

# Stiftung für Kulturelle Weiterbildung und Kulturberatung



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servicezentrum  
musikschulen

## Press Release

### **The Stiftung für Kulturelle Weiterbildung und Kulturberatung (*Foundation for Cultural Education and Cultural Consulting*) is set to fall victim to budget cuts. The liquidation of this critical infrastructure would be a costly mistake for Berlin.**

**Berlin, 20.11.2024.** Berlin's budget requires over 3 billion euros in cuts, and the cultural sector, the smallest department, is being disproportionately affected. The list of cost-saving measures announced on Tuesday, mentions the public-law Stiftung für Kulturelle Weiterbildung und Kulturberatung (*Foundation for Cultural Education and Cultural Consulting*, SKWK) and its affiliated subsidiary, Kulturraum Berlin gGmbH (KRB). In addition to massive cuts, there is also talk of liquidation.

The SKWK serves as an umbrella organization for five initiatives in Berlin that will be forced to cease operations immediately: Diversity Arts Culture (DAC), Institut für Kulturelle Teilhabeforschung (*Institute for Research on Cultural Participation*, IKTf), kultur\_formen, the servicezentrum musikschulen (*service center for music schools*, szm) and Kulturraum Berlin gGmbH (KRB).

The liquidation would have devastating consequences for Berlin's cultural sector, and for the whole country:

Without **Diversity Arts Culture**, the cultural sector would lose its avenue for becoming more inclusive of Berlin's diverse urban society. Artists and cultural workers would no longer have access to crucial anti-discrimination support.

Without the **Institut für Kulturelle Teilhabeforschung** (IKTf), cultural institutions would lose an evidence-based resource to remain competitive in the broad leisure market. Cultural policy makers and administrations would lack critical data and facts on the effectiveness of cultural funding.

Without **kultur\_formen**, over 200 cultural education and artistic projects across Berlin would lose their funding annually. More than 5,000 children, youth and young adults would be denied opportunities for cultural participation. Key programs like the Berliner Projektfonds Kulturelle Bildung (*Berlin Project Fund for Cultural Education*), the Berliner Projektfonds Urbane Praxis (BPUP) and Kubinaut are facing existential threats.

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Without the **servicezentrum musikschulen** (*service center for music schools*), Berlin would lose its central expert body focusing on equal access to music education, a right enshrined in the school law, and the organizational backbone would collapse for all district music schools.

Without **Kulturraum Berlin gGmbH**, more than 2,500 Berlin artists would lose their workspaces, and major projects such as the preservation of the *Uferhallen* and the *Kulturkataster*, an innovative mapping tool to save cultural spaces, would face termination.

"I am shocked by the plan to dissolve the Stiftung für Kulturelle Weiterbildung und Kulturberatung and Kulturraum Berlin gGmbH," said Florian Stiehler, Chairman of the Foundation. „Just months ago, I was appointed to this role by the Chair of the Board of Trustees, Senator for Culture Joe Chialo. In response to the 10% savings mandate, we as a foundation had developed a proposal. The news of our potential liquidation caught us completely off guard. Nearly 100 highly qualified employees stand to lose their jobs, and Berlin risks crucial infrastructure, expertise, and experience in the key areas of participation, cultural education, and diversity, which are central to the future viability of the cultural sector.”

Since its establishment in 2019, the Stiftung für Kulturelle Weiterbildung und Kulturberatung has strengthened cultural participation and education, while making Berlin's cultural sector innovative and future-ready. Over the years, it has built a vital infrastructure that supports the entire cultural sector with groundbreaking initiatives, such as: an interdisciplinary anti-discrimination advisory service (Diversity Arts Culture), the low-threshold talent development program “Durchstarten” (kultur\_formen), “KulturMonitoring” (Institut für Kulturelle Teilhabeforschung), a tool used to conduct visitor research for cultural and leisure facilities throughout Germany, and, since 2023, the city-wide management of processes for Berlin's music schools, including the support for the MS-IT administrative software.

If the foundation is liquidated, Berlin's governing coalition would destroy this carefully built infrastructure, which would require significantly higher future investments to recreate within Berlin's cultural administration and institutions. In doing so, the coalition would double the harm to the cultural sector, compounding the impact of the widespread funding cuts already targeting individual institutions and initiatives.

“We are fighting to prevent this liquidation and are open to dialogue with political decision-makers,” says Florian Stiehler.

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