

ONASSIS AIR OPEN CALL 2021/22

THE SCHOOL OF INFINITE REHEARSALS

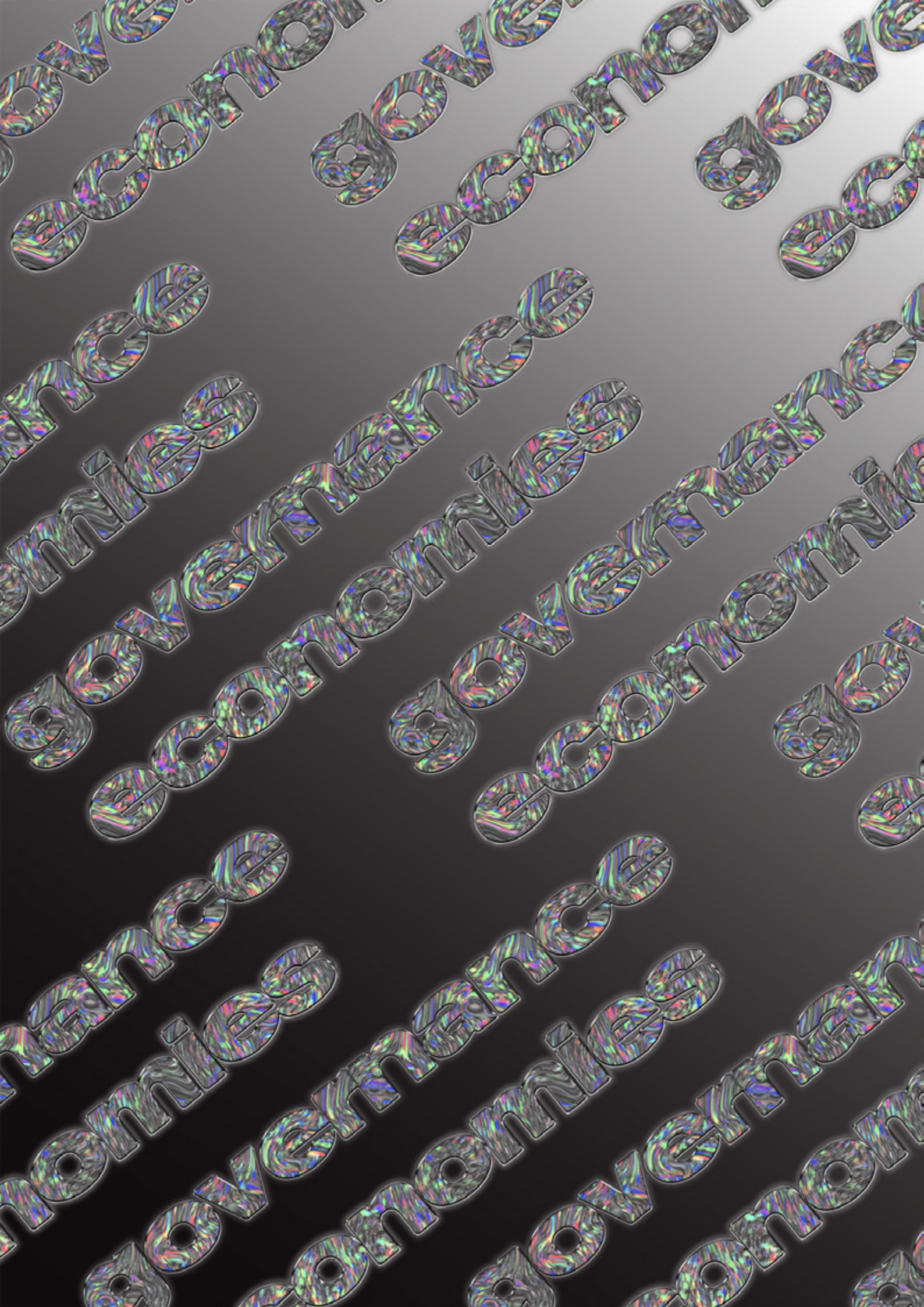
Inspired by the title of a novel by Wilson Harris, in September 2020 we started *The School of Infinite Rehearsals*. Conceived as a collective research program and as a continuation of the individual program strands we introduced during our first year of existence, *The School of Infinite Rehearsals* brings together an interdisciplinary group of participants to exchange knowledges and practices around two research topics we find urgent to address and further explore collectively.

