

Feedback to finalist

Name of Centre:	Listen! Centre for Excellent Jazz Education
Name of Institution:	Norwegian University of Science and Technology
<p>Aim and vision</p> <p>The stated vision of the centre is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To transform the culture for music learning and teaching towards a general appreciation of aural learning and teaching • To contribute to rehumanizing the pedagogy and epistemology of higher education and education in general <p>The application emphasizes that the existing Jazz Programme (JP) is the point of departure for the centre. Central to the JP is that key concepts (communicative musicality, imitation, embodied understanding, creative participatory sense-making, community of aural practice, reflection in communicative action, assessment and evaluation of open-ended creative processes) are investigated practically and theoretically, with aural practice being prime. A great deal of experience has accrued to this approach and there is clearly great enthusiasm among teachers and students alike, as the site visit confirmed.</p> <p>The key expressed aim of the centre is to use the anticipated resources to capacity build. Centre funding will allow the group to strengthen its existing network as well as further develop its important outreach work.</p>	
<p>Structure and organisation of the centre</p> <p>The centre will be led by a Management Team consisting of a Director (Njål Ølnes), Deputy Director (Eldbjørg Raknes), Academic Programme Director of JP (Eirik Hegdal), an Administrator (TBA), an Educational Development and Evaluation Manager (Dagrun Engen), and a Research and Partner Manager (Mattias Solli). A partner network is established with all partners based in mid-Norway.</p> <p>The centre is structured around six work packages:</p> <p>WP1 Developing communicative musicality and aural community of practice WP2 Co-creating working life diversity WP3 Early start and broad recruitment WP4 Assessment, evaluation and quality enhancement WP5 Researching creative participatory sense-making WP6 Communicative dissemination</p> <p>Students are involved in all activities and have responsibility for WP-specific projects, including student–student learning activities, organization of festivals and workshops, and evaluations.</p> <p>The centre Management Team is supported by a Steering Committee, Partner Committee, Student Committee and Advisory Board. The centre organisation and proposed structure was clearly articulated in the application, resulting in the decision of the panel to shortlist the application and attend a site visit.</p>	
Strengths and weaknesses	

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

- The enthusiasm and commitment of existing students was evident, and the panel interpreted these as being a clear strength. There was evident passion regarding AIM among all groups and a strong belief that funding LISTEN! will represent a major step towards spreading the methodology across the country, even to other countries, and perhaps not just limited to jazz music education. The students were highly supportive of the teaching methods employed on the JP and were able to clearly articulate the perceived advantages of AIM as a method.
- The stakeholders were clear and articulate about the need for a Centre and the value of promoting the AIM listening method (while recognising that the method also needs to be challenged)
- The panel detected a pedagogical philosophy that could be developed beyond the AIM approach. This translates to two very ambitious vision statements and a comprehensive mission. There were many stories of success, which are testament to how AIM works in practice and has been changing how people are experiencing, and learning to appreciate, music.
- Evident also is an impressive array of ideas of how and where AIM and the work of LISTEN! could make a difference for a variety of stakeholders, but most importantly even for people not yet aware of its potential. There is an opportunity here to use the method to reach those not currently perceiving themselves as part of NTNU's musical education.

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

- It was unclear what the centre would be beyond a network of partners working to demonstrate and develop the potential of the aural approach
- The transformative nature of AIM is unclear beyond being an effective pedagogic tool
- The applicants could not convincingly describe the place of the proposed centre in relation to existing offerings identified through international benchmarking, despite this being recommended in previous feedback from the panel
- Evidence for the suggested work was not provided, and the panel remained unconvinced that the proposed centre had identified appropriate criteria for success measures
- The panel did not hear persuasive answers to several of the questions proposed to the various interviewees (with the exception of the students and the stakeholders)
- The panel missed clearly outlined plans on how the different subgoals will be systematically implemented, and how some of the activities listed will contribute to achieving these goals
- The proposal failed to articulate what communicable and observable outcomes of the centre's work will help the centre and others to assess LISTEN's success and impact from short-, mid-, and long term perspectives
- The proposal also lacked research-based reflection of the limits of the AIM approach, what will be needed to systematically develop and adapt it for other contexts, or how to overcome the challenge of cognitively convincing people of a clearly experientially oriented approach
- In regards a question concerning the evaluation of students, the panel was informed that evaluation is not appropriate and so the teachers "fake it" in order "to avoid structures that are hampering the individuals." This was felt by the panel to be a serious abdication of the responsibility to create appropriate metrics for evaluation and assigning value in an artistic education.

Overall recommendation: do not fund