't make the change, from New York being flooded by rising sea levels to Central Europe being a new Sahara. But what will our world look like if we do make the change? What technologies will we still have to develop for it, and what economic, social and democratic changes will accompany them?

Planet B is not the second chance for another place where we can continue as before, it is the cipher for the indispensable, new and in many forms completely different life and action on this only planet that exists for us. It is the chance for coexistence with the unique ecosystems of this planet, a chance for a new and fair coexistence of humans on this planet.

*“Blah, Blah, Blah”—Greta Thunberg on the results  
of the current last global climate conference COP26.*



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After all, more than 30 years have passed since the IPCC's first warnings.

And that is how long it has taken for there to be an agreement under international law between 193 countries to limit global warming to 2° by 2050. The limit of 1.5° that is actually necessary is, however, no more than a wishful goal, and no sanctions have been agreed, but even if development is very slow to get underway, we have at least resolved to tackle the biggest social and economic transformation project in known history: By 2050 at the latest, the use of coal worldwide must be reduced by 95 percent, and the consumption of oil and gas must be reduced by 60 percent and 45 percent, respectively—and we must create the framework conditions for this.

From today's perspective, with the dislocations of the Corona pandemic and the monstrosities of the war against Ukraine before our eyes, this is a completely hopeless undertaking that we can only achieve if we change as individuals, as a society, as humanity, if we agree on a different way of living on this planet.

We know what to do with crystal clarity, but not how to do it; we are afraid of the consequences of climate change, but even more, of the many imponderables and unknowns of the necessary change.

*So can we change not only the world we live in,  
but also ourselves?*

If our idea of innovation has been primarily associated with technology, with systems and processes, with optimization, streamlining, and increasing profits, in the next ten years we will have to give ourselves an enormous innovation push.

We will need every bit of technology, every organizational, logistical optimization that can help us reduce emissions and filter them back out of the atmosphere. But the biggest innovation project in human history this time has to be ourselves, our ability to rise to the challenge as a global community — a reinvention of humanity!



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## Welcome to Planet B

A different life is possible! But how?

(Linz, 4/7/2022) Ars Electronica 2022 will take place from September 7 to 11, on the campus of the Johannes Kepler University Linz, at the Linz University of Art, at the LENTOS Museum of Art, at the Francisco Carolinum and OK in the OÖ Kulturquartier, at the Anton Bruckner Private University, at the Atelierhaus Salzamt, at the Stadtwerkstatt, at the Tabakfabrik... and, of course, at the Ars Electronica Center.

In 2022, Linz will once again host a “Festival for Art, Technology and Society” where participants from science, business, the creative and art scenes from the local region and around the world will contribute their perspectives. “This broad collaboration is a true example of ‘Linz quality,’” says Gerfried Stocker, artistic director of Ars Electronica. “Nowhere else is it so natural for artists, researchers, entrepreneurs and activists to collaborate on a joint event. This coming together of very different people and their perspectives, which has grown over decades, gives the festival its unique character - and contributes significantly to its international appeal.”

This year’s motto is “Welcome to Planet B - A different life is possible! But how?” and invites a delightful thought experiment: What if we had already mastered the great challenges of the 21st century? How would we then live (together) and what would characterize that society? And last but not least: What would our path there have looked like? What political, social, cultural and technological transformation would we have moved forward with, and how?

### September 7 – 11, 2022: Come to Linz!

“After two years of virtually unrestrained experimentation with hybrid and virtual formats, Ars Electronica 2022 will once again present itself as a major physical event in Linz,” announces Gerfried Stocker. “In light of the just-published findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the pandemic-related cracks across our societies, the shattering war in Ukraine and the resulting global political upheavals, we consider it the order of the day to invite people from all over the world to Linz to talk about our future.” More than ever, Europe's largest festival for art, technology and society sees itself first and foremost as a platform for interpersonal exchange that transcends borders. “Since 1979, we’ve been building bridges between disciplines, industries and cultures and getting people talking to each other—and it’s never been more important than it is today,” says Gerfried Stocker.



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## Ten festival locations in Linz

In 2022, a total of ten locations in the Linz city area will be used. One hotspot will again be “Kepler’s Garden” on the sprawling campus of Johannes Kepler University Linz, while a second major festival hub will be formed by LENTOS Kunstmuseum, Kunstuniversität, Atelierhaus Salzamt, Stadtwerkstatt and Ars Electronica Center in the city center. There are also the Tobacco Factory, Francisco Carolinum and OK Linz, as well as the Anton Bruckner Private University on the Pöstlingberg.

## A Kaleidoscope of Sustainable Future Perspectives

All of these locations will become settings that tell about life on “Planet B”. They become festival gardens in which artists, researchers and activists each use their own means and methods to sketch out how we can shape our world sustainably. Obviously, students from the JKU in Linz will be making different proposals for our future than young media artists from Latin America or Eastern Europe, who will be presenting their work at the LENTOS Kunstmuseum. At the same time, it forms the starting point for an exciting discussion that will not only revolve around the decisions we want to make on the way to “Planet B,” but above all, around the question of how we arrive at these decisions.

## Making technology part of the solution

A central theme of the 5-day staging of “Planet B” will be technology. Within the framework of major European initiatives such as S+T+ARTS or Studiotopia, artists and scientists will once again show how we can shape the development and use of technology in such a way that not only a few, but we as a society as a whole benefit from it. Among many other best-practice examples, the “S+T+ARTS Center Upper Austria” initiated in 2021 will be presented for the first time; Greiner, the JKU, the Innovation Capital City of Linz and Ars Electronica are working together with the artists Kat Austen (UK/DE) and Fara Peluso (IT/DE) on the topic of regional circular economy.

## A festival on “Planet B”

Finally, what would a festival like Ars Electronica look like on a “Planet B”? In our opinion, it’s a certified “Green Event” with everyone—hosts, participants and visitors—working together to make its ecological footprint as small as possible. What these contributions actually look like is currently being worked out with partners such as Brantner – Green Solutions or Europe’s largest non-profit IT company AfB (Arbeit für Menschen mit Behinderung). The focus is on “mobility,” “energy, water, sanitation,” “food,” “waste,” “event location,” “event technology,” “social responsibility” and “communication.”

[ars.electronica.art/planetb](https://ars.electronica.art/planetb)