



**Association Européenne des
Conservatoires, Académies de
Musique et Musikhochschulen**

Information Brochure on AEC Membership

**Association Européenne des Conservatoires,
Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC)**

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in becoming a member of the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen. AEC is indeed a member organisation of conservatoires, music academies and music universities across the European Higher Education Area and beyond, which are generally identified as Higher Music Education Institutions (HMEIs). More than 320 institutions are currently AEC members and thanks to AEC, institutions can find themselves represented in this network, creating one voice for Higher Music Education:

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

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.

We hope that you share our vision and will, when joining the AEC Community, be guided by it. We believe that AEC membership carries many benefits for institutions. Regarding the procedure of becoming an AEC member, we hope that you understand that we need to make an evaluation of your institution to ensure that it is consistent with our membership requirements. Doing this means that, when we need to make statements about the institutions we represent to a variety of (political) leaders and stakeholders, we can do so with complete confidence that what we say applies to all our members. Acceptance for membership therefore becomes the confirmation of an institution's credentials as a deliverer of Higher Music Education, or as an organisation closely connected with this activity.

This brochure will provide you with information about the benefits, types of membership, the fee and of course on the application itself. Should you have any questions after reading the brochure, please do not hesitate to contact the AEC office via mail at info@aec-music.eu or paolacurci@aec-music.eu.

We're looking forward to receiving your application and we hope to be able to welcome you to the AEC Community very soon.



Debora Kelleher, AEC President

Benefits of Membership

We believe the benefits of membership are many and powerful. Here are the main ones:

- **Strength in numbers:** A key benefit of AEC membership is the connection it offers to more than 320 similar institutions working with similar ambitions, challenges and concerns. Higher Music Education Institutions (HMEIs) are often small institutions within their own national higher education landscapes and their voice can sometimes be overlooked. Joining the AEC network means that the interests and concerns of Higher Music Education can be broadcast loudly and clearly.
- **Information sharing:** AEC provides channels through which member institutions can share information with one another and find suitable partners with whom to work on projects and events. The AEC Office also regularly distributes news, advice and information of general relevance to all its members. Through its extensive database, AEC can provide the kinds of statistics and data about European Higher Music Education that institutions increasingly need for their dialogues with ministries, funders, quality assurance agencies, etc.
- **Getting together:** The core activity of the AEC from its foundation has been helping those who work in HMEIs to meet each other, away from the busy demands of their normal routines and in environments designed to stimulate reflection, discussion and fresh ideas. AEC organises four meetings yearly, each tuned to particular groups and interests. Next to this brief introduction on our events, more information can be found on the AEC website:
 - ❖ Each year in November, the AEC Annual Congress takes place in a different country, during which representatives of all member institutions meet to discuss specific themes, to exchange information and to broaden their professional and personal networks. The AEC Annual Congress is also used as a platform to inform AEC members about the work done in the AEC projects and about the latest developments at European level. The General Assembly of AEC members is another important part of the Annual Congress, including the Information Forum.
 - ❖ Another event organised by the AEC each year is the Annual Meeting for International Relations Coordinators in European HMEIs. The meeting is meant for administrative or teaching staff members who deal with international relations and European programmes (such as Erasmus+), as well as for institutions not familiar with these programmes, but who have an interest to become involved.
 - ❖ In addition, the AEC organises workshops and seminars on specific subjects. These can be related to a specific European project or to a particular genre or topic within Higher Music Education. AEC currently runs platforms on Pop and Jazz (PJP), and Artistic Research in Music (EPARM).
- **Breaking new ground:** AEC has been deliberately pro-active in engaging with the higher education reforms instituted by Education Ministers across Europe since the Bologna Process. AEC considers itself as a think tank in the field of Higher Music Education. AEC's philosophy is firmly rooted in the conviction that the driving forces behind innovation and further developing the landscape of Higher Music Education should be the actors themselves: performers, composers, teachers, scholars, and students. Ground-breaking work has been carried out already within the framework of a series of AEC-led projects in the past. Many members and their staff have become innovators and experts by joining Working Groups on learning outcomes, competences, quality assurance, etc. gathering experts from all over Europe to work together towards improving the field.
- **Publications:** AEC has a significant catalogue of published handbooks and other documents designed specifically to be of use to member institutions and staff working in them, authored by experts from the field. Wherever possible, publications are available in various European languages besides English. These are mainly in French, German and Italian, but also other languages depending on the interest and content. New publications are distributed in relevant languages to members, and a selection of all publications is on display at every AEC event.

