



République du Sénégal
Un Peuple - Un But - Une Foi

**MINISTÈRE DE LA CULTURE, DE
L'ARTISANAT ET DU TOURISME**


MCAT

**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE
for Culture, Creative Industries and
Historical Heritage**

The General Secretariat of the Dakar Biennale

Issued in Dakar, February 1, 2026

**International call for curatorial projects open to exhibition curators
for the Artistic Direction of the sixteenth (16th) edition of
the Biennale of Contemporary African Art, scheduled to take place from
November 19 to December 19, 2026, in Dakar, Senegal.**

For its sixteenth edition, the General Secretariat of the Biennale of Contemporary African Art is seeking a curatorial project that examines the current transformations of the world while grounding its reflection in the realities and imaginaries of the African continent.

Full proficiency in both French and English is required to ensure smooth and effective communication with artists, the artistic and scientific communities, the international press, and the general public.

I. PRESENTATION OF THE BIENNIAL OF CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN ART

The Biennale of Contemporary African Art was born out of the desire of the Senegalese government, which oversees it, and Senegalese artists who, since the 1970s, have regularly organized art exhibitions highlighting the different phases in the evolution of contemporary artistic creation.

Established in 1989, with its first edition dedicated to Literature in 1990, the Dakar Biennale initially embraced a multidisciplinary approach. From its second edition, it was reserved for contemporary art, before being definitively devoted to contemporary African creation in 1996. The 1992 edition of the Biennale placed particular emphasis on fostering encounters, exchanges of experience, approaches, and discourses among artists and professionals from diverse backgrounds, thereby contributing to critical reflection on contemporary art and to the promotion of African artists.

Taking into account the recommendations arising from the evaluation of the 1992 Dakar Biennale, and strengthened by the clear commitment of the Government of Senegal, the Biennale resolutely positioned itself in favor of contemporary African art from 1996 onwards. Its initial objective was to establish a distinct identity in relation to other contemporary art biennales, and subsequently to develop Africa's own aesthetic discourse, with a view to contributing to the conceptualization of theoretical tools for the analysis and appreciation of artistic practices. It has enabled:

- To promote African creativity and the creation of new models in the field of visual arts;
- To confirm or reveal talents in the world of visual arts as well as in the world of design and digital arts;
- To foster new approaches in the definition and conceptualization of contemporary arts in Africa;
- To reveal to a wide audience from all corners of the world an Africa that creates and innovates;
- To promote African visual artists and circulate their works in order to promote the integration of contemporary African art into the international art market;
- To stimulate new collaborations between African creators on the one hand and between African creators and those from other continents on the other hand;
- To strengthen the capacity of contemporary African art professionals and finally to make Dakar an African Capital of the Arts.

As a major artistic event dedicated to the visual arts, the Biennale of Contemporary African Art attracts the largest audience in Africa. It welcomes artists from Africa, its diaspora, and other regions of the world, and aspires to be a professional, internationally recognized event devoted to contemporary art, where creators, curators, experts, collectors, patrons, and institutions engage in meaningful exchange.

The Dakar Biennale distinguishes itself through its clear, assertive, and coherent approach to the presentation of African creativity. Faithful to its legacy, it proudly forms part of the international network of biennales and major events dedicated to contemporary art. This sustained presence reflects a growing awareness of the Biennale's ambition and its simultaneously artistic, scientific, economic, political, social, and educational missions, establishing it as a major event both nationally and internationally.

The Biennale remains unquestionably unique in its format and scope, with high-quality aesthetic proposals and artistic choices that guarantee its prestige and reputation. The State of Senegal is the main contributor to the Biennale, which is also supported by technical and financial partners from the co-operation sector and the private sector.

The sixteenth edition of the Biennale of Contemporary African Art is scheduled to take place in Dakar from November 19 to December 19, 2026.

II. MISSIONS OF THE ARTISTIC DIRECTION OF the 16th EDITION OF THE BIENNIAL OF CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN ART

Drawing on its own curatorial approach, the Artistic Direction articulates a distinctive and innovative vision of the role and mission of the General Secretariat of the Biennale of Contemporary African Art within the landscape of major international cultural events.

