



MUSIC EDUCATION POLICY
GROUP

JOINT ACTION FOR MUSIC EDUCATION: PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS

5th SYMPOSIUM

23 - 25 OCTOBER 2023

GLASGOW & EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND

In partnership with and hosted by Creative Scotland



THEME

This 5th symposium focuses on the importance of collective efforts and collaborations in the field of music education. This international symposium brings together music education professionals to delve into the potential of partnerships and explore innovative and effective ways to enhance music education policy and practices globally.

In the realm of music education, networking, collaborating, and partnering hold immense potential for overcoming challenges, for instance those posed by limited policy support and insufficient resources, including financial backing. By fostering connections and alliances, music education actors can tap into a range of benefits that contribute to the growth and sustainability of the field in line with the principles laid out in the Global Compact for Music Education.

Participants will explore existing strategic alliances from a number of different countries and organisations that provide insights into how the collective voice of music education actors can be amplified to address such challenges, advocate for policy changes and increased support.



THE GLOBAL COMPACT on music education

The Global Compact on Music Education (GCME) lays out universally shared, applicable and proven principles of music education. It takes the form of an “agreement” made up of 6 interlinked and complementary principles.

From 2020-2022, a group of over 40 renowned experts from all over the world worked together to develop the GCME as a values-based reference tool and shared framework for action.

Music organizations who become signatories to the GCME commit to implementing the 6 principles in their sphere of influence.

The GCME is also an active knowledge-sharing process that includes bi-annual Music Education Policy Reports from signatories. It is thus a useful instrument that allows stakeholders to see where their music education policy and practice aligns with best practice globally.

The 6 Principles

1 Humanness

i) Music is a natural expression through which we become more fully human

Music is embedded in our genes and affords us opportunities to explore the breadth and depth of human experience as a means of becoming who we are meant to be. All known human societies expect their members to be able to engage with music, whether through making, listening, or dancing to it. Our inherent capacity for music is as much part of our common humanity as our capacity for speech. Music enables us to share and understand our own actions, thoughts, and feelings and those of others.

ii) Music education contributes to understanding the self in relation to the world

Every culture has complex musical traditions that have been shared across generations. When we interact musically with each other, we experience a host of benefits for our health, happiness, productivity, creativity, and sociality. Musical experiences shape our self- and group-identities in ways that lead not only to personal growth but can also lead to the transcendence of racial, economic, and class barriers. Music education enables humans to flourish, and through personal and collective experiences to develop social, cultural, ethical, and gendered understandings of themselves and others through the transformation of their own lives and that of their community. By learning about and engaging with music, we become more fully human.

2 Human development, well-being and health

i) Music education contributes to human development across the lifespan

The power of music manifests itself in different ways throughout the human lifespan. From the earliest stages of life, sound and movement patterns, such as highly musical, infant-directed speech, contribute to emotional, sensorimotor, social, playful, and empathic aspects of caring relationships. By engaging with music, older children improve their cognitive, social, motor, and language skills, and when children learn a musical instrument, they train their general cognitive skills, as well as their ability to self-regulate their actions, thoughts, and feelings. Music plays an important role in enabling adolescents to create a unique self-identity that is different from that of their parents. Music is equally beneficial for adults and seniors, as learning an instrument or singing in a group can give life new meaning and purpose. Music is a powerful driver of brain plasticity, adapting the central nervous system to new challenges. As such, music is important in many therapeutic contexts, including facilitating speech development and supporting focused attention. In adults, making music slows down the physiological aging of our brain.

ii) Music education contributes to well-being and health

Although there are individual differences in response to music, almost every human being can benefit from the positive effects of music on health and quality of life, providing their preferences and agency are respected. Awareness of the multiple ways in which music influences human behavior and well-being continues to grow with numerous studies demonstrating that those who engage in music report high levels of satisfaction and happiness. At the same time, stakeholders are realizing the potential of integrated musical interventions to improve medical and therapeutic treatments in a cost-efficient manner.

3 Human rights

The right to participate in cultural life is recognized in a number of international human rights treaties, notably in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is generally agreed to be the foundation of international human rights law, and which has been ratified by 179 countries. § 27 states "...everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts (...)." Because music is a constituent part of culture, the right of everyone to participate in cultural life can be said to include the right of everyone to participate in musical life. Consequently, countries that have formally agreed to the right to participate in cultural life by ratifying a relevant human rights treaty, must not prevent their citizens from freely participating in musical life. Participation in musical life can be said to include listening to, enjoying, making, creating, teaching, performing, circulating and learning about music; thus the right of everyone to participate in musical life includes the right to participate in a music education.