- **Quality enhancement:** For many HMEIs, evaluation and accreditation became a recurrent part of the quality assurance cycle. AEC has contributed greatly by developing tailored quality enhancement procedures which member institutions can use either independently for their formal reviews or, often, in conjunction with them. From AEC's work on quality assurance issues, the foundation of MusiQuE (www.musique-qe.eu) emerged, which is the only European located subject-specific quality assurance body active in the field of music.
- **Reaping the benefits:** AEC members pay an annual membership fee. This entitles them to special members' rates for registration at all the events organised by AEC and to enter a special members' domain of the AEC website. Members can also access fuller information than available to visitors and post job vacancies in the AEC online vacancies platform. In addition, members can download full electronic versions of AEC publications and purchase additional hard copy versions without costs, just paying the postal charges. Lastly, AEC members initiatives can be disseminated through the AEC communications channels online, namely AEC newsletter (issued on a monthly basis) and social media channels.

Types of Membership

The AEC currently distinguishes two types of membership categories: Active Membership and Associate Membership. Active and Associate members are defined by the criteria listed below. There is no distinction between the statuses of the two types of membership in all, but one of the actions and interactions of the AEC. The one exception concerns voting rights at the AEC's General Assembly, an event which takes place during the Congress. The AEC Statutes state that these are confined to Active Members, although Associate Members are welcome to attend, and participate in the discussions of the Assembly. Associate Members pay the lowest level of annual membership fee and have all other rights and privileges of membership in common with Active Members.

Active membership

This is described in the AEC Statutes and their supplementary Internal Regulations as 'For conservatoires, music academies, music universities, Musikhochschulen and other equivalent institutions IN Europe¹, in which curricula of professional quality are aimed at training for the music profession².'

- ¹ Defined as: *the European Higher Education Area [EHEA] plus countries identified for increased cooperation under the European Neighbourhood Policy.*
- ² Defined as: *institutions engaged in the delivery of programmes, some of which are above Level 4 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) or its equivalent, and meet the broad description of such programmes contained in the AEC/Tuning Handbook: 'Reference Points for the Design and Delivery of Degree Programmes in Music'.*

Associate membership*

This is described in the AEC Statutes as:

1. For conservatoires, music academies, music universities and other equivalent institutions OUTSIDE Europe that provide the same level of study courses as indicated above.
2. For other organisations IN and OUTSIDE Europe which are active in, or have a connection to the training for the music profession.

For example:

- Higher education institutions where music is taught but not with the particular professional emphasis found in HMEIs and their equivalents;
- Institutions active in music training, but only at the levels below higher education;
- Institutions and organisations dealing with the music profession in any or all of its forms, part of whose work has clear connections with Higher Music Education and its institutions.

Membership duration

When you successfully apply to become AEC member, your membership will be automatically renewed each year. You will keep receiving news and information on events and projects, as well as an invoice with the new membership fee in January each year. Should you wish to withdraw, you can notify the AEC Office via email, preferably with some feedback on your membership.

(*) Please note that the AEC Council, the association's governing body, ultimately decides on membership applications. Members that are eligible to become Active members are required to apply to do so.

Membership Fees

AEC Membership fees are reviewed annually and are calculated according to the principles that are approved by the General Assembly each year.

During the 2013 AEC General Assembly, it was decided that the membership fees would be recalculated according to the latest Gross National Product (GNP) data available. Countries will be assembled into different categories depending on their GNI. In addition, the membership fees are corrected in line with the Belgian indexation rate, which depends on the price of consumption goods. Normally this amounts to a 1 to 2.5% raise per year.

In 2017, the AEC General Assembly approved the Sustainability Plan 2019-2022, thanks to which the AEC has built its financial reserves and can function independently from (European) project funding. During this period, membership fees were gradually increased in a balanced manner and based on the principle of solidarity between members, keeping the principles as approved in 2013, but adding several others. The categories of GNI were adjusted and for the countries in the highest categories the fee gradually raised towards 2022, in order to reach a proportion of the GNI that is close to 3%.

The membership fees proposed for 2026 build on the results of the Sustainability Plan mentioned above. Additionally, the following elements are considered in determining the new membership fee levels:

- All membership fees are adjusted in line with the Belgian inflation rate (+2%);
- Active membership fees are based on 2024 GNI, which divides the countries into 10 different groups;
- Active membership fees are further divided into three categories, based on their number of students:
 - o Institutions with less than 200 students pay 75% of the indexed fee;
 - o Institutions with 200 to 700 students pay 100% of the indexed fee;
 - o Institutions with more than 700 students pay 125% of the indexed fee.

