

OPEN CALL MITTELYOUNG 2026

*Open call for Theatre, Dance, Music and Circus projects
of UNDER-30 artists, companies and collectives
from Central Europe and the Balkans*

From December 11, 2025 to February 10, 2026

**9 projects for Mittelyoung (14- 17 May 2026)
the 3 best projects for Mittefest (16-26 July 2026)**

At its sixth edition, Mittelyoung is an event by and for young people under 30, a window for a generation immersed in a century, the 21st, yet to be invented and written. The festival is based on an open call for projects from Italy, Central-Europe and the Balkans, **examined by a group of under-30 curators (*curatores*)** appointed by Mittelfest in cooperation with some institutions and training bodies in Friuli Venezia Giulia region and SNG Nova Gorica (Slovenia).

Among the applications submitted, under the coordination of Mittelfest artistic direction, the group of *curatores* will select **9 projects (2 theatre, 2 music, 2 dance, 2 circus and one project that may belong to one of the above categories) to be showcased and from 14 to 17 May 2026** in Cividale del Friuli.

Afterwards, among those 9 projects scheduled, the same group of *curatores* together with the artistic direction will further select up to **3 shows to be re-scheduled during Mittelfest Fear from 16 to 26 July 2026.**

Art. 1 Eligibility criteria

The call is open to:

- ensembles/companies of artists under the age of 30
- individual artists under the age of 30

The artistic staff of the Ensembles/companies may count up to a maximum of 6 members

Ensembles/companies must be based in one of the following countries:

Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Montenegro, the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland and Ukraine.

All members of the artistic staff must be aged between 18 and 30 at the time of submitting the application. Any technical staff is not subject to age limits.

Individual artists under-30 must be nationals of or permanent residents in one of the above-mentioned countries.

INFORMATION OFFICE

mittelyoung@mittelfest.org

Stretta San Martino, 4
Cividale del Friuli (UD)

The works submitted must be unreleased in Friuli Venezia Giulia. Works unreleased in Italy will be taken in special consideration.

The projects submitted must be relatively quick to set up and dismantle in order to allow the programming of several shows in one day as is customary in a festival.

The timing, schedules and spaces of the performance will be defined by Mittelfest.

Ensembles/companies will be asked to adapt to the designated performance venues.

The projects submitted must be in line with the theme ***Fear*** of Mittelfest 2026 edition.

It is said that deep down in the abyss, beneath the frozen earth and rocks, in a network of caves and tunnels, there lived two sisters, endowed with a single eye, which they exchanged so that they could see. It is said that while one was handing him over to the other, Perseus, enveloped in darkness, reached out his hand and stole the eye. And from the abyss, he reached unknown and dense cliffs and gloomy woods, and crossed seas and deserts, until he reached the home of the Gorgons. There, a tremendous silence reigned and an endless series of men and animals, all turned to stone, terrified by Medusa's gaze. Perseus blindfolded himself to hide his fear from her eyes. He would walk through that graveyard of statues, guided by the eye he had stolen from the two sisters. And he would find Medusa, absorbed in sleep, quiet with her head of repulsive snakes. And, it is said, without seeing her, he would sever her head from her neck.

Then, the first miracle occurred: two horses were born immediately, one of which was winged, Pegasus. It is then said that Perseus, riding on Pegasus, stopped at the seashore and washed his victorious hands. To prevent the sand from damaging the severed head, he softened it with leaves and sea rushes. He then laid Medusa's head with its terrifying snakes on top. Then, the second miracle occurred: the blood, which was still pouring from the head, reduced the leaves to dust, while giving the sea rushes an unknown rigidity, turning them into coral. Since then, it is said that the blood of the hideous Medusa can turn what lies inert in the water into precious coral, or what rests on the ground into hard stone and dust.

“This is what happens with fear: it is all in the expectations, in what we imagine it will be. Fear is the primary emotion that anticipates events, it does not follow them. It is already there. It arrives and points the way, as in the allusive geography of myth. Yet, while it predicts succumbing to every fatal challenge, it prevents the outcome. All you have to do is go beyond what your eyes believe. Because sight is often deceiving: it does not notice what is in front of it, but what the mind already expects. The gaze, it is said, only registers differences.

Our story, then, may be similar to that of Perseus: do not yield to Medusa's gaze, do not turn to stone in the face of terror that is already known, in the face of what the mind fears will happen. Instead, shielded by a stolen eye, keeping our fearful gaze locked, we can return victorious, riding our Pegasus, laden with precious corals.

