



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE

Directorate A – Strategy, Work Programme and Resources **Scientific
Development Unit**



About the JRC SciArt Project

The SciArt project brings together scientists, artists and policymakers around a matter of concern to the JRC and the EC. We broker, curate and communicate transdisciplinary exchanges and encounters around given topics of interest, and finally produce and exhibit the product of such encounters in a venue of relevance.

We support research and produce works which excel in their creative and imaginative potential to interweave disciplines and cultures and imbue audiences (be these scientific or not) with enthusiasm and wonder. We especially look forward to projects that provide stark emotional elements and experiences to help us relate to research, inquiry and current societal concerns.

Resonances is what we strive to create - between art and science, but also between scientific disciplines, between art science and policy, between EC and citizen. Resonances is also the name of our flagship initiative. A two-year cycle brings together scientists with artists in a summer school, on a theme chosen from the EC/JRC work programme. When inspired by these meetings, artists can propose artworks in close collaboration with the scientist(s). These works are then produced in a festival the next year. They are also shown in a major European venue.

About Resonances

Each iteration of Resonances follows a theme of priority to the European Commission. At the summer school, international artists explore this theme together with JRC researchers and EC policymakers interested in participating. The summer school provides fertile ground for acute and extensive horizontal exchange and discussion, meant to discover which disciplines will start to resonate with what art, or what scientist will vibrate with the work and mind set of a specific artist. These conversations are the starting point for germinating project proposals for artworks at the intersection of art, science and the respective theme. After the summer school, artists are invited to submit proposals in due time after the residency period. These will be evaluated by a curatorial committee and international experts, which can potentially lead to a residency and artwork production.

Some history

The first, pilot Resonances Festival took place in 2015 on the topic of Food (see [Resonances I Food @JRC Ispra@StudioPiù Milan](#)). Following on its success, the JRC organised a second edition of the Resonances Festival (see [Resonances II Fair/Fear Catalogue](#)) on the topic of Fairness, which resulted in an exhibition and a series of events held in September/October 2017 at the JRC in Ispra and at the Leonardo da Vinci Science and Technology Museum in Milan. [Resonances III Datami](#) (2018-19) aimed at fostering awareness and stimulating new thinking on the topic of AI, big data and the digital transformation.



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Open Call for Expression of Interest

Resonances IV SciArt Summer School @ JRC

20-24 June 2022

Introduction

Artists across creative disciplines, countries and at any stage of their career are invited to submit an application to participate in the Resonances IV Summer School at the European Commission's Joint Research Centre in Ispra, Italy. As a melting pot of perspectives and disciplines, the Summer School will be a fertile ground for fermenting ideas on the theme of ***NaturArchy: Towards a Natural Contract***. The programme is targeted at artists producing work in the rich lands between art and science, whose work engages diverse audiences, and who show strong interest in scientific inquiry.

The purpose of the Summer School is to invite artists to explore and be inspired by the challenges of doing science for policy. JRC scientists and policy-makers will be part of this group, jointly discussing and discovering the theme of *NaturArchy* in its contexts and perspectives. Through this process, we wish to create a safe haven where artists and JRC scientists have the possibility to engage in high-quality pioneering collaborations. We hope these exchanges will lead to inspiring projects and works of art at the intersection of the arts, sciences, and society. Of greatest interest are works that spill over from art and research cenacles into the streets.

A maximum of 20 artists will be selected and invited as experts, according to European Commission rules, to participate actively to a summer school workshop (see details below). At the end of the summer school, they will be invited to submit a project proposal that combines research and production in view of a more extensive residency at one of the [JRC sites in Europe](#). If selected, the proposal will be produced and showcased at the JRC, with the possibility to exhibit, subsequently, in a major European venue.

Theme / Curatorial Statement

NaturArchy: Towards a Natural Contract aims to explore – through artistic, scientific and legal expressions – how providing nature and its phenomena with a contract that integrates her juridically into our society can redefine our anthropocentric relationship with her.

Pushing beyond Rousseau's social contract, *NaturArchy* calls for a more inclusive and equitable contract with our environment and its non-human inhabitants. To free nature from the onslaught of human activities, we need to rearticulate her immanent sovereignty and decentre the human. But how can we do this without impairing our own development? Decolonise our most intimate takes on nature? If we could ensure legally enforceable rights for natural entities, how do we decide what is right or wrong for these sovereign entities? How much are we disposed to hand in if decisions no longer hinge solely on human concerns?

