

Press release

31. October 2019

UNESCO reached a decision

Karlsruhe is the first German Creative City of Media Arts

A great sense of happiness in Karlsruhe: The city joins the international UNESCO Creative Cities Network – the first German city in the category of Media Arts. The announcement was made by the Director-General of UNESCO in Paris.

As a new member of the city network, Karlsruhe will enter into an exchange with major cities from all over the world. The UNESCO Creative Cities Network was created to promote cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development. During the one-year application process, about 40 institutions of culture, creative industries, research, science and the digital open-source field as well as municipal corporations and departments have joined in.

"This is an important day for the city," says the Mayor of Karlsruhe Dr. Frank Mentrup. "With their decision, UNESCO recognizes the special potential Karlsruhe has as a location of media art and creativity. With the award UNESCO Creative City of Media Arts, Karlsruhe is being defined as a leading center of universal media art, digital economy and IT research." Mentrup is referring to the latest ranking of the EU, which names Karlsruhe as number two of European cities with 500,000 inhabitants in terms of culture and creativity." The city is now gaining even more international appeal and attention. My thanks go to all participating partners," said the city's head. "Now it is important to fully use the enormous potential offered by joining in the Creative Cities Network of the City of Karlsruhe.", adds the Mayor of Culture Dr. Albert Käuflein.

The plan of action developed by the Ministry of Culture will be implemented by the participating institutions in the next four years. Local building blocks will serve as a canvas for media art in public urban spaces, such as the "Schlosslichtspiele" or the "Seasons of Media Arts" festival. As well as promoting of innovative, cooperative and networked media art projects. Christiane Riedel, Managing Director of the ZKM | Center for Art and Media, which curates the "Schlosslichtspiele" and the "Seasons of Media Arts", is particularly pleased by this aspect of the UNESCO title: Now media art belongs to the city of Karlsruhe, like the fan-shaped layout." Peter Weibel, Artistic and Scientific Director of the ZKM: "This award is a global recognition that Karlsruhe has become more and more of a capital of art and creativity. We accept the title with gratitude and joy, because it is clear that the long-standing cultural work in Karlsruhe has led us to the Champions League of media art. "

Among other things, the ZKM will expand its existing global cooperation network on an international level to present its "Open Codes" exhibition from 2020 in other creative cities such as Shanghai, Bilbao or Seoul. The plan of action is intended to further boost the cultural and creative industries as an think tank and growth engine for urban development. A new fund has been set up to promote the networking activities of art and media professionals. A cooperation has been planned with partners from countries of the global south.

In addition, Mayor Dr. Frank Mentrup expects further impulses for the new German member due to the Creative Cities Network founded in 2004 by UNESCO. Once a year, representatives of the worldwide network, which unites the seven creative fields of arts, crafts, folk art, design, film, gastronomy, literature, media art and music, exchange ideas at a conference. In 2020, this meeting will take place in Santos, Brazil. There prospects of urban development are discussed from a cultural, economic and social point of view." In an international and intercultural dialogue, we can present ourselves as a cosmopolitan metropolis. In addition, new perspectives and opportunities arise to make Karlsruhe a place even more worth living," says Mayor Mentrup. "This benefits not only the citizens but also the guests of the city."

To further spread the spirit of the Creative City, there are now two official hashtags:

#KarlsruhelstMedienkunst
#MedienkunstIstKarlsruhe

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<https://www.cityofmediaarts.de>

Website UNESCO:

<https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities/events/unesco-designates-66-new-creative-cities>