OCEAN/UNI 2026

An Online Activations Series

Sound Ecologies

Apply by filling this application form

Apply

Dates
→ April 15 – May 20, 2026

Duration
→ 6 weeks (5 online sessions)

Time Commitment
→ 2 hours per session (approx. 10 hours total session time, 10–20 hours of independent work in total)
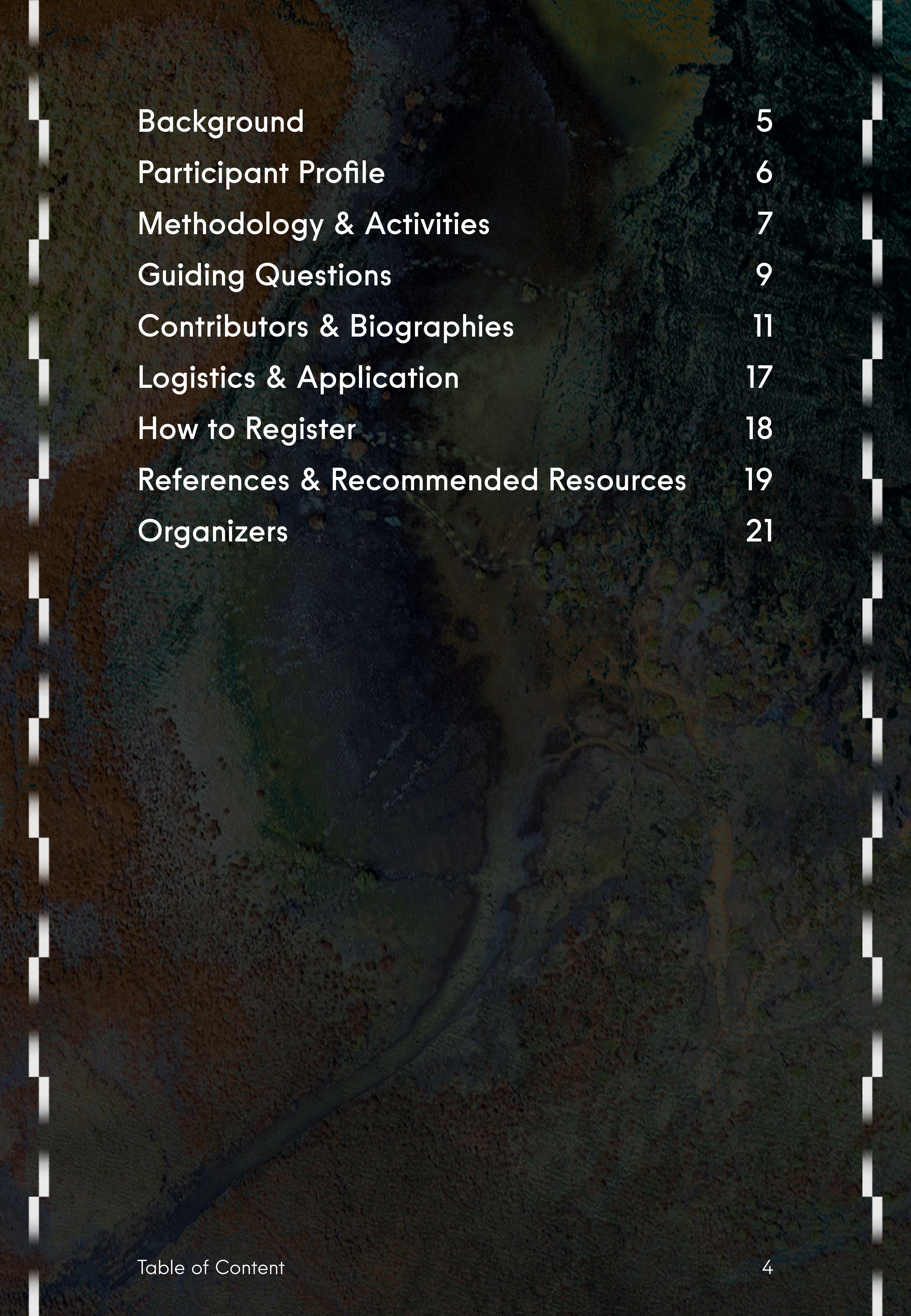
Cost
→ Free of charge

Stipend
→ One participant project selected for further development in 2027 will receive a stipend of €2,000.

