



ASSITEJ Executive Committee Meeting: Online, 23 September 2025

Present members of the Executive Committee:

Susan Jessica Giles, *President*, Australia (Sue)
Louis Valente Sørensen, *Secretary General*, Denmark (Louis)
Paulo Ricardo Merisio, *Vice President*, Brazil (Paulo)
Selloane Mokuku, *Vice President*, South Africa (Lalu)
Seok-hong Kim, *Vice President*, South Korea (Seok-hong)
Carole Umuliga Karemera, Rwanda (Carole)
Gonzalo Moreno, Spain (Gonzalo)
Julia Dina Heße, Germany (Julia)
Maria Luisa Labuhn, Young Dance Network (Bebê de Soares)
Shoaib Iqbal, Pakistan & New Zealand (Shoaib)
Stavros Stavrou, Cyprus (Stavros)
Theis Håvard Fincekhagen Campbell Irgens, Norway (Theis)
Yannick Louis Marie Boudeau, Belgium (Yannick)

Absent members of the Executive Committee:

Émilie Robert, *Treasurer*, France (Émilie)
Jonathan Dafydd-Kidd, UK (Jon)

Present staff members:

Christopher John Blois-Brooke, *Staff Member*, UK (Chris)

Absent staff members:

Marissa Garay, *Staff Member*, Mexico (Marissa)

Present Guests:

François Fogel, *African Vogue Project*, France (François)
Mamby Mawine, *African Vogue Project*, Senegal (Mamby)
Thierry Oueda, *African Vogue Project*, Burkina Faso (Thierry)
Wangninlba Koné, *African Vogue Project*, Côte d'Ivoire (Koné)



Online, 24 September 2025

Present members of the Executive Committee:

Susan Jessica Giles, *President*, Australia (Sue)
Louis Valente Sørensen, *Secretary General*, Denmark (Louis)
Paulo Ricardo Merisio, *Vice President*, Brazil (Paulo)
Selloane Mokuku, *Vice President*, South Africa (Lalu)
Seok-hong Kim, *Vice President*, South Korea (Seok-hong)
Carole Umuliga Karemera, Rwanda (Carole)
Gonzalo Moreno, Spain (Gonzalo)
Julia Dina Heße, Germany (Julia)
Stavros Stavrou, Cyprus (Stavros)
Yannick Louis Marie Boudeau, Belgium (Yannick)

Absent members of the Executive Committee:

Émilie Robert, *Treasurer*, France (Émilie)
Jonathan Dafydd-Kidd, UK (Jon)
Maria Luisa Labuhn, Young Dance Network (Bebê de Soares)
Shoaib Iqbal, Pakistan & New Zealand (Shoaib)
Theis Håvard Fincekhagen Campbell Irgens, Norway (Theis)

Present staff members:

Christopher John Blois-Brooke, *Staff Member*, UK (Chris)

Absent staff members:

Marissa Garay, *Staff Member*, Mexico (Marissa)

Present Guests:

Abdul, *Wanderlust*, Indonesia (Abdul)
Diperson Jung Rana, *Wanderlust*, Nepal (Diperson)
Kedar Shrestha, *Wanderlust*, Nepal (Kedar)
Petra Paramita, *Wanderlust*, Indonesia (Petra)
Rahmi Dewi, *Wanderlust*, Indonesia (Ami)
Tsend-Ayush Turmunkh, *Wanderlust*, Mongolia (Tsend-Ayush)
Uyanga Ayurzana, *Wanderlust*, Mongolia (Uyanga)



Agenda

- 1. Welcome from President**
- 2. Regularity of the Meeting**
- 3. Present, Apologies, Number of Voters**
- 4. Proposal and Approval of Agenda**
- 5. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting**
- 6. Conflicts of Interest**
- 7. Meeting with African Vogue** (Regional Cooperation Programme)
- 8. Use of ASSITEJ International Budget in Babel Project**
- 9. The Future of ASSITEJ Artistic Gatherings**
- 10. Meeting with Wanderlust** (Regional Cooperation Programme)
- 11. Decision on Next EC Meetings**
- 12. Any Other Business**
 - 12.1. Open letter
 - 12.2. Research Update
 - 12.3. Communications Position
 - 12.4. Umbrella Session



1. Welcome from President

Sue Giles welcomed the EC.

2. Regularity of the Meeting

Sue, in her capacity as President, confirmed the regularity of the meeting, complying with the provisions of Article 10.2 of the Constitution, to discuss and deliberate on the presented agenda.

