

REPORT

AEC

Annual Congress
and General Assembly 2024

13 > 16.11

 Conservatorio di Milano

*In. In. In.: Innovation, Inclusion and
Interdisciplinarity – from education to
employment and society*

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INTRODUCTION

Under the theme “In. In. In.: Innovation, Inclusion and Interdisciplinarity – from education to employment and society” the AEC Congress and General Assembly 2024 took place at Conservatorio di Milano on 13-16 November 2024.

Music and music education are more in demand than ever when the world’s great challenges need to be addressed. There are many options, and music is developing rapidly, not just as an art form, but also as a basis for meaningful communities, as core content in activities promoting good health and well-being and as a faithful companion in everyday life across generations.

AEC and its members lead the way by constantly renewing their community engagement, adapting curricula, redefining quality and excellence and involving students and staff in creating the future of higher music education leading to a sustainable career.

This year’s AEC Congress highlighted topics such as the green and the digital shift, innovative leadership, artistic research, lifelong learning, power relations, inclusion of students with special education needs, innovating curricula, pre-college music education, international collaborations, connecting analysis and performance, the AEC Mentorship Programme, and a celebration of the 10th anniversary of MusiQuE.

As the flagship project of the AEC since 2022 is coming to an end, a very special event was the presentation of final outputs of “ARTEMIS – AEC Empowering Artists as Makers in Society”, funded by the EU, where participants familiarized with several years of development work within a wide range of topics, which are now made available to all AEC members and which will be of decisive importance for the development of our sector in the future.



[Trailer](#)

Congress Committee

- AEC Council: **Deborah Kelleher**, Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin, Ireland (AEC President)
- AEC Council: **Jeffrey Sharkey**, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (AEC Vice President)
- AEC Council: **Malgorzata Sternal**, Academy of Music in Krakow, Poland
- AEC Council: **Anothai Nitibhon**, Princess Galyani Vadhana Institute of Music, Thailand
- Hosting Institution Conservatorio di Milano: **Riccardo Ceni**, IRC
- Hosting Institution Conservatorio di Milano: **Raffaele Vignali**, President
- Hosting Institution Conservatorio di Milano: **Massimiliano Baggio**, Director
- Hosting Institution Conservatorio di Milano: **Andrea Burro**, Congress Coordinator
- Hosting Institution Conservatorio di Milano: **Raffaella Valsecchi**, Communication Manager
- AEC Office Team: **Finn Schumacker**, AEC Executive Director
- AEC Office Team: **Sara Primiterra**, AEC Events and Projects Manager

WEDNESDAY

Pre-Congress Workshop – MusiQuE Peer Reviewers Training

By the MusiQuE Board (Ankna Arockiam, Lies Colman, Orla McDonagh, Jacques Moreau), **experienced Peer Reviewers** (Celia Duffy, Martin Prchal, Iñaki Sandoval, Don McLean, MistPorkelsdóttir) **and MusiQuE Office** (Linda Messas, Ana Alvarez, Crina Mosneagu, Basia Kowalczyk, Daniel Rivera)

MusiQuE is an external evaluation body dedicated to the continuous improvement of the quality of higher music education at international level and to assisting higher music education institutions in their own enhancement of quality.

In this Pre-Congress workshop, MusiQuE organised the in-person sessions of its 12th Peer Reviewers Training Workshop. This year, the Peer Reviewers Training Workshop had a record number of 41 participants, coming from 22 countries around the world. Preceded by an online session on October 17 where the participants were introduced to MusiQuE's structure, procedures, and the roles and responsibilities of a Peer Reviewer, the in-person sessions included play role sessions and plenaries where participants share their experiences and insights of the role of a Peer Reviewer. The workshop was both thought-provoking and inspiring, offering three days of collaborative learning and growth. A recap of the workshop highlights can be found on the [MusiQuE website](#).



[View the presentation](#)

Pre-Congress Workshop - Digitisation

Facing the Present: Digitisation Scenarios in Higher Music Education

With **Sandrine Desmurs** (Lecturer - Head of Digital Department), **Thom Gilbert** (Digital Learning Manager), **Mimi Harmer** (EPASA), **Alessandra Callegari** (AEC Communication Coordinator), **Håkon Kvidal** (Norwegian Academy of Music), **Enric Gaus** (ESMUC) **Philipp Ahner** (Staatliche Hochschule für Musik- Trossingen)

In the rapidly evolving landscape of higher music education, digitisation continues to be a relevant topic - some may describe it as a cloud hanging over us all, which refuses to dissipate. How do we deal with infrastructure, resistant stakeholders, or limited internal expertise?

In this interactive pre-congress workshop, the [ARTEMIS Digitisation Working Group](#) proposed solutions and enhanced digital capacities through practical activities, with collaboration from EPASA.

Through immersive scenarios, attendees explored possible strategies across competencies, curriculum, stakeholders, and resources, fostering collaborative learning and creative problem-solving within an international community.

Participants left this workshop with a comprehensive understanding of various digitisation scenarios in higher music education, practical insights into best practices and innovative strategies for digital transformation and a network of peers and experts to collaborate with on future digitisation initiatives.

Key Focus Areas:

- **Infrastructure & Technological Developments:** Examining the technological frameworks and resources required to support digital initiatives in HMEIs. Discussions covered network, VLE, hardware devices, BYOD policy, AI charter, VR/AR, UX etc
- **Curricula:** Exploring the integration of digital tools and methodologies into music curricula. Participants discussed redesigning courses to incorporate online learning, virtual performance, and digital collaboration, ensuring that students gain the skills they need to succeed in their careers.
- **Teacher Needs:** Addressing the professional development and support required for faculty to thrive in a digital environment. Topics included training programs, peer support networks, and the development of digital teaching competencies to enhance pedagogical effectiveness.
- **Student Profiles:** Understanding the evolving expectations and needs of digitally native students. Addressing the varying levels of digital proficiency among students. Personalizing learning experiences, leveraging digital tools for student engagement, and preparing students for diverse career paths in a digital world were the topics discussed. Equipping students with the necessary skills to utilise current technologies, including discussions on the role of AI in music education.

This workshop was designed for leaders and decision-makers in higher music education, including directors, department heads, digital learning managers, IT directors, and curriculum developers and administrators. Participants benefited from the collaborative atmosphere and the opportunity to co-create actionable plans for their institutions' digital futures.



[View the presentation](#)

Pre-Congress Workshop - Advocacy

Let your voice be heard: how to ensure influence and create new ambassadors for your cause.

With **Finn Schumacker** (AEC Executive Director)



This workshop gave the participants an understanding of the political decision-making processes and how they can be influenced. Good political advocacy is not based on special talents or secret contacts, but on a systematic effort that can be planned, carried out and followed up.

Attendees were equipped to create their own advocacy campaign with the help of the new AEC Advocacy Toolkit, which takes users through a series of steps and creates a powerful and targeted plan of action.



[View the presentation](#)

The workshop consisted of several elements and began with participants familiarizing themselves with the AEC Advocacy Toolkit. Participants then worked in small groups to prepare campaigns based on concrete cases from the institutions of the participants using a template.

Key focus areas:

1. What is successful advocacy: Background information on advocacy and its development over recent years, including the decisive shift from access and actors to networks and political belongings and the fact that political and public agendas merge.
2. The implementation model: Challenge and idea, Analysis, Objectives and framing, Putting into action and Evaluation
3. The stakeholders: Interests from the sector and the public, the political interest and the business interest.
4. The political process: Agenda setting, the initiative phase, policy formulation, the decision, the implementation and policy change
5. The action plan: Meeting politicians and officials, the media strategy, a presentation, forming working groups or a task force, creating alliances, monitoring
6. The advocacy model of the AEC: AEC acting towards EU on behalf of institutions, AEC in partnerships, AEC supporting institutions in their campaigns at national level

By the end of the workshop, participants had:

- Thorough knowledge of the elements of an advocacy campaign
- The ability to organize a professional advocacy campaign from scratch
- Understanding of political decision-making processes
- The ability to identify partners and opponents and utilize this knowledge in planning The campaign
- Get behind expressions such as buffering, bridging, framing and priming

This workshop was designed for senior management and other decision-makers as well as communication officers at all levels in higher music education institutions. Participants could take advantage of the opportunity to prepare a tailored advocacy plan for their own institution and launch it together with your colleagues immediately after the congress.

Pre-Congress Workshop - Project Writing

Project Writing Mastery with Real-World Examples: the Creative Europe Opera Out of Opera 2 Project and the Erasmus Capacity Building Project VIETMUS with **Michelangelo Galeati**, Conservatorio Santa Cecilia in Rome

This workshop focused on skills and insights into crafting successful project applications. It featured detailed presentations of two exemplary projects: the Creative Europe Project Opera Out of Opera 2 and the Erasmus Capacity Building Project Vietmus. In the first part of the workshop, participants looked into Opera Out of Opera 2, examining the various components of its project application and learning about the project's conception, development, and the key elements that contributed to its successful funding. This case study provided a comprehensive understanding of the critical aspects of project writing, from initial idea to final submission.

The second part focused on Vietmus, an Erasmus Capacity Building Project, which was analyzed through the perspective of an external evaluator. Participants gained insights into the evaluation criteria and the key factors that make a project stand out. This analysis offered a unique opportunity to understand the evaluator's viewpoint and how to tailor applications to meet their expectations.

