

The background is a complex collage of various images. It includes a close-up of a person's face with vibrant, multi-colored paint (red, blue, purple) applied to their skin. Another section shows a person's face with blue hair and a red face mask. There are also abstract, painterly textures in shades of purple, red, and blue. The overall aesthetic is artistic and contemporary.

swiss arts council  
**prohelvetia**

# PROSA

Annual report



## COVER

- 1 The exhibition project «puzzled», featuring works by Swiss artist Xénia Laffely, was shown at Kunstraum Niederösterreich in Vienna.
- 2 Under the label «Design Switzerland», ten up-and-coming Swiss design studios presented their projects at «Milan Design Week».

Every year, Pro Helvetia publishes the projects it has supported or undertaken during the reporting period under «Supported Projects». This online database enables users to search for individuals and institutions that have received support, as well as for project types, event locations and the amount of funding awarded.



3 Initiated by the Maison du Futur, «Corona Stages» enabled exhibition visitors to experience culture through using digital technologies. Image: Swiss author Katja Brunner.





4 The transdisciplinary festival «Foodculture Days» in Vevey serves as a networking and exchange platform dealing with food, art and society.



5 Cultural practitioners from Brazil and Switzerland jointly mounted a project-based online exhibition titled «Tech Art Lab Sessions». Image: a work by Gabriel Junqueira.



«Two years of the pandemic have disrupted my activities more than I could have imagined at first. The widespread uncertainty, also with regard to artistic residencies, confronted me with the need to find new ways of creating, developing contacts and doing artistic research. I have never had to be as flexible, tenacious and optimistic as during this period, for example, by relying even more on Swiss institutions, and by acting locally while trying to think globally.»

ALAN BOGANA

The pandemic forced Swiss artist Alan Bogana to move his residency in Hong Kong online.







7 At the «Bivouac» exhibition on «La Rasude» industrial site in Lausanne, Gailing Rickling Architects explored a building's technically sensitive load-bearing structure.



8 Andy Storchenegger created the video installation «Nobody is Okay» jointly with the poet Marita Banda and local performers during his 2021 residency in Zambia.



# VULNERABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY: TOGETHER INTO THE FUTURE

## CHARLES BEER, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The year 2021 ended with a sense of déjà vu. In the face of the pandemic, uncertainty continues to persist. The back and forth between protecting lives and pursuing activities, between individual freedom and collective responsibility remains the focus of attention and debate.

Culture, by virtue of its capacity to question the profoundest aspects of our realities, is essential to social cohesion. For the past two years, it has played a central role in the discussions and decisions on which its fate directly depends, while its actors are seeking to adapt amid restrictions, deprivations and sometimes even contradictions.

Through its far-reaching network of offices around the world, Pro Helvetia has been able to observe the global dimension of the crisis and to gauge both the uniformity and the discrepancies between the decisions and measures taken in various countries, which have highlighted first and foremost the unbearable inequality across all domains.

Amid this uncertainty, Pro Helvetia remains firmly committed to supporting cultural practitioners. By adapting its formats and measures, the Swiss Arts Council has been able to provide relevant and ongoing support throughout the crisis.

**Culture, by virtue of its capacity to question the profoundest aspects of our realities, is essential to social cohesion.**



9 Charles Beer, Chairman of the Board of Trustees

As Chairman of the Board of Trustees, I wish to express my deepest gratitude to all the members of our network, in Southern Africa, South America, South Asia, China, the Arab region, Russia, Paris, Venice and Zurich, for their outstanding work and commitment. We are proud of all of you.

None of us knows what tomorrow will bring, or how long the current instability will last. To remain effective and sustainable, the work of the Swiss Arts Council will need to be able to adapt to continually changing circumstances.



10 Philippe Bischof, Director

## PHILIPPE BISCHOF, DIRECTOR

Yet again, we are looking back on twelve confusing months and feel as if we were treading water. We are also beginning to resign ourselves to the fact that the pandemic is here to stay, a permanent companion whom we will not be ridding ourselves of anytime soon. «If I had to say what has most defined my life during the pandemic, it was this strange implosion of time», writes Daniel Schreiber in his commendable essay «Allein» (Alone).

For the professional cultural sector, which is per se mobile and globally networked and thrives on many people coming together, this poses multiple challenges. With an impressive mixture of improvisation, crisis management skills and pioneering spirit, many actors in the cultural sector have so far managed to safeguard their existence, albeit with painful losses. In Switzerland, governmental and private support have contributed to this survival. Let us not forget, however, that beyond our borders circumstances have unfortunately been far from stable everywhere: very different political and economic situations threaten cultural creation and cultural heritage, structurally and socially. We are observing these developments with great concern.

**The pandemic has ruthlessly exposed the vulnerabilities of the system and its actors, which we must now face together.**

In addition to the pandemic and its consequences, several pivotal issues have made themselves felt due to the fragility of the past months: social security, fair working conditions, programme and staff diversity, decolonisation of the canon. Other central concerns include equal opportunities, abuse-free structures and ecological sustainability. These political and social force fields are – quite rightly – contributing in their own forceful way to creating a certain pressure for change in the cultural sector.

Steeled by years or even decades of precarious existence, cultural practitioners and institutions are amazingly adept at keeping sight of the bigger picture, besides having the courage to raise their voices. And yet, we cannot overlook the fact that fatigue and uncertainty have also set in within the cultural system, associated with the imponderables of everyday life: unpredictable audience behaviour, uncertain financial conditions, changing travel restrictions and the demands of maintaining a feasible work-life balance. The pandemic has ruthlessly exposed the vulnerabilities of the system and its actors, which we must now face together.

As the Swiss Arts Council, our responsibilities include wisely balancing reliability and flexibility and actively contributing to developing a more sustainable funding policy. The positive experiences of the pandemic are helping us in this respect: the knowledge and skills we have acquired through ongoing dialogue with many actors during the transformation phase are enabling us to move confidently, consciously and cautiously into what we hope will be a better future.

One day, with the benefit of hindsight, we will probably be able to say that this was an epoch-making time, one which also initiated positive changes in the cultural system. Until then, however, we must take the prevailing uncertainty and lack of plannability seriously. The cultural sector is part of larger transformational dynamics and shifts in society, politics and the economy. It is therefore even more important that we prudently plan those measures and changes that are needed to interconnect cultures inside and outside of Switzerland thanks to committed cultural practitioners and our partner institutions.

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# I. FOCUS SWITZER- LAND

Supporting Swiss artistic creation in all its diversity and ensuring its dissemination across Switzerland's different language regions, both on the basis of applications, are Pro Helvetia's core activities. The Arts Council is also committed to providing cultural life with fresh impetus and to supporting projects of national significance.



# SAMPLE PROJECTS

In 2021, Pro Helvetia supported over 2500 art and cultural projects throughout Switzerland. Taken together, these projects reflect the diversity of contemporary artistic and cultural creation while expressing social developments and issues. This year, too, the pandemic drastically impacted the cultural sector. Although events were able to take place again, at least for a short time, the entire year was marked by great uncertainty. Cultural practitioners and institutions were forced to constantly develop new strategies and formats in order to be able to pursue their projects. To provide the best possible support during this challenging transformation phase, the Arts Council launched a set of measures called «Bridges to the Future». Funding in the various disciplines was adapted to the prevailing circumstances and, in addition, extraordinary calls for proposals were launched in all of the disciplines funded by the Arts Council, with a focus on new models of dissemination, visibility and networking.

Through its **WORK GRANTS**, Pro Helvetia makes a significant contribution to a diverse and high-quality range of contemporary creation in the performing arts, design, interactive media, literature, music, comics, visual arts and transdisciplinarity. In 2021, the Arts Council expanded its work grants in several areas. New measures include funding authors not writing in one of Switzerland's national languages, such as Sreten Ugričić, who submitted a project for a novel written in Serbo-Croatian. In music, production grants in the field of sound art and music theatre have also been awarded since 2021. The calls for work grants in the fields of design and interactive media were also successful, as were research and production grants for transdisciplinary projects, for example, the project «Flüchtiges Eis» (Fleeting Ice) by Sabine Harbeke, Regula Imboden and Margrit Schwikowski.

Pro Helvetia **PROMOTES ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE** between the regions of Switzerland. The exhibitions, theatre and dance performances, festivals, concert series, translations or folklife

events supported by the Arts Council establish links between the different languages and cultural communities, as well as contribute to strengthening social cohesion. As part of the extraordinary set of measures «Bridges to the Future», the A\*dS was mandated in 2021 to conduct workshops and courses on digital presence and self-marketing for authors from Switzerland. Support was also granted to the 25th Leukerbad International Literature Festival, whose anniversary edition focused on Swiss literature. In the visual arts, the Arts Council contributed to the exhibition of Swiss artist Vanessa Billy at Kunsthaus Pasquart in Biel. Besides tracing the development of her work over the last 15 years, the exhibition also provided insights into her exploration of different materials, as well as addressed ecological themes and the energy crisis.

