

Co-organised with: **CLASJAZZ**

## Report: EJN Social Inclusion Seminar 2026

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*by Katy Minter*

**4 – 7 February, Almería, Spain**



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## Contents

<i>Background</i>	3
<i>The Almeria Seminar</i>	3
<i>Seminar introduction</i>	3
EJN introduction	3
Host introduction	4
Clasijazz background	4
<i>Presentations</i>	5
NUEJAZZ for kids – presented by Frank Wuppinger (NUEJAZZ Festival)	5
D’Improviso – presented by Cristiana Morais (Sons Da Lusofonia / Festa Do Jazz)	7
Jazzfest Community Film Lab – presented by Nadin Deventer (Jazzfest Berlin)	9
Inclusion & Rural Areas – presented by Iró Graonidou (Clasijazz)	10
Inclusion work	10
Clasijazz Rural	10
RisorgiMarche Festival – presented by Giambattista Tofoni	11
Gender Equality in Music – presented by Eva Frost (Jazz Danmark)	12
<i>Seminar discussions on social inclusion</i>	13
Community Engagement & Active Participation	13
Reaching And Involving Fewer Opportunity Groups	15
Youth Engagement	17
Migration, Cultural Diversity And Asylum	19
<i>Conclusion</i>	20
<i>Annex #1 – Schedule</i>	21
WEDNESDAY, 4 FEBRUARY – ARRIVALS & WELCOME	21
THURSDAY, 5 FEBRUARY – SHARING EXPERIENCES	21
SATURDAY, 7 FEBRUARY – DEPARTURES	22
<i>Annex 2 – Participants list</i>	23

## **Background**

In an age of constant broadcasting and an unlimited access to information, it has become increasingly difficult to ignore the political upheaval and social injustices endured by millions worldwide. Now more than ever, individuals and communities from across the world seek solace in the arts. They search for spaces to express themselves, to escape from the realities of modern life and to feel that they are part of a community. And yet, in many areas of the world, access to the arts is deemed a privilege, not a necessity. It is in fact the marginalised individuals and groups that often experience barriers to accessing artistic provision most keenly.

There may not be a singular solution to making the arts more socially inclusive, but instead a network of small decisions and collaborations that move us towards a more united front. Where individualism is the new status quo, the importance of meeting each other with openness, curiosity and a mutual understanding is more pertinent than ever. Now in its 8th edition, the Europe Jazz Network Social Inclusion Seminar remains a significant pillar in the establishment of international conversations between arts organisations regarding matters of social inclusion.

## **The Almeria Seminar**

For this year's seminar, the cohort of EJM members were invited to the beautiful port city of Almeria in southern Spain. The hosts for the week were the brilliant team at *Clasijazz*, whose central venue – typically used for concerts and workshops - lies at the heart of the city. Whilst most of the seminar activity took place at Clasijazz, the itinerary also included visits to multiple other concert venues associated with the organisation. Not only this, but the visiting group were also given the opportunity to explore cultural sites across the city and enjoy the local cuisine on offer. Most notably, we visited El Morino, the current active headquarters of Clasijazz Rural activity - located in the small, historic municipality of Terque.

## **Seminar introduction**

### **EJM introduction**

On the morning of February 4, our Europe Jazz Network president, Karolina Juzwa, opened the seminar with an earnest introduction. Outlining the significance of previous inclusion activity, Karolina reinstated the continued importance of the Social Inclusion seminar to the EJM network - noting that its legacy was one of great consequence. She expressed her desire for this year's conference to act as a continuation of this legacy through its ability to provide a space to share best practices, to speak of the challenges we encounter in our ever-changing work, and to ensure that mutual learning remain at the heart of all activities taking place.

Most notably, she spoke to the strength needed by both individuals and their associated communities to carry out work of this nature:

*“This is a place where you can gain a lot of new inspiration... new motivation to help you carry on the work you do. This requires a lot of energy, dedication and effort.” (Karolina Juzwa – EJM President)*

Giambattista Tofoni echoed her sentiments in a speech shortly afterwards. He maintains that, since its inception in 2017, ‘We Insist! Social Inclusion through Creative Music’ has been the most important event in their extensive catalogue of network activity. Before handing over to our hosts for the seminar, Giambattista aptly sums up the shared ambition over the coming few days:

*“[We are] trying to change the world around, that is really... in a very bad position at the moment.”*  
(Giambattista Tofoni – EJN General Manager)

### Host introduction

We were then warmly welcomed to Almeria by one of our lead hosts and an integral member of the Clasijazz team: Iró Graonidou. She told us the compelling origin story of their association and how it has since grown into a foundational part of the vibrant music scene in Southern Spain.

### Clasijazz background

Their association was first imagined in 1998, when a group of close friends longed to gather and listen to music together but were lacking a space to do so. With limited resources, they took matters into their own hands and decided to create their own space - located in a small rehearsal room. It has since grown to include hundreds of local members, and its impressive program of concerts and community activity has become the main reference for modern music in the city.

Their cultural centre supports a range of artistic pursuits: from musical and theatrical performances through to their very own Gospel choir rehearsals and experimental art exhibits. Clasijazz started as an organisation primarily focused on the genre of jazz but has since grown to encompass all walks of artistic expression and demonstrates this not only through their diverse program but also through their music school activity.

