

Artist in Residence Program 2026 “EAT”

Program Overview and Application Guidelines

1 Program Overview

Since its opening, Aomori Contemporary Art Centre (ACAC) has conducted an Artist in Residence (AIR) program via open call nearly every year. This year, we have classified residencies focused primarily on artistic activities (research, production of artworks, and presentation of results) under a “Creator framework.” In addition, we have added a new “Mediator framework” to encourage participation from a broad range of creatives, such as researchers and curators, whose activities are less focused on the production and presentation of artworks. The results of the “Creator framework” residencies will be presented – as artwork exhibitions, performances, workshops, or other formats – during the Results Presentation period. Presentation of results is not required for those participating under the “Mediator framework”; instead, we expect that their research activities will be premised on proactive dialogue and collaboration with the “Creator framework” participants and local residents. In both cases, residency participants will receive continuous support from ACAC staff, from research, production, and the organization of various events, all the way to the Results Presentation. Their activities will also be made available to the public through our website, program catalogs, etc.

The residence period consists of a core period lasting for 62 days (61 nights) from October 9 to December 9, 2026, during which the participants will, in principle, reside at ACAC. If desired, participants may reside at ACAC for a maximum of 92 days (91 nights) from September 15 to December 15, 2026. Please select a residence period appropriate for your desired activities.

Each year, the open-call AIR program is given a different title; the 2026 program will be conducted under the theme of “EAT.” ACAC’s location in the foothills of the Hakkoda Mountains is a landscape thriving with food, home to a diverse array of wildlife, grasses, herbs, nuts, fruits, and edible mountain plants. On the other hand, wild animals such as bears and monkeys have been appearing in human spaces more frequently in recent years. For rural areas like this, the question of how to coexist alongside non-human life is becoming an urgent one. These changes are not unrelated to the impacts of human activities, impacts which include climate change. “Eating” is not an activity reserved only for humans, but one that is practiced by all living things. In this year’s open-call AIR, we will move away from anthropocentric perspectives to reconsider our relationships with other species and the environment, taking “food” as our starting point. Here, “food” is understood in a broad sense which includes not only practices such as cooking and harvesting, but also subjects such as memory, narrative, spiritual belief, and distribution. We expect participants to approach their creative activities by moving back and forth between thought and practice as they immerse themselves in the surrounding landscape.

2 Number of Participants

1. Creator framework

Participants under this framework will engage in creative activities such as research, production, and presentation of results. Participants may, if desired, conduct a separate sub-program in addition to their main activity.

Participants selected from applicants residing outside Japan: 1 to 2

Participants selected from applicants residing in Japan: 1 to 2

2. Mediator framework

The participant under this framework will engage in research activities focused on dialogue and collaboration with the local community and with those participating under the “Creative framework.” This participant may, if desired, conduct a separate sub-program in addition to their main activity. The participant will also submit a research report.

Participant selected from applicants residing in or outside Japan: 1

*** Applicants may only apply to one framework (either the “Creator framework” or the “Mediator framework.”)**

3 Program Schedule

• Residence Period

The core period of the residency will last for 62 days (61 nights) from October 9 to December 9, 2026, during which the participants will, in principle, reside at ACAC. If desired, participants may reside at ACAC for the entire program period, or a maximum of 92 days (91 nights), from September 15 to December 15, 2026.

Core period: October 9 (Fri) – December 9 (Wed), 2026

Program period: September 15 (Tue) – December 15 (Tue), 2026

• Application Period, Selection Schedule

Application period: February 25 (Wed) – April 10 (Fri), 2026 17:00 JST (UTC +9:00)

Selection schedule:

April 10 (Fri) 17:00 JST (UTC +9:00) Application deadline

Early May First screening by ACAC curatorial staff

Late May Second screening by guest judge and ACAC director/curatorial staff

Late June Selection of invitees and notification of results

4 How to Apply

Screening by application form contents and accompanying materials.

* Please submit the following application form with portfolio **no later than April 10 (Fri) 2026 17:00 JST (UTC +9:00).**

* If you are unable to submit the application through Google Forms, please contact us through the Inquiry form on the ACAC website.

Application Form : <https://forms.gle/3wojKWZ3GCgQjrjC7>

Notes

- Before applying, please read the Program Overview and Application Guidelines 2026, Application Form Instructions 2026, and Notes on Completing the Application Form carefully.
- A confirmation message will be displayed once the application form has been successfully submitted. A copy of your completed form will be sent by email to the address you entered on the form. If you do not receive an email, please check your spam folder before contacting us.

5 Screening and Notification

Based on submitted materials, artists will be selected by 2026 guest judge IWAMA Asako and the ACAC director and curatorial staff. Applicants will be informed of the final decision by email in late June, 2026.

