



**ASSITEJ Executive Committee Meeting:
Mexico City, Mexico
17 - 23 March 2026**

Present members of the Executive Committee:

In person:

Susan Jessica Giles, *President*, Australia (Sue)
Louis Valente Sørensen, *Secretary General*, Denmark (Louis)
Émilie Robert, *Treasurer*, France (Émilie)
Paulo Ricardo Merisio, *Vice President*, Brazil (Paulo)
Bebê de Soares, Young Dance Network (Bebê)
Jonathan Dafydd-Kidd, UK (Jon)
Julia Dina Heße, Germany (Julia)
Stavros Stavrou, Cyprus (Stavros)
Theis Håvard Fincekhagen Campbell Irgens, Norway (Theis)
Yannick Louis Marie Boudeau, Belgium (Yannick)

Absent members of the Executive Committee:

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)
Shoaib Iqbal, Pakistan & New Zealand (Shoaib)

Present staff members:

Beatriz Aguilar, *Staff Member*, Spain (Beatriz)
Christopher John Blois-Brooke, *Staff Member*, UK (Chris)
Marissa Garay Tostado, *Staff Member*, Mexico (Marissa)

Guests present during specific meetings:

Anelvi Rivera, *ASSITEJ Mexico* (Anelvi)
Jennifer Andersen, *External Evaluator* (Jenny)
Richard Sallis, *External Evaluator* (Richard)
James Kitchen, Malawi (James)
Kenia Rodríguez, *ASSITEJ Cuba* (Kenia)
María Inés Falconi, *ASSITEJ Argentina* (María Inés)
Soledad Yunge, *ASSITEJ Brazil* (Soledad)

Agenda

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- 13. Representation of *ASSITEJ* at Upcoming Events**
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1. Welcome from President and Hosts

Sue Giles opened the meeting and welcomed Anelvi Rivera, president of *ASSITEJ Mexico*.

Anelvi provided a short cultural insight and introduction of her team.

2. Regularity of the Meeting

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

3. Present, Apologies, and Absent Members, Number of Voters

Acknowledgement and apologies from five missing EC members.

Julia Dina Heße arrived one day late, and Émilie Robert left one day early.

17 March: 9 voters, 6 absent

18 March: 10 voters, 5 absent

19 March: 10 voters, 5 absent

20 March: 10 voters, 5 absent

21 March: 10 voters, 5 absent

22 March: 10 voters, 5 absent

23 March: 9 voters, 6 absent

4. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting

The EC approved the minutes of the last meeting, with 6 in favour and 3 abstentions (from members who were absent during the last meeting).

5. Proposal and Approval of Agenda

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

6. Conflicts of Interest

Paulo Merisio and Bebê de Soares reported that they are very connected to the Artistic Gathering proposal from *ASSITEJ Brazil*.

Yannick Boudeau reported a conflict with Krokusfestival's request to host an EC meeting.

7. Reports / Updates

7.1. President's Report

Sue shared her [report](#).

7.2. Secretariat Report



Louis Valente shared his [report](#).

Chris Blois-Brooke explained the new selection platform for events.

Beatriz Aguilar shared the work done on the World Day campaign.

Staff will work on the 2026 Membership Form to send out in April if possible. Émilie suggested the form could be sent out the previous year in the future.

7.3. Treasurer Report

Émilie shared her [report](#).

Louis explained how the CCE grant allocation in the annual statement was calculated.

Chris asked whether there is a mechanism by which *ASSITEJ* could receive the delegate pass fees first and then use them as co-funding. Louis said this may be possible, but one element to clarify is the VAT implications under Danish law.

Bebê asked about the possibility of members paying in advance, if we needed to prove the co-funding fiscally. Louis mentioned that the reserves could be used and that more could be spent in 2027 and 2028. The EU audits our activities, not our finances.

7.3.1. Update on Annual Statement 2025

Ahead of the meeting, Louis and Émilie shared an initial draft of the annual statement from the auditors covering the period since the Association moved the registration to Denmark (01.07.25 – 31.12.25). The ledger cards for the period have also been shared with the EC and, in particular, the management groups for their review.

The final version of the annual statement will be emailed to all EC members for signature. According to Danish law, all EC members shall approve and sign the annual statement.

7.3.2. Budget for 2026

Émilie and Louis presented a budget proposal for 2026, 2027, and 2028. Among the key changes since the last budget were:

- An increased expectation of income from member fees to 34,000 EUR based on the income in 2025.

- A projected income from the Creative Europe CCE project grant of 1,140,000 EUR over the four-year project period (2025-2028).
- An increased budget for mobility schemes for artists (strategic invitations and contributors to the professional exchange programme). 30,000 EUR for the Congress in 2027 and 18,000 for the Artistic Gathering in 2028.
- 40,000 EUR allocated for a potential new Regional Cooperation Programme in 2028.
- An allocation of 6,000 EUR to the President as an annual honorarium for the work for the Association.
- An increased amount for travel costs of staff and the president to 12,000 EUR annually.
- An increased support for hosts of EC meetings. Increased from 8,000 to 10,000.
- An increased amount of travel support to EC members attending EC meetings.

VOTE:

Does the EC agree on this budget?

Unanimous vote in favour.

The 2026 budget will be presented at the General Assembly in May 2026.

7.4. Workshop With Evaluators

Jenny Andersen and Richard Sallis [gave a presentation](#) that included a summary of their Baseline Evaluation and possible areas of focus for the Mid and Endline Evaluations.

Jenny and Richard asked the EC and staff to break into working groups to discuss the findings and recommendations applicable to each group and possible areas for future evaluation.

The working groups were given 45 minutes and asked to report back with feedback.

Communications:

Many of the findings are already being implemented, and others are already planned. There are some recommendations that we think are for the longer term, but we can start preparing. The group asked for more information about the small grants scheme to support local communications. They asked Jenny and Richard for more feedback on how to define sustainability, since members

were unclear about it. The Member Zone is already being worked on, and some access and inclusion points are being implemented for Korea. Research will also be implemented in the short term; it is important to identify key points to promote.

Membership:

It is interesting to see that many respondents weren't members, which shows good work and reach done through the newsletter. We need to communicate with them and see how they can become members.

Regarding short-term recommendations, many are in the process and will be presented during this meeting. The website and newsletter can be improved to ensure clearer communication. The Access & Inclusion Toolkit needs to be more visual, and we need to promote it. IIAN wants to be more involved and help with Korea.

Partnerships and Research:

Regarding the recommendations for the 'Creating Cultural Equity' project, members aren't as informed, maybe because this project was just starting, or they thought it was just the same funding continuing. The projects/activities should be highlighted more than the name, which is not a working strategy, and can confuse people more.

In the short term, we should find a way to engage members in advocacy discussions (maybe best practices & how to engage successfully in the political landscape).

Communicating more about research via a summary of findings in the newsletter. This could be talked about in Prague during the Networks group meeting.

A participation tool to collect feedback from young people would be great for the medium term; a participatory evaluation from children.

We need more time & capacity to work on all the suggestions.

Management and Events:

The group was interested in the focus on transparency and democracy; people's need to know the basics. Using the website to clarify as much as possible.

Interesting to see that regional was a big topic, and how to expand awareness within and of those regions.

The group would like to know more about how to reach the members of National Centres.

Regarding the short-term recommendations, telling members the why, how, and who of selection processes, only for their information, is important. Having



different payment options, an updated website, and a wider representation within the EC.

7.5. Working Group Reports

7.5.1. Management

Reporting deferred

7.5.2. Membership

The working group shared their [report](#).

Louis suggested *that ASSITEJ International* contact artists in Colombia to better connect. There is a large TYA scene in the country, but there is no *ASSITEJ National Centre*.

Yannick and Carole Karemera had an online meeting with artists from Morocco and suggested the working group could meet and follow up.

Sue shared that there will be a members' meeting in Asia in August in Thailand, and it would be good to link with the membership group.

Julia said there has been no feedback from Bangladesh, and she will follow up.

Stavros Stavrou shared that artists from Uganda seem close to applying; they are in close contact with Yvette Hardie and Lalu Mokuku.

The creation of *ASSITEJ Portugal* is taking a long time; it seems no one wants to take responsibility because they don't have the capacity to run the centre.

Lalu had previously suggested having protocols of engaging stated up front in Umbrella Sessions and acknowledging who isn't a member, asking them to engage; these sessions should be a membership benefit.

Bebê disagreed, saying that if people have landed in an Umbrella Session, we need to allow them to stay, and that this is a good way to connect with those who aren't members.

There was further discussion on Member benefits, plans to incorporate the Member Zone, and what this will mean for access to resources and opportunities.

Bebê expressed that the proposed WhatsApp group shouldn't be for all open calls in the sector, because there's too much information and effort already spent on that; it should be only for member calls.

Sue added that although it's interesting to have constant opportunities, we need to see how it's different from the newsletter, which already seems to be enough. The Secretariat had considered a similar group for centres to share information, which they can pass on to their members. We can share questions they have in common, and it's also a way to connect with those who don't use email much.



