



Association Européenne des  
Conservatoires, Académies de  
Musique et Musikhochschulen



# Annual report 2023

Members, activities, policies and finances

## About the AEC annual report 2023

Each year, the AEC publishes an Annual Report in accordance with proper accounting practice but, more specifically, with its statutes, whose article 11.4 states that 'The report will include a balance sheet and a profit-and-loss statement. It will also provide a detailed account of the administrative tasks performed in the preceding financial year'. In addition to fulfilling this statutory requirement, this report aims to outline the different areas of AEC's work in 2023, explaining the Association's financial position as well as its activities, discussions, developments and events.

Full information on the financial situation of the AEC can be found in the AEC 2023 annual accounts. In this Annual Report, only the key elements of the Annual Accounts are included, but members wishing to receive the entire AEC 2023 Annual Accounts can do so by contacting the AEC Office at [info@ec-music.eu](mailto:info@ec-music.eu).

This Report is available for downloading in PDF-format from the Publications section of the AEC website ([www.aec-music.eu](http://www.aec-music.eu)).



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## 1. Message from the President

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I am delighted to present the Annual Report of the Association des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC) for 2023.

This was a year of celebration, and one of change. We marked our 50th Congress edition and 70th anniversary in the Royal Conservatoire, the Hague with over 400 members and friends old and new. Under the theme “Enhancing Quality Through Sustainable Connections”, this year’s Congress highlighted topics such as quality enhancement, international collaborations, student involvement, diversity and inclusion, power relations, digitisation, artistic excellence, pre-college music education, environmental and mental sustainability, lifelong learning, curriculum development and artistic research. We addressed future trends most notably through a robust debate about “What does the rise and use of Artificial Intelligence mean for the future of our sector?”

AEC continued our Creative Europe Network project, known as ARTEMIS – Empowering Artists as Makers in Society. Now in the second year of this three year project, important themes are coming to the fore relating to advocacy, international cooperation, lifelong learning, going green, diversity, inclusiveness and gender equality and further developing and innovating music education. I remain hugely grateful to the ARTEMIS working groups, those dedicated professionals and students from inside and outside the AEC membership. They have already brought new ideas to our community, enriching our knowledge and understanding of higher music education and of the role of the arts in society.

At the heart of AEC’s work are its networking activities for members and our Pop and Jazz, Artistic Research and Early Music platforms continued to flourish. The newly established EPASA – the European Performing Arts Students’ Association – continued to develop, bringing the student voice more centrally into our ideas. AEC’s increasing global activities were reflected through

the involvement of higher music education networks from the United States (NASM, CMS) and Southeast Asia (SEADOM) on our Council, in our ARTEMIS working groups, and in our trend analysis research.

I must also acknowledge the tremendous work of the AEC Council, leadership in Executive Director Stefan Gies, General Manager/Deputy Executive Director Linda Messas, and the AEC Office Team both within the ARTEMIS project’s context and in their work for AEC more generally. Our success is built on their professionalism and passion.

**Deborah Kelleher,**  
**AEC President**



## 2. AEC's vision and mission

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### Vision

AEC is the leading voice for Higher Music Education in Europe, a powerful advocate for its member institutions.

AEC understands and supports music and arts education, together with cultural participation, as central contributors to quality in human life, and inclusive societies founded on democratic values.

AEC sees professionally focused arts education as a quest for excellence in three areas: artistic practice; learning and teaching; research and innovation. It seeks to foster these elements and to encourage the diversity and dynamism with which they are pursued in different institutions, countries and regions.

### Mission

AEC works for the advancement of Higher Education in the performing arts, primarily focusing on music. It does so based on three pillars:

#### **Pillar 1: Fostering the value of music and music education in society**

- Representing and advancing the interests of the Higher Music Education sector at national, European and global levels for the greater societal good.
- Working to increase opportunity and access to Music Education.
- Assisting its members in engaging audiences in an evolving cultural environment and in exploring the musical needs in society.

#### **Pillar 2: Enhancing quality in Higher Music Education**

- Promoting excellence across Europe in relation to artistic practice, learning & teaching and research & innovation.
- Fostering internationalisation.
- Supporting the education of graduates with high professional standards, well prepared to work in a diverse and rapidly changing, globalised society.

#### **Pillar 3: Promoting participation, inclusiveness and diversity**

- Promoting the diversity of approaches to Higher Music Education.
- Supporting its members in different regions of Europe in ways that are appropriately tuned to their diverse needs and priorities.
- Strengthening the student voice inside the association and its membership.

In 2023, progress has been made in relation to each of these pillars, through a range of events, activities and projects, as reported in the following pages. In addition, the Council and the Office have been working all year long on preparing a *Framework for a strategic plan for 2024–2028*, enabling AEC's work to continue in 2024 but leaving room for the new Executive Director (who would start in March 2024 after Stefan Gies' retirement) to shape the next Strategic Plan.

### 3. Events

#### Pop and Jazz Platform (PJP) Meeting

*What does it mean to make it? Opening gateways to working life, internationalisation and artistry*

- 168: participants on site.
- 25 countries represented.
- 12 programme sessions.
- 19 speakers.

Hosted by Saint Louis College of Music in Rome, 16–18 February 2023, Rome, Italy.

The AEC Pop and Jazz Platform (PJP) meeting 2023 took place at the Saint Louis College of Music in Rome, Italy, from 16 to 18 February 2023 under the title “What does it mean to make it? Opening gateways to working life, internationalisation and artistry”.

The platform’s participants were able to once again meet in person after two years of digital gatherings. The 168 participants enjoyed the usual mix of keynote speeches, open floor sessions, on-stage conversations, discussion groups and networking.

For more information, read the event’s report [here](#).



#### Pop and Jazz Platform (PJP) Preparatory Working Group

The PJP preparatory WG is in charge of the organisation of the AEC Annual PJP meeting. It aims to promote and support higher education in popular music and jazz in the widest definition of those terms.

**Linda Bloemhard** – Codarts, University of the Arts, Rotterdam, The Netherlands (WG Chair)

**Jere Laukkanen** – Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, Helsinki, Finland

**Marta Raviglia** – Conservatorio di Musica Girolamo Frescobaldi, Ferrara, Italy

**Mario Carrillo** – Centro Superior Música Creativa, Madrid, Spain

**Susanne Abbuehl** – Academy of Music FHNW, Basel, Switzerland

**Anna Uhuru** – Leeds Conservatoire, Leeds, United Kingdom

**Johannes Pries** – Popakademie Baden-Württemberg, Mannheim, Germany

**Barbara Lalić** – AEC Office Team (WG Coordinator)



## European Platform for Artistic Research in Music (EPARM)

*Upbeat: Futures of Artistic Research in Music*

- 141: participants on site.
- 39: participants online.
- 30 countries represented.
- 43 programme sessions.
- 56 speakers.

Hosted by Royal Danish Academy of Music, 30 March–1 April, Copenhagen, Denmark.

The European Platform for Artistic Research in Music (EPARM) held its 10th edition at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen on 30 March–1 April 2023. The event was attended by 180 participants from 30 countries: 141 travelled to the Danish capital and 39 joined online. The conference provided numerous opportunities for attendees with diverse backgrounds and expertise to engage in stimulating discussions, network and exchange novel ideas and approaches of artistic research in music.

The conference's theme, "Upbeat: Futures of Artistic Research in Music", sparked discussions about key topics such as how we can better prepare emerging artists to conduct Artistic Research, the place of Artistic Research in the curricula of higher music education, the future impact of technology and digitalization and how Artistic Research can drive critical encounters that drive change.

For more information, read the event's report [here](#).



## European Platform for Artistic Research in Music (EPARM) Working Group

The EPARM WG is responsible for organising the AEC Annual EPARM meeting. Its objective is to strengthen the understanding of artistic research as a mean of promoting deeper musical engagement.

**Stephen Broad** – Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow, United Kingdom (WG Chair)

**Anna Maria Bordin** – Conservatorio Statale di Musica "Giuseppe Verdi" di Torino, Turin, Italy

**Paul Craenen** – Royal Conservatoire The Hague, The Hague, The Netherlands

**Sean Ferguson** – Schulich School of Music of McGill University, Montreal, Canada

**Matthias Hermann** – Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst, Stuttgart, Germany

**Wei-Ya Lin, mdw** – University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna, Austria

**Lina Navickaitė-Martinelli** – Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre, Vilnius, Lithuania

**Beatriz Laborda González** – AEC Office (WG Coordinator)



## Annual Meeting for International Relations Coordinators (IRCs)

*Opening Doors: Adopting a More Inclusive Perspective*

- 220 participants on site.
- 33 countries represented.
- 5 programme sessions online.
- 20 programme sessions on site.
- About 40 speakers.

Hosted by the LUCA School of Arts – Lemmensinstitut, 20–23 September, Leuven, Belgium.

The AEC Annual Meeting for International Relations Coordinators (IRC) 2023 took place in September at the LUCA School of Arts – Lemmensinstitut in Leuven (Belgium), bringing together 220 participants in presence. Online sessions took place on 8 and 13 September before the event in Leuven that took place from 20 to 23 September.

The 4-day in-person event provided opportunities to learn and grow as well as network. This year the event invited higher music education institutions' international relations coordinators to adopt a more inclusive perspective while looking at the themes close to the daily business of any international relations coordinator: mobility, employability, diversity, international cooperation and digitization.

