

Call for Artists
Apply by 01.07.25

Curated by Elyse Tonna

Moving with the Wind, Like Waves

Introduction

Curator Elyse Tonna, in collaboration with Bank of Valletta, invites proposals from early-career, emerging and mid-career artists or collectives based in Malta to take part in Moving with the Wind, Like Waves - a contemporary art project culminating in a site-specific, collective exhibition at the Inquisitor's Palace in Birgu, scheduled for November 2025.

Commissioned and supported by Bank of Valletta as part of its ongoing commitment to fostering contemporary artistic practice in Malta, this initiative encourages artists to engage with conceptual research and process-based thinking throughout the development of new work.

Moving with the Wind, Like Waves seeks proposals that reflect sensitivity to place, memory and speculative approaches to storytelling. Rather than proposing specific artworks, artists/collectives are invited to propose adaptable conceptual frameworks - ideas that can evolve in response to the site and the curatorial framework and be developed in close dialogue with the curator and project team and the site's curatorial and Exhibitions Department on behalf of Heritage Malta.

Conceptual Framework

"Thus waves come in pairs," wrote Etel Adnan - a line that offers not only a poetic image, but a method for thinking through movement, connection and unseen currents. Moving with the Wind, Like Waves takes this as its point of departure, exploring the quiet shifts, layered inheritances and reverberations of encounters that shape space, memory and perception.

This project does not begin with resolution but with attention. It asks what lies at the edge of visibility - not because it is hidden, but because it has not yet had space to be heard. The wind moves without instruction, the wave returns without symmetry. Both signal the presence of systems larger than our own, marked by repetition, drift, interruption and return. The concept calls for artists to work in tune with such rhythms - tracing what lingers, what dissipates, what accumulates.

Rather than positioning the encounter as a singular event, this framework considers it as a condition: an ongoing negotiation between presences, materials and histories. The aim is not to extract meaning but to co-drift alongside it, welcoming multiplicity, speculation and the fragmentary. Artists are encouraged to propose frameworks that respond to the potentiality of the spaces they will inhabit - not only architecturally, but atmospherically.

This exhibition framework resists the linear in favour of the cyclical, the binary in favour of the relational. It considers how spaces transmit messages to both humans and non-humans alike, how the overlooked and the atmospheric might carry knowledge of their own. It asks: what forms of sensitivity, care and noticing are required to understand not only what is recorded, but what has remained unspoken?

Artists are invited to listen, to shift, to return. To respond to the echo rather than the signal. To propose works that do not aim to conclude, but to begin - to resonate, to move.

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Scope and Process

Moving with the Wind, Like Waves invites emerging and mid-career contemporary artists based in Malta to submit conceptual proposals that remain open, adaptable and grounded in process. Rather than finalised works, artists are asked to propose conceptual frameworks - ideas that will evolve in response to the specificities of the Inquisitor's Palace as the project unfolds.

Up to eight artists or collectives will be selected. At the beginning of the artistic process, an introductory site visit will be facilitated by the curator and the Heritage Malta site's curatorial team and Exhibitions Department. Each artist will then be assigned a location within the Inquisitor's Palace based on the conceptual alignment between their proposal and the characteristics of the space. The work will be developed site-specifically and in close dialogue with the curator, with additional input from the site team where relevant. Throughout the process, artists will be supported through one-to-one mentoring, offering conceptual guidance and critical feedback to help shape the development of their work in response to the site and the curatorial framework.

Proposals may take the form of installation, sculpture, sound, moving image, research-based practice, ephemeral gestures, text-based work or other media. Practices engaging with underrepresented histories, less dominant narratives, embodied knowledge, intangible heritage, speculative processes and ecological thought are particularly encouraged. The exhibition will prioritise immersive and experiential approaches.

An outreach programme will be developed alongside the artists' work, creating opportunities for public engagement and expanded conversations around the exhibition's themes.

Who is eligible?

This open call is open to:

- Individual emerging or mid-career artists, groups or collectives who are currently based in Malta and have a valid VAT number;
- Contemporary artists working across any medium or interdisciplinary practice, especially installation, sculpture, sound, digital media, moving image, spatial practice, text-based or research-based forms;
- Applicants aged 18 and over at the time of submission;
- Applicants with some experience in site-specific or large-scale work and in managing project timelines will be considered favourably;
- Applicants available to engage in a process-based development of new work, in close dialogue with the curator and project team throughout the exhibition process.

Proposals must be for new, original work that will be developed specifically in response to the curatorial framework of Moving with the Wind, Like Waves and the Inquisitor's Palace.

Submitted proposals must not have been previously exhibited and cannot be supported by other funding sources. While not required, previous experience in collaborative or research-based practices will be considered an asset. The works will not be for sale.

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What is the application process?

Applicants must complete the submission via the online form on www.bov.com/moving-with-the-wind-like-waves. The form will request the following:

- Contact details;
- Short artist bio (100 words) and artistic CV (maximum 2 pages);
- Portfolio with up to 5 examples of relevant work (PDF or links);
- Conceptual framework (max 500 words) responding to the curatorial framework of Moving with the Wind, Like Waves;
- Motivation statement outlining your interest in participating and how the project would support your artistic development (max 500 words);
- Statement on site-/context-specific approach (max 250 words);
- Outline of outreach or public engagement approach (max 250 words);
- Preliminary budget and timeline, aligned with your proposed medium, approach and overall timeline;
- Optional supporting materials such as sketches, video/audio links or research notes.