MZone has a WhatsApp integration built into it, so we can wait until that's ready. Via MZone, we can send announcements to specific groups of members.

Chris added that we could set up website notifications that people can opt in to, and receive emails and WhatsApp messages.

The programme for pairing centres (PairUp) will likely begin in September 2026. The two participating centres in each pair must define clear goals between them; they can meet at least three times and share a brief reflection at the end of the pilot programme.

The idea is to start with five partnerships.

7.5.3. Communications

Beatriz shared that the focus has been on the World Day campaign, but they will begin work on the global communications strategy after the meeting in Mexico.

7.5.4. Partnerships and Research

Reporting deferred

7.6. Committees Relevant for this Meeting

7.6.1. Iberescena

Paulo shared that *Iberescena* invited Ibero-American networks with diverse perspectives to serve as a consultative council, and the *ASSITEJ* Ibero-American Network was invited to represent TYA; Paulo and Bebê (substitute) are the representatives.

They have been discussing new possibilities, and we have added our perspective to focus on children. We have sent a letter saying that it was important to include the child's perspective.

7.6.2. Regional Cooperation Programmes

Things are moving forward with both projects, and grant agreements have been signed.

7.6.3. Child Participation

How is it resonant for *ASSITEJ* other than global projects?

ASSITEJ wants to be a centre where people can come and find tools for child participation. We are very interested in understanding how children can be a more active part of the organisation. The focus on child participation in Korea for the World Congress still requires detailed work. Part of our problem is the definitions and contextual understandings roundwithin our membership - we



need to look at what participation means across the world, but also develop our own models as *ASSITEJ International*.

7.6.4. Green Team

Julia shared the [Green Team report](#).

ASSITEJ passed the SHIFT peer audit once more.

The Green Team explained that it is expensive to be in the programme. In the future, it would be good to request an audit and receive a certificate, rather than keep paying to be part of SHIFT. SHIFT is important because it talks to politicians; we also need to find other places we can learn from, and *ASSITEJ* brings a global perspective to SHIFT, which is also important.

We need to keep prioritising this, even if we don't do another series with SHIFT; one idea is to create EU deliverables on sustainability that require *ASSITEJ* to deliver on the topic, although we may not be part of an auditing programme in the future.

The Green Team feels *ASSITEJ* can do it and can then bring it to members in the future; it has already begun with Wanderlust (the Regional Cooperation Programme in Asia), which is creating its own action plan and sustainability policy. One person from each Regional Cooperation Programme has joined the Green Team. We need to get involved with our hosts in all EC meetings, as well as with some of the local community.

Julia suggested inviting centres to start using tools developed in the SHIFT project so they can share them with their members; it would be interesting to know how different countries implement these tools.

Sue asked to adapt the use of the word “sustainability” and maybe call it “green” to make it clearer for members.

She also asked what the current take on carbon offset was, and Chris said it should be used as a last resort. The programme needs to be chosen carefully, and not feel like you can create emissions just because they'll be offset.

We also need to be careful so people don't think they are doing the wrong thing, but see what is necessary in each context and what they can do to contribute to climate response. It's not about passing wisdom, but about learning from locals and understanding their challenges; awareness-raising and risk assessment.

8. Ratifications

8.1. Online Votes

No voting took place since the last EC meeting.

9. Updates from ASSITEJ Events

9.1. Update from the 22nd World Congress

Preparations for the Professional Exchange Programme (PEP) open call have begun. Sue met with Jeeyoung Bang in Perth, and *ASSITEJ Korea* wants to make children more visible throughout the event. There is an idea of opening up different formats for delegates to engage in and share. The PEP could include a “5-min pitch” and have sessions with several pitches. Instead of having parties, we can ask people to share a little about their national contexts. Pecha Kuchas could be another option, with shorter formats and more visual elements to help with language challenges. The Congress can populate the Conference Centre (a very corporate space) with installations, and people can apply to these as a fringe. All this is also important for contributors to get funding.

Émilie asked how the selection would work if too many people offered to pitch, and to keep in mind that it is always an issue that people book productions and the PEP schedule is out later, which makes them change their plans.

Stavros suggested focusing on pitches so we can filter applicants.

In terms of language, Jon asked whether 5-minute pitches might be too short, since translation takes time, and to consider that, at the end of the pitches, people need time to meaningfully connect. An option is that if you don't get selected for Performances or PEP, you could be offered the pitch.

Pitches could be related to productions, and Pecha Kuchas to the PEP.

Chris added that it takes a lot of work to curate pitches/sessions, and we should have someone to facilitate sessions, maybe a paid production manager. We should also put this in the production schedule and hold rehearsals for PEP.

Bebê added that pitching is very difficult, so we could have an Umbrella Session with a tutorial on how to do it.

Louis shared that there have been conversations with the Korean team about remuneration for PEP contributors, free passes for those with longer interventions, and additional support for those who run workshops.

The Korean team has decided on three themes for the Congress: Asia, Child Voices, and Possible Worlds.

The idea may be to have focus days (like the Congress in South Africa in 2017) for curation. There needs to be a decision on whether we curate narrowly or more broadly, and how we help people navigate it. It is important to flesh out what the main topics mean and why they want them for Korea. Topics across different gatherings have been similar and vague, and it is unclear why we need them if we want a global perspective.

VOTE:

Does the EC agree on giving a free pass to PEP contributors but not for Pecha Kuchas or pitches?

Unanimous vote in favour.

VOTE:

Does the EC agree on giving a free pass and extra support to PEP contributors giving a workshop?

Unanimous vote in favour.

10. Specific Items of Business

10.1. EC Succession Planning Discussion

This discussion remains *in camera* and will continue online in May 2026. All notes from the discussion and proposals for further discussion will be shared with EC members who were not present.

10.2. ASSITEJ Brazil Bid for Artistic Gathering

The *ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering 2028* bid will be presented at the May General Assembly for member voting.

Paulo presented the bid to the EC.

The Artistic Gathering will have to be held in the first semester of the year because, after that, the political leaders will change, and there will be no financial support.

There will be a meeting in May where *ASSITEJ Brazil* will begin practising and exploring options regarding the PEP.

Matheus Lima, Deputy Secretary of Culture in Niteroi and a former student of Paulo, is on board with the preparations of the event.

ASSITEJ Brazil is counting on venues connected to the culture secretary for now, but we can explore more options. The idea is to focus on the voices of the South. Niteroi is connected to two important networks, Mercociudades network, and IberCultura Viva, and we can plan to stimulate the creation of centres that don't exist before 2028, so they can engage.

The PEP will be the main focus, then New Voices and then the performances. The nucleus team from Brazil could be responsible for the PEP. New Voices could be the responsibility of the Ibero-American Network, and the festival in Niteroi could be responsible for performances.

Niteroi is very close to Rio, so the infrastructure is available, but it is a separate city with a different perspective.

10.3. Creative Europe Platform Application

Louis shared information on this funding strand, which has a budget of up to 2.8 million EUR (lump sum grant) per project - twice the size of *ASSITEJ*'s current Creative Europe funding. The project period is likely to be 2027 – 2030/2031, with an application deadline likely to be the end of 2027.

The objective of this funding stream is to support emerging artists and their work in countries eligible for Creative Europe. It is not age-specific but career-specific, and participants must be living in Europe (which raised some concerns).

ASSITEJ would receive the money and link with centres that provide space as hosts for the development (and receive a portion of the money).

Co-funding is 20%, ideally secured in advance, and could also come from hosts/centres contributing money. It would require at least one full-time member of staff and increased financial support.

Yannick floated the idea of using the 7% of the budget that can be allocated to overhead costs to also support similar activities in areas like Africa.

Sue added that we could think of this as a route to developing diversity of artists (immigrants/asylum seekers/disabled artists).

Louis said that to balance the focus on Europe, we must be serious about developing applications for other areas. However, this investment ultimately builds on our capacity - we would have at least two more staff members. There would be a transition in getting things running smoothly.

Paulo reminded the EC that explaining the BCR project to the rest of the world was a big process, and this is bigger. It's using even more of the EC's time to invest in Europe. The idea is very good - the investment in artists, but it's hard to understand the money now, and it will be harder then.

Bebê said it was a matter of carefully selecting the artists to ensure representation. The EC has already developed a funding structure that now benefits the rest of the world. This could be a way to create inspiration for the likes of *Iberescena*. She disagreed that the lens is too European-focused because the rest of the world currently benefits from European money.

Émilie said it was an interesting idea, but it may be a bit early to add this to what we already do. Reflecting on what the EC can currently do, she is not sure we are ready to add this huge next thing right now.

Julia added that she would like to draw the big picture, and then be careful when building the risk register and management plan. She asked if it was okay to scope it, and then decide to stop if it's not right for us.

