



Shape the Future of Arts Education: Join the ELIA Students Working Group!

ELIA seeks eight members for the Students Working Group

Deadline: 1 October 2026

ELIA is inviting applications from students at member institutions to join the ELIA Students Working Group. We are looking for eight motivated student members to contribute their voice, creativity, and curiosity to a collaborative international community exploring a student-curated space created by and for students to support peer learning, collective reflection, and agency across the ELIA network.

Why Join

As a student member, you will gain:

- **Direct Impact:** Make your voice heard. Influence arts education as it happens, feeding your lived experience directly into ELIA's governance and advocacy.
- **A Global Network:** Connect with an international community of peers facing similar challenges across different artistic disciplines and countries.
- **Professional Growth:** Develop skills in student-led organising, collective action, and navigating complex institutional power dynamics.
- **Digital Leadership:** Gain hands-on experience in leading accessible, international collaboration using cutting-edge online tools and asynchronous work-sharing practices.
- **Travel Opportunities:** Attend annual in-person gatherings and major ELIA events, including the ELIA Biennial 2026 in Zwolle, with travel and accommodation support.

About the ELIA Students Working Group

The group comes together to create, curate and sustain a dedicated space for student agency (from and for students) within the ELIA network through the ELIA Students Community Hub.

The group works on issues that matter to students across higher arts education, recognising that experiences differ widely across institutions, countries, and personal situations. Rather than fixing a closed agenda, the group focuses on shared areas of concern that can evolve over time.

It prioritises areas through collective discussion, focusing on phases and needs as they emerge and in line with their two-year strategic plan. This allows the group to turn ideas into action through student-led sessions, shared resources, or collaborations, aiming for concrete actions like toolkits or inputs to various channels of engagement with the Community Hub while remaining adaptable to evolving priorities.

The activities of the Working Group develop around the following focus areas:

- **Student Life and Conditions of Study**

We explore what it means to study art today, including workload, wellbeing, access, precarity, and economic realities such as tuition fees, dependence on paid work to manage alongside studies, unpaid or low paid internships or labour, and varying national contexts for student support. We create space to share experiences and to name challenges that are often felt individually but shaped structurally

- **Learning, Teaching, and Pedagogical Cultures**

We reflect on how learning happens in our institutions, what supports or limits it, and how students can actively shape educational practices. This includes exploring alternative formats, peer learning, feedback cultures, and experimentation beyond traditional classroom models.

- **Agency, Voice, and Engagement**

We work on strengthening student agency: learning how to speak up, how to be heard, and how to engage with institutional structures without being tokenised or overburdened. This includes sharing strategies for dialogue, collaboration, and collective action.

- **Transitions and Professional Futures**

We address moments of transition from entering studies, graduating, moving into professional life, or changing paths. We share knowledge, uncertainties, and resources related to these shifts, recognising that futures are multiple and not linear.

- **Community, Solidarity, and Care**

We value connection across borders, disciplines, and differences. We work on building solidarity between students, recognising care as a shared responsibility and an essential condition for learning, creativity, and participation.

[Find out more in the Student Strategic Playbook here>](#)

Who can apply

Who are we looking for?

We welcome applications from **students actively enrolled at ELIA member institutions**. Applications are open to all areas of study and creative practice across all artistic disciplines or cultural fields.

We are looking for active members who identify with one or more of these **roles (personas)**¹:

- **The Connector:** You ask the deep questions and keep the community moving with purpose.
- **The Supporter:** You focus on community care, checking in on others, and keeping the workload balanced.
- **The Igniter:** You are a vocal advocate who calls out issues and pushes the group into action.

Applicants should:

- Be motivated by the desire to **contribute to a legacy and positively impact the future** of arts education.
- Bring a **curiosity-driven, relational, and reflective mindset**, sensitive to multi-generational (across student cohorts) and intersectional dynamics.

The Working Group values diverse, inclusive, and intersectional representation, taking generational, cultural, disciplinary, and geographic diversity into account.

Selection Criteria:

In line with [ELIA's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion \(EDI\) policy](#), the selection process will aim to compose a group that reflects plurality, ethical responsibility, and a diversity of perspectives relevant to technological transformation and critical inquiry in higher arts education. The Working Group will ensure a **balanced foundation across roles, disciplines, geographical representation and institutional contexts** from the outset.

