

## Year One Open Call for Applications

**TBA21–Academy and Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza present Organismo | Art in Applied Critical Ecologies**, an experimental independent study program connecting research, theory, and speculation through a series of focused case studies—regenerative interventions that explore different forms of alliance. The project aims to explore new methodologies and configurations of actors when working in the service of ecological transformation. Its foundational hypothesis is that the work of artists reinvigorating interdisciplinary projects has great potential to contribute to cultural paradigm shifts that can instigate new ways of inhabiting the planet and embrace both complexity and inclusivity.

Organismo is based on the experiences of TBA21–Academy, TBA21’s research arm and incubator for collaborative inquiry, artistic production, and environmental advocacy, which for over a decade has served as a catalyst for new forms of knowledge arising from nurturing relationships between art, science, public policy, and conservation. Joining its efforts with the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Organismo functions as a system of connections between art practices, interdisciplinary research, government bodies, and local communities to facilitate the development of plural and intersectional projects that are necessary to address the challenges and converging crises of today.

The Year One of the independent study program departs from the learnings gathered during its experimental Year Zero edition—one that was conceived as a prototyping process in which parameters, hypotheses, and organizational structures were tested. The program will continue developing its multidisciplinary, multiagent, multiscalar, and multispecies approaches with the aim of activating collective intelligence. Foregrounding artistic practice as a driving force, and building bridges between speculation and application, Organismo intends to mobilize cultural and political transformations by developing narratives and languages that allow us to imagine other ecological orders. To this end, research lines and case studies intertwine to activate theory by applied explorations and the formulation of a group proposal. Candidates need to commit to both dimensions.

## 01. CASE STUDIES

Organismo believes situated knowledge is vital for addressing the complexities of contemporary ecological challenges. Thus the independent study program is structured by applied case studies that enable access to specific forms of knowledge and their interrelated actors and communities. The aim is to both activate these networks within their local conditions, and to nurture the processes proposed with remote forms of experiential learning.

In Year One the five case studies are:

- **PyroEcologies**  
**Fire's Potential to Destroy and Ignite Life in the Earth System**  
Facilitated by FECYT | Fundación Española para la Ciencia y la Tecnología - Ministerio de Ciencia, Innovación y Universidades, and Barcelona Supercomputing Center - Centro Nacional de Supercomputación
- **Museum Entanglement**  
**Thyssen and its Social Ecosystem**  
Facilitated by Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza
- **Territorio Abadía Retuerta**  
**Forest Epistemologies for Regenerative Practices**  
Facilitated by Abadía Retuerta
- **Ocean Futurisms**  
**New Storytelling Devices for Radical Imagination**  
Facilitated by TBA21-Academy
- **Non-Archives**  
**Open Intelligence as Digital Archives and Experimental Publishing**  
Facilitated by TBA21-Academy

The cases will each be developed over different durations, through different compositions of agents and dynamics depending on the location, geographic condition, themes, resources, and availability of the participants in each case study. Fuller details on each case study are presented in the complementary document “**Case Studies Description**,” which can be found on [TBA21's website](#), under the Organismo page.

## 02. RESEARCH LINES

The research lines of Year One of the independent study program respond to the work carried out at TBA21-Academy since its foundation in 2011, in close connection to the interests of Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza.

They will unfold as follows:

- **Convivial Conservation**
- **Ecologies of Technologies**
- **The Rights of More-than-human**
- **Ecologies of Peace**

An introduction to each of these research lines is presented in the complementary document “**Research lines**,” available on [TBA21's website](#), under the Organismo page.

### 03. STRUCTURE AND TIMELINE

Year One of Organismo's independent study program will take place between **October 24, 2024, and June 20, 2025**. Initially, content and theory informed by the research lines will be discussed, before then being applied through the development of proposals that respond to the challenges proposed by each case study.

The schedule has four phases:

- **Phase 1: Research line exploration**  
- October 2024 - January 2025

The different research lines of the program will be explored in consecutive modules, with sessions guided by selected guests. An initial in-person encounter will take place on October 25 and 26, 2024, at Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza; participation in this initial meeting is mandatory.

- **Phase 2: Case conceptualization**  
- February - March 2025

- **Dynamics and agreements**  
Last week of February 2025

The design of the approach, the organizational structure, and the process of each case study will be developed in a series of online workshops that will involve collaborative work between the complete team forming the case. Participation is mandatory.