Application Deadline
→ February 28, 2026

TBA21—Academy, in collaboration with the Ars Biologica project, MEDiverSEAty research network, and artist/researcher Robertina Šebjanič, invite applications for Sound Ecologies, an acoustic inquiry exploring the relationship between biodiversity, investigative listening and ecoacoustics. Sound Ecologies is an online activation series within the framework of OCEAN / UNI Spring semester 2026 Plural Seas, Porous Futures.

Background

Environmental emergencies of the Anthropocene are increasingly understood as crises of relationality. As articulated by thinkers such as Arturo Escobar, Vinciane Despret, and Donna Haraway, dominant frameworks that position humans as separate from nonhuman entities have contributed to profound ecological and political consequences, shaping how we know and understand the world. These perspectives highlight the need to move beyond extractive and reductionist approaches toward forms of engagement that acknowledge interdependence across human and more-than-human worlds.

In response, contemporary research on biodiversity is shifting away from models that isolate biological decline from its cultural, (geo)political, and epistemological conditions. Biodiversity is increasingly understood as a multi-layered, relational, and processual phenomenon—a 'living archive' of histories and relations shaped by governance structures, knowledge systems, and modes of sensing. This shift invites us to a move beyond mere measurement toward a situated narration of environments across the hydro/terra/atmo sphere(s), foregrounding decolonial listening and myth-making as vital investigative tools.

Sound Ecologies emerges from this context as a collective learning environment grounded in listening. Bringing together researchers, artists, and practitioners from diverse fields, the activations invite participants to engage environments through shared inquiry and situated practice. Listening is approached as both a method and an ethical stance, opening space for attentiveness, subtle interaction, and the exploration of relational, more-than-human futures shaped by multispecies co-existence.

Participant Profile

We are seeking approx. 15 interdisciplinary practitioners who are actively working at the intersection of acoustic practices, critical environmental research, and creative investigation.

Who should apply?

We are looking for practitioners with previous experience in relevant fields:

- Environmental investigation or critical ecological studies.

- Field recording (hydrophone, air) or acoustic sensing technology.

- Sound art, ecoacoustics, or bioacoustics research.

We encourage applications from practitioners who can contribute expertise from (or across) the following three clusters:

The Acoustic & Artistic Investigator

Sound artists & composers, acoustic ecologists, media researchers focused on sonification, field recording, and experimental audio production.

The Scientific & Environmental Specialist

Ecoacousticians, ecologists, and environmental scientists focused on acoustic indices, biodiversity monitoring, and quantifying environmental harm through sound.

The Critical & Investigative Researcher

Anthropologists, environmental humanities scholars, investigative journalists, and critical designers focused on critical theory, decolonial listening, counter-forensics, and situated practice.

Methodology & Activities

Framework

Sound Ecologies positions sound as a primary method of ecological encounter. Listening is approached as a way to sense the acoustic signatures of biodiversity, stress, resilience, and transformation across interconnected spheres of the terra/hydro/atmo sphere(s). Sound operates simultaneously as a sensory medium, an analytical tool, and a form of situated evidence-making.

Within this framework, sound also functions as a forensic and counter-forensic instrument. Acoustic practices can register disturbances such as water and air noise pollution, extractive and non-extractive activities, and other manifestations of environmental imbalance that frequently escape visual detection. Through attentive and critical listening, latent dynamics within ecosystems are surfaced, rendering perceptible what unfolds beneath visible or representational thresholds.

The activation foregrounds transdisciplinary collaboration as a transformative force. Drawing from ecoacoustics, acoustic ecology, investigative audio, environmental sound art, and multispecies studies, Sound Ecologies creates a shared research space where scientific monitoring, artistic inquiry, and community-engaged listening intersect. Participants are encouraged to work across methodological boundaries, developing counter-mapping and sonic documentation practices that question dominant epistemologies and foster alternative forms of ecological knowledge.

Rooted in sensory-based, situated practice, the activation series takes place within the MEDiverSEAty and Ars Biologica frameworks to support experimental modes of research, collective analysis, and public knowledge production. By engaging with sonic plurality, mythologies, memory, and storytelling, Sound Ecologies seeks to understand biodiversity not only as biological variation, but as a living archive— holding histories, relations, and possibilities for imagining more-than-human futures.

What will we do?

