

# EPS- Erasmus Policy Statement

## Overall Strategy

Aquila's bid to be European Capital of Culture for 2019 is a proposal to launch the material, cultural and social rebuilding of the city after the 2009 earthquake. Casella Conservatoire is wholeheartedly backing the bid and giving the support of its network of connections across Europe and the world. This network of friends gave their staunch support to the Casella Conservatoire and above all its students when the earthquake wounded the city so seriously. Our partner institutions and in particular their international relations offices in the European Conservatoires and Music Academies rallied round in no time and with their generosity guaranteed that our students were given the chance to study in their institutions, welcoming them as if they were part of their family, offering help and sending study material (an extremely generous donation was received from Frankfurt's Hochschule and Graz offered our students at that time a welcome as "free movers" which we remember with particular fondness).

With this in mind, the Casella Conservatoire intends to propose an international conference for the 50th anniversary of its foundation in 2018 to this network of institutions promoting the European Higher Education Area possibly in collaboration with the European Association of Conservatoires which has played such an important role in the Bologna Process. The Casella Conservatoire will be able to count on its prestigious premises in Collemaggio, on its present building, which is provisional but nevertheless functional and the Auditorium designed by the architect, Shigeru Ban offered by the Japanese government, making it an important hub for the social, artistic and cultural life of the city. Thanks to the theatre's intense season of high quality performances of all types of live entertainment, our students will have a chance to take to the stage whilst at the same dealing with all aspects of musical organization.

The choice of the partners of the Casella Conservatoire initially sprang from the countless professional and personal relationships between teachers and staff of the Casella Conservatoire and teachers and staff of the various European Institutions. The network of partners has been enlarged thanks to the numerous opportunities for meetings promoted by organizations like the AEC with the annual meeting of its directors and its annual meeting of the coordinators of international relations and thanks to the personable approach to mobility adopted by the Italian Conservatoires. In many cases partners were sought for on the basis of student requests. The Director of the Casella Conservatoire is active in work groups such as Tuning Polifonia and a member of the AEC board and this has contributed towards the growth of the international status, visibility and prestige of the city of L'Aquila.

New important opportunities for work contacts have been created by taking part in other European programmes such as Cultura 2000 (Roads of Romanticism, 2007), Youth in Action (Norway 2011), Leonardo (Working With Music, 2010-2013). The students and teachers of the Conservatoire have taken part in international meetings such as the Festival Transeuropéenne in Rouen (2011-2012), and the Department of Early Music. The recent strategic choices by the Conservatoire Casella have been made with particular attention being paid to the true value of the qualifications achieved, and particular importance given to the possible joint ventures to be undertaken with other European Institutions in certain specialized fields such as Early Music, Jazz and pop, electronic music, music therapy and music with a social purpose, with the concrete aim of creating courses with a final certificate of degrees from joint institutions.

Even though, government finance for Institutions for the teaching of music and art is being cut there is a growing awareness that culture and research are potential resources for sustainable development. This awareness is strengthened by the arrival of new signs of well being and by the initiatives of international organizations such as UNESCO with the Seoul Agenda, promoting arts culture as a structural element in education. On these operational initiatives will hinge future international collaboration both for developing joint programmes and for stimulating research which is able to offer the academic world new points of departure and new perspectives.

## **Organisation and implementation of international cooperation**

The timely entry of the Casella Conservatoire in 2004 in the AEC, has enabled it to found a solid network of contacts to sustain all the various types of mobility. On the part of the students of the Casella Conservatoire there is a growing interest in mobility thanks also to solid and well tested experiences and thanks to the enlargement of the number of partnerships. Besides institutions of academic training, the Casella Conservatoire has also joined forces with music companies offering our students and graduates the possibility of professional work experience.

Staff training mobility is also blossoming and new educational settings are being explored to improve the range of courses on offer, with the creation of boundary-free relations in new sectors such as pop and ethnic music. The active participation in AEC initiatives such as the Early Music Platform, is rewarding the Casella Conservatoire for its investment in these sectors. The Electronic Music Department has also distinguished itself, with Erasmus placement students and graduates on the Leonardo project having achieved much success and concrete work opportunities.

Monitoring the quality of our educational courses has been made possible with our membership of the AlmaLaurea consortium, which with its data bank offers national and international visibility to our graduates and provides data concerning their employment at one, three and five years on from their graduation. It will also be important to document the professional results of how many students from the Casella have created an Alumni Association testifying the educational process of our Conservatoire which has highly qualified and excellent achievement results in many fields.

## **Participation in the program on the modernisation of the Istitution**

The quality of the courses on offer is of prime importance at the Casella Conservatoire with a focus on the students' needs. Both as regards the traditional and more innovative job-oriented courses the creation of these courses has been made paying particular attention to the study time required and with a careful use of ECTS credits, clearly defining the skills and abilities to be mastered in the undergraduate and postgraduate courses, in the specialization courses, in the masters and the training and research training courses. By offering our teachers the chance to transfer all their professional experience into their courses, we guarantee the quality of our tuition for our students and offer what they concretely need for their future in the world of music.

By 2020 we at the Casella Conservatoire aim to offer quality international mobility for study purposes and/or professional training to at least 20% of our students in line with the rest of Europe. We also aim to encourage the participation of minority groups with financial and organizational support, in the knowledge that taking part in mobility programmes and other programmes for the development of European higher education guarantees, moreover, precious moments of professional refreshment for our teachers and our administrative staff and allows us to offer high quality master classes, facilitates exchanges and the creation of courses organized in collaboration with partners from other nations, thus making us a more prestigious institution in the international field.

The Casella Conservatoire intends to adopt measures to facilitate its students' entry into the working world, to make its placement office fully operational and create links with arts companies and workplaces both at home and abroad. The experience with Leonardo Working With Music showed without a doubt how important it is to offer our new graduates professional training experience to verify, stimulate and increase their skills and give them the opportunity to work as musicians.

The Casella Conservatoire will have more resources if it can endorse a clear fund searching policy and a policy of research for new sources of interest which it can share with new friends interested in common goals, who are willing to share our challenges to develop a new community of citizens who hold the same values for sustainable growth. Our strength lies in our efficient fund managing and a capacity to make projects and develop our territory at the same time, thus laying the foundations for the creation of an artistic and cultural hub both for L'Aquila and the Abruzzo region as a whole, documenting our social agenda with clarity.