Driven by its founding principles that are based upon collective artistic research and a more self-organized and process-oriented ethos, Onassis AiR, the (inter)national artistic research residency program in Athens, continues to evolve as a growing community of peers from Greece and abroad. Like any living organism that continually grows based on information from its surrounding environment, Onassis AiR transforms and adapts its programs with characteristics that are passed from one movement to the next. From individual research needs to fostering a collective research study, the experiential and the tactile have become core components of how we think and practice together. Over the past 18 months, we have experienced different ways of “cohabitation” in the house that now belongs to more than 50 artists, curators and art practitioners who, between September 2019 and January 2021, have taken part in programs and formats developed by Onassis AiR in collaboration with all of the participants, colleagues, and guests.

Halfway through our collective journey of *The School of Infinite Rehearsals 2020/21*, we are refining and adapting some of the modi operandi of our current program, based on the feedback we received from our participants.

For our second year of collective study, *The School of Infinite Rehearsals 2021/22* (Movement V-VIII), we will transform our methodological approach in two ways. On one hand, we are introducing two main, and rather broad, research focus areas that are inextricably connected, and which we aim to explore from two different vantage points each time. This year’s research topics are broken down into different points of inquiry, allowing us to approach and address their specificities on a micro-level, while also exposing their inter-connections on a macro-level, drawing on all the cultural, political, aesthetic, and the diverse cultural and geographic backgrounds of each participant.

On the other hand, we want to further expand and foster our collective and horizontal ways of thinking and practicing together. For this reason, there will be no conveners or mentors. The 2021/22 Movement Groups (V-VIII) will be convened by the participants themselves, who will bring their existing individual practices and research interests into the collective research practice. To this end, the ONASSIS AiR 2021/22 OPEN CALL is not looking for answers, but rather for questions, intricacies, aspirations, intuitive strategies that need to be tested, and for ways to imagine other modes of functioning as societies. The curriculum of *The School of Infinite Rehearsals 2021/22* will be co-shaped by the areas of interest submitted by the applicants around each proposed thematic.



ONASSIS AiR 2021/22 OPEN CALL

For the current ONASSIS AiR 2021/22 OPEN CALL we invite you to apply for the second iteration of *The School of Infinite Rehearsals: Movements V-VIII*, running between September 2021 and June 2022 in Athens, Greece.

ONASSIS AiR 2021/22 OPEN CALL invites applications from artists, curators, designers, activists, collectives, educators, legal advocates, performance makers, economists, architects, filmmakers, and other practitioners from any medium of expression or discipline, who are yearning and willing to delve into a collective study, exploration and exchange of practices, around two research topics we find urgent and necessary to address today.

Onassis AiR was founded on the principles of learning and doing with others. It is situated within a complex nexus of relationships, between a large-scale art institution and a self-organized community of peers. This duality is continuously traversed in our day-to-day housekeeping, while rehearsing our different modes of being with others. Any form of knowledge reflects the particular conditions within which it is generated, as well as the specific social relationships, the locations and the particular perspectives of the people who come to constitute these knowledges.

For our second year of *The School of Infinite Rehearsals*, we want to look inwardly and also outwardly, for the spatial and temporal structures that affect the ways we live, the ways we act, and the ways we come together. How do we relate to others and how do we organize our decisions? What modes of governance do we adhere to and how do we shape them? What economic systems do we choose to be complicit in and how much agency do we claim to implement radical alternatives? How do we institute our knowledge(s) and acknowledge our institutional complacency or complicity?

The School of Infinite Rehearsals
2021/22 delves into two research
topics from different focal points.

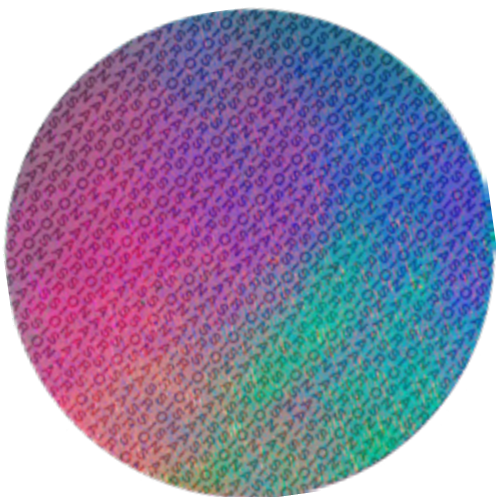
In Fall 2021, Movement V & VI
will collectively explore issues
of **governance** delving into
self-organization (Movement V),
and *institutions* (Movement VI).

