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First steps for Unique Joint Music Master

A new and unique Music Master is currently being developed and is planned to start in 2009. From October 2006 till October 2009 five European conservatoires, two US partners and seven external partners will work on this 'Joint Master for New Audiences and Innovative Practice'. Partner institutions are: The Prince Claus Conservatoire & the Royal Conservatoire (Netherlands), The Guildhall School of Music & Drama (UK), Iceland Academy of Fine Arts (Iceland) and Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences / School of Music (Finland). Participating institutions are: Eastman School of Music, Rochester (USA) and Georgia State University, School of Music (USA). The external partners are: the North Netherlands Orchestra, Music Centre of the Dutch Broadcast, Leiden University Graduate School of Creative & Performing Arts, Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Jyväskylä Sinfonia, Globetown Action Zone and the Municipality of Isafjordur. The first major steps have been taken to ensure the success of this challenging project.

Joint Master Meetings

The two working groups of the Joint Master had their first meetings in Groningen last December. The Curriculum Development working group discussed the main outline of the curriculum, and more specifically the content of four compulsory modules, optional modules and the issue of Mentoring. The Quality Assurance working group focused on admission procedures, internal and external quality assurance (including accreditation), based on country overviews the individual members had prepared.

The steering group had its second meeting in London on May 18 and 19, during which the external partners were introduced. This joint meeting with the external partners emphasized how schools and partners could benefit from this cooperation. Moreover, the steering group came to important agreements concerning e.g. the business plan (including a managerial model), the amount of credits needed for the programme, the design of the pilot year and other important quality assurance issues.

The second meeting of the working groups took place in Iceland from 9 to 12 June. The curriculum development and quality assurance groups looked into further fine tuning of learning outcomes, assessment procedures, internal and external quality assurance, and into the curricula emerging from the different profiles of the participating schools, all of which will lead to the start of the Joint Master's pilot in September 2009.

Valuable advice

Darla Crispin, head of the Graduate School of the Royal College of Music in London, is the external evaluator of the JM project, and she attended the meetings in December 2006 and the Steering Group meeting in London. Dr. Crispin is of great importance to the progress of the project, by monitoring it closely and giving valuable comments and advice.

Handbook Joint Master

A handbook on the development of a Joint Master's programme will be written during the project. The processes of developing a Master together with several international partners will be described in detail, as well as any unusual challenges we came across and the practical solutions we found for these.

Dissemination

The Joint Master was presented three times this spring:

- At the Seminar 'Trends in the Music Profession in Europe; Lifelong Learning & Employability' from 9 to 11 March, Groningen
- At the yearly Congress of the Dutch HBO-Raad (The Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences) on 26 April, entitled 'Trends towards the future'
- During the conference 'Towards strong creative disciplines in Europe' from 27 to 28 April in Tallinn, Estonia.