In signing to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a government has not thereby committed itself to providing any aspect of cultural life, including music education; however, within the legal constraints on its own prerogatives, a government could ensure a music education for all by including provision in its cultural, educational, family, communal or urban policies, school curricula, acts of parliament or, most powerfully, constitution.

4 Diversity and Intercultural Understanding

i) Music education should reflect diverse musical traditions and genres

There are as many ways of giving meaning to “humanly organized sound” as there are communities in the world, both past and present. Each inspires people to share their music accordingly: formally or informally; through master-apprentice relationships or institutional structures; with or without notation; with focus on either short-term or long-term outcomes; standalone or integrated with other artistic, community and spiritual practices. However, this rich diversity is poorly reflected in much music education across the world, as issues of power have led a small number of musical expressions and approaches to learning and teaching to dominate. This presents a limited and biased picture of the world’s musical diversity, denying learners the joy and understanding that comes with exploring the many ways in which humans connect with and through music, across eras and cultures. A more transcultural approach to music education is needed to redress the balance. This includes recognizing indigenous and other under-represented voices, and incorporating different ways of music learning and teaching more equitably.

ii) Music education should contribute to social and intercultural understanding

Learning music with others is a unique form of non-verbal, embodied interaction and communication. It is a focused way of working together towards a common goal and learning from each other. At its best, it organically stimulates consideration of and interaction with the ‘other.’ At its worst, it leads to deepening stereotypes, alienation, and prejudices.

While it is naïve to assume that learning about different musics automatically leads to world peace, well-designed music education can build bridges and serve as a pathway for cross-cultural understanding and respect. Introducing and celebrating different musical cultures engages learners in practices outside their musical comfort zones and widens their horizons. It can also demonstrate similarities and connections. Even if at times it is confrontational and creates cognitive dissonance, encountering the unfamiliar can support greater intercultural understanding and cohesion in diverse communities.

There is a need to diversify and decolonize music education by thorough redesigns of both content and pedagogy. Although many methods of music education increasingly include culturally diverse content, this is still far from sufficient. And because there is a deep and subtle relationship between music and how it is transmitted, we must expand our pedagogies beyond the predominant practices, particularly those based in Western music cultures. Diversified content and pedagogies can strengthen one’s sense of place in the world and develop openness to other groups and cultures. Each locality can enact these changes based on their unique context. Examples might include hosting guest teaching artists from diverse cultural traditions, engaging with Indigenous practitioners, or utilizing online resources.

5 Active Music-Making

Active music-making—with the voice, body and instruments, individually and with others—should be at the heart of any music education. Active music-making is participatory, interactive, reflective and creative. It is a means to express and understand the self and others while deepening musical learning, for anyone and at any level, in formal and informal contexts.

In addition to the intangible qualities that arise from profound musical experiences, the benefits of active music-making are emotional, cognitive, physical and social. Therefore, profound and fully participatory programs of active music-making will support the development of global citizens who respect and protect humanism and humanity, and thereby support the various conditions for our survival as social beings.