The meeting was designed mostly as an in-presence one, but online pre-conference sessions were organized on 8th and 13th September and all Plenary Sessions and their follow up discussions were streamed from Leuven for online participants.

For more information, read the event's report [here](#).



## International Relations Coordinators Working Group (IRC)

**Jan-Gerd Krüger** – Prince Claus Conservatoire Groningen, The Netherlands (WG Chair)

**Dimitrios Marinou** – Athens Conservatoire, College of Music, Athens, Greece

**Frauke Velghe** – KASK & Koninklijk Conservatorium, Ghent, Belgium

**Oana Balan-Budoiu** – The National Academy of Music Gheorghe Dima, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

**Melissa Mercadal** – Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya (ESMUC), Barcelona, Spain

**Iveri Kekenadze Gustafsson** – Malmö Academy of Music, Malmö, Sweden

**Wei Boon Tan** – Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, Singapore, Singapore

**Sara Primiterra** – AEC Office Team (WG Coordinator)





## 50th Annual Congress and General Assembly

*Enhancing Quality Through Sustainable Connections*

- 420 onsite participants.
- 30 online participants.
- 40 countries represented.
- 40 programme sessions.
- 100 speakers.

Hosted by the Royal Conservatoire the Hague, 9–11 November, The Hague, The Netherlands.

The AEC Congress and General Assembly 2023 took place at the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague on 9–11 November 2023. The event marked the 70th anniversary of the AEC Foundation and its 50th Congress edition. This year's Congress drew more than 420 in-person participants from about 40 countries, making it the most attended event in the history of the AEC! The main sessions were also streamed to an audience of 30 online participants. The event featured not only keynote speakers belonging to higher music education institutions as well as the cultural and creative sector but also interactive workshops, and networking sessions. Across 4 days, over 100



speakers contributed to more than 40 sessions, in the format of the usual mix of workshops, plenaries and panels.

The programme included topics such as quality enhancement, international collaborations, student involvement, diversity and inclusion, power relations, digitisation, artistic excellence, pre-college music education, environmental and mental sustainability, lifelong learning, curriculum development and artistic research.

For more information, read the event's report [here](#).



## AEC Congress Committee

The AEC Congress Committee is in charge of the organisation of AEC Annual Congress. The Committee is comprised of the AEC Office team, AEC ExCom representatives as well as representatives of the hosting institution.

**Deborah Kelleher** – Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin, Ireland (AEC President)

**Jeffrey Sharkey** – Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow, United Kingdom (AEC Vice-President)

**Martin Prchal** – Royal Conservatoire The Hague, The Netherlands

**Lies Colman** – Royal Conservatoire The Hague, The Netherlands

**Stefan Gies** – AEC Chief Executive

**Sara Primiterra** – AEC Events Manager (Committee Coordinator)



## Early Music Online Forum Series 2023

Date and location: Three online sessions on 23/3, 27/4, 25/5

- Historically Informed Performance versus Gramophonically Informed Performance.
- Beyond Europe #1: Early Music Education in Chile, Mexico, Argentina.
- A future for Early Music: Connecting with the audience.

Number of participants: from 7 to 173 per session (including YouTube views)

“The Quodlibet” – AEC’s online and open forum for dialogue on all matters of Early Music had three 1,5-hour online sessions in 2023 which took place on 23 March (Quodlibet #1), 27 April (Quodlibet #2), and 25 May (Quodlibet #3). The first session had the theme of “Historically Informed Performance versus Grammophonically Informed Performance”. The second session extended the discussion of Early Music globally with the theme “Beyond Europe #1. Early Music Education in Chile, Mexico, Argentina”. On the third session, themed “A future for Early Music: Connecting with the audience” the European Early Music Network joined the discussion about audience development. The number of online participants live on Zoom was 20 in each session. After adding the streams on YouTube after the sessions, the total amount of audience for the session 1 was 173, 75 for session 2 and 108 for session 3.

For more information on the forum, please visit the [webpage of Quodlibet 2023](#).

## REMA Early Music Summit 2023

*What’s NEXT? The Future of Early Music in Question*

Date and location: 30 November–2 December, Brussels and Bruges, Belgium. The AEC joined REMA (the European Network for Early Music) in their first in-person Summit *What’s Next – the Future of Early Music in Questions*, held from 30 November to 3 December at the Bozar in Brussels and Concertgebouw in Bruges.

The Summit brought 200 early music promoters, educators and musicians together in person, fostering a sense of connection and collaboration that no virtual meeting could match. The exchange of ideas, insightful discussions and the establishment of new partnerships have created a solid foundation for the future of the early music sector.

The AEC session, attended by 40 participants, was prepared by the AEC Early Music Task Force. It took place in Bruges on 2nd December under the title “Beyond Concert Culture: Initiatives from the Conservatories”.

For more information, please visit [the event’s summary in the AEC news](#).

### **RAPP Lab multiplier event**

*Reflect & React – How Artistic Research Empowers Musicians and Performing Artists at Higher Education Institutions*

- Date and location: 12–13 May, Köln, Germany.
- Number of participants: 35 on site.

On 12 and 13 May, a conference on Artistic Research (AR) as part of higher music education study courses took place at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Köln, co-organised by AEC.

It provided the opportunity to make two Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership projects meet – both were investigating the added value for music students of engaging in AR for the development of an individual, original and excellent artistic profile. RAPP Lab approached the issue from a more analytical point of view, while REACT – as the project title suggests – had a stronger focus on developing and testing alternative models of learning and teaching at Higher Music Education Institutions (HMEIs).

Key questions addressed were:

- How to sensibilise students for their relationship to their own artistic practice?

- How to create learning and teaching atmospheres in which collaboration and responsibility are in focus?
- How can findings from the projects contribute to re-think and re-design study programmes and curricula?
- What formats and settings are suited to promote and to support learning & teaching that is informed by artistic research for students at master’s, doctoral and even bachelor’s level?

For more, please see the event [summary](#).

### **FAST45 – Final Dissemination Event**

*FAST45 – Futures (Un)Known*

- Date and location: 6–7 December, Brussels, Belgium
- Number of participants: 100.

The final conference of the EU-funded project FAST45 – Futures Art School Trends in 2045 took place on 6–7 December 2023 in Brussels, hosted by LUCA School of Arts in Brussels, Belgium, and co-organised by AEC and ELIA. Taking a futures studies approach, the FAST45 project, which has now come to its end, aimed at imagining, mapping and shaping a future higher arts education landscape in which participation, research, and education in the arts and being in close touch with the society play a crucial and integral role.

During this 2-days event, about 100 participants coming from higher art education all over Europe discovered and responded to the four future scenarios depicted in the project: Open Spaces, Slow Eco-life, Phygital Frontiers and Profitable Endeavours; furthermore, participants had the opportunity to get to know the FAST45 Learning Platform, which includes a Data Map and a 3-year-long journey of lectures and seminars.

To learn more, please visit the [event website](#).

## 4. ARTEMIS and PRIhME projects

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### Highlights from AEC – Empowering Artists as Makers in Society project (ARTEMIS project, 2022-2025)

Throughout the year, AEC has carried out a wide range of activities as part of its flagship project [AEC – Empowering Artists as Makers in Society \(ARTEMIS, 2022-2025\)](#). Working Group members and external stakeholders involved made good progress on the following objectives:



#### 1. Enhancing cooperation among Higher Music Education (HME) institutions at European level and beyond to strengthen artists' mobility and employability

In addition to the events organised by AEC (see chapter 3), the association has had representation in major events organised by partner organisations outside Europe, including [NASM \(National Association of Schools of Music\) in Arizona](#), and [IMC \(International Music Council\) in Rabat](#). Moreover, NASM, together with the CMS (College Music Society) and SEADOM (Southeast Asian Directors of Music) have contributed leading different sessions at the AEC Annual Congress 2023, which reflects AEC's increasing global connections.

- Outcome: 4 events at AEC member institutions, 1 session organised at a partner's event, and 1 online forum.
- Targets: HME institutions. National / international partners and stakeholders.
- Impact: Cooperation with HME institutions and global partners taking place within specific forums and sessions addressed at AEC events, tackling most of the project topics and WPs.

#### 2. Strengthening Lifelong Learning opportunities for artists and for HME teachers and reinforcing AEC's role in delivering such opportunities

AEC's Lifelong Learning Working Group (LLL WG), together with the Royal Conservatoire The Hague, has organised a [second series of 'Artist as Teacher' seminars](#), addressed to instrumental and vocal teachers in HME. Participants benefited from stimulating learning exercises with the objective to increase their knowledge and skills in educating HME students.

- Outcome: Second series of Artist as Teacher seminars.
- Targets: HME instrumental and vocal teachers.
- Impact: 22 teachers, from 19 HME institutions in 14 European countries, increased their skills and knowledge in educating HME students.

#### 3. Reinforcing the capacity of AEC and its members to represent their interests and to advocate for the promotion of the cultural and creative sector

AEC's Advocacy Task Force has developed a new [AEC Advocacy Strategy](#), which addresses advocacy in a great variety of aspects, and can be targeted to policy or regulatory matters. Moreover, advocacy had a prominent role at the AEC Annual Congress 2023 with contributions by Benjamin Feyen, Secretary General of the Cultural Creators Friendship Group, and Georg Häusler, Director for Culture and Sport in the European Commission (DG EAC).

