

Personal statement /Marja-Leena Juntunen (PhD, LicEd, MM)

As an experienced scholar and educator in music education for over 35 years, including eight years as Professor of Music Education, and with exceptionally wide international teaching and research experience, intercultural competence, and language skills (incl. English, Spanish, French, Finnish and Swedish), I have much to offer ISME. As a Board Member, I would also be able to act as a liaison between ISME and our university (University of the Arts Helsinki) who organizes the World Conference of 2024 in Helsinki.

To the Board, I would bring my diverse experiences as a music teacher of children, youth and adults, in a variety of contexts. I have gained international experience through studies and/or teaching appointments in Switzerland, Netherlands, and the USA and during numerous international visits as a teacher and scholar. My scholarship covers a wide range of contexts and perspectives in music education and includes over a hundred publications. My research critically examines embodied aspects of music learning and musicianship, applying phenomenological theories of embodiment to examine the role and possibilities of body movement in music education. In recent years, my research has centered on issues of accessibility and equ(al)ity, aiming at increasing opportunities for all children and youth to participate in high-quality music and arts education in Finland and beyond. I have, for example, collaborated in building music teacher education in Nepal. As an expert in my field, I also take an active role in Finnish society by disseminating research results outside the academia (e.g., popularized writings, textbooks, and media appearances).

As a board member, I would highlight the Nordic emphasis on educational quality and democracy. Part of my research has aimed to identify unequal practices in arts and arts education and to envision more equal future practice. This experience has deepened my understanding of the challenges, complexities, and possibilities of inclusion, equality, and diversity, and of the constant need to critically examine and reflect on our values, dispositions, and practices if we genuinely want to increase accessibility and inclusion in music education. Furthermore, the current uncertain times increasingly call us to imagine and create ways to promote ecological sustainability, just societies, and the wellbeing of all, as well as to increase our understanding of the integral relationships between humans and the environment. I would like to stimulate and sustain discussion in ISME especially related to these themes and their implications for music education practices.

My commitment to ISME to date is evident in the papers I have presented and workshops I have facilitated in ISME World Conferences and national seminars already since 1990. I have also had the honor of serving as an Editorial Board Member (2008–2014) and review reader (2014-ongoing) for the *International Journal of Music Education*. Moreover, through my writing of the professional biography of Professor Ellen Urho (Juntunen 2013), a former President and Honorary Life Member of ISME, I became well acquainted with the history, values, mission, and practices of the organization. Serving on the ISME Board would offer me the possibility to continue and expand ISME's efforts strengthening international collaborations and advancing music education globally.