

Internationale Gesellschaft der Bildenden Künste (IGBK)

National Committee of Germany

The Internationale Gesellschaft der Bildenden Künste (IGBK) unites Germany's three most important supra-regional artist associations: Bundesverband Bildender Künstlerinnen und Künstler (BBK, Federal Association of Artists), Deutscher Künstlerbund (German Artists' Association) and GEDOK, Verband der Gemeinschaften der Künstlerinnen und Kunstförderer (Federation of Women Artists and Patrons of the Arts). The association was founded in 1957 as the German National Committee of the International Association of Art (IAA). The IGBK and its projects are supported by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media and by the Kulturstiftung der Länder. The current chairpersons are Andrea Knobloch (Deutscher Künstlerbund), Ulrike Rosenbach (GEDOK) and Werner Schaub (BBK, speaker of the board). Managing director is Thomas Weis.

Main Activities in 2015 and 2016

Information and Service

IGBK councils visual artists on the possibilities of working opportunities and grants, both in Germany and abroad. Information and contact details for international exchange is provided at the IGBK webpage (www.igbk.de). The IGBK office helps with formalities with respect to projects abroad and provides advice regarding administrative issues. It issues the 'Certificate for the Customs Authorities for the free flow of works by living artists' for artists based in Germany as well as the 'International Identity Card' of the IAA (824 cards were issued in 2015, valid for 2 years).

www.touring-artists.info – The Information Portal for Artists Working Internationally

Since April 2013 www.touring-artists.info, a joint project of IGBK and the German Center of the International Theatre Institute (ITI) has been online. The website offers artists information on the topics visa/residence, transport/customs, taxes, social insurance, other insurances, and copyright related to cross-border mobility. A database of German support schemes for international projects as well as checklists and sample documents etc. complement the information. The topics have been examined for both, the visual and the performing arts. Information is available in English and German language and is addressed to artists based in Germany and working abroad for a limited time as well as to foreign artists who come to work in Germany temporarily. The project is supported by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media.

Since the project launch, IGBK, together with cooperation partners and experts, has been organizing diverse workshops and presentations throughout Germany in order to make touring artists known to the artist's scene (7 presentations/workshops in 2014, 7 presentations/workshops in 2015). The activity is ongoing.

In 2014 the touring artists helpdesk service was set up, together with SmartDe. This is where artists profit from individual advice regarding their international projects and working stays abroad. The service is free of charge. In 2015 also a forum was launched where artists and cultural professionals can share experiences among themselves (<http://forum.touring-artists.info>). In 2016 the section 'Refugees welcome' was released, where touring artists provides information, tips, and experience-based knowledge geared towards refugee artists in Germany as well as people engaged in the arts and cultural sector in Germany who (would like to) work with refugees.

Representing Artists' Interests: Workshops, Symposia and Membership

IGBK represents the interests of visual artists at international and European level, seeking to improve their legal and social status. With its engagement with several organisations and networks, IGBK attempts to insure that the interests of artists are taken into consideration at relevant political and administrative decision-making levels. Together with partner organisations IGBK organises symposia and workshops on topics of relevance to artists. Art education, communication, self-image, conditions and perspectives of artistic practice are topics of discussions in order to propose possible solutions and to increase awareness for future-oriented concepts.

Roundtable on the EU Programme CREATIVE EUROPE

In order to prepare the mid-term evaluation of the EU programme CREATIVE EUROPE, which will be presented by the European Commission in 2017, a first exchange between cultural professionals (e.g. experienced applicants) and representatives of administrative and political bodies in charge of European cultural support took place at national level. IGBK and the German Center of the International Theatre Institute (ITI) together with the Creative Europe Desk (Germany) therefore organised a roundtable in November 2015 in Berlin. The exchange was initiated by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media.

Symposium inEXCHANGE

The symposium inEXCHANGE was a joined project of IGBK and the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (ifa). It was organised in December 2015 in Berlin. In the context of the agendas on Foreign Cultural Policy of the German Federal Government (the Commissioner for Culture and the Media as well as the Foreign Ministry) and taking into account positions of artists involved in exchange programmes, the following questions will be discussed: What is meant by 'intercultural exchange' and which expectations are associated with it – from a European and international perspective? How is the political aim to support 'intercultural exchange' concretely organised? Which political expectations towards artists are expressed through funding guidelines and selection criteria? What understanding of art and artists becomes visible? What are artists' expectations as regards the agendas and programmes that arise from them? How do artists translate the wish for 'intercultural exchange' into self-initiated projects and cooperation? The event focussed on the Villa Romana, on bangaloREsidency as well as on independent artists' organisations. More information is available from the IGBK webpage (www.igbk.de).

Workshop 'Social Security and Mobility of Artists in Europe'

In November 2016 an international workshop on 'Social Security and mobility of artists in Europe' will take place in Berlin (organized by the IGBK in cooperation with the IAA Europe). The workshop will be composed of two parts, each with a different focus: the first is about artists' mobility and the practice of self-posting within the EU – and wishes to show best practices and lacks of information. Part 2 focusses on recent developments in national social security systems relevant to visual artists.

Membership at European and international level

The IGBK represents the German National Committee of the IAA and is – at a European level – part of the IAA Europe. From 2002 to 2008 IGBK was holding and since 2015 IGBK holds the presidency of the IAA Europe (president: Werner Schaub) and is in charge of the office. IGBK is also involved with Culture Action Europe (CAE) (www.cultureactioneurope.org) and with the cultural mobility information network On the Move (OTM) (www.on-the-move.org).