Pro Helvetia supports **EMERGING ARTISTS** and helps them gain a foothold in their professional scenes. Together with its partner institutions, Pro Helvetia offers residencies and coaching programmes, as well as grants for public pres-

entations and promotional measures. In 2021, Pro Helvetia supported the five-week workshop and research programme «Atlas – create your dance trails» for emerging choreographers. One visual project that received support as part of «Bridges to the Future» was the «Bivouac» exhibition, an artistic exploration of «La Rasude», an industrial site in Lausanne. Artists, architects and collectives presented, among other things, visions of a new living environment. Support was also granted to the «International Young Composers Academy» project, an international meeting in Lugano offering young composers the opportunity to exchange ideas, learn from each other and create works together.

Pro Helvetia responds to issues and trends in contemporary artistic creation and backs innovative projects able to provide **FRESH CULTURAL STIMULUS** in Switzerland. To address

the ongoing constraints in the field of music, the «work in progress» call for applications focused on supporting musical creation, research processes and the development of new presentation formats. In addition, as part of «Bridges to the Future», literary publishers were supported in strengthening their digital skills with the «Digitalitera» project. In summer 2021, the results of «Geschlechterverhältnisse im Kulturbetrieb» (Gender relations in the cultural sector), a study conducted by the Centre for Gender Studies at the University of Basel on behalf of Pro Helvetia and the Swiss Center for Social Research, were presented. The study shows that women are significantly underrepresented in many areas of the Swiss cultural sector, with marked differences between sectors.

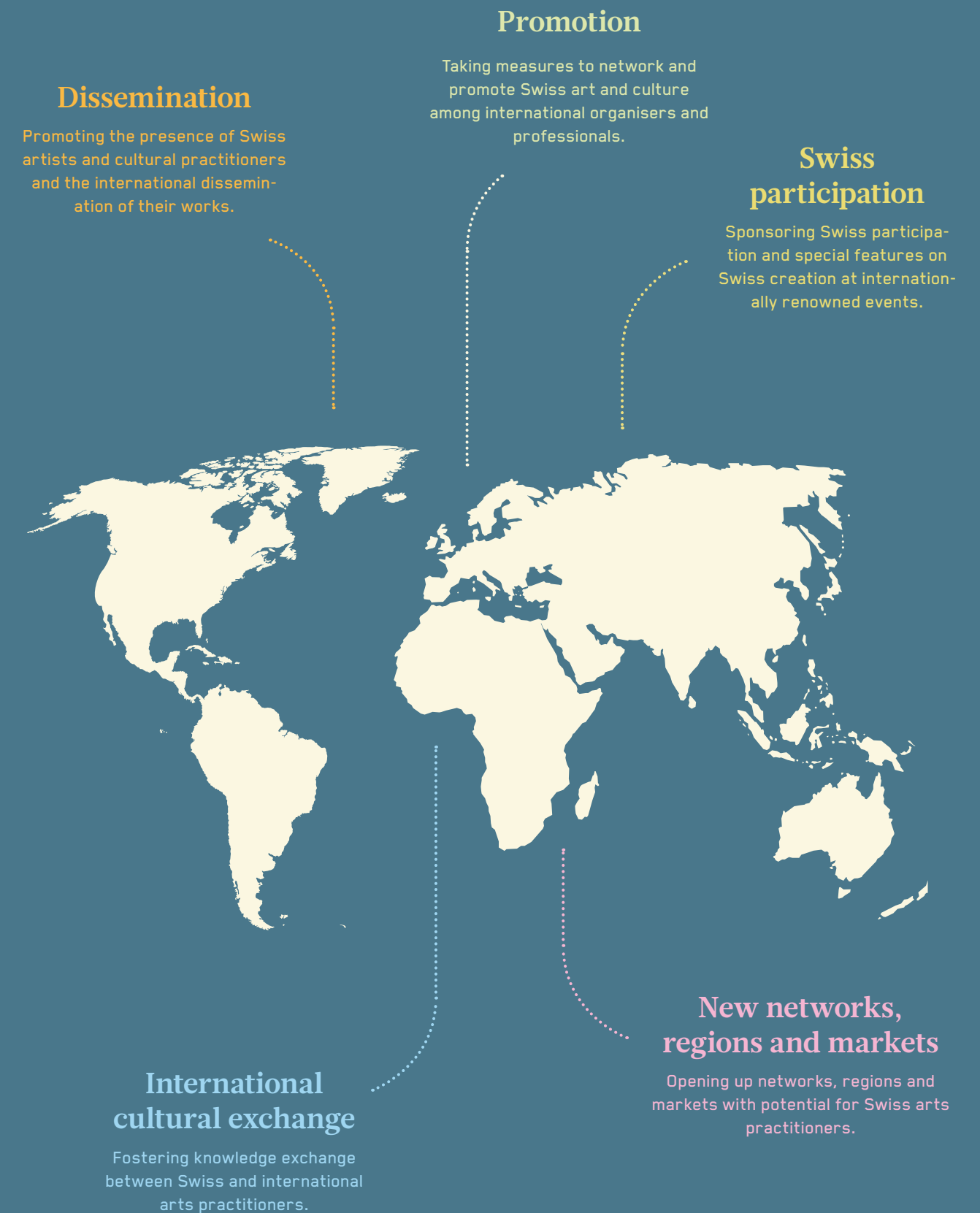
**Cultural practitioners and institutions were forced to constantly develop new strategies and formats to be able to pursue their projects.**

Pro Helvetia supports **CULTURAL OUTREACH** projects that are exemplary, demonstrate an innovative approach and encourage critical reflection on art and culture. Launched in 2021, the seven-part podcast series «Art meets ...» invites cultural practitioners, scientists and academics to exchange ideas on diverse topics such as astronomy, biohacking or robotics as part of the focus on «Art, Science and Technology». In view of the new orientation of art education in the sense of «critical reflection», the Arts Council developed a call for proposals titled «Multiply Perspectives». Starting in 2022, the call aims to discover innovative ways of enhancing critical reflection on art and culture and their function in society.



# II. FOCUS INTER- NATIONAL

Pro Helvetia awards grants to cultural projects from Switzerland that are presented worldwide. In this way, the Arts Council promotes contemporary art and culture from Switzerland across the world. Through its global network, Pro Helvetia supports the development of professional, international networks in all artistic disciplines supported by the Arts Council and strengthens international cultural exchange and cooperation.





# SAMPLE PROJECTS

In 2021, Pro Helvetia supported over 2400 art and cultural projects in 100 countries as part of its international activities. Severely restricted mobility continued to pose major challenges for international cooperation in 2021. In addition, the pandemic highlighted the extent to which structural inequalities are profoundly shaping the arts and culture worldwide. With «To-gather», Pro Helvetia therefore launched an international call for proposals for the first time, in order to test new forms and methods of promoting international cooperation between Swiss cultural institutions.

Pro Helvetia **PROMOTES THE DISSEMINATION** of works by artists and cultural practitioners from Switzerland who are invited by recognised institutions, event organisers or festivals abroad. To this end, the Arts Council awards grants to theatre and dance productions, concert tours, reading tours, exhibitions and translations of projects from Switzerland. In 2021, the Ruhr-triennale featured a Swiss focus. Among others, audiences could experience Edu Haubensak's «Grosse Stimmung» (Grand Atmosphere), a musical cycle for ten differently tuned grand pianos or a series of debates including readings and talks on «Die Natur des Menschen» (Human Nature), curated and moderated by Lukas Bärfuss. In 2021, the «Sélection Suisse en Avignon», the Swiss platform at the Avignon OFF Festival, went ahead again after a year's break due to the pandemic. The programme included Muriel Imbach's «À l'envers, à l'endroit» (Backwards, forwards), a children's play which stands the stereotypical gender roles in fairy tales on their head.

Through its wide range of **PROMOTIONAL MEASURES**, Pro Helvetia helps to raise the profile of art and culture from Switzerland among organisers abroad. In 2021, the Arts Council enabled ten up-and-coming design studios to present their projects at the renowned «Milan Design Week». The young studios also benefitted from matchmaking with important industry partners. At WOMEX (Worldwide Music Expo), the international conference of the global music scene, held in Porto

in 2021, Pro Helvetia and the FONDATION SUISA organised a joint booth to promote music from Switzerland.

