ASSITEJ Executive Committee Meeting:
Online, 2 & 4 November 2026

Present members of the Executive Committee:
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)
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)
Jonathan Dafydd-Kidd, UK (Jon)
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)

Present staff members:
Christopher John Blois-Brooke, *Staff Member*, UK (Chris)

Absent staff members:
Beatriz Aguilar, *Staff Member*, Spain (Beatriz)
Marissa Garay, *Staff Member*, Mexico (Marissa)

Agenda

1. Welcome from the President
2. Regularity of the Meeting
3. Present, Apologies and Absent Members, Number of Voters
4. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting
5. Proposal and Approval of Agenda
6. Conflicts of Interest
7. Specific Items of Business
    a. President Decision to Re-Stand
    b. Handover Process Secretary General
8. SHIFT Report and Update
9. Constitutional Changes
    a. Regional Cap
    b. Updates for Clarification
10. Update from World Congress
    a. Performance Selection
11. Financial Items
    a. Update on Increased Staff Costs
12. Bid for ASSITEJ Events
13. Next Meeting in Belgium
14. Any Other Business

1. Welcome from the President

Sue Giles welcomed the EC.

2. Regularity of the Meeting

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

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

Paulo Merisio was absent on the first day.
14 voting members were present.
Theis Irgens was absent on the second day.
14 voting members were present.

4. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting

The EC unanimously approved the previous meeting minutes by a show of hands.

5. Proposal and Approval of Agenda

Sue reviewed the meeting agenda. No objections were raised to the agenda.

6. Conflicts of Interest

None were raised.

7. Specific Items of Business

a. President Decision to Re-Stand

Sue had previously communicated with the EC about standing again for the next term, expressing the rationale that both the Secretary General and President leaving at the same time is not good for the association's continuity and consistency. Sue asked the EC if they had any questions or concerns about her decision.

Bebê de Soares asked about the option of a double Presidency to start paving the way for the successor, and asked who would run for Secretary General.

b. Handover Process Secretary General

Gonzalo Moreno said he was concerned about the Secretary General role and how it is used as a General Manager as well; he said this should be divided into two separate roles, as the tasks are different. This is an opportunity to improve the situation and define what we expect from each role.
Lalu Mokuku added that the Vice President roles could also be reconfigured, and that we should raise awareness around the new roles.

Jon Dafydd-Kidd also pointed out that the two roles the Secretary General currently holds are tied together and one is an elected position. The policy and procedure need to be clear if the roles remain tied as it makes employer/employee relations complicated.

Louis Valente shared that people have the intention of standing for his role.. The idea is to start the handover now. He spoke in favour of keeping the Secretary General as an elected role. He also said he'd be interested in continuing to support the EC if the board is interested and it's useful, particularly with the setup in Denmark.
Bebê agreed that splitting the role would be a good idea: keeping the elected position and adding a Manager of the Secretariat as a separate paid position. Louis mentioned that the Secretary General role would then need to be full-time to maintain the balance; this would mean two full-time positions.

Julia Dina Heße felt that giving staff more resources and power is very interesting. This would require extra funding and some restructuring within the association. The fear of losing knowledge or weakening the association is normal, but this has always happened and will always happen.

Theis said it is a good aim to have in terms of restructuring the staff, and to expand and secure stability. However, it's probably not something to do with the change coming in one year. With the current people who will stand, we can be confident that things will work well and we have time to make changes.

Emilie expressed concern about keeping staff and the EC completely separate, because the current Secretary General role helps connect both sides. It feels like a good time to think about how we are organised, and maybe the Management Working Group can bring some proposals.
Louis added that it is also important not to move away from the association's volunteer feel; this helps to stay closer to the membership. There is strength in having such an engaged EC that shapes things together with the staff.