Louis suggested using this to gain experience and develop the Association, as the Creative Europe network projects have done. It is also important to have a platform for emerging artists in TYA, and it might be better for ASSITEJ International, with its global board, to oversee the project rather than a European group of members.

Bebê commented that this programme supports artists. It is a positive move in response to the challenges made by the Cuban Next Generation. For example, for 2 weeks, artists are remunerated, hosted, and then there is a sharing; it is money in the artists' pockets. The National Centres are also empowered. She suggested doing a scoping budget to visualise how many artists, etc.

Stavros said that it could be used to see how to support other Centres through the Network application. It's important to communicate about the current funding and how it benefits all members, and doubly so if we get this funding. For example, we have staff due to EU funding, and we have the Regional Cooperation Programme as a result.

Jon asked whether running this project would mean *ASSITEJ* would shift the current way EC and staff collaborate, and Louis stressed we can't lose the connection of work between EC and staff because this makes *ASSITEJ* special.

10.4. Application to Skopje 2028

Skopje is a programme in which, each year, two European cities (one from outside the EU) hold the title of European Capital of Culture, and for 2028, the non-EU city will be Skopje, North Macedonia. They have issued an open call for the years leading up to 2028. *ASSITEJ North Macedonia (MKD)* reached out to Stavros, expressing interest in applying. The Skopje TYA festival is a member of *ASSITEJ MKD*, and they are considering inviting visitors in October (when the festival takes place) and getting involved in community activities and workshops. The application requires a European partner and associate partners. Stavros thought *ASSITEJ International* could be the European partner, and *ASSITEJ MKD* want *ASSITEJ's* support to put them in touch with people and suggest whom they can invite. It will be a small-to-medium project, around 20,000 EUR, and a local call within North Macedonia.



The EC asked whether *ASSITEJ MKD* would be a reliable partner, what it would entail for *ASSITEJ International* to be a partner, and what the financial setup would be.

Stavros shared that the Centre has the capacity and background, and that their festival in Bitola is very well organised. They would be the lead partner and receive the money. *ASSITEJ* can write a letter of intent in the application that explains the role of the organisation.

Louis said the argument could be that we have a new Centre, Stavros is involved, and it is a good funding opportunity. *ASSITEJ International* is enabling a new centre to do an activity that involves others in the region.

VOTE:

Is the EC in favour of proceeding with the Skopje application?

Unanimous vote in favour.

11. Memberships and Member Requests

11.1. Considering Official Status for Regional Networks

Louis presented a [draft](#) of how a potential official status could be formulated, created by Paulo, María Inés Falconi (*ASSITEJ Argentina*), Mambi Mawine (*ASSITEJ Senegal*), Tanja Turpeinen (*ASSITEJ Finland*), Angélique D'Onghia (*ASSITEJ Luxembourg*), Shoaib Iqbal (*ASSITEJ New Zealand*), and himself.

Theis commented that it is good for regional networks to have obligations and rights and is important for their development.

Stavros agreed that it is straightforward that they should be recognised in one way or another, clarifying how they become a network and are approved by the EC, and confirming that they will not have a vote.

Sue added that if it were official, we could have a format and differentiate between needs-based and regional networks.

Émilie stated that regional networks cannot be members according to the constitution. We cannot have members who don't vote. Of course, centres can form and build any kind of network, and we can consider how we can support them when needed. It is important to give them a space, but not sure it needs to be as a membership.

Jon emphasised that these networks were created from their own energy and the centres' wishes, and that they shouldn't feel as though we're taking away their autonomy. It feels like we subdivide our membership more, and this is something they can do on their own. They feel the need to make their regions



more visible and amplify their voices. Maybe we can find a way to help them feel acknowledged.

They agreed that it is not about finding a way to membership, but officially recognising them. Being part of a region is solid and important.

Paulo added that it is important to be official so stakeholders can see that it is a thing and that they do exist.

There was discussion of the difference between geographic and common-interest networks, and the fairness of centres that don't have a regional network. Louis cited the example of the Ibero-American network, which is not only geographical but also cultural and linguistic. Is it about working with the same funding sources, and does it help with access to them? Is it a good way to address regional issues? If we say we feel it's best for them to be informal or official collaborations, what is most instrumental in how we influence regional policies or secure funding? There has been some formalisation, and some gatekeeping and power relations haven't been clarified. If we make them official, we need to ask people to take charge formally; if they are informal, we encourage a more flexible way of working.

Sue shared that the Asian network is a great example of an impossible model and isn't working as a network. If we make it official, expectations of how they are organised rise. Does it splinter the new membership drive if they can just join a network when they don't have a centre, or do they stop from applying as an affiliate?

Stavros mentioned there needs to be room for changes and development within the networks. The Small Countries network has moved towards working on an annual event. They will apply for funding to Creative Europe as partners. In this case, no one cares if they are recognised or not.

They added that formalising means responsibility. For example, Latvia was not active for years, and, with the Nordic-Baltic network, they took responsibility for ensuring they were represented and reignited the centre. Being official can make you responsible for working with the region. It makes it easier and gives a different feel if they are recognised.

11.2. Adolescence Network

The EC met with Kenia Rodríguez (*ASSITEJ Cuba*), María Inés Falconi (*ASSITEJ Argentina*), James Kitchen (Malawi), Soledad Yunge (*ASSITEJ Brazil*), and Anelvi Rivera (*ASSITEJ Mexico*), who sent an application to create an Adolescents International Network.

Kenia had the initial idea to create a professional network for artists working with and for adolescents. In only 10 days, they already had 50 people interested. They have organised a committee to begin work and want to bring together people working for adolescents and adolescents making theatre. There are four initial lines of work: training, research, playwriting, and working with adolescents. Many things can happen online and be reproduced in person at different meetings and festivals. It is important to think about why adolescents aren't going to the theatre anymore.

At the moment, the network is open, and there are no specific conditions for joining, but they are considering creating a constitution.

Their idea is to present the network at the Congress in Korea and organise conferences or debates on adolescence.

Sue asked if there was a focus on the connection between working with adolescents and having them create their own work, which the group has in mind.

Anelvi mentioned that this project has two sides that must be kept parallel: promoting youth participation and developing something with professionals. María Inés said there is certainly a special line for the focus on youth. This could serve as a previous step of Next Generation/New Voices.

Louis asked whether it made sense, in creating the network for young people, for them to be part of the process from the beginning. María Inés stated that they would need to give them a clear landscape, but they still don't have it. Soledad said there could be a parallel committee of young people to the one of adults. María Inés said they could be some kind of advisory committee, where they can show their interests and relationship with theatre. We can give them space to listen to their needs and proposals and see how it works within the organisation.

Louis asked how they can invite adolescents without making them feel that it is an adult project, and it really is something made for them, by them.

Julia shared that in Germany, there are initiatives that try to shift decision-making power to young people; they can make decisions and have money to spend. It is a work with them and a power shift.

Paulo shared that in Brazil, there are universities that form performing arts teachers, and that it would be interesting to open it up to these future teachers. The network had initially thought of young people ages 13-19, but agreed they could include a group like this one.



María Inés also shared that Cristina Cazzola (ForesTEEN) had gotten in touch and proposed a meeting to discuss both projects.

Julia asked about any plans on how they would make up the board and hold elections, and María Inés responded that there is currently a transition committee for about 1-2 years, until the network is running. They had not considered a formal board because they don't need one at the moment, but can work on one if *ASSITEJ* requires it.

Louis explained that there is currently a process happening between *ASSITEJ International* and the Professional Networks on what it means to be a network, how to work together, and the creation of a Toolkit.

The EC agreed that there are still a few things to work out before formalising this network, such as clarity around the board and the people involved in the organisation, a constitution or structural organisation, and the level and kind of involvement of young people.

11.3. Krokusfestival

Gerhard Varfaillie from *Krokusfestival* (cofounder of *ASSITEJ Belgium*) would like to host an EC meeting on 3-12 February 2027. Next year, *The Cultural Centre of Hasselt*, organiser of *Krokusfestival*, will apply for a new period of subsidies. Krokus will celebrate its 30th anniversary in 2027, and the Cultural Centre has already planned a number of activities involving children and young people starting next season (September 2026).

Every year in Belgium, during the first week of February, there are meetings with European cultural foundations and European networks.

Louis mentioned that there is usually an open call to host an EC meeting, so the procedure should be the same this time to keep it fair and transparent.

Julia added that some EC members had been in Belgium in November at BRONKS, and the EC hasn't been in Asia in a while, so we should consider other invitations so EC delegations can join in other areas of the world.

Bebê stressed that Krokus is an important festival and they are having an anniversary; EC attendance can attract more people, and this is someone very committed to *ASSITEJ*.

The Secretariat will send an open call for an EC meeting from the end of 2026 to the beginning of 2028. The call will be sent at the beginning of April with a deadline for the end of May.

