



AMBASSADE  
DE FRANCE  
AU PAKISTAN  
Liberté  
Égalité  
Fraternité

ambiance  
Hotels & Resorts

af

Alliance Française  
Lahore - Pakistan



ART RESIDENCY  
**CHECKING IN**

**MARCH 28 - APRIL 18, 2026**  
**LOCATION: AMBIANCE RESORT HUNZA**

# **CHECKING IN**

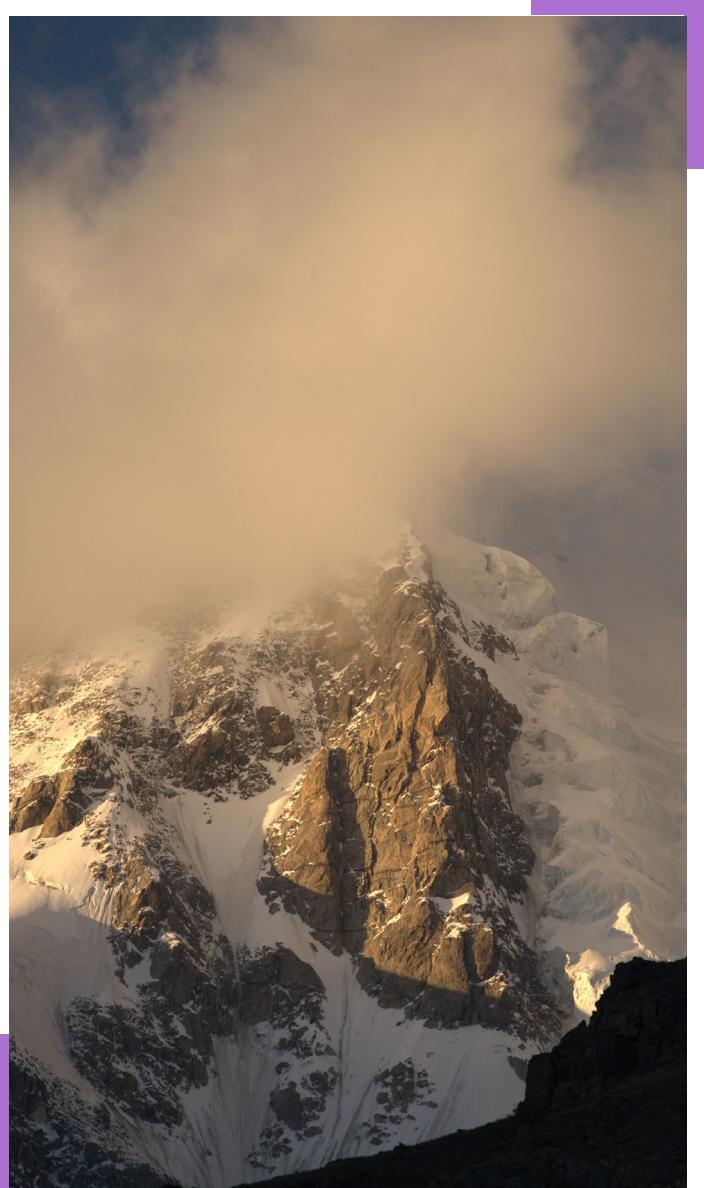
**Checking In** is envisioned as a deliberate threshold. It is the point that signifies arrival with intent, sharpened attention, and a pause between two shifting states of being. This residency is developed around that shift.

Over three weeks, six artists will step out of compressed timelines and habitual production cycles into a slower register of seeing, thinking, and making. The focus is both on what is produced and on how practice adjusts to a different rhythm. In this altered rhythm, distractions recede to the background.

Since 2020, Ambiance Hotels and Resorts has been at the forefront of showcasing artistic talent from across Pakistan to our discerning international clientele through our Call for Art initiative. With artists participating from Pakistan and France, **Checking In** is held within a broader ecology of exchange, mentorship, and shared critical attention.

This residency is conceived neither as a retreat nor as withdrawal, but as a space for sustained attention and the recalibration of both practice and purpose. Join us as we evolve from a space where work is not only displayed, but consciously created.