- Outcome: AEC Advocacy Strategy and workshop at the AEC Annual Congress 2023.
- Targets: HME representatives from AEC member institutions.
- Impact: AEC members were informed about advocacy practices at European level and gained expertise for representing their interest at international level.

### **Supporting EPASA – European Performing Arts Students’ Association.**

AEC has been supporting students financially and administratively in the process of establishing [EPASA – European Performing Arts Student’s Association](#). The association is dedicated to advancing the interest of performing arts students across Europe.

EPASA held its inaugural conference on 22-23 April, bringing together students with the objective of sharing ideas and discussing a range of topics including the green agenda, diversity, championing student voice, digitisation and internationalisation. Moreover, EPASA organised the Student Summit 2023 in the framework of the AEC Annual Congress 2023, aimed at reaching out and empowering music students within the AEC membership.

### **4. Going green and Adapting to the digital shift**

The AEC Goes Green Working Group and the Digitisation Working Group have launched in-depth surveys aimed at both, [exploring green and eco-sustainable practices and needs](#), and [understanding the presence of digital courses within HME institutions](#). The preliminary results of these surveys have been the subject to different sessions facilitated by both Working Groups in the frame of AEC events. These sessions served also to raise awareness of environmental issues and digital capabilities in the HME sector.

- Outcome: Online and in-presence sessions at AEC events.
- Targets: HME representatives from AEC member institutions.
- Impact: AEC members were informed about the impact of the surveys launched by the Working Groups, which provided reflections and conclusions around the topics addressed.

### **5. Further developing and innovating music education**

AEC’s Capacity Building Working Group has [facilitated and moderated five clusters, each consisting of 5-6 HME institutions](#) that are currently engaging in the process of curricular change. The group is providing assistance and support in the development of tailored action plans, and is investigating themes, trends and challenges which in turn will be implemented in a set of guidelines, reflections and case studies.

- Outcome: 5 clusters of 5-6 HME institutions engaging in peer learning platforms.
- Targets: HME institutions undertaking curricular change.
- Impact: 26 institutions involved in the clusters are being accompanied in the changes towards further developing the education they provide to artists.

Furthermore, AEC has reinforced synergies with both EMU (Music School Union) and EAS (European Association for Music in Schools), as well as with YMTE (Young Music Talents in Europe), through the work of the SCHEME and the AEC-YMTE Joint Working Groups respectively.

SCHEME delivered a joint session at the [European Forum on Music 2023](#), while YMTE, together with EPASA, took an active role at the AEC Annual Congress 2023 by addressing the needs of the younger generations.

### **6. Shaping and implementing fair, inclusive, diverse and gender equal frameworks in Music HME institutions**

The Diversity, Inclusion and Gender Equality Working Group (DIGE WG) delivered an [in-presence workshop in Palermo](#), aimed at sharing experiences, identifying good practices and collaboratively envisioning institutional change in relation to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in HME. Furthermore, the group launched an online [resource package](#) which invites peer colleagues to collectively dream up possible futures for HME through DEI work.

- Outcome: In-presence workshop in Palermo.
- Targets: HME representatives from AEC member institutions.
- Impact: 40 participants from 6 HME institutions in Sicily discussed how to build and maintain equitable and inclusive practices in the HME field.

Finally, AEC has been working in close collaboration with both ECSA (European Composer and Songwriter Alliance) and EJN (Europe Jazz Network) for the development of two mentorship programmes for female and non-binary composers and songwriters



## Final outcomes of the PRIhME project – A Stakeholder Assembly on Power Relations in Higher Music Education

2023 marked the end of the PRIhME project, a strategic partnership of 9 European institutions examining the issue of power relations in the HME sector. The project was funded by the European Commission's Erasmus+ programme. Delegates from these institutions formed the PRIhME Stakeholder Assembly and ensured the project's organisation through the Assembly Working Group, the Editorial Board, and the Steering Committee.



AEC and the partner's goal was to foster a safe and healthy sector in which we can train and educate creative and socially engaged performing artists through policy recommendations and examples of best practice.

PRIhME has thus worked with the following four themes in four Stakeholder Assemblies:

- Understanding Power Relations and Music.
- Sexual Orientation and Gender.
- Socio-Economic background & Disability.
- Artistic Standards.<sup>1</sup>

In the final multiplier event, that took place on 24 August, 2023, the results of the PRIhME project, i.e. the Recommendations adopted by four Stakeholder Assemblies were presented and discussed with the attendees. The event also included interventions by experts from the field.

1 All PRIhME activities included representatives from these partner institutions: Royal Irish Academy of Music, Ireland; European Association of Conservatoires (AEC), Belgium; Popakademie Baden-Württemberg GmbH, Germany; Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Graz (KUG), Austria; Musikene Centro Superior de Música del País Vasco/Euskal Herriko Goi Mailako Musika Ikastegia, Spain; Saint Louis Music Center Srl, Italy; Academy of Music, University of Zagreb, Croatia; Akademia Muzyczna im. Krzysztofa Pendereckiego w Krakowie, Poland; Malmö Academy of Music, Lunds Universitet, Sweden; PRIhME also collaborated with an associate partner: Kharkiv I. P. Kotlyarevsky National University of Arts, Ukraine

## PRIhME outcomes

### Final recommendations of the Stakeholder Assemblies:

The 50-person [PRIhME Stakeholder Assemblies](#) included students, teachers, and administrative personnel from 9 European partner institutions\*. Special attention was given to institutional roles, geographic spread, social and cultural backgrounds, expertise in social inclusion, and civic engagement.

The stakeholder assembly was inspired by the citizen's assembly model and deliberative democracy, in which a small but diverse and representative sample of people affected by a theme makes inclusive recommendations and conclusions for a larger group.

In PRIhME, the stakeholders used their work and meetings to make policy recommendations to the European HME community, thereby providing a framework within which to address power relations.

The Assembly has composed [these final recommendations](#) for the HME sector, consisting of

- The Stakeholder Assembly Recommendations, and a narrative for each.
- A summary of the assembly discussions to help contextualise the recommendations.

Furthermore, at the AEC General Assembly 2023, the PRIhME final recommendations were adopted as guidelines for the HME sector.

### Translations:

The recommendations have been translated [to the language of the partner institution](#) and are available on the PRIhME website.

### Glossary

Building a [power relations vocabulary](#) is just a start in addressing power relations and creating awareness. The glossary helps define important words so

as to promote a shared understanding within the academic community: it facilitates analysis of situations by naming them, and assessing and better understanding different perspectives. Such clarity leads to improved communication in defining different types of power.

### PRIhME exercises

This [collection of exercises](#) was created and used at the 4 assemblies of the AEC's Power Relations in Higher Music Education project. Exercises were created and performed by the team of facilitators from 6 higher music education institutions.

These exercises can be used in the classroom, at meetings or events.

### Toolkit

The PRIhME [toolkit](#) is an important starting point for all who work, study, engage in research, or hold positions of authority in HME institutions. The suggested roadmap is meant to be as comprehensive as possible, and has been drawn from meetings within participating institutions.

In 2023, the Editorial board of the PRIhME project finalised the ebook on the power relations, that will be published in 2024.



## 5. AEC involvement in projects

### Erasmus+ Strategic Partnerships

#### **DEMUSIS - Enhancing the digital competencies and entrepreneurship skills of academic musicians in Serbia for culturally more engaged society (2019–2023)**

The project aimed at strengthening the entrepreneurial capacities of academic musicians to use technology artistically, creatively and responsively in a general and cultural context. It was coordinated by the University of Arts in Belgrade, supported by both private enterprises and partners from the public Cultural & Creative sector in Serbia and also including HMEIs from the Netherlands and Lithuania. A comprehensive overview over the project achievements can be found [here](#).



#### **Etiketa (2023–2024)**

ETIKETA (ongoing) is a one-year small-scale Erasmus+ project to test new forms of transnational cooperation between higher education institutions in order to prepare the launch of a joint European Degree label.



The project call was exclusively aimed at already existing alliances from the European Universities Programme. As the AEC has from the beginning been in close touch with FilmEU, the only EU alliance in the field of performing arts carried out in 2023, it made sense to involve the AEC also in the activities to prepare establishing a European Degree label, which is intended to be a complementary certificate to the qualifications students obtain when graduating from joint programmes in the context of transnational cooperation between several higher education institutions, such as European Universities.

#### **FAST45 – Future Art School Trends 2045 (2021–2023)**

The FAST45 consortium was led by LUCA School of Arts and included six Arts HEIs from all disciplines, including CEFEDM Lyon as the representative of the music field, together with business professionals from the CCS and beyond. The project's objective was to imagine, map and shape a higher arts education landscape where participation, research, and education in the arts play a crucial and integral role both within the sector and within the society as a whole.



In 2023 a workshop was given by FAST45 in Leuven at the IRC Meeting. Moreover, AEC hosted, together with ELIA and LUCA School of Arts, the final multiplier event of the project in Brussels, featuring a policy event involving representatives of the EU institutions where a preliminary version of the 'FAST45 Policy Recommendations' jointly drafted by ELIA and AEC was presented. For more information on the project, please click [here](#).

