



YAM BLACKBOARD MUSIC PROJECT

YAM – You need trust!



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Content

1	Introduction	3
1.1	Summary	3
1.2	Approach	4
1.3	Partners	5
1.4	Timeline	5
1.5	Background	5
1.6	Aims and objectives	6
2	Methodology	8
3	Activities and places	9
3.1	YAMsession	9
3.1.1	Participants	10
3.1.2	Producers' Forum	11
3.1.3	Showcases and musicians	15
3.1.4	Talks	17
3.1.5	Panels and speed sessions	18
3.1.6	YAMawards ceremony	19
3.1.7	Communication and media	19
3.1.8	YAMsession overall	20
3.2	National showcases	21
3.3	Partner meetings	22
3.4	Speed sessions	23
4	Communication and promotion	24
4.1	YAMspace website	26
5	Project management and cooperation	28
6	Challenges and obstacles	30
7	Outputs, impacts and benefits	32
7.1	Contacts and network	32
7.2	Capacity building and audience development	33
7.3	Internationalisation, mobility and exchange	35
7.4	Legitimacy and quality assesment	37
7.5	Research	38
7.6	Overall project expectations	39
8	Concluding questions and future focus	41

Introduction

YAM – you need trust! is an evaluation report reviewing the activities and achievements of the **Blackboard Music Project 2014-2016** (BbMP).

1.1 Summary

The Blackboard Music Project is an international development and exchange project aimed at increasing the quality and quantity of professional Young Audiences Music (YAM) concerts around Europe running from October 2014 to December 2016. Ten organisations in eight different European countries are partners in the project with Jeunesses Musicales International as the umbrella organisation of which the nine other partners are members. Levende Musik i Skolen, Aarhus, Denmark is the lead partner. BbMP is co-financed by EU's culture programme Creative Europe 2014-2017.

The main objectives of the project have been to strengthen the international network, to share expertise and knowledge and to promote the international exchange of concerts for children and youth. All of this has been done through a series of activities including three YAMsessions (see details below) and five national showcases/festivals all over Europe: from Umeaa, Sweden in the North to Zagreb, Croatia in the South.

More than 200 high class YAM concerts have taken place performing for almost 8000 children and approximately 1700 industry professionals in Croatia, Finland, Denmark, France, Norway, Sweden and Belgium. Each partner has sent between one and three productions abroad to perform at a YAMsession or national showcase, and a total of 24 YAM productions have been exchanged across borders paving the road for increased mobility among YAM productions in the years to come.

The main focus and achievement of the project, however, has been the network and exchange of ideas, concepts and approaches to different aspects of YAM among producers and organisers in the field. This has primarily taken place at the three YAMsessions, of which YAMsession 2014 in Sweden was the first. Since then YAMsession has been established as *the* annual international event for creative professionals working in the field of young audiences development.

YAMsession includes showcases of the best young audiences productions from Europe and the world; a dynamic producers forum with live producing; thought provoking presentations and discussions from international speakers and the YAMawards ceremony announcing the world's best music productions for young audiences.

Additionally, the five national showcases in France, Belgium, Denmark and Finland have all had a delegation of partners visiting, allowing them to meet on a regular basis and to develop and discuss different models and approaches to YAM, and not least to experience how the different partner organisations organise, produce, and present YAM concerts.

A key component throughout the project has been the sharing of best practices, training videos, interviews, work models, articles etc. In this, the young audiences music platform YAMspace.org, launched in September at YAMsession 2015 in Croatia, is the main vehicle. Aside from featuring news and events, the website has incorporated a major LEARN section (digital toolkit) with video material – each YAMsession has produced a series of videos with talks, short documentaries and interviews – articles, research and much

more, as well as a closed forum where producers and organisers can discuss different aspects and ideas in a professional environment. The YAMspace website provides a solid base for finding new inspiration, knowledge and relevant information for all YAM professionals – or anyone wanting to know more about YAM - around Europe and abroad.

All of this has reinforced the establishment of a professional and strong international YAM field and network that embrace large and small organisations across cultures. New initiatives have been started in countries with limited means; new collaborations and exchanges across borders take place as a result of the project.

1.2 Evaluation approach

This evaluation report has been created on the basis of quantitative evaluation forms sent to all producers, musicians and partners taking part in the project activities as well as qualitative interviews with music groups, producers, partners and testimony from people outside the partner circle.

The aim was to get an overview of how partners, participants and musicians have experienced the project activities. Special focus will be placed on YAMsessions and YAMspace as the primary outputs of the project, but also the value of participating in several national showcases and experience how many different organisations approach organising and producing YAM concerts.



1.3 Partners

Levende Musik i Skolen (LMS), Denmark (Project Lead)
Jeunesses Musicales International (JMI)
Jeunesses Musicales Croatia (JMC), Hrvatska Glazbena Mladez
Jeugd en Muziek Vlaanderen (JMV), Belgium
Jeunesses Musicales Wallonie-Bruxelles (JMWB), Belgium
Konserttikeskus, Finland
Jeunesses Musicales France (JMF)
Jeunesses Musicales Macedonia (JMM)
Rikskonsertene, Norway
Jeunesses Musicales Sverige (JMS), Sweden.
Jeunesses Musicales Serbia was initially included as an associated partner.