This workshop was designed to be hands-on, offering practical exercises aimed at honing your project writing skills. Participants were staff members new to project writing or experienced professionals looking to refine their expertise



[View the presentation](#)

Erasmus Orchestra Concert



An ensemble of young musicians from the Erasmus Orchestra performed in the context of AEC Congress 2024 and shared their Erasmus experience.

A total of 15 students from European conservatoires performed under the direction of the student conductor Robin Sansen Calderó, featuring works by Poulenc, Saariaho, and Rota.

This special concert, supported by the Agenzia nazionale Erasmus+ INDIRE, the "G. Verdi" Conservatory, and AEC, highlighted the transformative power of the Erasmus+ Programme in promoting cultural exchange and international excellence in music, art, and dance education.



[View Concert Programme](#)

WELCOME TO NEWCOMERS

With members of AEC Council and AEC Office Team

As in previous years, the AEC Annual Congress and General Assembly 2024 provided a moment for AEC member institutions to get familiar with the network's activities and latest developments.

The session served for newly granted AEC members to introduce their institutions, as well as to know more on how to access their institutional profile on the AEC website, to learn about AEC newsletter and other communication channels and to recap the in-presence and online sessions offered in the conference programme.



[View the presentation](#)

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

The session started with EPASA's Board Members Natalia Roe and Marloes de Nul welcoming the participants and presenting EPASA as the "association for students, by students." The board was presented as well EPASA's mission and goals and membership tiers. Then some tips for newcomer students when attending AEC Congress: "state your opinion – your voice matters".

Elisabeth Gutjahr and Bruno Pereira, on behalf of AEC's Council, referred the extremely relevant role of EPASA and how essential it is to have this students' representation at the Congress and in each member institution. The session's dynamic was based on two relational games: a speed dating (2 minutes with a person and then another 2 minutes with someone else); a drawing game in small groups (drawing what a student representative means).



[View the presentation](#)

OPENING SESSION WITH PERFORMANCES

Jazz Music introduction:

Serviga Duo (Edoardo Viganò, Sax and Andrea Servidio, Piano). Music by Servidio and Viganò

Words of welcome by:

























- **Massimiliano Baggio**, Director of CM
- **Raffaello Vignali**, President of CM
- **Alessandra Gallone**, Italian Ministry for University and Research
- Video by **Antonio Uricchio**, President of the Italian National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes ANVUR
- **Michael Wilder**, President of NASM (United States)
- **Anothai Nitibhon**, SEADOM President
- **Monica Vejgaard**, EPASA President & Mimi Harmer, EPASA Vice-President
- **Deborah Kelleher**, President of the AEC

Introduction to the Opening Brainstorming by Finn Schumacker, AEC Executive Director



[Watch the session](#)

OPENING BRAINSTORMING

| Themes | Facilitators | Material |
|--|--|--|
| 1. Partnerships for cooperation and exchanges of practices: music is in the air | Valeria Biggi, Italian ERASMUS National Agency INDIRE, with Payam Susanni (VIETMUS) and Stefan Gies / Kadri Steinbach (TUNE) |     |
| 2. Music and Artificial Intelligence: How are institutions addressing this in the curriculum? | Simone Pilon (Berklee Valencia) and Inge Simoens (Antwerp) |     |
| 3. Artist-mediators/teaching artist to support and/or encourage artistic practices in local territories | Sandrine Desmurs (CEFEDM Lyon) |   |
| 4. Engaging new audiences | Jens Ewen (Weimar) and Michelangelo Galeati (Rome) |  |
| 5. How to provide mental health and well being support to music students | Leila Hooton (London RCM) |  |
| 6. Encouraging and motivating staff to participate in a quality enhancement culture | Muireann O'Kefee (TU Dublin) |   |
| 7. Safe Space – discrimination issues in institutions | Ankna Arockiam and Steven Faber (AEC Gender Equality and Non-discrimination Mainstreaming Task Force) | |
| 8. The new Traditional Folk & Global Music Working Group of the AEC | Keld Hosbond (AEC Council) and Nod Knowles (European Folk Network) |   |
| 9. A brainstorming session to exchange ideas, challenges, and opportunities for collaborations across disciplines | Miranda Harmer (EPASA) |  |
| 10. AEC on a Green journey | Ashkhen Fixova, AEC Office |   |
| 11. Balancing power relations in collaborative teaching in vocal performance education: a discussion based on the example from IUA | Thora Einarsdottir (Reykjavik) |  |
| 12. Closeness and distance in instrumental and vocal teaching | Margareth Tumler (Graz) |   |
| 13. "Implementing Internationalisation" - from attracting students to grade conversion | Ania Sergueeva (Paris Boulogne Billancourt) |   |

CONSERVATOIRE ORCHESTRA CONCERT

After the Opening Brainstorming participants attended the Conservatoire Orchestra Concert, experiencing an unforgettable evening.

The concert started with a piece for orchestra from Chiclana, and continued with arias from Puccini, where the soloists delivered a stunning performance, beautifully accompanied by the orchestra.

Programme

OSCoM- Orchestra Sinfonica del Conservatorio di Milano

Pietro Mianiti, conductor

Francisco Pulpillo Chiclana
El pueblo de los ajos, for orchestra

Giacomo Puccini
"Manon Lescaut", *Intermezzo*

"La Bohème", *Quando me'n vò*
Rosalba Aurora Ducato, soprano

"Gianni Schicchi", *Era uguale la voce*
Filippo Fontana, baritone

"La Bohème", *Sì, mi chiamano Mimi*
Tsisana Giorgadze, soprano

"Tosca", *E lucevan le stelle*
Lian Wang, tenor

"Gianni Schicchi", *O mio babbino caro*
Rosalba Aurora Ducato, soprano

"La Bohème", *Quadro III, Finale (Quartetto)*
Tsisana Giorgadze and Hyunji Park, sopranos **Lian Wang**, tenor - **Filippo Fontana**, baritone



 [Watch the concert](#)



PLENARY SESSION I - KEYNOTE - A VOCATION FOR SHARING

By **Filippo Del Corno**: composer, artistic director, cultural manager, former student and now full professor of composition at the Milan Conservatory, former president of Fondazione Milano and councillor for culture of the City of Milan

Early Music introduction:

Antonio Vivaldi - Concerto per 2 trombe e archi RV 537

Aurelio Canesi e Mattia Cristino (trumpets), **Eleonora Zanne e Javier Tiestos** (violins), **Michele Locatelli** (tenor viola da gamba), **David Dell'Oro** (bass viola da gamba), **Marimo Toyoda** (harpsichord)

In the performing arts the acquisition of specific skills appears to be the first goal of training: learning to play, dance, or act requires a strong mutual commitment between student and teacher, based on a profound and mutual trust.

However, the search for perfection risks to remove a crucial issue: the learned skills are destined, more than in any other professional path, to be displayed in a shared experience. Every performance is aimed at an audience, whose configuration reflects the social context in which that experience takes place.

The public purpose of any performing art is therefore its mission; the training of young artists cannot forget that their profession could represent a powerful tool to transform and enhance the present and future world. If we are aware that cultural participation appears today the most urgent and necessary action in order to promote social cohesion and even economic development, the training of young artists therefore entails a further responsibility for teachers: teaching is not just transferring skills, but also instilling a vocation for sharing.

The three key words in the title of our AEC Annual Congress – Innovation, Inclusion, Interdisciplinarity – imply, from different perspectives, this necessity for sharing and invite us to rethink not only the forms in which the performing arts teaching is expressed, but also the places themselves in which this activity occurs. Today, schools for the performing arts must be increasingly porous towards the urban contexts in which they are present, and promote a multiplicity of relations with city communities; teachers and students must open the doors of their educational laboratories, in order to create an immediate connection between training activity and social dissemination.

In this action the first purpose is not the pure display of talent of our pupils, although this may be extremely high; the main goal should be to experiment new ways to involve in cultural access those social groups who are currently excluded, promoting a cross-fertilization between different disciplines and languages, as it has actually already happened in particularly fruitful seasons for the progress of human societies.



[!\[\]\(fe3aebe81acea8d45108cd2768939da7_img.jpg\) Watch the session](#)



Filippo Del Corno

Born in 1970, he graduated in composition at Conservatorio G. Verdi.

His works have been performed in major theaters and festivals by musicians such as Berio, MacMillan, Ashkenazy. His works are recorded for Deutsche Grammophon, Cantaloupe, DaVinci and published by Curci, Ricordi and Suvini Zerboni. In 1997 he founded Sentieri selvaggi, a group dedicated to contemporary music. From 2013 to 2021 he was Deputy Major for Culture in the Municipality of Milano. He is a Professor of Composition at the Milan Conservatorio.

PARALLEL SESSIONS I - INNOVATION

1 - Play Green! Implementing the Green Shift in HMEIs

By the **ARTEMIS AEC Goes Green WG:**

- **Duška Jelenković Vidović** (WG Chair)
- **Ashkhen Fixova** (WG Coordinator)
- **Maria Kalleitner-Huber** (Head of Sustainability Universität Mozarteum Salzburg)
- **Heloise Lecomte** (Responsable communication et presse CNSMD)
- **Marloes De Nul** (EPASA + AEC Goes Green)

This session focused on the role of higher music education in fostering sustainability, in line with the European Council's push for systemic changes in education. The outcomes of the **AEC Goes Green Working Group** within the **ARTEMIS project** were presented to provide tailored recommendations for integrating the concept of sustainability into music education and embed sustainability into HMEI's institutional strategy addressing the gap between widespread concern about climate change and the lack of corresponding action. These recommendations, based on European best practices, aim to promote interdisciplinary approaches and green skills, empowering both students and educators to drive change.