Jon expressed concern that decisions are being based on people rather than the role, and if we are being custodians of an EU grant and taking responsibility, there should be a policy in place that recognises which parts are employed and which aren't.
Carole said it has to do with the organisation's policy, and that having to explain the nature of *ASSITEJ International* over and over again means we have to be extremely cautious about how we explain it, because it can be complicated for people to understand. If we think about legacy and continuity, we need to formulate and articulate it in that way so members don't think it is about holding power. She also mentioned that it is important to clarify that the administrative role is not completely tied to political/elected roles and responds to other regulations.

Chris Blois-Brooke supported the idea of an Operations Manager who could take on some of the Secretary General's administrative tasks. Regarding the distance between staff and the EC, it is also an opportunity to consider where the office is based and whether we need a physical space to work together sometimes.
Shoaib agreed that being a volunteer association is incredibly powerful, and we share this with our Centres. On the other hand, we have a growing need to do a lot of things we can't because of time. One role should not have to do all the thinking and doing; this could be taken on by a team of staff. Without clear accountability and safeguarding, we take on a lot of risk, so we should have clear policies.

Yannick Boudeau said the association has reached a point where the EC needs to consider the operational and Secretariat work. For the next term, maybe we should arrive with proposals on how the EC will work.

8. *SHIFT* Report and Update

Julia said the next audit will be on 16 December 2026, and asked everyone to review the Sustainability Policy.
Chris has handed over his place in the Green Team to Marissa Garay.
On The Move is now handling *SHIFT*, after Culture for Climate Scotland stepped down.

9. Constitutional Changes

a. Regional Cap

Sue asked those who were not present at the meeting in Chile to share their views on the regional cap for the EC, and whether everyone still wants to explore it.

The idea is to create a quota/cap to ensure underrepresented regions are represented equally within *ASSITEJ*. The focus is on the process, and not individuals in the current EC.

Carole said she is in favour of the regional cap; it could make a big difference to the future of elections. It speaks to diversity of voices; this is a global organisation, so it should represent different contexts, cultures, governance, and ideas. If people are more aware, it will send a positive message worldwide that leadership is open to representation from anywhere.

Seok-hong Kim supports a maximum, but it would be ideal to pair it with a quota, because many regions will still be underrepresented; maybe a minimum per continent.

Shoaib agrees that the cap is powerful and important for participation and equity; it is also an exercise in developing leadership. This would also make National Centres vote for candidates from other parts of the world. A cap will not automatically promote equal representation; equity and resource-sharing still need work and awareness raising in every National Centre.

Lalu echoed the importance of a regional cap. There also needs to be a way to address accountability issues, so representation actually counts. At its core, this is an element of volunteering, which requires significant time and commitment; it also creates an opportunity for technical engagement on communication and accountability.

Bebê suggested limiting the EC to no more than 7 members from one region. She emphasised that calling for counsellors is necessary for geographic spread.

Stavros said this looks great in theory, but in practice, in the current EC, for example, we would've missed two people, and that would be a great loss. We need to encourage more candidates from other countries to run and become more visible in the next months. We should also encourage the creation of more centres in regions that lack presence, and strengthen the roles of Vice Presidents and Counsellors so they can be linked to regions and ensure geographic representation, even if we don't decide to go on with the quota.

VOTE:
Is the EC in favour of continuing to explore this idea? YES (UNANIMOUS)

Sue asked a group to put together a proposal for members. Louis will call a meeting, and anyone interested can join to work on this. The initial group will be Paulo, Stavros, Gonzalo, Bebê, Lalu, Carole, and Louis.

b. Updates for Clarification

The Constitution will be updated to clarify that a candidate may stand for election to the EC after losing an election for President or Secretary General. This is currently unclear in the Constitution.
This speaks to practicalities of the General Assembly. This way, we can have one vote for specific officer roles and then a separate vote for the EC. We will make this clearer in the election protocols.

Bebê said that from the beginning, people should be listed as candidates under each role, as well as under the general EC.