3. Present, Absent, Number of Voters

Apologies from Jon Dafydd-Kidd, Émilie Robert, and Marissa Garay, who were unable to attend the first day (23 September).

13 voters present.

Apologies from Jon Dafydd-Kidd, Émilie Robert, Bebê de Soares, Shoaib Iqbal, and Marissa Garay who were unable to attend the second day (24 September).

11 voters present.

4. Proposal and Approval of Agenda

Sue went over the official agenda for the meeting, which the EC approved unanimously by a show of hands.

5. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting

Sue asked the EC to approve the minutes through an online vote after this meeting.

6. Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest were reported.

7. Meeting with African Vogue (Regional Cooperation Programme)

Sue welcomed everyone, and introductions were made.

Sue asked the African Vogue group to begin by sharing their vision and major activities for the project, and then to move on to discuss how



ASSITEJ International can support these activities and help build local and regional partnerships.

Thierry began by stating that the project aims to empower and enhance the youth in the three countries (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, and Senegal), and to establish a framework for skills development, thereby enhancing the capacities of various stakeholders in the region. It also serves as a means to enhance regional collaboration and foster dialogue, primarily between practitioners and decision-makers. This project is a way to push and serve the future of TYA in the region.

Mamby also highlighted the empowerment of young audiences and their importance in society, as well as the collaboration and development that can occur among three different regions, and the economic benefits that can result from a functioning TYA sector.

Koné emphasised the importance of visibility of TYA in festivals and networks to play a role in the decision-making process for allocating support and finances in the country, and so working conditions for artists in the field can improve.

François added that they are also building connections with other countries in the region, like Guinea-Bissau, Mali, and Togo.

In terms of activities, Thierry mentioned that the first step involves advocacy on several levels (local, community, and networks, etc.); engaging in communications and building networks. The next step is the dissemination of artistic works, as they aim to create productions together. The third step involves creating events, such as meetings and workshops, for their artists.

François shared that they have designed a timeline with three milestones, which are festivals. The first festival will take place in June 2026 in Senegal, followed by December 2027 in Burkina Faso, and the final one in April 2028 in Côte d'Ivoire.

The first section will be devoted to the redaction of a “cookbook”, which is a way to evaluate and assess the needs in the region; things needed to produce performances. The second section would be devoted to projecting the performances and the training of professionals. The third section would be devoted to the circulation of the three projects, one per



country, and to an advocacy programme designed during the second section.

Lalu asked if there had been any thought given to the potential disruption that Artificial Intelligence might bring to the project, and what the possibilities are for linking the project with ASSITEJ International's research. She also asked about any collaboration and communication there could be with ACYTA.

Thierry mentioned they have been working on strengthening communication with ACYTA, and they have organised some Coffee Sessions to connect ACYTA members across language and regional barriers. He also mentioned that research is central to the project, particularly in addressing the question of respect and acknowledgement of children's rights. For this, they are collaborating with different universities in their respective countries.

Koné added that it is difficult to avoid technical innovation (such as AI), and since children are highly connected, they will learn how to integrate it into the project.

Louis expressed the need for ASSITEJ International, the project applicants, and ACYTA to spend time together and develop this collaboration, hopefully at Djarama Festival next year.

Stavros asked if there were any plans to involve the members of the three National Centres in running the project.

Mamby responded that the process of creating this application had gone through the membership with time to reflect on it. The project aims to include as many people from different formations and Centres.

Koné pointed out that there are key moments with different tasks within the project; one can be artistic in creation, another involves touring and how to circulate productions, and another focuses on advocacy and addressing decision-makers.

François stressed that work must start as soon as possible because they will be applying for support from various bodies, and a discussion with the ASSITEJ EC is needed regarding the budget and how the money will be managed.



Sue agreed that it was urgent to make time for those conversations, how to assist in terms of evaluation, and to discuss how the contact between African Vogue and the EC will work.

Sue stressed how enthusiastic everyone was about the project and working together to make it happen.

8. Use of ASSITEJ International Budget in Babel Project

Louis explained that there are some mobility funds left in the project for ASSITEJ International as partners. The proposal is that this money is used to support the accommodation/flights of those who plan to join the final Babel event, Conference and Export-Import Festival.

VOTE:

Is the EC in favour of using the Babel funds for this purpose?

