

Charter of the ITI/UNESCO Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts

Version 2 – December 2015. Approved during the 1st General Assembly of the Network

This Charter of the ITI/UNESCO Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts has been approved by all the members and partners before submitting the documents to UNESCO. First amendments were made during its first General Assembly in 2015 in Shanghai, China.

A further amendment concerning a new pilot structure has been unanimously approved by the second General Assembly of 2018. It states that there will be a President, a Board and a Secretary. It defines the roles and status of the Network Secretariat and clarifies the relations between the Network and the International Theatre Institute (ITI). An amended Charter will be submitted to the next General Assembly.

1. Introduction

The Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts is a joint collaboration of higher education research institutions in the performing arts, UNESCO and the International Theatre Institute ITI – in alignment with the guidelines and procedures for the UNESCO/UNITWIN Chair and Network Program. The Network's main focus is higher education in the performing arts – drama, theatre, dance, music theatre, playwriting, and all related performing arts disciplines.

Its headquarters are based at the higher education institution from which the coordinator of the Network is appointed. The permanent address for the Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts is: ITI/UNESCO Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts c/o International Theatre Institute ITI, UNESCO, 1 Rue Miollis, 75015 Paris, France.

The Network is a non-profit organization. It is non-political in its nature. It welcomes members from all continents, independent of their socio-economic condition, race, religion, ethnicity, gender, culture and nationality. The Network is based on democratic principles and it follows the core values of collaboration, inclusiveness, transparency and inspiration.

2. Goals

The goals of the Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts are:

- To make education in the performing arts accessible to all populations of students, regardless of socio-economic condition, race, religion, ethnicity, gender, culture or nationality;
- To promote professional education in the performing arts worldwide for the enhancement of the skills of professionals in the field;
- To exchange knowledge and best practices on different methodologies for education in the performing arts;
- To develop and share innovative models for higher education in the performing arts;

- To support higher education in the performing arts all over the world, including developed and developing countries – with a special focus on Africa, in alignment with the UNESCO global priority “Africa”;
- To initiate collaboration between the members of the Network;
- To protect and promote unique manifestations of “cultural identity” as observed and demonstrated by members of the network from their cultures – in alignment with the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions;
- To create a project to designate and preserve Intangible Heritage in the Performing Arts globally – in alignment with UNESCO and ITI;
- To advocate for peace, mutual understanding and respect through education in the performing arts – in alignment with the goals of UNESCO and ITI;
- To bring together students and educators in the performing arts and professionals of the performing arts for the benefit of the profession.

3. Objectives

To reach these goals the Network can realize the following projects or activities- initiated and organized by its members or part of its members, regionally or internationally:

- School festivals
- Conferences
- Congresses (whenever possible in conjunction with the ITI World Congress)
- Exchange programs for educators and students of the Network
- Research projects
- Intangible Heritage research and preservation activities - in conjunction with UNESCO and ITI
- Dissemination of knowledge in print or via digital and audio-visual publications
- Exhibitions
- Competitions
- Awards
- Any other event or activity which supports the goals of the Network

4. Membership

The Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts consists of full members, and is restricted to:

1. A university, a university department or a properly accredited arts academy, engaged in higher education in the performing arts;
2. A research organization in the field of the performing arts;
3. Secondary Educational Institutions and research laboratory organizations offering International Baccalaureate (IB) and other internationally recognized degrees that are engaged in the education of teachers in the performing arts;
4. A network of higher education institutions of a country that unites members in accordance with the 1, 2 and 3. If a national network is a member it will only have one vote for the General Assembly.
5. The International Theatre Institute ITI.

If an institution or organization wishes to become a member of the Network, it has to be recommended by one of the existing members and must be accepted by the majority of the Board of the Network. By accepting membership, the member agrees to follow the goals and procedures formulated in this Charter.

A member ceases to be a member if a) it is no longer active, b) it does not pay its annual contributions for two years in succession, and c) it violates this Charter.

The Board of the Network reviews membership on a regular basis and sends a letter for exclusion to members who have not fulfilled one or more of the above conditions {a, b, and/or c}.

5. Membership Fee

Each organization pays an annual contribution to be used for the administrative purposes of the Network. The amount is decided during the meetings of the General Assembly by simple majority. Network Members who are not able to pay an annual contribution due their socio-economic situation may be exempted to pay a contribution by a Board decision.

6. Relationship with UNESCO

Being a UNITWIN/UNESCO Network, the Network is in regular contact with UNESCO, reports to the relevant UNESCO sectors by submitting a report of activities in alignment with contract with UNITWIN/UNESCO. The founding and future members of the Network are bound by this contract. The Network supports UNESCO with projects that are in alignment with the goals and programmes of UNESCO, especially in the Culture and Education Sectors of UNESCO.

