

FINNISH–AFRICAN EXCHANGE NETWORK FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN MUSIC (FANM)

Coordinator: Sibelius Academy, Finland

Partners: University of Ghana, Ghana; University of Cape Town, South Africa; Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, Mozambique

Study areas: Art and Design

What are the main aims of your network?

The network aims at sustainable cooperation between the Sibelius Academy and African partner universities. We aim to support educational development of curricula and to increase all kind of interaction between the cultures. One purpose of the network is to enhance academically important teacher and student exchange, which works as a tool for developing deeper cooperation. The network activities produce many qualitative results such as new courses and new teaching methods, which affect the study programme development.

The network has formed a good platform for continuous development of different ideas for cooperation. The culture of a society is the basis for development. It is culture that determines the values of the society. It is therefore immensely important to respect the cultural diversity and support the activities preserving cultural identity. Supporting cultural activities helps in creating a solid foundation for higher education development.

We support the Finnish development policies in the field of music and culture with long-term sustainable cooperation. Cooperation activities widen the much-needed understanding of global development matters. Through education, it is possible to increase the knowledge and expertise of the people working in the cultural sector and music education.

What kind of activities are there in your network?

The network activities include reciprocal student and teacher exchange, intensive courses and networking activities. Partner schools have been active in exchanges since 2006. The plan for academic year 2008–2009 includes an intensive course, which will take place in spring 2009 in Africa. The networking meeting will take place in connection with the course.

Creating a network and a successful start of the mobility are the main results of the first year. Exchanges have created a basis for future cooperation which will include curriculum development and increased mobility between north and south among others. There have been 6 mobile students and teachers so far.



What sort of successes and challenges have you encountered during your project?

The response from the African partner institutions to the proposed cooperation has been enthusiastic. Teacher exchange has resulted in personal and institutional contacts which will create further cooperation possibilities. The biggest challenge so far has been the actual creating of the network: it is a time-taking process both academically and administratively.

Your advice to forthcoming networks

In the beginning, try to organise networking activities in order to include as many individuals as possible in the network.

