

FAQ for TalentFestival 2026 – English Version

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General Information about the Festival

What is TalentFestival 2026?

TalentFestival 2026 is a large educational festival as part of the #netzTalente project, bringing together around 1,000 participants from the Ruhr region and European partner countries. The festival focuses on topics such as democracy, Europe, civic engagement, media literacy, and intercultural exchange. It combines encounters, participation, and creative project work in an open and interactive format.

When and where does the festival take place?

24 September 2026

10:00 a.m. to approx. 6:00 p.m.

Stadion an der Hafenstraße, Essen

Who can participate?

School classes from the Ruhr region as well as partner schools from other European countries are welcome to participate. The festival is especially suitable for students from grade 9 onwards, as well as teachers and educational support staff.

Is participation free of charge?

Participation in the festival is generally free of charge for students, teachers, and accompanying persons from Germany.

In addition, we support schools from the region with transportation options and organizational assistance where possible.

Groups from other European countries also receive organizational and financial support.

Are there fixed start and end times?

Yes. TalentFestival takes place from **10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

Some central program elements, such as the joint opening and closing sessions, are scheduled at fixed times. In between, groups can move freely around the festival grounds.

Do we have to attend for the entire duration of the festival?

As TalentFestival is a free event for selected project and network partners with fixed program elements at the beginning and end of the day, attendance is expected throughout the entire period from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

If this is not possible, please contact the project manager directly: Florian Busacker – busacker@talentmetropol Ruhr.de

Of course, the day can still be organized individually by you and your students. In addition to a quiet room, there will also be plenty of seating and resting areas available on site.

What about catering on site?

There will be various free catering options available for participants throughout the festival grounds. Vegetarian, vegan, and halal-certified options will also be provided.

How does travel work for German participants?

German groups will generally travel from their school location. We will provide schools with all important travel and organizational information well in advance.

Participation

How do I register my class or students?

Registration is only possible via the online registration form, which will be available in both German and English.

Are German language skills required?

No. The festival is internationally oriented and aims to make participation accessible to as many students as possible.

Both German and English will be spoken at the festival. In addition, information, program elements, and signage will be designed in a clear and understandable way so that participants without German as their native language can also find their way easily.

There will also be activities that work without extensive language skills and focus primarily on interaction, participation, and shared experiences.

Until when can I register?

To support planning, early registration is highly appreciated and only possible while places are available.

Can I register even if I do not yet know exactly how many students and accompanying persons will attend?

Yes. You can already register even if not all details have been finalized yet. We understand that school planning takes time. Your registration still helps us with the overall planning process. More detailed information can be submitted later.

How many students per school can participate?

There is neither a minimum nor a maximum number of participants per school. However, it is important that an appropriate supervision ratio is ensured by accompanying teachers (generally around one accompanying person per 35 participants).

At the same time, we aim to make participation possible for as many students and schools as possible.

Can several classes from one school participate?

Yes, this is generally possible. Participation depends on the available capacities.

Program and Participation

What can students do and experience at the festival?

TalentFestival is designed to be lively, open, and diverse. Planned activities include:

- Workshops
- Interactive activities
- Presentations of school projects
- Exchange opportunities with young people from other cities and countries

- A varied stage program
- An after-show atmosphere to end the day together

Does my class need to bring its own project?

No. Participation is also possible without bringing a project.

However, schools are welcome to contribute their own ideas and projects developed within the framework of #netzTalente and actively help shape the festival. Simply send us an email at info@talentfestival.de and we will get in touch with you.

#netzTalente

What is #netzTalente?

#netzTalente is a project focused on teacher training in the educational method “Service Learning” as well as the development and implementation of engagement projects with school classes.

Through these projects, students develop digital, social, and intercultural skills, strengthen democratic values, and engage in European exchange with partner schools.

Do we need to participate in #netzTalente beforehand?

Participation in #netzTalente is part of the festival concept.

This allows all participants to get to know each other in advance, develop project ideas, and prepare for the festival together. In addition, there will also be networking and exchange opportunities for teachers during the festival itself.

Is there concrete support for implementing projects?

Yes. Schools and teachers can receive support through:

- Training sessions
- Exchange formats
- Educational materials
- Guidance and support during project development

Financial support for selected projects may also be discussed within the available possibilities.

European Cooperation

Can partner schools from abroad participate?

Yes and no. Due to the project’s funding guidelines, only partner schools from European countries can participate.

Does a partnership already need to exist?

An existing partnership with TalentMetropole Ruhr is not required. However, participation of European schools takes place in cooperation with a participating German school.

What support is available for European groups?

International groups can receive organizational and, if necessary, financial support, especially regarding:

- Travel
- Accommodation
- Catering
- Local transportation

Our goal is to keep the organizational effort for schools as low as possible.

Organization

What does the day look like?

Planned activities include:

- A joint opening ceremony
- Various program areas with workshops, stage programs, and interactive activities
- Project presentations
- Open networking and meeting spaces
- A joint closing session

Are there fixed program elements for everyone?

Yes. Some central program points, intentionally kept short, will take place jointly. Apart from that, groups are free to move around the festival grounds and participate in activities individually.

How much supervision is required on site?

Accompanying teachers are responsible for supervising their groups within the usual framework of school excursions and events. We recommend at least one accompanying person per approximately 35 participants.

In addition, an organizational team with designated contact persons will be available on site throughout the entire festival.

Added Value for Schools

Why is participation worthwhile?

TalentFestival offers schools and young people:

- Strengthening of class cohesion at the beginning of the school year
- Promotion of self-efficacy and participation
- Motivation through a shared experience
- Practical engagement with important future topics
- Exchange with young people from the Ruhr region and across Europe
- Visibility for students' own projects and ideas
- New inspiration for schools and teaching
- Intercultural encounters in a unique festival setting
- A fun educational day — completely free of charge from start to finish