1.4 Timeline

- November 6-8th, 2014 YAM Session, Umeå, Sweden + partner meeting
- January 10-11th, 2015 Showcase JMFrance, Paris, France + partner meeting
- April 4th, 2015 JMV Showcase, Antwerp, Belgium + partner meeting
- September 14-16th, 2015 YAM Session, Zagreb, Croatia + partner meeting (with evaluation)
- Launch of project website: YAMspace.org
- October 25-27th, 2015, LMS Musiki Tide Festival, Billund, Denmark+ partner meeting
- December 8-16th 2015. Exchange of concert tour, JMF: Festival Tout'Ouie, Paris
- March 9-11th, 2016, Showcase Konserttikeskus, Finland + partner meeting
- April, 13-14th 2016 JMWB Showcase, Belgium + partner meeting
- October 25-27th, 2016, YAM Session, Larvik, Norway + partner meeting (with evaluation)
- Launch of website forum

1.4 Background

The project was initiated by the “Young Audiences Music Committee” of Jeunesses Musicales International (JMI) who wanted to work towards increased international cooperation, capacity building and exchange to give the YAM field a general lift in terms of quality, quantity and visibility - nationally as well as internationally. In a survey between Young Audiences organisations worldwide from 2010, there was a clear indication that YAM producers were working rather isolated in most countries and wanted more contact, inspiration, competence building etc.

Additionally, the Scandinavian countries had been working together in NNS (Nordic Network for School concerts) for a number of years with very good results, and some of the experience gained in that cooperation (e.g. the Producers’ Forum model) was thought useful to implement in a European context.

In this context the YAM Committee identified key points of development required in the field of YAM productions:

1. Accessibility: YAM programs are not available in all European countries, and in those countries in which they do exist, not all young people have access to them.
2. Mobility: YAM activities/productions are largely restricted to the national borders.
3. Structural: the YAM field has to date no systematic capacity building program in any country.

1.6 Aims and objectives

The overall aim of the project has been to increase the quantity as well as the quality of concerts for young audiences in the participating countries and improve the possibilities for the exchange of concerts between the European countries/regions.

In that context, the following objectives were identified in the project Cooperation Agreement and Project Description:

- To create a relevant, strong and well-functioning communication platform and network for YAM producers, organisers and experts.
- To invest in sustainable practices that ensure the lasting impact of the activities by collecting existing knowledge, evaluating and channelling it into a European 'best practice' toolkit for producers and all working within the field with examples, recommendations and inspiration for improvement.
- To strengthen the competences and capacity of producers,
- musicians and organisers across Europe in the YAM field to better address their target groups.
- To present YAM productions in countries other than that of their country of origin.
- To identify areas in which research projects could be developed e.g. the possible national differences in the reception of music (school concerts) of the young audiences etc.
- To facilitate development programs for members of the ten organisation to strengthen their competence e.g. in the field of producing for young audiences, evaluation procedures for ensuring high quality in the programming, effective tour scheduling etc.

Through the education and coaching of producers/organisers and the capacity building among these:

- to disseminate best practices in young audiences and augment the expertise among the parties involved.
- to identify and promote cutting-edge music productions dedicated to young audiences as well as families.
- to give children and young people in Norway, France, Denmark, Croatia, Belgium, Sweden, Macedonia, Finland as well as Serbia, the associated partner, the opportunity to experience live music performed by high quality musicians from the countries/regions involved.
- to create awareness of cultural differences as well as universal means in young audience productions in order to promote and facilitate international exchange and thus reach new audiences.
- to develop new models of music communication to young audiences through linking the best of qualities from all parties involved.

Additionally, an audience development strategy was incorporated in the project description (shortened version)

...Audience development in BbMP will be approached from two angles: 1) with the aim of widening the target audience, 2) with the aim of deepening the relationship with the target audience. In both cases the focus on networking, capacity building and the formal education of producers and organisers in the field is a deliberate strategy enabling the producers and the organisers to be the gateway to reaching the millions of school children around Europe.

- 1) *The possibilities for widening are naturally very large within the target audience. The situation of each of the partners differs greatly and by introducing a variety of 8 different countries representing northern, central and southern/eastern Europe, we hope to gain the maximum effect of capacity building: the interaction and networking among the partners (see activities) will result in a general*

internationalisation and shared knowledge of new and existing methods of approaching, organising and financing YAM productions.

- 2) *The second aim will be approached in much the same way as the first. Here, however, the producer is the most prominent figure as the mediator between the artist and the target audience. The producer has expert knowledge in the musical as well as the educational world, and it is his/her job to use this knowledge to help the artists reach their audience.*

The Producers' Forum especially will set the frame for discussing practical issues, and the best practice toolbox on the project website will present the results of these discussions to the benefit of not only the partner organisations and countries, but to all countries in Europe and further abroad.

Moreover, all partners in the beginning of the project filled in a "Challenges and Expectations" form (see appendix for summary) to use as a working tool for the project management.

As a direct consequence, we have had additional focus on legitimisation, budget cuts, assessment of quality and the importance of the international work and how to communicate it locally/nationally.

The project aims and objectives were presumed to be met through a series of activities, which is described and evaluated in the following section. All activities were carried out more or less according to plan. Two showcases were switched and one of them changed into an additional YAMsession. Furthermore, an exchange tour was added as a Danish YAMproduction and winner of the YAMawards 2013 was booked as a consequence of their performance at YAMsession 2014 to play five concerts during the French Festival Tout'Ouïe co-organised by project partner JMFrance.

