



WAAE

World Alliance for Arts Education

The World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE) is a non-governmental not-for-profit organization. WAAE was founded in July 2006 in Lisbon, Portugal and formalized in a Memorandum of Understanding in Rovaniemi, Finland in November 2012. The WAAE is an Alliance between the International Drama/Theatre and Education Association (IDEA), the International Society for Education through Art (InSEA), the International Society for Music Education (ISME), and the World Dance Alliance (WDA).

We offer the following response to the UNESCO International Commission on the Futures of Education.

We believe that the Education Futures initiative is a powerful vehicle for embedding and activating the concepts and values of the 2010 *Seoul Agenda Goals for the Development of Arts Education*:

- GOAL 1: Ensure that arts education is accessible as a fundamental and sustainable component of a high-quality renewal of education
- GOAL 2: Assure that arts education activities and programmes are of a high quality in conception and delivery
- GOAL 3: Apply arts education principles and practices to contribute to resolving the social and cultural challenges facing today's world

More recently, the World Alliance for Arts Education held a summit in Frankfurt, Germany in October 2019, which re-affirmed these goals with numerous calls to action, which included:

- 1.) All education leaders, policy leaders and civil society to acknowledge that the arts, in their diversity, and arts educators play a critical role in fostering and transforming humanity;
- 2.) leaders in civil society and policy leaders to recognise and resource arts education as a vital pillar for fostering and nurturing a culture of sustainability in society in alignment with the UNESCO Sustainable Development Goals;

- 3.) Arts educators and other educators to form collaborative partnerships with governments, civil society, professional organisations and communities to establish local specific action plans that contribute to the UNESCO sustainable development goals and to understand and transform the present ecological collapse and its impacts on the social, cultural, economic and spiritual lives and institutions of all peoples throughout the world;
- 4.) and several others.

Below, we have summarised our beliefs below and have included four contributions from our members for review.

We believe that humans need meaning and community. We have always valued myths, stories, rituals, performance, and arts as a way to explain and understand our self and the people we exist with.

When we, as arts educators and artists, consider our present global and local contexts and the future of education we must consider the integral, if not central, role the arts play in enabling us to make sense of now and plan for the future. As we make meaning, we make culture and re-make it through history. The richness and diversity of the world's art forms provides opportunities for intercultural learning and international understanding, co-operation and peace. Importantly diverse communities make diverse cultures and they are equal, though history persistently reveals inequities, colonization and destruction of such diversity.

We believe the arts within the futures of education can unlock the true potential of internationalisation in that the global community has a global perspective on our humanity, our environment and sustainability of our obligations to each other. As we look forward, we do this championing diversity in every eco-system, knowing that there is no universal truth and no universal model for education. That is teachers, learners, curriculum, contexts, careers, communities, families will all be diverse, and for us as a humanity to survive (and for our planet to survive) we must cherish, accept, love, foster, protect and understand diversity.

We believe that in 2050 an industrial Western construct of education will be outdated. For example, the compartmentalizing of disciplines, timeframes, assessment, age groupings and the colonisation of curriculum and didactic learning will no longer meet the needs of a global society. We imagine a world where artistic practice is interwoven throughout all learning and the development of our youth.

We believe that the future purpose of education should be to develop responsible and creative individuals who contribute to the common good and the preservation of our planet.

Educators have a profound role to play in developing young people into citizens of a world not fully yet formed, and arts practice can help move us beyond reductive understandings of education as market function, and thereby contribute to wellbeing through both process and product. When the future cannot be fully seen or predicted, a capacity to respond to changing circumstance and be resilient, and indeed help create a new future is now well understood to be a creative disposition and reflective of what is biologically adaptive and hence promote young people's wellbeing .

In the time of COVID-19 among the many challenges facing nations and communities today, we believe that education is central to the act of improving the quality of life for all. This requires change. The futures of education can act as both an agent for change as well as providing a base from which we (re)build our systems, communities, and nations.

We advocate for the transformative role and power that arts education has and can enable these changes, which are imperative for the future of young people and our world.