

Call for Applications: FEM FESTival 2026
Balkan feminist festival 26-27th June 2026, Sofia



The Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) invites feminist organizations, activists, artists, cultural workers, musicians, theater practitioners, and progressive political actors to apply for participation in the **FEM FESTival 2026** – a unique regional platform that merges art and activism to promote gender equality and amplify marginalized voices.

Dates: 26 – 27th June, 2026

Location: Sofia, Bulgaria

Venue: [Municipal Home of Culture „Krasno Selo“, Sofia](#)

What is FEM FESTival 2026?

The Balkan region is undergoing rapid political and social upheaval. 2026 marks a moment of fracture and possibility, and **FEM FESTival 2026** invites you to join a feminist trans-regional, interdisciplinary-artistic platform that confronts patriarchal violence, exploitation, and authoritarianism while nurturing collective care and solidarity. The festival builds upon feminist and anti-fascist legacies of collective resistance in the Balkans, connecting contemporary struggles for gender equality, democracy, social justice, and peace.

Through artistic performances and interventions, as well as through critical discussions participants are invited to reflect on the struggles women and marginalized groups in the Balkan region face on a daily basis – from the worsening labor conditions and the devaluation of our care labor, through attacks on our bodily autonomy and rights of expression. But most importantly, the festival aims at building connections between movements and across borders and showing that political alternatives are possible.

Festival Goals

1. Reveal the daily realities of women, LGBTQI+, migrant, disability, and other marginalised groups in the Balkans.
2. Resist patriarchal and authoritarian structures through bold, creative expression.
3. Re-value care labor, solidarity economies, and communal forms of support.
4. Weave connections across social movements, borders, and artistic disciplines.
5. Showcase concrete, hopeful political alternatives that are urgent and possible.

What We're Looking For

Form	Description	Desired Impact
Performance & Live Art	dance, music, theatre, spoken-word, site-specific interventions	Make visible everyday feminist struggles and spark embodied resistance.
Visual & Media Art	Installation, photography, video-art, digital art, soundscapes, street murals, posters	Offer critical reflections and provocative visions of alternative feminist futures.
Community-Based Projects	workshops, participatory actions, collective storytelling, interactive games	Build cross-movement bridges and empower marginalized voices.

Research & Critical Dialogues	panels, round-tables, “knowledge-café”, policy-brief presentations	Connect artistic practice with feminist theory, labor struggles, and human-rights advocacy.
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All formats may be presented individually or in collaboration with other creators, collectives, or NGOs.

Submission guidelines

Eligibility	Artists, collectives, activists, trade unions, political actors and organisations, scholars, and community groups engaging with gender equality topics. Projects must relate to at least one of the festival themes (see above).
Submission materials	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Concept note (max. 800 words) – who you are and why do you apply, title of the performance/intervention, description of the performance/intervention, envisioned format, duration, technical and space requirements, what type of impact do you envision. Samples/portfolio – links, images, videos <p>Please send the written parts as pdf files. Please DO NOT send applications larger than 5 MB. In case you want to send images or videos, please upload them to a cloud system (GDrive, OneDrive etc.) or WeTransfer and send them as links.</p>
Deadline	May 25 th 2026, 23:59 EEST (midnight Sofia time)
How to submit	<p>Send your full application via email to kalina.drenska@fes.de with the subject line “FF2026 – [Your project title] – [Your name/collective]”</p> <p>You will receive a confirmation email for your application. In case you haven’t received such 48 hours after your submission, please reach out again.</p>
Selection Notification	Applicants will receive feedback on the status of their applications by June 1 st , 2026.
Travel & Accommodation	The FES covers travel and accommodation in Sofia for the duration of the festival for all selected applicants.
Honorarium	Successful applicants will receive a symbolic honorarium of a maximum of 350 € per performance/intervention after the end of the festival.

For any questions, feel free to reach out to kalina.drenska@fes.de!

Join us in making feminism visible, creative, and powerful at the **FEM Festival 2026!**