**Note:** For this initiative, we will engage four artists from Pakistan and two from France, including Pakistani diasporic artists based in France.

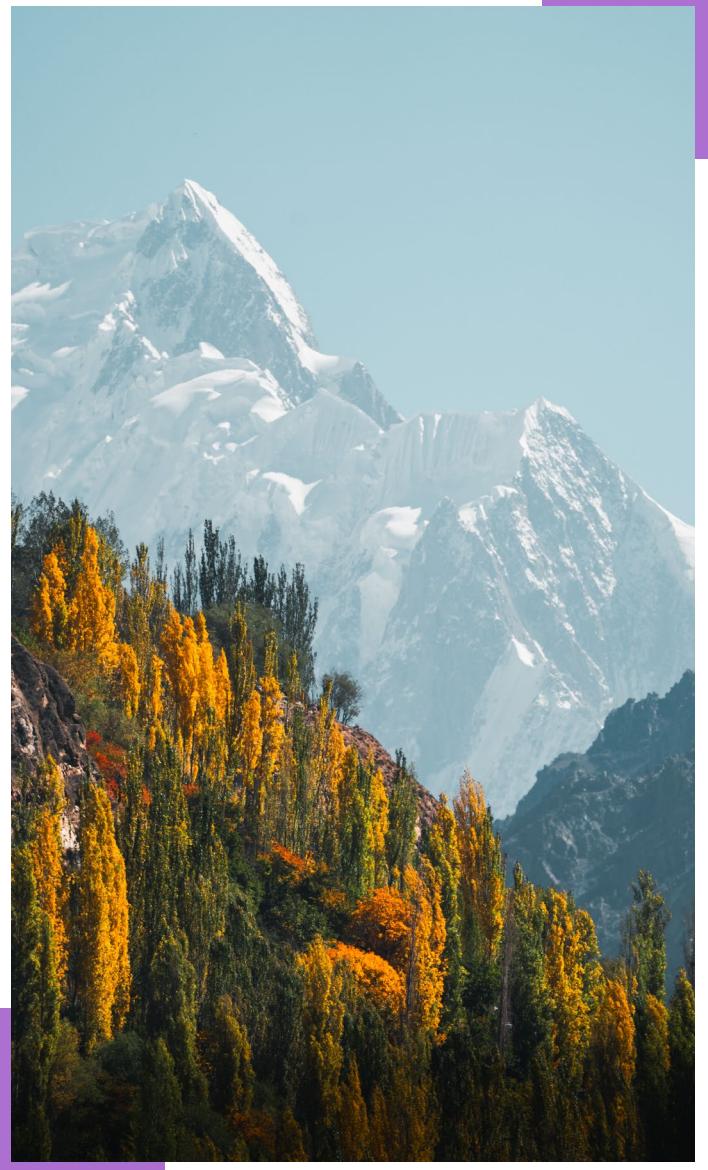


# WHY HUNZA

Hunza is integral to the idea of **Checking In**. It is a place that naturally enforces the pause the residency asks for. Distance, terrain, and scale slow movement by necessity. Time expands. Attention recalibrates. What begins as geographic arrival becomes a deeper shift in how one occupies space, work, and thought.

Set against the presence of Rakaposhi and the wide valleys of the region, the landscape offers more than visual richness. It introduces stillness, repetition, and vastness as working conditions. Light changes slowly across the day. Sound carries differently. These qualities do not simply surround the artist, they begin to shape perception and tempo.

Over the course of the residency, artists will not just be working in an inspiring setting; they will be absorbed into a context that invites sustained attention and careful response. It is within this slowed, attentive state that work is allowed to unfold with greater clarity, connection, and intent.



# AMBIANCE HOTELS & RESORTS

Ambiance Hotels & Resorts is a network of luxury hotels grounded in design, experience, and a sustained relationship with the visual arts. Its portfolio includes the Ambiance Boutique Art Hotels in Lahore, Karachi, and Islamabad, alongside Ambiance Resort Hunza and The Vibe by Ambiance in Murree. Across all its properties, art is not treated as an add-on. It is integral to how spaces are conceived, inhabited, and remembered.