Trees, planets, clouds and roots: we also want to investigate how the material world matters, and develop ways to understand the languages of nature and their legitimacy. Moulds, yeasts, grains, herbs: we want to deepen our collective awareness of the tremendous legacy of human intercourse with nature, and develop ways of living with her by reinforcing, not merely exploiting her.

Intersecting science and law, reason and style, art and judgment, policy and imagination, *NaturArchy* wants to re-imagine the western relation between the human and the non-human, in an attempt to ensure juridical persona to Nature's many wonders, be they stardust or DNA.

Topics may include (but are not limited to)

- Law and Nature: Ecocide, Environmental crime, Parliament of Beings
- Climate Heritage, Equity, Human Rights & Indigenous Peoples
- Biodiversity, Green Infrastructure, & Nature-based Solutions
- Languages & Codes of Nature
- One Health, Planetary Health, Resilience & Post-Covid recovery
- Green Deal, New European Bauhaus
- Natural Resources, Sustainable Agriculture, Water, Soil, Forests, Air, Atmosphere
- Identity, Meanings and Values in our relationship with the non-human

Selection Criteria

All submitted applications will be evaluated on the basis of:

- Reflection on the theme of 'NaturArchy', drawing on one or more specific topics (see above) in the personal statement;
- Openness and capacity to confront contrasting ideas and traditional forms of collaboration into the realization of works of artistic excellence;
- Show novelty of ideas and realisation, combine unexpected viewpoints and straddle/bridge disciplines;

- Demonstrate their capacity to envision scientific knowledge and insights;
- Show competence to realise works of exceptional artistic quality, that provoke wonder and interest, and create strong experiences;
- Demonstrate their ability to incorporate societal relevance of current scientific debates into their artistic works (e.g. as seen in previous works in the portfolio).

We look forward to applications from artists who recognise the value of creative resources in probing and bridging ways of knowing and engaging. Their work and approaches may encompass research-based, place-based, embodied and social forms of artistic practice, contaminated by science, or interested in the cultural significance of scientific research in support of policy.

We believe that art and artists have a very important role in imagining, representing and realising a sustainable future. Ever more so when coupled to scientific research and policy-making. We are interested in probing questions that lie at the heart of contemporary debates over what kind of world we want to live in, push forward the boundaries of our imagination of our desirable futures and connect with people in relation to our environment.

The Selection Committee reserves the right to invite other artists based on their expertise on the topic, societal relevance and/or prowess in combining art and science.

What to Expect

Process - Resonances IV Summer School leading to Resonances IV exhibition and events

The Resonances Summer School is a week of inspirational and exploratory meetings, serendipity and cross-breeding around the topic of *NaturArchy*. Researchers, scientists, policy-makers and artists come together for 5 days of formal and informal exchanges, short talks, conferences, presentations, speed dates, walks and more, to explore, connect, challenge and envision. Some sow their first ideas for a work of art.

Up to 20 selected artists, in their capacity as experts in their field, will have the opportunity to explore the JRC site in Ispra and exchange with a group of 30 scientists and policy-makers, who have expressed their interest in attending.

The summer school gives attendees the possibility to meet the people behind the JRC research projects that support EU policies, as well as to explore the facilities of the Ispra site. After the summer school, with deadline of 31 August 2022, all attendees are invited to develop and submit a project proposal for research and production of an artwork. Proposals for projects will be subject to another evaluation by a jury and, if selected, participants will be invited for longer residencies at the JRC during the first months of 2023.

Expectations

Participating artists are expected to:

- Give a short presentation of their own work;
- Establish dialogues and actively participate in discussions, exploring research themes within the JRC and the perspectives of scientists and policy-makers;
- Be present throughout the 5 days of the Summer School;

- Deliver a report on experiences and impressions with suggestions and ideas.

Optional

We hope that some dialogues can culminate in a co-conceived proposal for research and production of an artwork that exemplifies the subjects discussed, addresses public concerns inherent to *NaturArchy*, straddles disciplines and sensibilities.

Venue

The Summer School is hosted at the JRC in Ispra, in via Enrico Fermi 2749, Ispra (VA), Italia.

The Summer School is structured in two parts:

- A two-day Convening, **20-21 June 2022**, on the topic of Art, Science and Naturarchy, is open to all people interested in the subject and willing to participate to the discussions;
- A three-day workshop, **22-24 June 2022**, is open on invitation only.