The Clasijazz music school offers provision to both adults and children. Based primarily in the cultural centre in Almeria, the space consists of rehearsal rooms, halls and a restaurant. This allows them to curate cross-disciplinary events combining music with science, dance, food and other artistic disciplines. Amongst this provision, is their classical orchestra and an all-female jazz Big Band. However, their main project is the Clasijazz Big Band – an international jazz orchestra that offers both online and live concerts. So far, they have recorded several albums as well as embarking on multiple tours and collaborating with a range of international artists.

Some of their current and previous inclusion work includes the following projects:

1. **More Music, Less Hate** (*Erasmus Youth Exchange 2025*)

This project was designed to empower young people to confront discrimination and hate speech both online and in everyday life. Using music and artistic expression as tools for empathy, dialogue, and social change, it brought together young people from different backgrounds to reflect on intolerance and promote inclusion.

2. **Music Your Mind** (*Erasmus Youth Exchange 2023*)  
This project was created in response to the isolation that many young people experienced because of the pandemic – especially those from diverse backgrounds and rural areas. Using music, art and performance, the exchange brought together young people from different countries to express and strengthen their emotional and mental well-being.
3. **European Solidarity Corps** (*Volunteering 2018 – present*)  
Young volunteers join Clasi jazz in Almeria for one year of cultural exchange, creativity, and community impact. Participants support the organisation through work on their cultural and artistic activities, including music events, social media and contributions to sustainability initiatives at their rural centre, El Morino.
4. **Seeds** (*Partnership building 2025*)  
This seminar brought together 15 organisations from 11 countries with the aim of creating a space for the exchanging of ideas and collaboration around inclusion and youth work – specifically for young people with fewer opportunities. The visit involved field trips, the sharing of best practices and collaborative working sessions with both international and local organisations based in Asturias.
5. **Mini Jam** (*Working with children*)  
Music making classes that are open to whole families to learn music through the African model of oral transmission. In addition to these sessions, they also deliver educational concerts in primary schools to ensure the integration of music from a young age. They strive for the children participating in their classes and attending their concerts to become adults who value music and prioritise creativity.
6. **Erasmus+**  
Created together with Poland, Norway and Portugal, this project involved the creation of a video game that puts into practice the learning of rhythm alongside economic principles. The game created new cultural microstructures that mirrored that of the organisation, Clasi jazz. Its focus was on cultural entrepreneurship.

## **Presentations**

Across both seminar days a range of EJM members delivered presentations on a project they felt best showcased their organisation’s work on social inclusion. They generously shared their best practices along with the challenges that they have faced and/or continue to encounter. This section of the report summarises each of the presentations given, including quotes from the speakers that have been lightly edited for clarity. Background information has also been added on occasion to help contextualise the content of the presentations.

### **NUEJAZZ for kids – presented by Frank Wuppinger (NUEJAZZ Festival)**

NUEJAZZ Festival observed many families having limited access to the city’s musical offering due to barriers such as time, money and lacking language skills. In direct response to this issue, and with the aim of promoting cultural participation amongst children and their families, they launched *NUEJAZZ for kids* in 2013; a series of jazz concerts brought to children in preschools and primary schools. In collaboration with

local daycare centres and schools, children and parents were provided with the opportunity to experience live jazz directly at their educational facility. Supported by a range of sponsors, it reaches families who would otherwise not have access to such concerts and encourages their future participation in other jazz concerts and festivals associated with NUEJAZZ and beyond.

Frank explains that the concerts are centred around an interactive experience for attendees, to ensure that they have the opportunity to meaningfully connect with the music. This involves facilitators encouraging children and families to sing using methods of call and response, as well as performing actions and sometimes even dancing! They also provide the children with opportunities to play an instrument accessible to all. A video example was presented by Frank, featuring a group of young people taking in turns to improvise freely on a grand piano while a jazz pianist accompanied them.

### **Project development timeline –**

#### **2013**

- The first NEUJAZZ festival edition: 8 acts, 3 evenings (140 visitors) and 1 kids' concert on Sunday afternoon
- 4 small concerts in kindergarten/nurseries close to the venue before the festival to promote the kids concert finale

#### **2016**

- New venue, including a new concert room fit to house up to 250 people
- The program now includes up to 15 concerts in preschools across the city
- They started developing their own programs with different guests from a variety of fields:
  - Papier & Jazz (paper theatre)
  - A musical world tour (guest musician)
  - Zirkus Jazzino Part 1
  - Stories and Music (storyteller plus live graphic design)

#### **2019**

- Now up to 20-24 concerts are taking place in preschools and primary schools across the city, under the name is the *NEUJAZZ Kids Combo*
- New programs and first booking from other festivals and promoters in Germany
- 2 kid's specific concerts now taking place at the festival

#### **2020/2021**

- Live stream school concerts during COVID pandemic
- Up to 4000 participants per stream

#### **2022 to 2026**

- 13 different programs by the *NUEJAZZ for Kids Combo*
- 20 concerts in local primary schools, kindergartens and preschools across the academic year
- 5 public concerts in collaboration with the venue „Kulturwerkstatt Auf AEG“ across the year, all with varying programs
- New bookings from local schools and festivals all over Germany

### Overview of current provision

- Local school or preschool concerts as private events of the school, involving both the children and their families
- Public concerts with different programs.
- Schools are invited to attend specific schools' concerts in the festival venue during the festival period
- Export: an increase in bookings from different festivals and promoters all over Germany, including a country-wide tour in 2026

A stand-out innovation shared by Frank during the presentation was NUEJAZZ's marketing campaign for the festival, which involved providing children with blank posters for them to paint and design in their schools. The children were then encouraged to take their artwork home to share with their parents, in turn advertising the concert to parents and family members.

