

**World Alliance for Arts Education:  
A Response to the 2006 UNESCO Roadmap**

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Global Citizenship, Cultural Identities and Arts Education  
World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE)

Representing

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**Introduction**

The World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE) was formed during the 1<sup>st</sup> UNESCO World Congress on Arts Education held in Lisbon, Portugal, March 2006. At that time IDEA, InSEA and ISME formed the basis of the organization. Within two years the WDA officially joined the WAAE and the languages and disciplines of 'new media' and 'literature' were being integrated into the process of developing a new paradigm of education capable of responding to the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

While WAAE was created during the 1<sup>st</sup> UNESCO World Congress on Arts Education as a way to build a strong partnership among the constituent organizations, perhaps more importantly it was created in response to the UNESCO Roadmap for Arts Education. WAAE supports the UNESCO Roadmap for Arts Education (2006) as a broad platform for initiating global understanding and action about the relevance of arts education. What we missed in the roadmap was a focus for ongoing development. How will UNESCO harness its global influence to improve arts education? What are its concrete objectives and context-specific targets, and who specifically are UNESCO's key partners? WAAE was formed because we, on behalf of organised and networked arts educators, are pivotal in making and maintaining the necessary changes sustainable and therefore need to be actively consulted and instrumental in the development of Arts Education.

WAAE supports UNESCO's concerns of human rights; advocacy for access to education and cultural participation for all; concern for improving quality arts education especially that which is learner centred; focus on improving the teaching of arts education; and, recognition of the necessity for partnerships across school systems, tertiary institutions, community associations, business communities, cultural organisations and arts educators.

Sustainable change will rely on arts educators enacting pedagogic, aesthetic and institutional change and advocating for a shared and articulated vision. The formation of WAAE is a real and tangible response to the Road Map. The following outline describes an initial WAAE strategic plan for supporting the worldwide development of arts education as the foundation for a new paradigm of education.

Drawing membership from more than 90 countries, our global alliance of arts education organisations involves leading practitioners and scholars, and promotes innovative practices and research in arts education internationally. Through our national affiliations and individual memberships, we draw on the experiences of teachers, arts educators, teacher educators, artists/performers, researchers, scholars, community leaders, administrators and policy makers who are connected to formal education, popular education and community education from a variety of learning environments throughout the world. Creating the WAAE network has allowed us to collectively advance professional practices and policies for dance, drama/theatre, music, and visual arts education, as well as at the intersections between and among these arts education practices.

Moreover, since 2006, WAAE has held annual world summits (Hong Kong, Taipei, Taiwan & Newcastle<sup>1</sup>, England) and Presidential Council Meetings (Brazil, Sweden, France and Colombia<sup>2</sup>) and in 2009-2010 embarked upon a worldwide effort to encourage regional summits (Belarus, Canada, Colombia, Ghana, South Africa) and virtual summits (South-East Asia Pacific). Most summits built upon preceding summits and explored a variety of timely topics such as cooperative and transformational pedagogies, creativity, intercultural understandings, cultural development, global citizenship, cultural identities and arts education policy. Moreover, the above forums involved many hundreds of diverse arts educators and organisations. The disciplines of dance, drama, visual art, music, literature, film and media and cross-disciplinary blends of the above provided broad definitions of the scope of arts education provided within institutional and non-institutional contexts. This report draws upon all of these discussions and the outcomes generated within each conference or summit. In this way, the report provides documentation of a worldwide effort to advance arts education.

The following WAAE recommendations are derived from the 2009-2010 summits' strategic focuses on advocacy, networking and research. While these three areas of interest are approached separately, they are clearly interconnected and form the beginning of a strategic planning process for WAAE and its constituent organizations. Over the last few months, advocacy, networking and research documents have circulated among the organizations through the coordination efforts of WDA representative Ralph Buck (networking), ISME representative Victor Fung (Research) and InSEA representative Rita Irwin (advocacy). Each of these coordinators is a member of, or appointed by, the WAAE Presidential Council, coordinated by IDEA representative Dan Baron Cohen, and worked with a Liaison Group made up of four people, representing members from IDEA, InSEA, ISME and the WDA. These liaison group members stimulated feedback within their organizations and shared the feedback with the liaison group chair. This report is a collaborative culmination of our liaison group deliberations and represents our first step toward developing a WAAE strategic plan for the next five years. As such, WAAE, and each individual organization, will need to define the most effective ways of implementing our inter-connected agendas as we endeavour to promote arts education worldwide and strengthen the WAAE to contribute to the emergence of a new paradigm of education for the 21st Century.