Allowance, accommodation and transport

Artists winning the selection on the basis of this Open Call are invited to both the Convening session and the workshop. For the Convening session, they will receive daily allowance, accommodation and reimbursement of travel; for the workshop, in addition to the daily allowance and accommodation, they will also receive an expert fee according to the European Commission (more information [here](#)).

Application procedure

All applications should be submitted through the online [APPLICATION FORM](#), no later than February 15th 2022. You will be asked to upload a CV and a portfolio. To access the form, you might be asked to create an ECAS account.

Language

Applications can be made in English or French. During the Summer School, the working language will be English.

Contacts

For any inquiries, or problems, please contact JRC-Resonances@ec.europa.eu

Jury

A jury composed of members of the SciArt Team and external SciArt experts of clear reputation will evaluate the applications.

Privacy Statement

The SciArt project is part of the JRC's Centre for Advanced Studies. The privacy statement can be found [here](#).

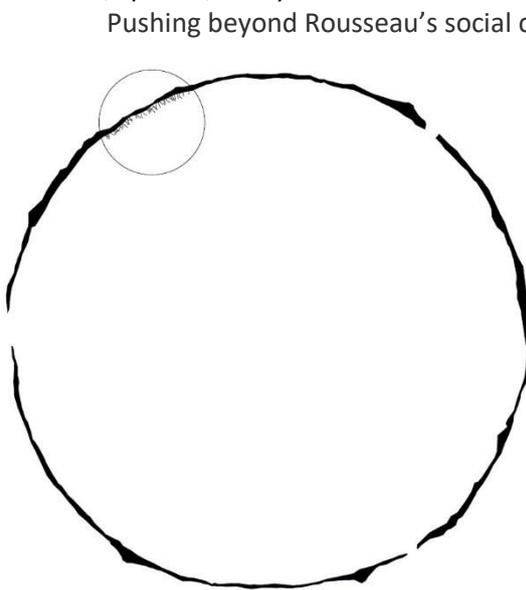
For more information about the JRC SciArt project and past Resonances editions, please visit [our temporary SciArt webpage](#).

NaturArchy: Towards a Natural Contract

*"We dominate and appropriate [nature]... Our fundamental relationship with objects comes down to war and property." [Michel Serres, *The Natural Contract*]*

Curatorial Statement

Trees, forests, rivers, mountains, seas, stardust, DNA — imagine the environment not as the backdrop of our activities, imagine objects of nature not as items to be appropriated or exploited, but as subjects with intrinsic value and full juridical rights. Cancel the tired subject-object dichotomy between person and environment, the obsolete opposition nature and culture that does not hold in view of modern scientific discoveries; do away with conditions of mastery, appropriation, and submission; reimagine human concerns as unreservedly dependent on the natural world, integrated within nature. Only such a shift in our conceptualisation of nature can change our deep relation to the matter, species, ecosystems around us. A real Green Deal requires a systemic change of ground.



Pushing beyond Rousseau's social contract, *NatureArchy: Towards a Natural Contract*,

calls for a more inclusive and equitable contract with our environment. Establishing a different relation with nature is a prime condition to acquire the necessary attitudes and skills to combat global warming. To limit our tremendous environmental impact. To free nature from the onslaught of human development – do we need to rearticulate her immanent sovereignty and decolonise her into sustainability again? Simply ensure legally enforceable rights to natural entities: and suddenly any decision as to what is the right or wrong action concerning the environment no longer hinges on human concerns. Trees, planets, clouds and roots: we want to explore how the material world matters,

Alexandra Arènes, *The Thickness of the Critical Zone at the Planetary Scale, 2019* – in: Bruno Latour & Peter Weibel, *Critical Zones, The Science and Politics of Landing on Earth*, Karlsruhe – Cambridge, MA, 2020

develop ways to understand the languages of nature and their legitimacy. Moulds, yeasts, grains, herbs: we also want to deepen our collective awareness on the tremendous legacy of humans in their intercourse with nature.

NaturArchy aims to explore – through artistic, scientific and legal expressions – how providing Nature and its phenomena with a contract that integrates her totally into our society can redefine our anthropocentric relationship with Nature. Intersecting science and law, reason and style, art and judgment, policy and imagination, NaturArchy wants to re-imagine the western relation of human and non-human, in an attempt to ensure juridical persona to Nature's many wonders, be they stardust or DNA.