The key to the success and longevity of the project was highlighted by Frank:

*"This is how you get inside society, to everybody – if you get into the schools and childcare services... this is really important, because if they want to cut your money you [then] have a lot of voices supporting you. It's not just the musicians." (Frank Wuppinger – NEUJAZZ)*

He also stresses the importance of requesting detailed testimonies from those involved – teachers and parents/family members – to strength future funding bids by demonstrating the positive impact of their work.

### Discussion points –

A member representing an Italian organisation shared their continued struggles in the face of their government's bureaucratic systems and how this posed a seemingly insurmountable barrier to delivering work in schools. From this emerged an interesting discussion exploring how the model of the NEUJAZZ program relies on the cooperation and support of the state and local authorities to be successful. Some members felt that the success of such provision is often determined on the enthusiasm of the teachers involved and that, unless government backing is established, there are likely to be barriers to providing fully impactful resources and experiences.

### D'Improviso – presented by Cristiana Morais (Sons Da Lusofonia / Festa Do Jazz)

Sons Da Lusofonia view improvisation and collaboration as key tools for dealing with the precarious and ever shifting environment that characterizes modern societies - particularly marginalized people and their neighbourhoods. *D'Improviso* is an artistic project focused on promoting sociocultural and sonic inclusion using these two tools. The project was first conceived in 2022 and has since involved 250 participants and engaged more than 3000 people in 189 initiatives across 5 neighbourhoods. The key goal of their work is to empower marginalized youth to increase their cultural participation, their artistic knowledge and their creative skills, by providing safe spaces for artistic experimentation, improvisation and collaboration. This project brings the participants from the outskirts of Lisbon to stages in the centre of the city.

Cristiana shared that financing this project has been an ongoing struggle, with a particularly difficult period leading them to pause the project for two years. Although this

was an unfortunate occurrence, it also led to a useful period of growth and reflection through which the project was newly refined. Cristiana shared their main takeaway from this period of reflection: when you allow the funding restraints to supplant the needs of the community, you risk losing the connection and energy required to make the project successful. Despite funding being an ongoing issue, the refinement of the initial project model has since led to more financial support and the involvement of additional partner organisations.

*D'Improviso* focuses on the term improvisation so as not to deter the children with the label of 'jazz', which often comes with its own attached preconceptions. The project promotes broad artistic dialogues across multiple art forms, inviting artists and educators to deliver sessions shaped by the interests and skills of the participants. These range from exposing them to jazz and credo music, delivering spoken word and beat making workshops, and the exploration of additional art forms such as break dancing and graffiti art.

*"The music they already listen to matters, and it's a crucial tool to use this as a springboard to get them interested in other types of music."* (Cristiana Morais – Sons Da Lusofonia / Festa Do Jazz)

One of the most prominent initiatives mentioned was the conception of workshops for the construction of percussion instruments from recycled materials. Not only did they contribute to the development of ecological awareness, but they also stimulated a creative approach to improvisation. In instances where technological advancements have proved an obstacle to engagement, they also started to incorporate electronic music making into their program of activity, taking them to studios and instigating in-person discussions with prominent artists.

Cristiana shared some valuable insights into how they managed to successfully integrate their work into the communities and neighbourhoods despite the barriers to access and many initial hesitations. They first set out to find partners in specific neighbourhoods that had long established connections to the communities through their ongoing social work. Many of them welcomed the incorporation of artistic offerings to their existing programs, as this was something that they were lacking. Nurturing these partnerships was a key step in gaining the children and their families' trust.

The next step was bridging the gap between the participant's home lives and the workshops that they attended. They did so by inviting the parents to attend and providing free transportation for both the participating children and their families. Another way in which they achieved this was by putting together a group of female artists and facilitating performances for families across the neighbourhoods. For such occasions, while Festa Do Jazz brought the music, the families were then encouraged to bring their food and culture. This resulted in a joyful celebration of sociocultural and sonic inclusion which also honoured the participants' cultural heritage.

Cristiana touched on the most important part of their project work:

*"The most important thing was starting to mix different aspects of music... the amateur one and the professional one. This is the one thing we will maintain in the new addition to the project."* (Cristiana Morais – Sons Da Lusofonia / Festa Do Jazz)

## Discussion points –

Eunice Romero, representing Taller De Músics / JAZZ I AM, contributed some thoughtful comments following Cristiana’s presentation. She touched upon the risks of preconceived ideas, social or cultural, being imposed on communities in this context and how important it is to avoid reinforcing these damaging misconceptions when working with said communities. Eunice acknowledged that, when done correctly, projects like *D’Improviso* allow people to bring their culture to a safe space without putting limits on it and in turn this establishes that the city belongs to them too.

## Jazzfest Community Film Lab – presented by Nadin Deventer (Jazzfest Berlin)

As part of their annual Jazzfest Community Week, this year Jazzfest Berlin presented an exciting new project: Jazzfest Community Film Lab. Taking place over several months across various locations in Moabit, this multidisciplinary project involves the close collaboration of a mixed group of creatives. Participants include jazz artists from recent and past festival programs; musicians from the community ensemble Moabit Imaginarim; children from the Jazzfest ImproLabs project; performers from the post-migrant group TheatreX and other local artists.

