



FUNDING PRINCIPLES 2. APPLICATION ROUND 2025

(Application deadline 31. October 2025, 6pm)

Next Steps

A program by Bureau Ritter to strengthen dance professionals in Hesse. Funded by the Crespo Foundation.

With the support of the Crespo Foundation, Bureau Ritter will deliver the funding programme “Next Steps” between 2024 and 2026.

In line with the Crespo Foundation’s mission of “empowering people”, Next Steps provides funding for professional dance practitioners in Hesse during all stages of their careers. The funding programme is open to dance artists in Hesse who are working professionally, regardless of their training. It is also open to cultural organisations and to recent graduates from accredited dance training institutes.

The programme will be delivered in close collaboration with professional dance artists from all genres in Hesse. Throughout the application process, the Bureau Ritter team will offer advice through a range of informative formats, working with the applicants to develop individually tailored projects.

Next Steps will focus not only on supporting individual artistic projects, but also on strengthening the entire professional dance sector. It will do so by helping artists to hone their artistic profiles, by offering training in project management, and by improving the conditions for creating and producing dance.

In the second application round in 2025, funding line A will support smaller projects lasting one year with a maximum grant amount of 25,000 euros.

Bureau Ritter will offer individual consultations throughout the funding period to support the selected projects. Meetings of all funded projects will be held once per year to encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing. Continuous impact monitoring will

help the projects achieve the goals they have set themselves.

What do we fund

Projects that support the applicant’s artistic and structural development. Project activities should take place primarily in Hesse. Projects may include, but are not limited to:

- Research, productions, re-stagings, touring, residencies, professional development or qualifications
- Measures to improve production conditions, such as renting rehearsal studios or work spaces
- Measures to promote inclusion and improve accessibility
- Activities that increase the visibility of the applicant's artistic work, such as press and public relations, outreach and engagement

Who can apply?

Professional artists (regardless of their training), ensembles, collectives and recent graduates of accredited dance training institutions as well as festivals, higher education institutions, venues and production houses or offices and cooperative networks within the dance scene. The prerequisite is a registered office or place of residence (for natural persons) in Hesse.

How much can I apply for?

The minimum amount projects can apply for is €5,000 and the maximum amount is €25,000. The requested amount must be appropriate for the proposed project and its duration.

What are the deadlines for applying?

Call opens: 08.09.2025

Deadline: 31.10.2025, 6 pm

Project start date: earliest 01.01.2026

Project end date: latest 31.12.2026

What kinds of costs are eligible?

The following costs are eligible, provided they are directly related to the project:

- personnel costs, fees, social security contributions (KSK)
- rental costs for rehearsal and/or work spaces
- costs for advertising, public relations and fundraising
- direct costs: equipment hire, furnishing for rehearsal and office spaces (no construction work unless it is to make spaces more accessible), technical costs, props and costumes, research materials etc.
- travel costs, transport, accommodation and subsistence
- other costs such as clearing of music or performance rights (GEMA), or project-related insurance

What are the conditions for receiving funding?

Successful projects will be fully funded up to the maximum grant amount.

Co-financing is desirable, but not obligatory.

There is no legal right to funding.

How can I apply?

Applications can only be submitted via the online application portal on www.next-steps-hessen.de, which opens for registration on 8 September 2025. Once an application has been started, it can be saved and edited until the deadline on 31 October 2025 at 6pm.

The application must be submitted online by the specified date and time. Applications will be evaluated solely on the basis of the information provided in the application form and supporting documents. Incomplete applications or applications received after the deadline has closed will not be accepted.

Who decides which projects are selected for funding?

An independent jury of experts will decide which projects are selected for funding. The assessment criteria include the following:

- The quality and feasibility of the submitted proposal
- The submitted proposal's expected impact on the applicant's artistic and structural development, or on the consolidation of their previous work
- The quality of the applicant's regional, national or international network, and their collaborations with other artists
- The project's contribution to improving working conditions for dance practitioners in Hesse
- The project's contribution to expanding the diversity of cultural offerings for audiences in Hesse

The meetings of the selection panel are scheduled to take place in March and December 2025.

How will the grant be paid and how do I prove that the project has been delivered?

Grants will only be paid once the grant agreement has been signed. The schedule of payments is determined by the approved project timeline and the budget.

All funded projects will document their progress via an online tool provided by Bureau Ritter, thus providing proof of the project's delivery.

These funding principles will come into effect on 1. July 2025. They are subject to change.

To find out more, download the supporting documents or find answers to the most frequently asked questions (FAQ), please visit www.next-steps-hessen.de.