In Spring 2022, Movement VII & VIII
will tackle areas of **economies**, with
a focus on *community economies*
(Movement VII) and *philanthropy*
(Movement VIII).

GOVERNANCE: SELF-ORGANIZATION & INSTITUTIONS

Every living organism, composed of one or more cells, is a system made of different structural units that gets arranged through internal processes inherent to the system and external factors that influence it. Every system is a constant negotiation between modes of self-organization and other forms of organizing that affect the ways in which the units relate to one another. The question is when does this process of negotiation begin and where does it end? How do we decide when to institute ourselves with others and what does this arrangement entail? In times of increased precarity and uncertainty, where we witness an overt privatization and commodification of all aspects of life, a deregulation of socio-economic structures, and hyper-individualized forms of self-management as a quest for self-actualization, what are the organizing patterns that keep us together?

During Movements V and VI, we will look together into issues of **governance** from two entry points, *self-organization* and *institutions*, as two sides of the same coin that coexist in interdependence. How do we organize ourselves and make decisions and how do the forms of social organization that we create allow for new spaces of care-full listening and participation rather than representation? How and by whom does responsibility get distributed and shared and how can institutions successfully embody non-hierarchical and open processes and become accountable to the artists and communities they are set up to serve? By assembling the practices, knowledges and habits that we exercise and perform within more or less established structures, we will explore what modes of governance we have at hand. Rather than anticipating future forms of organizing, how do we participate in instituting our present and what kind of new openings can we generate to constitute a 'we'?



**FALL 2021
GOVERNANCE:
ON SELF-
ORGANIZATION
& INSTITUTIONS**

**MOVEMENT V:
SELF-
ORGANIZATION
(SEPTEMBER 6 –
OCTOBER 24, 2021)**

**MOVEMENT VI:
INSTITUTIONS
(NOVEMBER 1
– DECEMBER 19, 2021)**

ECONOMIES: COMMUNITY ECONOMIES & PHILANTHROPY

We have grown accustomed to the predominant beliefs that guide our interactions and ethics in relation to the economic pillars that govern our lives. In the current economic status quo, growth is gold. Private enterprise and ownership are guiding our legal systems. The surplus of our economic systems is immensely siloed. We have bankrupted and depleted our planet abiding by such beliefs. Our moral and ethical compass has been demagnetized and is spinning out of control, leaving us grappling and hoping for another guide to our economic actions. Where do we begin in order to delve, question, imagine, and collectively work through a complex system by which our lives are governed, instituted, constrained, expanded, and lived by - our **economies**? How do we become explicit in the complicity of the outcome of the decisions we make and the actions we take in relation to how we engage with the existing, dominant, as well as alternative, imagined, experimental, and fantastical economies that we adhere or aspire to? What other regenerative economic models are feasible and sustainable, and would allow for “reflective, responsive, reciprocal relationships of interdependence between human communities and the living world upon which we depend”¹?

During Movements VII & VIII, we will collectively walk through two different paths of exploration leading us to a common space where both research threads will converge. Movement VII will expand the possibilities and approaches of a relatively recent, fundamentally relational vision of *community economies* that “prioritizes relationships and reciprocity as the true source of wealth and prosperity, a space of ethical negotiation and decision making (...) in which we place care and interdependence at the center, rather than the margins, of our politics”². Movement VIII will examine the role of *philanthropy* within the dominant strategic philanthropic model, as well as other forms like trust-based philanthropy, participatory grantmaking, regenerative practices and other experimental methodologies of philanthropy that are grounded in the core values of the process as power-sharing, social justice, equity, redistribution, transparency, and collaboration.