- **Immersion in the site**  
February - March 2025

Each case group will undertake a trip to a location associated with the case study, along with an external agent whose practice and context will inform the case's themes. This is a mandatory trip covered by Organismo, in accordance with an internal travel policy. The trip will have a duration of up to six days.

- **Phase 3: Autonomous case study development**  
- April - June 2025

The groups enter the phase of making decisions on a collective proposal, according to the objectives and internal arrangements established among all the case study members. Participants will formulate one proposal per case study resulting from the process. It will be carried out as collective work undertaken by the multiple actors informing the case. In **June**, a **public event** will be held at the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza to activate these proposals through a public presentation of the developed research and co-creation process.

- **Phase 4: Online platform contribution**  
- July 2025

Distillation of the research carried out collectively by the participants of the different case studies in an online platform hosted by TBA21 accessible to the general audience.

Organismo proposes to work with plural authorship, to activate the inherent potential of collective processes as a reflection of the accumulation of voices through time. For further elaboration on Organismo propositions, read the document "**Parameters and Configurations**" that can be found on [TBA21's website](#).

The contents and sessions will be developed by a chorus of voices from different disciplines and practices, composed of a diverse group of external profiles—both local and international—as well as team members of TBA21-Academy and Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza. You can find their names on the [TBA21 website](#).

### 04. COMMITMENT AND ENGAGEMENT

Organismo is designed to follow a hybrid, inclusive format throughout, in order to be compatible with participants' other commitments, with both in-person and online sessions on **Tuesday and Wednesday evenings**. It combines various types of sessions and meeting formats.

**Online sessions** are specifically intended for participants selected for the program, and will be either:

- Thematic sessions for the whole group of Organismo Year One participants. These will take place on **Tuesdays and/or Wednesdays at 18.00-19.30 CET** from November 2024 to June 2025.
- Case study group meetings scheduled based on availability of the participants and other actors involved, with a preference for Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. These will take place from February to June 2025.

**In-person** work will be concentrated in the initial workshop in October, and the case study trip that will be held between February and March. A **public program of in-person encounters** will accompany Organismo Year One. These sessions are open to a general public as a way to generate spaces of exchange with an expanded audience. They will happen on **Tuesdays or Wednesdays at 18.30-20.00h CET** from November 2024 to June 2025—either in the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, or at other locations in the city of Madrid.

Participants of the independent study program will have access to audiovisual recordings of the in-person and online sessions, in case they cannot attend. However, consistent participation in the online sessions throughout the duration of the program is required.

The program will require a weekly commitment of an estimated **five weekly working hours**, excluding the public program encounters. It will develop in both Spanish and English. Participants will be required to understand both languages, and to be able to articulate their thoughts fluently in at least one of the languages, ideally in both.

## 05. COLLABORATORS

The independent study program of Organismo | Art in Applied Critical Ecologies is an initiative by TBA21-Academy and Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza. Organismo is a platform developed by multiple collaborators. Year One has the following partners:

Abadía Retuerta, Atelier itd, Barcelona Supercomputing Center - Centro Nacional de Supercomputación (BSC-CNS), Fundación Española para la Ciencia y la Tecnología (FECYT) - Ministerio de Ciencia, Innovación y Universidades, Fundación Daniel y Nina Carasso, Real Jardín Botánico CSIC

## 06. APPLICATION

This independent study program is aimed at adults from diverse educational or professional backgrounds, who have experience or are interested in pursuing interdisciplinary, artistic, and speculative approaches to our research lines and case studies. Each candidate who applies to participate in the Year One of Organismo through this open call will need to choose one of the five case studies presented, as well as a second preferred option. Between five and six participants will be selected for each study case, so the program as a whole will invite between 25 – 30 people. **The participation fee is €310.**

Additionally, Organismo will offer a scholarship to five participants (one per case study) who will take on the role of documenting and reporting on the development of the different cases, as well as exploring different forms of evaluation of the process. The **Sustrato scholarship** covers the program tuition, and provides a grant of €1500. You can find additional information on the scholarship in the **'Terms and Conditions'** document, which can be found on [TBA21's website](#), under the Organismo page.