Its editorial line reflects a strong openness to a diversity of aesthetic expressions and is grounded in a continuous and dynamic dialogue with artists and their works. The Artistic Direction will be responsible for:

- Develop an original and singular curatorial project that takes into account the specific mission and core values of the Biennale of Contemporary African Art. The general theme proposed within this project must comply with the laws and regulations in force in Senegal;
- To propose a selection of artists and artworks intended for the official international exhibition;
- Coordinate the various preparatory phases of the edition in close collaboration with the General Secretariat and the Steering Committee;
- Write a final text presenting the artistic project;
- To design and supervise, in coordination with the technical management and scenography teams, the production and installation of the various official exhibitions of the Biennale;
- Participate in the development of presentation texts for the Biennale, the overall program of the event, as well as its communication and mediation materials;
- Participate in the development of associated events (opening ceremony, meetings, performances, guided visits, activities, off-site events, etc.);
- Develop a public mediation program aimed at fostering meaningful encounters with contemporary creation and stimulating critical reflection among audiences;
- To ensure the editorial coordination of the catalogue for the sixteenth edition;
- Coordinate and oversee the programming of scientific meetings, conferences, and round tables of the event, followed by the presentation of a written contribution;
- Participate in the development of the overall communication and marketing strategy for the sixteenth edition.

III. PROFILE SOUGHT FOR ART DIRECTION

Candidates must have solid experience in artistic direction or curatorial roles.

To this end, they must :

- Have a relevant artistic background; candidates must have experience in designing and organizing cultural and artistic events and demonstrate an interest in cultural mediation and communication around projects with a strong intellectual, discursive, and educational component. Have a good knowledge of the professional environment, developments and transformations in the visual arts and contemporary creation sector in Africa and around the world, as well as their production and dissemination processes. ;
- Have an ability to express and communicate their artistic ideas. They have a broad general knowledge and curiosity about artistic practices here and elsewhere;
- Have a solid professional network and be able to mobilize artists and collaborate with institutions and organizations that are influential in the arts;
- Be able to reconcile artistic objectives with the budgetary reality of the General Secretariat of the Biennale of Contemporary African Art:

- Know how to develop partnerships and mobilize additional resources for the realization of specific works. If necessary, he or she may be assisted by the General Secretariat of the Biennale of Contemporary African Art;
- Be able to work independently and remotely, both individually and as part of a team. ;
- Have a strong ability to delegate, share, and communicate their vision to teams;
- Demonstrate leadership and a strong ability to work in a team, as well as versatility and flexibility in project management;
- Have very good communication and writing skills in French and English. Proficiency in other languages will be considered an asset.

The assignment will be carried out in Senegal. The working partners and teams of the Dakar Biennale are mainly based in Dakar. If the candidate resides abroad, they must be able to make the necessary trips between their country of residence and the host country, in this case Dakar.

IV. PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

Each candidate must submit an original and relevant curatorial project that fully integrates its practical parameters.

The articulation of the proposed project with contemporary artistic dynamics—particularly in relation to current artistic and cultural events or mediation initiatives—must be clearly highlighted.

The project must demonstrate a clear connection to the scope and mission of the Biennale of Contemporary African Art. This connection is intended to remain flexible and may be expressed through the project's thematic development and the conception of interfaces for dialogue with the local context within the exhibitions. It is the applicant's responsibility to conceptualize and develop this connection.

The candidate will be required to submit a project presentation text and a concept note.

The Biennale of Contemporary African Art is supported by the Steering Committee of the 16th edition—composed primarily of figures from the art world—in the selection of the winning project.

V. SUBMISSION OF PROJECTS

The application file must be sent in PDF format, by email with the subject line "**Call for curatorial projects** ", **16th edition of the Dakar Biennale** «as well as the name of the candidate, their contact details in the body of the email.

The application must be written in French and include the following elements:

- a text presenting the curatorial project (concept, general theme, programmatic orientations and major activities, exhibitions and special projects, scenography, execution schedule);
- a statement of intent of no more than 4500 characters, summarizing the curatorial project (it may be illustrated by up to 10 visuals) and situating it within a broader approach and within the context of the Biennale of Contemporary African Art to motivate the application;
- a detailed curriculum vitae including name, date of birth, postal address, telephone number and email address ;
- a personal biography;
- a list of exhibitions curated by the candidate and a bibliography ;
- Any other document that you deem relevant.

**Complete application files must be sent by e-mail to the following address :
info@biennaledakar.org**

Incomplete applications, or those that do not fall within the scope of the Biennale of Contemporary African Art, may not be processed.

A personalized acknowledgment of receipt will be sent by email. Upon receipt of the application, additional information may be requested if necessary.

The General Secretariat of the Biennale of Contemporary African Art thanks all applicants in advance for their submissions. Only candidates selected for interviews will be contacted.

VI. CALENDAR

Deadline for submission of curatorial proposals :

March 1, 2026

Response from the General Secretariat of the Biennale of Contemporary African Art :

April 15, 2026

Biennale dates :

November 19 – December 19, 2026, Dakar

If you have any questions or require clarification, please call the following number:

+221 77 489 96 96

Issued in Dakar, February 1, 2026

**The General Secretariat of
the Biennale of Contemporary African Art**

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