

# Membership FAQs

To be a member, you must be

- › **an author**
- › **a successor in title (heir) or authorised agent of an author,**
- › **a photo or image agency or photo or image archive.**

The authors choose the professional group corresponding to their activities. Combinations are also possible:

**Professional group I** – visual artists (e.g. painters, sculptors), who transfer their rights in full.

**Professional group II** – photographers, caricaturists and designers, who transfer their rights to a limited extent (excluding reproduction rights).

**Professional group III** – directors, camera operators, film architects/set designers, costume designers, cartoon artists and producers of free (co-)productions.

Can a civil-law partnership (GbR) or team of artists become a member? ▼

Since the German Copyright Act does not allow copyright to be established by a legal entity, but only by the individual people who have created a work, it is essential that the individual members of the team or group of artists enter into an administration agreement with VG Bild-Kunst in addition to the team, partnership, etc. itself.

Can a minor become a member? ▼

This is possible with the consent of the legal representative. The administration agreement must then be signed by the legal representative. Proof of the artistic activity (e.g. specimen copies, proofs of sale) is also required.

What does membership of VG Bild-Kunst cost? ▼

Membership is free of charge.

How do I become a member? ▼

By entering into an administration agreement. This can be requested online. It will be sent by post, as only the original documents will be accepted for conclusion of the agreement.

We also need suitable documents confirming the details in the administration agreement. A suitable document is, for instance, a copy of your personal identity card (caution: irrelevant data, particularly the authorisation number, should always be blacked out!). The artistic activity must be documented by corresponding specimen copies in the original.

In the case of legal entities (e.g. civil-law partnership, image agency), official evidence of the business or trade being carried on is also required.

How long will it take to process the agreement? ▼

It takes about four to six weeks to process the administration agreements.

Are my works protected by VG Bild-Kunst? ▼

No! The works of an author are protected by the German Copyright Act. VG Bild-Kunst cannot eliminate the possibility of your works being used illegally, usually online. However, we will take action on behalf of members of professional group I who grant us their exclusive rights where there are gross infringements of such rights.

How do I receive an author number and password for registration? ▼

The author number and registration forms will be sent when the administration agreement is concluded. If we have a valid email address, a password will also be sent on conclusion of the agreement.

How do I register my artist name or my pseudonym? ▼

The administration agreement is in principle only concluded using your civil name.

If the artist name is shown on the identity card, it can be used in the administration agreement. A corresponding copy of the identity card is required. If correspondence is always to be conducted using the artist name only, a written notice to this effect must be enclosed.

The registration of pseudonyms must also be done in writing.

What do I do if my postal address or email address have changed? ▼

Notice of a change of postal address or email address can be given by telephone or in writing. Those taking part in the online reporting process can also enter the changes electronically themselves.

What do I do if my bank details have changed? ▼

Notice of a change in bank details must be given in writing and signed by the member/successor in title/authorised agent/guardian. We need the name of the bank, the IBAN and the account holder (if different from the member).

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What do I do if I am liable to pay VAT? ▼

If you are liable to pay VAT, then in addition to this information we also need written notice of the tax reference number (not the tax ID number) and your local tax office.

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What do I do if I am no longer liable to pay VAT? ▼

Inform us in writing in plenty of time of the date you are or were no longer liable to pay VAT.

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What happens if the author or their successor in title has died? ▼

Proof of a will or inheritance certificate (as copy) is required in order to continue the administration agreement or terminate it. In the case of a community of heirs, confirmation signed by all heirs must be presented showing who is to represent the rights of the community of heirs vis-à-vis VG Bild-Kunst.

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What happens if a civil-law partnership or team of artists has been dissolved? ▼

We must be given written notice of the dissolution - signed by all members of the partnership or team of artists - so that the administration agreement can be terminated accordingly.

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How can the administration agreement be terminated? ▼

Notice of termination must be given in writing with the signature of the author or successor in title/authorised agent/guardian.

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