6 Application Requirements

- a. Applicants must be individuals or groups engaged in artistic pursuits, including artists, curators, producers, art managers, art coordinators, researchers, writers, academics, designers, etc., regardless of background or genre. (Hereafter referred to as “participant(s).”)
- b. Participants must understand the purpose of their visit to ACAC and be able to reside and participate during the duration of the residence period.
* Remote participation will be allowed if the organizer deems it to be necessary.
- c. Participants under the “Creator framework” must present the results of their residency during the Results Presentation period. (Results may be presented in any format, including but not limited to exhibitions of artwork, performances, and workshops.) The participant under the “Mediator framework” must engage in research activities that entail dialogue and collaboration with the “Creator framework” participants, and must also submit a research report.
- d. Participants must be able to communicate in English or Japanese.
- e. Participants must be in good health. (Please consult with us in advance if you require special support)
- f. Participants must cooperate with ACAC staff in the setup and cleanup of exhibitions or events held during the residence period.
- g. Participants must be willing and able to share the communal residence facilities with the other participants during the residence period.

7 About the Results Presentation

Presentation period: November 14 (Sat) to December 6 (Sun)

Reception: November 13 (Fri)

* Installation: November 9 (Mon) to November 12 (Thu); Removal: December 7 (Mon) to December 8 (Tue)

* The specific configuration of the venue will be determined in consultation with ACAC staff.

8 Obligations of the Organizer and THE PARTICIPANTS

The Organizer and the Participant will carry out the program upon entering into a contract which includes the following mutual obligations, which they thereby agree to adhere to throughout the duration of the program. **The costs to be borne by the Organizer are calculated based on the assumption that successful applicants will come alone to Aomori; therefore, in principle, it is not possible for others to accompany the Participants during their residency. Participants can apply as a group or unit; in this case, the organizer considers 1 group or unit as 1 participant, and provides expenses (travel expenses, production expenses / activity expenses, sub-program expenses, accommodation allowance) for 1 person only.**

If successful applicants wish to be accompanied by family members, assistants, etc., they must consult with ACAC before traveling to Aomori. Should ACAC approve the Participant’s request, the accompanying individuals may stay at ACAC’s facilities. In this case, the Participant will bear the travel expenses and accommodation expenses (2,040 JPY per person per night) of the accompanying individual(s).

* All monetary amounts noted in these guidelines include tax.

Subject	Nature of obligation
Travel to Aomori	

Travel expenses	<p>In accordance with Aomori Public University's regulations regarding travel expenses, THE ORGANIZER will pay for travel expenses equivalent to 1 round trip during the program period. For residents of Japan, this will generally be calculated as the travel expenses required to travel between the train station nearest to the participant's current place of residence and ACAC. For participants who reside outside of Japan, this will be calculated as the travel expenses required to travel between the international airport nearest to the participant's current place of residence and Aomori Airport, and between Aomori Airport and ACAC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Expenses will be paid after the participant has arrived in Aomori. * The maximum payment amount is 100,000 JPY for those residing in Japan, and 300,000 JPY for those residing overseas. * Travel expenses will not be paid to Aomori City residents. * Expenses for the transportation of goods or materials will be borne by the participant.
Visa	<p>THE PARTICIPANT should make arrangements for a visa to enter Japan, if required. (All costs for obtaining a visa will be borne by THE PARTICIPANT.)</p>
Activities During the Residency	
Activities	<p>PARTICIPANTS under the "Creator framework" agree to conduct certain activities during their residency such as research and production related to their own artistic expression, as well as a presentation of the results of their residency.</p> <p>THE PARTICIPANT under the "Mediator framework" agrees to engage in research activities during their residency which entail dialogue and collaboration with members of the local community and "Creator framework" participants, and to submit a report of their research.</p>
Production expenses / Activity expenses	<p>THE ORGANIZER will provide 300,000 JPY to PARTICIPANTS under the "Creator framework" for production expenses that THE ORGANIZER deems necessary for THE PARTICIPANTS to carry out their creative activities (including costs for research, materials, exhibition installation and removal, etc.).</p> <p>THE ORGANIZER will provide 50,000 JPY to THE PARTICIPANT under the "Mediator framework" for activity expenses that THE ORGANIZER deems necessary for THE PARTICIPANT to carry out their research.</p>
Results Presentation	<p>The locations and final plans for the presentations by PARTICIPANTS under the "Creator framework" must be decided upon due consultation between THE PARTICIPANTS and ACAC staff.</p> <p>To facilitate the smooth management of the program, we ask that THE PARTICIPANTS hold their presentations during the designated presentation period.</p> <p>In principle, the "Creator framework" PARTICIPANTS are responsible for any preparations when holding exhibitions, events, etc. The "Creator framework" PARTICIPANTS are also responsible for any regular maintenance of their works that may be necessary during the exhibition period. Any such maintenance must be conducted during the facility's regular hours of operation.</p>