Some of the AEC ARTEMIS **Play Green! recommendations** were shared, covering six main categories, **Green event organisation, Sustainability Policy, Green travelling, Sustainable daily functioning, Communication and raising awareness, Research, artistic project, performances – sustainability as part of curriculum.** These recommendations are part of the publication that is being finalised by the WG and will be shared with the AEC membership soon.

The session emphasized inclusion, engaging institutions and local communities in sustainability efforts, and outlined actionable steps to reduce CO2 emissions, raise awareness, and inspire institutional change. The goal is to transform music education through sustainable practices and a shift towards a more environmentally-conscious mindset.

The session also featured the **music performance** of a short piece on green travel, performed by the WG members Ettore Cauvin and Marloes de Nul and **composed** by the latter.



[Watch the session](#)



[View the presentation](#)



[Key takeaways](#)

2 - Innovating Curricula

By:

- **Members of the ARTEMIS Capacity Building Working Group**
- **Representatives of institutions taking part in the ARTEMIS Clusters**

Since 2022, 26 institutions from 21 countries have been involved in the **ARTEMIS Clusters of institutions undertaking curricular changes**, a platform to work together through a process including reflection, exchange and mutual support, with the aim of strengthening their studies and empowering tomorrow's musicians.

The **ARTEMIS Capacity Building Working Group**, which is organising and supporting the Clusters, has also been working on compiling a **Big Book of Questions (BBQ) on Curricular Innovation** including insights from experts, case studies from the Working Group's own institutions, stories from the Clusters' institutions, inspirational questions and links to further resources.

Representatives of the Capacity Building working group and representatives of institutions taking part in the clusters shared what has been achieved: trends identified among institutions taking part in the Clusters and how their participation has helped institutions, key elements of the curriculum change process, and the structure and content of the BBQ. Short presentations of curriculum reform processes were given by Lynsey Callaghan (Royal Irish Academy of Music – RIAM) and Simone Pillon (Berklee Valencia). This was followed by a short small group exercise to discuss ideas, initiatives or current work to innovate curricula in their institution based on the questions taken from the BBQ.



Three takeaways from this session:

1. Curriculum reform processes take time and need to have strong involvement of all stakeholders
2. Curriculum reform should always be based on clear communication about the necessity (the WHY) of the changes
3. The Clusters in ARTEMUS were very helpful to institutions by providing them with a structure to their curriculum reform processes and finding support for such processes from colleagues in other institutions.



[Watch the session](#)



[View the presentation](#)

3 - Innovations and Opportunities for HMEI through Artistic Research: The Italian Case

With **Peter Dejans** (Orpheus Institute Gent), **Candida Felici** (Milan Conservatory), **Sean Ferguson** (EPARM WG, Schulich School of Music of McGill University), **Leonella Grasso Caprioli** (Brescia Conservatory, RAMI), moderated by **Lina Navickaitė-Martinelli** (EPARM WG, Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre)

This session explored the introduction of artistic research (AR) in third-cycle music education, focusing on Italy's recent developments in this area.

While in some countries artistic research has been fostered for decades within third-cycle studies, some others (like Italy) are yet looking forward to the innovations and opportunities that AR can offer to higher music education institutions. Realising the importance of such a step to the development of both AR and HMEI in general, this session addressed this change from a variety of perspectives, giving a special attention to challenges and prospects of the newly introduced third cycle in music at Italian higher-education institutions.

An overall mapping of the new PhDs, launched this year for the first time by Italian conservatories and academies, was presented focusing in particular on the third-cycle proposals implemented in the field of music disciplines, examined through a general overview of the number of grants offered, their thematic profiles and the establishment of institutional networks that have characterised this important step forward in the Italian system of higher arts and musical education.

The already-existing practices were discussed as well, such as the new doctoral project realised by Milan Conservatory together with Florence Conservatory, MUSART, which provides both a practice-oriented curriculum and a theoretical curriculum, and is characterised by an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach.

Not limiting the session to an Italian perspective, the workings of WARM (Workshops on Artistic Research in Music), organised by the Conservatory "L. Cherubini" of Florence, the Conservatory "G. Verdi" of Milan, in collaboration with the Orpheus Instituut Gent, were introduced, as well as a North American perspective on artistic research within third-cycle university programmes in performance and composition.



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4 - Digital innovation: implementing the Digital Shift

By the **ARTEMIS Digitisation Working Group** with **Philipp Ahner**, University of Music Trossingen, Moderator (Germany), **Martina Delluniversità** student at Conservatorio di Musica C. Pollini di Padova (Italy), **Núria Sempere**, ESMUC (Spain), **Thom Gilbert**, Royal College of Music (UK), **Oscar Colomina**, Reina Sofia & DISK (Spain)



This session addressed the impact of digital transformation on Higher Music Education and explored how institutions can understand and support this shift.

The changes underway or expected in Higher Music Education are, among other things, the result of the digital transformation that societies have been experiencing for several decades. How can we understand and support this digital shift in our institutions? But also how can we develop knowledge, critical thinking and therefore empowerment on these transformations at work?

Drawing on the work carried out by the **working group on digitalization** during the ARTEMIS project, this round table cross-referenced points of view and brought together managers of higher education musical institutions, students, teachers and technicians to explore the issues, challenges and opportunities that are knocking on the doors of our structures.

The session attracted many participants, with more attendees than available seats. The discussion with the audience showed that challenges vary across different levels: institutional, academic staff, non-academic staff, and students.



[Watch the session](#)



[View the presentation](#)



[Key takeaways](#)



5 - Whatever it is I'm Against It': A Change Management Toolbox for HMEI Leadership

Moderated by **David Bahanovich**, (Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia) and **Manus Carey**, (Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester)



In today's rapidly changing world, HMEIs must adeptly manage and embrace change to succeed and thrive. This interactive workshop provided HMEI leaders with a comprehensive understanding of change management frameworks and methodologies, alongside practical tools for driving change initiatives.

Participants explored strategies for overcoming resistance, leading change from within, and applying proven change models. Through hands-on activities, engaging exercises, case studies, and success stories, this workshop empowered leaders with the skills and knowledge needed to effectively navigate and lead transformational change.



[Watch the session](#)



[View the presentation](#)



[Key takeaways](#)

6 -Building curiosity and capacity through Lifelong Learning

By **Esther Viñuela, Kadri Steinbach, Brendan Breslin, Małgorzata Sternal** (LLL WG), **Manuela Bisceglie** (Conservatorio di Musica “Giuseppe Verdi”, Milano) and others.



The **AEC Lifelong Learning (LLL) Working Group** hosted a session dedicated to promoting lifelong learning within Higher Music Education Institutions (HMEIs) in Europe.

The session began with an introduction from LLL WG members, setting the context for the discussions followed by a Round Table showcasing case studies gathered from the survey conducted by the LLL WG on LLL offerings in HMEIs, where participants shared best practices and outline the objectives and significance of lifelong learning in today's educational landscape.



[Watch the session](#)



[View the presentation](#)



To conclude the session, the LLL WG presented a video that showcased the concept of lifelong learning and highlighted the diverse profiles of lifelong learners, emphasising the relevance of continuous education in the arts.

Both the presentations and the following discussion underlined the fact that the conservatoires operate “within public space” and it is important to offer LLL opportunities not only for the music sector but also to wider society.

At the same time – questions that followed the presentations concerned mostly the “institutional” dimension of LLL – opportunities for development of teachers and administration staff within conservatoires.

Answering the question: “how do you motivate / encourage your teachers to take part in trainings?”, the presenters mentioned the following:

- it is important to leave / give time in schedules to make it possible for people to take LLL opportunities; We cannot expect that people will take courses / seminars on top of their busy agendas;
- it is important to create an atmosphere of a “desired” and not obligatory meeting;
- mixing pleasure with professional benefit – example of meetings for developing English speaking skills organised for the staff at the Conservatorio di Milano.

The discussion showed that the practical dimension of the session was crucial for the participants. All three presentations (Norway, UK, Italy) were providing some details on how their programs / LLL opportunities are delivered, and some participants expressed a need of more practical advice on how to develop an LLL programme.

PARALLEL SESSIONS II - INCLUSION

1 - Exploring the link between inclusion and artistic practice: resistance within teaching and making music

By **Karolien Dons, Karine Hahn** (Diversity, Inclusion and Gender Equality (DIGE) Working Group), and **Monica Vejgaard** (Diversity, Inclusion and Gender Equality (DIGE) Working Group, EPASA)

in this session, the **ARTEMIS Diversity, Inclusion & Gender Equality (DIGE) Working Group**, explored the idea of resistance in artistic practice and the challenges involved in institutional transformation towards more diverse and inclusive Higher Music Education institutions (HMEIs). Institutional change includes everything from how we teach and learn, choose repertoire, communicate and collaborate, to how we assess performance and research and recruit new students and staff. In shaping these changes, diversity and inclusivity increasingly play a prominent role.

Resistance to change in HMEIs is typically connected to concerns about maintaining high artistic standards or fears that the music profession and the arts as a field, will be undermined or devalued.