Through its nationwide Call for Art initiative, Ambiance works with artists from across Pakistan to build a growing permanent collection of contemporary art. These works are acquired and displayed across its properties, allowing guests to encounter original work as part of their everyday movement through each space. This continuing engagement also supports emerging artists by offering visibility, context, and a sustained presence beyond the gallery.

As the home of **Checking In**, Ambiance Resort Hunza extends this philosophy into a setting defined by scale, stillness, and distance from urban pace. The brand's relationship with art shifts from display to process. The residency grows directly from Ambiance's commitment to living with art, offering artists time, space, and sustained creative attention.



# ABOUT ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE



The Alliance Française de Lahore is a leading cultural and educational institution dedicated to the promotion of the French language and francophone cultures in Pakistan. As part of the worldwide Alliance Française network, it plays a central role in fostering dialogue between France, Pakistan, and the broader francophone world through language education, cultural programming, and intellectual exchange.

Beyond its teaching activities, the Alliance Française de Lahore is a vibrant cultural hub that designs and hosts a wide range of artistic, literary, and intellectual events. Its program includes exhibitions, film screenings, debates, conferences, concerts, and literary encounters, developed in close partnership with Pakistani cultural institutions, universities, artists, and festivals. These activities aim to create spaces for dialogue, creativity, and critical reflection, while encouraging encounters between local and international voices.

Through its cultural action, the Alliance Française de Lahore actively contributes to the circulation of ideas, artistic practices, and cultural perspectives. It supports contemporary creation, promotes cultural diversity, and seeks to address major societal and global issues through culture. By positioning culture as a vector of exchange and mutual understanding, the Alliance Française de Lahore affirms its role as a key platform for cultural diplomacy and cooperation in Pakistan.

# **RESIDENCY SELECTION COMMITTEE**

To bring this project to life, the residency will be guided by the expertise of our distinguished selection committee. In collaboration with our internal team, they will carefully evaluate each application.



**Prof. Salima Hashmi**  
Artist, Curator, Educator, Gallerist  
Former Principal, NCA;  
Founding Dean MDSVAD, BNU



**Ali Kazim**  
Artist, Educator



**Prof. Risham Hosain Syed**  
Artist, Curator, Educator  
Head of Visual Arts, MDSVAD, BNU



**Muhammad Zeeshan**  
Artist, Curator, Educator

# RESIDENCY MENTORS

Artists will engage with our residency mentors, taking part in talks and workshops designed to nurture their practice and provide insightful feedback during jury sessions. Beyond these guided interactions, artists will explore practitioner-led workshops that encourage experimentation, spark new ideas, and create the space for their work to evolve organically.



**Prof. Salima Hashmi**  
**Artist, Curator, Educator, Gallerist**  
**Former Principal, NCA; Founding Dean MDSVAD, BNU**

Salima Hashmi is an artist, curator, and contemporary art historian. She was the founding Dean of the Mariam Dawood School of Visual Arts & Design at Beaconhouse National University and previously served as Professor and Principal at the National College of Arts, Lahore. A prolific writer, she is the author and editor of several seminal texts on South Asian art, including *Unveiling the Visible and The Eye Still Seeks*. She has received multiple honours for her contributions to art and education, including Pakistan's Pride of Performance (1999), ACUADS International Fellowship (2011), and an Honorary Doctorate from Bath Spa University (2016). She currently serves as Professor Emeritus at BNU and is a Council Member of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. In recognition of her meritorious contributions to the country she is set to be awarded the Sitara-e-Imtiaz on March 23, 2026.

**Prof. Risham Hosain Syed**  
**Artist, Curator, Educator**  
**Head of Visual Arts, MDSVAD, BNU**

Risham Syed is a visual artist and educator, and Professor of Fine Arts and Head of the Department of Fine Arts at the Mariam Dawood School of Visual Arts & Design, Beaconhouse National University, Lahore. A graduate of the National College of Arts, Lahore, and the Royal College of Art, London, her practice spans painting, textiles, sound, and installation, engaging histories of colonialism, urban space, and the Global South. Lahore is central to her work, informing inquiries into place, materiality, and memory. She has exhibited widely, including a solo presentation at the Newark Museum of Art, as well as at the Sharjah Biennial; Manchester International Festival; Jameel Arts Centre, Dubai; Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester; Barbican Centre, London; and the Fukuoka Triennial, Japan. Her work is held in significant public and private collections.



