

PROJECT DETAILS

LEARNING OUTCOMES

HOUSE OF EUROPE VIENNA 2026

ARTIST IDENTITY & CROSS-CULTURAL STORYTELLING



INTERNATIONAL SONGWRITING PROJECT

VMI CONSERVATORY
OF CONTEMPORARY
MUSIC
VIENNA MUSIC INSTITUTE



Co-funded by
the European Union

CREATE MUSIC BEYOND BORDERS!

Apply now and collaborate with international students and diverse artists in Austria! This year's edition takes place in Vienna at the Vienna Music Institute and combines online learning with an intensive on-site week. Through digital collaboration, participatory songwriting workshops, and live event production, students explore cultural identity, artistic cooperation, and the role of music in a diverse European society.

- Online Courses: March–April 2026
- Intensive Week in Vienna: 26.04.2026 – 30.04.2026
- Online Post-Production-Period: May–June 2026



Interested? See the attached document *Project Details & Learning Outcomes* - Contact your faculty to find out more.

WELCOME TO THE VMI



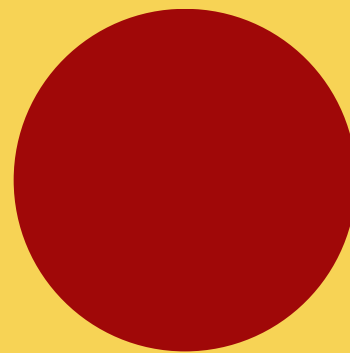


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HOUSE OF EUROPE INTERNATIONAL SONGWRITING PROJECT - VIENNA 2026

“Artist Identity & Cross-Cultural Storytelling”

When the House of Europe venture started out, 8 years ago, much of the focus was on facing the turmoil the world had fallen into. At the time, it seemed building bridges across cultures had never been more urgent. And here we are, in 2026, when many of these crises have not only not subsided, but taken a turn for the worse- and new challenges have emerged, many of them unforeseen.

The House of Europe project in Vienna brings together music students and guest musicians from diverse backgrounds to share their stories, explore their artistic identities, and create music together, in the face of these challenges. It is not about political leverage, but about promoting mutual understanding by exposing and challenging prejudices, opening up to other cultures and embracing diversity both on the human and artistic level.

Rooted in core European democratic values such as openness, solidarity, freedom of expression, and mutual respect, the project provides a space for dialogue across cultural and social boundaries. By transforming personal and collective experiences into music, the House of Europe project celebrates the beauty of difference and offers a living model for participation, inclusion, and resilience.

PROJECT DETAILS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The project encourages interaction between higher education music students from across Europe and non-Western musicians who are immigrants residing in the host country. Through participatory workshops, participants collaborate on equal footing, creating new music in teams and performing live. In addition, House of Europe functions as an international mobility program for both students and teaching staff from the following participating institutions.

- VMI – Vienna Music Institute (Vienna, Austria) Host Institution
- Metropolia University of Applied Sciences (Helsinki, Finland)
- HKU Utrechts Conservatorium (Utrecht, The Netherlands)
- Conservatorio di Musica “Luisa D’Annunzio” (Pescara, Italy)
- CS Música Creativa (Madrid, Spain)
- University of Tartu Viljandi Culture Academy (Viljandi, Estonia)

The House of Europe project began in 2018 as a series of intensive, week-long songwriting workshops across Europe. Between 2018 and 2020, it was implemented at four partner institutions: HKU Utrechts Conservatorium (The Netherlands), Metropolia University of Applied Sciences (Helsinki, Finland), Leeds College of Music (UK), and Conservatorio di Musica "Luisa D'Annunzio" (Pescara, Italy). During this phase, students focused on hands-on collaboration, exploring new musical ideas and working closely with peers from different countries.

