



# AEC Strategic Plan

## 2016–2021



Association Européenne des  
Conservatoires, Académies de  
Musique et Musikhochschulen

# Vision

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.



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# Mission

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

**Pillar 1:** Enhancing quality in Higher Music Education

**Pillar 2:** Promoting participation, inclusiveness and diversity

**Pillar 3:** Strengthening partnership and interaction with stakeholders

**Pillar 4:** Fostering the value of music and music education in society

AEC operates inclusively, sustainably, efficiently and effectively, enabling communication and sharing of good practice.

## Pillar 1: Enhancing quality in Higher Music Education

**AEC will promote excellence across Europe in relation to artistic practice, learning & teaching and research & innovation, by:**

- Investigating, advocating and disseminating innovative practice in all three fields
- Providing guidance for capacity-building and for establishing appropriate infrastructures in those areas
- Strengthening the understanding of artistic research as a means of promoting deeper musical engagement
- Encouraging quality enhancement, including through a sustained cooperation with MusiQuE
- Supporting member institutions in the delivery of high-level pre-college music studies

**AEC will foster internationalization, by:**

- Enabling its members to meet and exchange at international level
- Supporting the work of the International Relations Coordinators in its member institutions
- Endorsing the benefits of internationalisation at home and with regard to its impact on the future careers of graduates
- Following up on how internationalisation can be embedded in Higher Music Education through appropriate structures

**AEC will support the education of graduates with high professional standards, well prepared to work in a diverse and rapidly changing, globalised society, by:**

- Assisting its member institutions in exploring and developing new learning & teaching models in order to educate creative and communicating musicians
- Promoting the integration of entrepreneurial skills to prepare students for their future roles as musicians
- Raising consciousness for the social responsibility of artists and of Higher Music Education institutions
- Encouraging the sensible use of digital technologies in music performance and music education



## Pillar 2: Promoting participation, inclusiveness and diversity

**AEC will promote the diversity of approaches to Higher Music Education, by:**

- Enhancing the diversity of musical genres, cultures and languages and facilitating their intersections
- Engaging with leaders, administrators, teachers, students and external stakeholders
- Encouraging its member institutions to ensure equal opportunities to all individuals, regardless of their sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, disability, age or sexual orientation

**AEC will support its members in different regions of Europe in ways that are appropriately tuned to their diverse needs and priorities, by:**

- Further developing 'regional fora' based on the existing allocation of individual regional responsibilities to Council members
- Offering country-specific support services and developing mechanisms to strengthen participation in its activities, including special support for institutions with modest financial resources
- Engaging with national and European policy-makers and organisations

**AEC will strengthen the student voice inside the association and its membership, by:**

- Supporting young musicians in exploring ways in which their voice can be increased at European and at institutional level
- Engaging young musicians in sharing their views in relation to the association's activities and work



## Pillar 3: Strengthening partnership and interaction with stakeholders

**AEC will engage with organisations dealing with higher education policy at European level, by:**

- Consolidating contacts with organisations focusing on higher education such as the European University Association (EUA) and the European Association of Institutions of Higher Education (EURASHE)

**AEC will connect the levels and branches of the music education sector, helping it to become a united voice for music within the cultural and political debate, by:**

- Consolidating contacts with the European Music Schools Union (EMU) and the European Association of Music at School (EAS)
- Combining its core activities in Europe with initiatives taking place globally by e.g. intensifying contacts with IMC (International Music Council), NASM (National Association of Schools of Music) and SEADOM (South-East Asia Directors of Music association).

**AEC will strengthen dialogue with organisations dealing with arts practise, arts education and culture and strengthen inter-disciplinarity, by:**

- Intensifying dialogue with organisations focusing on music such as Pearle\* – Live Performance Europe, the IMZ International Music + Media Centre, the European Jazz Network (EJN), the Réseau de Musique Ancienne (REMA), Opera Europa, the European Music Council (EMC) and the European Composer and Song-Writer Alliance (ECSA)
- Deepening contacts with organisations dealing with other art forms, such as the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA) and the Centre International de Liaison des Ecoles de Cinéma et de Télévision (CILECT)
- Developing new contacts with organisations dealing with the arts, arts education and culture

A close-up, profile view of a man with a beard playing a saxophone. The image is partially obscured by yellow and blue geometric shapes. The saxophone is gold-colored and the man is wearing a light blue shirt.

## Pillar 4: Fostering the value of music and music education in society

**AEC will represent and advance the interests of the Higher Music Education sector at national, European and global levels for the greater societal good, by:**

- Strengthening lobbying at the level of the European institutions in order to create understanding among the European decision-makers for the distinctive value and identity of the arts and of higher music education
- Acting as a "Higher Music Education trend scout" and react to developments and trends which could represent threats or opportunities for its members
- Developing an advocacy toolkit for its member institutions enabling them to strengthen advocacy and lobbying at national, regional and local level

**AEC will work to increase opportunity and access to Music Education, by:**

- Taking a leading role in the development and follow up of a European Agenda for Music initiated by the European Music Council (EMC)
- Promoting early childhood music education as a crucial phase within music education
- Supporting its member institutions in the provision of music teachers for general and specialist schools equipped with appropriate artistic and educational skills

**AEC will assist its members in engaging audiences in an evolving cultural environment and in exploring the musical needs in society, by:**

- Gathering and sharing examples of good practices and innovative approaches that Higher Music Education institutions have identified as helpful in their work to increasing audience inclusivity and diversity
- Engaging in dialogue with cultures and traditions of knowledge transfer that differ from the traditional conservatory culture, promoting the integration of more diverse learning and teaching approaches among its member institutions



## Ensuring operational excellence

**1. AEC will perform all the functions of an effective and efficient member association, with clear governance and a well-run, proficient and dedicated office team, by:**

- Ensuring regular information exchanges and physical meetings among the AEC CEO, the AEC President, the AEC office team, the AEC ExCom and Council
- Reviewing regularly the organisational structure, the internal communication, the functions and the allocation of tasks within AEC Council, between AEC Council and AEC office team members, and between AEC office team members
- Reviewing regularly the performance of all individuals involved in the governance and running of the association

**2. AEC will strengthen its financial sustainability and strive to become more independent from project funding, by:**

- Exploring various funding strategies and their feasibility
- Developing a sustainable financial model that enables it to function at the level required by its membership

**3. AEC will strengthen and improve the communication to and from members and reinforce its role as an information platform and as a "trend scout", by:**

- Further developing the communication to members on its activities and work and on political developments at the European level concerning music and culture
- Improving and expanding its channels to share information about members' activities and practices and to promote them within and outside the membership
- Sharing with the full membership results and practices of projects and initiatives undertaken by smaller groups of institutions
- Enhancing its contacts database to increase its outreach to students and teachers

**4. AEC will develop its relationship with its members, by:**

- Strengthening its role as promoter of excellence and facilitator
- Regularly reviewing what AEC can do for its members and what they can contribute to the association (including in relation to the organization of events, seminars and training sessions)
- Building up and maintaining a database gathering individual and institutional expertise in certain clearly defined areas



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