	<p>* If THE PARTICIPANTS are participating remotely in the program under the “Creator framework,” installation and maintenance of exhibitions will be conducted by ACAC staff upon due consultation with THE PARTICIPANTS.</p> <p>THE ORGANIZER will prepare any materials (explanatory captions, panels, etc.) deemed necessary for the presentation of results upon due consultation with the “Creator framework” PARTICIPANTS.</p> <p>If your work incorporates light or sound, please discuss and coordinate the installation of temporary partitions, the use of headphones, etc., with the other participants to allow multiple participants to share the venue.</p>
Handling of works after the Results Presentation	<p>PARTICIPANTS under the “Creator framework” must remove their works and any other additional materials after the presentation period is over. Should the “Creator framework” PARTICIPANTS wish to take their works with them after the conclusion of the program, they are responsible for packing and for paying any shipping expenses.</p>
Sub-program	<p>A sub-program is a distinct program held separately from the Results Presentation, and may consist of lectures, performances, workshops, school visits, or other activities focused on interaction and exchange with local residents. It is possible for THE PARTICIPANT to hold a sub-program of some sort in addition to and distinct from the main activities they will be presenting at the Results Presentation.</p>
Sub-program expenses	<p>If any PARTICIPANTS wish to conduct a sub-program, THE ORGANIZER will prepare and bear the costs (limit: 10,000 JPY per PARTICIPANT) of any materials deemed necessary for the sub-program after due consultation with THE PARTICIPANTS. Additionally, THE ORGANIZER will pay an honorarium of 50,000 JPY to each PARTICIPANT conducting a sub-program.</p> <p>* Each individual PARTICIPANT or group of PARTICIPANTS will only receive a single honorarium of 50,000 JPY, even if they conduct multiple sub-programs.</p>
Studio	<p>THE ORGANIZER will allow THE PARTICIPANT to use the Creative Hall at ACAC free of charge during the duration of the program.</p> <p>* The Creative Hall is a shared workspace. There are no private studios.</p> <p>THE ORGANIZER will regularly clean the Creative Hall, but THE PARTICIPANT should keep their own work area clean. When THE PARTICIPANT has completed their production activities related to this program, they must return all facilities and equipment to the organizer in their original condition.</p>
About Living at the ACAC	
Accommodation allowance	<p>In accordance with Aomori Public University’s regulations regarding travel expenses, THE ORGANIZER will pay a per diem accommodation allowance for the duration of each PARTICIPANT’S stay during the program period. However, if THE PARTICIPANTS travel outside Aomori Prefecture for personal reasons, no per diem will be paid for the number of nights spent outside the prefecture. The same applies if THE PARTICIPANTS arrive at ACAC late or leave the</p>

	<p>program early. * The accommodation allowance is 2,400 JPY per night.</p>
Accommodation	<p>THE ORGANIZER will provide THE PARTICIPANT with private accommodations and accompanying facilities in the Residence Hall at ACAC free of charge during the program period (single room; 19.44m²). THE PARTICIPANT can use the shared bathroom and kitchen facilities. THE ORGANIZER will perform regular cleaning of the Residence Hall. However, THE PARTICIPANT must keep their private room and the bathroom and kitchen facilities clean. Upon leaving ACAC, THE PARTICIPANT must return all facilities to their original condition.</p>
Internet	<p>THE PARTICIPANT can use the wireless internet provided throughout the facilities.</p>
Insurance	<p>THE ORGANIZER will arrange and pay for an accident insurance policy covering the duration of THE PARTICIPANT's residency. THE PARTICIPANT is free to enroll in additional public or private insurance, such as health insurance, at their own expense. * Works presented at the Results Presentation or any sub-programs, etc., are not covered by this accident insurance policy.</p>
Other	
Cooperation with recording of activities; copyright	<p>THE ORGANIZER will archive (via photographs and video) THE PARTICIPANT's works and activities during this program. We ask that THE PARTICIPANT cooperate with the recording of these archives. THE PARTICIPANT retains all copyrights for work they produce during this program. However, THE ORGANIZER retains copyright for any archival photographs, video, etc., as well as the right to use any such archival material for publicity purposes. Any parties who have received prior permission from the organizer may use these archival materials free of charge.</p>
About the program catalog	<p>THE ORGANIZER will produce a program catalog and present 20 copies of the catalog to THE PARTICIPANT.</p>
Cooperation with media relations	<p>We ask that THE PARTICIPANTS cooperate with interview requests by the media as much as possible. However, it is possible to refuse such a request if a PARTICIPANT feels that it would interfere with their creative activities or violate their privacy. In such cases, please consult with THE ORGANIZER.</p>
Assistance for activities	<p>In addition to ACAC staff, ACAC works with an independent volunteer organization that supports the resident artists by providing assistance with their creative activities, interpretation services, and assistance with general living needs. Please discuss the nature of any support required with the volunteers and the organizer.</p>
About unforeseen situations	<p>In unforeseen situations such as public health emergencies, the program contents may change. In this case, the appropriate measures will be determined through consultation between THE</p>