1 <http://justicefunders.org>

2 J. K. Gibson-Graham, Jenny Cameron, Stephen Healy, 2013



**SPRING 2022
ECONOMIES:
ON COMMUNITY
ECONOMIES &
PHILANTHROPY**

**MOVEMENT VII:
COMMUNITY
ECONOMIES
(FEBRUARY 28
– APRIL 17, 2022)**

**MOVEMENT VII:
PHILANTHROPY
(MAY 2 – JUNE 19, 2022)**

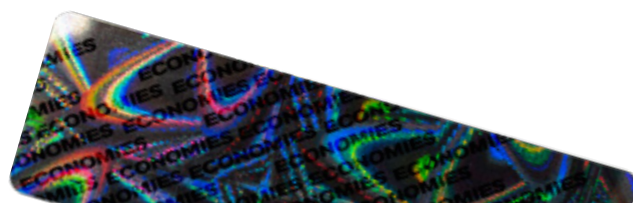
The proposal we put forth for the ONASSIS AiR 2021/22 OPEN CALL is to explore two research topics (**governance & economies**) through the lens of locality, starting with where our physical bodies will be, in the neighborhood of Plaka, in the historic quarter of Athens, at the foothill of Acropolis, and spiraling outwards through the perspectives of participants coming from other parts of Greece and the world who will compose each 2021/22 Movement Group.

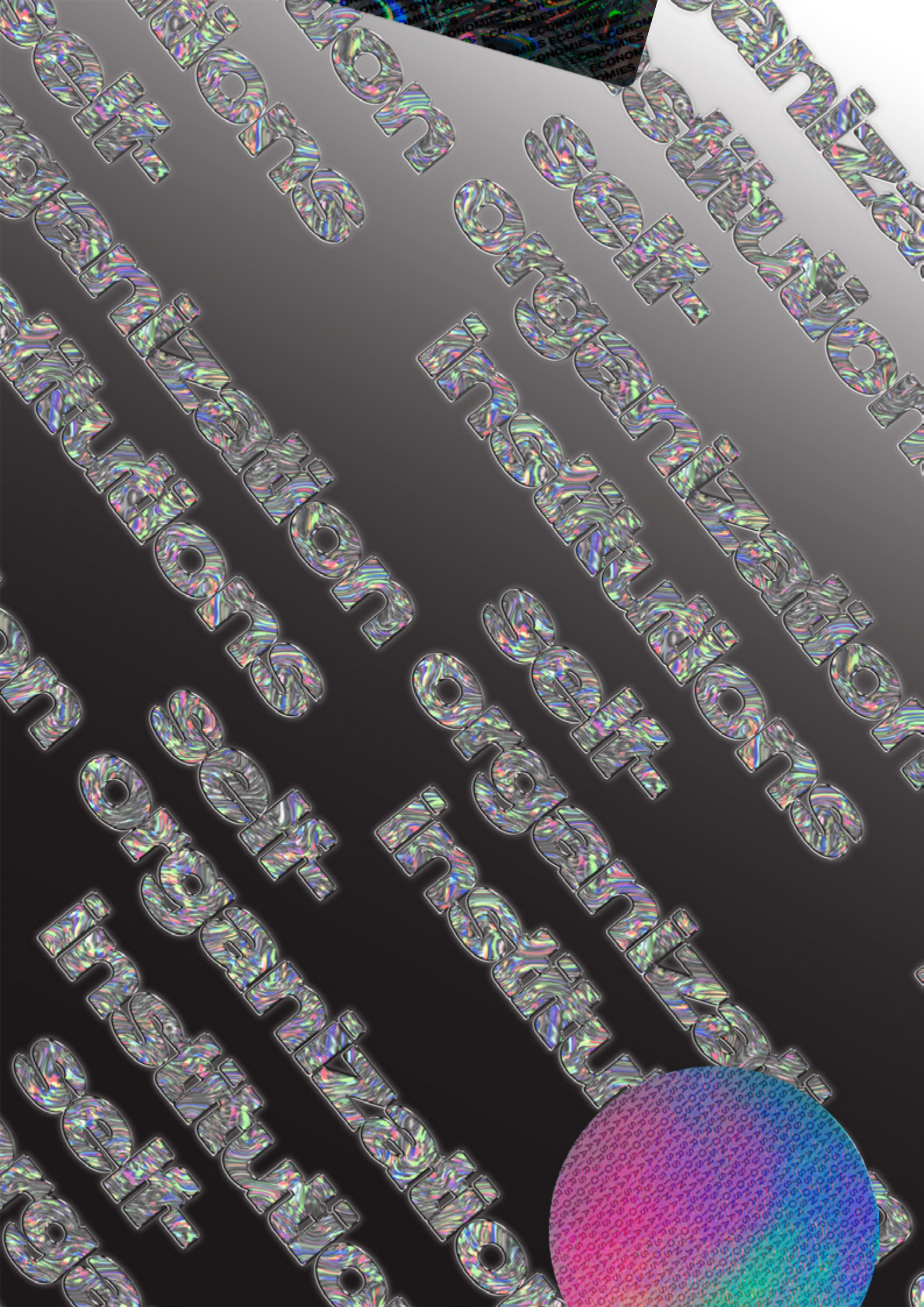
The contents and structure of each proposed research topic for Fall 2021 & Spring 2022 will be largely defined by the selected participants of each Movement Group. The formats, methodologies and tools each Movement Group will select and/or create to collectively explore the research topic they are involved in will be up to the group itself. During the first two weeks, Onassis AiR team and alumni will curate and facilitate a dense program focused on getting to know one another, exchanging tools and methodologies for sharing practices and strategies towards the creation of collective scores.

PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

Each selected participant must agree to the following general conditions of participation in the Onassis AiR program:

- Be available for a one-on-one interview (May 17–28, 2021) with Onassis AiR team if pre-selected during Phase II of the selection process.
- Commit to participate full-time in the selected program period (see dates of Fall 2021 MOVEMENT V & VI and Spring 2022 MOVEMENT VII & VIII), and any and all activities proposed by the Onassis AiR team for each Movement Group, as well as any collective activities jointly decided by the Movement Group you are participating in. This means that you need to be available at least five (5) days a week for the duration of the program (7 weeks), from 10:00-19:00, and be present during some evening and weekend activities, as well as possible field trips in or outside Athens. If full-time participation during the seven (7) weeks of the program is not feasible for you, please reconsider your application.
- Guarantee that no other pre-existing commitments will interrupt or prevent full-time participation in the program selected for.
- Stay in Athens for the full duration of the program.





The following resources will be offered to each participant. The program also offers shared resources that can be used by the group upon a collective decision-making process:

— Each participant will receive an individual research fee of €2,500 (euros).

— Each participant who does not live in Athens will have their travel (airfare, train, car, etc.) covered for their return trip to/from Athens, as well as to/from the airport or train station to the shared accommodation in Athens.

— Each participant who does not live in Athens will be accommodated in a shared apartment (single room occupancy for each participant), very close to the Onassis AiR work space where the majority of group activities and research will take place.

— Each Movement Group will have at their disposal a collective research budget of up to €5,000 (euros) that can be used for materials, invitations to other practitioners or organizations that could contribute to the research of the particular topic of Fall 2021 and Spring 2022, research trips, or other needs that the group will collectively decide upon, during their research time at Onassis AiR.

— We have established a tradition of daily lunches cooked by all the participants and team of Onassis AiR, in our cozy kitchen, that will continue in Fall 2021 and Spring 2022, Monday to Friday. All the groceries for the collective lunches are covered by Onassis AiR. In parallel, we are currently designing a research program focused on food in collaboration with invited chefs-in-residence throughout the year.

— We have a basic inventory of professional video & DSLR cameras and lenses, microphones, portable LED panels for video & photo shooting, speakers, audio board, projectors, computer and large LCD screens, and mechanical tools for light construction work.

— [Onassis AiR](#) is part of the [Onassis Foundation](#) that supports contemporary culture, education and health initiatives in Greece, New York & Los Angeles, and internationally. [Onassis Stegi](#) hosts theatrical and musical productions, film screenings, art and digital shows both inside and outside the walls of the center on Syngrou Avenue. [Onassis Education](#) department gives thousands of academic scholarships for BA, MA and PhD studies abroad and in Greece. The Onassis Foundation has an extensive contemporary art collection, as well as the [Cavafy Archive](#) and the [Onassis Library](#). All accepted participants can take advantage of the resources of other initiatives and units of the Onassis Foundation, including free access to events, performances, workshops and other activities of the Onassis Foundation.