Simultaneously, there are worries about the change being too fast – or too slow, as the strategies can take a long time to produce tangible outcomes for the everyday life of the institution. Participants had the opportunity to share and learn about experiences on how resistance related to diversity and inclusion is manifested in their own institutional practices of teaching and making music. Through dialogue, they were also encouraged to draw inspiration for practical steps for encountering resistance towards desired, and perhaps necessary, changes in their institutions.



[View the presentation](#)



[Watch the session](#)

2 - Power Relations towards inclusion: the implementation of PRIhME's guidelines and launch of the PRIhME book

With **Gretchen Amussen** and **David-Emil Wickstroem** (Popakademie Baden-Württemberg), **Itziar Larrinaga** (Musikene), **Luccia di Cecca** (Saint Louis Music Center)

Power relations have become a central issue within Higher Music Education and together with 9 Higher Music Education Institutions the AEC has explored different dynamics of power relations in 4 Stakeholder Assemblies. The recommendations that these assemblies generated were adopted with an overwhelming majority by the AEC general assembly in 2023.

Capping this EU co-funded ERASMUS project called "Power Relations in Higher Music Education" (PRIhME) this session presented the final intellectual output of the project, the anthology "Music, Power Relations and Beyond Critical Positions in Higher Music Education"*. The book not only explores different aspects of power and how it intersects with factors such as gender, socio-economic background or ableism but also provides reflections from students, teachers and administrators. During this interactive session, each chapter was outlined in detail, and participants worked in groups to consider aspect of power, and challenges to working and studying in safe and supportive learning environments. The following questions were discussed: how have AEC members integrated these recommendations (or not) in their institutions? What challenges have they faced? Did they emphasize certain aspects more than others? What can we learn from their experiences?

The key outcome of the discussions was a hunger to keep the conversation going with colleagues, to work on the PRIhME recommendations and to maintain the energy of this project into the future.

**Brüstle, Christa, Lucia Di Cecca, Itziar Larrinaga, Mojca Piškor, Eva Sæther, and David-Emil Wickström, eds. 2024. Music, Power Relations and Beyond: Critical Positions in Higher Music Education. Donostia-San Sebastián: Musikene.*



[View the presentation](#)



[Watch the session](#)



[PRIhME Book PDF](#)

3 - Fostering the inclusion of students with Special Education Needs in Higher Music Education: the case of IncluMusic and the CM Special Needs WG

By **Elide Scarlata, Maria Cinque, Ioana Zagrean** and **Maria Pia Ferdinandi** (IncluMusic project), **Francesca Innocenti** (AEC Diversity, Inclusion and Gender Equality Working Group), **Emilio Piffaretti** and **Alfonso Chielli** (Conservatorio di Milano)



The **IncluMusic project** aims to enhance the inclusion of students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and disadvantaged backgrounds in Higher Music Education institutions (HMEIs). It focuses on training music teachers, administrative staff, and tutors in innovative pedagogies to increase accessibility, participation, and completion rates among these students.

Part of the project was dedicated to the **creation of two training courses**, respectively addressed to HMEIs teachers and administrative staff aimed at reinforcing their competencies in the field of Special Education; creating a new professional role – that of the Academic tutor – aimed at monitoring on social inclusion practices and on the training process of teachers; preparing the Academic tutor, with the role of intermediation between students with disabilities and the academic staff; reinforcing the skills of the academic staff to help them work for inclusion together with the Academic tutor for inclusive music teaching; defining new approaches for training students with SEN; and creating a community of HMEIs adopting social inclusion practice.

Participants were introduced to the crucial role of **mindfulness** in fostering inclusion by promoting awareness and empathy, reducing biases, and enhancing emotional intelligence. It helps individuals understand diverse perspectives, creating a more inclusive environment. I

Part of the session was dedicated to the **Diversity, Inclusion and Gender Equality Working Group of the ARTEMIS project**, and the opportunities it provided for HMEIs to listen, discuss and confront each other about the topics of diversity, equity and inclusion. Through **workshops** in several cities, the group tried to **build a free and safe space** where everyone could listen and be listened to. The topic of visible and invisible disabilities was addressed, as well as the invisible resistance towards the people who have something different from us.

The main message of the session was that participating in **open conversations regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion** makes it possible for the teachers and administrative employees to put their hidden biases into the open for re-examination. The factors that trigger most biases can be **societal misconceptions and fear of the unknown**; hence, there is a need to practise equity. Addressing these issues is critical while fostering a positive enough learning environment for all learners regardless of those that have underlying visible or invisible disabilities. Addressing implicit prejudice does not take a day or a week but even a lifetime and several processes. By making such topics part of **training sessions** and building of the career, HMEIs will be able to create structures that counteract inequality in such institutions.

The Conservatorio di Milano presented their experienced with the model they created for the inclusion of students with SEN.



[Watch the session](#)



[View the presentation](#)

4 - Inclusion: From the Global to the Local

With **Silja Fischer** (IMC), **Keld Hosbond** (GLOMUS Network), and **Anothai Nitibhon** (SEADOM)

Building on discussions from the previous AEC Congress, the International Music Council (IMC) invited participants to explore the principles of international cooperation, emphasizing mutual tolerance, respect, and dialogue across musical cultures. IMC stressed the need of working towards access to music for all and that all artists should be fairly remunerated.

This session showcased examples of these principles in action, such as the transcultural collaboration in the GLOMUS network, where the student centred approach can help focus on the positives of diversity and multi-disciplinarity, and the cross-disciplinary work of the ASEAN Youth Ensemble, and a training program to create safer spaces for women and gender-expansive individuals in music.

Speakers engaged with the audience on the challenges and rewards of international collaboration, inclusion in institutions, and the AEC's newly launched **Traditional, Folk, and Global Music Working Group**. Participants were urged to go beyond perceptions of music within the conservatoire.



[Watch the session](#)



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5 - Setting Trends or Patching Holes? The Third Mission of Conservatoires

With **Giulia Antonicelli**, **Stefania Mormone**, **Giuseppina Manin** (Milan, Italy) and **Feng Lei** (Shanghai), moderated by **Malgorzata Sternal**, AEC Council Member / Krakow



This session explored the growing role of conservatoires in society, focusing on their **"third mission" beyond teaching and research**, which has become increasingly important in institutional evaluations and strategy development. Possible models of engagement and influence on society that conservatoires propose were presented.

The session aimed at giving answers to the following questions: How do we understand and implement the third mission in conservatoires? How can we create sustainable relations with various communities? How much of the conservatoires' contribution to society at large is taken for granted? Do we prepare our students for developing activities with societal impact?



[View the presentation](#)



[Key Takeaways](#)



[Watch the session](#)

The following 3 examples showed how conservatoires can engage with communities, the impact of their societal contributions, and how they prepare students for activities with societal impact:

- „Orchestra InOpera”, Milan (music in prison) – exploring how involvement of music students in creating artistic musical experience contributes to setting a path of recovery of inmates;
- „Diamo il La” , Milan (music in nursery schools) – looking at ways to promote access to conscious listening to classical music and more;
- „Revitalize Arts Education Through Collaboration Between Higher Education Institutions and Local Governments”, Shanghai – analysing how a conservatoire can play an integral part in urban cultural development, actively promote cultural brand projects jointly created with local governments, explore diversified cultivation paths for artistic talents, and enhance the overall artistic level of localities.

6 - Including the Young Generations: Vertical alignment and innovative teacher education

with **Till Skoruppa** (EMU), **Mario Zecher** and **Mattias Lundqvist** (YMTE), moderated by **Finn Schumacker**

This session was dedicated to give an insight into the work of AEC and its close partners in the field of **music education of children and young people**, with a focus on current **teacher training** developments, cohesion between the **educational levels** and the efforts to enhance **access** to music and participation of the young generation in general and to specifically promote young musical talent. The partners represented in the panel were **EMU** (European Music School Union) and **YMTE** (Young Music Talents Europe).

As part of the ARTEMIS project, the SCHEME Working Group (Steering Committee for the Harmonisation of European Music Education, consisting of AEC, EAS and EMU) has been tasked with investigating the impact of current societal changes on music education, such as the digital shift, the COVID crisis, the diversity of cultural needs, migration, climate change, the idea of European cultural citizenship, and how these changes influence **skills and responsibilities of future music teachers** in the formal music education sector (classroom teachers, music schools).

Also, as part of the **ARTEMIS project**, the **AEC / YMTE Joint Working Group** is investigating the landscape of **pre-college music education** addressing young talents and exploring new formats in terms of timing, collaboration with general education, target groups & student recruitment.

The session, which took the form of a dialogue between the panel and the participants, began with an update from the two working groups, where initial findings and proposals were put forward for discussion. The working groups collected feedback in the form of suggestions and new ideas that can enrich the final work with the deliverables of the ARTEMIS project, which will be published in early 2025.



[View the presentation](#)



[Key Takeaways](#)



[Watch the session](#)



PARALLEL SESSIONS III - INTERDISCIPLINARITY

1 - Synergies in Sound: bridging Education and Professional Performance through Collaborative Ventures

With **Stephen Maddock** (Royal Birmingham Conservatoire), **Cecilia Balestra** (Milano Musica Festival), **Gabriele Zanetti** (Da Vinci Publishing), moderated by **Marta Raviglia**, PJP WG and Conservatorio di Musica Girolamo Frescobaldi (Ferrara)

This session explored the synergies between education and professional performance showcasing how collaborative ventures can enhance the landscape for young musicians.



