

House of Europe International Songwriting Project

The idea of the international **House of Europe** songwriting project is to bring together European higher music education students and musicians from outside Europe. The students and the afore-mentioned guest musicians work together for a week in small teams writing and performing new songs they have written together. The intensive week of the project is in turn hosted by each of the six participating music institutions: Metropolia University of Applied Sciences (Helsinki, Finland), HKU Utrechts Conservatorium (The Netherlands), Conservatorio di Musica "Luisa D'Annunzio" (Pescara, Italy); CS Música Creativa (Madrid, Spain), VMI – Vienna Music Institute (Austria) and University of Tartu, Viljandi Culture Academy (Estonia). The project has been already implemented 11 times since the year 2018.

The **House of Europe** project was established to allow music students and musicians from non-European backgrounds to get to know each other, learn from each other about songwriting and collaborative music making, to learn from each other's cultures, and to network. So far, the new songs created in the project have told us stories about life in Europe, both through the eyes of those born here and those who ended up here for one reason or another. We have heard stories of everyday life, celebration, love, misfortune, dangerous journeys, the shelter of one's home – that is, of everything human that unites us and also sometimes separates us. Each intensive writing week culminates in a public concert where the new songs are performed by the participants of the Intensive Week. The concert will be recorded in multi-track audio and multi-camera video.

Metropolia UAS's Music Department will host the House of Europe project in the spring semester of 2025. The project will consist of three periods:

1. The online Introductory Course 7–28 February 2025 (1 cr ECTS, open to all)
2. The Intensive Week at Metropolia Music in Helsinki 10–14 March 2025 (2 cr, 3–4 places)
3. The Post-Production Period (implemented using online tools and communications) for students who participated in the intensive week, March – May 2025 (2 cr).

The online **Introductory Course** that precedes the Intensive Week deals with the skills and knowledge necessary for today's songwriter. The introductory course is open to all students of the House of Europe partner schools, and it has an extent of 1 cr. The themes of the online course are (TBC):

- **Basic Tools and Methods of Songwriting**
- **European Copyright and Contractual Practices**, with emphasis on the music creator's side
- **The International and Intercultural Songwriter**: How to reach diverse audiences across Europe and overcome the language barrier
- **Music Business 101**: The players and models of operation in the music business; pitching one's songs; digital marketing and distribution

All teaching days of the introductory course are Friday afternoons from 1 pm to 4 pm CET (2 pm – 5 pm EET). Links to distance learning classes will be announced later. Prior to the online teaching sessions, participants should familiarize themselves with the learning material and complete any pre-assignments shared by each teacher in advance. *It is possible to participate in the introductory course without participating in other project events.*

The Intensive Week will be organized on Mon – Fri 10–14 March 2025 at Metropolia UAS in Helsinki. (Sun 9 and Sat 15 November are travel days.) 3–4 students from each institution will be selected for the intensive week, who will have the opportunity to work with students from other partner schools and visiting musicians. A total of 18–20 students from six different countries will take part in the Intensive Week. Eligible students must have previous experience with writing songs, preferably in teams as well. Those who register for the Intensive Week must also participate in the Introductory Course and the Post-Production Period (see below).

The Intensive Week is coached by teachers from the participating music institutions. There is a joint workshop on Monday, where all participants get to know each other through music, set common goals, and are introduced to the activities for the week. The actual writing of the songs takes place in daily changing teams from Tuesday to Thursday. At the end of each writing day there is a common feedback session, where the teams give and receive constructive peer feedback on their work and possible development suggestions for further elaboration on their songs. On Friday there will be rehearsals during the day and a joint concert in the evening. In addition, if possible, one or two social evenings/workshops will be organized during the week, where the participants can get to know each other more deeply and share their thoughts and experiences in a more relaxed atmosphere.

The intensive week will be followed by a remote Post-Production Period in March–May 2025. The idea of this period is to re-record and produce songs written during the Intensive Week further, aiming at publishable quality. Only students who participated in the Intensive Week can participate in this period. The working methods and schedules of the Post-Production Period will be announced later.

The working language of the project is English. However, participants in the Intensive Week are encouraged to write lyrics in their own mother tongue as well.

How to enroll: Please contact the IR coordinator or other designated person of your home institution as soon as possible. They will provide you with the necessary information. If you are nominated by your home institution to participate in the whole House of Europe Project of Spring 2025, you also have to register for the Introductory Course separately, the registration link for which will be announced later. The deadline for enrollments is Wednesday 22 January 2025.

Enrollment for the whole Project (Introductory Course, Intensive Week, Post-Production Period) **is binding.** The selections will be announced by email by the responsible personnel of your home institution.

If you are selected to participate in the House of Helsinki Project, you can start booking your flights or ferry to Helsinki and back. Note that you have to arrive in Helsinki already on Sunday 9 March to make it to the venue by Monday morning, and that you should not leave before Saturday, 15 March. For the Intensive Week student participants, we have reserved very affordable rooms with breakfast at a hostel-level accommodation. The students will share either twin, triple or family rooms with shared bathrooms. The rooms are reserved until Sunday 16/03. If you are leaving already on Saturday, please let the hostel personnel know. The accommodation has to be paid at the hostel.

Based on the intensive weeks that have already taken place, it is safe to say that this is a really great opportunity to meet new people, learn more about other cultures and increase your skills in writing music and networking professionally. *Music is the language that unites us all!*