

Summer School "Sound, Politics, and the Urban Laboratory" (Vienna, 21-23 Jul 25)

mdw – University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna, Jul 21–23, 2025

Deadline: Apr 28, 2025

Kathrin Heinrich

isaResearch Summer School "Sound, Politics, and the Urban Laboratory".

As part of isa – International Summer Academy of mdw, the isaResearch Summer School 2025 seeks to explore the dynamic relationship between sound, urban space, and politics. Thanks to its rich historical musical tradition, Vienna has been called and marketed itself as “City of Music” – a label that must be critically examined both as a trope as well as within the neoliberal logic of the creative industries.

Using the notion of the “Music City” as a starting point, the three-day workshop invites Ph.D. students and other early-stage researchers in the humanities and artistic research, specifically those immersed in music, sound, and urban studies, to present and discuss their own research around the topic. Taking place on campus of the mdw, this interdisciplinary forum seeks to examine the political economies of sonic expression and musicking in public space and urban life. We also encourage reflections on the fluid relationship between cities and music, borders and mobility.

Participants will be able to present and discuss their research project in an interdisciplinary framework. Experts in the respective field at the mdw and beyond will engage in conversations and act as respondents. The programme will also include a keynote lecture by an international expert, site-visits in the urban landscape of Vienna as well as options to participate in other isa events. The summer school thus sets out to explore the transformative role of sound in shaping public environments and to provide participants with an intimate interdisciplinary experience that fosters new networks and perspectives.

Submissions may address, but are not limited to, the following themes:

- Inequality & Power Critique: How does sound influence social segregation and hierarchies in the urban environment?
- Sound in Public Space: Sound design as a means of shaping identity, security, or control.
- Mapping Urban Music Cultures: Historical and contemporary mappings of music venues and soundscapes as critical method.
- Music & Community Spaces: How do musical practices contribute to the creation and transformation of community spaces, particularly for minoritarian communities?
- Fluid Concepts: The relationship between cities and music in the context of water, borders, and mobility, e.g. the river Danube as a historical route of travel and migration
- Music & Agency: Music as a tool for claiming urban spaces, resistance, and the ‘Right to the

City.' How do regulations and governance shape sonic expression?

- Mental Health & Soundscapes: The impact of urban sounds on mental well-being and social participation.
- Genre Evolution and New Urban Sound Aesthetics: Hip-hop, electronic music, and transcultural music scenes as forms of urban self-expression

We invite applications from Ph.D. students and other early-stage researchers from disciplines including (but not limited to) Musicology, Dance and Performance Studies, Urban Studies, Artistic Research, Queer Theory, Cultural Studies, Music Theory, Indigenous Studies, Music Sociology, Critical Race Studies, Ethnomusicology, Popular Music Studies, Post-Colonial Studies, Art History, and Film and Media Studies. Presentation proposals should be connected to the topic of the participant's thesis or current research project.

Attendance of the summer school is free of charge, and mdw provides lunch and refreshments on-site. Limited funding to help with travel and accommodation expenses is available. The exact amount of funding will be decided on a case-by-case basis according to the requirements of the participant. Application is possible after the acceptance of your proposal with a short description of your situation and academic affiliation (or lack thereof).

We are happy to organize childcare for researchers travelling with children of any age; we kindly ask to be informed of any such needs as soon as possible after acceptance.

Applications including a title, a presentation abstract, keywords, a statement of motivation, and a short bio must be uploaded via our website. The deadline for applying is 28 April 2025.

Decisions on the acceptance of proposals will be announced in early May 2025.

Contact: Kathrin Heinrich isaresearch@mdw.ac.at

Websites:

<https://www.isa-music.org/de/isaresearch/>

<https://www.mdw.ac.at/forschungsfoerderung/isaresearch/>

Organization: Kathrin Heinrich, Therese Kaufmann, mdw Research Support

Academic Advisory Board:

Univ.-Prof. Dr.habil. Lisa Gaupp, Cultural Institutions Studies at the Department of Cultural Management and Gender Studies (IKM)

Scott L. Edwards, PhD, Institute for Musicology and Performance Studies (IMI)

Dr. Magdalena Fürnkranz, Senior Scientist, Theory and History of Popular Music, Department for Popular Music (iPOP)

Reference:

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