We will engage in collaborative research and critical inquiry. Our sessions will be structured around a joint investigative assignment set by the leading artistic voice. A key component involves peer-to-peer skill exchange, where participants share their specialized methods and research outputs. This collective process will be informed and enriched by the presentation of critical use cases and methodological insights from invited guests whose work is rooted in audio investigation and investigative aesthetics, directly influencing our research trajectory and collaborative findings.

The activations draw inspiration from expanded practices of ecoacoustics, environmental sound art, investigative audio, and deep listening, creating a bridge between scientific monitoring, artistic research, and community-engaged listening.

Guiding Questions

The collective research agenda of Sound Ecologies is driven by a set of interrelated questions that foreground listening as both epistemic practice and ethical stance:

- How do we listen to the planet across living and non-living entities, terrestrial and aquatic environments, human and more-than-human worlds?

- In what ways can attentive, situated listening challenge visually dominant and extractive modes of knowing biodiversity, political power, and environmental justice?

- How might acoustic practices enable us to attune to biodiversity as a relational, processual, and multispecies phenomenon rather than a static object of conservation?

- What becomes audible in spaces of limited visibility such as dense forests, underground ecologies, or the deep sea—and how do these soundings reshape our understanding of ecological presence, absence, and vulnerability?

- How can field recording, hydrophone practices, and acoustic sensing be ethically and effectively employed to translate environmental hypotheses into situated, actionable forms of evidence?

- How do individual field-based investigations resonate with one another, and what collective narratives, counter-maps, or "hidden dynamics" emerge through shared listening practices?

- What forms of knowledge, methodologies, and sonic archives can be collaboratively developed and socialized as public resources addressing the themes of Plural Seas and Porous Futures?

Together, these questions frame listening not merely as a technical skill, but as a mode of inquiry capable of revealing ecological relations, power asymmetries, and multispecies entanglements that often remain unheard.

Contributors & Biographiess

The activations are led artistically by **Robertina Šebjanič** and feature special guest contributions from **Earshot, Vladan Joler,** and **Paula Andrea Zapata-Ramírez.**

Robertina Šebjanič

© Alexis Gilli

Robertina Šebjanič, based in Ljubljana, is an artist/researcher whose practice drifts through the fluid thresholds of ecology, (geo)politics, and arts, attuned to the rhythms and ruptures of aquatic worlds. Her award- winning works navigate the intertidal zones between species, and bring to the surface the submerged voices of oceans and rivers.

Her works received awards, honorary mentions and nominations at Prix Ars Electronica, Starts Prize, Falling Walls, and Re:Humanism.

She gave lectures at Stanford University (Palo Alto), UCLA Art | Sci Center (Los Angeles), Tara Ocean Foundation and TBA21—Academy's Ocean Space (Venice), the UN Ocean Conference (UNOC3, Nice), and UNAM (Mexico City) among others.

Her work has been exhibited widely in museums, biennials, and festivals such as Villa Arson (Nice), Momentum Biennale (Moss), Ars Electronica (Linz), Tribeca Immersive (New York), Kunstgewerbemuseum (Berlin), Cukrarna (Ljubljana), Matadero (Madrid), Sea Art Festival (Busan), Akbank Sanat (İstanbul), MSU Zagreb, MSUB Belgrade, MSUM Ljubljana, CCD (Mexico City) among others.

Vladan Joler

© Vladan Joler archive

Vladan Joler is a Professor at the University of Novi Sad, and a researcher and artist whose work spans critical design, counter-cartography, investigative journalism, writing, data visualisation, and related disciplines. His projects explore and visualise various technical and social aspects of algorithmic transparency, digital labour exploitation, invisible infrastructures and other contemporary phenomena in the intersection of technology and society.

With a background rooted in media activism and game hacking, he has curated and organised numerous events

and gatherings of internet activists, artists, and investigators, including SHARE events in Belgrade and Beirut.
Joler's work is included in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; the Design Museum, London; and in the permanent exhibition of the Ars Electronica Center, Linz. His work has been presented in over one hundred international exhibitions, including institutions and events such as: ZKM, Karlsruhe; XXII Triennale di Milano; HKW, Berlin; Vienna Biennale; Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Transmediale, Berlin; Ars Electronica, Linz; Biennale WRO, Wroclaw; Design Society Shenzhen; Hyundai Motorstudio, Beijing; La Gaîté Lyrique, Paris; the Council of Europe in Strasbourg; and the European Parliament in Brussels.

