

Open Call for Doctoral Artist-Researchers

Orpheus Instituut,
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Open call

For artist-researchers



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Orpheus Instituut, Ghent (Belgium)

Support for living costs is available to a limited number of doctoral researchers.

Orpheus Instituut (Ghent, Belgium) is an international centre of excellence with its primary focus on artistic research in music. Its mission is to transform musical understanding and practice. Research at Orpheus Instituut is organised into clusters, each led by a Principal Investigator. Their areas of interest are outlined below. The institute is home to docARTES, an interinstitutional doctoral programme for artistic research in music. Orpheus Instituut is looking for doctoral researchers who are interested in joining one of the research clusters, while pursuing a doctoral degree. This open call is intended for musicians with an outstanding artistic record, strong research skills, and transdisciplinary interests.

Position

As a member of Orpheus Instituut you will:

- receive doctoral supervision from the relevant research cluster leader at Orpheus Instituut
- become an active participant in a research cluster
- benefit from assistance towards the dissemination of your work
- enjoy a stimulating interdisciplinary environment for research, study, and dialogue
- be encouraged to take initiative in (co-)organizing events, such as study days, seminars, lectures, concerts, and workshops
- be offered office space, access to Orpheus Instituut's library (including the prestigious Ton Koopman Collection) and other resources (performance spaces, recording facilities, keyboard instruments, electronic studio, etc.)

Candidate Profile

The applicant:

- is fluent in English (written and spoken)
- has a Master's degree, or equivalent experience
- deals with research questions which can be addressed through artistic enquiry
- can demonstrate an advanced artistic practice

Please consult the cluster descriptions for a more detailed description of individual positions.

Research Clusters at Orpheus Instituut

Declassifying the Classics: Technology, Rhetoric, and Performance, 1750-1850

Declassifying the Classics develops alternative approaches to understanding music(king) between 1750 and 1850—a period in music history that witnessed many of the canonising and classicising processes still valid today. Revisiting familiar and unfamiliar repertoires, we debunk myths that have been created around them, and reconstruct rhetorical, technological, and socio-cultural contexts for historically informed performance. Building on new perspectives developed from disciplines like archaeology, musicology, and organology, we recreate environments for experimentation, where methods of embodiment and enactment respond as much to the question of whom we perform (a whole network of people—not just the composer) as to what we perform (scores, either as reflections of the creating-performing composer or responding to the needs of specific userships). At the centre of our work are historical instruments—newly built, in partnership with some

of today's leading instrument builders. Our laboratory of instruments includes standards as well as specially built, unique keyboards pertaining to the music of Haydn, Beethoven, and Mozart, but also more generally to the cities of London, Paris, and Vienna. One important ongoing project concerns Beethoven's last decade as a deaf pianist-composer. Perspectives of disability, affordance, and entanglement invite drastically new investigations of his late piano music and string quartets.

We therefore welcome applicants with an artistic, scholarly, or technical interest or expertise in at least one of the following areas: acoustics, immersive sound recording, digital animation, videography, historical pianos and pianism, disability studies, and Beethoven biography.

Resounding Libraries: Unfolding Archived Knowledge Through Artistic Research

Libraries are often regarded as passive repositories of past work. Drawing inspiration from Ton Koopman's extensively annotated collection of books and scores, Resounding Libraries challenges this perception by exploring the profound interconnections between libraries, music-making, and interpretation. It does so by combining historical materials with newly developed digital tools.

