

Istituto Svizzero

**The Wyss Academy for Nature
at the University of Bern**

Swissnex in Brazil

Call for applications 2026

**Art & Science Residency
ON AMAZONIAN FORESTS**

Deadline 30.01.2026



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Istituto Svizzero acts as a transdisciplinary platform bringing together artistic and scientific research. From Rome, Milan or Palermo, it facilitates connections between Switzerland and Italy, as well as internationally. Each year, Istituto Svizzero presents a public programme aimed at promoting forward-thinking events and projects, experimental practices and excellence in research. Istituto Svizzero seeks to actively participate in the global discourse on arts and society, envisioning new paths and looking beyond the boundaries between disciplines. Istituto Svizzero offers residencies to emerging artists and researchers who wish to contribute to the future of art, science and innovation.

Istituto Svizzero promotes dialogue between art and science and experiences the many benefits of transdisciplinary exchange. Today more than ever, Istituto Svizzero believes that transdisciplinary perspectives are needed both to identify and address the challenges of our globalised societies and to imagine more sustainable futures.

The Wyss Academy for Nature at the University of Bern (WA) is a Swiss foundation established in 2020 through a partnership among the University of Bern, the Canton of Bern, and the Wyss Foundation. Its mission is to develop, test, and promote solutions to transform the relationship between people and nature. The foundation operates globally through regional Hubs in Europe (with offices in Bern), East Africa (with offices in Nanyuki – Kenya and Madagascar), Southeast Asia (with offices in Bangkok and Laos), and South America (with offices in Lima and Puerto Maldonado).

Through its Regional Hub for South America, the WA drives collaborative processes of territorial transformation based on applied research, policy engagement, co-designed solutions, and capacity strengthening. Its work is concentrated along the road and river corridors of the Tambopata province in Madre de Dios, Peru. Building on local insights, the Hub also contributes to regional and global efforts that create enabling conditions for forest conservation and sustainable natural resource management.

Swissnex is the global network connecting Switzerland and the world in education, research, innovation, and the arts. Its mission is to support the outreach and active engagement of its partners in the international exchange of knowledge, ideas, and talent, thereby contributing to strengthening Switzerland's profile as a world-leading innovation hotspot. Swissnex is an initiative of Switzerland's State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) and is part of the Swiss Confederation's network abroad. The activities of Swissnex are based on a collaborative approach, relying on public and private partnerships and funding. In Brazil, Swissnex is based in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, running activities all over the country.

Swissnex also sustains initiatives in the Arts & Creative Industries sector that bring together artists, designers, architects, researchers, and cultural institutions to explore intersections between art, science, and technology. Its activities are based on a collaborative approach, relying on public and private partnerships and funding, facilitating exchanges where artistic creativity and scientific inquiry converge to address societal, environmental, and technological challenges.

In 2026, the Wyss Academy for Nature, Istituto Svizzero, and Swissnex in Brazil will join forces to implement an art residency programme centred on highlighting the multiple values of the Amazonian forests. The residency will span three months for three artists, respectively from Brazil, Peru, and Switzerland. The artists will spend six weeks in Tambopata, Madre de Dios, Peru, followed by six weeks at the Istituto Svizzero's Villa Maraini in Rome. Each selected artist will receive a monthly grant of CHF 1,500 to support their participation throughout the residency period, for a total of CHF 4,500 each.

During the residency, artists will be immersed in two distinct yet complementary environments: the biodiverse, multicultural region of Madre de Dios in the Peruvian Amazon, and the transdisciplinary context of Istituto Svizzero in Rome. This dual setting will enable the artists to deepen their research, expand interdisciplinary connections, and engage with different communities of practice.

In Madre de Dios, the selected artists will participate in an immersive field experience designed to cultivate a rapid and profound understanding of the environmental, social, economic, and cultural landscape of Tambopata. Through engagement with Indigenous Peoples' and local organisations and communities, they will gain insights into socio-ecological dynamics, traditional knowledge, cultural heritage, and sustainable practices rooted in Amazonian environments. This immersion will create conditions for authentic exchange and thoughtful artistic reflection.

In Rome, Istituto Svizzero will integrate the selected artists into the cultural life of the institution, the community of the twelve fellows in residence, and its broader network of international residencies. The Roman phase will provide time, space, and intellectual exchange to further develop artistic research, artistic inquiry, refine project concepts, and engage in interdisciplinary dialogues across art, science, nature and society.