In 2024, he received the S+T+ARTS 2024 Grand Prize of the European Commission for Innovation in Technology, Industry and Society stimulated by the Arts, together with his collaborator Kate Crawford, for their work Calculating Empires (2024). Joler lives and works in Novi Sad.

Paula Andrea Zapata-Ramírez

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Paula Andrea Zapata-Ramírez is a leading marine biodiversity expert, researcher, and science leader with over 15 years of international experience in ecosystem conserva-

tion, marine spatial planning, and science—policy integration across the Caribbean, Pacific, and Mediterranean regions.

She currently serves as Chief Scientist at Ocean Quest, a foundation incubated at KAUST and part of the Pink Flamingo Society of Oceanographic Research Vessels, where she provides strategic scientific leadership with a strong focus on capacity building, inclusive ocean exploration, and support for early-career researchers in the Global South, particularly in Latin America. In parallel, Paula is an Associate Professor at Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana and an Associate Researcher at the Center of Excellence in Marine Sciences (CEMARIN), where she has played a pivotal role in shaping Colombia's national strategies for ocean and coastal governance.

Her research spans the application of advanced technologies—such as satellite remote sensing, AUVs, and ROVs—for high-resolution seafloor mapping and biodiversity monitoring, particularly in support of participatory and community-informed conservation strategies. Paula has led or co-led more than 25 funded projects, including deep-sea ecosystem exploration in the Dominican Republic, seabed surveys for submarine infrastructure, and the characterization of methane seeps in the Colombian Caribbean.

Through her current leadership role and past collaborations with organizations such as the Pink Flamingo Society, CliMetS Program, Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, National Geographic, and Conservation International, Paula continues to bridge science and policy, advancing ocean conservation in Latin America through equity, evidence-based decision-making, and ecological resilience.

Earshot

Earshot is the world's first not-for-profit organisation producing audio investigations for human rights and environmental advocacy. Using cutting-edge audio forensic analysis techniques, Earshot adds a crucial but often overlooked dimension to open-source investigations.

While image and spatial analysis have become widespread over the last few years, until now half of the story has remained untold on the soundtrack. Earshot draws on more than a decade of experience in audio analysis to bring justice to crimes that lie beyond the camera's frame. Its mission involves collaboration with international human rights organisations, lawyers, NGOs, journalists and independent media, activists, grassroots communities, as well as academic and cultural institutions.

Through comprehensive sonic investigations, Earshot produces groundbreaking research dedicated to defending the rights of communities affected by corporate, state, and environmental injustice.