### **WAAE Strategic Planning Recommendations**

WAAE recognizes a global hunger for partnerships, leadership, advocacy tools and skills, research and arts-based teacher-education models, and plans to provide a structure for addressing these needs. To do so, WAAE has identified Advocacy, Networking and Research as strategic strands for taking action to accelerate the development of a new paradigm of education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century based on cooperation, community and sustainability. The delineation of these strands draws attention to the need to re-integrate the arts in the development of humanity and society, and to position WAAE as an effective organization for advocating to governments and decision makers on policy, learning experiences and curricula. To form the strongest WAAE foundation possible, the Advocacy, Networking and Research strands need to form a coherent integrated strategic plan. What follows is our first attempt at outlining the recommendations WAAE may pursue in the coming years. The recommendations are clustered according to Advocacy, Networking and Research Strategic Action Groups who will take responsibility for facilitating particular recommendations. Strategic Action groupings will include representatives from each constituent organization with one member being assigned the responsibility of chairing the Action Group. The chairs will work together to ensure inclusiveness, congruence and continuity among their strategic actions. It is important to underscore the need for an integrated strategic plan that connects the planning and actions between and among the three strands. As such, the following recommendations are inherently connected regardless of the Action Group in which they reside.

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<sup>1</sup> The 2007 WAAE World Creativity Summit was hosted and coordinated by IDEA; the 2008 World Creativity Summit was hosted and coordinated by InSEA; and the 2009 World Forum was hosted and coordinated by IDEA.

<sup>2</sup> The 2006 PCM was hosted by ISME; the 2007 PCM was hosted by IDEA; the 2008 PCMs were hosted by IDEA and ISME; and the 2009 meetings were hosted by UNESCO and InSEA).

## **Advocacy Action Group**

### **Recommendation 1**

Articulate WAAE's vision, values and structure(s) that would better communicate and generate partnerships within wider strategic networks.

- Actions:
- a) Define a vision and values statement (See appendix).
  - b) Identify core objectives, members, and processes for dialogue.

### **Recommendation 2**

Make use of technology to share advocacy and research through networking. Prioritise the development of a WAAE Website; a WAAE E- Newsletter; and, social networking vehicles.

- Actions:
- a) Develop a website that provides a portal to other relevant sites, profiles arts education research, presents case studies and provides a site for dialogue.
  - b) Ensure the website increases public access to arts education information and organisations; appeals to arts teacher education programs; provides reliable and up to date sources of information; represents and appeals to diverse arts educators irrespective of language, culture, age, gender and demographic; provides a means for managing language translation; appeals to funding bodies or sponsors.
  - c) Ensure the website provides transparent access to WAAE core business that in itself provides connections with core partners.
  - d) Identify specific target groups and develop appropriate advocacy statements for each (policymakers, arts teacher educators, governments, etc). These statements should include arguments that have worked with a variety of audiences and stakeholder groups, exemplary culturally relevant practices and pedagogies in arts education, and how to address controversial topics from a variety of perspectives.

### **Recommendation 3**

Maintain and build a varied program of global summits, regional and national conferences all of which produce event proceedings or documented outputs for dissemination amongst and beyond WAAE members. Support participation in these events by making use of technology that may improve access and the dissemination of information ensuring diverse voices are heard. Each summit or conference is to have a clear purpose and structure and comply with WAAE values and protocols.

- Actions:
- a) Establish landmark events around which formal communication can be made with government, business, education institutions, funding bodies and the public.
  - b) Improve the provision of arts education in diverse contexts.
  - c) Schedule global events with sensitivity to needs, emerging issues and opportunities.
  - d) Schedule virtual events.

### **Recommendation 4**

Attention should be given to "branding" WAAE and its constituent organizations as pivotal forces in raising the level of recognition and understanding for arts education in public and political arenas.

- Actions:
- a) Identify a slogan and/or the recruitment of a team of "champions" or "ambassadors" from fields unconnected with education.

## **Networking Action Group**

### **Recommendation 5**

The WAAE Presidential Council should prepare a draft Constitution for formal approval by the WAAE member organisations.

- Actions:
- a) Develop and ratify a WAAE Constitution that articulates objectives, membership and governance procedures; improves and systematises communication between WAAE member organisations; develops and ratifies a rationale and procedure for establishing member organisations and formal and informal partners; and articulates a vision and procedures for interested sponsors and partners.
  - b) Ratify the WAAE constitution as soon as possible.

### **Recommendation 6**

Develop a strategic planning document for the next five years that states goals, purposes, outcomes and timeframes, providing direction for ongoing WAAE council and committee members and their events.

- Actions:
- a) To map a schedule for activity that may foster future development and agendas.
  - b) To articulate a direction for the next phase in WAAE's development.
  - c) Facilitate a draft WAAE strategic planning document.

### **Recommendation 7**

Establish partnerships while prioritizing UNESCO as a key partner. Systematically build other partnerships and communication with governments, private industry sectors, non-profit arts organizations, and other community-based arts education networks.