PARTICIPANTS and THE ORGANIZER.
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Examples: Length of stay and amount paid

Case 1: For a stay from September 15 (Tue) to December 15 (Tue) under the “Creator framework,” including participation in both the Results Presentation and a sub-program

Travel expenses: Max. 100,000 JPY if residing in Japan; 300,000 JPY if residing abroad

Accommodation allowance: 218,400 JPY

Production expenses: 300,000 JPY

Sub-program honorarium: 50,000 JPY

Case 2: For a stay from October 9 (Fri) to December 9 (Wed) under the “Creator framework,” including participation in the Results Presentation only

Travel expenses: Max. 100,000 JPY if residing in Japan; 300,000 JPY if residing abroad

Accommodation allowance: 146,400 JPY

Production expenses: 300,000 JPY

Case 3: For a stay from September 15 (Tue) to December 15 (Tue) under the “Mediator framework,” including participation in a sub-program

Travel expenses: Max. 100,000 JPY if residing in Japan; 300,000 JPY if residing abroad

Accommodation allowance: 218,400 JPY

Activity expenses: 50,000 JPY

Sub-program honorarium: 50,000 JPY

Case 4: For a stay from October 9 (Fri) to December 9 (Wed) under the “Mediator framework”

Travel expenses: Max. 100,000 JPY if residing in Japan; 300,000 JPY if residing abroad

Accommodation allowance: 146,400 JPY

Activity expenses: 50,000 JPY

9 Guest Judge for 2026 program**IWAMA Asako**

Asako Iwama lives and works in Berlin and Tokyo. Her background as both cook and artist has led her to organise a series of experimental workshops exploring the social dimensions of food. Her practice seeks to transform our perception of nourishment aesthetically and epistemologically in the relationship with nature and the person. Taking the form of films, installations and interactions, but often through the processes of cooking, her works open up a space for the public to navigate the margins between composition and constitution, affinity and social context, knowledge and history.

From 2005 to 2014, she worked at Studio Olafur Eliasson, where she conceptualized and co-ran “The Kitchen,” a canteen serving daily lunch in the studio, and co-produced TYT (Take Your Time) Vol. 5: The Kitchen (2013), later republished by Phaidon as Studio Olafur Eliasson: The Kitchen (2016). From 2019 to 2020, she was a fellow at the Jan van Eyck Academie. Her exhibitions include IJssel Biennale (Dieren, Netherlands, 2025), São Paulo Biennial (Sesc Vila Mariana, 2025), *Punya 2.0* (Kunsthalle Bern, 2024), *Yokohama Triennale 2020 Afterglow*, *Istanbul Design Biennial (2020–2021)*, *Things Entangling* (Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, 2020), *Foodscape: We are what we eat* (Arts Maebashi, 2016–2017), *techne, n.* (Den Frie Centre of Contemporary Art, 2014), *Europe (to the power of) n* (Haus der Kulturen der Welt, 2012), *Scenarios about Europe: Scenario 2* (Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst Leipzig, 2011–2012).

10 About Aomori Contemporary Art Centre (ACAC)

Aomori Contemporary Art Centre (ACAC) is an art center offering a flagship Artist in Residence (AIR) program through its residential art facility. Since its foundation in 2001, the program has been an active platform for a diverse range of artists in their creative pursuits and presentations. Located in the foothills of the Hakkoda Mountains, residents can enjoy a rich natural environment while still being close to the center of Aomori City. ACAC's architectural design is the work of internationally-acclaimed architect, ANDO Tadao, and features the concept of "invisible architecture". The center consists of a production studio (Creative Hall) and an accommodation facility (Residential Hall), encouraging interactions with others while providing a comfortable space for visitors to focus on their creative work.

ACAC's AIR program is an initiative expected to foster a variety of expressive activities which can only be realized in this unique environment. The center aims to be an inspirational space for all involved, emphasizing interactions between domestic/international artists and local communities. Since 2009, when ACAC's management was transferred from Aomori City to Aomori Public University, ACAC has also been conducting exchanges with students studying at the university in fields such as management, economics and regional development.

11 Contact and Inquiries

For inquiries regarding application to this program, please contact us using the [Inquiry form](#) on the ACAC website.

*Please note that we are unable to respond to inquiries by telephone.

Inquiry form: <https://acac-aomori.jp/inquiry/>