

## Feedback to finalists

<b>Name of Centre:</b>	CreaTeME - Centre for Excellence in Creative use of Technologies in Music Education
<b>Name of Institution:</b>	University of Agder
<p><b>Aim and vision</b></p> <p>The proposed Centre for Excellence in the Creative use of Technologies in Music Education (CreaTeME) is aimed at promoting and developing <i>'innovative, inclusive, responsive and responsible use of technology in artistic education'</i>, and its primary mission is to become the <i>'nexus in Europe for the development of innovative artistic and pedagogical approaches to technology in higher music education'</i>.</p>	
<p><b>Structure and organisation of the centre</b></p> <p>CreaTeME is aimed at responding to four major challenges facing higher music education due to digitalisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• technology changes the premises for what counts as musical knowledge and creativity;</li> <li>• technology changes the premises for artistic and pedagogical practices for music education;</li> <li>• technology changes the work market; and</li> <li>• technology challenges social and political structures in music education and in society in general.</li> </ul> <p>CreaTeME aims to meet these challenges through five work packages (WPs) that develop particular areas of practice. The proposed Centre is based on strong foundations at UiA. In 2013, DPM established the first specialisation in electronic music in Norway, and offered a master's degree in electronic music in 2016. A bachelors programme in electronic music was established in 2020. In addition, DPM hosts the Popular Music Research Unit (PMRU) consisting of five research groups, and currently holds 18 PhD research fellow positions contributing to musicological and artistic research. Three PhD research fellows are explicitly researching pedagogical approaches to technology in higher music education. Nine PhD research fellows have an explicit focus on creative use of technology in music, or technology's impact on the music markets. DPM is the only institution in Norway offering electronic music at Bachelors, Masters and PhD level.</p> <p>The Department of Popular Music (DPM) is established as a driving force for the continuous development of popular music pedagogy. The proposed CreaTeME SFU will be headed by Director (Prof. Jan Bang) and Co-director (Assistant Prof. Hilde Norbakken), leading the centre management group. The Director is an experienced project leader, having organised and arranged the Kristiansand Punkt Festival annually since 2005 which showcases experimental music from all over the world. The Centre management group will oversee the day-to-day management of the Centre and report to the Centre Board, which will hold the governance responsibility, through meetings each semester.</p>	

### Strengths and weaknesses

Using a combination of both the written application and the site visit, the panel noted the following strengths:

- The application presented a well-structured project plan with a clear timeline and well-defined milestones and deliverables. It was seen that these aligned well with the broader strategy of the university.
- The panel felt that the project team was cohesive and was driven by a shared vision and characterised by high enthusiasm, expertise and mutual appreciation. This includes partners from outside of the university and, most notably, the student partners, who appear to be an integral and active part of the planning and potential of the proposed centre.
- The ambition to scale up and to become more visible on the national and international level was clear, and this was based on a model of co-ownership regarding project partners
- While the electronic music programme was still relatively young, the panel felt that there was a very good foundation to build upon, including past achievements of high reputation, experienced and motivated staff, and visible leadership support and interest in the centre

In addition to the above, the panel would have liked to have seen the following:

- Further plans as to how CreaTeME will utilise its achievements and findings to inspire higher education beyond the field of music education. For example, how might the Centre adapt and promote its student partnership model or specific pedagogical and didactic principles to a wider audience?
- A more detailed plan of what steps will be taken to establish CreaTeME as the stated '*prime nexus in Europe for the development of innovative artistic and pedagogical approaches to technology in higher music education*'. The panel felt that this should go beyond the relatively short-term activities linked in the work packages, and be based on a regular reflection of where the Centre is compared to where it wants to be on a regular cycle.
- In a number of areas, the panel was of the view that there was a lack of success indicators outlined that could be used to show what a successful Centre would look like, and where and how it impacts its relevant environments more clearly. The evaluation of the activities of the Centre – both in terms of student outcomes and more widely in terms of artistic impact – will be vital to show value for money if Centre status is awarded.
- The panel felt that the dissemination plans for the Centre were weak and need to be strengthened. They felt that the systematic gathering of key experiences and insights (research) needed to take place and these need to be shared also across space and time (dissemination), including in the academic domain.

In summary, the panel felt that CreaTeME represented an excellent candidate for the award of SFU Centre status. It is based on strong foundations and has a coherent leadership structure that the panel felt confident were capable of delivering the outlined proposal. Moreover, the strong partnership with students was seen as a considerable advantage. If awarded SFU status, however, the Centre will need to establish rigorous and objective measures to evaluate the outcomes of the initiatives they undertake. Knowing what works – even in an artistic endeavour – is a vital thread to convincing others (students, other music departments, funding agencies, etc.) that the investment in the Centre has been both appropriate and successful. In a similar vein, the Centre should reconsider its dissemination plan to maximise the reach of its outcomes.

Finally, the panel recognised the efforts being made to close the gender gap among students entering the programmes run by DPM. They were, however, somewhat unconvinced that the proposed methods to reduce this further (mainly local visits) would have the desired effect to closing the gap further. The proposed Centre may therefore wish to reconsider how this work may be best achieved.

The panel recognised that CreaTeME was already a leader in this space in Norway and had the potential to be a leader both across Scandinavia and world-wide. By addressing the comments and suggestions above, the panel had confidence that CreateMe could fulfil its ambitions and create a legacy for both students in electronic music at UiA and also in the wider context of Norwegian artistic educational processes and practices.

**Overall panel recommendation: Fund**