

INTERNATIONALIZATION STRATEGY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MUSIC FRANZ LISZT WEIMAR
2023 - 2027



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1. SELF-IMAGE

The University of Music FRANZ LISZT Weimar (HfM Weimar) developed this internationalisation strategy in a cooperative process over a period of almost one year. All members of the university were asked to participate. This document contains the results of six strategy workshops in which all status groups within the university were represented. The resulting internationalisation strategy derives its legitimacy both from the participatory development process and from the resolutions agreed to by the university bodies involved.

Internationality has always characterized the HfM Weimar in a special way. Adopting an international perspective is a building block of our tradition; above all, it is an engine for innovation and a catalyst for quality optimisation. People from more than 50 nations study and work at the HfM Weimar. The nearly 50% international students enrolled at the HfM Weimar, over 100 university partnerships worldwide, and about 50 mobilities per year involving students, faculty and staff attest to its international profile and extensive network.

In the educational profile of the HfM Weimar, the areas of performance practice, music pedagogy and musicology are connected in a special way. This interdisciplinary permeability brings students and teachers into contact with each other in many ways, and at the same time places high demands on the coordination and organisation of the teaching program. International students are required from the very beginning of their studies to be well-versed linguistically as well. To ensure

the success of their studies, they must receive intensive support by a wide range of measures.

Collaboration broadens professional perspectives in teaching, performance practice, research and administration. Innovative strength can be ensured in all these areas if newly gained experience is made available to as many members of the organisation as possible.

Sharpening and expanding these and other dimensions of internationalization are the goals of this strategy. Its areas of activity and the recommended actions are derived directly from the core tasks of the HfM Weimar, and they are essential for its successful further development.

2. VISION AND GOALS

The internationalisation strategy of the HfM Weimar corresponds to the university's mission statement as well as its mission statement for teaching. With the stated concrete goals and measures, it supports the implementation of the visions from the mission statement documents. At the same time, it refers to the UN [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), thus underlining the social responsibility of the university.

Internationalisation strengthens the HfM Weimar's aim to offer the highest quality in all fields of activity – whether in study and teaching, in practice and research, or in administration and management. Internationalisation is therefore not an end, but rather a means to achieve this end. As a cross-sectional task, all areas of the university are equally involved in this effort.

The most urgent task areas are to be addressed with the help of the following objectives:

1. *Further develop the university's attractiveness for international students, doctoral candidates, and employees.*

A key success factor for attracting and retaining international students, doctoral candidates and employees is the establishment of sustainable measures for integration into the social and cultural life at the university location. The

goal is therefore the further development of a welcome culture that already begins with the (virtual) initial contact with the university and its media, which accommodates the internationality of the target group. The focus is on improving study and living conditions not only at the university itself, but also in the local and regional environment, e.g. through more intensive cooperation with the city of Weimar, the *Studierendenwerk Thüringen* (Student Services Thuringia) and other institutions in the region. This, too, contributes to the quality of the educational programs and increases the productivity of its members.

2. *Strategically align and deepen international collaborations.*

The many international activities and initiatives of individual members of the HfM Weimar should be more strongly bundled and, if possible, institutionalised. In this way, cooperation opportunities can be made accessible across departments, sustainably oriented and intensified. One instrument here is the networking of results that emerge from cooperation projects: By involving people from as many different organisational units as possible, competence can be gained across the breadth of the university.

3. *Responsibly utilise the social relevance of a music university.*

Performance practice, music education and musicology also have a social dimension and social relevance. We responsibly contribute experiences gained in our university community to further develop diversity both internally and externally in our regional community. At the same time, we pay attention to the ethical dimension of international cooperation: international collaborations are developed together with the partner organisations, and the people involved are treated as equals.

3. FIELDS OF ACTION AND MEASURES

Action plans for internationalisation, which can arise on a central as well as a decentralised level, are developed based on this internationalisation strategy. The following fields of action are considered strategically relevant and are therefore given priority. For cross-university measures, applications for third-party funding will be submitted to appropriate funding bodies. The International Office is to be

involved as a competence center in the planning and organisation of measures on department or institute levels.

A. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES

Beneficial study and living conditions are recognised as being just as important factors for successful studies at the HfM as quality teaching. In a special survey conducted in 2022 on the initial phase of foreign students' studying experience, the majority stated that they needed special support in the areas of study organisation, study counseling, and integration into everyday study life. In addition, foreign students in particular face language and financial challenges. As a result, the following measures are important for us:

➤ Improvement of the information offered

- Structural and content revision of the sections "Studying" and "International" on the HfM website,
- producing a handbook for international students,
- use of non-bureaucratic language and consistent English translation of study-related information on the website and forms,
- regular analysis of the target group and its needs using systematic surveys in combination with personal feedback workshops,
- achieve better visibility of central information points (contact persons in student counseling and administration as well as in the departments/institutes).

➤ Further development of support and counseling services for the inclusion of international students

- Creation of central contact points for counseling (especially for the topics of organization and financing of studies as well as inclusion),
- increased networking with external counseling centers on the topics of housing, residence-permits, insurance, etc. (*Studierendenwerk Thüringen*, *Foreigners' Registration Office of the City of Weimar*),
- design of an onboarding service for the initial study phase (with a focus on language acquisition),

- increased language support through subject-specific offerings (in cooperation with the Language Center at the Bauhaus University Weimar and through digitally supported language learning opportunities piloted in the Network Universities of Music 4.0)
- peer-mentoring by student mentors with an international background,
- creation of intercultural meeting spaces and themed events.

B. GLOBAL NETWORKING

➤ International cooperation with universities

Existing cooperation projects with foreign partners are reviewed during the obligatory digitalisation of ERASMUS contracts by subjecting them to a strength-weakness and benefit-cost analysis. We are guided by the following criteria and objectives for the institutional funding of an international partnership:

- Connection of the three pillars of teaching - practice - research, e.g. by integrating activities abroad into teaching, anchoring mobility windows in the curriculum, recognition (also non-material) of achievements made abroad,
- reciprocity of exchange through principally equal numbers of participants,
- secure and sustainable financing,
- interdisciplinary nature of the project,
- plan to embed and publicize the project within the university,
- suitable compatibility of the project partners on the planned cooperation levels,
- social relevance (e.g., by aligning the project with SDGs, conceptual broad impact).

Projects that meet most of the above criteria will be specifically expanded and maintained. The International Office advises members of the HfM on content-related and conceptual matters as well as on contractual and financial issues. Dissemination and evaluation of the projects are supported by the Public Relations Department and the Office for Teaching and Quality Development (LQE).

- Measures to support teacher exchange – impetus for innovation in teaching, practice and research
 - organisational support of the institutes during stays of guest lecturers,
 - purposeful invitation of guest lecturers for formats such as master classes, lectures, summer schools, workshops, panel discussions, etc.,
 - development of residency programs for visiting professors and/or visiting artists, e.g. artist in residence.
- Provide mobility grants to support exchange activities abroad.

The most important third-party funded programs for mobility at the HfM Weimar continue to be ERASMUS+ and PROMOS. Through additional funding opportunities in the new ERASMUS program generation 2021-27, the following measures are targeted in the area of mobility:

- Support for digitally supported teaching through closer integration of the International Office with the Digitalisation Steering Group (connecting with activities in the Universities of Music 4.0 network and the eTeach network of Thuringian universities),
- Promotion of ERASMUS+ Blended Intensive Programs and purposeful partner search at EU level to implement hybrid projects.

The awarding of mobility grants will be made more inclusive. New social top-ups in the ERASMUS program will create the framework for the support of such groups, which are generally less mobile. To be able to support these groups in a transparent and fair manner, the processes surrounding the distribution of mobility grants will be adapted:

- Actively promote bonus for green travel, students with child(ren), first-time graduates, etc...,
- Beginning in 2024, standardisation of the application processes for the scholarship programs of the International Office. Coordination with other scholarship providers at the HfM (e.g. Society of Friends and Sponsors of the Franz Liszt School of Music Weimar, Student Council) will be pursued in order to optimise funding quotas.

Special formats are being developed in which participants in mobility programs share their experiences as multipliers, both at events and via the International Office's own social media accounts. These communication channels will be expanded and gradually professionalised.

➤ Expansion of networks with topic-related partners

Our willingness to cooperate internationally is attested to by our membership in domestic and foreign professional associations and networks. In the future, the focus will be on collaborations with the organisations whose work focuses on the area of organisational development, for example through internationalisation and digitalisation, diversity, professional qualification, and fundraising (project-related third-party funding acquisition). During the term of this strategy, the focus will be on the following networks in particular:

- Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC),
- DAAD (*Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst* or German Academic Exchange Service), especially clusters of art and music colleges,
- Network Music Universities 4.0,
- eTeach Network Thuringia.

