



International network for contemporary performing arts

IETM's IDEA strategy

1. IETM's vision for Inclusion, Diversity, Equality and Accessibility

We aim to make our network more diverse and our activities more inclusive and accessible, reaching out to performing arts professionals from all backgrounds (ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, physical abilities, social conditions, languages, working and employment status, age, career path and geographical location). We do this by mainstreaming principles of inclusion, diversity, equality and accessibility across all our activities, with an intersectional approach.

2. Rationale

We believe that contemporary performing arts can and should represent and serve the whole of society. However, we acknowledge that our field, like all professional sectors, continues to reflect the inequalities that exist in society, where some groups have to struggle more than others at different stages of their careers.

We have embarked on a journey to make our activities more inclusive and accessible. By trying to improve ourselves, and by sharing successes as well as challenges, we hope to set an example, to raise awareness among our members and to encourage positive change in the performing arts scene, with possible impacts - in the long term - on society at large.

3. IETM's opportunities and challenges

As an international network, we enjoy some specific opportunities:

- Our membership represents all the elements of the sector (artistic and non-artistic professionals, policy-makers, educators, researchers, to name a few);
- Our members are based in different countries, which is in itself an asset for diversity;

- The informal nature of IETM meetings allows to acknowledge challenges, learn from others and imagine solutions together (while keeping in mind the specific contexts in which each member operates);
- As a civil society organisation, we can set our own agenda and choose our own definitions, approach and strategies, in dialogue with our members (collective process).

However, we also face some challenges:

- Our members are based in different countries; this, while being an asset for the diversity of the network, also implies different takes on inclusion, diversity, equality and accessibility, rooted in the countries' history, social reality and politics;
- Our members work across disciplines and represent different types of organisations; therefore, they have very different needs and approaches to inclusion, diversity, equality and accessibility;
- We represent only part of the contemporary performing arts sector, i.e. professionals working internationally;
- The composition of the network reflects the composition of the sector.

4. Measuring actions: the journey so far

While IETM has always paid attention to the geographic diversity of its members, since 2015 we have engaged in a thorough reflection on inclusion, diversity, equality and accessibility. A diversity strategy is part of our work plan 2017-2021.

At the moment, we are focusing on geographic spread, gender equality, ethnic diversity, physical ability, gender identity and aesthetics.

We are adopting a holistic, bottom-up approach engaging in discussion with the members and with a variety of stakeholders.

At this stage, we are focusing on measuring actions (what we are doing/have done) rather than people (how many members/participants we have from different groups).

IETM Secretariat, governance, membership & the sector:

- The IETM Secretariat in Brussels is balanced in terms of gender, and is diverse in terms of geographic origin and languages spoken.
- Since 2016, the team has received general training on diversity and inclusion, and some team members have received specific training on physical accessibility of events.
- The composition of the Board and Advisors' Committee ensures balance in terms of gender, geographic origin, age and type of organisation, knowing that these governance bodies have to reflect the diversity of the membership too.
- Board and Advisors, as well as the Associate Members, support IETM's work on inclusion, diversity, equality and accessibility.
- The development of a diversity policy is part of IETM's work plan 2017-2021 (supported by Creative Europe).

- Members are consulted regularly on these topics through focus groups, specific sessions during the plenary meetings, Talks & Listens, email and personal contacts of the Secretariat, and via the online Forum.

IETM activities:

- Diversity and accessibility are discussed with the local meeting organisers, raising awareness and facilitating the exchange of experiences. There is a checklist on accessibility that the Project Manager Meetings refers to when organising meetings.
- Gender balance and diversity are ensured as much as possible in the panels of the meetings, while we are choosing speakers and moderators on the basis of their expertise; ensuring diverse panels helps to mainstream diversity across all topics.
- Speakers and moderators are briefed on the barriers and biases that may exist for anyone to access/address the topic of their session. They also get recommendation to ensure that every kind of voice can be heard during the sessions.
- The meetings registration forms include a field asking if the person has any special accessibility needs; should there be some, the Secretariat team and the local organisers try to deliver as much support as possible.
- IETM meetings and IETM Campus include sessions about accessibility, gender equality, diversity (in teams, leadership, programmes etc.), aesthetic dimension of diversity, work with refugees, diversity and audience development, etc. IETM publications address the same topics and provide practical resources.
- 'Inclusion' is one of the six Themes on our website. In this section we collect articles, publications and research on related topics (e.g. gender equality, diversity, accessibility).
- A palantypist is contracted for the opening plenaries (when finances allow).
- Local meeting organisers, (Associate) members and external partners (e.g. ILGA-Europe) help to contact and involve in the meetings local professionals across the whole spectrum of diversity.
- IETM balances the geographical spread of its activities, to connect better with the sector in many different regions.
- IETM's publications tackle topics related to diversity and inclusion (see above); the pool of authors ensures as much as possible gender and geographic balance; the Fresh Perspectives series is made available in formats accessible to readers with visual impairments.
- Publications are made available as often as possible in English and French; the Themes section of the website includes articles in various languages.

