

Cinekid x Amarte: MediaLab Open Call 2026

40th Cinekid Festival, Amsterdam, 5 – 16 October 2026

Thanks to the support of the Amarte Foundation, Cinekid invites artists, designers and studios to submit Interactive Installations, Digital Design, Game & Apps, Digital Media Art, Live Performances, Hybrid Art, VR or AR projects for the upcoming MediaLab. Cinekid and Amarte welcome submissions from makers who are based in the Netherlands.

Calendar outline:

- Selection procedure
- Entry form online: March 31st, 2026
- Application deadline: May 10th, 2026
- Selection results/winner announced: End of May, 2026
- Realisation work: May - September 2026
- Testing work with Cinekid Junior Crew: September 2026
- Building up the work before Festival: 29 September – 3 October 2026
- Presenting work at Festival: October 5 - 16, 2026
- Evaluation: End of October 2026

REGULATIONS:

1. Conditions for entry
 - The work needs to be suited for children in the age range of 3 – 14 years
 - The submission needs to be an idea for a new work
 - The work must align with the theme of Cinekid Festival 2026: 'Celebrate Together'. This year, the Cinekid Festival is all about celebrating together. In a world full of instability and change, it's more important than ever to create moments of shared joy. Laughing, playing, watching, and discovering together brings people closer. It gives energy, recharges you, and it positively affects communities. Joy grows when you share it: experiences lived together linger longer and carry deeper meaning. Something special happens when people have fun together. The energy released, the connections formed, the shared focus, and the atmosphere you can almost touch—

these are the moments when communities grow. Shared experiences create a sense of “we,” and that’s exactly what we need today.

- The concept can be either fiction or non-fiction, but the works should playfully surprise, amaze or offer children a new insight into themselves or others through a mix of art, media and technology. Make sure it has a “together” or multiplayer component. Anything is possible, just let your creativity flow!
- It is imperative that the production can physically and properly presented at the festival and be solid enough to be used by thousands of children.
- Makers or makers' collectives must be based in the Netherlands. We do not support study projects, i.e. projects related to your studies, such as graduate projects. What we do support are projects by makers who are still studying, but where the project is separate from their studies.

Selection committee and criteria of selection

Cinekid and the Amarte foundation will form a jury which will decide which project will be selected from all entries in the Open Call.

Selection criteria are:

- a. Fun; the experience of the installation or work should be fun, at Cinekid MediaLab we aim to amaze children with technology
- b. Quality; the following are specific areas of attention: artwork, interaction design, usability, sound, storyline.
- c. Innovation; the uses of new technologies receive specific focus.
- d. Authenticity; areas of attention: artwork, interaction design, usability, sound, storyline.

Only two projects can be selected within this Open Call and will receive the budget to create and present the work and get advised by Amarte and Cinekid during the development of the work. Makers who did not get funded in this Open Call can still be approached by the Head of MediaLab to create work for the exhibition of this or next year and all applicants will be invited to the Cinekid x Amarte MediaLab networking event during the Cinekid Festival in October 2026.

2. Selected maker will receive;
 - a. 15.000 euro (including fee, material, technical and presentation costs. It also needs to be sustainable and robust enough to be presented at other locations too). Please note: Amarte and Cinekid attach importance to responsible commissioning. By this we mean that you offer the makers you work with the following: fair payments, clear agreements and a safe and inclusive working environment. So, keep this in mind when preparing your application and budget. Make sure that every maker involved is adequately paid.
 - b. Artistic and productional guidance by the MediaLab team and the chance to test the work with the Cinekid Junior Crew (a group of children between 7 and 12 years old).
 - c. The selected works will be presented in the Cinekid MediaLab from October 5 - 16, 2026, at our main location in Amsterdam Noord. During the full festival we welcome about 60.000 children, parents, students and international professionals.
 - d. Promotion of the work exhibited.
 - e. Photography material of the work exhibited.

3. Required materials

The entry forms must be submitted before or on May 10th, 2026. Cinekid is free to unlimitedly use the publicity materials (fragments, photo's) for promotional purposes.

Your entry consists of:

- a. Projectplan
 - i. The maximum length of your project plan is 2 pages (A4).
 - ii. The PDF may be up to 8MB in size.
 - iii. Briefly describe the following in your project plan:
 1. Title
 2. Substantive description of the work,
 3. Rationale: what is your artistic starting point with this work,
 4. Setup: how will you realize it and which technique(s) and presentation form(s) will you use?
 5. Approach and results, what and how are you going to do it, and when is your work considered successful?
 6. Finally, also include at least one image of the work, which can be a sketch, an artist impression, a photo of an already realized (part of your) work, or a link to an online video.
- b. Schedule
 - i. The maximum length of your schedule or planning is 1 page (A4).
 - ii. The PDF may be up to 4MB in size.
 - iii. The schedule should provide insight into the steps you will take to execute your project and the time needed. Note, the Cinekid Festival takes place in October 2026, and the deadline for the realized work is in September, so that the Junior Crew can test the work and the work can be finalized.
- c. Budget
 - i. The maximum length of your budget is 1 page (A4).
 - ii. The PDF may be up to 4MB in size.
 - iii. The budget should give a realistic picture of the estimated costs and income directly related to the execution of your project. The specification of costs must enable the jury of the Cinekid x Amarte Open Call to assess your underlying calculations and estimates.
 - iv. Your budget should also show how you are planning to adequately pay yourself and your team members. Also mention whether you have prepared the budget including or excluding VAT. This depends on whether you are VAT-liable or not. Prepare your budget in whole euros.

- d. Portfolio of your work
 - i. The maximum length of your portfolio is 3 pages (A4).
 - ii. The PDF may be up to 12 MB in size.
4. The submission of an entry implies acceptance of these regulations.

For all further questions, kindly contact Team Medialab at medialab@cinekid.nl

About Cinekid

Cinekid Festival is the largest children's media festival in the world. Children aged between 3 and 14 years can watch new, unusual and striking films and television productions and meet their creators. They also get a chance to explore the MediaLab: a playful area filled with interactive art installations, workshops, games, and apps. The MediaLab is Europe's largest digital media exhibition for children that features a wide array of interactive media art and design projects. The MediaLab presents artworks for the digital natives and critical experiments about our digital culture. Digital culture is an ever-changing media scene, encompassing new media, digital storytelling and new cinematic tools and technologies. Cinekid discusses this new territory of storytelling as a dialogue between narrative, more traditional cinematic aspects, the changing platforms of broadcasting and the personal use of digital media.

About Amarte

The Amarte Foundation was founded in 2019 by several families that share a deep love for the arts. Together they decided to serve as a springboard for artists based in the Netherlands and offer financial means to innovative artists and support projects in music, theatre, film, visual arts, and literature. Read more at <https://amarte.nl>