10. Update from World Congress

a. Performance Selection

Sue shared a previous concern from *ASSITEJ Korea*: few eligible works came from Africa, for several reasons (large casts, text-heavy, not age-appropriate, no

video). The inequity in people's capacity to provide materials for online viewing was very evident, as we had seen in the process for Cuba. This was also the case in South America, and there were very few Asian works.

59 people were involved in the selection. In the last/third review, Ms Baang proposed making some curated decisions about the programme, considering the point of view of Korean children and the need to fill larger venues, to fill the gaps in the current selection.
Louis added that current policies will be respected: a 40% cap on any continent, at least 60% from underexposed regions, and certain committees can be asked to make proposals to the selection committee. Nothing says all productions must come from the open call, so the host has some freedom to choose elsewhere to meet their needs. Currently, there are 20 productions, and 5 are not from the open call (2 international and 3 Korean).
Bebê remembered that in Cuba, the National Arts Council also invited a few outside productions to form part of the programme.

Lalu appreciated the "rejection" emails received, and asked if specific feedback is possible to companies who request it. Sue agreed that feedback is very useful for artists but said this is a big ask, because it would be impossible to do this for 900 applications. However, general feedback could be given as to what works and what doesn't in applications.
Emilie suggested that sharing the criteria and the selection committee's general thoughts would be useful for people.
Carole asked if geographical representation was being considered with the curated programme. For feedback, she suggested sharing it with the performances that were shortlisted.
Bebê asked to share comments written by the selection committee with the applicants. She wished to know more about the applicants within the current call who were from South America and to ensure that there were works selection from that region.
Paulo suggested sharing the criteria before open calls are launched, so people know what will be considered when applying.

Stavros asked about EC events for the Professional Exchange Programme.
Louis said the selection process is underway, but the committee knows other proposals will come.

11. Financial Items

a. Update on Increased Staff Costs

Louis shared a document with all the costs related to the staff and Secretariat office. The increases reflect a desire to create a safe employment environment for staff. Because the staff are not based in the country where we are registered, it is hard to ensure they are covered by social security, for example. *ASSITEJ International* will now support staff members in covering their own

insurance and some office costs. This was all made through separate contracts, because only Louis is an employee and the rest are freelancers.

Emilie shared that *ASSITEJ* now has lower accounting, consulting, and administrative costs, so there is money to increase staff salaries and improve conditions.

Gonzalo asked to discuss whether the MOU with *ASSITEJ Spain* will continue, so the salary for the communications position can be maintained at the same level as the rest of the staff. There was a short discussion around the parity of benefits and employment terms between current staff members.

VOTE:
Does the EC approve the proposed staff increases presented? YES (MAJORITY)

12. Bid for *ASSITEJ* Events

Bids for *ASSITEJ Artistic Gatherings* in 2029 and 2031 are still needed. Belgium and Singapore are considering bids for 2030. The call for bids will be sent out soon, along with the General Assembly dates, and the deadline will be three months before the General Assembly. The EC was asked to encourage conversations around this, especially in regions where there is a need for us to go.

Stavros asked about Canada and Norway's interest in applying.
Louis said Canada withdrew their interest.

Brazil will explore a different type of Artistic Gathering, with more focus on the Professional Exchange Programme and a smaller, more local festival. This may help other countries wishing to apply to see if it implies a smaller financial burden.

13. Next Meeting in Belgium

Bebê will have to leave for a few days in the middle of the meeting.

Arrival will be on 2 February. Departure is still to be confirmed.
Yannick shared a few activities that Gerhard Verfaillie and *ASSITEJ Belgium* are organising during *Krokusfestival*.

Wanderlust Nepal will happen right after the meeting in Belgium (11 February 2027).

Louis asked Sue and Yannick to help explore ways to engage children during the meeting in Belgium.

14. Any Other Business

a. Cybersecurity Update

Chris shared that the *ASSITEJ* website and servers were affected by recent worldwide cyberattacks and malware attacks, but Chris and Daniel Bailey (web developer) have managed to keep everything under control. He asked the EC to be extra careful with any links received.