Since 2021, the project has developed into a blended format that combines in-person workshops with online collaboration and digital music production. This approach has allowed participants to work creatively across borders, making use of modern tools while still sharing live musical experiences. The House of Europe project also answers sustainably-related challenges by blending distance learning and remote teamwork, utilizing digital music production and communication tools, with participatory songwriting workshops and live event production.

In its blended format, the upcoming House of Europe Vienna will mark the 10th edition, continuing to bring together students and teachers from the participating partner institutions for cross-cultural learning and collaborative music creation.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

The project provides a model to foster meaningful interaction between local communities and guest musicians, including those with immigrant backgrounds, through collaborative songwriting and music creation. Participatory workshops bring together music students and guest musicians, enabling participants to share their personal stories and musical traditions, and collaboratively transform them into new compositions.

The project begins with an ONLINE COURSE, open to all students from all participating institutions "Artist Identity & Cross-Cultural Storytelling," which prepares participants for international and intercultural collaboration. The course introduces key concepts in intercultural competence, digital collaboration, and creative teamwork, while also providing knowledge in songwriting, sound, music production, and digital tools. It helps students communicate across cultural, musical, and technological differences, and reflect on their own artistic identity.

During the INTENSIVE WEEK in Vienna, students and guest musicians collaborate in rehearsals, discussions, shared meals, and live music-making. These interactions foster mutual exchange of experiences, perspectives, and artistic ideas, while students develop leadership, teamwork, creative problem-solving, and musical competencies. The Intensive Week in Vienna also provides an opportunity to explore Vienna's cultural and musical environment, inspiring creativity, supporting intercultural exchange, and strengthening collaborative artistic practices.

The workshops culminate in a public performance, where students and guest musicians present their collaborative works. Local and national policymakers, decision-makers, and media are invited whenever possible to promote the project's outcomes and enhance intercultural understanding.

Following the workshops, participants engage in a remote POST-PRODUCTION phase, re-recording and producing their compositions using digital tools, with the goal of digital release and distribution, providing practical experience in creative entrepreneurship, portfolio development, and music promotion.

CONTENT OUTCOMES

Participants re-create and develop both new and existing songs, reflecting the diverse cultural backgrounds represented in the group. Students and guest musicians—whether from Europe or beyond—are encouraged to explore questions such as: What cultural perspective do I bring on the table? How can we connect artistically, musically, and personally? What does “Our House of Europe” mean to us?

While the working language of the project is English, participants are encouraged to write lyrics in their native languages, promoting authenticity and intercultural expression. The songs are publicly performed at the end of the intensive week and further developed by the songwriting teams during the post-production phase, applying skills in music production, digital collaboration, sound design and music business and music business. This includes reflecting on their artist identity, understanding their artistic vision, developing strategies for promotion and distribution, and learning to engage effectively with audiences and the music market.

The main focus of the intensive week is on cross-cultural creation, collaboration, and cultural awareness. Students complete initial productions of multiple songs on-site, and then continue to collaborate remotely, refining their work and sharing results with all participants as well as with local refugee centers and organizations in Vienna engaged in migration, intercultural exchange, and music education.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the project, the participants are expected to have developed and improved their skills to:

Digital and Intercultural Collaboration Competence

- Establish and maintain productive connections with peers from diverse cultural and musical backgrounds, both virtually and in person.
- Communicate effectively across different digital platforms, and technological tools.
- Engage respectfully with individuals and groups, demonstrating sensitivity to diverse cultural and intercultural perspectives.
- Actively participate in discussions, workshops, and collaborative activities.
- Collaborate artistically and personally with peers, taking on leadership, supportive, or specialized roles as needed.
- Work effectively in teams, managing complexity, ambiguity, and multiple perspectives with empathy, accountability, and professionalism.
- Re-evaluate their own perspectives when appropriate, practicing courage, humility, and openness.
- Listen attentively and suspend judgments when encountering new or unfamiliar ideas.