Michal Kučerák, Petra Linhartová, Fiona Middleton, TBA21—Academy
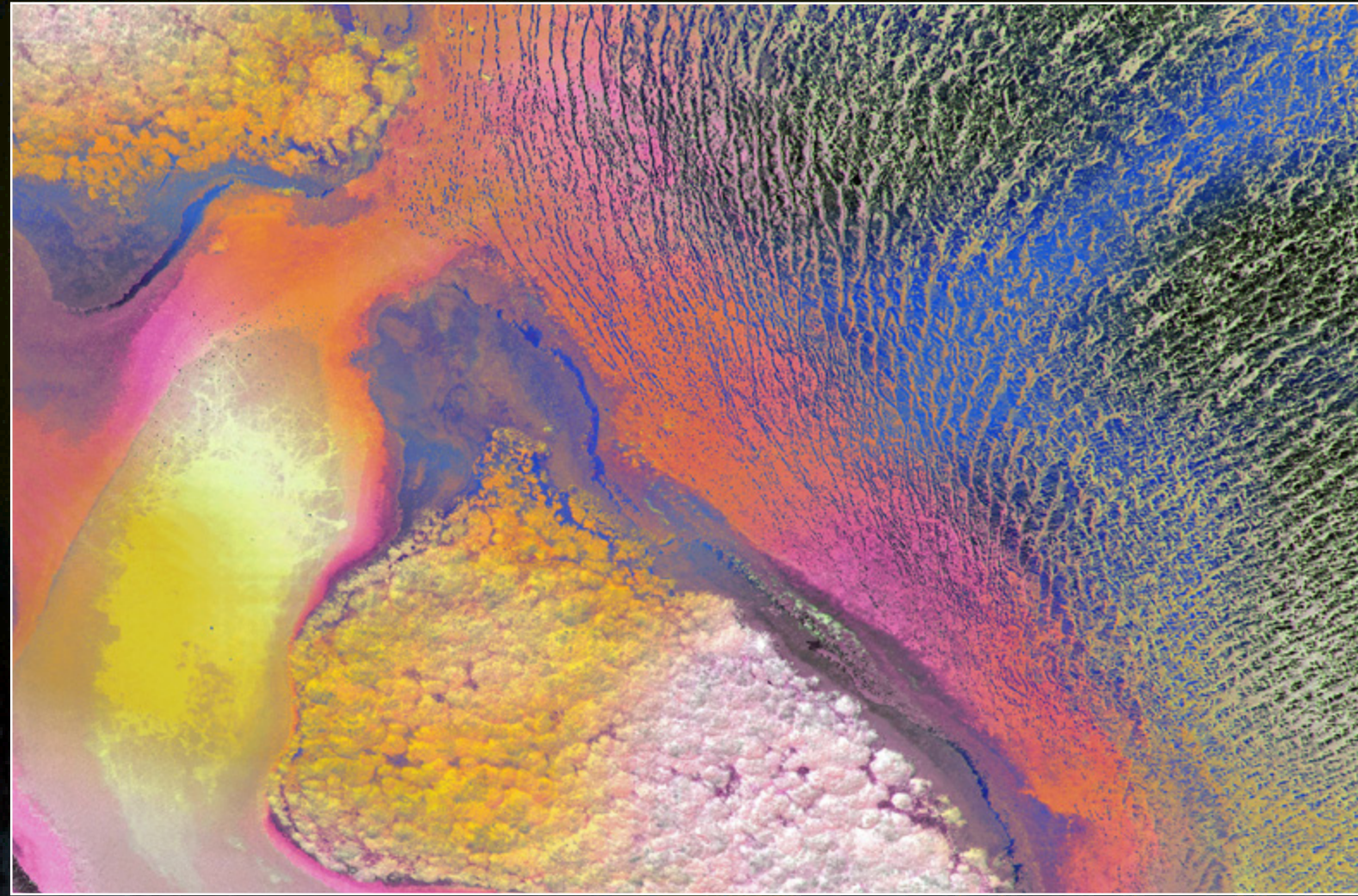
The TBA21—Academy digital team works within the research line Ecologies of Technologies, exploring technology as an integral part of planetary life rather than a domain separate from nature.

Drawing on technodiversity, the team investigates how digital, cultural, and material technologies shape ecological relations and imaginaries across diverse contexts.

By bridging digital practice, global learning communities, and applied ecological research, the team activates TBA21—Academy's digital heritage as a living space for study, experimentation, and mediation.

Logistics & Application

Selected participants are expected to attend 5 sessions, with the final session dedicated to presentations and pitching of ideas.

Sessions are held online via Zoom, and through a dedicated online space on the ocean comm/uni/ty.

All sessions are held on Wednesdays
from 6—8 pm CEST

→ April 15, 2026

→ April 22, 2026

→ April 29, 2026

→ May 6, 2026

→ May 20, 2026

Selection procedure

- January 15, 2026
  → Registration opens

- February 28, 2026
  → Deadline - Registration closed

- March 6, 2026
  → Application review ends

- March 9-13, 2026
  → Interviews with pre-selected applicants

- March 16, 2026
  → Notification of acceptance

How to register

Applications should be submitted via this
Google Form, requiring:

- A brief overview of your research trajectory and relevant links.

- A short reflection on the skills you bring and those you wish to develop.

- Your motivation for joining this specific activation series.

Contact

For any future questions, please write to:
info@ocean-archive.org

References & Recommended Resources

Projects by leading artist

Robertina Šebjanič (Slovenia): CO_SONIC 1884 KM²
https://robertina.bandcamp.com/album/co-sonic-1884-km-2

Robertina Šebjanič and Manja Ristić (Slovenia and Croatia/Serbia):
Hidden Adriatic
https://manjaristic.bandcamp.com/album/hidden-adriatic

Soundmoodboard: Recommended listening

Luc Ferrari (France): Presque Rien n°1
https://lucferrari.bandcamp.com/album/presque-rien-2

Hildegard Westerkamp (Canada): Transformations
https://empreintesdigitales.bandcamp.com/album/transformations

Leah Barclay (Australia): Dolphin Cove – Great Sandy Biosphere
Reserve
https://sonicterrain.bandcamp.com/track/dolphin-cove-great-sandy-
biosphere-reserve

Jana Winderen (Norway): The Noisiest Guys on the Planet
https://janawinderen.bandcamp.com/album/the-noisiest-guys-on-the-
planet