The AEC Council proposed the new membership fee levels set out in the table below, during the AEC General Assembly in November 2025 in Salzburg, to be adopted for 2026:

Country	Ref. LATE FEE IN 2025	NEW FULL FEE IN 2026	NEW FULL FEE IN 2026	NEW FULL FEE IN 2026
	Category 2 (200-700 students) in EUR	Category 1 (>700 students) in EUR	Category 2 (200-700 students) in EUR	Category 3 (<200 students) in EUR
LUXEMBOURG	2,059.16	2,625.43	2,100.35	1,575.26
NORWAY	2,059.16	2,625.43	2,100.35	1,575.26
IRELAND	2,059.16	2,625.43	2,100.35	1,575.26
SWITZERLAND	2,059.16	2,625.43	2,100.35	1,575.26
NETHERLANDS	1,742.37	2,221.52	1,777.21	1,332.91
DENMARK	1,742.37	2,221.52	1,777.21	1,332.91
ICELAND	1,742.37	2,221.52	1,777.21	1,332.91
SWEDEN	1,742.37	2,221.52	1,777.21	1,332.91
AUSTRIA	1,742.37	2,221.52	1,777.21	1,332.91
GERMANY	1,636.77	2,086.88	1,669.51	1,252.13
BELGIUM	1,636.77	2,086.88	1,669.51	1,252.13
FINLAND	1,636.77	2,086.88	1,669.51	1,252.13
FRANCE	1,636.77	2,086.88	1,669.51	1,252.13

UK	1,636.77	2,086.88	1,669.51	1,252.13
ITALY	1,372.77	1,750.28	1,400.23	1,050.17
SPAIN	1,151.08	1,467.62	1,174.10	880.57
SLOVENIA	1,151.08	1,467.62	1,174.10	880.57
ISRAEL	-	1,467.62	1,174.10	880.57
CYPRUS	1,151.08	1,467.62	1,174.10	880.57
CZECHIA	1,151.08	1,467.62	1,174.10	880.57
LITHUANIA	1,151.08	1,467.62	1,174.10	880.57
PORTUGAL	1,151.08	1,467.62	1,174.10	880.57
CROATIA	1,068.20	1,361.96	1,089.57	817.18
POLAND	1,068.20	1,361.96	1,089.57	817.18
ESTONIA	1,151.08	1,361.96	1,089.57	817.18
ROMANIA	938,81	1,361.96	1,089.57	817.18
RUSSIA	938,81	1,361.96	1,089.57	817.18
HUNGARY	1,068.20	1,361.96	1,089.57	817.18
SLOVAKIA	1,068.20	1,361.96	1,089.57	817.18
TURKIYE	938,81	1,196.98	957.58	718.19
LATVIA	1,068.20	1,196.98	957.58	718.19
GREECE	1,068.20	1,196.98	957.58	718.19
BULGARIA	938,81	1,196.98	957.58	718.19
KAZAKHSTAN	902,47	1,196.98	957.58	718.19
MONTENEGRO	938,81	1,196.98	957.58	718.19
BELARUS	902,47	1,196.98	957.58	718.19
SERBIA	902,47	1,150.65	920.52	690.39
GEORGIA	866,15	1,150.65	920.52	690.39
NORTH MACEDONIA	902,47	1,150.65	920.52	690.39
ALBANIA	902,47	1,150.65	920.52	690.39
ARMENIA	902,47	1,150.65	920.52	690.39
BOSNIA HERZ.	902,47	1,150.65	920.52	690.39
MOLDOVA *	-	-	-	-
UKRAINE *	-	-	-	-
EGYPT	866,15	1,104.34	883.47	662.60
LEBANON	866,15	1,104.34	883.47	662.60
ASSOCIATE MEMBERS	902.47	920.52	920.52	920.52

(*) Institutions from Ukraine and Moldova benefit from a free membership until 2027, included. In 2022, the AEC Council granted free membership to these institutions to strengthen cross-border collaboration and help staff and students from Ukraine and neighbouring countries out of the European Union during the Russian invasion.

Please note that, as in previous years, an early-bird discount of 5% will be applied to the figures listed above when the payment to the AEC is made before 01/04/2026.

In addition, since 2019, institutions that are both members of AEC and ELIA can apply for an extra 10% discount on their membership fees with both AEC and ELIA. More information about the rules and conditions can be found on the following link: https://cms.aec-music.eu/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/elia-double-membership-discount_20190124111300.pdf

Application

Based upon the information in this brochure, we hope you will want to apply for membership and will have a good sense of which category best applies to you. If you are in any doubt and cannot find the clarification you are seeking on the AEC website, please feel free to contact the AEC Office for further help.

Once you are ready to apply, you should construct an application file, which should include:

- A completed copy of the AEC application form that accompanies this brochure;
- A formal letter from the head of your institution, on headed notepaper and with institutional stamp, where applicable, stating your wish to become a member of the AEC (including a mention of the membership status you wish to apply for: active or associate);
- A short presentation of your institution and of its activities (e.g. a study programme or any other relevant information) in order to support your request for one or the other membership status.

Applications for AEC membership should be sent to: paolacurci@aec-music.eu

When receiving your application, we will process it as quickly as possible, but we kindly ask you to understand that acceptance or rejection of a membership application is formally a decision of the AEC Council. Your membership application will be discussed at the next AEC Council meeting following your submission date. AEC Council meets three times a year, and AEC Executive Committee twice.

We look forward to hearing from you and, potentially, to welcoming you as a new member.

For more information about the AEC, please consult the AEC website at:

<http://www.aec-music.eu>.