#### **GloCoDa – The Global Conservatoire for a Digital Age (2021–2023)**

This project, led by the Royal Music Academy Copenhagen, aimed at transforming the quality and methods of online teaching in HME. The project responded to the rapid growth of demand for online learning during Covid, and the urgent need to develop accessible, inclusive and practice-led study courses enabling students to develop high level skills in digital literacy, global citizenship and cross-cultural collaboration. Project partners besides RDA Copenhagen were mdw Vienna, RCM London and the Manhattan School of Music New York. For more information, please click [here](#).





### HarMA+ – European landscape of teaching practices and pedagogical innovation in HMEIs’ – Music theory fields (2020–2023)

The project, coordinated by Conservatoire royal de Bruxelles, addressed the need to develop collaborative tools, share knowledge and transfer pedagogical know-how and experiences in the field of music theory. AEC was in charge of coordinating the communication and dissemination of the project outcomes, as well as taking care of an external evaluation.



In 2023, the final dissemination event took place in Gdańsk, gathering 67 music theory teachers and IRCs from 34 HME institutions in Europe. For more information, please click [here](#).

### HarMA HUB (2023–2026)

HarMA Hub (ongoing) is an immediate follow up to the HarMA+ project, again led by Conservatoire royal de Bruxelles and bringing together the same partners with the exception of Conservatorio Superior de Música Joaquín Rodrigo in València replacing University of Music and Theatre “Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy”, Leipzig.



The project started in September 2023, and focuses on the exchange of practices in music theory courses through digital means. As part of the project, an HarMA hub platform of resources, including a music analysis repository will be developed.

For more information, please visit the project’s [website](#).

### IncluMusic – Increasing skills for building more inclusive conservatoires (2022–2025)

The project (ongoing), coordinated by Academia Națională de Muzică Gheorghe Dima in Cluj-Napoca, aims at fostering the inclusion of students



with Special Education Needs (SEN) and disadvantaged backgrounds in HME. IncluMusic supports music teachers to increase access, participation and completion rates of music students with fewer opportunities.

In 2023, project partners delivered a workshop at the IRC Meeting in Leuven, aimed at sharing different methods through which students with SEN in HME can be integrated, and how teaching in this area is delivered at national and European levels. More information on IncluMusic can be found [here](#).

### MUSENSE – Music Higher Education meets the Cyber Dimension (2022–2024)

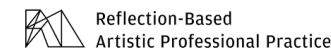
Led by the Conservatorio di Musica Statale A. Scarlatti, Palermo, the project (ongoing) aims at equipping music HEI students with additional, in particular digital skills. Based on the analysis of already existing models of good practice, of innovative forms of cyber and distance performances, IT and cyber practices in music performance as well as in educational settings, new forms and models of learning and teaching are developed.



Several activities took place in 2023, among others a teacher training activity in Brussels provided by Koninklijk Conservatorium Brussel and a dissemination event in Corfu, Greece. More information on MUSENSE can be found [here](#).

### RAPP Lab – Reflection-based Artistic Professional Practice Lab (2020–2023)

Exploring and testing how the reflective methodologies of Artistic Research (AR) empower musicians to creatively respond to the economic-cultural environment they are facing, this project had a particular focus on how to embed AR in curricula and study programmes at HMEIs. One of the main focuses of the project, led by the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Köln, consisted in organising



artistic research 'Labs' (intensive weeks focused on research) in each of the six partner institutions.

The final Multiplier event was organised as a separate event entitled [Reflect & React](#) together with another Erasmus+ project on a similar topic, [REACT](#) and with EPARM and representatives from other art disciplines (see above in Section Events). More information on RAPP Lab can be found [here](#).

### TEAM – Teacher Education Academy for Music (2023–2026)

The European Association for Music in Schools (EAS) coordinates one of the 16 projects that were newly granted as ERASMUS+ Teacher Academy with its project 'TEAM



-Teacher Education Academy for Music. Future-Making, Mobility and Networking in Europe'. The project's objective is to strengthen the network for music education in schools, to ensure LLL for classroom teachers and to foster mobility and provide future-making material for music education. The project involves both AEC and the SCHEME consortium as partners. For more information, please click [here](#).

### TUNE – Traditional Music Undergraduate Network in Europe (2021–2024)

The TUNE project (ongoing), bringing together six partners from across Europe under the lead of the University of Southern Norway campus Rauland, aims to promote strategic and structured cooperation between the partner HEIs through the development, testing, evaluation, and implementation of an innovative model for virtual and blended mobility in traditional music study programmes. The module to be developed is not, as usual, a master's module, but part of a bachelor programme.



By the end of 2023, each partner institution had organised at least one transnational meeting or other project activity which were regularly attended by numerous students. More information on TUNE can be found [here](#).

### VIETMUS – VIETnam Music Universities Spurring (2023–2025)

VIETMUS (Vietnamese higher education music system matches employability) is an Erasmus+



KA2 Capacity building programme bringing together European and Vietnamese HME institutions to jointly work on curricula, on students', educators' and administrators' skills in order to improve the employability of HME graduates.

The project is led by Conservatorio di Musica A. Scarlatti in Palermo, and includes partners from Belgium, Turkey and 5 universities in Vietnam. AEC, as leader in the coordination of communication, dissemination and exploitation activities, developed and followed up the implementation of the communication strategy and the social media plan. For more information, please click [here](#).

### Creative Europe projects

#### ECMA Pro (2020–2024)

The general aim of the ECMA PRO project is to support young professional chamber music ensembles in the development of their international careers and to explore new performance formats. The project emerged from the already existing European chamber music Academy, is chaired by mdw Vienna and includes partners not only from HME sector, but also festivals and non-profit initiatives from the music sector.



The project features various activities such as: workshops on career skills, showcases, workshops for musicians on how to engage with new audiences and how to innovate traditional concert formats within a regular venue. In 2023, an above-average number of ECMA events took place to catch up the delay caused by the pandemic. More information on ECMA Pro can be found [here](#).

### FAMES (2022–2025)

The FAMES project is led by the FAME's institute dedicated to perform and record orchestral music with a main focus on unconventional settings. The project addresses highly skilled young musicians in the field of orchestral music and focuses on giving the opportunity to participate in masterclasses, various orchestral practices, exploring new repertoires and performance styles (including music for film, media and gaming, crossover, digital components etc).

FAMES provides both orchestra courses and masterclasses with renown teachers, mentors and conductors and has access to a studio for orchestral music recordings. AEC's role is primarily to provide contacts and publicise the project idea among its members. More information on FAMES can be found [here](#).



### Lost Music (2022–2024)

LOST MUSIC project is a collaborative initiative co-funded by the Creative Europe programme of the European Commission. The project focuses on several key objectives: a/ Expanding the audience by engaging local and transnational audiences; b/ Enhancing knowledge of classical music, while cultivating audience tastes and interests; c/ Making classical music more captivating and appealing by incorporating new audience perspectives. And d/ Creating new opportunities for classical music artists through collaborations at both local and transnational levels.

Led by Forli'Musica (Italy), the project brings together partners sharing these objectives, including the Municipality of Dimitrovgrad (Bulgaria), Provincial Council of Alicante (Spain), and the AEC. To follow the further progress of the project activities, please click [here](#).



### Opera out of Opera 2 (2022–2025)

OOO2 is led by Conservatorio di Musica Santa Cecilia in Rome, together with partners from Austria, Norway, France, Ukraine, Portugal, Croatia and Belgium. The project aims at reaching out to new audiences for opera, with special attention to younger generations. A total of 5 operas have been selected for the itinerant and on-demand performances, which will premier in 2024. The operas will be reduced and will count on a coherent narrative and an overall concept that will be adapted according to the different creative teams.

The project has also set up official communication channels on social media to strengthen audience engagement, where regular content and social storytelling campaigns prior to the performances will take place. Further activities and project outcomes can be viewed by clicking [here](#).



### Sustainable-EEEMERGING (2023-2027)

Boosting the sustainability of young artist career and of organisations in Early music is a large-scale Creative Europe cooperation project meant to support the transition of the Early Music sector towards a more sustainable ecosystem by empowering all actors in the value chain to achieve meaningful outcomes. AEC is an associated partner involved in promotion and dissemination.



## Other projects and networks in which AEC is involved

### IN.TUNE

[IN.TUNE](#) ('Innovative Universities in Music & Arts in Europe) is the first European University alliance focusing on music. This alliance includes under the leadership of The Royal Conservatoire The Hague partner institutions from Barcelona (ESMUC), Belgrade (UArts), Bucharest (UNMB), Helsinki (Uniarts), Oslo (NMH), Paris (CNSMD), Vienna (mdw).



AEC is one of the all in all 19 associated partners making sure that the AEC community as a whole may benefit from the project outcomes. MusiQuE is in charge of organising an internal QA system. One of the main outcomes of the IN.TUNE project will be the development of frameworks for mobility & cooperation in research & innovation and joint policies for societal engagement.

### WoCE – Winds of Central Europe

WoCE is a [CEEPUS](#) funded project network addressing Balkan and Vishegrad countries under the leadership of Liszt Academy Budapest. It allows partner institutions to bring students together from different countries to do bundled short term chamber ensemble workshops. It's a one-year-project, but has been renewed annually so far. AEC is a silent partner helping to disseminate and make contacts. More information about Winds of Central Europe can be found [here](#).