Pro Helvetia organises and sponsors **SWISS PARTICIPATION** and special features on Swiss creation at numerous internationally renowned events, fairs and biennials. The Swiss focus at «ImPulsTanz – Vienna International Dance Festival», the important festival for contemporary dance already scheduled for the previous year, went ahead in 2021. Fourteen Swiss dance productions presented the breadth of the contemporary Swiss dance scene. At the 17th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia, the «oræ – Experiences on the Border» exhibition by a Genevan project team consisting of Mounir Ayoub, Vanessa Lacaille, Fabrice Aragno and Pierre Szczepski was held at the Swiss Pavilion. The exhibition combined the physical reality of the national border with political and social contexts, drawing a new picture of border areas. Involving cooperation across languages, the «European Poetry Festival» in London presented contemporary poetry, among others by Clea Chopard, Rolf Hermann and Baptiste Gaillard, who read new works in tandem with local authors.

Pro Helvetia promotes exchange with other cultures through **RESIDENCIES, KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND COOPERATIONS**. These formats and measures enable cultural practitioners from Switzerland to expand their networks, learn about new cultural

contexts and broaden their professional experience. For example, the two-year project «Locus Globus», in which cultural practitioners from South Africa and Switzerland invite local communities to help shape the multidisciplinary programme of festivals in both countries, was selected as part of the extraordinary «To-gather» call for proposals. As was the project «with the field»: a collective of artists from India, Bangladesh, Brazil, Mexico and Switzerland, working in eco-rural contexts, explored different artistic practices in a two-year interlocal exchange. In addition, the residency and

exchange programme «Connect» was launched in 2021 in association with Arts at CERN. Cooperation is intended to help strengthen dialogue between art and science at an international level.

The pandemic has highlighted the extent to which structural inequalities are profoundly shaping the arts and culture worldwide.

Finally, Pro Helvetia focuses on **NEW NETWORKS, REGIONS AND MARKETS** having the potential to promote more intensive exchange and a stronger presence of art and culture from Switzerland. Central to this initiative is developing and

maintaining partnerships with regional organisers. To meet the current need for online presence, Pro Helvetia launched a call for applications titled «Design Switzerland Matchbox: Industry Connect»: eight Swiss design studios had the opportunity to strengthen their digital competencies and were introduced to several potential industry partners. Due to inter-

active media events being cancelled because of the pandemic, the mentoring programme «SwissGames Showcase» was launched in 2020. In 2021, it was revised and a new call for applications was launched: Swiss studios presented themselves to an international jury of experts in virtual interviews. Jury members subsequently mentored the selected studios online and introduced them to potential industry partners in their network.



# GLOBAL NETWORK

Our global network enables artists and cultural practitioners from Switzerland to attend important events. It also promotes exchange and cooperation with local cultural institutions and artists.

Pro Helvetia’s global network comprises six liaison offices and the Centre culturel suisse in Paris (CCS), as well as the partner institutions Istituto Svizzero in Rome and Milan (ISR) and the Swiss Institute in New York (SINY).

## Liaison offices

To expand its activities beyond the Anglo-Saxon and European cultural geographies, Pro Helvetia has set up liaison offices over the past thirty years: in the Arab region (Cairo, 1988), Southern Africa (Johannesburg, 1998), Southern Asia (New Delhi, 2007), China (Shanghai, 2010), Russia (Moscow, 2017) and, for the first time, a decentralised office in four South American cities (Bogotá, Buenos Aires, Santiago, São Paulo, 2021). In 2021, the liaison offices in Moscow and Johannesburg also moved towards decentralisation, with a total of three employees now working permanently in Yekaterinburg and in West and East Africa, respectively. Pro Helvetia’s liaison offices are thus active in very different cultural and political contexts. They bring together cultural practitioners from Switzerland with ones from their local regions and promote dialogue between different cultural regions. The activities of the offices are the responsibility of local staff, who observe and actively engage in developing new artistic networks, practices and discourses in their regions. The liaison offices support projects run by local partners in all the artistic disciplines funded by Pro Helvetia. They also facilitate research trips and residencies for cultural practitioners in Switzerland or in the respective regions. In the reporting year, in which all regions were severely affected by the pandemic, the liaison offices specifically strengthened their partnerships and tested new formats for cultural exchange and artistic cooperation.

## Centre culturel suisse in Paris (CCS)

The Centre culturel suisse in Paris (CSS), run by Pro Helvetia, presents contemporary Swiss art and culture, in particular in the performing arts, music and visual arts. The CSS also promotes relations between the Swiss and French art and culture scenes. With two exhibition spaces, a stage and a bookshop, the Centre offers a platform to artists from various disciplines.

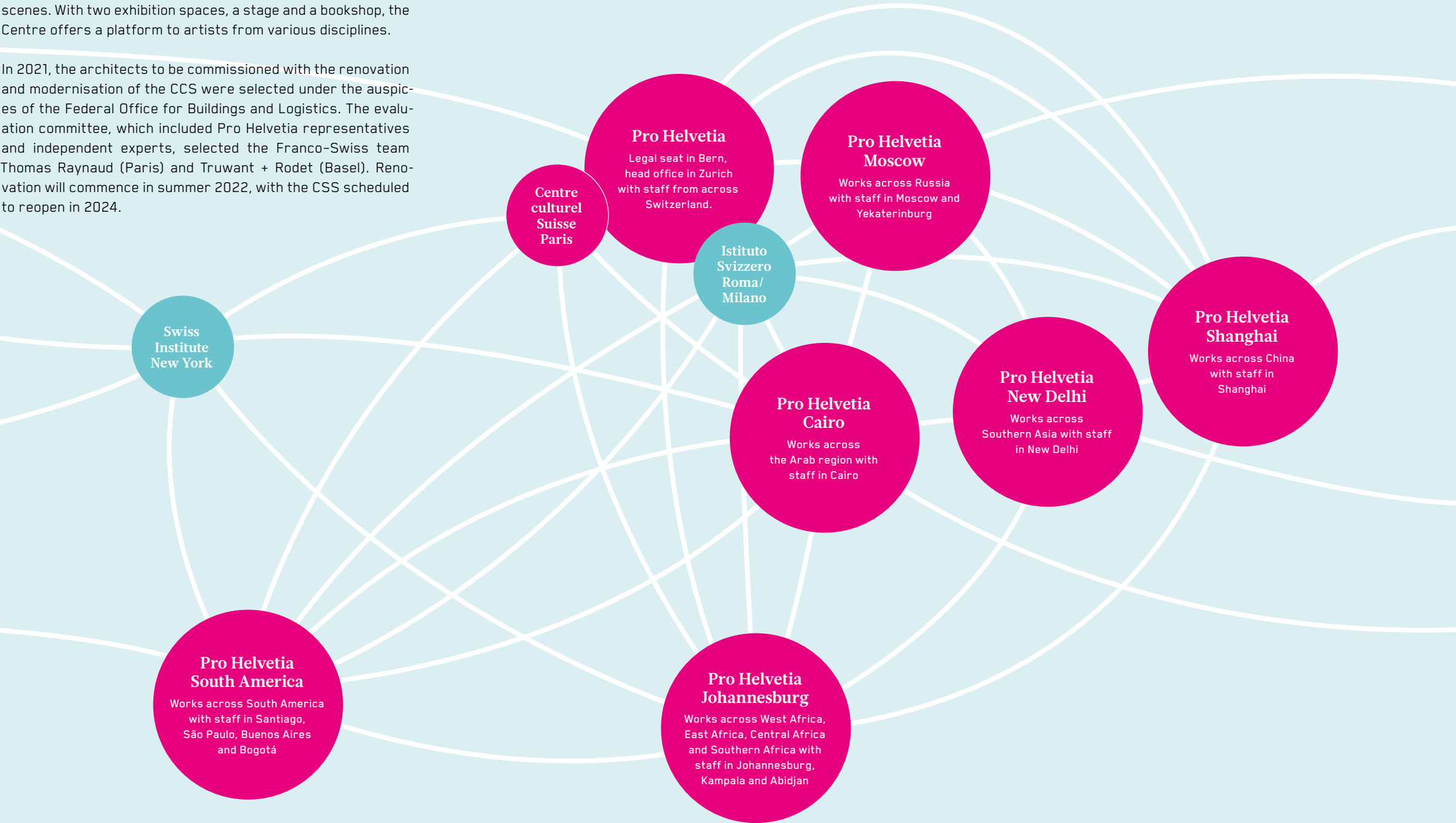
In 2021, the architects to be commissioned with the renovation and modernisation of the CCS were selected under the auspices of the Federal Office for Buildings and Logistics. The evaluation committee, which included Pro Helvetia representatives and independent experts, selected the Franco-Swiss team Thomas Raynaud (Paris) and Truwant + Rodet (Basel). Renovation will commence in summer 2022, with the CSS scheduled to reopen in 2024.

