

Foundation Swiss Sculpture Exhibition Biel

Call for projects for the 14th Swiss Sculpture Exhibition in 2024

Biel, the tenth-largest city in Switzerland, is characterized by its industrial character, multiculturalism, official bilingualism, and rich cultural life, especially in the public space. The Swiss Sculpture Exhibition, which has been held in the city since 1954, has left its mark not only on people's minds but also very concretely on the cityscape. Held at regular intervals, this international exhibition provides an opportunity for critical debate on art in public spaces.

In preparation for the 14th edition in 2024, the Foundation Board Expositions Suisses de Sculpture Bienne - Swiss Sculpture Exhibition Biel (ESS-SPA) is launching a selective, two-stage competition. Projects by artists, curators, teams or collectives are sought that relate to the public space of the city of Biel and operate within the framework of contemporary international art discourse. These projects can offer avant-garde and experimental approaches, but should be related to concrete places, institutions, or communities of the city.

Outline

What is expected?

A project that adds to the history of Swiss sculpture exhibitions by offering an innovative artistic concept of the highest quality.

It is imperative that the artists be present in Biel to establish a dialogue with the public, the population, and the visitors.

Expected is an exhibition concept that relates to contemporary art discourses.

Although the choice of theme is free, proposals should have a specific relationship to the city of Biel.

A budget of 500,000 Swiss Francs is available for the implementation of the project.

When and where will the exhibition take place?

The exhibition will take place in 2024. The exact start and end dates, as well as the duration of the exhibition, will be determined based on the exhibition concept. The entire city can be used as an exhibition space.

Who can participate?

This call is open to Swiss and international artists, curators, teams, or collectives.

Jury and process

The selection process will take place in two rounds:

First round: A first project sketch can be submitted according to the details below.

Second round: A jury of seven members will select 3 to 5 projects to be further developed (according to the details below) and finally determine a winning project to be realized. The projects invited for the second round will receive a contribution of 3,000 Swiss Francs each.

Members of the Jury:

Professional members:

Dr. Céline Eidenbenz, Curator Aargauer Kunsthaus
Prof. Dr. Sabine Gebhardt Fink, Professor of Contemporary Art and Freelance
Curator, Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts
Samuel Herzog, Freelance Journalist
Dr. Donatella Bernardi, Multidisciplinary Artist and Director of the Maison Rousseau
et Littérature

Non-professional members:

Stéphanie Mérillat, President of the Fondation Serge Mérillat, Biel
2 representatives of the Foundation Board ESS-SPA

Call for Projects: Conditions and Selection Criteria

First round, pre-selection

A concise and clear presentation of the project, the exhibition concept and the qualifications of the people involved is expected. The application documents should be a PDF file in A4 format (max. 20 pages) and contain the following information:

- Title of the exhibition
- Project proposal in text form, including information on how the presence of the artists of the team/collective will be ensured in Biel (max. 2 A4 pages).
- Illustrations of the project proposal (sketch, drawing, collage, etc.), (max. 4 A4 pages).
- Composition of the collective/team in short form (max. 1 A4 page).
- Curriculum vitae of the artists, curators, teams or collectives (max. 2 A4 pages).
- Information on knowledge of the Swiss art scene (max. 1 A4 page).
- References, short photo documentation of realized projects (max. 10 A4 pages).
- Indicative budget (max. 1 A4 page).

Interested parties who would like to submit a project have the possibility of asking questions by e-mail to info@ess-spa.ch. The answers to all questions will be published together on the website of the ESS-SPA Foundation (www.ess-spa.ch) by the deadlines indicated below.

Criteria for the evaluation of the first round

The following elements will be considered by the jury:

- Artistic quality of the project
- Relevant connection with the city of Biel
- Contemporary artistic and curatorial discourse in relation to Biel and its urban public space.

- Feasibility of the project, realistic implementation within budgetary and time constraints.
- Qualification of the artists, curators, teams, or collectives.
- Knowledge of the Swiss art scene

After the first round, 3 to 5 projects will be selected and invited to continue the work in the second round. Each of these projects will receive a lump sum of 3,000 Swiss francs to cover any costs.

Second round, further development of 3 to 5 projects

The projects selected for the second round must submit the following documents:

- Detailed concept (max. 12 A4 pages).
- Biographical information on the participating artists, teams, and collectives.
- Submission of a detailed budget of 500,000 Swiss francs (including all fees, rental, production, permits, transport, communication, insurance, printing costs, etc.).
- Visual material, sketches, illustrations, mock-ups, possibly models.
- Schedule for implementation
- References and links

Criteria for the evaluation of the second round

The following elements will be considered by the jury:

- Contemporary artistic potential of the exhibition concept regarding the public space of the city of Biel.
- Ability of the team to deal with a topic of contemporary art discourse in the urban space.
- Knowledge of and connections to the Swiss art scene.
- Communication, legibility, and ability to address a wide international and local audience.
- Soundness of the budget of CHF 500,000, (including all expenses, fees, rent, production, permits, transportation, communication, insurance, printing, etc.).

Implementation of the winning project

The overall responsibility for the exhibition lies with the ESS-SPA Foundation. The winning project will be implemented in close cooperation with the latter. The exact budget will be determined after the jury's decision, and a contract will be drawn up and confirmed with the winner or winners of the winning project. The ESS-SPA Foundation is responsible for keeping the budget.

The ESS-SPA Foundation helps in the production and management of the exhibition. Specifically, it makes contributions outside the project-specific budget in the following areas: Support in the implementation, coordination and contacting authorities, obtaining permits, setting and checking deadlines, monitoring the budget.

The ESS-SPA Foundation reserves the following rights:

- A. The exhibition may be postponed or resized until its funding is secured.
- B. The exhibition may be postponed or canceled in case of events such as a pandemic or other cases of force majeure.
- C. In the case of the sale of artworks, a contract must be concluded between the ESS-SPA Foundation and the artist(s) within the framework of the legal provisions on copyright. The modalities must be clearly specified therein.
- D. With regard to copyright, the legal provisions of Switzerland shall apply.
- E. The ESS-SPA Foundation, in collaboration with the author(s), the artist(s), is responsible for the communication and promotion of the project.

Deadlines:

Start of the call for projects (on ess-spa.ch):	April 11th, 2022
Deadline for submission of questions (by e-mail: info@ess-spa.ch):	May 15th, 2022
Publication of answers to the questions (on ess-spa.ch):	June 13th, 2022

First round

Deadline for submission of projects (on www.inscription.ess-spa.ch):	Sept. 19th, 2022
Evaluation of the submitted projects by the jury:	October 26th, 2022 (October 31st, 2022)
Information of the candidates:	November 4th, 2022

Second round

Start of the second round:	November 4th, 2022
Deadline for submission of projects:	February 10th, 2023
Presentation of the projects to the jury:	February 22nd, 2023
Evaluation of the projects by the jury:	February 22nd, 2023 (February 27th, 2023)
Information of the applicants and announcement of the selected project:	March 13th, 2023
Implementation of the selected project starts:	March 13th, 2023
Start of the 14th Swiss Sculpture Exhibition:	2024

FONDATION EXPOSITION SUISSE DE SCULPTURE ESS BIENNE
STIFTUNG SCHWEIZERISCHE PLASTIKAUSSTELLUNG SPA BIEL

Further information

[Foundation Swiss Sculpture Exhibition Biel \(ESS-SPA\)](#)

[City map of Biel with its public and cultural facilities](#)

[Cadastral map and GIS of the city of Biel: WebGIS - Biel-Bienne](#)

[Official website of the city of Biel](#)