### Erasmus Orchestra by INDIRE, the Italian Erasmus Agency

The [Erasmus Orchestrais](#) a musical ensemble, unique in its kind, made up of students of Conservatories and Music institutes that participated or are taking part in an Erasmus international mobility experience. The Orchestra is an initiative undertaken by the Erasmus+ Italian National Agency (INDIRE – National Institute for Documentation, Innovation and Educational Research). This



pilot project is based on the idea of a travelling ensemble which, thanks to the universal language of music and art, could represent the value of a common European identity that resonates in harmony.

The AEC supported this initiative by sending out to all its members a Call for Interest for the period 2023/2025. The call was answered by 200 students from 60 Higher Music Education Institutions in Europe. Performances of the orchestra will start in 2024.



## 6. Communication and services

### Communication

AEC's online followers are spread across four main social media networks as well as our newsletter as shown by the graph.

AEC is present on social media to be able to connect with its audience, build trust and drive meaningful engagement. Thanks to social media, AEC has amplified its voice and increased its visibility.

The AEC Office has analysed the tools and channels the association uses to reach its target audiences in order to ensure efficient communication. The engagement connected to AEC news and events being shared through the platforms is immediately reflected on our social media channels. The increase in traffic throughout 2023 is in line with the implementation of the AEC Communication Strategy.

### Communication Survey

This survey was directed towards International Relations Coordinators and Communication Officers at AEC member institutions. The survey aimed at understanding the communication needs and competencies of the higher music education sector, to ultimately being able to map the current landscape and challenges in the field of communication for higher music education institutions. The survey's ultimate goal is to create spaces both digital and physical to support the administrative teams at AEC's institutions with engaging with their audiences and disseminating all relevant news.



AEC gained around 2000 followers across its platforms in 2023

Following

f 4,700

in 1,394

X 1,325

604

(Instagram launched start of 2023)

### AEC WEBSITE:

Users: 96K

Page views: 355K



### NEWSLETTER & CAMPAIGNS:

In 2023 a total of **11** newsletters have been sent, reaching around **3,500** readers. Additionally, **7** surveys were sent out in the frame of the AEC Empowering Artists as Makers in Society – Creative Europe network.





## Vacancy Platform

Around **100** vacancies were posted.



## Coordination of Institutional Networks (METRIC)

AEC serves as coordinator of the METRIC network. METRIC has the aim to focus on the modernisation of higher music education through intensive international cooperation in the field of improvisation. Through a continuous process of mutual enrichment, METRIC wants to support the development and improvement of improvisation teaching, performance and research. Every year, one of the member institutions of the METRIC Network hosts an Intensive Programme (IP): five full days of workshops and masterclasses on improvisation. In 2023, the IP was hosted by the Hochschule für Musik und Theater "Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy". For more information on METRIC, please click [here](#).



## EASY – European Online Application System for Mobility



In 2023, EASY went through a big change, with a new company, the Austrian IT company SoP Mobility Online, hosting the system in its pilot phase. Since June, **115** institutions took part in the pilot while still using Dreamapply for real applications. Dreamapply closed down the system at the end of the year.

## Application-writing

AEC offers assistance to its member institutions with writing project applications for EU funding (i.e. writing texts, preparing budgets, liaising with partners). At the beginning of 2023, AEC contributed to the application writing process of the European University alliance, IN.TUNE.



## 7. #AECforUkraine campaign

In times of humanitarian crisis, AEC stepped up to support its member institutions in Ukraine with the #AECforUkraine fundraising campaign. The campaign was launched in December 2022 and ran until the end of March 2023.

We are so very grateful that many members and friends of the AEC donated to the campaign and we are proud to announce that the AEC was able to raise 6800 € thanks to around 50 contributions including private individuals or institutions.

With this money, the AEC managed to purchase three power stations, one for each of the below AEC member institutions:

- Ukrainian National Tchaikovsky Academy of Music – Kyiv, Ukraine.
- Kharkiv I.P. Kotlyarevsky National University of Arts – Kharkiv, Ukraine.
- A. V. Nezhdanova Odesa National Academy of Music – Odesa, Ukraine.



The stations were bought and delivered earlier this summer, thanks to the coordination help of AEC's Polish member, Akademia Muzyczna im. Krzysztofa Pendereckiego w Krakowie and in particular Dr Małgorzata Sternal, as well as the logistical help in the delivery from the [Gentes Foundation](#). The foundation was established in July 2019 by Polish volunteers working

previously on educational projects in Western Ukraine, water decontamination projects in the Donbas region and tuberculosis treatment projects in Ukraine.

Our sincere gratitude goes once again to all AEC members and friends who helped us achieve our goal. We also would like to sincerely thank our Polish member Akademia Muzyczna im. Krzysztofa Pendereckiego w Krakowie and the Gentes Foundation for arranging the deliveries.



## 8. AEC 70th Anniversary

Throughout 2023, the AEC - European Association of Conservatoires celebrated its anniversary by launching a compelling newsletter **series** that highlighted voices from its extensive network. This series served as a vibrant platform for sharing the experiences, insights, and stories of individuals and institutions that form the backbone of the AEC community.

The AEC Congress 2023 also provided a great opportunity to celebrate AEC's 70th Anniversary with various initiatives.

### Exhibition

The AEC Office put together a special "70th Anniversary Exhibition". The exhibition was located at the Royal Conservatoire The Hague and included:

- A 1953-2023 timeline, showcasing historical milestones for the association.
- Documents such as statutes, event programmes and project leaflets from the 60s-70s-80s-90s and 2000s.
- Memorabilia from AEC events.
  - Posters showcasing pictures from the AEC's Congresses throughout the years as well as the AEC platforms (the International Relations Coordinators Meeting, the Pop & Jazz Platform and the European Platform for Artistic Research).



- A poster with a tribute to AEC's honorary presidents.
- A screen playing selected videos of AEC's projects and activities throughout the years.
- A wishing tree for AEC members to leave their personal thoughts and wishes for AEC's future.

### Opening Brainstorming

The session took place on Thursday afternoon as one of the Congress opening brainstorming and involved around 25 participants. It constituted a form of open dialogue, with a chronological approach to the development of the AEC from the early 1990's till today. Many of the session's participants have been active within the AEC over the last 3 decades.



The session participants remarked how the AEC has served as a remarkable advocate for the sector, obtaining significant EU funding to support its ongoing working groups. AEC has developed platforms in early music, pop & jazz, traditional music, artistic research and international relations. It was observed how over the last 30 years, the organisation has become more inclusive, integrating more musical genres, and including students, staff and teachers as well as representatives from conservatoires on other continents in its working groups. AEC has supported curriculum development, and staff training, notably through the



“Artists as Teachers” course and ongoing training for evaluators in MusiQuE while also addressing sustainability, digitisation, power relations, diversity and inclusion. The participants also commented on how the AEC has facilitated collaboration and offered a space in which to reflect and imagine the future together. In doing so, AEC has helped provide a philosophical, artistic and educational framework for HMEI.

The members perceive that the strength of the AEC derives from the engagement of its members. In turn, the fact that many members have often been involved over decades provides continuity as the association continues to grow.

We thank Keld Hosbond, Gretchen Amussen and George Caird for taking notes and reporting about the discussion.



## Opening Fanfare “AEC” by Martijn Padding


The composer says:

“AEC is composed on request by Martin Prchal in honour of the 70th anniversary of the European Association of Conservatories. It is written for the KC trombone class of my colleague Sebastiaan Kemner.

The work is a homage to the Dutch-Flemish composers of the 15th and 16th centuries who went by foot to Venice to the San Marco Cathedral to sing and compose there. They were called the white men from over the mountains and were important in the development of the typical Venetian double choir style which involved spatially separate choirs opposite of each other singing or playing in alteration.

The abbreviation AEC was just too tempting for me to not use in this piece and simply explains why there are many minor chords in this score.”

Please click [here](#) to watch the video.

Access the 70th  
Anniversary booklet 

## 9. Advocacy and partners

Throughout the year, AEC monitored all relevant policy developments in the fields of culture and education, in particular those relating to higher arts education, and informed its members via its monthly newsletters. This included regular updates on the political debates and on the decisions made by the European Commission and the European Parliament. Highlights reported in 2023 were among others: the back and forth in the debate on the planned and then partially reversed cuts to the Creative Europe budget; the AEC's involvement in the mid-term reviews of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2021-2023 and the Erasmus+ and Creative Europe programmes; the efforts made by the European institutions to improve the working conditions of artists and to ensure fair remuneration; providing advisory support to AEC members under political pressure; the debate about the misleading use of the STEAM acronym to increase the proportion of women in technical professions; the efforts to improve the recognition of artistic research as an independent field of research; the ongoing debate on the consequences of digitisation and AI and what challenges and opportunities this brings for the art sector in general and the music sector in particular.

It was also part of AEC's advocacy activities to provide information on the publication of reports and studies, e.g. on the implementation of the European Higher Education Strategy, further developments and changes in funding programmes such as Erasmus+, Creative Europe and Horizon, as well as other policy discussions on arts, culture and higher education. In fall 2023, it has been repeatedly reported on appointment of the new Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth, Iliana Ivanova and what this change means for the Cultural and Creative Sector.