Musical and Artistic Development

- Communicate musical ideas and visions productively, even when language, instruments, and musical backgrounds differ.
- Experience music as a universal form of communication that can foster empathy, healing, and peace.
- Develop songwriting skills, creating lyrics and music collaboratively and individually.
- Explore the connection between sound and emotion, and reflect on how sonic environments shape perceptions of home.
- Gain new perspectives on what music can be and discover inspiration in everyday life.
- Practice skills in the area of field recording, basic production, and other creative technical skills.
- Collaborate creatively, fostering empathy and understanding in artistic work environments.

Multicultural Awareness and Knowledge

- Develop awareness of cultural diversity and gain knowledge about differences in European countries and their policies regarding migration.
- Learn about other cultures and musical traditions from around the world through the exchange of sounds, stories, and creative practices.

Creative Entrepreneurship and Music Marketing

- Write, promote, and distribute songs to reach diverse, multicultural audiences, both individually and as part of a songwriting team.
- Use understanding of their own artistic output to identify their audience and position in the music market. Make informed and creative choices in the marketing and promotion of their art.

PROJECT TIMELINE

ONLINE COURSE “Artist Identity & Cross-Cultural Storytelling” (1ECTS)

Open to all students from the six participating institutions
(Enrollment information will follow).

Dates & Times (CET):

- Friday, March 13 | 13:00–16:00

First session extended for more time to get to know each other and introduce course objectives.

- Friday, March 20 | 13:00–15:00
- Friday, March 27 | 13:00–15:00
- Friday, April 10 | 13:00–15:00

As the course involves group work and is designed to be interactive, attendance at all sessions is required. Please only enroll if you can meet that requirement.

1. March 13, “Artist Identity and Release Strategies”

In this opening session, participants meet and get to know one another personally and professionally. The session introduces concepts of artistic identity, creative vision, and strategies for music release, laying the foundation for collaboration, intercultural exchange, and teamwork throughout the project.

(Teacher: Julian Berann, VMI-Vienna Music Institute)

2. March 20, “Basic Tools and Methods of Songwriting”

An introductory course exploring essential methods, techniques, and creative approaches for crafting songs.

(Teacher: Jere Laukkanen, Metropolia University of Applied Sciences Helsinki)

3. March 27, “Playful Approaches to Collaborative Creativity”

An interactive, hands-on session based on the collaborative storytelling game “Share the Story”, encouraging creativity, communication, and team collaboration.

(Teacher: Julian Berann, VMI-Vienna Music Institute)

4. April 10, “Sounds like Home” Exploring and Producing Sonic Environments

An interactive session where students explore the sounds of their surroundings and create a soundscape inspired by their hometowns and memories of home. Using field recordings and everyday sounds, participants experiment with translating their environment into music. The session will also include a presentation of the collaborative portfolio developed by the student-teams throughout the course.

(Teacher: Julian Berann, VMI-Vienna Music Institute)

HOW TO APPLY?

The application deadline is February 23, 2026

For students nominated for the Intensive Week in Vienna:

Students nominated for the Intensive Week should also enroll in the online course using this form.

House of Europe 2026 - VIENNA - Enrollment Online Course

Enrollment for the Intensive Week in Vienna: Enrollment details will be shared directly with the nominated students in a separate message.

INTENSIVE WEEK IN VIENNA (2ECTS)

- Dates: Sunday, April 26 – Thursday, April 30, 2026
- Final Concert: Thursday, April 30, 2026
- Travel Dates: Saturday, April 25 and Friday, May 1, 2026

Students nominated for the Intensive Week will receive financial support through an Erasmus+ grant (please contact your home university for details).

POSTPRODUCTION PERIOD (2ECTS)

This applies only to students who were nominated for the Intensive Week.

Dates & Times (CET):

1. May, 8th, 2026, 1-4 pm
2. May, 29th, 2026, 1-4 pm
3. June, 12th, 2026, 1-4 pm

During the PPP, students will be guided by an Austrian music producer.



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