

Call for the MAK Winter Atelier

The MAK invites students and emerging artists living and working in Serbia, Romania, and Austria to apply for participation in an international Winter Atelier on artists' books with designer Sven Völker. The Atelier will be held as part of the EU project *AbeX Anthologies of Cooperation: Encounters in/through Artists' Books and Experimental Poetry* and will take place within the framework of the exhibition *TURNING PAGES: Artists' Books of the Present*.

The MAK Winter Atelier offers an intensive five-day workshop on the topic of artists' books with Sven Völker, a Berlin-based artist, graphic designer, and author. Völker is a picture book maker and a professor of graphic design at the University of Applied Sciences in Potsdam. He combines graphic symbols, color, form, and typography in a playful, modular way, allowing them to evolve in ever-new combinations. His picture book *A Million Dots* won the New York Times/New York Public Library Best Illustrated Children's Books Award in 2019. From his small, unconventional Berlin-based studio, he has designed the award-winning corporate identity for the Japanese Suzuki Motor Corporation and other commercial clients. In his art projects, he transfers the visual approach he uses in his picture books to the worlds of painting, sculpture, installations, and even the stage.

Books are a form of cultural memory and commemoration. Against the backdrop of the digital world, young artists experiment with the medium of the book, transcending traditional boundaries of image, text, and material. In the MAK Winter Atelier, participants will work on books as tools to design poetic visions and to expand their concepts in dialogue with Sven Völker.

The Atelier places particular emphasis on the co-creative process. The focus will be on designing prototypes that demonstrate how the book can be used as a medium for sharing ideas, and on making its potential for developing and expressing visions accessible to others as a tool for creative processes. Experimenting with and testing various tools and instruments for image, text, and material design will play an important role. We will therefore develop and evaluate a toolkit for making picture books that can be shared long-term with kids and adults, and which is freely available to all. **The MAK stands for diversity, gender equality, inclusion, and sustainability.** Through our wide range of topics and educational formats, we aim to initiate a socially relevant and lively dialogue with a broad and diverse audience, with whom we wish to share knowledge, skills, and inspiration.

The Winter Atelier will culminate in a pop-up exhibition, which participants will co-design as part of the workshop. This exhibition will convey the collaborative process and its outcomes in a creative and inspiring way.

The MAK Winter Atelier will take place at the MAK in Vienna from 16 to 20 February 2026 and will be hosted by EU funding. The MAK will cover the travel and accommodation costs for nine participating students/emerging artists.

Students and emerging artists from Serbia, Romania, and Austria can apply. Nine participants—three from each country—will be selected by a jury of five experts in the field of art education and artist books, who will evaluate the submissions based on artistic quality.

Criteria for the Call

Send us your application until 15 September 2025. The jury will announce their decision on 14 October 2025.

Age: 20 to 26 years old (at the time of the event)

Target group: Students and emerging artists working and living in Serbia, Romania, and Austria

To apply, you should have a specific interest in using books as a medium through which developing and communicating ideas. You should also be passionate about co-creative processes and dialogic communication. Since the entire event will be conducted in English, you must understand and speak the language fluently.

To submit your application, please send us:

- A short CV
- A two-page PDF presentation outlining your ideas for the MAK Winter Atelier.
- A portfolio of your previous published or unpublished projects in PDF format (max. 3–4 MB).
- Answer the questions below in a max. 2 page PDF

Describe your professional creative work and previous education—art, design, architecture, graphic design, illustration, writing, theater, education, or other subjects. (max. 1,000 characters)

What role does the book play in your work? (max. 1,000 characters)

Describe your creative approach (max. 1,000 characters)

What tools do you use? (max. 1,000 characters)

What materials have you gained experience with? (max. 1,000 characters)

Why is the book suitable for co-creative practice and communicating ideas? (max. 1,000 characters)

Please send the documents to: winteratelier@mak.at