7. Relationship with ITI

The Network works together with the International Theatre Institute ITI, its Centres, Committees, Project and Working Groups. The Network assists and supports ITI educational projects, like the "ITI World Performing Arts Academy" and the "University Theatre of Cultures". ITI and the Network collaborate in joint performing arts projects, bringing together professionals and students.

8. Structure

8.1 General Assembly

The General Assembly is the senior body of the Network. The General Assembly:

- elects the Coordinator for the Network and the institution who will house and staff the office (the Coordinator is endorsed by his/her home institution and this institution becomes the Network's headquarters);
- elects the Board of the network (a smaller body of the General Assembly);
- approves the annual reports (with new members, new projects, new activities - all pre-approved by the Board);
- approves the finances of the Network and sets the annual membership fee (pre-approved by the Board);
- approves changes to the Charter (prepared by the Board and pre-approved by UNESCO);
- decides to end the existence of the network by simple majority (prepared by the Board).

The General Assembly meets once every year or every two years. It is organized by the Coordinator and the Board together with the hosting institution. The hosting institution takes care for room, board and local transportation for duration of General Assembly.

8.2 Board

The Board consists of

- President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary and Treasurer (as required by French law);
- Coordinator;
- Leaders or Coordinators from Regional Offices/Bureaus;
- Additional Board Members

The Board should have at least one member from each region and at least two members of the International Theatre Institute. The number of members should not exceed 12 members. Project leaders participate in Board sessions for information purposes, without voting right.

The Board meets regularly, minimum twice a year. The election of the board is for a two-year term. Re-election is possible. The Board decides with single majority.

8.3 Coordinator and Coordinator's Office

The Coordinator of the Network provides an office for the Network in agreement with his/her home institution. The Coordinator must be formally endorsed by his/her home institution. The Coordinator is elected for two years. Re-election is possible.

The Coordinator leads the organization following democratic principles. His/her interest has to be the development and the smooth functioning of the network so that targeted results are achieved.

He/she must have the general interest of the members in sight and not the particular interests of his/her home institution.

8.4 Projects and Focus Groups

The members of the Network can initiate projects in a special field, according to the objectives of this Charter, according to the goals of the UNESCO Sector for Culture and of the UNESCO Sector of Education, and the UNESCO Guidelines and Procedures for the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs and Network Program. All members are welcome to participate in such projects, but it is not mandatory for all members to be involved in a Project. The members participating in a project can do their work through simple organization/coordination and can elect a leader or coordinator, who will participate in the Board sessions. Projects of a Regional Office may but do not need to be restricted to the members from the region. In addition, members of the Network can form specific Focus Groups that may result in the proposal of Projects.

8.5 Regional Offices/Regional Bureaus

The Network may have Regional Offices/Regional Bureaus whose membership is restricted to the members of the region. Regional Offices/Regional Bureaus should have a simple management structure, e.g. a coordinator or a leader, elected by the members. The leading institution's address should also be the address of the Regional Office/Regional Bureau. The projects and tasks of a Regional Office/Regional Bureau can be distributed within the members.

8.6 UNESCO Chair

Members of the Network may apply for a Chair on a special subject at UNESCO. Members who have a UNESCO Chair established at their institution have the same right as any other member of the network. If the special subject is attractive to other network members these members are free to work with a Chair of the Network on a project basis.

9. Finances

- The Higher Network for Education in the Performing Arts finances part of the printing of its annual or bi-annual report and the creation and management of its website through the annual membership fee.
- The Higher Network for Education in the Performing Arts may accept grants, subsidies and donations from donors, foundations, governments and sponsors.
- The Coordinator's Office is financed by the Coordinator's home institution which hosts the office.
- Festivals, projects and all Network activities have to be financed by the members participating in the project or donations collected by participating members.
- Travel, visa and insurance fees should be covered by each member him/herself or via his/her home institution.
- Institutions hosting meetings should generally strive to provide room, board and local transportation.
- The Board tries to assist those members that are not able to pay travel, visa and insurance fees due to socio-economic conditions.

10. Period of Function

- The Higher Network for the Performing Arts' duration is unlimited.
- The Higher Network for the Performing Arts ceases to exist if the simple majority of its members express their desire in writing to the President and the Coordinator of the network who then will inform UNESCO about the decision.
- The affiliation of the Network to the UNITWIN may be ended by the authorities of UNESCO, if the Network is no longer adhering to the contract and is no longer following UNESCO goals.

The Charter is also available in French and Spanish.

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