Resounding Libraries welcomes applications from performers, composers, producers, sound designers, and curators with an interest in:

- The artistic implementation of early modern modes of knowledge (representation)
- Intermedial approaches to early modern aesthetics and compositional logic

We particularly welcome candidates who demonstrate one or more of the following:

- Proficiency in European languages other than English
- A multidisciplinary background, evidenced through experience and/or education
- An active engagement with digital technology and critical theory
- A critical perspective on current trends in music, data, and society

HIPEX (Historically Informed Performance Practices of Experimental Music)

HIPEX is a collective of artist researchers applying methods of HIP music making in order to critically engage with 1960s-70s performers and their performances of experimental music. To further develop this research area, HIPEX is looking for doctoral researchers interested in investigating the music of this period through one of the following topics or areas of interest:

- Performance vs. compositional (work) aesthetics
- Conducting
- Aspects of gender in performance
- The development of interpretative traditions
- Open works (open structure, improvisation, graphic scores,...)
- Word pieces

Music, Thought and Technology

Music, Thought and Technology (MTT) investigates the fundamental role of technology in shaping thought and practice in music. MTT explores the present and future reconfiguration of the practices, artefacts and understanding of music through new creative work and theory. Its researchers are all active practitioners in contemporary and electronic music, composition, improvisation and sound art, pursuing individual and collective projects in artistic research.

MTT has opportunities for doctoral researchers with an artistic research project in any of the following indicative areas:

- Improvisation, composition and interactivity;
- Creative strategies in AI and machine learning;
- New models of collaboration between technologically-facilitated creative practices, including telematics;
- STS (Science and Technology Studies) approaches to music history;
- New material/software approaches to music/sound art creation;
- Design methodologies in creating new technical objects;
- Innovative approaches to computer-assisted composition;
- Radical interpretation of electronic repertoire;
- Vintage materialities and early electronic music.

Fragment: Accordances – Enactments

Fragment: Accordances – Enactments explores fragmentation in music as it is defined by process, reflexivity, and critical interactions with totality. By drawing the long nineteenth century into dialogue with new fields, for example e-textiles, gender studies, and marginalised musical practices, the project approaches musical practice, interpretation, and repertoire through transhistorical and exploratory lenses. It favours process over result and embraces curation, collation, and reconfiguration as artistic strategies. Fragments, in their openness and historical layering, disrupt fixed narratives and offer dynamic means to rethink musical identity and experience.

F: A-E offers opportunities for doctoral researchers interested in:

- Unfinished or incomplete musical objects
- Practical explorations of aspects of musical identity
- Aesthetics of fracture and fragmentation in performance and creation
- The evolution of interpretative traditions
- Processes of rehearsal and preparation
- Neglected, hidden, or discriminated practices and/or repertoire (e.g. non-canonised works, forgotten or marginalised performers and composers)

Application for doctoral positions

The application consists of four stages:

1. A written proposal

Submit a one-page expression of interest containing a project proposal, one-page CV, links to artistic material, and identification of the relevant/desired research cluster. Submissions should be made via this application form from September 1st. The last date for such submissions is October 31st 2025. Selections will be made in early November. Selected candidates will be invited to:

2. An initial conversation

You'll be invited for a conversation with the relevant cluster leader to establish how your research interests may align with those of the cluster and Orpheus Instituut.

3. Application to docARTES

Following further selection, candidates will then prepare an application to the doctoral programme docARTES coordinated by Orpheus Instituut in partnership with other institutions, including those that award the degree. The process requires an interview with jury members of the docARTES programme, which will take place in April 2026, and subsequent approval by the relevant partner university. For information regarding the deadline, please consult the docARTES website.

[Access the application form](#)

4. Final Decision

A final decision regarding the allocation of available funding amongst the accepted doctoral candidates will be taken by Orpheus Instituut.

Selection Criteria

Criteria for admission to docARTES may be found here: <https://www.docartes.be/en/admission/admission-requirements>

Support for living costs (€16.000 per annum) is available to a limited number of doctoral researchers.

Selection for such support will be made on the basis of relevance to a particular cluster. Please indicate in your application if you wish to be considered for funding. This arrangement requires the researcher to maintain a consistent presence at Orpheus Instituut in Ghent.

Orpheus Instituut is committed to diversity and welcomes applications from researchers of all backgrounds whose work demonstrates exceptional promise for advancing artistic research in music.

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