**Pauline Esparon**  
**Designer**

Pauline Esparon plays with the notion of rawness, a form of archaism, a primary state of materials before their standardization by industry. Forms from the vegetal, the animal or the mineral worlds can be intertwined. Her works always start with the investigation of materials, and slide from an instinctive research to a definite shape. This approach is as sensible as contextual, by questioning both the qualities of materials and the culture of materials, their heritage, their survival, their systems. Each project envisions a proposition to tweak production for the better and consider humble materials, processes, purposes of production as well as possible perspectives for crafts. Pauline Esparon's work has entered prestigious public collections, such as Le Mobilier National, the CNAP (Centre National d'Arts Plastiques) and the FRAC Hauts-de-France.



**Tapu Javeri**  
**Photographer, Jewelry Designer, Radio Host,**  
**TV Personality**

Tapu Javeri is Pakistan's leading photographer, renowned for his work in fashion, portraiture, and photojournalism. A graduate in Anthropology and Archaeology from Bard University, with a career spanning over three decades, his lens captures culture, character, and emotion with rare depth. He has exhibited nationally and internationally including in *Where Three Dreams Cross: 150 Years of Photography from India, Pakistan & Bangladesh*. His work has also been featured in prominent photography publications. Named among Nikon's Top 32 Pro Photographers in Asia, Tapu is a regular speaker at prestigious institutions including the Cambridge University, UK, the National History Museum, Bulgaria, and IVS, among others. Beyond photography, he carries forward his family's legacy as partner at Hassan Ali Mohammed Javeri Jewellers, where he merges traditional craftsmanship with contemporary design. His creativity extends to wearable art through his label Tapulicious, which transforms his photographic imagery into fashion accessories.

# STEERING COMMITTEE

These are the minds shaping the residency experience. Each member plays a vital role in guiding artists to engage thoughtfully with the curated programme, nurturing the creative process, supporting a compelling culminating display, and laying the foundation for the residency's evolving journey and future iterations.



**Kasim Kasuri**  
CEO & Chief Design  
Curator, Ambiance  
Hotels & Resorts



**Fabrice Disdier**  
Director, Alliance  
Française de Lahore



**Sadaf Atif**  
General Secretary, Board  
of Members, Alliance Française  
de Lahore



**Haseeb Ullah Zafar**  
Curatorial Assistant, Ambiance  
Hotels & Resorts  
Visiting Faculty, NCA



**Shumaila Hussain**  
General Manager Operations,  
CE Office, Beaconhouse Group

# WHAT THE RESIDENCY INCLUDES

- 1. Artist Grant** for creation, production, and framing of artwork.
- 2. Room and Board** for the duration of the residency, including breakfast and dinner.
- 3. Travel** to and from the artists' city of residence to Ambiance Resort Hunza.
- 4. Local Travel** for site visits and excursions.
- 5. Studio & Exhibition Space** for work and display.
- 6. Traveling Exhibition** showcasing selected works.
- 7. Opportunity** for one artwork to become part of the Ambiance permanent collection.
- 8. Guidance** through jury sessions and mentor-led workshops.
- 9. Art Activities** to inspire exploration and experimentation.
- 10. Mindfulness & Movement Sessions at Resonance**, the spa and wellness space at Ambiance Resort Hunza.

# ELIGIBILITY AND SUBMISSION

The residency is open to contemporary visual artists working in all disciplines, throughout Pakistan and France who have graduated from a prominent visual arts institution within the specified time frame. Please note that Ambiance Resort Hunza operates as a luxury resort hotel, not exclusively as an art destination. While every attempt will be made to offer art-specific facilities for participating artists, these may differ from those typically found at artist-centric institutions.

Aspiring artists producing high-quality work based in the Gilgit-Baltistan region who have not had the opportunity to take part in residency initiatives in Pakistan before will be prioritised.

The selected artist should be able to engage discursively and speculatively with Gilgit-Baltistan's wider artistic and cultural context. With this in mind, applicants should submit residency/ ideation proposals with accompanying sketches within their application, outlining their specific research interests and intentions for the residency.