AEC shared information on the launch of various calls for projects and on statements on cultural policy launched by the DG ECA, the European Parliament and the Cultural Creators Friendship Group (CCFG), as well as on related

follow-up debates. AEC members were regularly informed about the role and political influence of the EU Council Presidencies and concrete actions relevant for the sectors of culture and education. As steady member of the Stakeholder Group on the Transformation of Higher Education in Europe, which serves both as a think tank and an advisory group to support the European Commission, AEC holds an important position to influence the EU policy.



AEC continued also in 2023 to be a sought-after expert contact and advisor to the European Commission on issues related to the implementation of EU policy agenda cornerstones. A significant part of the AEC advocacy activities in 2023 was dedicated to further develop and to implement an AEC Advocacy Strategy within the Artemis project.

When it comes to doing efficient advocacy, it is of course advantageous to join forces and to present and remind specific demands in coordinated action with partners and stakeholder who are sharing interests with AEC. Speaking with one voice not only increases the visibility of the CCS as a whole, but also strengthens credibility of the positions presented. The partner organisations in question (see list below) are first of all European networks active in the realm of culture and education, but includes also organisations transcending these limits, both in terms of content and geographical destination.

AEC collaborated with partners among others by regular mutual invitations to contribute to each other's events as guest speakers, as it was the case in 2023 with ELIA, EMC, EAS, EMU, CAE, NASM, SAR, to name only a few. AEC representatives are moreover members of boards of important umbrella organisations.

## AEC partner organisations



## 10. Financial report

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At the end of 2022, AEC's plan for financial sustainability (2018-2022) came to an end. The various measures taken to increase AEC's level of reserves were successful and the amount of reserves aimed at (i.e. 10% of the turnover at the time) was exceeded. From 2023 onwards, AEC can continue generating positive results but without having the need to further feed reserves. Thus, the **surplus of € 1,686.99**, although significantly smaller than the 2022 result, indicates that **2023 has been a positive year for AEC's financial situation** and that, as much as possible, additional income has been transferred to 2024 to ensure financial stability in the coming year.

In 2023, both the overall income and the overall expenditure have increased – each by more than € 270,000.00 compared to 2022: the income from € 866,548.30 to € 1,138,494.09 and the expenditure from € 852,135.51 to € 1,136,807.10 (see explanations below). Please note the simplified version of the 2023 accounts presented below shows the figures from 2022 for the purposes of comparison.

The **three main sources of income** of the Association remained membership fees (34% of the total income in 2023), subsidies from the European Commission (40%) and event registration fees (18%):

- The income from membership fees has increased by 4% compared to 2022 (i.e. slightly more than € 15,000.00), due to an increased number of AEC members.
- The income from subsidies has increased by more than 92% compared to 2022 (i.e. almost € 217,000.00). First of all, AEC had postponed part of the ARTEMIS project activities from 2022 to 2023, and therefore transferred the corresponding part of the Creative Europe grant to

2023. Moreover, as in previous years, part of the income coming from AEC's involvement in many other European projects, some starting in 2023, has been transferred to the following year as a precautionary measure for maintaining AEC's financial stability.

- The income from event registration fees has considerably increased by over 69% (i.e. more than € 83,000.00), due to a high in-person participation at the four main AEC events, some of which set a record in the number of registrations.

Other sources of income included:

- The amount reimbursed by MusiQuE, composed of a fixed percentage of overhead costs, as well as staff costs for the AEC staff members serviced to MusiQuE on a full-time basis, which has increased by almost € 16,000.00 compared to 2022. This income represents 6% of the total income in 2023.
- The fees collected from some member institutions for the coordination of the METRIC network, and for AEC's project application-writing service, and the fees received for advertising and sponsorship at the AEC events and on the AEC online communication channels.

It should be noted that the invoicing of the EASY service has been shifted from the end of 2023 to 2024 for the following reasons:

- Making the accounting procedures of the EASY service easier for the AEC office by making the EASY service year correspond to the AEC financial year.
- Giving institutions more time to try out the new EASY Mobility Online System before deciding to subscribe as EASY internal institutions.

As in other years, AEC's **expenditure** consisted mostly of staff costs (50% of the total expenditure, against 57% in 2022), project expenditures (35%, against 27% in 2022) and events, travel and office costs (9%, against 14% in 2022):

- Staff costs have increased by € 85,000 compared to 2022 due an exceptionally high indexation rate in Belgium (11.08%) and to a temporary increase of staff members in early 2023.

- Goods & services (including events and project costs) have increased by almost € 193'000, mainly due to the ARTEMIS and other project costs (in line with the increase of expenditures) as well as costs related to the transition from EASY by DreamApply to the new EASY Mobility Online System.

**As a result of all these developments, a surplus of € 1,686.99 has been generated in 2023, which brings the amount of AEC's financial reserves to a substantial € 102,675.57.**

## AEC balance sheet 2023 (€)

Assets		466,038.49
A	Short-term debts (of up to one year) to be received	144,710.53
B	Liquid means	315,436.86
C	Accruals	5,891.10

**A** includes membership fees and events fees for 2023 which had not yet been paid to AEC by 31/12/2023, as well as subsidies and other income still to be received by AEC in 2024;

**B** is the amount of cash which AEC possessed on 31/12/2023 in its accounts (AEC General and Reserves).

Liabilities		466,038.49
D	Results since 2013	102,675.57
E	Short-term debts (of up to one year)	197,983.79
F	Accruals	165,379.13

**D** is the sum of all results obtained by the Association since it started to operate in Belgium in 2013;

**E** includes all expenses taken into account in the 2023 expenses, but which relate to invoices received and paid in 2024, as well as the amount of the holiday pay reservation and other salary costs for 2023 paid in 2024;

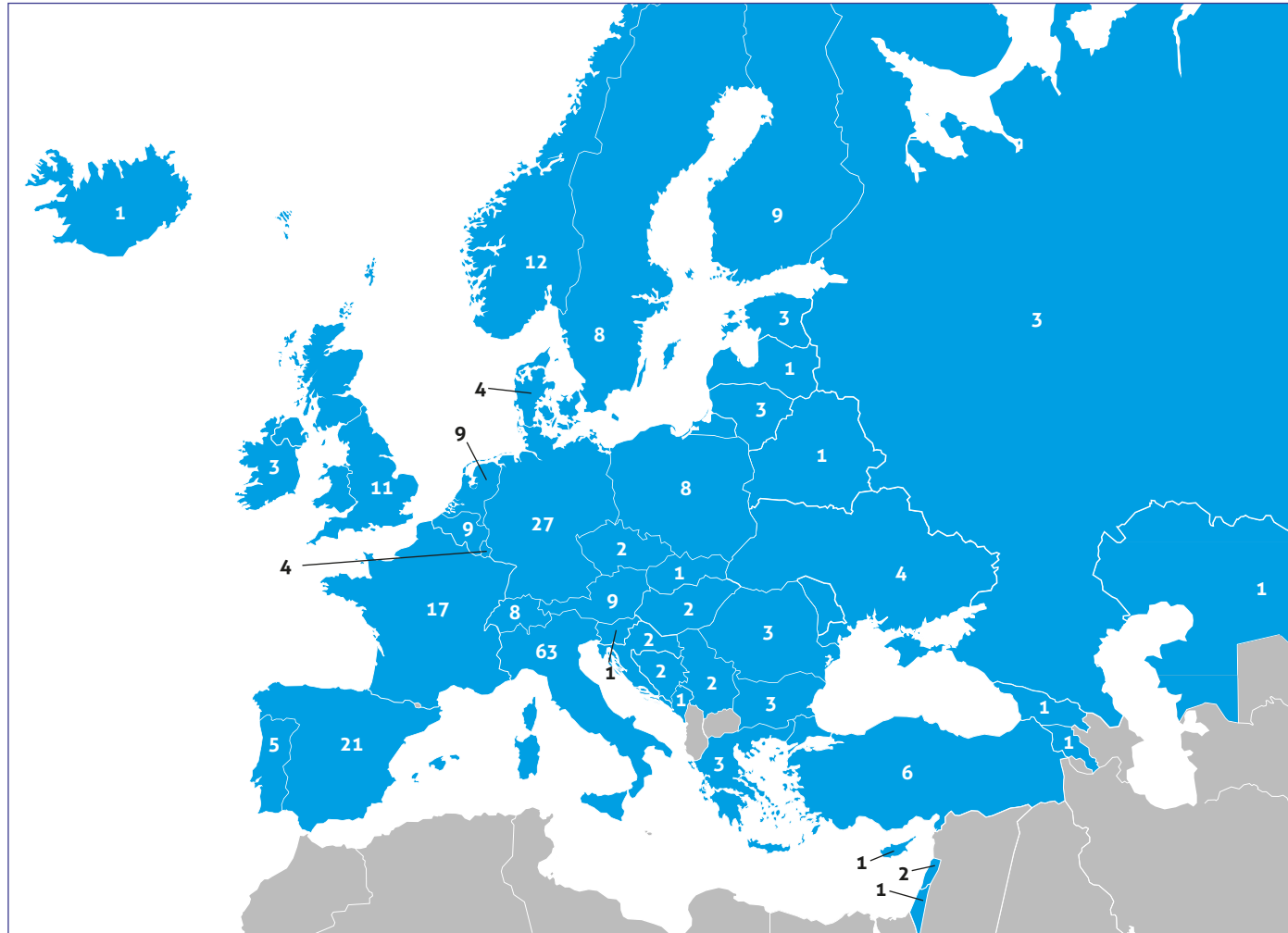
**F** consists of parts of a multiannual subsidies that AEC has received in 2023 for project coordination and which has been transferred to 2024 (€ 49,500.00 for ARTEMIS, and a total of € 94,539.89 for TUNE, VIETMUS, PRIhME, LOST MUSIC, HarMA HUB and OOO2) and various payments received by AEC in 2023 for invoices and events related to 2024.