Many of the before mentioned objectives and aims are not easily measurable, and our approach to evaluating the project has therefore been to evaluate the activities and outputs from the perspective of the activity organisers and the producers/organisers and musicians, the primary target groups addressed in the project. How have these target groups experienced the quality of the activities, and what have the benefits been of their participation in the activities. This has been done through specific questions about the activities and additional questions related to specific themes. One of the focal points of the project has been on the role of the YAM producer as a gatekeeper having access to the benefits of the capacity building and networking in the project activities and being able to "spread" that knowledge and best practice to musicians and children.



Methodology



This report focuses mainly on the content and quality of the project activities and cooperation, and to what degree the aforementioned aims and objectives have been met.

The following evaluations have taken place during the project period:

In December 2014 the partners filled in a “Challenges and Expectations” form for the project lead to get an overview of the partners’ point of departure.

At YAMsession 2015, half way through the project activities, an interim project evaluation was done among the partners, of which 7 answers (out of 10) were received.

After the last activity in the project programme (November 2016), three separate themed questionnaires (to be completed on the project web-based platform PODIO) were sent to approximately 60 people (27 performing musicians - primarily YAMsession musicians; 34 producers from in and outside the partner circle; and 10 partners) who had taken part as organisers, producers and musicians in one or more of the project activities. A total of 35 responses were received, which is to be considered a good result, 9 of them being the partners who are considered the key group as they have participated in more activities. The partners consist of both producers and organisers.

Additionally, 4 qualitative interviews took place at YAMsession 2016: two partners, one music group who had performed at two YAMsessions and one organisation from without the partner circle.

And finally, separate quantitative evaluations have been done for YAMsessions 2015-2016, which have received 18 answers in 2015 and 13 in 2016.

All questionnaires contained a rating from 1 to 5 with 1 corresponding to the worst and 5 to the best. All averages mentioned in the evaluation are based on this system. All of the above mentioned material along with the video documentaries produced for the project website and the views of the project lead have been used as a basis for the analysis done in this report.

Activities and places



3.1 YAMsession

“The YAMsessions have been a very important professional asset for me during the run of this project. I have expanded my number of professional contacts from a mostly Scandinavian to a more international scope, and have definitely gained a lot of insight in the many different ways concerts for children are being presented and produced in the different member countries. In particular, the producers forums with ‘the work in progress’-production work with two producers from two different countries working with a local music group over a few days during each YAMsession have been very valuable and highly inspiring high points every time.” Producer, Denmark

YAMsession is the annual international event for creative professionals working in the field of Young Audiences Music development and was initiated as part of the project (a minor pilot session was held in 2013 testing the format). The idea behind was to create a forum and a format which would be attractive to all professionals in the field: musicians, programmers, producers, bookers, organisers etc.

YAMsessions combine network and competency development - professionals in the field meet and share their experiences and ideas in both formal and informal fora to strengthen and build the YAM network and to promote and exchange high class YAM productions. As the different producers and organisers in the various countries in the network often work relatively alone, it is essential to get them to meet across borders to reach these objectives. Similarly time and money for travelling is limited for all, and it was therefore considered important to create an event with several ways of attraction to create the critical mass needed to provide the desired outcome.

A YAMsession includes: producers' forum; a range of the best young audiences music showcases from around Europe selected by an artistic committee; presentations from international researchers and speakers; a panel discussion taking up relevant aspects within the field; and the YAMawards ceremony, announcing the world's best music productions for young audiences.

Originally two YAMsession were planned during the project period, one taking place in Northern Europe and one in Southern Europe to allow for as many participants from different parts of Europe to participate. Due to a change in the project period, a third YAMsession was included transforming what was meant to be a Norwegian national showcase to YAMsession 2016 in Larvik, Norway.

With the general elements in the YAMsession described below it has turned out to be attractive for producers and organisers to participate. Also musicians appear to be increasingly attracted to YAM.

3.1.1 YAMsession participants

The primary YAMsession participants consist of producers, organisers, bookers and musicians. Depending on the hosting organisation/country and their network, additional participants such as culture workers, municipality representatives, teachers, culture schools representatives etc. may also participate.

In 2014, a total of 109 professionals attended. Of these 33 were international guests representing 10 different European countries. Approximately 100 Swedish children experienced the concerts - primarily the international concerts which were public.

In 2015, 55 professionals and 40 artists and YAMaward nominees were part of the YAMsession in Zagreb. 14 different countries were represented and in addition to this, around 350 Croatian children from local schools experienced the different showcases.

In 2016, 200 participants and 70 musicians (20 international and 50 Norwegian) participated. Of the participants, 55 were international delegates representing 12 different countries around Europe. 550 children from local schools in Larvik, Norway experienced the various concerts. Among the international guests, the primary reasons for joining were 1) network, 2) professional input, 3) inspiration and 4) looking for new concerts (rated in that order).

3.1.2 YAMsession Producers' Forum

The Producers' Forums is a training session that lasts two to three days and allows professionals to meet with a focus on practical and theoretical elements of concert production for young audiences. At the basis of the Producers' Forum is a learning-by-doing approach. Two experienced producers from two different countries and traditions and a group of musicians with potential for young audience music concerts are the key players of the forum.

- The forum opens with an unproduced concert giving the musicians opportunity to present their own ideas of a young audiences concert.
- The concert is followed by a session (without the musicians) where the two producers are allowed to introduce ideas and approaches to the coming work with the musicians, and the producers in the audience are invited to share suggestions, point of view etc.