12. Upcoming Meetings



12.1. Dates for EC Meeting in Chile

Inés Bascuñán (*ASSITEJ Chile*) is trying to find money to extend the EC's stay, but it may not happen. We could potentially support them further to extend their stay by one day, to the 18th of August 2026, which is one day before the current dates: arrival on the 17th and departure on the 23rd of August 2026. This would mean only 5 working days, so we will try to make it from 16-23 August. So far, Jon, Yannick, Émilie, and Lalu will not be able to attend.

The EC will make a list of people to connect with in Chile and to invite to an open EC meeting (new leaders, countries with no centres, etc).

12.2. General Assembly 2026

The agenda for the 2026 General Assembly will be sent out to members during the current EC meeting.

13. Representation of ASSITEJ at Upcoming Events

April:

Bebê will attend the MASA Festival in Ivory Coast with work of her own and give an *ASSITEJ* presentation.

Theis and Sue will be in Mongolia for the Wanderlust Project. Each will run a workshop, and Sue will meet with the Minister of Culture.

Stavros will be in Montenegro. Small Countries Network and NBAN will be in Iceland for a meeting.

May:

There is a possibility for Louis and Stavros to go to Turkey for the Bursa Festival. Paulo, Bebê, Jon, and Chris plan to be in Czechia for the meeting with the *ASSITEJ* International Professional Networks.

Paulo shared that the first Artistic Gathering exercise in Brazil will also take place in May.

June:

Yannick or Julia may be visiting the *Djaram'Art Festival* in Senegal, which is part of African Vogue, the Regional Cooperation Programme in Africa.

August:

Sue will be in Thailand at the BICT festival and the TYA Asia Network gathering.

14. Reporting Back from Working Groups & Committees

14.1. General Update on Progress

Communications:



Last year, Gonzalo Moreno created a document (a Miro board) to map out what needs to be done, and the group will follow it.

The group has created a timeline for the next World Day campaign.

It is currently difficult to know where everything is on the website, so the group plans to raise awareness of the technical terminology through social media so people can find things. Social media posts will also include newsletter openers and relevant content from centres.

Beatriz will create an EC calendar so it's easier to contact and get information from EC members, and to share what they're doing that tells an *ASSITEJ* story or is interesting to the general public.

The research projects will be disseminated through social media.

A WhatsApp community would be useful for centres and members.

There is an idea to create a general communications toolkit for members, along with training videos, so people can learn to create their own content.

Julia asked to include material from the Regional Cooperation Programmes regularly for visibility on social media.

Stavros commented that some information from the membership report could be shared on social media.

Jon asked for repeating and refreshing information for people on social media.

Partnerships and Research:

The Performing Arts Coalition (PAC) partnership will continue.

The group will look for ways to work with *Iberescena*.

The working group is also looking for ways to reach out to universities regarding opening curriculum in vocational schools/universities. Schools for artists don't have a special curriculum for TYA; this could be a connection with *IDEA*.

There will be a meeting for networks in Brussels in June, and this could be coupled with Catherine Magnant, who is head of cultural policy at *DGEAC*.

Julia said she would be interested in looking at universities that train future teachers; it could be a separate project. Marissa Garay said they could connect with *Teatro UNAM* and their project to create a TYA undergrad in Mexico.

Yannick shared that ASSITEJ has been invited by the director of the Creative Europe Desk in France in October 2026, as they wish to focus on cooperation projects related to Performing Arts for Young Audiences.

The group has not been able to reach *UNESCO*. It seems they work a lot with African countries and have some money for that.



Stavros said that in Montenegro, there will be someone from UNESCO on his panel, so he will try to connect.

Membership:

The working group will share a text in the next newsletter about their upcoming activities.

Malta and the Philippines are working on creating National Centres.

Bulgaria has been having trouble because it has too much to do and too little capacity.

The group intends to approach *ITI* centres and others to more easily contact those working in TYA in certain countries.

The *European Theatre Convention (ETC)* has a Young Europe project, so the group will get in touch to see if *ASSITEJ* can be a partner. They have a project to create new plays for young audiences that started in 2010; we should be involved.

The working group has contacted *ASSITEJ Uzbekistan* and other centres that are not so active.

They will be moving forward with 'ASSITEJ PairUp', and will send a form to members.

Identified Umbrella+ main points, and advocacy will be the first focus. There will be two experts per session, and they will work towards greater visibility with politicians and in the field. The idea is to find people involved in running centres, but not limited to that. The fee will be 150 EUR for each presenter.

Louis asked the group to set dates for the sessions so we can announce what's happening in the next six months.

There has been an email from *ASSITEJ Malawi* one year ago asking about their fee, but the Centre was never formalised. We need to get back in touch with the following steps.

There was also an email from Liaquat Ali Lucky in Bangladesh, in which the *ASSITEJ* centre was closed last year by the EC. There is a sensitive political issue there, and we need to see if things are really happening. Maybe reach out and say they need to work together to form a new centre.

Management:

The group is working on contracts and an AI policy draft, and how it relates to our other policies.

Yannick asked about *ASSITEJ*'s GDPR policy. Louis promised to share at the next in-person meeting of the EC.

15. Any Other Business

Sue shared that Ruth Winkler from Canada reached out to ask for input on a paper titled "The State of Touring Live Performances for Young and Multigenerational Audiences." The paper will be presented during a conference of the Western Arts Alliance.

16. Closure & Thanks

17. Annexes

(see below)

President's report - Mexico City, Mexico – March 17 – 24 2026

In the period between the last meeting and now, International collaboration and touring has been in focus, both by talking with presenters of work created for young audiences and artists who make that work, at the various festivals in Brussels, Montreal and Spain and at the Australian Performing Arts Market in February, which brought in a lot of the regional connections in Asia and a focus on TYA. I was there as ASSITEJ and also working as a broker of conversations and meetings between artists and presenters. Theatre Network Australia (ASSITEJ Australia) ran a sector gathering with attendance of 120 including 5 National Centres represented – ASSITEJ Singapore, UK, Aotearoa (New Zealand), Australia, Korea and hosted by Noel Jordan and me.

Issues raised from the group were international touring funds and programs, carbon footprint, audience development, hybrid work and hybrid contact, visas and safety, equity of opportunity and representation (disability and cultural marginalisation), social responsibility, smarter money (security long term and stability).

In our gathering the energetic engagement with discussion was heartening and determination to continue was clear. Everyone had three tasks to fulfil: major obstacles, potential solution or approaches and action. The last words in the session were from an artists of many years standing whose group was addressing risk. Major obstacle: fear, ignorance and lack of money. Possible solution: all agree to provide a little bit of risk all the time. Action: don't give up.

Our mission to advocate for the rights of the child and young person to art and culture remains the most important fight. And as well as working for change on all the fronts as we do wherever we are, we know it is as simple (and as difficult) as that - Don't give up.

Meetings and work – Global – since Montreal.

El Petit – Sabadell Spain - attended as the guest of ASSITEJ Spain (muchas gracias!) and delivered a brief information session on ASSITEJ.

Meetings with those who have expressed interest in hosting an Artistic Gathering in the years following world congress in 2027 – ASSITEJ Canada, Israel, Brazil, Belgium and Norway

ASIA TYA meeting about being part of an ASSITEJ panel at BICT fest in Bangkok Thailand in August and running a workshop with local artists

Meetings with the Wanderlust group – ASSITEJ Mongolia, Indonesia and Nepal.

Regular catch ups with ASSITEJ Korea about the World Congress – including a face to face with Bang and Hyeshin in Perth at the APAM.

Attended the Umbrella sessions

Meeting with Richard and Jenny to plan evaluation for the next few years

Meeting with PAYPA - ASSITEJ Aotearoa New Zealand to talk about cooperation – also a face to face with Sacha Copeland in Perth at the APAM.

Meetings – Local – since Montreal

These meetings are specific to our sector in Australia but do have resonance with the kinds of actions that are possible in many other contexts.

Minderoo foundation – philanthropic foundation with an interest in social cohesion and the role of the arts – talking about the focus on children and young people and how art and culture plays an intersectional role to support other sectors – education, health, justice and social welfare.

Children, Young people and the arts coalition – meeting with the office of Tony Burke: Minister of Home affairs, immigration and citizenship, cyber security and the Arts: with the office of Jess Walsh Minister for Early Childhood Education and Minister for Youth: with the office of Anika Wells Minister for Communications and with Senator Susan Templeman the Special Envoy for the Arts.

Meeting with Wallis Social Research group: commissioned by Creative Australia and Screen Australia to undertake a study into how children aged 2 to 15 engage with arts and creativity. The first of its kind, it will explore both what children are doing and also why (or why not) – their drivers, barriers, opportunities and influences. The study will provide vital new information to inform decision-making and policy development.

Maintaining contact with the 50 people who indicated interest in being part of the ASSITEJ Advisory - results of selection soon.