## AEC profit-and-loss statement 2023 (with 2022 for comparison) (€)

	2023	2022
<b>Income</b>	<b>1,138,494.09</b>	<b>866,548.30</b>
Membership Fees	391,107.49	375,943.74
Events Fees	203,512.53	120,076.52
Subsidies (i.e. project funding)	451,200.43	234,298.21
Contributions from partner institutions to EASY Pilot project	-	81,123.20
Reimbursement of staff and overhead costs from MusiQuE	66,000.00	50,022.20
Service fees (application writing and coordination METRIC network)	21,818.00	4,502.37
Other (including re-invoicing expenses)	4,855.64	582.06
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>1,136,807.10</b>	<b>852,135.51</b>
Staff costs (salaries incl. restaurant checks, social security, pensions, holiday pay reservation) plus Student Interns and Staff development costs	571,267.55	486,220.45
Goods & services (including events and legal expenses)	539,155.38	346,172.72
Written-off debts	12.230,01	6.217,32
Discounts on membership & events fees (earlybird rates)	13,626.88	13,088.32
Bank charges	527.28	436.70
<b>Result</b>	<b>1,686.99</b>	<b>14,412.79</b>

## 11. Members

### AEC members



**AEC also has members in:** Australia (4), Canada (4), China (3), Egypt (1), Qatar (1), Singapore (1), South Korea (1), Thailand (2) and USA (7)

**Total: 304 members**

Armenia 1	Latvia 1
Australia 4	Lebanon 2
Austria 9	Lithuania 3
Belarus 1	Luxembourg 4
Belgium 9	Moldova 1
Bosnia and Herzegovina 2	Montenegro 1
Bulgaria 3	Netherlands 9
Canada 4	Norway 12
China 3	Poland 8
Croatia 2	Portugal 5
Cyprus 1	Qatar 1
Czech Republic 2	Romania 3
Denmark 4	Russia 3
Egypt 1	Serbia 2
Estonia 3	Singapore 1
Finland 9	Slovakia 1
France 17	Slovenia 1
Georgia 1	South Korea 1
Germany 27	Spain 21
Greece 3	Sweden 8
Hungary 2	Switzerland 8
Iceland 1	Thailand 2
Ireland 3	Turkey 6
Israel 1	UK 11
Italy 63	Ukraine 4
Kazakhstan 2	USA 7

## 12. New members

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In 2023, the AEC welcomed several new members, reaching a community of 304 institutions (265 Active members and 39 Associate members), marking the record within the AEC community to date.

The following institutions have been accepted as Active Members:

- Conservatorio Statale di Musica P.I. Tchaikovsky di Nocera Terinese (Italy).
- Conservatorio Statale di Musica di Reggio Emilia e Castelnovo ne' Monti (Italy).
- Conservatorio Statale di Musica Luigi Canepa di Sassari (Italy).
- Conservatorio Statale di Musica Giulio Briccialdi di Terni (Italy).
- Conservatorio Statale di Musica Claudio Monteverdi di Bolzano (Italy).
- Conservatorio Statale di Musica Vincenzo Bellini di Caltanissetta (Italy)
- Istituto Superiore di Studi Musicali della Valle d'Aosta (Italy).
- University of Aveiro, Department of Communication and Art (Portugal).
- Academy of Music, Theater and Fine Arts AMTAP (Chisinau, Moldova).
- István Széchenyi University in Győr, Department of Arts (Hungary).
- NLA University College in Oslo (Norway).

The following institutions have been re-admitted as Active Members:

- Conservatorio Superior de Música de Aragón (Zaragoza, Spain).
- Conservatorio di Musica Carlo Gesualdo da Venosa di Potenza (Italy).
- Conservatoire de musique et d'art dramatique du Québec (Canada).

The following institutions have been accepted as Associate Members:

- Conservatoire de Musique du Nord in Ettelbruck (Luxembourg).





## 13. People

Finally, AEC would like to highlight the work of the different people involved and thank them for making 2023 a successful year.

### Council Members

#### President

**Deborah Kelleher** – Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin, Ireland

#### Vice-Presidents

**Jeffrey Sharkey** – Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow, United Kingdom

**Elisabeth Gutjahr** – Mozarteum University Salzburg, Austria

#### Secretary General

**Ivana Perковиć** - Department of Musicology, Faculty of Music, University of Arts, Belgrade, Serbia

### Council Members

**Riccardo Ceni** – Conservatorio di Musica “Giuseppe Verdi”, Milano, Italy

**Rico Gubler** – Musikhochschule Lübeck, Lübeck, Germany

**Keld Hosbond** – Royal Academy of Music, Aarhus/Aalborg, Denmark

**Claire Michon** – Pôle Aliénor Poitiers-Tours, France

**Bruno Pereira** – ESMAE Porto’s Superior School of Music and Performing Arts, Polytechnic Institute, Porto, Portugal

**Martin Prchal** – Royal Conservatoire, The Hague, Netherlands

**Abra Bush** – (Co-opted Representative of the Associate Members), Jacob School of Music, Indiana University, USA

**Anothai Nitibhon** – (Co-opted Representative of the Associate Members), Princess Galyani Vadhana Institute of Music, Thailand

### Office Members

**Stefan Gies** – Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

**Linda Messas** – General Manager / Deputy CEO

**Sara Primiterra** – Events and Project Manager

**Alfonso Guerra** – Membership and Finance Coordinator

**Barbara Lalić** - Office and Project Coordinator (until April 2023)

**Ashkhen Fixova** – Office and Project Coordinator (from April 2023)

**Alessandra Callegari** – Communication Coordinator

**Beatriz Laborda González** – Events Coordinator

Several trainees supported the association’s work throughout the year:

**Katharina Litzinger** (GER), **Alizée Leclercq** (FR), **Kristine Beitika** (LV), and **Tuulia Ryhänen** (FIN).



## Working Groups (WGs) & Task Forces (TFs)

### AEC – Empowering Artists as Makers in Society (2022–2025)

#### Networking of organisations and individuals (artists and culture professionals) throughout Europe and beyond

*Objective:* Enhancing cooperation among HMEIs at European level and beyond to strengthen artists' mobility and employability.

#### International Relations Coordinators Working Group (IRC)

**Jan-Gerd Krüger** – Prince Claus Conservatoire Groningen, The Netherlands (WG Chair)

**Dimitrios Marinos** – Athens Conservatoire, College of Music, Athens, Greece

**Frauke Velghe** – KASK & Koninklijk Conservatorium, Ghent, Belgium

**Oana Balan-Budoiu** – The National Academy of Music Gheorghe Dima, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

**Melissa Mercadal** – Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya (ESMUC), Barcelona, Spain

**Iveri Kekenadze Gustafsson** – Malmö Academy of Music, Malmö, Sweden

**Wei Boon Tan** – Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, Singapore, Singapore

**Sara Primiterra** – AEC Office Team (WG Coordinator)



### Pop and Jazz Platform (PJP) Preparatory Working Group

The PJP preparatory WG is in charge of the organisation of the AEC Annual PJP meeting. It aims to promote and support higher education in popular music and jazz in the widest definition of those terms.



**Linda Bloemhard** – Codarts, University of the Arts, Rotterdam, The Netherlands (WG Chair until February 2023)

**Jere Laukkanen** – Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, Helsinki, Finland (WG Chair from February 2023)

**Marta Raviglia** – Conservatorio di Musica Girolamo Frescobaldi, Ferrara, Italy

**Mario Carrillo** – Centro Superior Música Creativa, Madrid, Spain

**Susanne Abbuehl** – Academy of Music FHNW, Basel, Switzerland

**Anna Uhuru** – Leeds Conservatoire, Leeds, United Kingdom (until February 2023)

**Johannes Pries** – Popakademie Baden-Württemberg, Mannheim, Germany

**Sopio Murusidze** – V. Saradjishvili Tbilisi State Conservatoire, Tbilisi, Georgia (from April 2023)

**Barbara Lalić** – AEC Office Team (WG Coordinator until April 2023)

**Beatriz Laborda González** – AEC Office Team (WG Coordinator from April 2023)

### European Platform for Artistic Research in Music (EPARM) Working Group

The EPARM WG is responsible for organising the AEC Annual EPARM meeting. Its objective is to strengthen the understanding of artistic research as a mean of promoting deeper musical engagement.



**Stephen Broad** – Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow, United Kingdom (WG Chair)

**Anna Maria Bordin** – Conservatorio Statale di Musica “Giuseppe Verdi” di Torino, Turin, Italy

**Paul Craenen** – Royal Conservatoire The Hague, The Hague, The Netherlands

**Sean Ferguson** – Schulich School of Music of McGill University, Montreal, Canada

**Matthias Hermann** – Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst, Stuttgart, Germany

**Wei-Ya Lin** – University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna, Austria

**Lina Navickaitė-Martinelli** – Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre, Vilnius, Lithuania

**Beatriz Laborda González** – AEC Office (WG Coordinator)

### European Online Application System for Mobility – EASY

EASY is the most important online tool for student mobility in HME. Through EASY, students can send mobility applications and IRCs can manage incoming and outgoing Erasmus, Nordplus and other types of student mobilities.