The participation of university members in network activities is explicitly advocated and actively encouraged. In particular, project platforms of the AEC will be advertised more strongly, and the participation of students, teachers and employees in technology and administration will be promoted with mobility grants wherever possible.

C. DIGITALISATION

The digital age offers additional, easily accessible opportunities for cooperation and encounters. Existing cooperation projects can be expanded and intensified using digital means; conversely, digitality is a tool for the low-threshold development of new cooperation projects. This interaction documents the equal strategic relevance of both internationalisation and digitalisation at the HfM Weimar.

The interlocking of the two fields is demonstrated by the conscious utilisation of networks, for example:

- in the nationwide Network Music Universities 4.0, which is focusing on digital teaching development in its current funding phase, and
- in the Thuringia-wide eTeach network, which uses a variety of formats to focus on the digital support of teaching methods.

The coordination and support of projects in both networks is always developed at the HfM Weimar, also from the perspective of internationalization. Concrete instruments for this are the participation in or the (co-)development of ERASMUS-funded Blended Intensive Programs, in which teaching and practical projects that are digitally prepared and supported lead to a subsequent face-to-face phase of the participating project partners.

The HfM Weimar intensively accompanies the administrative digitalisation of the educational program ERASMUS+ (ERASMUS without paper). This is used to increase the attractiveness of the program by reducing bureaucracy, not leastly to achieve an increase in the number of participants at the HfM Weimar. In addition, the quality of counseling is being expanded, for example through careful evaluation of participant numbers and reports.

The parallel introduction or further implementation of the campus management system HISinOne, the space-planning tool ASIMUT, and other digital tools are also being actively pursued from the perspective of internationalisation concerns, for example by establishing standardised processes for translating system information. Conversely, the systems contribute to the simplification and harmonisation of administrative processes so that these also become more transparent for international students.

D. CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN THE INTERCULTURAL AND TRANSCULTURAL CONTEXT

➤ Qualification programs for all university members

In order to sensitise and inspire all university members about the transcultural university community, intercultural and transcultural competencies will be strengthened, and cross-cultural exchange will be promoted. Certification programs for employees including language courses and continuing education in an inter- and transcultural context will be developed together with the chancellor and the human resources department and will be open to all members of the university.

In addition, the staff training funding line in the ERASMUS+ program is to be used specifically for staff development. Young artists and musicologists as well as technical and administrative staff in particular are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity. The International Office will provide information on mobility programs that are specifically tailored to these target groups.

4. ORGANISATION | INFRASTRUCTURE:

The team of the Vice President for Digitalisation and Internationalisation, in particular the International Office, is responsible for the conception of internationalisation measures in close cooperation and coordination with the Internationalisation task force. At the beginning of 2022, the task force was established as part of the HSP project "HOCHSCHULE INTERNATIONAL^{ER}". The task force is open to all interested university members at any time as a platform for cross-departmental exchange. This strengthens the cooperation between university and non-university stakeholders. Internally, the institutes, the student council as well as departments of the administration (Department for Academic and Student Affairs, International Office, Teaching and Quality Development, Marketing, Press) should be mentioned. Externally, the cooperation with the city of Weimar, the Studierendenwerk Thüringen and practice partner institutions of the HfM Weimar both within the region and beyond are to be expanded and strengthened.

The International Office will be established as a central competence center that advises university members on international activities and projects and serves as the first point of contact for outsiders with questions about internationalisation at the HfM Weimar.

5. DISSEMINATION AND EVALUATION

The university is committed to increasing the visibility of international projects by providing exchange and presentation platforms to strengthen synergies within the organisation. In particular, practical formats are aligned and (further) developed that are thematically dedicated to the fields of action internationalisation, trans-culturality and inclusion (e.g. transcultural music sessions, ERASMUS+ for all, etc.). In addition, a communication concept is being developed for this purpose together with the relevant offices (especially press and public relations, marketing).

Indicator-based monitoring is being developed together with the Academic Quality and Development department to regularly evaluate the progress and impact of the measures and to be able to respond to identifiable developments. Suitable instruments for this process are the collection of statistical key figures, self-assessments through guided interviews, system surveys and internal audits. The derived results will be compiled by the International Office, discussed in the Internationalisation task force, and presented to the Senate. After three years, the Internationalisation task force will begin its revision process of the present internationalisation strategy, which will be published in a written report within the university. The Presidential Board and the Senate will then decide on the way forward for the further development of this strategy.

Adopted by the Presidential Board and the University Senate on 28.11.2022