OUR MISSION ABROAD

## Partner institutions

Based on performance agreements, Pro Helvetia contributes substantially to the cultural programmes of two Swiss institutions abroad: the Istituto Svizzero (IS) in Rome (and its branch in Milan) and the Swiss Institute in New York. The Arts Council also cooperates with Swissnex in San Francisco on a project basis.

In 2021, Pro Helvetia launched a programme of events and residencies at Palazzo Trevisan degli Ulivi with a focus on experimental and site-specific artistic creation. As part of this programme, six thematic residencies for Swiss artists in Venice were announced for the first time.





# SAMPLE PROJECTS

The pandemic still poses a major challenge for international cooperation. Pro Helvetia's global network with its long-term relationships and partnerships thus proved to be even more important. 2021 was characterised on the one hand by efforts aiming to strengthen existing cooperations and maintain exchange despite numerous restrictions. On the other hand, the need to find and test new formats and opportunities for sustainable international cooperation was recognised. The «To-gather» call for applications, launched by the Arts Council for the first time, aimed to support new or ongoing long-term international cooperation projects between cultural practitioners and cultural institutions in Switzerland and the global network, and thereby to strengthen existing ties and forge new partnerships.

In 2021, **PRO HELVETIA JOHANNESBURG** supported the «Voices of Nairobi» project of the Nairobi Musical Theatre Initiative: fourteen radio plays were produced in virtual workshops led by radio play director and dramatic adviser Erik Altorfer. The project inspired Altorfer to organise further workshops for Ugandan participants during Kampala International Theatre Festival. Initiated by Pro Helvetia South America, the «IN/OUT-Festival» crossed continents in its second edition: the liaison offices in South America and Johannesburg collaborated with three festivals in Brazil (Novas Frequências), Uganda (Nyege Nyege) and Switzerland (Sonic Matter), as well as with several cultural practitioners from the respective regions, in order to experiment with new forms of artistic collaboration. The online programme involved a virtual experience featuring concerts, video art and DJ sessions and reached over 3500 viewers.

Supported by **PRO HELVETIA CAIRO**, the Institut Français in Lebanon, the Lyon BD Festival and local comic artists organised the Beyrouth BD Festival to present contemporary French-language comics in various formats, including works by Swiss art-

ist Hélène Becquelin. The «TRANSMITTING VOICES» project brought together electronic and traditional musicians from Switzerland and Algeria through a digital forum, a week-long residency in Switzerland and three concerts. The project is linked to the Polyfon Festival Basel, a meeting place for lovers of contemporary music from Switzerland and across the world that contributes to sustaining artistic exchange in the field.

**PRO HELVETIA MOSCOW** supported an exhibition and exchange forum on technological and digital art at Moscow's «Experimental Music and Art (EMA) Expo 2021». Eleven artists and four curators from Switzerland, Russia and Argentina presented sculptural media objects and digital, sonic and biological art. Support was also granted to the international chamber music festival «Asia – Siberia – Europe» in Krasnoyarsk, which aims to build a bridge between East and West in Siberia. Every year, traditional instruments from different countries are presented; in 2021, this was the alphorn. The Swiss focus at the «Ural Industrial Biennial of Contemporary Art» in Yekaterinburg was also supported, for which Swiss artists Alan Alpenfelt, Hannah Weinberger, Olivia

Wiederkehr, Jerome Leuba and Florence Jung created or adapted special projects.

In 2021, **PRO HELVETIA NEW DELHI** supported, among others, the project «Let me tell you a story»: Swiss illustrators and Indian storytellers brought to life selected children's stories from South Asia and shared these with the audience visually and acoustically. In the field of culture, science and technology, the liaison office supported the «Be-Fantastic Together» project: the festival brought together artists and technology experts from Switzerland and southern Asia to explore artificial intelligence, machine learning, data and networks surrounding the climate crisis. Swiss artist Marc Lee served as a project mentor while Swiss experts such as Giulia Bini, Fragmentin and Boris Magrini contributed to panel discussions.

**PRO HELVETIA SHANGHAI** supported the exhibition «La Mode en Vert», held during Shanghai Fashion Week, to promote exchange between the Chinese and Swiss fashion industries around the topic of sustainability. Six Swiss fashion labels presented their latest collections to a Chinese trade audience. Supported by the Shanghai office, Birdly presented its «Paradise Lost» project at the 13th Shanghai Biennale devoted to «Bodies of Water». Wearing a full-body diving simulator, visitors delved into the deep ocean as sea turtles, with the experience making them even more aware of the importance of marine conservation. Through its contribution to the «Sound and Fury International Playwrights Translation & Exchange Program», the office also facilitated the translation of five Swiss theatre scripts into Chinese. The translated works were presented at readings in Shanghai.

Supported by **PRO HELVETIA SOUTH AMERICA**, and organised by the International Dance Biennale in Cali, the Swiss «Compagnie 7273» toured four cities in Colombia with its production «NUIT». The seven dancers used symbolic mathematical elements to create a ritual choreography. Support was also granted to Valentina Pini's video installation «Bosque Marino», shown as part of the

group exhibition «Consciencia» (Consciousness) at the «15. Bienal de Artes Mediales» in Santiago. In a large-format projection, carvings and ornaments in furniture were contrasted with natural forms. Pini researched the materials during her residency at the «Casa-Museo Alberto Baeriswyl» (CAB) in Patagonia, which was also made possible by Pro Helvetia South America.

In 2021, the **CENTRE CULTUREL SUISSE (CCS)** in Paris organised a panel discussion where Swiss graphic designers Adeline Mollard and Katharina Reidy presented and reflected on their work. The CCS also presented a major exhibition of works

by Swiss artist Manon: photographic series, photo performances, films and installations offered comprehensive insights into the artist's work, which focuses in particular on feminism and the role of women in the sexual revolution. In winter, Garrett Nelson's performance «Anacrónica III: The Mesmeric Sermons of the Nudists» was shown at the CCS. The performance formed

part of a cross-institutional project exploring the legacy of the late artist Cathy Josefowitz (1956–2014).

The year was shaped by efforts aiming to strengthen existing cooperations and maintain exchange despite numerous restrictions.





path. You squint your eyes and for  
ke eternity you open your eyes to  
your feet. Warm gusts of wind blo

stands at attention and invites  
u're having trouble with.





**«The continuing disconnection reminds us of the structural conditions that cultural connection and mobility are based on, and how fragile they are. It is time to reflect on the ways we are connected to others, to distant places, and the reasons for connecting in the first place. It is also time to overcome the fear of being slow. We are talking about slow travelling, slow touring, and all the nice things that can only be built over time.»**

OPHELIA JIADAI HUANG  
Artist, curator, Director of international projects,  
Shanghai Dramatic Arts Centre, China







14 As part of her research project on local print history in Dhaka, Swiss artist Mara Züst conducted a series of workshops with local Bangladeshi artists.



15 At the transdisciplinary festival «Open Source Body», artists and professionals from the health sector and biomedical research exchanged ideas.



# III. FACTS AND FIGURES

Of the CHF 43.0 million available to Pro Helvetia in 2021, 86.3 per cent were invested directly in the arts and cultural activities. At 13.7 per cent, the share of administrative costs lay within the strategic target set by the Federal Council. In 2021, Pro Helvetia received a total of 5041 applications. The proportion of approved applications rose again to 48.8 per cent, the average figure in the pre-Covid period.