All materials must be submitted in English or Maltese by **1st July 2025, 12:00 (noon)**. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

How will the proposal be evaluated?

1. **Artistic Motivation and Conceptual Framework (35%)** Strength and clarity of the proposed conceptual direction in relation to the curatorial framework. Consideration of movement, listening, interrelation and the unseen. Appropriateness of the chosen medium.
2. **Site-/Context-Specific Awareness and Thematic Resonance (30%)** Sensitivity to spatial and contextual aspects. Ability to reflect on the Inquisitor's Palace through its ethnographic and layered qualities rather than direct historical interpretation. Alignment with broader themes such as ecological thinking, care or overlooked narratives.
3. **Process-Based and Collaborative Potential (20%)** Openness to mentoring, dialogue and iterative development. Willingness to work closely with the curator and teams. Consideration of how the project might extend into public or discursive engagement beyond the exhibition itself.
4. **Feasibility and Capacity (15%)** Realism of the proposal in terms of budget, timeline and production. Evidence of the artist's ability to deliver a new site-specific work within the project's framework.

Project Team

Moving with the Wind, Like Waves is a contemporary art project commissioned and supported by Bank of Valletta's CSR programme, with the aim of supporting the development of emerging and mid-career contemporary artists based in Malta.

The project is led, developed and curated by Elyse Tonna, an independent curator and architect. Elyse leads the curatorial and creative direction of the project, working with a small project team under her guidance. Karolina Rostkowska supports the project through coordination and logistics, contributing to key aspects of project development. Additional team members may be engaged during later phases of the project depending on its evolving needs. The project's visual identity and communication materials are being developed by 2point3.

The project team is working in collaboration with Heritage Malta, including members of the site's curatorial and logistical team at the Inquisitor's Palace, and the agency's Exhibitions Department.

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Timeline

Please note the following key dates for the project:

- Open Call Launch: Week of 2 June 2025
- Submission Deadline: 1st July 2025, (12:00 CET, noon)
- Notification of Results: By 6th July 2025
- Introductory Meeting and Site Visit: 8th July 2025, 13:00 (time to be confirmed)
- Research and Development Phase: July–September 2025
- Submission of Final Sketches and Proposals: 15th September 2025
- Production Phase: October - November 2025
- Installation Period: 24 - 28th November 2025
- Exhibition Opening: 29th November 2025
- Exhibition Duration: December 2025 - 4 January 2026
- Public Programme and Outreach Activities: Rolling schedule developed collaboratively with artists, beginning from November 2025

Please ensure availability for key moments in the process, particularly for the introductory meeting and site visit, development meetings and final installation period. Additional dates may be added in dialogue with the selected artists.

What support is being provided?

Curatorial Mentorship and Artistic Development

Artists will receive ongoing support from curator Elyse Tonna throughout the research, development and installation phases. This includes one-to-one guidance as well as collective feedback sessions with the other participating artists. The curator will also assist artists in conceptualising and developing any related public-facing activities or events.

Production Assistance

Project coordination will be led by Karolina Rostkowska, with logistical and administrative support offered throughout. The curator will liaise with the Heritage Malta site team at the Inquisitor's Palace as needed. Artists are expected to lead and manage the installation of their work on-site in accordance with site conditions.

Allocated Budget

Each artist will be allocated a budget of up to €2,500 (inclusive of VAT). Budgets must cover all costs related to the project, including: artist's fee (up to 30–35% of total budget inc. of VAT), materials and production, fabrication, rental of equipment or software, professional fees (if required), installation and dismantling and transportation.

All artist fees must be invoiced with a valid Maltese VAT number and the expenses by relevant VAT or fiscal receipts.

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Site Access and Facilitation

Artists will be assigned a specific location within the Inquisitor's Palace. The curator will coordinate with the site's curatorial team to ensure access to relevant spaces and facilitate site-specific research where necessary. Please note that some spaces within the Inquisitor's Palace may have access limitations or conservation restrictions.

Public Programme Participation

Each artist will be invited to contribute to the parallel public programme through talks, tours, workshops or other activities, developed in collaboration with the curator and project team.

Documentation and Visibility

All works will be professionally documented and presented across the project's publication, exhibition materials and communications channels.

Questions and Clarifications

For queries regarding this open call or the submission process, please contact us by **23rd June 2025** at **mwwwlw.exhibition@gmail.com**. While we can offer clarification, we are unable to provide individual feedback on draft proposals. The Q&As will be published online.

Additional Information

Any proposal, concept or work submitted in response to this open call remains the exclusive intellectual property of the artist.

By applying, artists grant the curator and Bank of Valletta permission to use images and descriptions of the selected works for the purposes of communication, documentation and dissemination related to the project and its associated programming.

All selected artists will be required to sign a short agreement with the curator on behalf of Bank of Valletta confirming their participation in the exhibition and outlining key responsibilities, timelines and conditions of support.

Conclusion

Moving with the Wind, Like Waves invites proposals from artists who are committed to developing new, site-specific work through a process-based and collaborative approach. The project values conceptual depth, site sensitivity and a willingness to evolve ideas through research, collaboration and dialogue.

We look forward to receiving proposals that reflect these aims and demonstrate a clear and considered engagement with the themes and methods of the project.