

**Society for Ethnomusicology  
Strategic Plan  
2010-2015**

**Progress Report  
August 14, 2015**

Between 2008 and 2010, the SEM Board, Council, Long-Range Planning Committee, Development Committee, Crossroads Committee, and various other constituents engaged in a series of wide-ranging discussions on ways of increasing the academic and public impact of the Society. These deliberations resulted in the SEM 2010-2015 Strategic Plan, which outlined 4 primary goals and 11 concrete initiatives. In 2011 the Society launched its Sound Future Campaign as a concerted effort to raise funds for these initiatives and, as of 08/01/15, has received over \$350,000.

Below is a copy of the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan, with **progress to date indicated for each initiative**. Thanks to the exceptional work and generosity of our membership and partners, we have successfully carried out projects in support of all of our primary goals.

In 2016 SEM will engage in a new round of strategic planning in order to determine the major challenges facing our field and organization in the upcoming years, our priorities for action, a series of feasible projects, and the resources necessary for implementation.

Our strategic planning will again involve broad-based discussion within the Society. We will evaluate both achievements and limitations in the execution of the 2010-2015 plan, examine member data and comments received through the 2014 Membership Survey, and establish a variety of channels for members to provide input in the creation of a new plan. All members will be invited to envision a strengthened SEM and participate in its development!

**Society for Ethnomusicology**  
**Strategic Plan**  
**2010-2015**

**Mission**

The Society for Ethnomusicology was founded in 1955 to promote the research, study, and performance of music in all historical periods and cultural contexts.

The Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM) is a U.S.-based organization with an international membership of over 1800 individuals dedicated to the study of all forms of music from diverse humanistic and social scientific perspectives. We examine music as central to human experience throughout space and time, and explore its profound relationship to cognition, emotion, language, dance, visual arts, spiritual belief, social organization, collective identity, politics, conflict and peace, economics, the physical body, and mental health. Through SEM programs and the work of our individual members, we seek to advance academic and public understanding and appreciation of music as a cultural phenomenon of unlimited variety and as a resource that is fundamental to the wellbeing of individuals and communities.

As the largest ethnomusicological society in the world, SEM is well positioned to focus wide-ranging academic and public efforts in the promotion of knowledge and practice of all musics. This strategic plan constitutes a five-year agenda for the execution of this mission. Work will be carried out by the SEM board, council, committees, interest groups, regional chapters, general membership, and staff, in collaboration with partner organizations across the U.S. and around the world.

Our primary goals are to:

1. Create greater awareness and understanding in the academy and public sphere of ethnomusicological perspectives.
2. Increase ethnomusicology's contribution to civic life and public policymaking.
3. Facilitate international communication and collaboration in ethnomusicology.
4. Strengthen K-12, undergraduate, and graduate education in ethnomusicology.

In pursuit of these goals, SEM will work to expand its capacity by further developing the diversity of its membership and governance, while also engaging a range of partner organizations. Diverse perspectives will be included in the planning and implementation of all initiatives outlined below. SEM will secure financial resources to support these initiatives through a new fundraising campaign, with appeals to members, the music industry, foundations, and governmental and intergovernmental agencies. Increased investment of both human and financial resources in this strategic plan will enable SEM and its partners to have a far-reaching and lasting impact on the understanding and practice of music worldwide.

## Goals

### 1. Create Greater Awareness and Understanding in the Academy and Public Sphere of Ethnomusicological Perspectives.

#### Initiatives:

- **Publicity for Ethnomusicology**

Disseminate information about ethnomusicology and SEM to electronic and print media outlets in both the academy and the public sphere. Highlight the diversity and value of ethnomusicological perspectives and the publications, conferences, and other programs of SEM and similar organizations.

>SEM has focused its publicity initiatives on social media, its website, and other electronic communications. At present, our [Facebook group](#) has over 3,000 members, our [Facebook page](#) over 2,000 likes, and our [Twitter feed](#) close to 500 followers. New content is regularly added to [our website](#), which currently has over 400,000 annual pageviews. Notices about the Society are maintained in [JSTOR](#), and email announcements concerning the Annual Meeting are sent to over 30 other academic societies.

- **Smithsonian Folkways Partnership**

Partner with Smithsonian Folkways by contributing multimedia reports on field research to the online *Folkways Magazine* and by co-producing annotated albums of music recordings for digital release.

>SEM has collaborated with Smithsonian Folkways to co-produce "[From the Field](#)," with funding to Folkways from the National Endowment for the Arts through an interagency agreement. To date, six peer-reviewed, multimedia reports have been published in the online *Smithsonian Folkways Magazine*.

- **Engagement with Other Scholarly Societies**

Organize ethnomusicology sessions at the annual meetings of other scholarly societies, and organize special sessions at SEM's annual meeting that feature members from other academic disciplines.