More than 60 participants were involved in the filming during the festival week. The work produced aims to address pressing issues of our time – such as the shaping of a pluralistic society, origin and belonging. Alongside the filming process, a collaborative space for artistic encounters and new forms of exchange was created.

The process of developing this new project grew from a series of interesting musings that Nadin posed:

*What can a festival do that other initiatives haven’t done before, that schools don’t already offer?*

*As this project is financed by taxpayers’ money, how can we reach and engage most of our co-citizens with our festival activity?*

*Who owns the city? Who owns the stages?*

They focused on engaging with the communities in Moabit and used pre-established initiatives - and the needs to which these targeted - to inform the format of the project. This involved them physically knocking on people’s doors in the refugee community in Moabit to ask how they could best bring the festival to them. They teamed up with universities, dancers and social organisations, all to ensure that they were meeting the collective needs of the wider community.

Aptly summed up by Nadin:

*“We do not bring a fully established vision to these communities... we focus on their initiatives, their realities and their needs.” (Nadin Deventer – Jazzfest Berlin)*

The film is due to be released in Berlin sometime this year.

## Inclusion & Rural Areas – presented by Iró Graonidou (Clasijazz)

### Inclusion work

Clasijazz approach to inclusion work is grounded in the belief that music is a universal language that unites people. Their organisation is built around the creation of cultural microstructures, as they believe everyone has a role in the sharing of music. While involving students in classrooms, associations and collectives, they are fostering a shared sense of community and creating spaces in which everyone feels useful and welcome.

Their pedagogical methods are grounded in African teachings. Iró explains that, in most African languages, there is no word for “music” – therefore everything has the capability of being music. They draw upon the rich musical traditions of the Wagogo tribe from Tanzania, which are centred around polyphonies and natural rhythm. They also centre their sessions around the melodies of songs.

At the heart of their teaching methods is the core belief that music belongs to everyone. Humour is also an extremely important part of the ways in which they connect to their community. Cue the video of their leader Pablo running around Almeria dressed as Mozart...

### Clasijazz Rural

The Clasijazz Rural strand of the organisation was created as a response to three key issues:

1. A limited vision of culture – focused on specific and disconnected disciplines while ignoring the traditional knowledge rooted in rural areas.
2. The concentration of cultural activity in urban centres.
3. The lack of sustainable models – economic, social and environmental – that allow cultural projects to endure overtime, care for their surroundings and foster collaborative networks.

From these three issues, grew the three pillars on which Clasijazz Rural activity is built upon: performing arts, nature and habitat. Performing arts fosters culture and creativity in a rural environment, using artistic expression as a community-building force. The second pillar, nature, encourages a resilient and conscious relationship with the natural environment. And habitat signifies the importance of inhabiting in a globalized context, encouraging activity community participation and recognizing its role in shaping and producing the built environment.

The core project that has been developed from these three pillars is called *Escenario Hábitat Natura*. It develops a methodology to create a cultural ecosystem where traditional and contemporary knowledge shape diverse and hybrid realities. The integration of these three pillars in a single program, carried out through various projects and activities, fosters interdisciplinary dialogue and a more holistic approach to how rural cultural identity is conceived and constructed.

On day 2 of the seminar, the EJM cohort were guided to the current active venue of Clasijazz Rural, El Molino in Terque. This 300-year-old former building (donated by a local villager) was collectively restored to serve as a shared meeting and living space,

designed to host artists, researchers and local communities. Its design lends itself to cohabitation, providing a space where education, research and artistic creation can all take place. El Molino hosts the activities of the Escenario Hábitat Natura cultural program while also offering several services, such as residency, retreats, and workspaces for artists, creators, and researchers.

Here are some recent examples of Escenario Hábitat Natura activities provided by Iró:

- “Other ruralities” cycle, featuring an exhibition by Sebastião Salgado and a reading of the book Arado Torcido
- Children’s festival “Despreciables Fest”
- Folkloric group “El galayo” from Alboloduy
- Residency with Maria Schneider and the Clasijazz Big Band
- Esparto exhibition and workshop
- Showcase of the “solsticio” photography residency

There have also been numerous concerts, artistic residencies, courses, workshops, exhibitions, and talks.

### **RisorgiMarche Festival – presented by Giambattista Tofoni**

Giambattista presented the moving story of how and why the festival RisorgiMarche was created (of which he is the co-founder). The festival grew from trying circumstances, when an earthquake struck central Italy in the summer of 2016. Amongst the regions most affected was Marche, where 50,000 people were forced to evacuate from the mountains to the coast. Schools were closed and small businesses were forced to shut; collapsed buildings littering the region. Giambattista recalls the devastating affect it had on the livelihoods of locals and their economic welfare, as levels of tourism severely depleted in Marche and the surrounding regions.

In response to these events, Giambattista received a call from a close friend who is a prominent actor in Italy. He proposed that they create something to support the infrastructure of the region and revive tourism. The festival also aimed to reaffirm the beauty of the territory and its unchanged capacity to welcome, as well as physically reuniting communities affected by the earthquake. And thus, RisorgiMarche was born.

Now an annual event, RisorgiMarche delivers afternoon concerts that take place on the mountain meadows and in the villages of the territories affected by the earthquake, in safe and accessible places, reachable by the public through a path of a few kilometres to be covered exclusively on foot or by bicycle. Great artists from the Italian and international scene perform in spectacular landscapes – without a stage or artificial lights – attracting thousands of people who set out to experience a day of slowness, immersed in the beauty of nature, to morally and concretely support those who are engaged in the effort to start again.