Usual work:

Newsletter proofing, contributing to and proofing open calls, sending greeting messages upon request, writing the World Day message, making connections between artists and collaborators or presenters, writing letters of support or reference, communication with EC members, meetings with Louis regularly and at need and keeping in touch with Secretariat activity through Whatsapp, creation of policies and protocols – incident report, workplace safety - creation of discussion papers for EC meetings, reading and commenting on agreements with researchers, working on the MOUs, PAC surveys etc, engaging in online/in person panels and roundtables, travelling to various festivals as a guest and to all EC meetings, doing opening ceremony speeches, running workshops, consulting and mentoring.

Report from the Secretariat

EC meeting in Mexico City

March 2026

These are the headlines of the work done by the Secretariat since the EC meeting in Montreal, November. 2025.

Activity	Who	Status / Description
MOU for Congress 2027	Louis, Sue	Draft completed, waiting on definition of financial setup for receiving income from delegate passes.
Open call for productions	Louis, Chris, Marissa, Sue, Korean team	Draft completed and circulated
Selection process for performance selection is almost finalized	Sue, Louis, Chris, ASSITEJ Korea	See process in attachment (almost finalised).
Creating selection platform for open calls for Korea	Chris	
Digital production plan for Congress	Chris	Draft ready to implement
Call for professional Exchange is being elaborated	Louis, Sue, Julia, Chris, ASSITEJ Korea	Themes, proposal forms and general structure is being elaborated. Themes structure and economic conditions to be discussed with the EC.
World Day	Beatriz, support from working group and staff	Video, President message, logo, poster, GIFs, micro actions, advocacy letter, toolkit, translated and circulated. Video messages from EU commissioner, Ibersescena President, Cyprus minister for culture.
Newsletters	Marissa	The issues of Nov-March
Bid conversation and Bid document for AAG2028	Paulo, Sue, Louis	Bid document created and ready for EC feedback.
Grant Agreement for African Vogue	Louis + Liaisons	Completed and signed
Support to ticket purchase	Chris	Chris is supporting the Regional Development programme (especially Nepal) & EC Members in booking flight tickets.
Secretariat support to SHIFT validation	Chris	Chris support the sustainability working group in the annual per audit.
Annual report and auditing	Louis, Emilie, bookkeeper (Kathrine)	Annual report and auditing almost completed. A lot of work to set up systems and register all documents at the auditing company.

Babel finance report	Louis	Completed, waiting on payment from Teatercentrum (lead partner). Overhead from Babel will be an income in 2026, final amount not defined, waiting on final project report to the EU.
Legal rights to CCE	Louis	Transfer of the CCE project from the Italian legal entity to the Danish legal entity. Ready to be done but waiting on the financial validation of the Danish Legal entity for which we need the annual statement Of the second half of 2025.
CCE Annual periodic report	Louis, Marissa, Chris, Sue	All elements of the report are being prepared ready to be completed when the Danish legal entity has been financially validated. Important for the next EU installment.
Member form	Chris, Marissa	Needs to be updated and reopened for 2026.
Member zone	Chris, Marissa	Ongoing work
Value of TYA	Chris, Louis, Sue	Co-funding received and all amounts paid to the researchers.
Quantitative Access data	Chris	Project agreement completed, ready for final feedback and signature.
External evaluation	External evaluators, Sue, Louis, Chris,	Baseline report completed, evaluators will run workshop with the EC at the present meeting.
PAC Report: Between Rhetoric and Reality: Cultural Rights, Artistic Freedom, and Democratic Resilience	Louis, Beatriz, Yannick, Stavros	The report was shared through comm channels, and in an Online seminar with 493 registered and 270 attendees.
Performing Arts Lunch	PAC, Louis, Yanick, Stavros	Informal lunch at Bronks in Brussels with PAC networks, EU Platforms, and people from the EU institutions (Cabinet, Commission, Executive Agency).
Meeting with EU Commissioner Cabinet	Sue, Stavros, Yannick, Louis	Meeting about children's cultural rights. Very good dialogue with focus on actions within the culture compass for EU, Coordination between children rights broadly and within Culture. Also lead to recorded World Day statement from the commissioner.
Survey on the future for European funding: Performing Arts Coalition	Elena (external consultant) Louis, Chris, Marissa	Questionnaire text completed by Elena. Marissa and Chris will set it up in Zoho forms. All PAC members circulate. Background: Negotiations on AgoraEU and the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) are ongoing. The European Parliament is preparing a report on the MFF, and a specific report on AgoraEU (CULT Committee). Publication expected on 1 June, with amendments possible until 11 June. Final version expected in autumn. PAC should therefore be able to provide input before 1 June with a short and clear policy paper outlining the needs, priorities and challenges of the performing arts sector as well as feedbacks regarding Creative Europe be ready to react quickly before 11 June if amendments are proposed. Methodology:

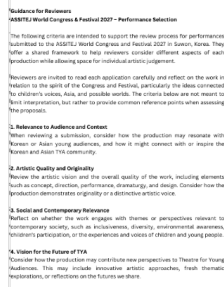
		Launch a short survey addressed to members, to be distributed quickly. Deadline: 17 April (with possible extension until 24 if needed). May: analysis of results by Elena Mid-May: policy paper shared with Members of the European Parliament Workshops could take place afterwards to expand the work and discussions within networks and create an updated version of the policy paper A public-facing event could be organised in December 26 / January 2027.
Initiate creation of ASSITEJ Panama	Paulo, Louis	Paulo and Louis visited Panama with help from Renán Fernandez from Iberescena and the Panama ministry for Culture.
General Assembly 2026	Marissa, Louis, Sue	Invitations sent long ago. Final agenda and bit should be sent to members this week.
Day-to-day digital platform management	Chris, Marissa, DevLabs	Finding and fixing bugs and errors on the website, Zoho software, and other digital platforms.
Digital Consolidation	Chris	(1) Consolidation of Secretariat software into the Zoho eco-system. (2) In partnership with TechSoup, Software One, and Avenge Tech, we are scoping and consolidating AWS, IONOS, and Cloudflare.
Digital Website Support to National Centres & International Professional Networks	Chris	Meetings with ITYARN, WLPG, IIAN to discuss their website needs.
Web Development	Chris, NAF, DevLabs	Explored alternative options for Events Platform (e.g. SwapCard, Zoho Events), collaborating with NAF and DevLabs who have begun web development (to the extent that we can do ourselves without ASSITEJ Korea's involvement) and we already have a timeline for those tasks where we do need ASSITEJ Korea.
Preparing EC meeting	Marissa	All the work it involves that the EC is here.
Republishing Research	Gonzalo, Chris, Marissa, Beatriz	New graphic template for research outputs. Editing, proofreading, and re-publishing the BCR research.

Meetings of reporting relevance

Activity	Who	Description
ASSITEJ Korea	Sue, Louis, Chris	Congress preparations:
PAC meetings	Louis, Yannick,	

PAC
partners

As of 13 March



ASSITEJ Treasurer report March 2026

Two main topics since November 2025 were membership fees on one hand, accounting and budget on the other.

Membership fees

In November, I sent the invoices that were missing before, because the centres hadn't filled the form yet or because some decisions had been taken in the EC meeting in Montreal, like exemption requests being accepted and the specific top rate for national centres in Low Income Countries of 800 €.

Some other exemption requests came late and were shared with the membership working group to take decisions. ASSITEJ Liechtenstein, as some centres before, claimed that their main grant should be considered related to projects. Our answer was "Many other members have a large part of their income from projects. Besides, we need to give our members equal treatment. That's why we decided to offer you a stepped increase to the full membership fees, this year: you will pay 50% only in 2025". IIAN fees were waived as they were still struggling to set a bank account in their new country of residency, Luxembourg.

Some reminders were sent to centres and networks in November and December. We didn't hear from Angola, Austria, Argentina, Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti, India, Montenegro (new member), Nigeria, Romania, Russia, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Zambia.

Anyway, things went well and most of the centres paid before the beginning of December. The total membership fees for 2025 are 34 721 € (meaning 66 members out of 81), much more than expected in our initial budget and even more than the estimated amount I had set in October (31 500 €). This is very good news, especially regarding the need for cofounding the EU grant.

The receipts for the fees were sent in January and February 2026.

During that period, African Vogue contract was signed, after a lot of discussion on the budget by Louis. The three partners (ASSITEJ Senegal, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire) were proposed that we take 150 EUR from the grant to pay their membership fee in 2026 and 150 EUR for outstanding years for Côte d'Ivoire as well.

Nepal as well was offered that the 2025 fees would be taken from the grant for Wanderlust.

More fees mean a more robust organisation in a longer term. It is a good step.

2025 Budget

I had several short meetings with Louis during that period, on accounting and budget. In 2025, building a statement and following the budget was difficult as we had to deal with

two different systems for the two halves of the year. It took the accountant some time to go from one to another and she needed a great help from Louis. We worked to make sure that we will have a right accounting report. It will be much less complicated than under the Italian system though.

The last invoice from Roberto Frabetti was paid with an email to him to point out that we should have known before receiving it how much more work was spent on this and how much more money this would mean from our budget. This email got no answer.