- Afterwards, the two selected producers work with the musicians on their concert format for two whole days, while the audience attend the other YAMsession activities.
- Once during YAMsession the two producers are invited to share how the work is progressing and answer any questions from the audience.
- The forum ends with the co-produced concert performance followed by a final session which includes the musicians. The working producers and the musicians relate how the collaboration has worked, what challenges they encountered, reflections on the process etc., and the audience joins the discussion to give feedback, further suggestions or other. In this manner different topics on producers' work are approached, depending on what is relevant in the production and what has challenged the process.

Originally, the idea was to have more producers than the two working with the production involved in the presentation, but as YAMsession became a larger joint event, it was decided to keep the session open allowing all participants to attend the Producers' Forum sessions. This means that not only producers, but also other musicians, organisers and other with interest in the producing process can benefit and gain inspiration from the open forum.

"There's always a lot to learn from a dynamic production process and this process is about giving [the artists] the tools to create a better concert program, but it's also about bringing producers together from two different cultures, from two different production traditions, from two different perspectives on the stage and seeing how they meet each other, how they work together and trying to bring that into other areas to improve our productions, because the future for us is to be able to meet other producers from other countries that have other ways they think about childhood, other ways they think about art, other ways they think about music, and finding ways that we can work together and enrich each other". Scott Rogers, Rikskonsertene, Norway



The three YAM sessions have introduced expert producers from six different countries, each time having one producer from Scandinavia and one from the rest of Europe to join two sets of approaches and traditions. In Umeaa in 2014 a French and a Norwegian producer worked together, in Zagreb, Belgium and Sweden were represented, and in Larvik the producer team consisted of a Dutch and a Finnish producer.

The music groups being produced have been a Swedish acapella quartet with roots in the Swedish folk tradition (2014), a Croatian classical string quartet (2015) and a Norwegian classical chamber music trio of vocal, piano and clarinet (2016). All three groups were chosen for their musical excellence and all three with an interest in performing for young audiences.

The Producers' Forum format as described in the above has been the point of departure in all three forums: an introductory unproduced concert followed by debates on the first day of the YAMsession; a follow up in the middle; and the co-produced concert followed by a debate as the YAMsession finale. In 2015, however, there had been a misunderstanding in terms of notifying the musicians properly, and producers and musicians therefore only had four hours together to work on the second concert as opposed to two days.

In 2016 the forum format differed slightly as the discussion after the first concert did not take place due to misunderstandings among the organisers, and the final discussion similarly was shorter than originally intended.

The three forums have shed light on a range of key topics within the production of YAM concerts.

"Trust the music" as opposed to focus on props/costumes; let the musicians do what they do best (a musician who is not an actor or a story teller should not act or tell stories); the going against traditions inherent in the classical music genre (such as the placement of the musicians, introduction to instruments, music history, the use of note stands etc.); and the importance of giving the children a personal and close impression of the musicians and the music:

"we shouldn't be that afraid of breaking old traditions, because in this case you can really see how the audience goes into the music in a totally different way; when they come close to the musicians, they see the note stand, they will be part of the music in another way." Producer, 2015.

The latter perspective made a great impression on the musicians: *"We became aware of a new entity, which develops during the live performance. This connection with the audience. We were not really aware of it before, because we would always worry about our performance abilities - how we would do something or not do. Now we can be more relaxed and give more to the audience. We can now feel more connected to the audience."* Musician, 2015

Similarly different innovative experiments in terms of stage set up, placement of audience, use of camera and placement and movements of musicians have been shown and discussed. Always maintaining the focus on the music and the space created between children and the musicians. *"What happens between the [children] and the musicians that's what it's about"* Producer, 2015.

The forums have outlined different aspects of the role a producer can have in a YAM production. *"They are fantastic musicians ... The only thing I would like to discover with them is what is the best set-up... how can they share their music with young audiences without explaining it."* Producer, 2015.

From the perspective of the musicians, the advantages of being produced for the first time were clear: *“It was all really new for us and really exiting. We completely changed our concept when performing for children.(...) It opened so many different possibilities”*. Musicians 2015

As a response to whether or not they could feel a change in the young audience before and after their work with the two international producers, the answer was unambiguous:

“There was a really dramatic effect on the [young] audience – and on us also. We remember especially one high school boy who attended this performance in Croatia, and he said that he didn’t like to listen to classical music concerts, but if classical music and concerts were more like this, he would like to attend it more. So it was a great compliment to us, and of course to the producers.” Musician, 2015

Despite the cultural and thematic background of the producers and musicians, the collaboration in all three forums has worked incredibly well *“the fact that we can collaborate across borders, I think that’s an amazing experience”*, producer 2014. This was especially relevant in Zagreb due to the limited time. *“It was so new: interacting with the audience and more communication. It was really a great experience”* Musician, 2015. In all three forums, it has also been clear that a successful outcome is very dependent on the musicians being open minded and flexible. It takes a lot of courage for musicians to dare throw aside old habits and experiment with new approaches, especially when it’s done in such a short space of time.

Approximately 30-35 producers have participated in each forum, a combination of younger as well as older experienced producers, from Sweden, Macedonia, Norway, Austria, Denmark, Croatia, Belgium, Finland, Portugal, Estonia and Iceland. The producers’ forums have been open sessions in the YAMsession program, allowing all interested YAMsession participants and musicians to take part and benefit from discussion in the process.

At all three forums, a video crew has followed the producers and musicians resulting in short documentaries giving insight in the working process and the reflections of the producers and the musicians. The 2014 and 2015 documentaries can be found on YAMspace.org. The 2016 documentary was at the creation of this report still in the making.

