

1. The MUK

The Music and Arts University of the City of Vienna, commonly referred to as "the MUK", is a public institution that provides exceptional and affordable education in Music and Performing Arts. Currently, the MUK is home to approximately 900 students and over 280 distinguished faculty members, including internationally renowned artists involved in artistic research, music, dance, drama, and singing. The university's city-centre campus with premises in Johannesgasse, Bräunerstraße, and Singerstraße plays a vital role in Vienna's urban and cultural life. As a subsidiary of Wien Holding, the MUK is fully owned by the City of Vienna and has strong ties to other cultural institutions in this network.

2. Studying at the MUK

The MUK offers a wide range of Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes in the fields of conducting, composition, instrumental studies, vocal studies and opera, drama, dance and musical theatre. In addition to the artistic degree programmes, there are educational training programmes such as the Bachelor's degree programme in Instrumental and Vocal Pedagogy (IGP) or the Master of Arts Education (MAE). A doctoral programme in Artistic Research offers the opportunity to pursue a PhD at the MUK.

Tuition fees are deliberately kept low and are significantly lower than those of comparable institutions. Receiving a top education at the MUK is determined not by wealth but solely by the quality and merit of the applicants and students. The applicant's artistic talent and professional aptitude are assessed in an entrance examination. Currently, more than 900 students are receiving artistic training from about 280 professors and lecturers at the MUK. More than half of our students come to Vienna from abroad. The university admits 150- 200 candidates per year from approximately 1,500 applicants.

The following courses of study are offered at the MUK:

Faculty of Music

- Keyboard Instruments, Conducting and Composition (Preparatory course/Bachelor's/Master's degree programme/Certificate of Performance)
- String Instruments (Preparatory course/Bachelor's/Master's degree programme/Certificate of Performance)
- Wind and percussion instruments (Preparatory course/Bachelor's/Master's degree programme/Certificate of Performance)
- Jazz (Bachelor's/Master's degree programme/Certificate of Performance)
- Early Music (Preparatory course/Bachelor's/Master's degree programme/Certificate of Performance)

Faculty of Performing Arts

- Vocal studies and Opera (Bachelor's/Master's degree programme/Certificate of Performance)
- Musical Theatre (Bachelor's degree programme)
- Acting (Bachelor's degree programme)
- Dance (Preparatory course or pre-college/Bachelor's degree programme)

Pedagogical studies (cross-faculty)

- Instrumental and Vocal Pedagogy (IGP)
- Master of Arts Education (MAE)

Doctorate/PhD in Artistic Research (cross-faculty)

- Composition/Music theory
- Arts and cultural education
- Contemporary theatre
- Performance art
- Contemporary dance
- Interpretation research

The Student Affairs Office has compiled information on its various degree programmes and qualifications in a brochure. [This brochure](#) contains key details about the university as well as general information on studying at the MUK.

3. Research at the MUK

A solid academic education is guaranteed by completing one of the many Bachelor's, Master's or doctoral programmes at the MUK. The Centre for Science and Research (ZWF) teaches scientific and artistic-scientific techniques, introducing students to current debates. Students gain skills in critical thinking, reflection, methodology and interpersonal communication while preparing for the demands of their final thesis. In addition to conducting scientific and artistic research, the staff of the ZWF regularly organise conferences, research, and discussion events in cooperation with national and international scientists, artists, and research institutions. Through externally funded research projects, the MUK is continuously expanding its academic research on future-oriented aspects of the arts and their role in society.

4. MUK: Past and present

4.a. Contemporary history

The origins of the MUK as an institution can be traced back to the Conservatory of the City of Vienna. From 1926 to 1938, the premises at Johannesgasse 4a housed RAVAG (*Radio-Verkehrs-AG*), Austria's first public broadcasting company and the predecessor of today's national public broadcaster, the ORF. The building was a main target of the failed Nazi July Putsch on 25 July 1934. Following Austria's "Anschluss" to Nazi Germany in March 1938, all social democratic and private music schools were replaced by a central music school of the City of Vienna, headquartered at Johannesgasse 4a.

After the Second World War the Conservatory of the City of Vienna was re-established in 1945. Since then, its address at Johannesgasse 4a has been synonymous with first-class artistic training. In 2020, a group of researchers analysed and documented the Nazi era as part of the *House History/Contemporary History* project.

4.b. Gradual transformation into a city university

In 2000, the institution began its transformation into a university, integrating its programmes and degrees into the European Higher Education Area (Bologna Process). In 2005, the institution became the first private university of the arts in Vienna to be accredited. It adopted the name *Konservatorium Wien Privatuniversität*. In 2015, it was renamed *Music and Arts University of the City of Vienna* (MUK). Although publicly funded, MUK differs from Austria's state universities in its legal status, as it is accredited under the Private Higher Education Act (PrivHG). This status not only affirms the institution's legal standing but also reflects its commitment to excellence in arts education.

4c. MUK@OWA: A new university campus is underway

In March 2025, Mayor Dr Michael Ludwig announced plans to establish a new campus for the MUK at Otto Wagner Areal (OWA). He reaffirmed this commitment in June 2025 before the Vienna City Council, highlighting MUK's unique role as Vienna's only university.

