How to do a Cultural Palace? (Frankfurt a. M., 17-18 Sep 26)

Frankfurt am Main, Sep 17–18, 2026
Deadline: Feb 8, 2026

Paula Loem

How to do a Cultural Palace? Reflections, Practice, and Vision.
How can a democratic space function that unites diverse cultural offerings under one roof?
What has the idea of the cultural palace meant historically, and what does it mean today?

The Bolongaro Palace in Frankfurt-Höchst is currently being renovated. It is set to serve as a cultural center in the future and will open in this new function in 2027 in western Frankfurt. One of the largest palaces of the late Baroque period will thus not only be open to everyone, but will also be used for many collaborative projects in the future. One year prior to its opening, the Historisches Museum Frankfurt invites participants to a symposium that will discuss the design, use, and significance of the palace as a democratic cultural space. The two-day event will take place at two locations: At the Historical Museum, the focus will be on international and academic ideas (conference language English). In Höchst, workshop discussions and artistic contributions will explore ideas for the future cultural palace (English and German).

The symposium is part of the accompanying program for the CityLab exhibition "Höchst tells it's story" (2026–2027). The Historisches Museum Frankfurt, together with the Junge Museum Frankfurt and the Porcelain Museum, forms a museum family that will be joined in 2027 by the Museum in Bolongaro Palace. The permanent exhibitions of this future museum within the cultural palace have been developed and conceived collaboratively with many residents of Frankfurt-Höchst.

We invite researchers, architects, curators, urban planners, cultural actors, and other interested contributors to submit proposals. Theoretical and historical perspectives on cultural palaces, third places, and forms of shared use are welcome. We are interested in the
following topics and formats, which can be expanded upon:

Subject areas
• International case studies on cultural palaces and cultural centers
• Architecture and urban contexts of cultural palaces
• Historical perspectives on cultural palaces
• Transformation and adaptive use of historic representative buildings
• Third places
• Participatory design processes, collaboration, and social sustainability
• Democratic spaces for coming together and their organizational structures

Formats
• Short presentation
• Participation in a panel discussion
• Participatory and interactive formats such as workshops

Please submit an abstract (approx. 1 page) and a short biography by February 8, 2026, to: paula.loem@stadt-frankfurt.de

Proposals will be selected by a scientific committee. Selected contributors will receive travel expenses, accommodation and meals.

The symposium is organized by the Historisches Museum Frankfurt in cooperation with World Design Capital Frankfurt RheinMain 2026. It will take place on September 17 and 18 in Frankfurt am Main.

Reference:
CFP: How to do a Cultural Palace? (Frankfurt a. M., 17-18 Sep 26). In: ArtHist.net, Jan 15, 2026 (accessed Nov 9, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/51487>.