In the partners’ evaluation of YAMsession 2014, the producers’ forum was highlighted as the peak experience of YAMsession, which received an overall average of 4 out of 5.

From the organisers’ perspective, the producers’ forum was a great success, and this was also confirmed by the general feedback during and after the event.

In 2015, the reactions to the co-produced concert from the audience were even more enthusiastic: *“The transformation from the concert you gave us yesterday to today is just mindboggling!”* producer in audience 2015 (documentary). The success of the forum was also reflected in the YAMsession evaluation in which the producers’ forum reached an average of 4,6. It was described as a *“real eye-opener for audience and musicians; simple but interesting changes that more than doubled the musical impact”*; *“Absolutely outstanding. The metamorphosis of the quartet was amazing and done in a really short time”*.

In 2016, the international participants rated the personal output and the format of the forum an average of 3,7, the majority rating a 4 or a 5: *“So inspiring and a real energy boost”*.

However, the lower rating compared to the previous year was apparently caused by the structure of the forum primarily:

“The structure of presenting the Producers’ Forum was sort of haphazard. We should have a pre-interview with the performers and producers right after the first presentation, an update from the producers during the course of the day, and a post-interview after the final performance. We had some of this, but the format was unclear for participants who had not been involved in a YAM producers’ forum before”.

Moreover, it was pointed out that the expectations were very high after the 2015 forum, which showed two concerts that were incredibly different in format and approach.

In 2016 the same group of children were in the audience to the first and last concert (aged 10 to 12) and after the last concert they were asked about their views upon the two concerts. They preferred the second concert, but since this dialogue took place in Norwegian, and was not planned originally and structured accordingly, this is definitely a point of development for future forums.

“The Producers’ forum really shows the importance of producers for young audiences musicians/performers and the impact. Through common reflections the process inspires and stimulates continued improvement and growth” Partner

From a project perspective, the producers’ forum has proven a successful format. The fact that we were able to have two instead of three was a great advantage in the process of shaping the format through different circumstances. The format now stands clear but still flexible and will surely be used in YAMsessions over the coming years. The corner stone is peer-to-peer learning qualified with inputs from researchers and other experts. This makes it highly relevant for the participants who find it attractive to spend time and money this way. The evidence of many eye-opening moments shows how the producers’ forum process leads to improved quality of YAM productions, which is the actual goal of the program.



3.1.3 YAMsession showcases and musicians

The idea behind the YAMsession showcases was to introduce a forum where high class YAM productions from different countries were presented and promoted.

For the first major YAMsession in Umeaa, 2014, the 20 showcase concerts consisted of mainly Swedish productions. Three international productions were presented as part of the program from Denmark, Norway and Spain. The showcases introduced a variety of different concerts for different age groups within a range of genres: from Sami joik to Jewish Klezmer to Flamenco and West African djembe; from contemporary opera to variété to experimental music.

In the evaluation, it was commented that the concerts only represented Scandinavian organisations (aside from one Spanish production), and for an international event there should have been more European countries represented.

From the organisers point of view, the planning of the first YAMsession took place in the initiation of the project, and some of the YAMsession ideas – e.g more international productions - were not realizable at that stage.

After Umeaa, the YAMsession format has been established as a setup with five to six high-class internationally adapted productions representing different organisations and countries. These are selected by an artistic jury of Blackboard partners and local organisers. In addition to this, the hosting organisation/country will present one or more concerts, depending on their resources and organisation. On that account, the YAMsessions may differ in size, YAMsession 2015 in Zagreb had a total of ten showcased concerts over two days, whereas YAMsession 2016 over three days presented 27 full concert including five shorter concerts that took place as part of the Spot on program (a feature of the Norwegian host in which tastes of new ideas or new productions were introduced and discussed).

In the participants evaluation the 2015 showcases were rated an average of 4,0. They were described as having “*high quality*”, while a few were commented to be less convincing or “*poorly adapted*”. In 2016 the average remains 4. Of these, however, one has an average of 2,3 and therefore lowers the rate considerably for the remaining five productions, which are rated between 3,9 and 4,6. Additionally, it was pointed out by the participants that a variety in genre and age-group is an asset, and furthermore smaller group sizes can an advantage in terms of being attractive for touring in other countries.

YAMsession has so far only introduced productions from within the partner circle, and all partners except one have sent one or more productions to the three YAMsessions in the project period. In addition, BbMP has helped ensure a balance between the nationalities of the participating musicians/productions (in 2015 and 2016). This meant for instance that the Norwegian partner assisted the Croatian partner in terms of getting a production ready to send to YAMsession 2016 in Norway, by sending a Norwegian producer to work with the Croatian musicians in a workshop which took place a month before YAMsession 2016.

“It is wonderful to experience the seriousness about YAMsession - that playing school concerts are seen from theoretical and academic angles also” Musician, 2014.

From the point of view of the musicians, they are generally very positive towards their participation in YAMsession. The overall experience is rated an impressive 4,5, the answering rate being 8 out of 15 asked productions (counting the international programs only).

“It was great to be a musician at YAMsession – thank you.” Musician, YAMsession 2016.

