

## Annexe 3 Manifesta 16 Ruhr Education and Mediation Programme

25th of March, 2026  
St. Josef Kirche, Gelsenkirchen, Germany

The Education and Mediation Programme of Manifesta 16 Ruhr places community at its centre, offering multiple ways for visitors from all backgrounds to encounter the biennial and one another. Rather than transmitting fixed or “objective” knowledge from expert to audience, the programme understands mediation as a collective process grounded in mutual exchange.

Visitors are welcomed as co-participants whose perspectives and memories actively shape encounters with artworks, venues and neighbourhoods. This approach reflects Manifesta’s long-standing commitment to embedding artistic interventions within local contexts and engaging audiences from all walks of life.

Central to this programme is a team of nine mediators who have undergone an extensive collective learning process. Working across disciplines and personal backgrounds, they challenge and enrich one another’s viewpoints while developing authentic mediation practices responsive to the social fabric of the Ruhr Area. Mediators facilitate conversations that connect artistic positions with visitors’ own experiences of culture, labour, migration and community. In doing so, mediation becomes a practice of bringing people together to exchange ideas about society and shared futures.

### Walks

The Walks of Manifesta 16 Ruhr form a key element of public engagement. Offered as free Public Walks and bookable Group Walks, these exploratory parcours invite visitors to move through the biennial’s venues — many located in non-functioning or abandoned churches — while reflecting collectively on the histories and contemporary meanings of these sites.

### Youth Shift

Engaging younger audiences is equally vital. The specially invited *Youth Shift* initiative brings together a young critical generation of biennial observers who contribute fresh perspectives on Manifesta 16 Ruhr. Their participation supports the biennial’s ambition to become locally embedded through initiatives such as Citizens’ Assemblies, open call projects and the involvement of community-based mediators.

### Schools, Neighbourhood and Us

*Schule, Nachbarschaft und Wir* (Schools, Neighbourhood and Us) positions schools as extended communities capable of fostering social cohesion. In collaboration with four invited artists or artistic collectives, students

participate in creative processes that culminate in site-specific artistic interventions presented during the biennial. Themes include identity/ language, neighbourhood, communities and their relationship with school.

## **Spotlights**

Complementing this initiative, the Spotlights programme foregrounds perspectives of communities shaped by experiences of discrimination. Developed in partnership with regional institutions, associations and grassroots networks, its participatory formats (such as writing workshops) prioritise empowerment through creative expression.

## **School Activities and Family Programme**

Finally, free Activities for Schools and a dedicated Family Programme ensure that children, teenagers and caregivers can take part in creative workshops throughout the biennial. During the summer break in Nordrhein-Westfalen, Manifesta 16 Ruhr presents summer schools together with the education departments of Kunstmuseum Bochum and Kunstmuseum Gelsenkirchen. These activities explore neighbourhood public spaces such as parks, streets and marketplaces as sites for community-making.

Together, the Education and Mediation Programme articulates Manifesta 16 Ruhr's vision of shared social practice rooted in dialogue, experimentation and collective imagination.

You can find more information on our website [manifesta16.org/education](http://manifesta16.org/education)