Stephen Maddock spoke about his experience from both sides of the Conservatoire / Professional divide, having recently completed nearly 24 years as Chief Executive of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. He shared some examples of professional development activities at RBC, and talked about what kind of skills employers are now looking for in young musicians and administrators as they enter the profession.

Cecilia Balestra discussed the strategies and the results of the long-term collaboration between Milano Musica Festival, established annually in partnership with Teatro alla Scala, and Conservatorio di Milano, engaging students and offering them valuable opportunities to participate in performances as professional output of articulated workshops.



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[Watch the session](#)

This collaboration aims to promote knowledge of 20th and 21st century composers and performance techniques, while fostering essential connections within the music sector. The festival's approach includes sharing artistic choices, structuring appropriate production methods and ensuring effective communication of the festival's program within the Conservatory.

Finally, Gabriele Zanetti presented Da Vinci Publishing's commitment to young musicians through the DVYoungsounds.com project, which promotes new voices in classical and jazz music while focusing on economic sustainability and product quality. This initiative highlights the opportunities digital music provides to emerging talents and the challenges of ensuring accessible, high-quality production. The presentations was followed by Q&A with the Audience moderated by Marta Raviglia.

2 - New campuses for regenerating cities

Examples from Milan, **Cluj-Napoca** (Romania) and **Shenzhen** (Hong Kong), with **Massimiliano Baggio / Raffaele Vignali / Matteo Valente, Ping Jin** and **Nelida Nedelcut / Oana Balan** moderated by **Charlotte Saelemakers** (Royal Conservatoire Antwerp)

This panel explored the transformative power of new conservatoire campuses and their role in shaping vibrant urban communities.

After a short introduction about the current European initiatives related to the topic, the **Conservatoire of Milan** shared its inspiring beginning of the journey from idea to project plan for the building of a second campus (first stone this winter), designed to rejuvenate a marginalized neighborhood. With a focus on community integration, sustainability, and innovation, the new campus will offer spaces for study, performance, and creative collaboration, fostering professional growth not only for students but also for startups and other youth initiatives.

We also heard from **Shenzhen Conservatoire**, a pioneering institution with a new campus close to completion (in 2026) in China's rapidly growing city, discussing how music can enrich city life, foster international collaboration, and contribute to sustainability goals not only within the city but also towards its Greater Bay Area or urban agglomeration.

Cluj-Napoca in Romania presented its newly completed campus, which has revitalized a once overlooked area. Through cutting-edge facilities, new programs, and a growing artistic community, Cluj-Napoca is positioning itself as a cultural hub with an impressive concert hall, collaborations with major cultural organizations, and interdisciplinary projects.

This panel highlighted how music education not only builds artist's careers but also transforms cities and communities, offering hope, revitalization, and new opportunities going from ideas and dreams to a new campus, a new place to belong.

The topic is extremely interesting and important in the context of "social relevance" of conservatoires. In all three cases it is still too early to say if and how the three campuses will influence the regeneration of respective areas. The examples could be followed up in a similar session at future congresses.



[View the presentation](#)



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[Discussion Report](#)

3. Timeless Tunes: from Da Vinci's Instruments to Cutting-Edge and digital Music Technologies

With **Massimiliano Lisa** (Director of Leonardo 3 Museum) and **Maura Romano** (Country Manager Flagship Store & Institution at Steinway & Sons Italy), moderated by **Domenica Giannone** (Conservatorio di Milano)



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[View the presentation](#)

The session investigated a link between past and future: Leonardo da Vinci's instruments exhibited in Leonardo3 Museum (Milan) and Steinway's newly designed Spirio pianos. The common idea shared by the two presentations focused on the power of ideas and the importance of design. Both, Leonardo da Vinci and Steinway worked on the development of new instruments taking advantage of their ancestors and introducing new technologies in order to bring new musical objects to life. The artistry and the sophisticated skills of craftsmen are the glue putting all these elements together and creating the magic of fresh and renewed inspiration for artists and musicians worldwide. Maura Romano (Steinway&Sons Milano) and Massimiliano Lisa (Leonardo3 Museum) showcased their instruments for a truly interesting travel into space and time from Leonardo's instruments' reconstruction to Steinway's new released Spirio technology.

Leonardo's Instruments

Leonardo presented himself to the Duke of Milan playing a lyre in an extraordinary way. He indeed had a particular interest in music that led him to study and build new musical instruments. In some cases he glimpsed and anticipated solutions developed only later in time. However, all his instruments were imperfect and none were adopted by musicians and made history. Like no other (before or after him), however, he managed to get from his technical projects extraordinarily effective drawings that look like true works of art. His contribution was that of being a great experimenter who created truly original musical instruments or machines.

The Leonardo3 study center has put together the largest collection in the world of functioning instruments designed by Leonardo: Grande Organo Continuo, Harpsichord-Viola, Accordetto Continuo, Cannone Musicale, Trumpet Gigante, Tamburo Elastico, Piva Continua and Flauti Glissati. Those instruments have also been played in a special event at the Milan Conservatory in 2024. Perhaps the first time that these instruments have ever played together. Certainly for the first time since Leonardo's time! During the session, some of Leonardo's instruments exhibited at the Leonardo3 Museum were presented, shown and heard with the help of videos.

Steinway Spirio Technology

Steinway Spirio, a master of art and technology, represents a bridge between tradition and innovation. Steinway & Sons has been making pianos since 1853 and in 2015 introduced Spirio, an high resolution player system, the next step in Steinway's history of innovation. In 2021 the revolution continued with Spirio I r, a recording and editing system capable of live performance capture and playback. The interface offers to performers, composers and sound engineers powerful tools to record, edit, playback, save and share their performances and compositions without compromising the quality of sound and touch of the Steinway piano. Last year the revolutionary technology Spiriocast was introduced, the first high resolution piano broadcast featuring events, live concerts and masterclasses with Steinway Artists and the sharing of performances in real time between remote Steinway Spirio pianos. This instrument represents an invaluable tool for Music Education Institutions. At the session, there will be a Steinway Spirio piano for demonstrations and videos to illustrate the main features of the technology.

4 - Establishing a direct connection between emerging artists and established professionals in the music industry

By **Ragnar Berthling** (Co-founder Keychange), **Tatiana Papastoisi** (ECSA), **Francesca Cerretani** (EJN) and **Alfonso Guerra** (AEC), together with mentors and mentees from the **ECSA-AEC 2023 Mentorship Programme** and the **AEC-EJN 2024 Mentorship Programme**

Mentors and mentees from the **Mentorship Programme**, developed jointly by AEC, **ECSA** (European Composer and Songwriter Alliance) and **EJN** (Europe Jazz Network) shared their experiences, highlighting personal growth, professional development and challenges faced in their mentorship journey. They reflected on how the programme has influenced their artistic practices, broadened their networks, and opened up new opportunities. The Mentorship Programme is an EU-funded initiative that aims to serve as an introduction to the music industry for young female and non-binary composers, songwriters and jazz musicians who are beginning to approach their careers, with the help of well-established professionals as role models and with the ultimate goal of enhancing gender equality and non-binary visibility within the sector. The session also featured group discussion moments.



The representative of **Keychange** set the framework to understand the context of the mentorship programme. The organisation plays a critical role as a leading advocate for gender equality and diversity in the music industry. By demonstrating how initiatives like Keychange align with the mentorship programme, a strategic framework for developing sustainable pathways for female and non-binary music students was provided, further highlighting the importance of fostering equitable opportunities within the music ecosystem.

Finally, the session served as an opportunity to present the brand new mentorship programme to be developed jointly by AEC, ECSA, EJN, JMI (Jeunesses Musicales International) through its Ethno programme, REMAM, Play It Loud! and Keychange, within the framework of the newly Creative Europe grant for European networks for 2025-2028.



 [Watch the session](#)

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 [Key Takeaways](#)

5 - Preserving and Researching our Heritage: library projects in Milan, Ghent and Brussels

With **Gianni Fidanza** and **Sara Taglietti** (Milan), **Peter Dejans** (Ghent), **Olivia Wahnnon de Oliveira** (Bruxelles), and **Carlo Mazzini** (EPASA board member), moderated by **Ivana Perkovic** (AEC Council Member / Belgrade)

What if libraries were not simply places where music is rediscovered, but where music is continuously brought to life? Could libraries become creative spaces where musicians engage with their heritage in new and innovative ways? In many conservatories, the library is seen as a background player—indispensable but passive.

This session challenged that perception and explored how libraries can play a more active role in the educational and artistic development of musicians. The session brought together experts from Milan, Ghent, and Brussels who are rethinking the role of libraries in higher music education institutions.



Gianni Fidanza and Sara Taglietti from the Conservatorio di Milano presented how their library, in collaboration with the Ufficio Ricerca Fondi Musicali (URFM), integrates students in both research and library science, fostering a collaborative environment where students take an active role in exploring the collection. The Conservatorio has increased student footfall into the library with a bibliography class; student interns; paid student workers creating a more vibrant and open space. Carlo Mazzini, representing the student perspective from EPASA, based on his experience on the Milan's Conservatoire library, discussed how working in libraries can enhance students' academic and professional experiences.