The answers are divided as follows:

YAMsession 2014:	1 (Denmark)
YAMsession 2015:	2 (Denmark, Finland)
Ysession 2016:	5 (Denmark, Finland, France and Belgium)

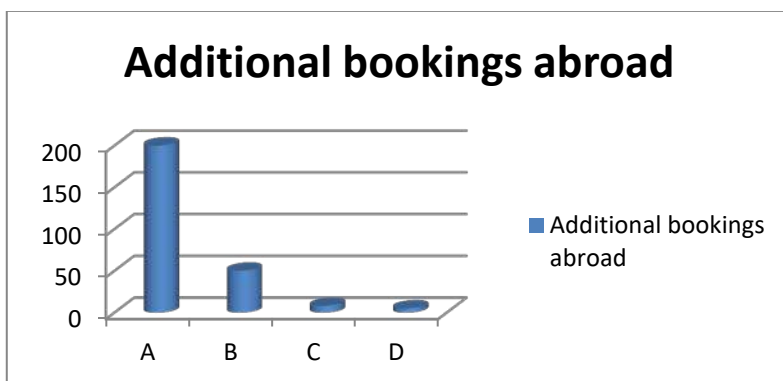
It can be argued that groups being less content with their outcome of the session would be less inclined to evaluate, and a point of critique from a partner has also been expressed on behalf of the musicians: *“We were frustrated that no discussion has been held with the professionals at the end of the showcase”* partner YAMsession 2015. Similarly, it has been pointed out that the musicians should be more involved during a YAMsession and it has been suggested for example that each showcase could have a pair of international producers talk with them afterwards (interim project evaluation). The YAMsession format is under constant development, and on the basis of this evaluation, we’re looking at how to accommodate the wishes from the musicians.

The overall response remains positive, though, and among the advantages pointed out is the opportunity to experience and get inspired by other YAM productions:

“it’s always good to see other bands perform - it gives a lot of inspiration” Musician, YAMsession 2016. This aspect is further elaborated in the qualitative musician interview: *“In our country we really don’t do this kind of thing. To see this is like another universe opening. I mean, it’s really great. It’s a shame that so many things are happening at the same time, because you want to be everywhere.”* Musician, YAMsession 2016

The main advantage in being part of YAMsession from a musicians’ perspective, however, is the demand. *“Generally, it is really attractive as a musician to be on YAM due to the demand. The more people from different countries the better.”* Musician, YAMsession 2014.

Yet, the demand naturally differs depending on the production. In the musicians’ evaluations, of the 8 answers received, 4 productions (A,B,C and D) have received between 5 and 200 additional bookings in other countries, some have tours in the planning, but the final number of concerts were not yet finalized), while 3 point out that at the time of the evaluation, it was still too soon to say.



From the perspective of the participants, when asked what productions they would be willing to book from YAMsession 2015, 2 productions had one vote, 3 had 2 votes, 1 had 3 votes and 1 had 8 votes.

In 2016, the participants answer that they have been or consider getting in touch with 3 of the 6 international productions and in addition to this five of the Norwegian productions.



3.1.4 YAMsession talks

"The inclusion of researchers in the YAM (especially those who present well) is an important part of building a stronger seriousness in the field." Partner, Norway.

The overall idea behind the YAMsession talks has been to establish a relation between relevant research and the practical YAM work, in order to strengthen a serious foundation in the field, and to give the YAM participants new ideas, insight and tools for legitimation. The idea was to apply a short, inspiring and easily accessible format to introduce relevant research: 20 minutes of talk followed by a 10 minute discussion.

The different YAMsession talks have been primarily research based, but have also included presentations of different YAM projects taking place within the partner organisations, and musicians bringing in different perspectives on performing for young audiences.

The talks have touched upon areas such as the significance of cultural identity in the perception of music; the significance of strong experiences with music in school settings; how young audiences perceive music at different ages and the role of empathy and music in a digital setting. The speakers have represented eight different countries around the globe and introduced research from universities in seven different countries.

At the first YAMsession in Umeaa, three international and one Swedish speakers were programmed along with three introductions of Swedish projects working with music and children. The feedback received from

the participants was that the YAMsession program was too full, and therefore, YAMsession2015, introduced fewer sessions with talks – a total of four of which two were research based.

The YAMsession 2015 speakers were rated a 3,5 average, some being high-lighted while others were considered less relevant.

In 2016, two international speakers were introduced. This was an estimate on behalf of the organisers. The Norwegian host introduced a larger number of showcases and to avoid the program being too full, we settled on two international speakers.

The rating of the two speakers were very high with an average of 4,4 and 4,8. It should be noted, however, that other activities took place simultaneously, and fewer people therefore might have attended the talks as opposed to the Zagreb program where only one activity happened at the time.

In general, depending on the individual interests in the audience, it will be difficult to find a topic relevant for all, and as Michel Hogenes also mentions in his independent sheet (appendix A), not all YAMsession participants have equal interest in the academic aspects of the field. It has become clear, however, that the ability to present and communicate research, and how it can be applied practically, is of paramount importance in a non-academic YAM environment.

3.1.5 YAMsession panels and speed sessions

The panel debate has been another fixed feature on the YAMsession program. The idea behind was to have a range of experts within the YAM field to elaborate on different topics within the YAM field with comments and opinions from the audience.

In Umeaa the panel consisted of concert directors from two Scandinavian organisations, and an artistic producer from France.

At YAMsession 2015, it was agreed to have the invited speakers be part of the panel along with the project researcher Michel Hogenes who has been a part of all three YAMsessions, and a moderator to ask relevant questions that the panel had discussed in advance. This format received positive feedback and was therefore repeated at YAMsession 2016.

Overall, the panels have touched upon issues such as the ways children perceive music; the role of the child in YAM performances, the role of interaction in YAM productions etc.

The 2016 panel was rated a very satisfactory 4,3 average.