Giambattista highlights the involvement of small businesses at the festival and how all of the festival food, products and services are sourced from local producers. He also speaks to the importance of inclusivity and environmental sustainability when it comes to putting on this event. They involve the disabled community in the selling of their merchandise and have adjustments in place to ensure they can access the festival site. RisorgiMarche is an example of an event with low environmental impact and is "plastic

free", a model that looks to the future of the planet through the adoption of new criteria that make the event sustainable in all respects. They use solar powered energy for almost everything on site and all attendees support in the clean up once the event is over. Giambattista also provided some impressive calculations of the amount of energy that is saved by everyone walking to the festival site as opposed to travelling by car or public transport.

### Gender Equality in Music – presented by Eva Frost (Jazz Danmark)

Eva presented a compelling case regarding the lack of universal data collection and monitoring when researching the gender balance in jazz music. Many of the Jazz Danmark projects, such as JazzCamp for Girls and JazzCamp for Girls International, focus on addressing this imbalance whilst also seeking to support especially vulnerable minorities – specifically, asylum seekers. Eva explained that, whilst conducting years of varied project work, she has been increasingly frustrated by the incohesive approach to data evaluation, monitoring and collecting in artistic organisations across Europe. She posed the question: why do we not have a benchmarking system through which we can compare and amalgamate project data of a similar nature?

Eva shared that they recently received a significant amount of funding to support their mission to refine and benchmark data processes in arts related research. Using the issue of gender imbalance as an example, she acknowledged that we already have several years' worth of data reported in varying ways - we now just need to start establishing processes that allow us to efficiently analyse it as a collective body of data.

Eva then generously shared their organisation's most current research paper that is due to be released at this year's *Jazzahead!* fair. It employs new processes of evaluating and analysing the large database of information collected by researchers and provides recommendations on how to change the gender balance in music.

The paper focuses on four major reports, all developed by JazzDanmark over the past 3 years. Eva provided some examples of the data collected and analysed in these reports, as well as showcasing their work with *Musiklivets Talentrapport* (The Talent Report on the Music Sector, 2025), where they developed a dynamic heatmap that collects over 250 data points regarding gender representation in the music scene's food chain and professional layers. The tool is updated continuously and, for the first time, allows for the systematic tracking of developments in gender balance across the entire music sector.

The data presented some interesting trends regarding gender balance in the music industry as a whole. Eva noted that the gender balance in educational institutions has vastly improved in recent years but that this does not extend to other areas of the industry, especially regarding professional careers. The gender balance is still dramatically in favour of men in areas such as chosen repertoire for ensembles and programming.

The report is split across three distinct sections:

**1. Case stories:** Five data-based examples of how different key figures have worked with representation and achieved concrete results.

**2. A summary of recommendations:** Drawn from the four mentioned reports, pointing to both shared insights and unique contributions, thus providing a complete picture of where the field stands today.

**3. A mapping of existing practice initiatives:** These are placed in relation to the reports' recommendations to make visible where action is already being taken and where there is still unredeemed potential.

The model of recommendations can then be set against existing initiatives, to help evaluate and measure their impact. Organisations are therefore able to see whether they are effectively targeting the recommended areas and also gauge how effectively this work is being done elsewhere. Eva explained that this is something they will be continuing to refine over the coming years, in the hopes to encourage a more collaborative and universal way of data collection across artistic projects. Their ambition is to create a common reference point for the entire music scene that can be translated into daily practice.

### **Seminar discussions on social inclusion**

A series of breakout discussion groups were coordinated on the first day of the conference, enabling members to think on and discuss ideas on how to further social inclusion in the music industry. The chosen four topics (detailed below) were each discussed in relation to four key areas:

1. Ideal world
2. Challenges
3. Tools to create change
4. Impact

Thanks to the careful planning and steadfast organisation of our hosts, the groups were regularly split up and rotated to ensure that the members were engaging with a different set of people in each discussion. This made for well-balanced and rich discussions.

Although I participated in 4 different groups, I was not involved or present for all of the discussions. Therefore, in favour of succinctness and accuracy, I have not written a detailed account of all the four areas of focus within each topic. For some, I have simply summarised the bullet pointed notes provided by the participating members.

This section of the report briefly summarises the areas that were covered and a collection of key points that were discussed for each topic. The summaries are not exhaustive of everything that was discussed but aim to include a variety of the members' opinions and experiences. Words in *italic* are transcribed quotes from audio recordings taken in the sessions, which have been slightly edited for clarity.

### **Community Engagement & Active Participation**

This discussion was focused on provision with the main objective of creating a common sense of belonging and active participation with your environment. How do we instil a meaningful sense of community in our audience and participants?

### **Ideal world –**

For many of the members, imagining an ideal world was a difficult task in light of the current realities being experienced across the world. This discussion split into two strands: that of logistical ideals (mostly relating to economic barriers) and that of how participants engage and view the artistic experience.

*“In an ideal world, we want the participants to engage with and participate in our festivals simply for the joy of the music and not just for the big names”*

A common ideal was one in which our communities value the shared experience of listening to music above the content of the music itself. They engage with cultural activity as a way of connecting to others through a shared love of music, as opposed to fulfilling an individual goal or expectation.