SPACES

The house has six (6) studio spaces, a shared office, a large fully stocked kitchen, storage spaces, an amazing terrace with tables, chairs, a sofa and lounge chairs for open air screenings, and a small vegetable garden with seasonal herbs and vegetables which we use during our communal lunches. We have also transformed one of the studios in the attic into a fully equipped recording studio for radio broadcasts and recording sessions.

We use the spaces of Onassis AiR with the principle of “making space” available to others, therefore there is no notion of “my” studio, but of course when someone needs a dedicated space to work, there is plenty of space available. Also, as we believe in the continuity of supporting participants and their artistic journey, we have reserved one of the studios, the *Palimpsest Studio* (or *Pali-Room*), intended for use by all previous participants of the program. You can read more about the basic principles and ethos of Onassis AiR [here](#).

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SELECTION PROCESS

Carrying on with the ethos of an undisciplined, artist-run community of peers, the selection for the ONASSIS AiR 2021/22 OPEN CALL is based upon a peer-to-peer process by the current participants of Onassis AiR.

The selection will be done in two phases. The first phase follows a very specific model based on **blind-selection** methods, where no personal and biographical information (i.e. your name, bio, CV, work sample, etc.) will be visible to the peer review panel during Phase I, in order to safeguard the selection process from any form of nepotism.

All applications will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- How your proposed sub-theme and methodological approach can contribute towards the collective exploration of the research topic you are interested in?
- How does your understanding of collective research relate to the ethos of Onassis AiR and *The School of Infinite Rehearsals*? Please [read more here](#).
- How is your individual existing practice relevant to the research topic you are applying for?

SELECTION PHASE I

During Selection Phase I, each application will be reviewed by two (2) of the 2020/21 participants of Onassis AiR, independently of each other. Each person reviews individually all the applications assigned to the couple, based on the answers to the two (2) questions listed below, without seeing any other information (name, gender, age, CV, supporting documents) about the applicant.

Selection Question #1: Depending on the Movement Group (V-VIII) you are applying for:

- describe your individual interest in the theme proposed;
- lay out a specific research focus you would like to explore with other participants of that Movement Group during the seven-week collective research period;
- propose a subtitle for your research focus. If you are selected, your proposed research focus & subtitle will become one of the points of inquiry of the collective research that you and your Movement Group will embark on.

Selection Question #2: Please describe what is collective research for you. How does collective research move, smell, sound, decide, host, perform, and rehearse?

If both people in each selection couple believe the answers satisfy the selection criteria (YES), the application will proceed to Phase II of the selection process. If both people in each selection couple believe the answers do not satisfy the selection criteria, or both are unsure (NO or MAYBE), the application will not proceed to Phase II. If one in the couple chooses YES and the other chooses NO, the application will also proceed to Phase II.



SELECTION PHASE II

During selection Phase II, all the applications that passed from Selection Phase I will be reviewed in detail, with all the requested supporting materials, other questions in the application, CV, etc. by the team of Onassis AiR (Ash Bulayev, Nefeli Myrodia and Myrto Katsimicha), with an advisory board consisting of Grégory Castéra, Binna Choi & Marianna Takou (Casco Art Institute), Ilaria Conti, Karthik Pandian, and Piergiorgio Pepe.

INTERVIEWS

After Selection Phase II is completed, we will schedule interviews through video conference, with each of the pre-selected applicants. Following the interviews, the final selection will be made and each selected participant will be informed not later than June 4, 2021.

IMPORTANT DATES

JANUARY 29, 2021

ONASSIS AiR 2021/22 OPEN CALL applications open.

FEBRUARY 26, 2021

Deadline for submission of all applications (no exceptions). All applications must be submitted not later than 12:00 noon (Coordinated Universal Time, UTC+2). The open call online platform will go offline after the specified time and no exceptions will be made for any applicant for any reason.

MAY 7, 2021

All pre-selected applicants informed and interviews scheduled.

MAY 17–28, 2021

Interviews with each pre-selected applicant.

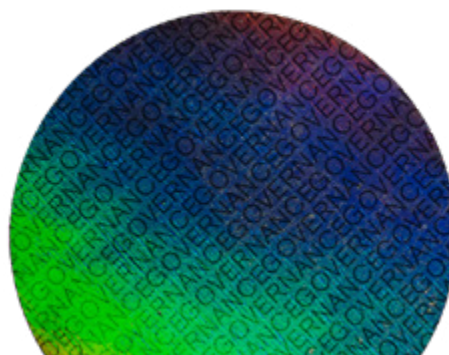
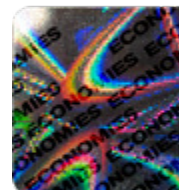
JUNE 4, 2021

All selected participants are informed by email.