Peter Dejans informed about the brand new project 'Resounding Libraries' by the Orpheus Institute in Ghent based on Ton Koopman's private collection now bought by Orpheus and made semi-public, an extraordinary resource of over 5.000 artefacts for 17th- and 18th-century music research, offering fresh perspectives on performance practice and preserved with the newest technology. Much of this collection has now been digitised.

Olivia Wahnnon de Oliveira from the Conservatoire Royal de Bruxelles shared how their heritage library collaborates with students to digitize and perform unpublished works, turning students into ambassadors for these lesser-known pieces. The institution included a mandatory component in its courses: students do a critical edition of an unpublished manuscript in Master years 1 and 2, with the music being performed in a concert. In addition, the conservatoire librarians annually proposes manuscripts from its archives as the subject of performance projects.

The discussion revolved around key questions: How can libraries evolve to become spaces where musicians actively engage with their studies and performance? What unique value can they offer beyond traditional functions? How can they become more visible and central to the artistic and academic life of higher music education institutions?

Participants have been invited to actively contribute by reflecting on the following questions:

- How do your institutions currently integrate libraries into the curriculum?
- Are your libraries involved in performance and research initiatives? If not, what are the obstacles?
- Could student involvement in library activities enhance their education and elevate the library's role?
- What practical steps could be taken to make library resources more integral to the creative and academic projects of your students and faculty?
- How can digital tools help expand the accessibility and visibility of your library's collections?



[View the presentation](#)



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6 - Connecting analysis and performance: the HarmaHub project, and the Performance Studies WG Project

With **Salvatore Gioveni** (Royal Conservatoire Bruxelles) and **Anna Maria Bordin** (Italian Society for Music Analysis and Theory), **Simon Prunet-Foch** (Entre de Musique Baroque de Versailles) moderated by **Riccardo Ceni** (Conservatorio di Milano)

The session moderated by Riccardo Ceni aimed at outlining innovative ways for teaching and conceiving theoretical subjects, especially analytical ones, in musical HEIs.

What is or should be the relationship between practical performative disciplines and theoretical-analytic ones? Can the innovation brought for instance by Performance Studies and Topic Theory provide a compass for teachers, students and researchers on the one hand, and on the other offer institutions an opportunity to meet and exchange innovative practices? The multi-voiced discussion intended to make the current status and possible new developments.

The first perspective was offered by Salvatore Gioveni (Conservatoire Royal de Bruxelles). He had created the “HarMA HUB” project to concentrate on a central online HUB useful tool for students, teachers and researchers. The partners implemented a set of targeted activities and tools:

- A Music Analysis Repository, an EU Bibliography, a Multilingual Basic Terms;
- The implementation of two intensive training programmes “HarMA Weeks” for staff and students;
- The development of a peer-reviewed journal in Music Theory, to support research on these topics;
- The implementation of two dissemination events targeting all HMEIs in Europe,
- A Final Conference “HarMA Seminar” in Valencia, April 14-16 April, 2025, organized since 2017 as an international meeting for HMEI’s music theory faculties.

The main outcome was the strengthening of the community around Music Theory in HMEI’s at the European level, the project’s results being teachers- and students-oriented.

The second perspective came from Anna Maria Bordin, member of the European Platform for Artistic Research in Music (EPARM) and president of the Italian Society of Music Analysis and Theory. She offered an overview of c.a. 50 proposals, characterised by the central role of the pianism, received in occasion of two EPARM Conferences. The overview highlighted the presence of analytical tools, their methodological relevance, the significance in defining the conclusions and, if possible, their innovative profile. The results showed an aware (or unaware) use of analytical tools, often in a multi-analytic and transdisciplinary perspective.

The third perspective came from Simon Prunet-Foch, Head of training at the Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles, about the CMBV professional training workshop, that supports professionals in the music sector by offering them, each year, different professional training courses always dealing with the French musical repertoire of the 17th and 18th centuries. The example of a workshop on the Bande de violons was presented in order to show the preferred educational orientation taken for these experimental workshops, allowing a relevant performance practice experience and a rediscovery of the French baroque repertoire, at the crossroads of musicology and interpretation.



[Watch the session](#)



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PLENARY SESSION II - ARTEMIS FINAL OUTCOMES AND FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION

With members of the ARTEMIS Working Groups and the Chair of the Quality Assurance Committee, moderated by Finn Schumacker

AEC's flagship project ARTEMIS – Empowering Artists as Makers in Society – is AEC's largest Creative Europe program to date, which began its activities in 2022.

Numerous working groups, formed by members from a range of AEC's member institutions, have in the past almost three years immersed themselves in topics such as international cooperation, lifelong learning, advocacy, digitisation, greening the sector, continued development of innovative music education and diversity, inclusion and gender equality.



ARTEMIS is coming to an end, and in this session, we took the opportunity to take a closer look at the results of the extensive project and impressive work by the working groups and the AEC Office which forms an important basis for the further development and transformation of higher music education in general and the AEC member institutions in particular.

At the session participants got an overview of the whole project, and heard from the working groups about their experiences with the project and presentations of their results. They also gained important insight into how to select, combine and implement the many valuable results of the ARTEMIS project at institutions, creating a change process and involving all stakeholders: teachers, staff and students.



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[Mentimeter results](#)



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PLENARY SESSION III - QUALITY ENHANCEMENT AND QUALITY CULTURE IN HIGHER MUSIC EDUCATION

A session by MusiQuE – Music Quality Enhancement

By **Linda Messas** (MusiQuE Director), **Narong Prangcharoen** (College of Music at Mahidol University), **Helena Gaunt** (Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama), moderated by **Lies Colman** and **Orla McDonagh** (MusiQuE Board members)

The session provided a reflective overview of MusiQuE's impact over the past decade, highlighting its role in enhancing arts education institutions worldwide by supporting their continuous development and fostering a culture of quality.

MusiQuE's director, **Linda Messas**, began the session by reflecting on the organization's growth, its accomplishments over the last ten years, and its future vision.



Following this, two institutions shared their experiences with MusiQuE and the tangible impact the review process had on their practices. **Narong Prangcharoen**, Dean of the College of Music at Mahidol University, and **Helena Gaunt**, Principal of the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama, discussed why they chose MusiQuE for their reviews, focusing on the added value MusiQuE provided compared to their university quality assurance systems. They also presented specific actions implemented in response to the Review Team's recommendations, offering valuable insights and practical lessons that could serve as learning points for other institutions.

The session concluded with an interactive group discussion where participants explored the future of quality enhancement in higher music education. In small groups, attendees reflected on their institutions' priorities regarding quality and quality enhancement, considering how these relate to MusiQuE's trajectory and contribution to creating an enhancement-led approach to quality in higher music education.



[Watch the session](#)



[View the presentation](#)

REGIONAL MEETINGS

As every year, participants had a chance to discuss relevant issues in Regional Meetings chaired by AEC Council Members

Discussion Questions:

- Presentations and latest news from the region
- Mapping of existing national/regional associations of HMEIs and a potential more significant role of the national/regional networks collaborating with the AEC on advocacy and data collection.
- Feedback on the Congress program / content so far
- Any other business

Regional Groups and Chairs:

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Austria, Germany, Switzerland | Elisabeth Gutjahr |
| United Kingdom, Ireland | Jeffrey Sharkey |
| Slovenia, Romania, Croatia, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Georgia, Armenia, Ukraine, Moldova, Albania, Lebanon, Egypt, Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Palestine | Ivana Perković |
| France, Luxembourg + French Speaking Regions in Belgium/Canada | Claire Michon |
| Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia | Malgorzata Sternal |
| Italy | Ricardo Ceni |
| Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Iceland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania | Keld Hosbond |
| Spain, Portugal | Bruno Pereira |
| Netherlands, Belgium | Martin Prchal |
| Australia, China, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, Canada, USA, Israël, Qatar | Co. Anothai Nitibhon |



SATURDAY

Mini Workshop on Mindfulness

By **Mariapia Ferdinandi** (IncluMusic project)

In this session participants had the opportunity to explore what is Mindfulness, its key principles and why it is important to develop it in daily life in order to improve our mental health, focus and emotional regulation.

They also experienced a short Mindfulness practice on the breath followed by a reflection on the experience and on how to incorporate mindfulness into our daily routines.

Information Forum and market

Music Introduction - A Pop Soul Medley

Luana Fracalvieri (voice), Simone Longo (piano)

Information Forum

34 plenary presentations by AEC Member institutions took place moderated by Deborah Kelleher, AEC President, followed by Q&A with the speakers in the form of "market place".