Alliances / partnerships:

- The Secretariat collaborates with the Associate members to support diverse delegations of artists attending IETM meetings, and to develop research and training activities in the fields of inclusion, diversity, equality and accessibility.

The Secretariat also facilitates peer-learning among our Associate Members on diversity, accessibility and inclusion.

- The Secretariat collaborates with funders to try and facilitate participation of delegations from countries less represented in IETM (MENA region; Africa; neighbouring countries in Central-Eastern Europe and Central Asia).
- The Secretariat establishes and nurtures connections/collaborations with 'allies' from the artistic and social field: FIA and UNI MEI (trade unions federations), ILGA-Europe (supporting LGBTI+ community), ECRE (European Council for Refugees and Exiles), EDF (European Disability Forum), ENAR (European Network Against Racism), EWL (European Women's Lobby).

5. Next steps

This document will be shared with IETM members on the Forum before the meeting in Porto (April 2018), and feedback/comments will be collected on the Forum and via email/skype.

The document will then be discussed during the Talks and Listens in Porto and voted at the General Assembly. During the GA we aim in particular to define the goals for the next three years.

Over the next three years we plan to strengthen the activities undertaken so far and engage in further activities suggested by members, and to keep exchanging with the network (governing bodies, members and Associate Members) as well as with external allies.

We plan to evaluate the results achieved at the end of the current work plan (2021) and to adapt the strategy according to such results.

Proposals for objectives and measurement

- Objective 1: to measure IETM members' (and the sector at large) interest for, and engagement with the IDEA issues:

A) Survey of diversity/inclusion policies among IETM members & participants (confidential, but not anonymous). People are asked to answer 8 questions:

1) Do you have an (in)formal inclusion / diversity / equality / accessibility strategy in place in your organisation? Answers: yes - no - I don't know

2) If yes, what does it focus on? (check all valid options) gender equality - ethnic diversity - disability - other (please specify) // If no, why? (please explain)

3) Who is the person in charge of the policy (in case we want to follow up for more details)?

4) What could IETM do to help you to develop a policy? (please explain)

5) Any other thought on this matter?

6) Please name your organisation:

7) Is your organisation a member of IETM?

8) How many people work for your organisation? <10 / 11-15 / >16

B) The survey results will be key for the Toolkit on inclusion (in PAT II.2 - 2019), so the author (to be appointed) could analyse them and follow up with relevant members.

=> results (*quantitative and qualitative*): 1) level of member's interest in the issue in 2018 (if the survey is not mandatory, the number of replies itself will also be indicative); 2) number of IETM members who do have a policy in place; 3) precious qualitative information about IETM members' views and expertise on these matters (from the comments + follow-up); 4) content for the Toolkit on inclusion.

- Objective 2: to make IETM's meetings more accessible to persons with physical impairments - incl. communicating clearly about the accessibility of each venue of all meetings:

Continuing doing what we are doing, and being honest about the challenges, failures, difficulties, but also results - so that we can keep improving (in line with our actual human and financial resources), being realistic with promises and expectations.

- Objective 3: measure the results of IETM's current work programme:

A) Repeat the survey on diversity policies in 2020 (autumn plenary) and compare the results with 2018 to see if things have changed (*quantitative and qualitative*).

B) In the meantime, we continue our discussions during the Plenary and Satellite meetings, and by comparing the level and quality of the discussions we can see if topics change or not, what new experiences and suggestions come up etc.

- Objective 4: to inspire change in our members' organisations (and the sector at large - through our members):

A) Continue proposing sessions on these topics, following members' interests/proposals, secure diversity of panels, and mainstreaming inclusion / diversity / equality / accessibility topics across sessions.

B) Produce the Toolkit and propose a test phase with selected members, incl. a hands-on session by the author during a plenary meeting (when we launch the Toolkit) and follow-up at the next plenary (impacts on budget and communication, but we could search for additional resources & build partnerships...).

C) Continue building/strengthening alliances with other organisations (FIA, UNI MEI, ENAR, ILGA etc.) for: speakers, participants, dissemination of publications & reports, exchange of expertise, joint communication...

D) Share the journey and the results at the last plenary planned under this work programme (spring 2021).