Some details on the 2025 budget (statement in progress):

More money came from Babel than expected. Furthermore, the overhead will also be a supplementary income in 2026 (final amount will be defined on final project report to the EU). Part of the staff costs in 2025 (Louis', a very small part of Marissa's) are related to the Babel project

All web platforms costs are higher this year than expected. Despite really significant savings, the digital budget overall remains higher than was estimated by the operational budget (by 14,410 EUR). The main reasons for this are:

- The cost for AI translation and Accessibility tools was significantly underestimated in the first drafts of the operational budgets (only 16% of what the true cost was budgeted), and
- The cost of subscriptions to work platforms was underestimated somewhat in the first drafts of the operational budgets (51% of the true cost was budgeted).

On the contrary, less money was spent on communication staff, as Beatriz was hired late in the year. We also spent few money on the Regional Cooperation Programme as it started in December and for Wanderlust only.

As said before, a higher membership fees amount is good news for the cofinancing of the EU grant. Regarding cofunding as well, the University of Sidney paid its contribution for "The value of TYA" project in 2025 and everything is clear. Cofunding in the future will probably be a little less than what we wrote in the EU application. Nevertheless, we are counting on having the full grant for CCE as for BCE. And it is probably better to do all activities that were described in the application and to spend the grant rather than receive money at the end of the project we haven't spent on activities. The risk is not high and is valuable.

Regarding the EU grant, we chose not to account a fix amount every year, a fourth of the total one. We will rather estimate an amount related to the activity level.

Finally, our new auditor makes a good and strict work, asking a lot of questions to Louis. We can rely on him.

Louis and I will have to write the annual statement adding the two halves of the year together as soon as possible. We will present it to the EC before the General Assembly, in April. According to the Danish law, the EC members will have to sign.

2026 Budget

Due mainly to the higher amount of membership fees, meaning a more chance to have the whole EU grant, and the unexpected final contributions from the Babel project, Louis and I made some changes to the 2026 budget. A new one has been sent to the EC and is presented in the meeting in Mexico.

In order to better support our members and the representation role of the president, more money is allocated to the staff and the EC travels, in different sections. An allocation for the presidency is also proposed as nowadays, since the EU grant improved our activity level, the president can not have a full-time job aside the presidency of ASSITEJ International. This new allocation will have to be voted by the EC.

Some lines in the budget had no expenses in 2025. We split the global amount in three, to keep the same level of activity and expense.

More mobility expenses will also be arisen (strategic invitations), as well as EC meeting support in order to allow any national centres to host the EC.

ASSITEJ International



International Association of
Theatre & Performing Arts for
Children & Young People

Evaluation workshop –Mexico, March 18, 2026

Facilitated by:

[Dr Jennifer \(Jenny\) Andersen](mailto:j.andersen@unimelb.edu.au) j.andersen@unimelb.edu.au

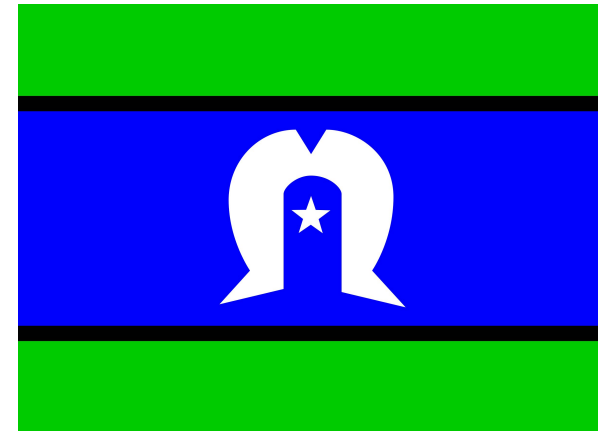
[A/Prof Richard \(Rich\) Sallis](mailto:sallis@unimelb.edu.au) sallis@unimelb.edu.au

Faculty of Education, The University of Melbourne



Acknowledgement of Country

We are grateful to live and work on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Boon Wurrung people of the Kulin nation, where people have been celebrating culture with young people for millennia. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded and pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.



What we will do today

- Present a summary of the Baseline Evaluation
- Outline possible areas of focus for the Mid and Endline Evaluations
- Break into Working Groups to discuss:
 - the findings and recommendations of the Baseline Evaluation applicable to each individual working group
 - possible areas for future evaluation
- Facilitate a summary of today's working group discussions

Baseline Evaluation (2025)

1. The 2025 Artistic Gathering in Marseilles (Bright Generations / Générations Lumineuses), and
2. The Regional Cooperation Programme (RCP), launched in December 2024 to promote cultural equity through regional collaboration.
3. Cultural equity.

The report also integrated findings from the 2025 Membership Survey, feedback from the Executive Committee (EC) Workshop in Marseilles, and observations from evaluators' participation in meetings, workshops, and document analyses.



Methodology

- A mixed methods approach combining quantitative survey analysis (via Qualtrics) with qualitative thematic analysis.
- Data were drawn from member surveys, Secretariat responses, online event observations, and documentation related to the RCP and its evaluation processes.



Key findings and Recommendations: *Regional Cooperation Program Selection process*

Demonstrated ASSITEJ International's commitment to transparency, fairness and cultural equity. Prompted the development of a self-evaluation tool.

Recommendations:

Add RCP Working Group, EC's and project groups' thoughts and feedback about the program to the RCP Evaluation Report to make it a living document that can inform future rounds.

Consider the use of the self-evaluation tool for the RCP program and any others that may benefit.



Key findings and Recommendations:

Membership & Engagement

There was the highest number of responses to the survey to date, reflecting an engaged membership that values communication and advocacy. Some confusion about membership pathways persists and membership amongst young people is low.

Recommendations:

Explore ways to communicate costs and process of membership, with a focus on young practitioners.

Continue strong communication efforts about activities and mission – this is greatly valued by members.

Continue to support regional and online activities and allied membership.



Key findings and Recommendations: *Cultural Equity*

Members clearly endorse this focus of the organisation and the programs that are being undertaken to achieve it. If anything, they would like more to be done.

Recommendations:

Consider the suggestions regarding CE in the survey responses and let members know this has been done
Communicate CE programs and achievements to members.



Key findings and Recommendations: *Artistic Gatherings & Events*

Membership are highly engaged in these events and generally very satisfied.

Recommendations:

Consider members' suggestions via the survey
Pass results onto organisers of events, where useful.

Communicate to members that their feedback has been considered.



Key findings and Recommendations: *Executive Committee Workshop*

Robust internal reflection reflects forward-looking strategy emphasizing inclusivity, accountability and evidence-based advocacy.

Recommendations were developed by the EC across four domains:

Management: Clarify governance, improve transparency (e.g., quicker minute circulation), and pilot hybrid conference models.

Communications: Expand digital engagement, create sustainability definitions, and increase translation and outreach support.

Membership: Implement a 'Welcome Pack', mentorship ('buddy') systems for National Centres, and regional focus groups.

Advocacy: Strengthen academic partnerships, develop an ASSITEJ International peer-reviewed journal, and pilot participatory research with children and young people.



Suggested Future Directions (Midline and Endline Reports)

- Members' relationship and engagement
- Community of practice
- Sustainability (environmental)
- Disability/ access
- Regional Cooperation Projects and regional membership
- 2026: Survey, with a focus on regions

Article to be published “ From Accountability to Artistic Integrity: Rethinking Evaluation in Arts Organisations’

Workshop Tasks – An Introduction

The EC's involvement today is one step closer towards growing a culture of evaluation in ASSITEJ International.

Today (via your working groups) we'd like to:

- Hear your thoughts about how the *findings* of the Baseline report may inform your working group going forward
- Discuss how your working working groups may be able to respond to *recommendations* within the report(s)
- Know what *you would like* us (the External Evaluators) to focus on in the next three years

Workshop Task:

In your **working groups** please discuss the following points:

- What did you find most useful/interesting in the findings and recommendations pertaining to your working group?
- What do you want to know more about?
- Which recommendations do you think could be acted upon in the short term?
- What feedback overall can you provide to the Evaluators?

45 mins for this task

Working Groups Report Back





SUMMARY AND FINAL THOUGHTS



ASSITEJ Membership Working Group Report

March 2026

Members:

Carole Umilinga Karemera
Julia Dina Heße
Seok-hong Kim
Stavros Stavrou
Theis Irgens

Introduction:

Since November 2025, the ASSITEJ Membership Working Group has continued to strengthen communication and collaboration between ASSITEJ International and its members — National Centres, Networks, and Affiliates.

The Group has maintained a strong focus on supporting both existing and emerging members, developing internal communication structures and encouraging active participation across regions. Particular attention has been given to follow-up processes after the Umbrella Session, the development of the National Centre Toolkit, and the expansion of ASSITEJ's network.

Working Group Meetings:

The Working Group met regularly between November 2025 and March 2026: through two online meetings (Zoom), complemented by continuous communication via email and WhatsApp.