- **AEC At Osaka World Expo 2025**
- **Erasmus Orchestra**
- **dialoguing@rts – Advancing Cultural Literacy for Social Inclusion through Dialogical Arts Education**
- **1000+ Concerts: Innovating Higher Music Education through Social Inclusion**
- **FAMES**
- **AEC for the more sustainable planet: Green Music posters and raising awareness through music**
- **EPASA – European Performing Arts Students Association**
- **MUSENSE Project**
- **IN.TUNE Alliance – Innovative Universities in Music & Art in Europe**
- **Consortium of European Universities FilmEU and Film School of the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre**
- **European Folk Network – collaboration with the folk music and dance scene across Europe**
- **SEAMLI and SEADOM 2025**
- **Music Festival and Sustainability – PGMF2024**
- **Princess Galyani Vadhana Institute of Music International Symposium (PGVIS)**
- **CEMAN – Central European Music Academies Network**
- **Creative projects of the I.P. Kotlyarevsky Kharkiv National University of Arts**
- **Yerevan State Conservatory in today reality**
- **InMlcs international master in composition for screen**
- **IMPACT – International Master in Dance Creation**
- **COPECO**
- **Inspiring Creative Jazz Music**
- **Unlocking Potential: Bridging Worlds with Young Musicians**
- **College of Chinese And ASEAN Arts, International Students and Scholarship Opportunities**
- **Choirs for Ecocide Law**
- **Atys project, toward a new interpretation**
- **Music Diaries 2024**
- **The Nomadic School of Arts (<https://nomadic.schoolofartsgent.be/en/>): a large scale project of KASK & Conservatorium**
- **The Modular Synth of Chalk? Making Blackboard Music**

- **What's cooking at RCA**
- **New Master on Innovative Music Performance at Oulu University of Applied Sciences**
- **Launching the Institute for Arts and Medicine at UNLV: Participation in the Global Ecosystem Integrating the Arts and Healthcare Sectors**
- **ASIMUT**
- **MUVAC**
- **NKODA**



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Discussion Groups

On the last day, participants had the opportunity to join discussion groups on three specific topics.

A: ARTEMIS in presence Safe&Brave Space - The Safe&Brave Space was shaped as a discussion group, in which participants were encouraged to give feedback about the event itself and situations experienced in their institutions with particular attention to diversity, inclusion, gender equality and non-discrimination matters.

B: Fostering International Synergies through Global Collaborations – workshop by SEADOM - This workshop invited European music conservatories to explore the potential of fostering synergies through global collaboration, with a particular focus on partnerships with Asian institutions. By engaging in international exchanges, conservatories may discover opportunities to blend diverse musical traditions and pedagogical approaches, potentially enhancing cultural understanding and driving innovation. Such collaborations could manifest in joint performances, research projects, and faculty initiatives, possibly creating a more dynamic educational environment that's responsive to evolving industry needs. Participants had the opportunity to examine real-world case studies of global collaborations and their potential synergies, while considering strategies for addressing cross-cultural challenges. Through interactive discussions, attendees gained insights into establishing meaningful global connections and building respectful partnerships. This workshop aimed to provide tools and ideas for fostering innovative synergies through global collaboration, potentially promoting greater inclusion and interdisciplinarity in conservatories worldwide.

C: **Advocacy: Large agendas, concrete actions!** - In a world where competition for attention continues to intensify and grow more complex, it is essential to regularly reassess and refine one's communication strategies. Key questions include: What are the core messages? Who is the target audience? Who are allies and adversaries? And how can we best integrate and optimise the various tools available?

For many years, AEC has built considerable expertise in lobbying, achieving success on numerous agendas, particularly within the framework of the European Union. With the 2023 Advocacy Strategy, AEC is committed to developing a toolkit that members can utilize to meet diverse needs at national, regional, and local levels. This initial version of the toolkit was introduced during the Advocacy Pre Congress Workshop.

This session invited members to engage in discussions based on their own experiences, addressing the broad spectrum of advocacy needs—from internal efforts to influence new institutional policies to external advocacy for institutions facing political challenges to academic freedom. These discussions aimed to provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of advocacy, offering concrete examples of advocacy activities, and introducing AEC's advocacy toolkit and its practical applications. At the same time, AEC gathered valuable insights from members about their advocacy work at both national and institutional levels, which will inform the ongoing development of the toolkit.



[View the presentation](#)

D: **Exploring student representation in conservatoires: Dialogue for change** - In this interactive discussion session, hosted by the European Performing Arts Students Association (EPASA), participants engaged in an open and exploratory dialogue on the evolving role of student representation in higher music education institutions and decision-making processes at conservatoires. Monica Vejgaard presented EPASA's mission. The question asked to the participants to trigger the discussion was: what can we learn with each other and how do we improve the students' participation in HMEI?

Multimeter was used to output the discussion in small groups:

- What role should students play in shaping the future conservatoires?
- How can student voices contribute to decision-making in a mutually meaningful way for everyone involved?
- Which questions do we need to address when discussing student representation in HMEI?

Rather than aiming for final answers, this session sought to collaboratively discover the right questions. Through discussions and shared reflections, participants explored diverse perspectives on the importance of student involvement. The hope with this session was to create space and time for a dynamic and ever-evolving conversation about reimagining traditional roles and better-integrating student voices into the heart of higher music education institutions.



[View the presentation](#)

General Assembly

Agenda:

1. Approval of the minutes of the 2023 General Assembly
2. President's Report: Annual Report 2023 and activities to November 2024 (for information)
3. Elections to the Council
 - 3.1 Appointment of returning officer
 - 3.2 Presentation of the candidates
 - 3.3 Explanation of the voting procedure and vote
4. AEC Strategic Plan 2025-2030
 - Approval of the Strategic Plan
 - Presentation of the Operational Plan (for information)
5. Financial report of the Secretary General
 - Report on the 2023 accounts (for information)
 - Approval of the proposed membership fees for 2025
 - Approval of the forecast out turn 2024
 - Approval of the proposed budget for 2025
 - Appointment of a new external auditor for the 2024 accounts
6. AEC Sustainability policy and Action plan (for information)
7. Matters related to the international subject- specific quality enhancement agency, MusiQuE (for information)
8. Confirmation of new members, withdrawals and expired memberships (for information)
9. Election to the Council (continued from points 3.)
 - Announcement of the election results for the vacant seats on Council
10. Future Congresses
11. Any other business



[Watch the session](#)

During the General Assembly, AEC active members voted on a range of key documents, including those addressing crucial financial matters such as the proposed AEC budget and the updated membership fees for 2025.

In addition, they were introduced to the AEC Sustainability Policy and Action Plan, marking a significant milestone in the organisation's ongoing commitment to the green shift.

The General Assembly also formally approved the AEC Strategy 2030, which outlines four strategic objectives, complemented by a fifth organisational strand, that will serve as the foundation for the AEC's future operations. The Strategy will soon be available on the AEC website.

Moreover, the General Assembly welcomed the 2024 cohort of new members, bringing the total number of AEC members to 309, consisting of 270 active members and 39 associate members. This achievement sets a new record for AEC membership, reflecting the growing influence and reach of the organisation.



[GA documents](#)

AEC Council Elections:

The active members of the AEC also voted to fill two vacant seats on the AEC Council. In addition to one seat that had been announced as vacant in October, a sitting Council member chose to end their term a year earlier than expected, creating a second vacancy.

The AEC received two applications for these positions: Gyula Fekete from the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music in Budapest and Jan Philipp Sprick from HfMT – Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg. Following the vote, both candidates secured an absolute majority of votes and were elected to the AEC Council. We extend our best wishes to them as they take on their new roles!

Following the 2024 General Assembly, the AEC Council has the following composition.

- AEC President: Deborah Kelleher (Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin, Ireland),
- AEC Vice-President: Jeffrey Sharkey (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow, United Kingdom),
- AEC Vice-President: Elisabeth Gutjahr (Mozarteum, Salzburg, Austria)
- AEC Secretary General: Ivana Perković (Faculty of Music, University of Arts, Belgrade, Serbia)
- Riccardo Ceni (Conservatorio di Musica "Giuseppe Verdi", Milano)
- Małgorzata Sternal (The Krzysztof Penderecki Academy of Music in Kraków, Krakow, Poland)
- 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)
- Barbara Maria Willi (Janáček Academy of Performing Arts in Brno, Brno, Czech Republic).
- Gyula Fekete (Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music, Budapest, Hungary)
- Jan Philipp Sprick (HfMT – Hochschule für Musik und Theater, Hamburg, Germany)

Co-Opted members: Abra Bush, (Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, United States), Anothai Nitibhon (Princess Galyani Vadhana Institute of Music, Thailand), Monica Vejgaard and Miranda Harmer (EPASA).

The AEC Council and AEC Office would like to express their sincere gratitude to Martin Prchal (Royal Conservatoire, The Hague, Netherlands), who has decided to end his term on the Council due to other commitments. We thank Martin for his dedication and invaluable contributions and wish him all the best in his endeavours and projects.



STUDENTS WRAP UP

EPASA hosted the wrap up session, which included a dynamic discussion on feedback for future AEC events, how to build EPASA further as a community, and how to get further involved and support each other in creating a better sector.