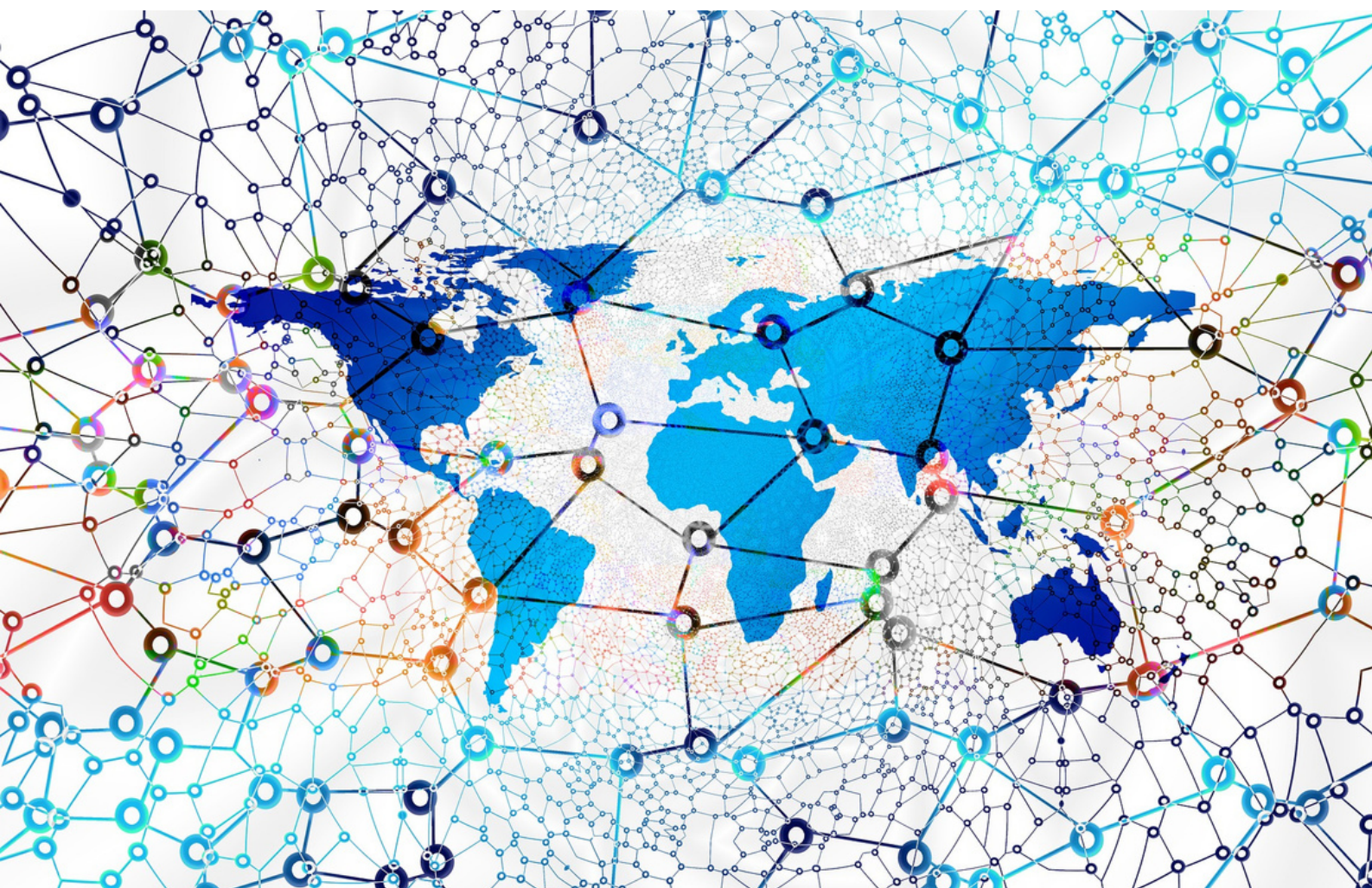
Universal access to active music-making relies on the availability of financial and human resources; its provision must be championed (with reference to the many personal and societal benefits) as a priority at every level of national, regional and local leadership; and enough resources allocated to delivery. Trained and skilled music educators are needed to support the musicianship of others, along with collaborations between schools, families and the community in its broadest sense. Influential voices and networks within and across nations must advocate for a universal understanding of why active music-making is so important, and establish and communicate clear policies for its implementation.

6 Teacher Education

An education in music can be provided for all ages and levels and in formal, non-formal and informal contexts. It can be facilitated by specialized music teachers, non-music teachers, professional or amateur musicians, family and community members or peers. Universal access to high-quality music education in school requires a professional music educator workforce: research and experience indicate that music is generally best taught by specialized teachers who have access to both robust pre-service education and continuing education in music. Due to disparities in policies and available resources, this goal can be difficult to achieve in practice but is well worth collective and local effort.

There is thus an urgent need for teacher education programs to empower music teachers to meet the needs of all learners. In order to realize overarching principles—such as universal access, inclusivity, and diversity—the goal of music teacher education is to produce effective teachers equipped with theoretical knowledge, empathy, artistic experience, pedagogical expertise, confidence, and a commitment to lifelong learning. Additionally, they must develop a deep understanding of the diverse historical, cultural, psychological and philosophical foundations of learning and teaching music, including cultural competence, political consciousness and social-emotional awareness.

