

Call for Papers: isaResearch Summer School 2026

Across Moving Grounds: Music, Performing Arts, and the Politics of Mobility

22–25 July 2026 | Vienna

mdw – University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna

Experiences of mobility, displacement, migration, and exile are not exceptional but constitutive of cultural and artistic histories. From touring performers and diasporic communities to digital circulation and forced displacement, music and performing arts have long been shaped by movement across borders. In recent decades, scholarly debates on these dynamics have introduced key concepts such as *cosmopolitanism*, *translocality*, and *postmigration*. When studying music, sound, and performing arts today, how might we reconsider the relationship between the global and the local? Which conceptual tools enable us to grasp contemporary mobilities without flattening their historical and political ambiguities?

In 2026, the isaResearch summer school in the framework of isa – International Summer Academy invites contributions that rethink the entanglements of the global and the local through postmigrant, decolonial, and intersectional perspectives and how they relate to music, sound, and the performing arts. We also welcome reflections on how *worlding* as a concept and artistic practice can illuminate the creation of worlds beyond the binary logics of the local and the global.

Taking place in parallel to the isa masterclasses and workshops at the mdw campus in Vienna – a city both historically diasporic and currently postmigrant – the four-day workshop is open to Ph.D. students and other early-stage researchers in the humanities and artistic research, specifically those immersed in the study of music, sound, dance, and film. Participants will be able to present and discuss their research in an interdisciplinary framework. Experts in respective fields at the mdw and beyond will engage in conversations and act as respondents. The programme will also include a lecture by an international expert and site-visits in the cultural landscape of Vienna. The summer school thus sets out to provide participants with an intimate interdisciplinary experience that fosters new networks and perspectives.

Submissions may address, but are not limited to, the following themes:

- *Postmigration* as concept, method, and critique
- *Translocality* and digital networks of cultural production
- Exile, diaspora, and historical continuities of displacement
- Climate crisis: ecological displacement and artistic responses
- *Cosmopolitanism* revisited: class, race, and cultural capital
- Decolonial perspectives on global music history and canon formation
- *Worlding* and musical world-making: epistemologies and aesthetics
- Translation as method
- Sound, film, performance, and the politics of *positioning*
- Methodological innovations: How can traveling concepts and critical term analysis offer new analytical tools? (How) can travel, mobility, and movement themselves become (integrated into) methodological premises?

We invite applications from Ph.D. students and other early-stage researchers from disciplines including (but not limited to) Musicology, Dance and Performance Studies, Artistic Research, Queer Theory, Cultural Studies, Music Theory, Indigenous Studies, Music Sociology, Critical Race Studies, Ethnomusicology, Popular Music Studies, Post-Colonial Studies, Art History, and Film and Media Studies. Presentation proposals must be connected to the topic of the participant's thesis or current research project.

Attendance at the summer school is free of charge, with lunch and refreshments provided on-site by the mdw. Limited funding to help with travel and accommodation expenses is available. The exact amount of funding will be decided according to the requirements of the participant. Application is possible after the acceptance of your proposal with a short description of your situation and academic affiliation (or lack thereof). We are happy to organize childcare for researchers travelling with children of any age and kindly ask to be informed of any such needs as soon as possible after acceptance.

Applications including a title, a presentation abstract, keywords, a statement of motivation, and a short bio must be uploaded via our [website](#). The deadline for applying is **30 April 2026**. Decisions on the acceptance of proposals will be announced by the end of May.

The isa comprises masterclasses, workshops and lectures as well as isaOnStage with public concerts, the music education program isaCommunity and the interdisciplinary academic summer school isaResearch. The mdw campus provides an ideal setting that promotes exchange between disciplines as well as the interplay of artistic excellence, social responsibility, and intercultural community.

Contact: Kathrin Heinrich isaresearch@mdw.ac.at

Websites:

<https://www.isa-music.org/de/isaresearch/>

<https://www.mdw.ac.at/forschungsfoerderung/isaresearch/>

Organization: Kathrin Heinrich, Therese Kaufmann, [mdw Research Support](#)

Academic Advisory Board:

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