Toshiya Tsunoda/Taku Unami (Japan): Wovenland
https://erstwhilerecords.bandcamp.com/album/wovenland

Abdellah M. Hassak Carnival in Casbah (Morocco)
https://audiotong.bandcamp.com/album/carnival-in-casbah

Antoine Bertin (France): Phytoplanktonic Conversations
https://antoinebertin.bandcamp.com/album/phytoplanktonic-conversations

Bosque Vacío (Mexico): Subacuática
https://flamingpines.bandcamp.com/track/subacua-tica

AGF (Finland): Solidicity
https://agf-poemproducer.bandcamp.com/album/solidicity

Mélia Roger & Grégoire Chauvot (France): Cranes and Fox dialogue
https://biodiversitarecords.bandcamp.com/track/cranes-and-fox-dialogue

Ana María Romano Gómez (Colombia)
https://dissonancefromhell.bandcamp.com/track/ana-mar-a-romano-g-mez-la-ley-del-m-s

Lawrence English (Australia): Field Recordings From The Zone
https://lawrenceenglish.bandcamp.com/album/field-recordings-from-the-zone

Radio & interactive resources

Sin Superficie a radio show at Radio Nopal by Lena Ortega (Mexico)
https://www.mixcloud.com/radionopal/playlists/sinsuperficie/

Radio Submarine (Egypt)
https://soundcloud.com/yaramekawei/sets/radio-submarine

Radio Tsonami (Valparaíso, Chile)
https://radiotsonami.org/

Aporee — The Sounds Of The World, interactive map
http://aporee.org/maps/

freq_wave: 7 seas
https://ocean-archive.org/collection/72

freq_wave metamixer
https://ocean-archive.org/view/1870

Sounds too Many soundscape library
https://ocean-archive.org/collection/31

Organizers

TBA21—Academy is TBA21's research and advocacy arm, fostering deeper relationships with the Earth's hydrosphere and its extended ecologies through the lens of art to activate new forms of care and collective action. Operating as an incubator for collaborative inquiry, research-based artistic production, and environmental advocacy, the Academy works through exhibitions, commissions, fieldwork, residencies, pedagogical programmes, and assemblies, and catalyses new forms of knowledge emerging from exchanges between art, science, policy, and civic engagement.

Ocean-Archive.org is an online platform that investigates the potential of storytelling and transdisciplinary collaboration within and beyond archival practices. It strives to expand critical ocean literacy in a time of great necessity and catalyzes collective action for a living Ocean. The aim of Ocean-Archive.org is to bring together the multitude of voices and journeys around the Ocean and connect those striving to nurture and protect it. With ocean comm/uni/ty, the platform instigates conversations around the Ocean so that the members can connect and co-create. Designed as a storytelling and pedagogical tool, Ocean-Archive.org translates current knowledge into a shared language that fosters synergy among art, science, policy, and conservation, and enables us to make better decisions for urgently needed policies.

MEDiverSEAty is a European Doctoral Network exploring the human dimensions of Mediterranean marine biodiversity. Responding to the gap between existing conservation frameworks and their real-world implementation, the project integrates social, cultural, and economic perspectives into biodiversity research and policy. Focusing on areas such as marine citizen science, maritime spatial planning, and marine heritage, MEDiverSEAty highlights the often-
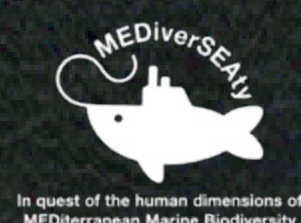
overlooked diversity of cultures, roles, and attitudes shaping human—sea relations. Bringing together partners from six Mediterranean countries, it delivers an interdisciplinary training programme grounded in Ocean Literacy and Marine Biodiversity Conservation.

The MEDiverSEAty project receives funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement ID: 101119700.
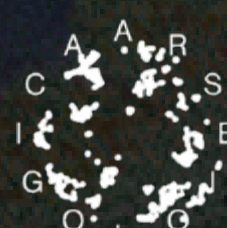
Ars Biologica is an emerging platform for art, science, and ecological thinking, developing within the framework of the European Capital of Culture 2028 in Budweis, CZ. Ars Biologica is a living laboratory for experimental research, education, and international cooperation. It connects partners from academia, scientific institutions, art organizations, and European partners through a network of projects exploring the relations between technology, human activities, and the environment.