We encourage applications from all backgrounds; however, at this time, the residency and accompanying artist grant are available to individual artists only. Applications from artistic duos or collectives are not eligible. Similarly, we are unable to accommodate partners or children in the aforementioned accommodation, although artists requiring such accompaniment may still apply if they are able to arrange their own accommodation.

## ELIGIBILITY

1. You must have attained a BFA, MFA, or an equivalent qualification from a recognized visual arts institution in Pakistan or abroad, between 5 to 10 years prior to the application submission date (2015–2020).
2. You must have participated in at least two group or solo exhibitions at an established art organization in Pakistan or abroad in 2025.
3. Participation in the residency requires physical presence at Ambiance Resort Hunza for the full duration (March 28 - April 18, 2026). Online participation is not permissible.

## APPLICATION SUBMISSION

To participate, please email a single PDF containing the following to [art@ambiancehotels.net](mailto:art@ambiancehotels.net)

**1. Images of 4–5 recent artworks**, including the following details for each piece:

Title  
Medium  
Size (in inches)  
Year of creation

*Please ensure the details are mentioned clearly next to the corresponding artwork.*

**2. Artist statement of intent** for each submitted artwork or series (approximately 100 words per piece/series).

**3. Artist biography** (100–200 words). Please refer to the Ambiance Hotels & Resorts [Artists' Directory](#) for examples.

**4. Updated CV**, highlighting participation in group/solo exhibitions and residency programs, and including basic details such as:

CNIC or Passport details  
Full name  
Gender  
Age  
Nationality  
Date of birth  
Residential address  
Phone number  
Current email address  
Education/ Institute  
Year of graduation  
Place of work  
Occupation

**5. Residency proposal** (100–300 words) outlining what you hope to achieve during the residency and how it will support your artistic practice.

**6. Two sketches of proposed artworks** with ideation statements (100–200 words).

**7. Proposed budget breakdown.**

**8. High-definition black-and-white artist profile photo.**

# **PROCESS, DEADLINES, AND COMPENSATION**

- 1. Revised submission deadline for international artists only:** January 31, 2026. Applications must be emailed as a single PDF.
- 2. Selection notification:** The Selection Committee will make final selections by February 12, 2026. Selected artists will be notified via email.
- 3. Interviews:** Online interviews may be scheduled between January 12 and February 11, 2026. Dates will be confirmed via email or WhatsApp.
- 4. Preparations:** Material sourcing and final preparations will take place from February 13 - March 27, 2026.
- 5. Residency arrival:** Artists are to arrive at Ambiance Resort Hunza on March 28, 2026.
- 6. Residency activities:** Artists will engage with practitioners and residency mentors to produce a series of artworks for exhibition.
- 7. Residency dates:** March 28 - April 18, 2026.
- 8. Exhibition opening:** The artworks produced during the residency will be exhibited at Ambiance Resort Hunza on April 18, 2026.
- 9. Artist grant:** The final grant amount for each artist will be based on the submitted budget proposal. The maximum grant per artist is PKR 100,000.

**10. Travel and accommodation:** All transport and accommodation costs for participating artists will be covered by Ambiance Hotels & Resorts.

**11. Retention of artwork:** Ambiance Hotels & Resorts reserves the right to select and retain one artwork per artist (created during the residency) for the Ambiance Permanent Collection, based on residency mentor recommendations. No financial remuneration will be offered. This artwork will be showcased at an Ambiance property in Pakistan with a QR code directing viewers to the artist's profile and Instagram account.

**12. Traveling exhibition:** Following the residency, the exhibition will travel to various venues in association with our partner organization.

**13. Return of artwork:** Artworks not retained acquired for the permanent collection will be returned to the artists. Transport of these artworks will be the responsibility of the artists at the conclusion of the traveling exhibition.

**14. Media and promotion:** Artist profiles and images of submitted artworks may be featured on Ambiance Hotels & Resorts' social media, website, and associated partner platforms. By applying, artists agree that submitted content may be used at the discretion of Ambiance Hotels & Resorts.

**15. Agreement to terms:** Please submit your application only if you agree to all the terms and conditions outlined above.