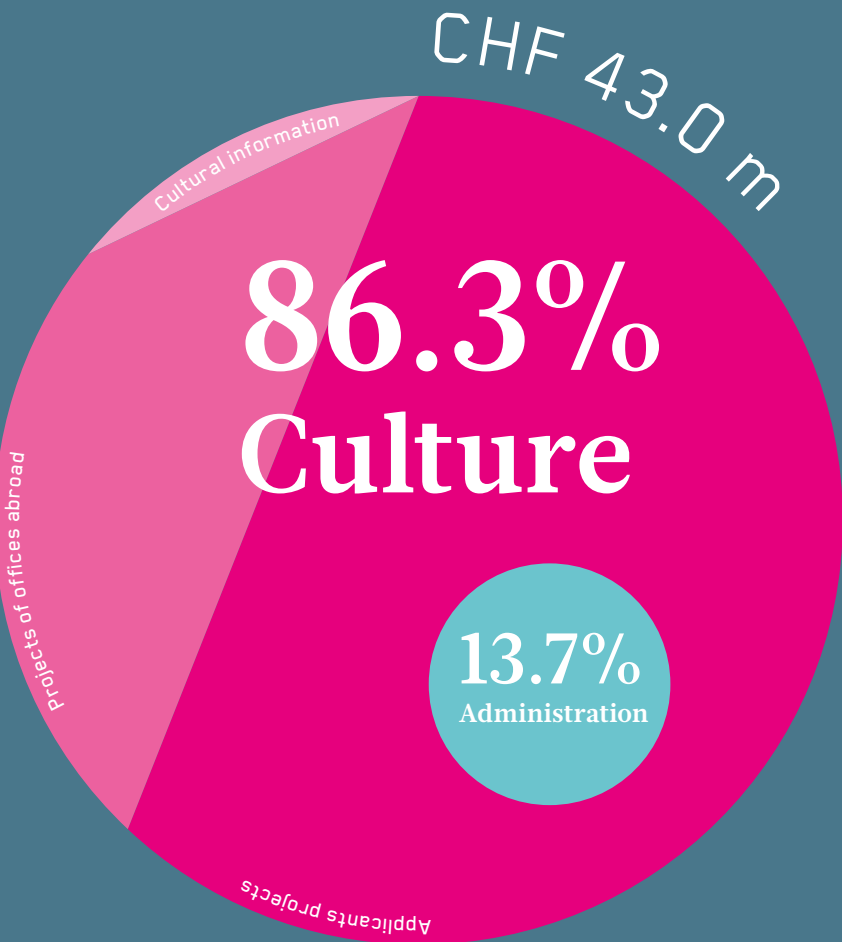
## Culture as the highest priority

Of the CHF 43.0 million spent by Pro Helvetia in 2021, 86.3 per cent went directly to cultural activities. At 13.7 per cent, the share of administrative costs, calculated based on the ZEWO standard, remained within the strategic target set by the Federal Council.

Applicants projects	28.9 m
Projects of offices abroad	7.5 m
Cultural information	0.7 m
Administration	5.9 m

### Amounts spent in CHF

In the context of the Federal Cultural Policy Statement (Kulturbotschaft), Swiss Parliament grants Pro Helvetia a framework budget every four years. For the four-year period 2021-2024, the Arts Council received 180.4 million Swiss francs. The 2021 instalment amounted to CHF 43.0 million.





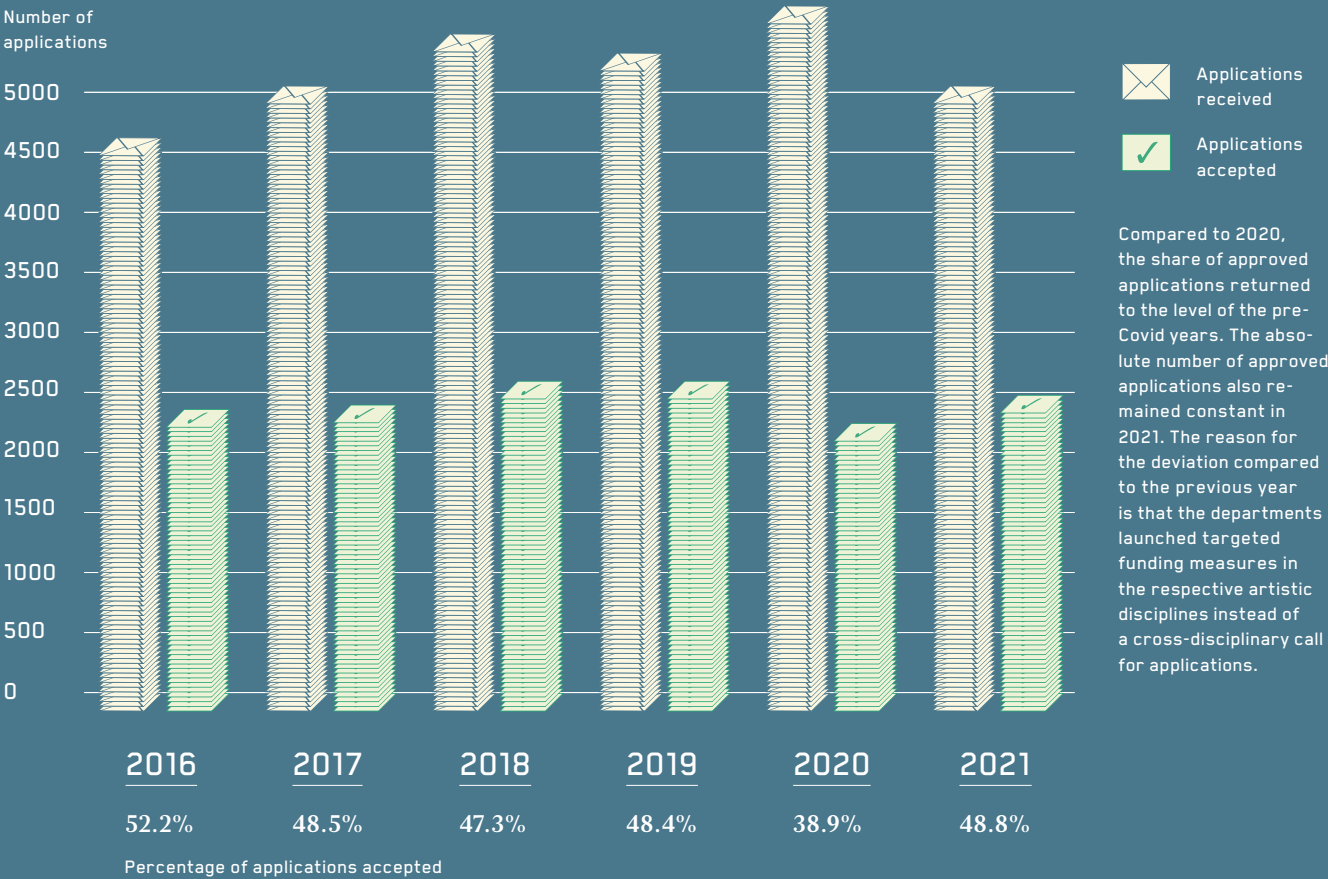
Overview of applications received

In 2021, Pro Helvetia received 5041 applications. Support was granted to projects in the fields of Design & Interactive Media, Literature, Music, Performing Arts, Transdisciplinarity and Visual Arts.

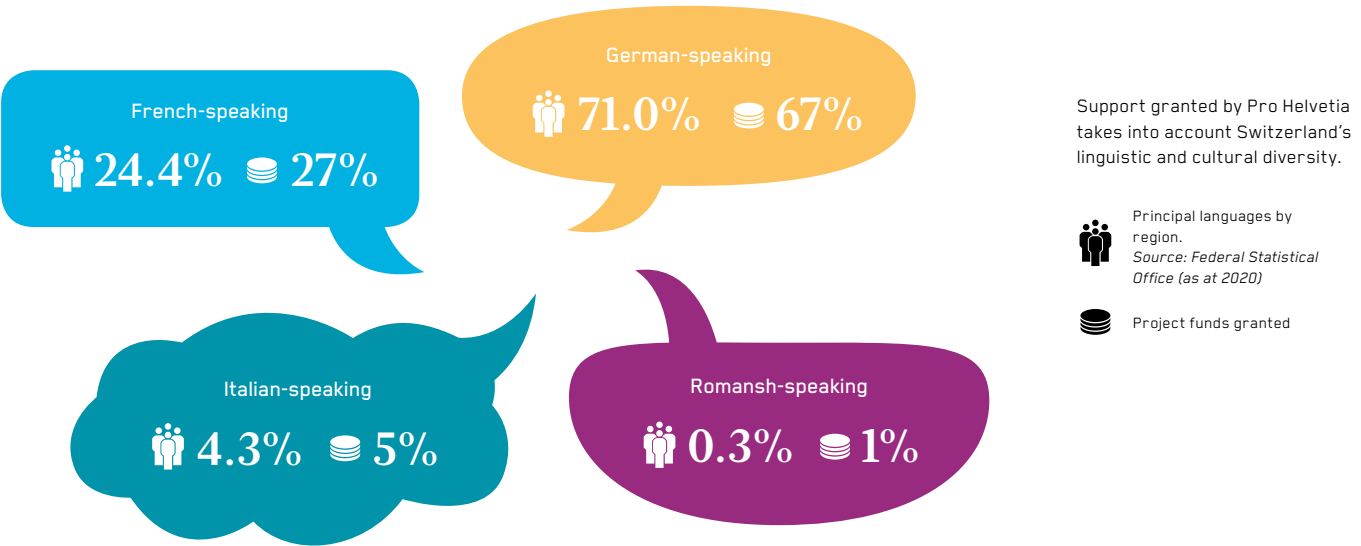
In 2021, one Pro Helvetia funding decision was appealed at the Federal Administrative Court. The ruling was still pending as of 31 December 2021.