The remainder of the conversation focused on removing barriers to participation. Some examples of this included but were not limited to:

### **Economic barriers –**

- Having an unlimited budget to deliver projects
- Making concerts free to access
- Unrestricted funding so that you can be proactive about responding to the needs of others and involve them in the creation of projects, rather than being reactive

### **Accessibility –**

- Removing physical accessibility barriers in venues
- Establishing a universal way of communicating

### **Education & representation –**

- Less fixed borders between genres of music
- Better representation in educational settings for jazz music and how it connects to other genres

### **Others –**

- Everyone feels equally valued
- Co-creation with all communities in an interdisciplinary way

The consideration of providing all music for free made for a dynamic discussion. Whilst most participants felt this was a positive idea, many members also felt that this had the potential to undermine the value of the art itself.

*“In Italy, the government only fund who they deem to be ‘professional’ musicians and do not see free or community-focused cultural experiences as high-value... we need a shift of attitudes”*

*“Audiences come to free events, but they don’t tend to stay.”*

There was a consensus that if the artistic experience was not valued by the community, it would pose a greater risk to their engagement and participation. Organisations such as Cheltenham Festivals and NEUJAZZ exemplified their current models which employ a

combination of free and paid provision. The free activities enable engagement from targeted communities, especially those who don't usually have the means to or feel comfortable participating in cultural activities. The hope is that, through these positive, free experiences with music, these groups would then go on to engage with the paid program of activity.

### **Challenges –**

Some of the challenges discussed include but are not limited to:

- Accessibility
  - Includes sensory issues such as light and noise triggers
- Location (non-urban or rural areas)
- Language barriers
- Cultural differences
- Economic barriers
- Establishing consistent income streams

### **Tools to create change –**

A range of interesting ideas arose from this discussion that include but are not limited to:

- Clear artistic direction
- Specialist programming catering to different target audiences
- Social inclusion on every level
- Providing examples of achievable role models
- Social media presence (influencers – the good ones!)
- Collaboration and research

### **Impact –**

The discussed areas of impact were as follows:

- Functional eco system
- Strong strategical partnerships
- Individual and collective responsibility
- Self-sustaining, good quality and established projects
- Society providing an open space for creativity and innovation

### **Reaching And Involving Fewer Opportunity Groups**

This discussion focused on making cultural experiences accessible to vulnerable groups in society. We were tasked to consider the utility of both collaborative and co-creation activities, as well as how we can support their professional development and representation in the cultural sector.

### **Ideal world –**

- Listening to the affected communities' views when developing ideas for activity, instead of assuming what their needs are
- Prioritisation of co-creation when developing projects
- Infrastructure in rural areas to ensure social mobility
- Building trust and strong partnerships

## Challenges –

This topic opened up an interesting conversation about building trust and its function in successfully involving fewer opportunity groups.

*“What comes to mind regarding how to reach communities is how to build trust and to know exactly what the need is. You have first to listen in order to understand their needs.”*

This led to an acknowledgement of the difficulty in building this trust without sufficient financial backing. The essential research and development phases of projects – where the needs are clarified and trust is established – often miss out on appropriate financial support and are therefore not always successful.

Challenges regarding communication, specifically language barriers, was a concern shared by many of the members. As was the prioritisation of different needs, and individual versus collective identities.

*“In terms of intersectionality, we don’t want to divide minorities into these groups and as a result define them as just one part of their identity... but we still want to work with and acknowledge these groups.”*

*“How do we prioritise? I would want to invest in every kind of group but, maybe practically, it’s better to make a choice and prioritise just some. It is physically impossible to do everything for everybody at once. You want to reach as many people as possible but while still making it impactful.”*

It was established that the integrity and impact of the projects is often at risk when trying to accommodate the needs of everyone, and that this can lead to ineffectual results – no matter how good the intentions are.

In order to address these challenges, the group felt that changes need to be made and responsibility taken by the majority groups in society.

*“The majority should accept and adapt to the minority.”*

## Tools to create change –

Amongst the many discussed, here are some examples of the key tools our members feel would support change in this area:

- **Ambassadors** – self-advocates or mediators who have the trust of the minority group and provide feedback that is taken seriously and is not employed for tokenistic purposes; employing a test and learn process.
- **Long term strategies and monitoring**
- **Educational institutions** - these provide people with broad access to all areas of society and are often highly prioritised politically.
- **Subsidised transport**
- **Influential politicians and families** – to showcase the benefits of cultural experiences.
- **Involve members of community groups at all stages of project development**
- **Co-curation!**

## **Impact –**

The discussed areas of impact were as follows:

- A culturally diverse and inclusive society
- Pioneers of the arts, diverse new music and genres
- Technological progression
- The elevation of mindfulness and wellbeing
- An increased sense of empathy, security and trust in society
- The ability to fully express yourself
- More accessible funding opportunities
- The valuing of real-world knowledge and expertise over formal education
- Intercultural communication

## **Youth Engagement**

This discussion focused on how we can involve young people in our project work. What is required of educational activities, spaces or performance to foster their integration in music and culture from an early age?