>SEM has co-organized the following inter-society events: two sessions at the 2011 American Folklore Society Annual Meeting; a [joint 2011 Annual Meeting](#) with the Congress on Research in Dance; a [joint 2012 Annual Meeting](#) with the American Musicological Society and the Society for Music Theory; and a [joint 2015 Forum on applied ethnomusicology](#) with the International Council for Traditional Music in Limerick, Ireland. The Society is currently collaborating with the Music and Sound Interest Group of the American Anthropological Association on an [Anthropology of Sound Forum](#) to be held in conjunction with the SEM 2016 Annual Meeting. In addition, the Society has strengthened its [liaisons program](#) with other organizations, including newsletter reports on each other's meetings.

## **2. Increase Ethnomusicology's Contribution to Civic Life and Public Policymaking.**

### **Initiatives:**

- **Public Policy Sessions at Annual Meeting**

Organize at each SEM annual meeting a special session devoted to the relationship of music to a critical global issue, such as peace, health, education, economic development, and environmental stewardship. These sessions will also address action plans for affecting policymaking.

>SEM has organized the following special public policy sessions at its Annual Meeting: "Music and Public Policy: The Political Economy of Musical Labor" (2013); "Ethnomusicology and Public Policy: Intangible Cultural Heritage and Its Effects on and in the Field" (2014); and (currently planned) "Digital Freedoms and Rights for Music" (2015).

- **Partnerships with Nongovernmental Organizations**

Develop partnerships with NGOs that address issues affecting musicians, music traditions, and communities. Possibilities include organizations concerned with censorship, intellectual property rights, conservation of cultural heritage, cultural survival among indigenous peoples, health, and economic opportunities.

>To date, SEM has established no partnerships with NGOs. However, many of its individual members are actively engaged in applied projects.

## **3. Facilitate International Communication and Collaboration in Ethnomusicology.**

### **Initiatives:**

- **Global Conference Project**

Employ digital technologies to expand participation in the SEM annual meeting and develop a scholarly community that is globally inclusive, continually engaged, and ecologically sustainable. Explore the use of videoconferencing, online forums, wikis, and other interactive technologies to facilitate international communication and collaboration during the annual meeting and throughout the year.

>Through arrangements with Indiana University Collaboration Technologies, SEM has been [video-streaming](#) selected program sessions at its Annual Meeting since 2011. These streams are available in open-access live and archived formats to viewers throughout the world.

- **SEM Translation Series**

Develop a new SEM Translation Series to increase communication in ethnomusicology across language barriers. This series will include volumes of translations into and from English.

>During Fall 2015 SEM will launch (in collaboration with Indiana University Libraries' Scholarly Communications) [Ethnomusicology Translations](#), a peer-reviewed, open-access online serial for the publication of ethnomusicological literature translated into English. In 2016 the Society will publish a book of translations through the University of Illinois Press: *A Latin American Music Reader: Views from the South*.

- **Travel Stipends Fund**

Establish a fund to support travel of ethnomusicologists from outside the U.S./Canada to the SEM annual meeting.

>SEM initiated an Annual Meeting Travel Fund in 2012. At present, four [International Awards](#) of \$1,000 each are offered annually to presenters outside the U.S./Canada and two [North American Awards](#) of \$500 each to underemployed presenters from the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Central America, or the Caribbean.

#### **4. Strengthen K-12, Undergraduate, and Graduate Education in Ethnomusicology.**

##### **Initiatives:**

- **Teacher-Training Programs for K-12 World Music Education**

Collaborate with university music education programs and other organizations to develop new teacher-training programs for K-12 world music instruction, so as to increase efforts on cultural diversity in music education for children and youth.

>In conjunction with each SEM Annual Meeting, the Education Section holds a workshop for local K-12 teachers, organizes a "Day of Ethnomusicology" for local high school students, and presents an offsite workshop at a local middle school. In addition, members of the Education Section collaborate directly with Smithsonian Folkways to present K-12 teacher-training workshops at universities around the U.S.

- **Summer Institute in Ethnomusicology**

Develop an ongoing Summer Institute series with institutions in the U.S. and abroad that addresses diverse music topics in support of undergraduate humanities education. Institutes will be interdisciplinary in topics, faculty, and participants.

>SEM collaborated with Wesleyan University in 2011 to hold a Summer Institute, titled "[Ethnomusicology and Global Culture](#)," for college/university professors from several disciplines. Funding was provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

- **21<sup>st</sup> Century Fellowship Fund**

Increase the assets of SEM's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Fellowship Fund to permit the award of one or more annual dissertation writing fellowships to students in ethnomusicology.

>In 2013 SEM began awarding an annual [21<sup>st</sup> Century Fellowship](#) of \$5,000 to support dissertation fieldwork in ethnomusicology.