Artistic projects developed through the residency are expected to respond meaningfully and to reflect on how artistic expression can contribute to processes of ongoing socio-ecological transformations. Artists will be encouraged to explore the interdependence between nature and people strengthen connections between forested and urban spaces and highlight the co-benefits of forest-linked livelihoods. Their work should consider how regenerative practices and nature-based solutions can nurture more harmonious relationships between people and Amazonian ecosystems. Collaboration between the three artists and the realisation of a final art project are encouraged.

To deepen this process, the residency will place particular emphasis on connecting artistic exploration with the scientific, cultural, and socio-ecological insights emerging from the field experience in Madre de Dios. Artists will be invited to engage with themes such as social and technical innovations in forest ecosystems, the multiple ways in which forests contribute to collective well-being, and the diverse systems of forest values shaped by ancestral and local knowledge. By integrating these perspectives into their creative research, the residency seeks to lay the foundation for a vibrant and durable community of artistic and cultural practice capable of identifying emerging agents of change and proposing meaningful pathways toward transformative action.

The residency programme will provide:

- Six weeks of field-based research and art residency in Madre de Dios, Peru
- Six-week of art residency at Istituto Svizzero in Rome, Italy
- Participation in Tambopata and Istituto Svizzero's public events and other activities
- Support for organising small art events in Puerto Maldonado, Rome and Switzerland
- Access to Istituto Svizzero's networks in Italy, Switzerland, and internationally
- Interdisciplinary exchanges with Istituto Svizzero's fellows in Rome
- Access to Istituto Svizzero's library and digital resources
- Promotion of the residency (by Istituto Svizzero, the Wyss Academy for Nature and Swissnex in Brazil)
- Presentation of the research outcomes in a public event at Istituto Svizzero
- Promotion of potential art projects resulting from the residency by Istituto Svizzero, Swissnex, and the Wyss Academy for Nature

We are seeking artists whose research and practice reflect sustained engagement with the topic and a genuine interest in building meaningful connections with the Amazonian forests, as well as collaborating with scientists, practitioners, ancestral and local knowledge holders, and technology partners.

Conditions for admission for the Swiss artist

- Proven artistic activity in Switzerland one or more artistic disciplines, including but not limited to visual arts, design, architecture, cinema, literature, dance, theatre, performing arts, music, and other artistic fields
- The candidate has completed a post-bachelor's study (Master's or other) or has proven experience in the artistic field
- Swiss citizens or residents in Switzerland with a sufficient knowledge of English and Spanish, to facilitate communication, local exchanges, and documentation
- There is no age limit

Conditions for admission for the Peruvian artist

- Proven artistic activity in Peru in one or more artistic disciplines, including but not limited to visual arts, design, architecture, cinema, literature, dance, theatre, performing arts, music, and other artistic fields
- The candidate has completed a post-bachelor's study (Master's or other) or has proven experience in the artistic field
- Peruvian citizens or residents in Peru with a sufficient knowledge of English and Spanish, to facilitate communication, local exchanges, and documentation during the residency
- There is no age limit

Conditions for admission for the Brazilian artist

- Proven artistic activity in Brazil in one or more artistic disciplines, including but not limited to visual arts, design, architecture, cinema, literature, dance, theatre, performing arts, music, and other artistic fields
- The candidate has completed a post-bachelor's study (Master's or other) or has proven experience in the artistic field
- Brazilian citizens or residents in Brazil with a sufficient knowledge of English and Spanish to facilitate communication, local exchanges, and documentation during the residency
- There is no age limit

As a general rule, applications for stays of shorter or longer duration will not be considered.

In addition, applicants may not apply to another residency programme of Istituto Svizzero (Rome, Milan, or Palermo Calling) during the same academic year.

Accommodation and residence in Madre de Dios and Rome

Residents will be provided with shared accommodation in Madre de Dios, Peru, and all meals will be fully covered.

At Villa Maraini, in the center of Rome, Italy, residents will be provided with a private room or a shared apartment, including breakfast and a shared communal lunch from Monday to Friday.

Dates of the residency

Peru – Madre de Dios | 14 September – 25 October

Italy – Rome (Istituto Svizzero) | 26 October – 6 December

Switzerland – Possibility of a public presentation in December 2026 (venue and date to be confirmed)

Selection Process

Applicants must submit an online application no later than **30 January 2026 at H18:00 CET** by completing the application form available at the link below. The application must include a CV, portfolio, motivation statement, and a brief description of the proposed research focus during the residency on Amazonian forests. Selection results will be announced by the end of February 2026.

For the Application Form [click here](#)

General Inquiries – Contact Information

For general inquiries about the residency in Madre de Dios, please contact:

Cynthia Gómez at cynthia.gomez@wyssacademy.org

For general inquiries about the residency in Rome, please contact:

Elena Catuogno at residencies@istitutsvizzero.it