Will it happen? Who knows: if, while observing things, we begin to see them with new tools and different eyes, some pleasant surprise may await us. If the fear that lurks in our thoughts were overcome by our actions, some miracle might reveal itself. Instead of running away from it, why not follow every fear wherever it leads us? Why not accept its adventures?

Maybe we will find stones, maybe corals.”

Giacomo Pedini, Artistic Director

Art. 2 Dates and locations

Stage 1: Mittelyoung *Fear* from 14 to 17 May 2026 in Cividale del Friuli (UD), Italy

Stage 2: Mittelfest *Fear* from 16 to 26 July 2026 in Cividale del Friuli (UD), Italy

Art. 3 Conditions

Associazione Mittelfest will grant to each selected project (stage 1) an economic support (co-production contribution or cachet) up to **EUR 4,000.00**, which will be calculated on the basis of the number of people involved and the type of performance, including all social security and tax charges by law, as well as return travel and accommodation expenses.

The estimated costs proposed by the artist or the company will be subject to evaluation by Associazione Mittelfest (and possible negotiations).

Art. 4 Application process

Applications must be submitted exclusively via the **online application form** available on the website www.mittelfest.org.

The application form must be accompanied, under penalty of exclusion, by:

1. Short biography of the artist or company in English and if available in Italian (maximum 1500 characters). **No personal information (e.g., addresses, emails, phone numbers) should be included in the submission**
2. Artistic presentation of the project in English and if available in Italian (maximum 2000 characters). **No personal information (e.g., addresses, emails, phone numbers) should be included in the submission**
3. List of future repeats scheduled until the end of August 2026
4. For non-unreleased projects, list of repeats performed up to the date of the application submission

The following fields **must be filled** in on the application form:

1. Personal data (date of birth, tax residence, nationality, role) of all members of the *ensemble* (artistic and technical staff):
2. Technical data sheet of the show in English and/or Italian (itinerant performances that do not require a fixed location will also be taken into consideration)

- ✓ download the [TECHNICAL DATA SHEET 2026](#) and the photos of Mittelyoung LOCATIONS (Church of Santa Maria dei Battuti)

3. If available, script in original language, to facilitate the creation for any surtitles, and, if possible, in English or Italian
4. Photos and/or videos (links, if available) of the show and/or anything else relevant to the selection

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- ✓ Open the [APPLICATION FORM](#) for Mittelyoung 2026

Art. 5 Project selection: stage 1 and stage 2

Selection - Stage 1

The submitted projects will be examined and evaluated, with the coordination of Mittelfest artistic director, by a group of under-30 curators: an *ad-hoc* commission of *curatores*.

The *curatores* Commission will select a maximum of 9 projects (**2 theatre, 2 music, 2 dance, 2 circus and one project that may belong to one of the above categories**), which will officially enter the programme of **Mittelyoung** (from 14 to 17 May 2026).

The shortlisted individual artists or companies will be notified of the official confirmation via e-mail **by 13 March 2026**.

The 9 projects selected to participate in Mittelyoung 2026 (May 14 - 17, 2026) will be announced by the end of April 2026 on social channels (<https://www.facebook.com/Mittelfest> and <https://www.instagram.com/mittelfest/>) and on the Mittelfest website: www.mittelfest.org

Selection - Stage 2

During **Mittelyoung** event, the Commission will select 3 projects to be included in the programme of **Mittelfest Fear**. The selected projects will be scheduled between 16 and 26 July 2026 in Cividale del Friuli.

Each project passing this second selection will be granted at least the same financial support allocated in stage 1 and calculated as provided for in Art.3.

The Commission of *curatores* may request additions to the documentation already submitted in order to better evaluate the projects.

The evaluation criteria of the Selection Commission are unquestionable.

The shows selected for Mittelyoung will also be judged by a panel of experts who will award some special mentions

Art. 6 Deadlines

Applications must be filled online **by 10 February 2026 at 3pm** to the following web site address: www.mittelfest.org/en/mittelyoung/

For further information see the FAQs on www.mittelfest.org or write to mittelyoung@mittelfest.org

For the establishment of the Curatores Committee we thank:

Accademia Eleonora Duse - Centro Sperimentale di Cinema e Arti Performative, Associazione culturale Arearea, Conservatorio Statale di Musica Giuseppe Tartini di Trieste, Conservatorio Statale di Musica Jacopo Tomadini di Udine, Fondazione Luigi Bon, Università degli Studi di Trieste, Università degli Studi di Udine, SNG Nova Gorica (Slovenia), e anche Associazione culturale Circo all'incirca, Convitto Nazionale Paolo Diacono, Istituto Tecnico Arturo Malignani, Scuola di Danza Erica Bront e Teatro Club Udine – Palio Teatrale Studentesco.