This type of preparation often takes place at higher education institutions. Both an investment in institutional resources and political will are necessary to ensure the provision of a sufficient number of high-quality teacher education programs. Programs must be research-based; be subjected to rigorous evidence-based evaluation; and closely relate to school curricula, educational and cultural policy contexts, and real-life challenges and solutions. Teachers should take the opportunity to engage in peer learning and have access to skilled mentors and supervisors. They should also become familiar with and competent in how to advocate for robust teacher education.



AGENDA

23-25 October 2023, Scotland

Monday, 23rd Oct – GLASGOW, RCS

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| 9:30 – 10 | Meet & Greet (coffee) |
| 10-10:30 | Keynote by John Wallace (perhaps also by Nicola Benedetti) |
| 10:30 – 12 | Workshop on topic of “accessibility and partnerships” led by Stephen Broad |
| 12-13 | Lunch |
| 13-14 | Lunchtime concert – woodwind ensemble & solo |
| 14-15:30 | National Insights: The Power of Strategic Music Education Partnerships in a GCME Perspective Opening Panel This panel explores why and how national strategic music education partnerships and alliances have been set up. Looking at examples from Scotland, Finland, Canada and the Netherlands, a particular focus will be on how these partnerships are contributing to overcoming challenges, for instance those posed by limited policy support and insufficient resources, including financial backing. Panelists will also discuss how setting up these partnerships and alliances can foster the implementation of various GCME principles. Panelists: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Morag MacDonald, Youth Music Initiative Manager, Creative Scotland• Jack Nissan, Music Education Partnership Group, Scotland• Annika, Mylläri, member of project group for the Vision for Finnish Music Ed 2030 and Head of Music, Centria University of Applied Sciences• Eric Favaro, Chair, Canada Coalition for Music Education• Chantal de Bonth, Cultural Education Officer, LKCA |
| Time tbd | External visit – schools etc. |
| Time tbd | Tea at RCS |
| Time tbd | Concert at piping centre / And/or take train back to Edinburgh as a group and attend the Scottish International Storytelling Festival |

Tuesday, 24 October – EDINBURGH, Creative Scotland

9-9:30 Welcome, Coffee

9:30 – 09:45 Welcome by Iain Munro

9:45 - 11:00 **Symphony of Collaboration: Empowering Music Schools**

Presentation Session

This session will explore the transformative power of collaborative platforms and umbrella organizations for music and arts schools and/or for the municipalities hosting these schools. Presentations will provide insights into how these platforms are not just supporting and connecting individual schools but are also catalyzing profound changes in a number of GCME principles such as human development, well-being, and active music-making.

Presenters

- Till Skoruppa, Secretary General, European Music School Union
- Torgny Sandgren, Secretary General, Swedish Arts Schools Council
- Adrian Collette AM, Chairperson, Music Australia (via zoom)
- Representative of municipality (Edinburgh?)

11:00-12:00 Collection of individual presentations, e.g. by Dr. Anita Collins (biggerbetterbrains), by Erica on the GCME, etc.

12:00 – 13:00 Lunch

13:00 – 14:00 **Unlocking Synergies: National Arts Funding Strategies for Partnership and Collaboration Support**

Panel Discussion

This session delves into the dynamic landscape of arts funding through the eyes of public national funding bodies. Representatives from these organizations share their insights into how they are strategically allocating financial and non-financial resources to nurture partnerships and collaborations within the music sector. Among other things, this panel will explore the methodologies and criteria used by funding bodies to assess the effectiveness and impact of partnership initiatives and will furthermore look

at the challenges faced and innovative solutions implemented to overcome barriers in promoting collaborative endeavors.

Panelists:

- Hannah Fouracre, Head of Music Education, Arts Council England
- Somebody from Creative Scotland
- Myriam Schleiss, Section Culture and Society, Federal Office for Culture, Switzerland
- Somebody from NAFME, tbd.

14:00 – 17:00 Meeting at the Scottish Parliament with Michelle Thomson, MSP, Convener of the Cross-Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Music
External visit (school, music initiative, etc.)

Time tbd Whisky tasting (tbd)

Time tbd MEP Dinner and/or concert / tbd

Wednesday, 25 October – EDINBURGH, Creative Scotland

10-11: MEP Group members can meet individually with selected MEPG members

11-1pm MEPG general meeting

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Meeting ends 1pm