Unanimous vote in favour (11 votes)

9. The Future of ASSITEJ Artistic Gatherings

Currently, there will be no Artistic Gathering in 2026 and there is none so far identified for 2028.

The questions now are if ASSITEJ will create a call for 2028 and 2029, and/or if the Regional Cooperation Programme will continue.

Louis explained that bids for a 2028 Artistic Gathering would have to happen before the 2027 World Congress. If there is a 2028 call, members also need to know if it will be the only Gathering or if there will be one in 2029.

Sue said one of the considerations had been whether ASSITEJ International has the capacity to hold a Gathering each year, especially since they have become a bigger event.

Theis shared that the Nordic-Baltic Network has had some discussions around this. He stressed the importance of having a broad attendance in Congress, and sometimes attending a Gathering is more for those who can afford them. Maybe not having a Gathering every year, we could make sure as many Centres and people in general can attend the Congress. He explained it would be interesting to have more years to look at what will



happen in the wake of not having Artistic Gatherings, maybe giving more opportunity to regional-focused or theme-focused events.

Bebê disagreed and said that she believed there should be one Artistic Gathering between Congresses and not get rid of them. Even now without a Gathering in 2026, people are asking about travelling to the Regional Cooperation projects that will be happening.

Julia shared that her feeling is that, in Germany, without a Gathering in 2026, international topics have disappeared from their agenda. However, people do feel better about having more time to prepare for the World Congress. She supports having at least one Gathering, because this keeps the sense of belonging to ASSITEJ, rather than waiting 3 years. She also supported the idea of using the Regional Cooperation projects as an ASSITEJ event and highlighting those regions so people can also attend these. This would mean ASSITEJ has an event each year, but all different sizes and the Gathering can also be reworked.

Chris agreed with Julia's compromise. He shared that from a staff point of view, not having a Gathering has allowed time to focus on other projects and more time to work on Congress activities. The timeline for projects has been much more manageable this year, also because of the experience and platforms that we now have.

Carole agreed that having one Gathering also allows people to plan ahead and fundraise. She said that for the Congress there could be a more international focus and a more regional/local one for Gatherings and the Regional Cooperation Programme.

Stavros added that it is evident from the survey results made by the external evaluators, that the Gatherings are popular and members look forward to them. He agreed it should be only one but with enough time between Congresses. Stavros mentioned that the Regional Cooperation Programme needs more time to be evaluated and for ASSITEJ to know if it worked or not.



Gonzalo said the Regional Cooperation Programme should be maintained and maybe it could be linked to the Artistic Gathering. It could be mentioned in the call for Regional Cooperation Programme that they could host the Gathering.

Paulo mentioned it was important to keep one Artistic Gathering because they have different focuses than Congresses and this allows the community to be present in more regions. He also added that it would be important to listen to what the membership wants.

Seok-hong agreed to have one Gathering, but it is also important to keep the TYA discussion going among professionals every year, and this needs to be a global space.

Sue agreed that Gatherings are very important and spark meaningful relationships.

Louis said Gatherings are an essential element of the organisation. He shared that the survey data showed that 80% of attendees are new every time. Gatherings are very effective and multifaceted because it involves so many topics and he is in favour of keeping them this way because a strongly curated theme would allow less people to connect. He mentioned downgrading the events and focusing on regions that really needed would be fundamental. It is also important to consider how manageable it is from an EC and Staff point of view in terms of the full workload. The Regional Cooperation Programme depends on the funding ASSITEJ receives each term, but not the Artistic Gatherings.

Julia added that if there is no funding for the Regional Cooperation in the future, with the learnings from this programme and the Regional Workshops, we could find a fitting event when the time comes.

Carole also added that the applicants to the programme shouldn't be overloaded and expected to host a bigger event than what they had thought of initially.

Louis reminded everyone to consider the complete landscape and activities (advocacy, research, World Day campaign, etc.) when thinking



of the capacity and tools to achieve our strategic aims. The events need to be connected to the bigger picture of the association's work. Maybe the concept of Artistic Gatherings should be freer, especially in terms of the budget for the local host.

Louis expressed that if the EC decides to have an AAG for 2028, it must be announced soon so that members can begin to think about it, even if the call for bids is launched later on.

Julia agreed that it would be helpful to see how many members would be interested in hosting in either 2028 or 2029. She said it is important to continue with an experience that is so important for many people in the ASSITEJ community, and also to promote festivals from the Regional Cooperation Programme and support people to attend. Louis mentioned this would depend on each proposal and its aims.