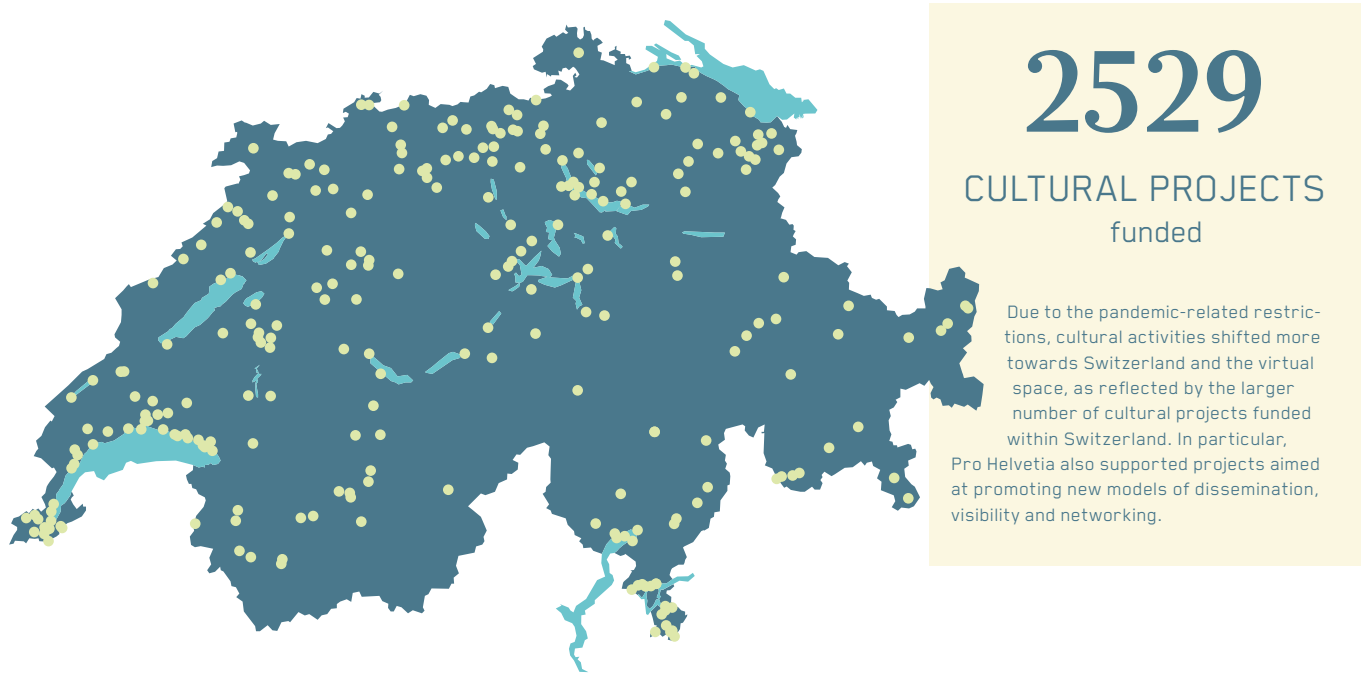
Development of the number of applications



Supporting linguistic diversity



Funding by national region

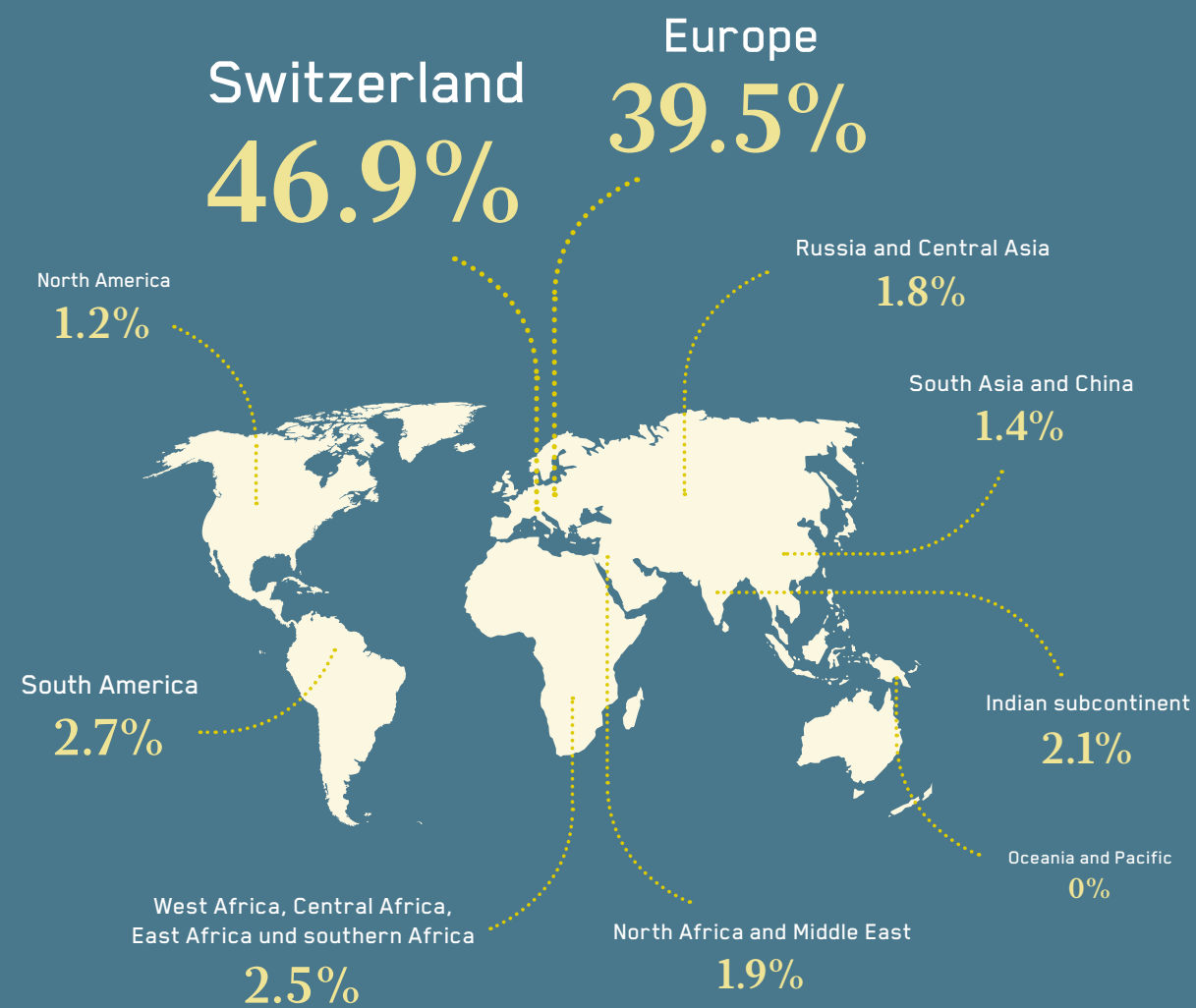




## Promoting Swiss culture around the world

Besides its domestic activities, in 2021 Pro Helvetia supported over 2400 Swiss art and cultural projects in 100 countries.

Supported projects by world region:



«The intentional lack of events and in-person communication, as well as the loneliness that comes from being abroad long-term, awakened deep layers of reflection. Both on the level of personal artistic practices and on the level of the country one is exploring. This makes a residency fruitful even under Covid regulations: fewer temptations to be distracted, more mental freedom and inner permission to spend a lot more time on the actual process.»

ALENA PAPINA

The Russian artist spent a 2021 residency at Rote Fabrik.



16 At its 2021 «Manon» exhibition, the CCS also presented the artist's early work «Das lachsfarbene Boudoir» (The Salmon Boudoir) (1974), which creates a tension between intimate space and staging.



# IV. EVALUATION

Pro Helvetia regularly evaluates its core commitments and measures. In 2021, due to the special situation caused by the pandemic and the corresponding adjustments to its funding instruments, the Arts Council did not evaluate its established measures, but instead evaluated two important special measures developed in response to the extraordinary circumstances: the «Bridges to the Future» set of measures and the «To-gather» call for applications. Evaluations provide important information on the effectiveness and appropriateness of the special measures and indicate any need to adjust future funding practice.

## Bridges to the Future

«Bridges to the Future» measures were developed jointly with cultural practitioners in order to provide relevant alternative support to the cultural sector, which has been severely affected by Covid-19. The measures ranged, for example, from contributions to artistic research in the fields of performing arts and music to the promotion of digital skills and the implementation of measures to support studios in the field of interactive media in developing marketing strategies, most of which were successful thanks to this integrative approach. This is evidenced by the 320 or so applications received for research funding in the fields of music and the performing arts, or the 150 or so cultural actors who were supported in building their digital skills. In some cases, the feedback and lessons learned were so positive that it was decided to integrate the new measures into the «product» portfolio of the disciplines in question for the coming years.