## **Ideal world –**

- In all children's educational or care institutions there should be regular engagement with arts, music and culture
- Easily accessible spaces for young people to develop, practice and play
- Every child has equal access to all opportunities
- Talent development programs and residencies
- Used instruments should be shared with those in need

## **Challenges –**

The overwhelming challenge discussed was the perception of music and its value to society. It was noted that there is a trend of individualism inhabiting lots of musical practice at present, in an attempt by many to lean towards convenience. For example, it is often easier to make music on your computer than it is to put together and coordinate a band in real life. In particular, members acknowledged that jazz is an art form grounded – sometimes out of necessity – in individualism, as it involves a lot of technical work. Most jazz groups are not formed with a focus on longevity, but instead for specific, short-term projects, making it harder for young people to build meaningful relationships.

The discussion then moved to how educational institutions perpetuate individualism within jazz as a genre. Their lack of integration of real-world circumstances can lead to a damaging illusion being created for young jazz musicians that hinders their development in the professional world. The biggest challenge posed was better matching the engagement with music in real and within a community to its representation in educational institutions.

Some other challenges discussed include but are not limited to:

- Public perception of arts – it's not considered vital
- Funding / financial backing
- A lack of expertise in educational settings (teachers)
- Lack of willingness to work together

- Economic barrier (ticket prices) to attending workshops and concerts
- Varying local infrastructure depending on location

### Tools to create change –

This discussion focused on 4 different areas:

1. **Music education** – it is not currently well connected to the real world and members therefore demand a change to their strategies in order to better engage and connect with the surrounding communities. The suggested changes included:
  - Broadening the curriculum
  - Connecting subjects to better integrate arts with other life skills
  - Providing instruction on how to navigate being a professional musician or industry professional and encouraging them to create a sustainable career

*“I don’t think all the teachers are free [to teach what they would want]”*

2. **Life with music** – people to engage with music more generally in society and not just as a means of becoming a professional musician. Examples included:
  - Making connections between real life examples of how music impacts you and your life, to contextualise how important it is and provide a cultural / external perspective

*“It is very challenging to find a way to bridge the gap between the representation of music in education and the reality of its impact in social life”*

3. **Physical meetings** – more facilitated spaces to make music; more ‘open jams’ and opportunities to physically meet up and explore creativity in a safe environment. Examples included:
  - Facilitating in-person environments that welcome a range of abilities, adapting these environments
  - Mentorship opportunities, with autonomy over who you get to work with and creating a mutual avenue of growth and connection
4. **Impact of culture** – this is often unknown and means that we do not have political priority compared to other organisations in regard to social inclusion. Some suggested tools to combat this include:
  - Improving evaluation processes and ways of evidencing impact to engage more public funding and private funding bodies
  - Creating universal measures of impact and benchmarks across the arts industry, enabling us to collate data and present larger bodies of work to prove

### Impact –

The discussed areas of impact were as follows:

- More concerts
- Young people become more educated and aware of the importance of the arts
- Changing the perception of jazz music
- Better methods of teaching
- An increase in professional opportunities

- A greater understanding of the value of culture in politics

### Migration, Cultural Diversity And Asylum

This discussion was based around the concept of music and culture operating as a universal language; a natural medium for breaking down barriers. Integration and cultural exchange have become a flagship in providing vulnerable people – specifically, those who are experiencing political asylum or forced migration - with a safe space and aid in fostering their integration into society. Can we create a common space for these cultural exchanges to grow?

#### Ideal world –

Much of this discussion was centred around the creation of an ideal political climate and the reimagining of a world with a shared sense of what ‘home’ and ‘community’ is. The removal of borders and therefore nationalistic inclinations was a common want for many of the members.

*“Europe should be a place for everyone... and an openness in the dialogue between different countries and cultures could bring about the kind of social inclusion we’re looking for.”*

Some of the other ideas shared included:

- No wars in the world
- Finding home within yourself; free movement instead of migration
- Not claiming the spaces of others (no colonization)
- Building trust and having empathy
- Maintaining political and religious beliefs as a means of understanding and accepting one another’s differences
- Freedom of artistic expression

*“The freedom of artistic expression is extremely important, especially if you are an asylum seeker. There may be things that are not allowed in their country that prevent them from exercising these freedoms.”*

#### Challenges –

Some of the challenges discussed include but are not limited to:

- Logistical and structure – namely finance/funding streams and government processes surrounding tax and visas
- Cultural differences (including social behaviours) and language barriers
- Society’s lack of willingness to adapt to people migrating
- Access to migrant communities
- A need for co-defining new spaces and not having them dictated by the majority
- Society views – people reacting negatively to the introduction of new communities due to media and propaganda consumed
- Lack of representation
- Changing mindsets of host countries/societies

## **Impact –**

The discussed areas of impact were as follows:

- Removing the colonialist mindset from Europe and it instead becoming a place for the people of the world
- Increased access and shared enjoyment of the arts
- A happier society with less mental health problems
- An increased tolerance and understanding of cultural differences
- The recognition and relinquishment of privilege

In particular, the topic of recognising and relinquishing privilege led to an interesting discussion. Many of the members touched on their own privilege and how uncomfortable the process of recognising this is to the majority of people in positions of power.

*“It is a painful procedure to give up privilege... it is not always a conscious decision.”*

*“Equity comes with sacrifice, typically from the majority. Convincing them to let go of the privileges they have is hard and why wouldn’t it be?”*

## **Conclusion**

It is almost impossible to summarise the full extent of the diverse opinions and lived experiences that were offered by our members of the EJM over these two seminar days. There was certainly a moving depth and sincerity to the discussions that took place, which gave way to a great number of profound and impactful learnings.