The new campus will not only expand MUK's capacity for teaching, research, and artistic practice but also create opportunities for student accommodation, benefiting both the university and the surrounding community. This creation of a genuine campus setting will optimise study conditions for students from all institutes and degree programmes. The historic pavilions, surrounded by greenery, offer an inspiring environment for the students' artistic work. Moreover, the historic building complex is being adapted with environmentally friendly technologies such as geothermal energy and photovoltaics. This makes it a flagship project within Vienna's climate strategy and its 2040 climate targets.

An initial phase of the project, now underway, focuses on developing a comprehensive spatial and functional programme for the proposed campus site in western Vienna. As part of a wide-ranging participatory process, future users are actively involved, ensuring that their expertise, requirements and working methods are directly incorporated. This *modus operandi* provides a clear picture of how teaching, learning, rehearsals, work, and cooperation can function on the new campus.

4.d. Collaborations

The Music and Arts University of the City of Vienna is a key institution in the heart of Vienna and its contemporary culture, enjoying numerous cooperations with a wide range of cultural institutions, venues, theatres, universities and research institutions.

Collaborations with top-class orchestras (Vienna Philharmonic, Vienna Symphony Orchestra, RSO Vienna, Tonkünstler Orchestra) and Austria's most renowned festivals (Salzburg Festival, Wien Modern, Resonanzen) and performance venues (Wiener Musikverein, Konzerthaus Wien, Vereinigte Bühnen Wien, Burgtheater, Volkstheater Wien, ORF RadioKulturhaus, MuTh, Tanzquartier Wien, Dschungel Wien, Schauspielhaus Wien, Porgy & Bess) ensure that students have excellent opportunities to present their musical, acting and dancing skills to a wide audience. In addition, the MUK maintains media partnerships with the public broadcaster ORF and the private radio station Radio Klassik Stephansdom.

MUK's academic discourse is enriched by collaborations with the Joint Research Network Elfriede Jelinek and the European Forum Alpbach, among others. The Centre for Science and Research (ZWF) has increased third-party funding through research projects supported by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF).

4.e. Notable Personalities

4.e.1. University Rectors

Over the past 25 years, its leaders have overseen the transformation of the former Conservatory of the City of Vienna into the current Music and Arts University of the City of Vienna.

Dr Andreas Mailath-Pokorny has been serving as University Rector since 2018, and was reappointed for an additional four-year term in 2026.

Since May 2019, **Associate Professor Dr Rosemarie Brucher** has held the office of Vice Rector for Science and Research. **Dieter Boyer, MA MAS**, was appointed Vice Rector for Organisational Development at the MUK in October 2024.

4.e.2. Teachers

At the Music and Arts University of the City of Vienna, distinguished artists and educators from around the world teach and conduct research. These include Lidia Baich, Esther Balfe, Roland Batik, Sheng-Fang Chiu, Sophie Dervaux, Adrian Eröd, Christian Fennesz, Dalibor Karvay, Boris Kuschnir, Andy Middleton, Anton Mittermayr, Maja Osojnik, Agnes Palmisano, Eva Reiter, Susan Riggava-

Dumas, Matthias Schorn, Werner Sobotka, Susi Stach, Katharina Stemberger, Kristina Šuklar, Doris Uhlich, Pavel Vernikov, Linda Watson, and Beate Wiesinger.

Students have the opportunity to work with internationally renowned artists in master classes, seminars and workshops in addition to their regular lessons. Notable past guests have included Daniel Barenboim, Martin Fröst, HK Gruber, Georg Friedrich Haas, Nikolaus Habjan, John Holloway, Bill Holman, Lang Lang, Elisabeth Leonskaja, Dave Liebman, Jean-Marie Londeix, Malcolm Martineau, Bobby McFerrin, Jim McNeely, Bob Mintzer, China Moses, Krzysztof Penderecki, Felix Powrosło, Michael Schade, Claus-Christian Schuster, Johannes Maria Staud, Markus Stockhausen and Peter Van Heyghen.

4.e.3 Alumni

The MUK is proud of its distinguished list of alumni, including prominent artists such as Verena Altenberger, Paul Badura-Skoda, Karin Bonelli, Sergei Dogadin, and Falco. Additional esteemed graduates are Johanna Falkinger, Till Fellner, Rafael Fingerlos, Markus Freistätter, Viktor Gernot, Aleksey Igudesman, Otto Jaus, Elfriede Jelinek, Erich Kleinschuster, and Bogdan Laketic. The institution is also proud to recognize Marianne Mendt, Kristina Miller, Bettina Mönch, Nicholas Ofczarek, Selina Ott, Lukas Perman, Julian Rachlin, Yury Revich, Verena Scheitz, Mark Seibert, Daniel Serafin, Mihail Sosnovski, Alexandra Soumm, Kristina Sprenger, and Michael Spyres among its alumni. Furthermore, the list includes Aleksandra and Kristina Šuklar, Doris Uhlich, Lorenzo Viotti, Terry Wey, Peter Wolf, and Joe Zawinul, reflecting the institution's impact on the fields of music and the arts.