JUNE 15, 2021

All applicants will be informed by email about the result of their application.

If you have general questions during the time that the Open Call online platform is open (between January 29-February 26, 2021) about the application, please email air@onassis.org (Monday to Friday, 10:00-18:00 UTC+2). We will not be able to answer any questions after the final deadline of the Open Call (February 26, 2021, 12:00 noon, Coordinated Universal Time, UTC+2).



APPLICATION FORM

In the online application, applicants will be asked to provide:

— **Contact Information**

— **Biography in narrative form**

(2500 characters, approx. 400 words)

— **CV/Resume as a PDF attachment**

(2 page limit)

— **Selection Question #1:**

Please tell us about your practice.

(2,500 characters / approx. 400 words or 3 minute audio or video if you prefer to use other means of expression)

You may use any medium you find useful to describe your practice, be it text (narrative, poem, essay format, etc.), audio (audio statement, sound art, etc.), video (video essay, video statement, video art, etc.). Depending on the medium you choose, please pay attention to the word/video/audio limits for this question.

— **Selection Question #2:**

Please describe what is collective research for you. How does collective research move, smell, sound, decide, host, perform, and rehearse?

(2,500 characters / approx. 400 words or 3 minute audio if you prefer to use other means of expression)

— **Selection Question #3:**

Depending on the Movement Group (V-VIII) you are applying for:

- a. please describe your individual interest in the theme proposed;
- b. lay out a specific research focus you would like to explore with other participants of that Movement Group during the seven-week collective research period;
- c. propose a subtitle for your research focus.

(3,500 characters / approx. 500 words or 5 minute audio if you prefer to use other means of expression)

If you are selected, your proposed research focus & subtitle will become one of the points of inquiry of the collective research that you and your Movement Group will embark on.

— One (1) **work sample** that you believe is relevant to your application

If you choose to submit an audio or video that exceeds five (5) minutes, please indicate start/end time of no more than five (5) minutes that you would like the selection team to review.

All the information in the application form as well as any supporting documents (bio, CV, work sample) **must be in English.**

You can only apply for **one (1)** of the Movement Groups (V-VIII).

FAQ & FACTS

- It is for those who live & work in Greece or anywhere in the world.
- There are no age restrictions.
- There is no requirement of formal academic degrees.
- It is not intended for those who are currently enrolled in an academic program (BA/MA/etc.).
- It is for those who seek collective exploration and co-existence with their peers within horizontal, non-hierarchical structures.
- It is for those who seek a non-homogeneous, inclusive, and collaborative environment with other practitioners coming from diverse disciplines and practices.
- Collectives are eligible to apply. Due to the small size of each Movement group, only one representative of the collective can take part in the program of *The School of Infinite Rehearsals* of Onassis AiR.
- Although we do not have the infrastructure to offer child-care, we will investigate other support mechanisms for selected applicants with children on a case-by-case basis during the interviews.
- We seek to establish a safe and welcoming space that ensures participation of the widest range of participants. However, please note that Onassis AiR is housed in a historic building with many stairs, and sadly not all spaces are wheelchair accessible at the moment.
- If selected, you are expected to take part in the program of *The School of Infinite Rehearsals 2021/22* of Onassis AiR full-time. If full-time participation during the seven (7) weeks of the program is not feasible for you, please reconsider your application.
- Since the program is open to participants living and working in Greece, as well as international participants, the working language of the program is English.
- Onassis AiR does not offer individual artist studio spaces. All spaces are meant to be shared and used collectively by each Movement Group. Onassis AiR is a growing community of peers, with previous participants having access to all spaces and resources of Onassis AiR. As a future participant of the program, you will have similar access after completion of your residency.
- Onassis AiR is not intended as a production space, nor is it equipped to accommodate artistic production.
- Your details will be stored securely for the purposes of this application. We will delete your application and any associated documents after six (6) months from the completion of the selection process.



**APPLICATION
FORM**
[CLICK HERE](#)