*“We should be taking risks, we should be willing to suffer, and we should be inviting and accepting friction because that is what leads to real change.”*

Despite the sobering circumstances in which many countries find themselves, the general takeaway from the seminar was a feeling of determination and solidarity. Most members would agree that there has been a significant increase in social inclusion initiatives in the arts and a continued motivation to create meaningful change. Collaboration and co-creation seem to be at the heart of many organisation’s successes and are therefore best practices that we should all be striving to employ in our present and future social inclusion work.

## **Annex #1 – Schedule**

### **WEDNESDAY, 4 FEBRUARY – ARRIVALS & WELCOME**

- **Arrival of EJM participants / Hotel check-in | Hotel Costasol**
- **19:30 - 22:00 Registration & badge collection | Clasijazz entrance**
- **20:00 – Concert: Triplanetas | Clasijazz, Sala Principal**
- **21:00 – Welcome Dinner (Tapas & Wine) | Clasijazz, Cafeteria**  
Dinner featuring local food and wines, in a relaxed atmosphere at Clasijazz (includes a Short welcoming by **Clasijazz Gospel Choir**)
- **22:30 – Jam Session | Clasijazz, Sala principal**  
The Clasijazz weekly jam session, open to all! A signature event of Clasijazz bringing together musicians, volunteers, and community members.

### **THURSDAY, 5 FEBRUARY – SHARING EXPERIENCES**

- **10:00 – 13:00 – Social Inclusion Seminar | Clasijazz, Sala principal**  
Inclusive approaches to jazz and beyond
  - Short introduction by EJM & Clasijazz: community-based inclusion examples
  - Presentations of some EJM members’s initiatives
  - Working in split groups & sharing of good practices
- **13:30 – Lunch (Clasijazz, Sala Swing)**
- **15:00 - 17:30 - Continuation of the Seminar | Clasijazz, Sala principal**
  - Continuation of the split groups
  - Restitution of the groups, general discussion & questions
- **20.30 - 22.00 - Dinner for all participants offered by EJM | Nevada Bar**
- **22:30 – Jam Session at Port of Spain**  
Weekly jam night of Thursdays, with a younger audience and funkier vibe.

### **FRIDAY, 6 FEBRUARY – RURAL INCLUSION**

- **10:00 – Departure by bus from Almería to El Molino de Clasijazz | Meeting point outside ‘La Tagliatella’ restaurant**
- **10:45 - 13:00 - Focus on inclusion in rural and non urban areas**
  - Discover how Clasijazz brings music and inclusion to rural areas, with an additional focus on sustainability
  - Other examples from EJM members working in rural areas

- General discussion & questions
- **13:30 – Paella & Live Music**  
Lunch with music from local musicians
  
- **15:30 – Leaving from El Molino by bus back to Almeria**
  
- **16:15 – Arrival in Almeria**
  
- **17:30 – Cultural visit: Almería and the Alcazaba**  
Visit to Almería’s fortress with views over the city and sea
  
- **18:30 – Showcase of Flamenco Jazz - Majao | La Guajira (Social Association near the Alcazaba)**
  
- **19.30 – Free time / free dinner**
  
- **22:00 – Concert: Big Bandarax (Clasijazz)**  
The young big band closes the seminar with an uplifting performance

#### **SATURDAY, 7 FEBRUARY – DEPARTURES**

- **Departures**

## Annex 2 – Participants list

NAME	SURNAME	ORGANISATION	COUNTRY
Hanne	Beck	Kunstencentrum KAAP	Belgium
Mik	Torfs	nona	Belgium
Eva	Frost	JazzDanmark	Denmark
Jacob	Mangwana Haagendal	DSI Swinging Europe	Denmark
Nadin	Deventer	Berliner Festspiele	Germany
Tove	Waldemarsson	Womex/Piranha Arts	Germany
Frank	Wuppinger	NUEJAZZ Festival	Germany
Elina	Linoxylaki	Athens Technopolis Jazz Festival	Greece
Pétur	Oddbergur Heimisson	Reykjavik Jazz Festival	Iceland
Francesca	Cerretani	EJN	Italy
Maddalena	Ciocca	Puglia Sounds	Italy
Anna	D'Amico	I-Jazz	Italy
Matteo	Gabutti	Associazione Culturale 4'33"	Italy
Claudia	Sergio	Puglia Sounds	Italy
Giambattista	Tofoni	EJN	Italy
Angelo	Valori	Pescara Jazz Festival	Italy
Stefano	Zucchiatti	EJN	Italy
Aleksandra	Line	Latvian Music Information Centre	Latvia
Liesbeth	Beeftink	LantarenVenster	Netherlands
Lieke	Timmermans	TivoliVredenburg	Netherlands
Karolina	Juzwa	EJN	Poland
Magdalena	Łuczyn	Lublin Jazz Festival	Poland
Cristiana	Morais	Festa do Jazz	Portugal
Sebastian	Gheorghiu	UCIMR	Romania
Diana	Gheorghiu	UCIMR	Romania
Simona	Maxim	Sibiu Jazz Festival	Romania
Marina	Fernández	PJE Plataforma Jazz España	Spain
Eunice	Romero	Taller de Músics / JAZZ I AM	Spain
Sara	Aldén	Göteborg Artist Center (GAC)	Sweden
Ian	George	Cheltenham Jazz Festival	UK
Katherine	Minter	B:Music	UK
Alix	Shepherd	The Glasshouse International Centre for Music	UK

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