**Lucia Di Cecca** – Conservatorio Statale di Musica Santa Cecilia, Rome, Italy (TF Chair)

**Aino Jalkanen** – Sibelius Academy, Helsinki, Finland

**Morten Tandrup** – Rhythmic Music Conservatory, Copenhagen, Denmark

**Roser Graell** – Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse, Lyon, France

**José Luis Fernández** – Conservatorio Superior de Música, Vigo, Spain

**Sara Primiterra** – AEC Office (TF Coordinator)

### Early Music Task Force

The Early Music Task force has been put together to coordinate the collaboration with the Early Music Network REMA for the Early Music Summit and follow up the activities of the AEC in the field of early music in the upcoming years.

**Isaac Alonso de Molina** – Royal Conservatoire The Hague, The Netherlands (TF Chair)

**Claire Michon** – Pôle Aliénor, Poitiers, France

**Kelly Landerkin** – Hochschule für Musik, Basel, Switzerland

**Anton Steck** – Staatliche Hochschule für Musik, Trossingen, Germany

**Beatriz Laborda González** – AEC Office (TF Coordinator)

### Training and providing advice to professionals (WG 3)

*Objective:* Strengthening Lifelong Learning (LLL) opportunities for artists and for HMEI teachers and reinforcing AEC’s role in delivering such opportunities.

### LLL Working Group

**Esther Viñuela** – Escuela Superior de Música Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain (WG Chair)

**Kadri Steinbach** – UT Viljandi Culture Academy, Viljandi, Estonia

**Brendan Breslin** – Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin, Ireland

**Małgorzata Sternal** – Academy of Music in Kraków, Kraków, Poland

**Cecilia Cereda** – Conservatorio di Musica Giacomo Puccini, La Spezia, Italy

**Andy West** - Leeds Conservatoire, Leeds, UK (until October 2023)

**Beatriz Laborda González** – AEC Office (WG Coordinator)



## Representing the sector and advocating (WP4)

*Objective:* Reinforcing the capacity of AEC and its members to represent their interests and to advocate for the promotion of the cultural and creative sector.

### Advocacy Task Force (TF1)

**Gabriele Rosana** – CAE – Culture Action Europe (until November 2023)

**Katharina Weinert** – EMC – European Music Council

**Irene Garofalo** – ELIA – European League of Institutes of the Arts

**Manuel Damásio** – GEECT – European Grouping of Film and Television Schools

**Francesco Spina** – ENCATC - European network on cultural management and policy (until July 2023)

**Nana Sharikadze** – Tbilisi State Conservatoire, Tbilisi, Georgia

**Guillermo Rodríguez** – EPASA

**Stefan Gies** – AEC Office (WG Coordinator)



### EPASA – European Performing Arts Students' Association

**Monica Vejgaard** – Danish National Academy of Music, Odense, Denmark (President)

**Miranda Harmer** – Leeds Conservatoire, Leeds, United Kingdom, (Vice-President)

**Iveri Kekenadze Gustafsson** – Malmö Academy of Music, Malmö, Sweden (Board member)

**Nathalie Roe** – Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama, Cardiff (Board member)



**Barbara Lalić** – AEC Office (WG Coordinator until April 2023)

**Ashkhen Fixova** – AEC Office (WG Coordinator from April 2023)

### Collecting and disseminating data, information and practices (WP5)

*Objective:* Establishing a reliable empirical basis for actions aimed to support the project performance and to scale up the HME sector, including in relation to Going Green and Digitisation.

### Digitisation Working Group

**Sandrine Desmurs** – Cefedem Auvergne Rhône-Alpes, Lyon, France (WG Chair)

**Philipp Ahner** – Staatliche Hochschule für Musik Trossingen, Trossingen, Germany

**Haakon Kvidal** – Norwegian Academy of Music, Oslo, Norway

**Enric Guaus** – Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya, Barcelona, Spain

**Miranda Harmer** – Leeds Conservatoire, Leeds, United Kingdom

**Thom Gilbert** – Royal College of Music, London, United Kingdom

**Alessandra Callegari** – AEC Office (WG Coordinator)



### AEC Goes Green WG

**Dušanka Jelenković** – independent researcher, Belgrade, Serbia (WG Chair)

**María Sanz** – Centro Superior Música Creativa, Madrid, Spain

**Marloes De Nul** – Conservatorium Maastricht, Maastricht, The Netherlands



**Maria Kalleitner-Huber** – Mozarteum University, Salzburg, Austria  
**Héloïse Lecomte** – Conservatoire national supérieur musique et danse, Lyon, France  
**Ettore Cauvin** – Codarts University of the Arts, Rotterdam, The Netherlands  
**Barbara Lalić** – AEC Office (WG Coordinator until April 2023)  
**Ashkhen Fixova** – AEC Office (WG Coordinator from April 2023)

### Communication and dissemination

*Objective:* Ensuring the visibility of the project activities and a wide dissemination of its outcomes.

### Communication Task Force

**Juan Manuel Hegedüs-Gravina** – ENCATC – European Network of Cultural Management and Policy  
**Derville Quigley** – ELIA – European League of Institutes of the Arts  
**Alessandra Callegari** – AEC Office (TF Coordinator)

### Building the capacity of the HME sector to train artists as makers in society

*Objective:* Further developing and innovating music education, from the scope and responsibilities of institutions to learning & teaching and curriculum design.

### Capacity Building WG

The Working Group on Capacity Building serves as a think tank that contemplates the contemporary tasks, motives and goals of HMEIs as driving forces in the sustainable development of arts education and research on the one hand, and of the



professional music profession in its plurality on the other. Questions that arise include the role and impact of new skills, attitudes, social awareness and situatedness, as well as new perspectives on excellence, quality and societal engagement.

**Martin Prchal** – Royal Conservatoire The Hague, The Netherlands (WG co-Chair)  
**Lies Colman** – Royal Conservatoire The Hague, The Netherlands (WG co-Chair)  
**Stefan Heckel** – University of Music and Performing Arts, Graz, Austria  
**Natassa Economidou** – University of Nicosia, Cyprus  
**Guadalupe López Íñiguez** – Sibelius Academy, Helsinki, Finland  
**Lydney Callaghan** – Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin, Ireland  
**Anna Shaphira** – Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance, Jerusalem, Israel  
**Ingrid Breie Nyhus** – Norwegian Academy of Music, Oslo, Norway  
**Celia Duffy** – Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow, United Kingdom  
**Guillermo Rodríguez** – Koninklijk Conservatorium Brussel, Brussels, Belgium  
**Javier Soriano** – Pôle Aliénor, Poitiers, France  
**Linda Messas** – AEC Office (WG Coordinator)

### AEC-YMTE (Young Music Talent Education) Working Group

**Lucia Di Cecca** – Conservatorio Statale di Musica Santa Cecilia, Rome, Italy  
**Balázs Kecskés** – Franz Liszt Academy of Music, Budapest, Hungary  
**Ross Lyness** – Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin, Ireland  
**Alf Richard Kraggerud** – Barratt Due Musikk institut Oslo, Norway  
**Mattias Lundqvist** – Barratt Due Musikk institut Oslo, Norway (WG Co-Chair)  
**Minna-Maria Pesonen** – East Helsinki Music Institute, Helsinki, Finland  
**Mario Zecher** – Eberhard-Ludwigs-Gymnasium Stuttgart, Germany  
**Stefan Gies** – AEC Office (WG Chair and Coordinator)

## Steering Committee for the Harmonisation of European Music Education – SCHEME

**Isolde Malmberg** – European Association for Music in Schools (EAS)  
**Philippe Delarun** – European Music School Union (EMU)  
**Marina Gall** – European Association for Music in Schools (EAS)  
**Till Skoruppa** – European Music School Union (EMU)  
**Jeffrey Sharkey** – AEC Vice-President (AEC Executive Committee representative)  
**Stefan Gies** – AEC Office (WG Chair and Coordinator)

## Fostering diversity, inclusion and gender equality

*Objective:* Shaping and implementing fair, inclusive, diverse and gender equal frameworks in HMEIs.

## Diversity, Inclusion and Gender Equality (DIGE) Working Group

**Katja Thomson** – Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts, Helsinki, Finland (WG Chair)

**Karine Hahn** – Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse, Lyon, France

**Francesca Innocenti** – Conservatorio Statale di Musica “ A. Corelli”, Messina, Italy

**Karolien Dons** – Prince Claus Conservatoire, Groningen, The Netherlands

**Monica Vejgaard** – Danish National Academy of Music, Odense, Denmark

**Xiangning Lin** – Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, Singapore, Singapore

**Ron McCurdy** – USC Thornton School of Music, Los Angeles, United States

**Alfonso Guerra** – AEC Office (WG Coordinator)



## AEC Gender Equality and Non-discrimination Mainstreaming Task Force (TF)

**Steven Faber** – ArtEZ University of the Arts, Arnhem, The Netherlands

**Ankna Arockiam** – Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow, United Kingdom

**Alfonso Guerra** – AEC Office (TF Coordinator)

**Barbara Lalić** – AEC Office (TF Coordinator until April 2023)

**Ashkhen Fixova** – AEC Office (TF Coordinator from April 2023)



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