“I got lots of positive feedback on the discussion from both Norwegians and visitors from other countries”, Moderator, Norway. “The discussion was interesting – could have continued a bit longer – and it was brilliantly moderated.” Partner.

At YAMsession 2015, the **speed sessions model** was introduced, which had been developed at partner meetings/showcases in the spring, and it was continued at YAMsession 2016.

For details and evaluation of the speed session model, see page 23.

3.1.6 YAMsession YAMawards ceremony

"The [YAMawards] ceremony rose to a new level!" Partner, YAMsession 2016

One of the attraction points of YAMsession is awarding the best productions of the year for small ensembles, large ensembles and opera. The price is called YAMawards (Young Audiences Music Award) and has been handed out since 2008. It is a great asset for YAMsession that it has been possible to integrate it, and it very much helps to attract attention to the whole event. This in spite of that it only occupies a few hours of the total program. It is evident that many musicians and independent production companies are aware of this annual price, and of course it is of professional interest for producers and organisers to be presented for the top quality concert productions from around the world.



3.1.7 YAMsession communication and media

YAMsession has been the major source for the video production in the project, which have been featured regularly on the YAMspace website since its launch at YAMsession 2015.

At all three YAMsessions, a video crew has participated to film talks, concerts and make interviews with producers and organisers. For each YAMsession aside from the Producers' Forum documentary already mentioned, talks and interviews have been made, a YAMsession teaser (the latter was produced in 2014 only) etc.

For more details on the YAMspace website and the overall communication strategy, see the section on communication and website page 24

3.1.8 YAMsession overall

“As one of very few producers of concerts for children in Denmark, the possibility of going to YAMsessions in other European countries is a very direct and important way to expand your professional capabilities. At the YAMsessions and showcases you can see and hear concert productions from different countries and afterwards discuss the artistic approaches and results with colleagues from different countries. This has been a great source of inspiration for my daily work as a producer. Through these concert experiences and the feedback and ideas from the panels and especially the speed sessions (where a group of producers discuss different aspects of the concerts several times during the festival) I have gained creative energy, expanded my knowledge base and often found exciting new ideas for future production work.”

Overall, the feedback received on all three YAMsessions has been very positive: *“a concrete experience of cultural diversity. Very interesting live producing”*.

The partners overall YAMsession 2014 experience was rated an average of 4. The professional output of the YAMsession was also a 4 average and the high point of the session was clearly indicated to be the producers’ forum -the hands on work of the two international producers with the Swedish acapella quartet.

In 2015, the average rate was 4,2 with the producers’ forum as the favourite part. *“The YAMsession is continually improving in form and content” “The suggestions (Umeaa) have been heard for Zagreb”* Participant 2015.

At the final project YAMsession in 2016, the overall YAMsession experience was rated 4,3 and the YAMawards ceremony and the Spot on were highlighted as favourite aspects of the event.

When asked about the professional gains of the three YAMsessions taking place within the project, the average rate among the partners were 4,4 and among the producers also 4,4. *“I love this combination running from one project to the other and between speakers, meetings and eatings.”* Producer, Iceland.

Due to successful promotion of the YAM Sessions, we have succeeded in having people from countries outside the partner circle attend the YAM Sessions, and this has led to valuable contacts in countries such as Austria, Estonia, Portugal and Iceland (YAMsession 2017 will take place in Portugal). Also it has been a great help to have partners in the project with fewer YAM activities and their contribution has been valuable in terms of what can be done to bring YAM to countries/partners with few or no YAM activities.

Similarly the benefits of hosting a YAMsession are also considerable: *“YAMsessions have changed the way our network thinks about the work that we do. The YAMsession in Larvik, Norway has fundamentally changed the way Marked for Musikk [the second YAMsession 2016 Norwegian partner] approaches their whole showcase arrangement as a national event”*. Rikskonsertene Partner, Norway; *“It has widened our eyes and shown us how other countries produce for a young audience... and it gave us the opportunity to gain national attention (e.g. from the Minister of culture and other high ranking politicians)”*, Marked for Musikk, Cohost YAMsession 2016.

The Croatian cohost of YAMsession 2015 and project partner similarly expresses that the status of the organisation and the YAM concerts have risen as a consequence of hosting YAMsession 2015.

3.2 National showcases

The idea behind including the national showcases, most of which take place annually in the respective organisations, as part of the project activities had several functions. First and foremost to get the partners – producers, organisers and bookers - together for an event and meeting with enough content and volume to be attractive for all involved:

A range of YAM concerts to give basis for discussions and the sharing of ideas and inspiration; the opportunity to experience how concerts are presented, produced and organised in different countries and organisations; to get to know the different partner organisations; to create networking possibilities including formal and informal talks and discussions; to create a procedure for the exchange of YAM productions by having a minimum of one foreign production perform as part of all national showcases/festivals, and to have international visitors experience a range of different national productions in a local setting.

“The incredible aesthetic of the French productions really shook us up” Partner, Norway

It is important to emphasize that the national showcases are evaluated from the perspective of the output of the international participants; to what degree did the showcases encounters contribute to the overall aims of the project. On that basis, the format and quality of the showcases are not taken into consideration as this is the responsibility of the individual partner organisation, and relates to their local network and organisation and not to the project aims and objectives.