Carole added that we could think of having a mobility grant for the sub-region or across regions and invite those people who would like to have an insight in specific regions, at a much smaller level.

Paulo added that for 2028, it could be the same format as it has been for now, and in the meantime, search for a different format for the future. Louis suggested starting to change the format right away to make it more accessible for hosts.

Stavros suggested having the application process for AAGs in two phases. First, have a general open call, more of an expression of interest. And second, work with those interested in creating the bid.

Lalu asked how to thread and connect everything that ASSITEJ does with these events, so that we don't replicate efforts.

It was agreed to create a draft of a call for an expression of interest to host an AAG.

Paulo suggested keeping the call open for different and new formats.

10. Meeting with Wanderlust (Regional Cooperation Programme)



Sue welcomed everyone, and introductions were made.

Sue asked the Wanderlust group to begin by sharing their vision and major activities for the project, and then to move on to discuss how *ASSITEJ International* can support these activities and help build local and regional partnerships.

Uyanga shared a [presentation created by the group](#). She went over the project mission and its goals of access to theatre, cultural exchange within the three centres and with other international artists, and sustainability awareness.

The presentation showed a budget overview of the project, and Uyanga explained that they are also raising funding from other sources.

Three festivals will be touring across Asia. The first one will take place in Mongolia in March 2026, the second in Indonesia in August 2026, and the third in Nepal in May 2027. The festival in Mongolia will include two artist groups travelling to 24 sub-provinces to perform, workshops & dialogue sessions, and a Next Generation programme.

The project presented possible areas where they would need support from ASSITEJ International, like connections with experts, EC representation, and support in meetings with officials.

Uyanga talked about the possibility and complications of hosting an ASSITEJ Asia meeting during the festival.

Ami and Abdul shared information on current and future activities in Indonesia related to the project. The festival will be the first theatre festival for children in Kalimantan. ASSITEJ Indonesia is exploring potential collaboration with other ASSITEJ members and/or countries in the region. The festival in Indonesia will visit two districts and the capital city of the province.

Kedar shared information on current and future activities in Nepal related to the project. They are currently mostly focused on the artists and performances that will be going to the festivals in Mongolia and Indonesia. The festival will mainly take place in Bagmati Province and possibly two more districts.



The team had administrative questions for ASSITEJ International, which Louis agreed to address in a separate meeting. Sue agreed that there will be a separate meeting to go through the practicalities and to discuss other tools and mechanisms that will be part of the process.

Lalu asked the team to consider how these efforts could contribute to the research, to keep in mind the pillars of the ASSITEJ Manifesto, and to think about the environmental implications of AI and how to manage them with young people.

Carole asked the team to consider the dates for the festival in Nepal so people could travel there after the World Congress in Korea. She also requested that political issues be included in the risk assessment for travelling in and out of Nepal.

Carole mentioned that she could help with connections in UNICEF Nepal regarding co-funding.

Seok-hong asked if each festival was being curated independently, and Uyanga said that they are independently organising, but all three National Centres have been invited to the other two festivals. The hope is that this project opens more initiatives for collaboration in the future.

Stavros expressed that it is great to use this project to help ASSITEJ Indonesia develop as a new National Centre. He also asked if there was a working plan for the next few months regarding how the work would be shared. The Wanderlust team is still working on it and is waiting to have a signed agreement as well as an assigned EC member to work with them.

Julia shared that she would love to be involved in the project section that deals with environmental expertise in TYA. She also asked if, within their Next Generation Programme, the international participants would be from the region or what they had in mind. Uyanga mentioned that this will, in part, depend on how much funding they have. If they have enough budget, they will make a global call, but the priority will be for Indonesian and Nepalese artists.

Julia encouraged the team to share what they are doing with their entire membership.



11. Decision on Next EC Meetings

Sue went over next possible EC meetings.

2026: Panama in March (a few EC members after the meeting in Mexico, to help with the creation of a National Centre); Mongolia in March/April (could have representation from some EC members or an Asia meeting); Senegal in June (could have representation from some EC members); Chile in August (full EC meeting).

2027: first trimester, somewhere in Asia, for a full EC meeting. There has also been an offer for a meeting in Luxembourg.

Smaller delegations of EC members visiting will depend on the budget available.

The EC will make an online vote to decide on near-future EC meetings.

12. Any Other Business

The EC discussed the organisation of the upcoming Umbrella Session.