## To-gather

In 2021, the pandemic continued to profoundly influence the cultural sector globally, posing a risk to the continuity of established partnerships and existing artistic practices. The Pro Helvetia mandate, to promote and foster exchange between Swiss and regional cultural contexts, depends directly on the «health» of regional cultural scenes. With «To-gather», Pro Helvetia aimed to foster connections between Swiss and international artists and cultural practitioners, in order to maintain the existing professional networks and to establish new ones during and beyond the pandemic. Artists and collectives were encouraged to submit collaborative projects lasting 2–3 years and involving partners in Switzerland and at least one liaison office.

The open call generated a total of 133 submissions, with 31 applications selected in various artistic fields, including multidisciplinary projects, and regions: Arab region 5 (out of 15 submissions), Southern Africa 8 (37), South Asia 7 (28), China 3 (14), Russia 3 (13), South America 6 (26). Many applications proposed projects seeking to further explore possibilities for digital and hybrid collaborations. There was a clear interest in reflecting on the future of residency exchanges so as to nurture international connections. Finally, the call also received an increasing number of applications for research-based projects taking longer to complete.

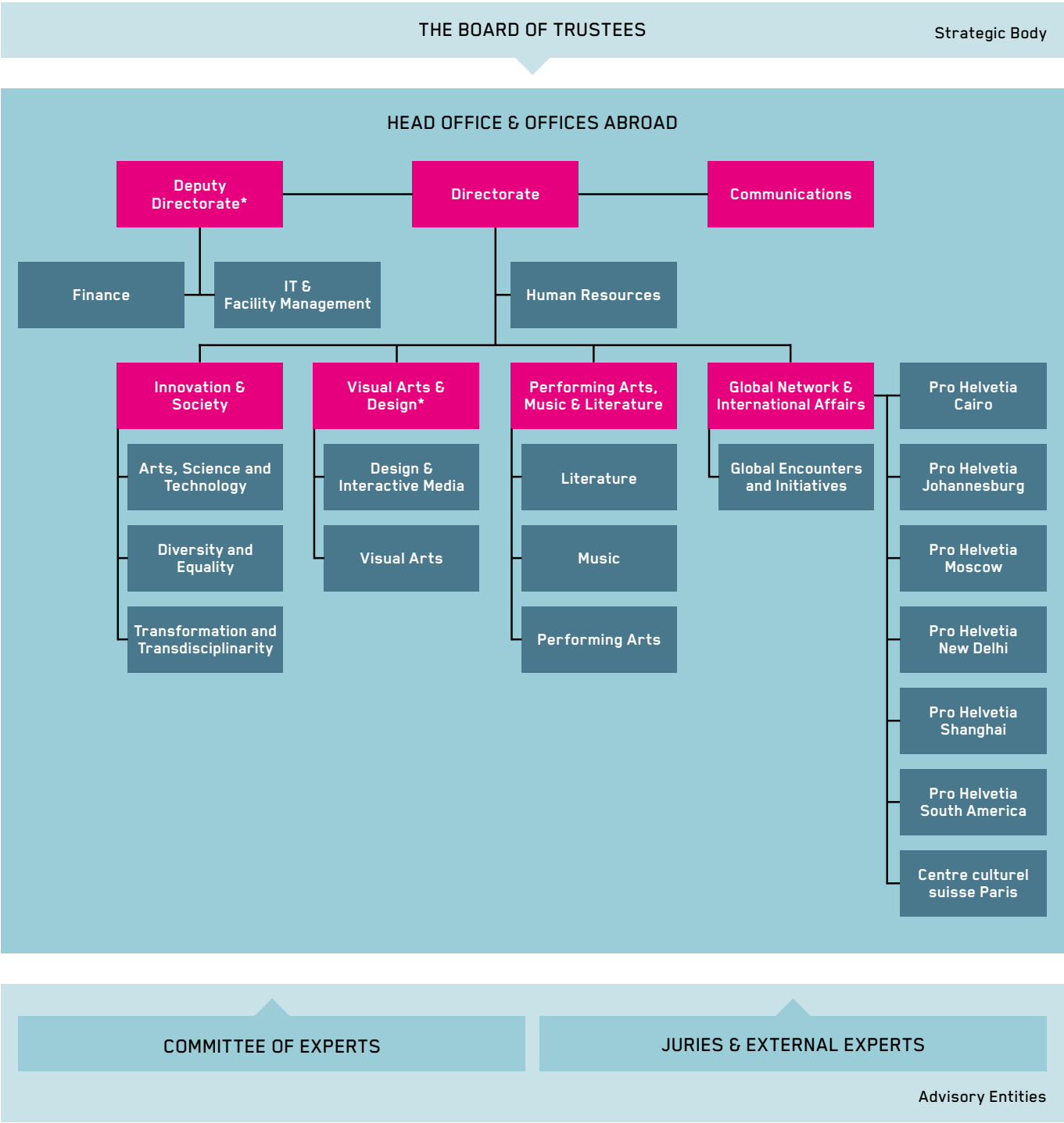
The call attracted a wide range of partners and generated great interest. This shows that the proposed measures respond to issues of relevance to artists and organisations from both the Swiss and international cultural contexts.



# V. ORGANISATION

The Board of Trustees, chaired by former Geneva State Councillor Charles Beer, is responsible for the Art Council’s strategy and governance. The head office, under Director Philippe Bischof, and its 118 staff in Switzerland and abroad ensure that the Art Council’s activities and objectives are pursued and implemented as efficiently and effectively as possible. Pro Helvetia is able to rely on the advice of its Committee of Experts, juries and independent experts.

# ORGANISATIONAL CHART



Executive Committee

\* In dual role

As at 31 December 2021



# BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The nine members of the Board of Trustees represent the diversity of the cultural sector, operational requirements and Switzerland’s language communities. The Federal Council elects the Board of Trustees for a term of four years. Members may be re-elected once.

- President**  
CHARLES BEER, Chêne-Bourg  
**Politics, national and international**  
Former Councillor of State, Canton of Geneva

**Vice-president**  
SUSANNA FANZUN, Scuol  
**Cultural communication**  
Freelance film director and journalist; Director of Pisoc Pictures, President of cineasts.ch

HANNES GASSERT, Zurich  
**Cultural entrepreneurship**  
Cultural and technology entrepreneur, Co-founder Liip, crstl, Opendata.ch

GIANFRANCO HELBLING, Bellinzona  
**Cultural institutions**  
Director, Teatro Sociale Bellinzona

FRANÇOISE KÖNIG GERNY, Basel  
**Law**  
Co-head of Legal Services, Department of Economic, Social and Environmental Affairs, Canton of Basel-Stadt

ESRA KÜÇÜK, Berlin  
**Arts and audience outreach**  
Head of Operations, Allianz Kulturstiftung

SARAH LOMBARDI, Lausanne  
**Art and cultural studies**  
Director, Collection de l’Art Brut

ELODIE PONG, Zurich  
**Artistic creation**  
Artist

KARL SCHWAAR, Bern  
**Business and finance**  
Former Deputy Director of the Federal Finance Administration

As at 31 December 2021

# SECRETARIAT & OFFICES ABROAD

## Management

The Director oversees daily operations and heads the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee is responsible for implementing the Art Council’s strategies and promotional activities. Its members are elected by the Board of Trustees on recommendation of the Director. The successor to Sabina Schwarzenbach, who left the Arts Council in October, was not yet known at the time of publication.