- Actions:
- a) WAAE should demonstrate a commitment to the UNESCO Road Map and be publicly perceived as working in collaboration with UNESCO.
  - b) WAAE should also make proposals directly to UNESCO. For instance, WAAE should propose a UNESCO endorsed *World Arts Day/ World Arts Week*.
  - c) WAAE should assist partner arts educators with policy and government bodies such as UNESCO.
  - d) WAAE needs to identify organisations motivated and able to inform development of arts education.

### **Recommendation 8**

Seek resources/partnerships that will enable the employment of an administrator and the above recommendations.

- Actions:
- a) Gain financial support for the employment of a WAAE Executive Officer; development of a website; organisation of conferences; publication of resources.
  - b) WAAE needs to review, analyze and debate the presence and absence of particular themes within NGO activities, mission statements and advocacy strategies. This will assist WAAE with its own re-imagining of its commitment to arts education worldwide, ensuring that WAAE is relevant and timely as well as professionally and politically active.
  - c) Develop a business plan that outlines costs, revenue, management of resources, particularly around the re-development of the website, but also in regard to financing an executive officer.

## **Research Action Group**

### **Recommendation 9**

Encourage research in arts education that deepens and diversifies existing research.

- Actions:
- a) Create discussion that furthers engagement where limited research exists (e.g. the arts in indigenous, traumatized and marginalized communities) and where collaboration and co-construction in cross-cultural arts education interventions can foster cultural autonomy and voice.
  - b) Encourage research that impacts on social sustainability, personal identity and development, interdisciplinary education, and intrinsic and instrumental engagement with

the arts.

c) Nurture research that supports teachers in diverse cultural contexts.

d) Explore how to assist researchers in securing funding through the use of micro-economic models, internet-inspired models (such as crowd sourcing) and corporate citizenship models (such as Percent for Art).

### **Recommendation 10**

Examine how WAAE may advocate for more effective, relevant and ethical methods of investigation that engage learners, teachers, and educational participants.

- Actions:
- a) Promote arts education research that recognizes diverse artistic, creative and discursive processes; describes diverse arts and design products, and verbal discourse; further understandings of arts education by engaging in longitudinal studies and meta-analyses of existing arts educational research.
  - b) Promotes diverse approaches to research ranging from quantitative to qualitative to arts-based forms of research.

### **Recommendation 11**

Provide website access to reporting research that is being done or has been done.

- Actions:
- a) Website access should promote dissemination of meta-analyses; collection of existing research; knowledge banks and research databases; participatory activity-and-practice banks that encourage educators to explore ways to generate and use new knowledge; and research collaboration initiatives.
  - b) As webbing offers both opportunities and threats, net neutrality should be applied. Webbing should be used to protect and promote freedom of expression.

### **Recommendation 12**

WAAE needs to enhance the dissemination of research on arts education.

- Actions:
- a) Celebrating the diversity and commonalities of arts education research WAAE can promote a call for the recognition of *a global human right to produce and disseminate knowledge and research through digital technologies*.
  - b) Enhancing the efficacy, purpose, and ethical basis of research by engaging in processes of co-construction that feeds research on arts in education back to the researched communities and participants in relevant ways.

## **In Conclusion**

This report attempts to document some of the important directions WAAE plans to pursue in the next five years while outlining what may be considered the first steps toward developing an integrated strategic plan. WAAE supports the UNESCO roadmap and through the above strategic actions, hopes to nurture a strong arts education advocacy campaign, an integrated network of arts education partners, and a vibrant research platform. We welcome feedback on this report from members of our organizations as well as other arts educators, arts education advocates and educational partners.

## **Appendix**

### **Draft WAAE Vision and Values Statement**

The WAAE vision and values statement needs to champion the role and meaning of arts education in the 21 Century by fostering trans-disciplinary, trans-cultural and trans-national arts education advocacy, networking and research.

### **Values**

The WAAE organisation, its events, publications and projects are built upon the following values:

- Respect for diversity.
- Practice of solidarity and cooperation.
- Equality of participation and access.
- Transparency and accountability.
- Open and trusting communication.
- Non-hierarchical membership and participation.
- Generosity of spirit and inclusion.
- Innovative, interactive and critical-reflexive dialogue.
- Humane citizenship and democracy.
- Ecological sustainability.

### **Goals**

- Identify and establish a network of partnerships.
- Connect and share advocacy and research statements with diverse groups.
- Support advocacy, networking and research activity in WAAE.
- Build sustainable communities of support.
- Shape a new arts-based education paradigm for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Purpose**

- To be known within and beyond arts education forums.
- To establish relationships with diverse partners.
- To find common interests with partners and arts educators.
- To identify what we can offer and what can we receive (e.g. resources, recognition, endorsement).
- To influence key stakeholders, gatekeepers and opinion formers (e.g., politicians, ministers of education, teacher educators, curriculum designers).
- To equip WAAE network members with the tools to be effective advocates, e.g., providing evidence, stories, and contacts.