The selection will consider:

- **Academic and Disciplinary Diversity:** Variety of disciplines, institutional contexts (e.g., small/large, applied/research-oriented), and student experiences across levels (undergraduate, postgraduate, research).
- **Expertise and Motivation:** Interest in the realities of student life, such as workload, wellbeing, career paths and the economic challenges of studying in the arts today. You should be curious about experimenting with new ways of learning and have a critical perspective on how digital environments, including AI and surveillance, affect our education.
- **Diversity and Positionality:** Range of cultural backgrounds, generations, and continents; awareness of contextual complexities, power dynamics, and positionality; capacity to navigate diverse (including resistant) perspectives with care and reflexivity.
- **Contribution Capacity:** Demonstrated ability or willingness to co-create deliverables (e.g., workshops, guidelines, repositories) and participate in flexible formats like asynchronous collaboration or in-person hosting.

What to Expect

The **ELIA Students Working Group** curate conversations and workshops that explore the realities of being a student today, from our living and studying conditions to the way digital tools and institutional power shape how we learn and work together. As a member, you will be a full participant in the Working Group, contributing to the development of the **Students Community Hub**, and engaging in collaborative projects, events, and initiatives.

The Working Group will:

- Curate and support the **Students Community Hub**, creating opportunities for experimentation, reflection, and exchange among students, staff, and external partners.
- Develop and deliver **programmes, workshops, materials and events** that look honestly at the realities of student life, from precarity and workload to the impact of digital tools like AI. Together, the group explores how these conditions shape education and build the collective confidence to shape a future that reflects artistic values.
- Bring student perspectives into ELIA's wider work by **contributing collective insights** that can inform its programmes, events, organisational development, and advocacy
- Participate in **major ELIA events**, online, hybrid, and in-person gatherings, with the support of the ELIA Team.

- Explore **in-person gatherings**, where feasible, at different member institutions, possibly in proximity to or in collaboration with other **ELIA events**, including the **ELIA Biennial Conference**.

As a student member, you will:

- Join **online Working Group meetings** on a regular basis (approximately every six weeks) to advance the group's activities and goals.
- Contribute to **collective projects**, including research initiatives, participatory workshops, events, and creative or artistic collaborations.
- Participate in **in-person gatherings**, where feasible, to engage directly with peers and staff from across **ELIA member institutions**.
- Collaborate with other student members and staff to explore the **conditions we study and live within**, from the impact of **digital shifts like AI and surveillance to the economic realities and power structures** of our education.
- Engage in the **co-creation of knowledge**, reflecting the **urgent issues your generation faces** as we navigate and shape the future of our creative practices.

The Working Group is **digitally-rooted by design**. We prioritise online meetings and asynchronous collaboration to ensure that your location, time zone, or financial situation never stands in the way of your participation. By using these tools thoughtfully, we make our space accessible to every student, everywhere.

Estimated time commitment: **4–6 hours per month**, depending on the group's planned activities. The group's work remains sensitive to student workloads, exam periods, and different levels of capacity. Your term as a student member will be **two years**, with the possibility of extension up to four years enabling sustained contribution while allowing rotation of new voices.

The Working Group is supported administratively by the **ELIA Team**, which handles scheduling, meeting logistics, and event organisation. Members are expected to contribute actively beyond plenary meetings and are encouraged to host occasional sessions at their own institutions, fostering peer learning locally and across ELIA.

Support and Benefits

Applicants must include a letter of support from their institution confirming approval of the time commitment and acknowledging participation in Working Group activities as valid justification for academic absences.

Travel and accommodation costs incurred by the members of the Working Group for the activities of the group need to be primarily covered by their own institutions, unless other funding mechanisms are in place.

For the 2026-2028 period, selected student members will receive bursaries covering travel and accommodation for the group's annual in-person working group meetings.

Selection Process

Candidates will be selected based on their applications by a selection committee consisting of Representative Board, Working Group members and ELIA staff, with the nominated candidates being formally approved by the Executive Group.

- The deadline for applications is **Thursday, 1 October**.
- All applicants will be notified of the first selection results by email no later than **Wednesday, 7 October**.
- Follow-up interviews will be held with invited applicants between **12–14 October**.
- The successful candidates are expected to join the onboarding session of the group, which will take place online on **Thursday, 29 October from 13:30–15:00 CET**.
- The successful candidates are expected to join the working group session during the ELIA Biennial, which will take place in person on **Thursday, 29 November from 14:00–15:30 CET**.

Please apply [HERE](#)

For any questions or additional information, please contact ELIA Community Manager, Amalia Smyrnioti at amalia.smyrnioti@elia-artschools.org.



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