- Director**  
PHILIPPE BISCHOF

**Deputy Director**  
JÉRÔME BENOIT  
Head of [Visual Arts & Design](#) →

ANNA ARUTYUNOVA  
Head of [Global Network & International Affairs](#) →

ANDREAS MOOS  
Head of [Performing Arts, Music & Literature](#) →

SERAINA ROHRER  
Head of [Innovation & Society](#) →

SABINA SCHWARZENBACH  
Head of [Communications](#) →  
(until 31 October 2021)

- **Innovation & Society**  
SERAINA ROHRER, Head of Innovation & Society

→ **Performing Arts, Music & Literature**  
ANDREAS MOOS, Head of Performing Arts, Music & Literature  
FELIZITAS AMMANN, Head of Performing Arts  
REINA GEHRIG, Head of Literature  
ANDRI HARDMEIER, Head of Music

→ **Visual Arts & Design**  
JÉRÔME BENOIT, Head of Visual Arts & Design  
MADELEINE SCHUPPLI, Head of Visual Arts  
SYLVAIN GARDEL, Head of Design & Interactive Media

→ **Global Network & International Affairs**  
ANNA ARUTYUNOVA, Head of Global Network & International Affairs  
THOMAS BRUHIN, Head of Offices Abroad and Centres (until 31 August 2021)  
  
DALIA DAWOUD, Head of Pro Helvetia Cairo (as of 15 September 2021)  
PETER FARES, Interim Head of Pro Helvetia Cairo (until 30 September 2021)  
JOSEPH GAYLARD, Head of Pro Helvetia Johannesburg  
YUXI (LUCY) LU, Head of Pro Helvetia Shanghai  
AKSHAY PATHAK, Head of Pro Helvetia New Delhi  
ANTON FLEUROV, Head of Pro Helvetia Moscow (as of 15 November 2021)  
NATALIA RUCHKINA, Interim Head of Pro Helvetia Moscow (until 31 December 2021)  
JEAN-MARC DIÉBOLD, Head of Centre culturel suisse (Paris)

- **Communications**  
SABINA SCHWARZENBACH  
Head of Communications (until 31 October 2021)

**Finance**  
SILVIO RÜEGG  
Head of Finance and Controlling

**Human Resources**  
MARION LAUTNER  
Head of Human Resources

**IT & Facility Management**  
MIRCO WÄLKE  
Head of IT & Facility Management

As at 31 December 2021

Further details on Secretariat staff:  
[WWW.PROHELVETIA.CH](#)



# ADVISORY BODIES

## Committee of Experts

The Committee of Experts consists of a maximum of thirteen members, each specialising in a particular discipline. The Committee assesses funding applications and Pro Helvetia initiatives for amounts over CHF 50 000, as well as multi-year support agreements.

The Board of Trustees elects the members of the Committee of Experts for a four-year term of office. Every member may be re-elected once.

- President**  
MARIE-ANNE JANKIK, Music / Classical music
- Vice-president**  
GORDAN SAVICIC, Interdisciplinary Projects and Digital Culture

- GIULIA BINI, Cultural Economics / Design
- SERENA D. DANKWA, Diversity
- MARYNELLE DEBÉTAZ, Performing Arts / Theatre
- VÉRONIQUE FERRERO DELACOSTE, Performing Arts / Dance
- ANJA DIRKS, Performing Arts / Theatre
- KIJAN ESPAHANGIZI, Culture and Society
- JULIA GELSHORN, Visual Arts
- PASCALE KRAMER, Literature
- STÉPHANIE-ALOYSIA MORETTI, Music / Jazz
- SAMUEL SCHELLENBERG, Visual Arts
- PHILIPP THEISOHN, Literature

As at 31 December 2021

## External Experts

On request, External Experts advise the Head Office in specific matters where additional specialist knowledge is required. The Board of Trustees appoints each Expert for a limited period of four years.

Further details on External Experts:  
[WWW.PROHELVETIA.CH](http://WWW.PROHELVETIA.CH)

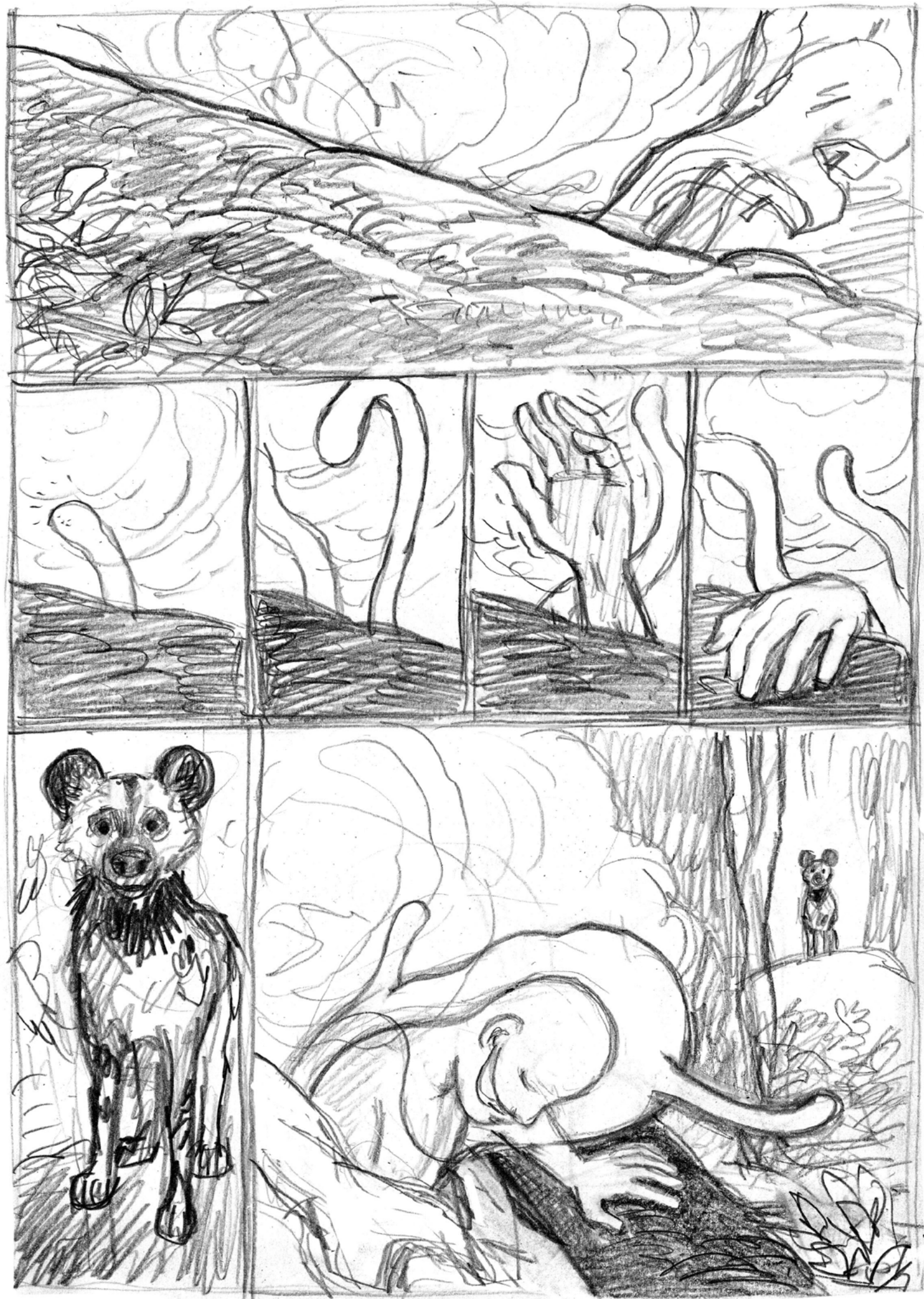
## Juries

Pro Helvetia may appoint juries to assess funding and project applications. The Board of Trustees appoints jury members for a term of maximum four years.

Current juries and their members:  
[WWW.PROHELVETIA.CH](http://WWW.PROHELVETIA.CH)







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«From an exceptional situation to crisis as a permanent condition: because of the cancelled tours, as a musician I often felt as if I were alone in an echo chamber that paralysed creativity. I can break through this paralysis if, in addition to my art, I also engage in activism addressing the issues raised by the pandemic: from collective responsibility to the value of culture to the individual's mental well-being. Questions that we also need to negotiate in art and in the cultural sector.»

RAMÓN OLIVERAS  
Artistic director of Ikarus







21 In the field of design, «LARMA Studio» received production funding to create high-quality and powerfully aesthetic fashion accessories by upcycling various materials.



22 Swiss dancer and choreographer Yasmine Hugonnet organised a two-day contemporary dance workshop as part of the «She Arts» festival in Cairo.





Photography

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 Joanna Pianka                                   | 13 Sandino Scheidegger, Random Institute |
| 2 Scenography: iiode / Photos: Jonathan Maloubier | 14 Samsul Alam Helal                     |
| 3 Louise Martig                                   | 15 Digital Art International – ART2M     |
| 4 Association Foodculture Days                    | 16 Margot Montigny / CCS 2021            |
| 5 Gabriel Junqueira                               | 17 Heta Multanen                         |
| 6 Patrick Principe                                | 18 Tom Tirabosco                         |
| 7 Nicolas Delaroche Studio                        | 19 Thomas Berns / Ruhrtriennale 2021     |
| 8 Andy Storchenegger                              | 20 Nelly Rodriguez                       |
| 9 Federal-studio.com                              | 21 Noé Cotter                            |
| 10 Federal-studio.com                             | 22 Lobna Monieb                          |
| 11 Luzia Hüttenmoser and Anna-Lena Pontet         | 23 Rita Markova                          |
| 12 MoCA Shanghai                                  |  |

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**SUPPORT,  
CONNECT,  
INSPIRE.**

Committed to  
the arts in  
Switzerland and  
around the world.

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