



Association Européenne des
Conservatoires, Académies de
Musique et Musikhochschulen

NOTES FOR INSTITUTIONS WISHING TO BECOME AEC MEMBERS

**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 AEC. The AEC is a member organisation of conservatoires across the European Higher Education Area and beyond. Some 300 institutions are currently AEC members and one of its great strengths is their active engagement with the Association and what it stands for. The AEC's Vision is summed up in the following statement:

*The AEC aims to be **the leading voice for European higher music education** and a powerful advocate for all that is best in it throughout the world. It sees the discipline of higher music education as combining a quest for excellence in three areas: artistic practice (the doing and making of music); learning and teaching (the transmission of knowledge and understanding of music) and research and innovation (the exploration of new musical knowledge and understanding and of new ways of applying it). It seeks to foster all of these elements and to encourage the diversity and dynamism with which they are pursued in different institutions, countries and regions.*

We hope that you will feel that you share this vision and that you wish to join the community of institutions who, as AEC members, are guided by it. We believe that AEC membership carries many benefits for institutions and some of these are listed below.

At the same time, we hope that you will 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 to politicians and other leaders and influential bodies about the institutions we represent, we can do so with complete confidence that what we say applies to all our members. In this way, also, acceptance for membership becomes, in itself, the confirmation of an institution's credentials as a deliverer of higher music education, or as an organisation closely connected with this activity. Details of membership criteria are given below.

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 nearly 300 similar institutions working with similar ambitions, challenges and concerns. Conservatoires are often small institutions within their own national higher education landscapes and their voice as individuals can sometimes be overlooked. Being within the AEC membership network means sharing a platform from which the interests and concerns of higher music education can be broadcast loudly and clearly.
- **Information sharing:** AEC provides channels through which members institutions can share information with one another and find suitable partners with whom to work on projects and events. The AEC Office Team also regularly distributes news, advice and information of general relevance to all its members. Through its extensive and growing databases of information, AEC can provide the kinds of statistics and data about European higher music education that institutions increasingly need for their own 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 conservatoires 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 now organises as many as five meetings for its members in each year, each tuned to particular groups and interests. Here is a brief summary; 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 in higher education at European level. The annual 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 Conservatoires. The meeting is meant for administrative or teaching staff members in European conservatoires 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 in higher music education. AEC currently runs three Platforms of this kind: the AEC Pop and Jazz Platform (PJP), the AEC Early Music Platform (EMP) and the European Platform for 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 in the Bologna Process. The AEC philosophy is that it is better for these processes to be carried out by people who understand music - i.e. the musicians themselves - and this means that ground-breaking work has taken place within the framework of a series of AEC-led projects. Many individuals from AEC member institutions have now become experts in their own right in matters such as learning outcomes, competences, quality assurance, etc. as a result of their participation in these activities, and the process continues with new projects.
- **Publications:** AEC now has a significant catalogue of published handbooks and other documents designed specifically to be of use to member institutions and staff working in them. The authors are generally from precisely this background themselves and know from their own situations what is relevant and what is not. This catalogue is being added to all the time and, wherever possible, versions in English, German and French - and sometimes other European languages as well - are produced. When new publications appear, they are distributed in relevant languages to members, and a selection of all publications is on display at every AEC event.
- **Counselling and advice:** Recognising the value of the specialist knowledge now held amongst its members, AEC holds registers of individuals and their expertise. Members can draw upon these to find

suitable experts for counselling visits and other forms of advice. At times when it receives funding for this, AEC is even able to help with financial and logistical arrangements for such visits.

- **Accreditation:** Many conservatoires are now going through accreditation processes and these will become a recurrent part of the quality assurance cycle. AEC has developed specially-tailored quality enhancement procedures which member institutions can use either independently of their formal reviews or, often, in conjunction with them. AEC has now collaborated with national accreditation agencies in several European countries on joint accreditation procedures.
- **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. In 2012, with the launch of the AEC's new website, it also enabled them to enter a special members' domain of the site. 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.

Membership:

The AEC distinguishes two types of membership categories: Active Membership and Associate Membership. Active and Associate members are defined by criteria listed below. In all but one of the actions and interactions of the AEC, there is no distinction whatsoever made between the statuses of the two types of member. The one exception concerns voting rights at the AEC's annual 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, academies or universities of music, 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, academies or universities of music and other equivalent institutions OUTSIDE Europe that provide the same level of training 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 in which music is taught, but not with the particular professional emphasis found in conservatoires and their equivalents;
- Institutions active in training for the music profession, 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 Fees:

Membership fees are reviewed annually. At the General Assembly in Zagreb in November 2017, Council proposed the following 7 membership fee levels, calculated according to latest Gross National Product (GNP) data (2016):

	Payment before 1 st May 2018: 'earlybird' discount	Payment after 1 st May 2018
Active Members Category 1	€ 1050,53	€ 1107,37
Active Members Category 2	€ 1034,29	€ 1092,14
Active Members Category 3	€ 970,34	€ 1029,21
Active Members Category 4	€ 897,26	€ 955,12
Active Members Category 5	€ 781,55	€ 839,41
Active Members Category 6	€ 749,07	€ 806,93
Active Members Category 7	€ 717,61	€ 774,45
Associate Members	€ 749,07	€ 806,93

1: Luxembourg, Switzerland, Norway, Ireland, Iceland, Denmark, Netherlands, Sweden, Austria, Germany, Belgium, Finland, France, UK

2: Italy

3: Israel, Spain, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Cyprus

4: Portugal, Slovakia, Estonia, Greece, Lithuania, Poland, Latvia, Hungary

5: Turkey, Kazakhstan, Russia, Croatia, Romania

6: Belarus, Bulgaria, Lebanon, Macedonia, Serbia, Albania, Egypt, Bosnia Herzegovina

7: Georgia, Armenia, Ukraine

Application:

Based upon the information above, 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 can't find the clarification you are seeking on the AEC website, please feel free to contact the AEC Office Manager at info@aec-music.eu for further help.

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

- A completed copy of the AEC application form that accompanies these notes
- 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 (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 guide or any other relevant information) in order to support your request for one or the other membership status.

Applications for AEC Active or Associate Membership should be sent to: info@aec-music.eu

When we receive your application, we will process it as quickly as possible but we ask you to understand that acceptance or rejection of a membership application is formally a decision of the AEC Council and ExCom. AEC Council meets three times a year and ExCom 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>.