Additional coordination took place in preparation for follow-up actions related to the Umbrella Session and Toolkit development.

Activities:

In the past months, the Working Group has:

- Continued follow-up with the working groups formed during the October 2025 Umbrella Session, encouraging further meetings.
- Initiated the planning of the next Umbrella Session, which took place on 14 January.
- Progressed the development of the updated National Centre Toolkit.

- Maintained regular contact with National Centres and Networks, with a focus on strengthening engagement with less active members.
- Supported the induction process of new members, including mentorship and onboarding support.
- Continued publishing and promoting new National Centres through ASSITEJ communication channels (newsletter and social media).
- Actively contributed to procedures related to the Regional Cooperation Programme.
- Continued advising individuals and organisations interested in establishing new National Centres.

Umbrella Session Working Groups:

Following the Umbrella Sessions held in October 2025 and January 2026, several working groups have remained active and continued their discussions in the months leading up to March 2026. These groups have developed a number of concrete proposals aimed at strengthening collaboration, communication, and capacity-building within the ASSITEJ network.

The following proposals will be presented to the Executive Committee for further consideration:

- **Pairing of National Centres (*Collaborations Working Group*)**
A structured “pairing” or “buddy system” between National Centres, aiming to foster closer collaboration, knowledge exchange, and mutual support. This initiative seeks to connect Centres with different levels of experience, resources, and regional contexts, encouraging long-term partnerships and shared activities.
- **Announcement-Only WhatsApp Group (*Collaborations Working Group*)**
The creation of an official, moderated WhatsApp group dedicated exclusively to announcements from ASSITEJ International. The purpose is to provide members with clear, direct, and accessible communication regarding open calls, opportunities, deadlines, and key updates.
- **Umbrella Plus Mentorship System (*Administration of National Centres Working Group*)**
The development of an “Umbrella Plus” system, through which individuals working within National Centres will have the opportunity to be mentored by experienced professionals from across the ASSITEJ network. This initiative is intended to support professional development, strengthen organisational capacity, and encourage knowledge transfer. Participation would be limited to ASSITEJ members.

Further details on each proposal have been developed by the respective working groups and are shared in separate documents.

Updating of the National Centre Toolkit

The process of updating the National Centre Toolkit has been initiated, with the aim of creating a more comprehensive and relevant resource for ASSITEJ members.

A significant part of this process is informed by the outcomes and discussions of the Umbrella Session Working Groups, whose contributions are being integrated into the new version of the Toolkit. These inputs provide valuable, practice-based insights into the functioning, challenges, and development of National Centres.

During this process, it was observed that many of the existing “good practice” examples originate from a limited number of countries. As a result, the Working Group is exploring ways to ensure that the Toolkit becomes more representative of the diversity of contexts within the ASSITEJ network. This includes seeking additional contributions and perspectives from a broader range of National Centres and regions.

Communication with Members:

Meetings and email communications were held or planned with both existing and prospective members.

Present Members:

ASSITEJ India – A productive meeting was held, confirming a strong willingness to continue and further develop their work. The Working Group supported their request to connect with ASSITEJ Networks, facilitating relevant introductions. In addition, facilitators for potential professional exchange activities were suggested.

ASSITEJ Uzbekistan – It was identified that previous communication had been unsuccessful due to an incorrect email address. Louis Valente will re-establish contact and initiate a meeting.

ASSITEJ Turkey – An invitation was sent to Louis Valente and Stavros Stavrou to attend their festival in Bursa in May 2026. A new board has been elected, with Oya Yilmaz continuing as President.

ASSITEJ Jordan & ASSITEJ Lebanon – Two online meetings were held with Stavros Stavrou regarding the development of a potential regional project with ASSITEJ Cyprus, focusing on early years.

ASSITEJ North Macedonia – The Centre expressed interest in applying for the Skopje 2028 European Capital of Culture open call, with ASSITEJ International as a European partner. Stavros Stavrou was invited to support the application process. Additionally, in view of their planned visit to Norway in May, connections were facilitated with ASSITEJ Norway.

ASSITEJ Montenegro – A meeting is scheduled at the end of March 2026 in Podgorica, where Stavros Stavrou will meet with all members of the National Centre.

ASSITEJ Slovakia – Continued follow-up and updates following the pre-induction phase.

ASSITEJ Italy – Stavros Stavrou met with several board members in Bologna. A new President has recently been elected.

ASSITEJ Mongolia, ASSITEJ Indonesia & ASSITEJ Nepal – Julia Dina Heße and Stavros Stavrou held meetings with representatives of the three Centres in the context of the Wanderlust project, focusing on sustainability aspects.

ASSITEJ Armenia – Stavros Stavrou met with Artur Ghukasyan, President of ASSITEJ Armenia, who confirmed that the Centre is reactivating and planning future activities.

ASSITEJ Greece – Stavros Stavrou met with Marilena Triantafillides, President, who shared updates on current and upcoming activities.

ASSITEJ Ghana – Stavros Stavrou met with their Chairperson, Ekua Ekumah following her request, to discuss possible strategies for attracting new members.

Future Members:

Egypt - AFCA Arts Center & Hakawy International Arts Festival (Suha Belal) are interested in exploring the establishment of a national centre in Egypt (Meeting Date TBC)

Malta – Daniel Azzopardi, former Artistic Director of ZiguZajg and now working for the Malta Arts Council has expressed willingness to support artists in creating a National Centre.

Kazakhstan – After the death of the previous President and the dissolution of ASSITEJ Kazakhstan, an attempt was made to connect to the network through a professional from Kazakhstan who has filled in our survey.

Uganda – Professionals from Uganda had requested a meeting with the Group through Lalu Mokuku. The meeting was held and the intention is to reactivate ASSITEJ Uganda. The professionals in Uganda have asked for help from ITI Uganda.

Bulgaria – Theis Irgens and Stavros Stavrou had a meeting with the Arlekin Art Association, which initially showed interest in establishing a National Centre in Bulgaria. After the meeting and the information provided, the interest was withdrawn.

Colombia - Julia Dina Heße, Stavros Stavrou and Gonzalo had a meeting with a company in Colombia, who was interested in ASSITEJ membership. They were encouraged to study the National Centre Toolkit before a second meeting can take place.

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ASSITEJ GREEN TEAM Report

March 2026

Members:

Julia Dina Heße
Émilie Robert
Chris Blois-Brooke
Seok-Hong Kim

Introduction:

Since the beginning of 2023, ASSITEJ International has been a member of the SHIFT Eco-Certification Programme. Together with 15 other European cultural networks we have been trained and advised by Culture for Climate Scotland and Vector 42 (Netherlands) to operate our international work in the TYA sector in a more eco-sensitive way.

The Green Team has maintained a strong focus on developing 'eco-reflexes' and awareness for (un)ecological actions both internally within ASSITEJ International (the EC, and the Secretariat) and externally with our members, partners, and stakeholders. The SHIFT audit examines 5 key areas which are Management & Policy, Communication & Awareness Raising, Travel, Events, and Office measures.

Committee Meetings:

The Green Team met regularly between January 2025 and March 2026: through two online meetings (ZOOM), complemented by continuous communication via email and a dedicated WhatsApp channel.

Additional meetings with our Peer from SHIFT (Celia Grau from Opera Europa) took place over the whole year and resulted in a Peer-Audit of both organisations in December 2025 and January 2026. Both organisations successfully passed the Audit and received the SHIFT Eco-Certificate for the third time in three years.

Activities:

In the past months, the Green Team has:

- Collected data and evidence for the SHIFT Audit which can be accessed for anyone interested (Chris shared the folder link with the EC)

- Took part in the annual online SHIFT Workshop training for Cultural Networks and presented a report during this training on the Peer-Work between ASSITEJ and Opera Europa
- Invited three new members to the Green Team coming from the Regional Cooperation Programmes of ASSITEJ International. We hope to enlarge the perspective of our ecological work within ASSITEJ and create common learning opportunities with members.
- Send out information on ecological events, catering, and mobility to the hosts of the upcoming World Congress 2027 in Suwon City, South Korea
- Started an exchange on sustainable festival making and touring with the team from WANDERLUST (Regional Cooperation Project) and offered tools from SHIFT for the hosts of the upcoming festival in Mongolia in April. The exchange will continue after the festival and will include input from other members such as Tanja Turpeinen from ASSITEJ Finland/ Nordic-Baltic Network
- Created (for the first time) a document on Climate Risk Adaptation which considers the current and future impacts of climate warming on our sector and stresses the need to install fitting plans for possible extreme environmental situations (e.g. heat waves, flooding, storms during events) especially for ASSITEJ events

Feeding Green Learnings into the National Centre Toolkit

In 2024 the Green Team worked on a Green Workbook for Members that was meant to introduce some of the core topics and tools that occurred in the SHIFT Programme. However, there has been no presentation or publication of this Workbook within our membership yet. It should have been shared with members in a Green Team Session during the AAG 2025 in Marseille but this session was announced too late so it didn't take place in the end. It remains a goal to create a Green Section within the National Centre Toolkit that serves the purpose of further awareness raising and learning from good practices in our community.