[View the presentation](#)



CLOSING SESSION

Closing remarks

The venue and dates of the AEC Congress 2025 were announced:
University Mozarteum Salzburg, Austria, on 5-8 November 2025

Closing performance - A Chamber Music Farewell:

Francis Poulenc - Sextuor FP100

II. Divertissement: Andantino - III. Finale: Prestissimo

Marta D'Aleo (flute), Silvia Piras (oboe), Alice Molari (clarinet), Thomas Claisen (horn), Stefano Ottomaniello (bassoon), Aram Shekikyan (piano)

 [Watch the session](#)

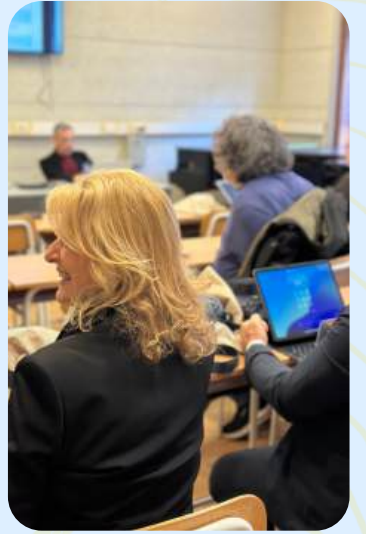
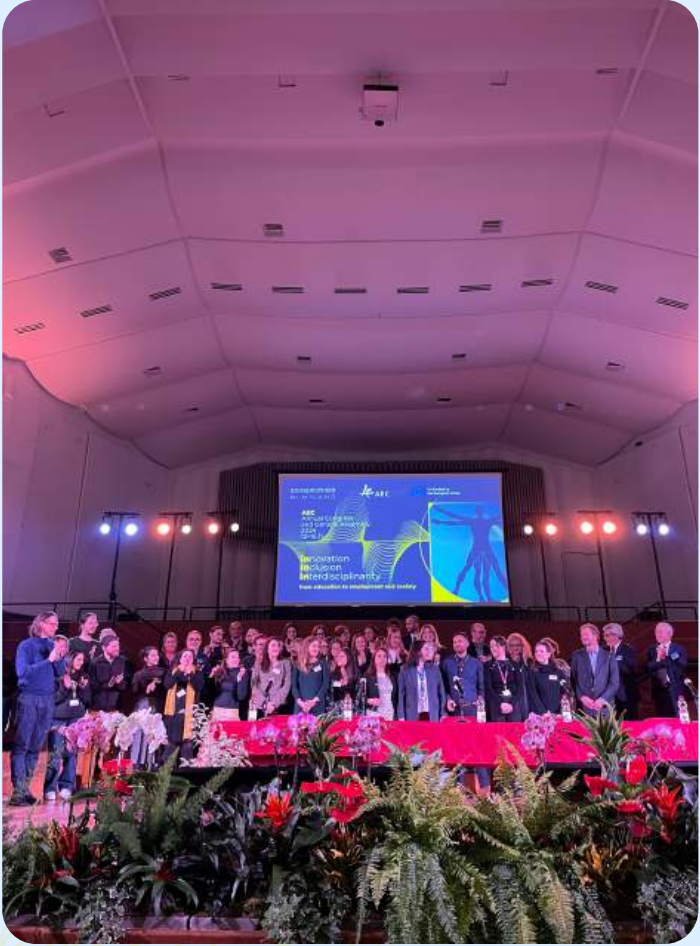


NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

Participants had the opportunity to meet colleagues during the coffee breaks and organised lunches and dinners. The welcome dinner on Thursday took place in the Conservatoire after a fantastic concert by the Conservatoire Orchestra.

On Saturday participants visited the Leonardo da Vinci Museum of Science and Technology where the elegant Closing Dinner also took place.





SPONSORS

AEC would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our sponsors for their contributions to the success of the Congress. It was a pleasure to have you with us!

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THANK YOU!

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all our members and partners who travelled from near and far to attend the event. AEC would also like to thank all speakers, moderators, the Congress Committee members, and ARTEMIS Working Group members who contributed to making this event a success!

Many thanks also to the Conservatorio di Milano for hosting us, to Riccardo Ceni, Andrea Burro, Luisa Prayer, Domenica Giannone and Raffaella Valsecchi for the coordination work and onsite help to ensure a great setup and to the conservatoire's student representatives for their support.

WHO

The Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC) is a European cultural and educational network with around 309 member institutions for professional music training in 64 countries. The network is co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme.

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Wednesday 13 November

14:00 - 18:30 **Pre-Congress Workshop** – MusiQuE Peer Reviewers Training - FOR REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS ONLY - **Sala Coro (+ Rooms 104, 105, Sala Conferenza Biblioteca)**

18:30 - 19:00 **Concert Ensemble Erasmus Orchestra** - **Sala Puccini**

Thursday 14 November

09:30 - 13:30 **Continuation of the Pre-Congress Workshop** – MusiQuE Peer Reviewers Training (FOR REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS ONLY) - **Sala Coro (+ Rooms 104, 105, Sala Conferenza Biblioteca)**

09:30 - 13:00 **Pre-Congress Workshops**

Digitisation Workshop - **Room 107**

Advocacy Workshop - **Room 106**

Project Writing Workshop - **Room 108**

13:45 **Registration** starts - welcome coffee - **Foyer Sala Verdi**

14:30 - 16:00 Optional **Guided Tour** - **Meeting point: registration desk**

15:00 - 15:50 Welcome to **Newcomers** - **Sala Puccini**

15:00 - 15:50 Welcome to **Students** - **Foyer Alto Verdi**

16:00 - 17:15 **Opening event** - **Sala Verdi** - **STREAMED**

17:15 - 17:45 **Networking with refreshments** - **Foyer**

17:45 - 19:00 **Opening Brainstorming** on topics proposed by participants - **Please check the rooms in Swapcard**

19:15 - 20:00 **Conservatoire Orchestra Concert** - **Sala Verdi**

20:00 **Welcome dinner** - **Cloister and foyer**

Friday 15 November

08:45 Registration for late comers - **Registration desk**

09:00 - 10:00 **Plenary Session I** - *A vocation for sharing* by **Filippo Del Corno** - **Sala Verdi** - **STREAMED**

10:15 - 11:15 **Parallel Sessions I** - **Innovation**

1 - Play Green! Implementing the Green Shift - **Sala Conferenza Biblioteca**

2 - Innovating Curricula - **Sala Coro**

3 - Innovations and Opportunities for HMEI through Artistic Research: The Italian Case - **Sala Verdi** - **STREAMED**

4 - Digital Innovation: implementing the Digital Shift - **Room 107**

5 - 'Whatever it is I'm Against It': A Change Management Toolbox for HMEI Leadership - **Sala Puccini**

6 - Building curiosity and capacity through Lifelong Learning - **Foyer Alto Verdi**

11:15 - 11:45 **Networking with refreshments** - **Foyer**

ASIMUT presentation - **Room 104**

- 1 - Exploring the link between inclusion and artistic practice: resistance within teaching and making music - **Room 107**
- 2 - Power Relations towards inclusion: the implementation of PRIhME's guidelines and launch of the PRIhME book - **Sala Coro**
- 3 - Fostering the inclusion of students with Special Education Needs in Higher Music Education - **Sala Conferenze Biblioteca**
- 4 - Inclusion: from the global to the local - **Sala Puccini**
- 5 - Setting Trends or Patching Holes? The Third Mission of Conservatoires - **Sala Verdi - STREAMED**
- 6 - Including the Young Generations: Vertical alignment and innovative teacher education - **Foyer Alto Verdi**

12:45 - 14:00 Lunch - **Foyer**

- muvac presentation - **Room 105**
nkoda presentation - **Hotel Indigo Milano**

14:00 - 15:00 Parallel Sessions III - Interdisciplinarity

- 1 - Synergies in Sound: Bridging Education and Professional Performance through Collaborative Ventures - **Sala Verdi - STREAMED**
- 2 - New campuses for regenerating cities - **Foyer Alto Verdi**
- 3 - Timeless Tunes: from Da Vinci's Instruments to Cutting-Edge and digital Music Technologies - **Sala Puccini**
- 4 - Establishing a direct connection between emerging artists and established professionals in the music industry - the example of the Mentorship Programme for young female and non-binary composers, songwriters and jazz students - **Sala Coro**
- 5 - Preserving and Researching our Heritage - **Sala Conferenze Biblioteca**
- 6 - Connecting analysis and performance: the HarmaHub project, and the Performance Studies WG Project - **Room 107**

15:15 - 16:15 Plenary Session II - ARTEMIS final outcomes and future implementation - **Sala Verdi - STREAMED**16:15 - 16:45 Networking with refreshments with ARTEMIS Information Market - **Foyer**16:45 - 17:45 Plenary Session III - Quality Enhancement and Quality Culture in Higher Music Education by MusiQuE - **Sala Verdi - STREAMED**18:00 - 19:15 Regional meetings with AEC Council Members - **Please check the rooms in Swapcard**

Saturday 16 November

09:10 - 09:40 *Mini workshop on Mindfulness by Maria Pia Ferdinandi, IncluMusic (optional) - **Aula Pollini - optional***09:45 - 11:30 Information Forum - **Sala Verdi - STREAMED**11:30 - 12:00 Networking with refreshments with Information Market - **Foyer**

12:00 - 13:00 Discussion groups

- A** - ARTEMIS in presence Safe&Brave Space - **Room 107**
- B** - Fostering Synergies through Global Collaborations - workshop by SEADOM - **Sala Puccini**
- C** - Advocacy: large agendas, concrete actions! - **Sala Coro**
- D** - Exploring student representation in conservatoires: Dialogue for change - **Sala Conferenze Biblioteca**

13:00 - 14:30 Lunch - **Foyer**14:30 - 16:30 AEC General Assembly 2024 - **Sala Verdi - STREAMED**15:00 - 16:30 Students' Wrap Up - hosted by EPASA - **Sala Puccini**16:30 - 17:00 Networking with refreshments - **Foyer**17:00 - 17:30 Closing Session - **Sala Verdi - STREAMED**19:00 - 20:00 Visit to Leonardo da Vinci Museum of Science and Technology - **L. da Vinci Museum of Science and Technology**20:00 Closing dinner - **L. da Vinci Museum of Science and Technology**