## 07. APPLICATION FORM

To apply to the program, please send a maximum three-page PDF file answering the questions below to [organismo.info@tba21.org](mailto:organismo.info@tba21.org). Please add one additional page if you wish to apply for the *Sustrato* scholarship. Applications must be received by **September 29, 2024, at 23:59**, and applications must include each of the following:

### • Name(s) and Last Name(s)

### • Telephone number

### • Age

### • Place of residence

### • About yourself:

- Tell us about some significant elements or features of your life and intellectual trajectory.
- What are some experiences that have defined your way of thinking?
- How do you imagine yourself developing your practice in the future?

### • About the program, expectations and commitment:

- What forms of learning or experience would you like to gather from the program?
- Which topics and research lines interest you most? Which issues would you like to work on, and why?
- Do you have a willingness to undertake both the immersion in the contents and the development of the proposal during the program?
- What does collective intelligence mean to you? Could you describe your experience working collectively? What tools and dynamics could you bring to the group?

### • About the case study:

- Which case study would you like to join and why? Alternatively, is there any other case you would like to take part in?
- Which knowledge, skills, perspectives, ways of doing and/or sensitivities will you bring to this research group?

### • About the language (short answers):

- This program will combine contents in Spanish and English. Are you able to comprehend both languages?
- Do you feel comfortable expressing and articulating your thoughts in at least one of those languages? Which one do you feel most confident with?

### • If you would like to apply for the *Sustrato* scholarship:

- What would you like to explore through this role?
- Which tools or skills do you have to carry out this task?
- What do the terms *evaluating* and *documenting* mean to you? How would you propose to evaluate and document the case study you have selected?
- Are you able to commit to the extra time needed to fulfill this task?

In addition, you may also share a video presentation of up to two minutes' duration or/and an image-oriented document up to 5 pages in case that you want to present visual work. The total size of all files should not exceed 15MB.

By applying to this open call, you accept all the stated in the **'Terms and Conditions'** section that you can find on the TBA21 website. Additional information on the research lines, case studies, and parameters and configuration of the program are also available in downloadable PDFs on the [TBA21 website](#).

## about TBA21-ACADEMY

**TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary** is a leading international art and advocacy foundation. Established in 2002 by philanthropist and art patron Francesca Thyssen-Bornemisza, the foundation stewards the TBA21 Collection and its outreach activities, which include exhibitions as well as educational and public programming.

TBA21 is based in Madrid, working in partnership with the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, and has other important points of action in Venice and Portland (Jamaica). All activity at TBA21 is collaborative and fundamentally driven by artists and the belief in art and culture as accelerators in social and environmental transformations and ultimately in the service of peace.

[www.tba21.org](http://www.tba21.org)

**TBA21-Academy** is the foundation's research arm, fostering a deeper relationship with the Ocean and wider ecologies by working as an incubator for transdisciplinary inquiry, artistic production, and environmental advocacy. For more than a decade, the Academy has catalyzed new forms of knowledge emerging from the exchanges between art, science, policy, and conservation in long-term and collaborative engagement through fellowships, residency programs, and activities in a wide variety of formats. Among its major projects are the Ocean Space art center (Venice), the independent study program Organismo | Art in Applied Critical Ecologies (Madrid, MNTB), Alligator Head Foundation (Port Antonio, Jamaica), *The Current Pacific/Mediterranean/Caribbean*, the online initiative Ocean-Archive.org with OCEAN / UNI, and Bauhaus of the Seas Sails.

## about MUSEO NACIONAL THYSSEN-BORNEMISZA

The **Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza (MNTB)** houses in the Palacio de Villahermosa one of the most important collections of paintings in the world, with a thousand works of art assembled over seven decades by the Thyssen-Bornemisza family. Since its opening to the public in 1992, the MNTB has been fulfilling its mission to transmit knowledge, educate and socially integrate through its collection, an extensive program of exhibitions and the programming of a wide variety of activities. Its daily work is based on values such as excellence, sustainability, innovation, integrity, involvement, trust, teamwork and avant-garde spirit. It also emphasizes the dissemination of its collections with programs aimed at involving all kinds of audiences in a universal cultural project, based on the firm belief in the capacity of art to enrich people and to enhance creativity and critical thinking, improving their quality of life.

The MNTB, on the other hand, carries out extensive work in the field of sustainability. Both in its exhibitions and activities and in its internal managing, it responds to the challenges of the climate emergency, firmly advancing in sustainability and social responsibility in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) included in the United Nations 2030 Agenda.

[www.museothyssen.org](http://www.museothyssen.org)