Reflections on the meaning and purpose of SHIFT for ASSITEJ International:

After the third year as participant in the SHIFT audit process, the Green Team reflected on the learnings and the value that being part of the programme brings to the work of the EC and the organisation as such. We think that, thanks to the SHIFT Guidelines and Norms, our awareness within the Executive Committee and Secretariat has been raised and especially the members of the Green Team have had a huge learning in terms of methods and tools for measuring and influencing our ecological footprint. We have installed habits like vegetarian diet in all EC meetings and we have developed regular communication about more sustainable travel and event within the EC and with our hosts and partners. We have learnt that the European standard for ecological actions is not applicable in many countries both within Europe (e.g. Serbia) and outside of Europe. We have also learned that many actions that can be undertaken to improve or ensure sustainable production are undertaken in countries outside of Europe but not taken into consideration in the SHIFT programme (yet).

After three years we feel confident that we can continue the actions and measurements that we have started in this process and we are wondering how much use there still is for ASSITEJ to remain in the SHIFT programme as it is quite pricey. The Green Team believes that the next steps for our association should be more in the way that we already have started in the dialogue with WANDERLUST: share the tools and methods from SHIFT with our National Centres and engage in a meaningful conversation with them, if and how they might be interested in starting a process of implementation of (some) of these guidelines within their Centres' work. We think it to be valuable to start a Pilot Project with three to five National Centres from different continents that are willing to initiate a mentored sustainable transformation process with the help of the Green Team for one year. This could also include other mentors or experts from our membership that are already further along in the process than us. Also, if we saved money from SHIFT (and only try to spend money for the Audit to get the certificate but drop out of the programme in total, if that became possible) we could use it to support our members by inviting external experts to Umbrella Plus Sessions etc. or to provide other tools.

The overall idea is that the knowledge and tools that the Green Team was able to gain through SHIFT is passed on and made useful for our members to encourage and enable them to do (more) sustainable work in their countries. And ideally to share their new tools with their members.

Further details on this idea need to be discussed within the EC to come to a conclusion if such a Green Pilot should be brought to life and within which conditions and timelines.

Considering an official status of the Regional Networks in ASSITEJ International

13.01.2026

Group

Paulo Merisio (Brazil)

Maria Ines (Argentina)

Mambi Mawine (Senegal)

Tanja Turpeinen (Finland)

Angélique D'Onghia (Luxembourg)

Shoaib Iqbal (New Zealand)

Louis Valente (Denmark)

Process

- Was discussed in the Umbrella working group
- Share at Umbrella Session
- Discuss and refine in the Executive Committee
- Discussion and voting at the General Assembly in Korea 2027

Rationale

The ASSITEJ Regional Networks have a long history in ASSITEJ International but are not described and recognised in the official documents of the Association. There is a need for an official status for several reasons:

- To recognise an existing practice within the membership.
- To enable recognition from external stakeholders and funders, and create the basis for a legal status to operate financially.
- To create a collective understanding in the Association of the functioning of the regional networks including their role, rights and obligations.

These Regional Networks currently exist in ASSITEJ:

- African Children and Youth Theatre Arena (ACYTA)
- ASSITEJ Asian Network
- ASSITEJ Ibero American Network (Red Iberoamericana de Artes Escénicas para la Infancia y la Juventud)
- ASSITEJ Network of German-Speaking National Centres
- ASSITEJ Network of Lusophonic-speaking National Centres
- Nordic-Baltic ASSITEJ Network
- Slavic Countries Network
- Small Countries Network

These ASSITEJ National Centres are currently not part of a regional network:

Out of the current 77 National Centres, 12 National Centres are not part of a regional network:

- ASSITEJ Belgium
- ASSITEJ Canada
- ASSITEJ France
- ASSITEJ Greece
- ASSITEJ Haiti
- ASSITEJ Hungary
- ASSITEJ Ireland
- ASSITEJ Italy
- ASSITEJ Netherlands
- ASSITEJ Romania
- ASSITEJ UK
- ASSITEJ USA

These ASSITEJ National Centres are part of more than one regional network:

- ASSITEJ Brazil (Iberoamerican and Lusophone)
- ASSITEJ Iceland (Small Countries and Nordic-Baltic)
- ASSITEJ Luxembourg (Small Countries and German-speaking)
- ASSITEJ Liechtenstein (Small Countries and German-speaking)

Draft of how the Regional Networks could be described in the ASSITEJ International Policies and Protocols Handbook

What is a regional network?

Regional Networks are clusters of ASSITEJ National Centres that collaborate within a particular global region, geographical, or linguistic context. The networks can also include individuals and institutions within the region/context from countries that do not yet have a National Centre.

What are the criteria for membership

To qualify for membership in the Association, a Regional Network should include at least three (3) National Centres or individuals from countries without a national centre that share a particular geographical, linguistic or structural context.

What are the roles of the regional networks?

- Strengthen relationships between the artistic communities and national centres of the network by creating opportunities for exchange, cooperation, solidarity and long-term collaboration.
- Be a champion for performing arts for young audiences and the aims of ASSITEJ in the region.
- Supports artists, professionals, and national centres from the regional network, helping them to join and fully engage with the international ASSITEJ community, ensuring equal access to opportunities, resources, and professional networks.
- Strengthen the visibility of the region in larger international contexts.
- Support new and emerging national centres in the region in collaboration with ASSITEJ International.
- Uphold the values of ASSITEJ: Generosity, inclusivity, representativity and sustainability.
- More...?

Rights of the ASSITEJ Regional Networks

The ASSITEJ Regional Networks have the right to use the title towards members of the Association and external stakeholders and funders including to use it to establish a legal entity.

They have the right to speak and make proposals at constitutional meetings about topics that cannot be addressed adequately by National Centres.

The Regional Networks do not have the right to vote and to be elected to any office within the Executive Committee because the National Centres of the networks are already members of the association, and this would provide them with double voting power and the potential for double representation in the Executive Committee.

A regional network is based on voluntary participation of the national centres, and the Regional Network does not have the right to interfere in the internal business of national centres.

Obligations of ASSITEJ Regional Networks

- To be actively engaged in activities, projects or collaborations which reflect the aims of the Association.
- To adhere to the constitution of ASSITEJ International.
- To work with transparency in decision-making. As a minimum, this means to decide among the members of the network the procedure for how decisions are made, how meeting agendas are created, meetings chaired/facilitated, finances administered, powers to manage activities are delegated and how conflict of interests are handled. Each regional network has the freedom to address and formalise these questions in a way suitable for the context.
- To appoint a correspondent who takes responsibility for corresponding with the Secretary General and to communicate to their members the information sent from the Secretariat.
- To keep the Executive Committee informed of their activities at least once a year, but preferably more regularly. This can be done through the website, the newsletter, in person, or by other means.
- To include all national centres in the region/context that wish to be part of the network.

Questions to think about

- ASSITEJ Regional Networks are networks of National Centres. The level of engagement of individual artists and institutions in the activities of the networks differs from region to region according to the needs and priorities. What are the methods to engage the artistic communities of the regions in the regional networks of ASSITEJ? To what extent should the individual members of the national centres identify as a part of a regional network?
- How can we establish a regular mechanism for the regional networks and the Executive Committee of ASSITEJ International to share information and collectively analyse the situation in the regions? Some ideas:
 - One time per three year term the Executive Committee invites each regional network for a shared working session online or in person with a special focus on the region. What are the current activities, needs and strategic priorities? Which are the feasible short-term and longer-term actions that ASSITEJ International and the regional network can make to address these?
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Examples of activities of Regional Networks

ASSITEJ Small Countries Meeting & SparksLab Programm

The ASSITEJ Small Countries Meeting & SparksLab Programm is an annual professional gathering that brings together representatives from a network of small European countries working in the field of performing arts for young audiences. The network is built on the idea that smaller countries often face similar structural, cultural, and financial challenges, and that sharing experiences and strategies can strengthen their artistic ecosystems.

Each year, the meeting is hosted by a different member country. Hosting rotates among the participating countries, with the host organisation welcoming the other members and covering accommodation and meals for the invited participants.

Every participating country is represented by one official delegate, ensuring strategic exchange at an organisational and policy level. In addition, two artists from each country take part in the SparksLab programme, which runs alongside the professional meetings. SparksLab is an artistic research and professional workshop designed for emerging artists, encouraging experimentation, peer learning, and international exchange.

The programme of the meeting typically includes professional discussions, round tables, workshops, and encounters with cultural policymakers, as well as attendance at performances and artistic events connected to the host country's local and international scene. These moments allow participants to share good practices, reflect on common

challenges, and collectively shape the future direction of the ASSITEJ Small Countries network.

More examples to be added....