The showcases differed widely in format and size. Some showcases were primarily promotional and had a very large group of national professionals within the network of the hosting organisation -cultural workers, teachers, music school representatives, municipality representatives, bookers etc., which provided a solid basis for promoting the project and the international collaboration taking place (e.g. JMFrance showcase with 500 participants and, the JMWB showcase with 280 professionals) and no children in the audience; some showcases had a special focus on workshops (the JMV showcase which featured a different structure with only few YAM concerts followed by workshops); some showcases had a large number of children in the audience (e.g. the LMS Musik i Tide Festival 2015 - Europe’s largest festival for YAM concerts - that reached more than 3000 children in the local municipality and Korvat Kävelylle 2016 in Finland that introduced concert to 1200 children from local schools in the area).

At each of the national showcases, an international delegation between 9 and 14 delegates from the partner organisations have been present to experience the showcase.

At the interim evaluation, the partners rated the artistic output of the showcase participation an average of 3,8. *“Always interesting artistically, but not often relevant for our own tours (language/technical/financial)”*. The organisational output was rated an average of 3,7 *“We still know too little about one another as organisations”*. At the end of the project, the partners’ average had increased to a 4,6.

Among the producers the professional gains of attending the showcases at the end of the project were rated an average of 4,5 (based on 5 answers as only few producers participated in more showcases).

“I took part in the national showcases except one. Each in their own way gave good and inspiring insight in the different ways these countries work with concerts for young audiences, both on a musical and production level” Producer, DK

Furthermore, it can be mentioned that in connection with Musik i Tide festival 2015 in Denmark, a large research project took place “Billund builds Music” prior to and during the festival, in which children had to build their own music instruments. The project included all schools in Billund Municipality, and was a cooperation of the LEGO Foundation, Tufts University, Boston, US and the schools in Billund. This increased the international scope of the festival and consequently added to the promotion platform of the project both locally and internationally, but more importantly, it created a basis for a special ownership to the concerts which was interesting to witness. The children were generally more interested in the concerts after having built their own instruments.

3.3 Partner Meetings

Partner meetings were planned in connection with each project activity, meaning a total of eight, along with two additional preparation meetings for the YAMsessions 2015 and 2016.

The regular partner meetings have sustained a flow in the discussions and meant that we have been able to address more relevant topics.

“The showcases and partner meetings have given me information on good practices used elsewhere and more knowledge on the different aspects of our field and the situation in the other partner countries”.

At the second partner meeting, it was decided that each meeting in connection with a showcase or YAMsession should have an overall theme of artistic or organisational character. This means that themes such as how to best benefit from international corporation in times of transnational budget cuts within the cultural sector; development of the speed sessions model (for details, see the capacity building section); how to promote and reach countries with no or few YAM activities; quality assessment in YAM productions, research and advantages of the international cooperation have been approached and discussed during the project period.

Overall there has been general satisfaction with the outcome of the partner meetings.

The interim evaluation done in Zagreb in 2015 reached an average of 3,9 *“important for networking and understanding of the project.”* The average at the end of the project period was 4,6 (this rating was a combined showcase and partner meeting question). One partner thought *“they were interesting but not directly relevant for my everyday practice”* another would have preferred that they were fewer. The majority, however, rated the top grade 5 (6 answers out of 9).

“Meeting with the partners and experiencing the showcases with the audiences in the different countries was an eye-opener. We learned a lot about the producers, the musicians/performers and the audience”

From the project management perspective, overall, we have been more than satisfied with the outcome of the partner meetings. The general experience was that people were engaged, enthusiastic and dedicated. We had lots of more themes we would have liked to address, and the meeting agendas were always a full. Especially in the YAMsession meetings, it was of paramount importance to be efficient, because they were the only meetings which had all partners represented.

3.4 Speed Sessions

The development of the speed sessions model was initiated at the second national showcase in Belgium, April 2015. The model is meant to be a general tool for producers to talk about and go more into depth with the producing aspects of YAM productions. The sessions were introduced to the network as part of the program at YAMsession 2015 in Zagreb, and has since then been tested and developed at all project activities.

The basis of the model is that a small group of producers get together with a moderator and a note taker to talk about and share observations and ideas concerning producing and productions in a qualified forum after experiencing one or more concerts as a point of departure.

The session can be short and efficient or longer and go more into depth depending on the time frame. For more information about the model, see YAMspace.org.

Overall, the feedback from the sessions has been positive. In the interim evaluation, after YAMsession 2015, the average was 4 in terms of the professional output. To many it was a wonderful asset: *“Especially interesting are the BRIEFS [speed sessions] after the showcases – must be preserved by all means!”* Partner. *“Interesting and important. We need tools to work in a structured way”*; *“Speed sessions is a great new tool for analysing quality”*, others pointed out that not all groups had worked well.

The speed session groups in Zagreb were large (10-12 people) and we had kept them open for all YAMsession participants, which in some of the groups resulted in the discussions being less focused. As a result, the following sessions were aimed at producers only.



At YAMsession 2016, the shorter speed session format was tested in four groups with 5-6 producers in each. At this stage, there was not enough qualified moderators to make more groups, and therefore a number of Norwegian producers regrettably did not participate in the sessions. The rated average among the international producers that participated was 3,8. The mixed ratings (from 2 to 5) had two aspects: *“It is a very good idea and helps people connect, but it falls short of a way of sharing with everyone”* Producer, France; and the fact that the session was not an official part of the YAMsession program: *“We need to open up participation (first come, first served) and make the speed sessions a more conscious part of the YAM session”*. *“For me as a producer, my resources could have been used to a much higher level”*. Producer, Norway.

The organisers will have these problems in mind when planning the future YAMsessions, and the speed session format will continue to develop within the YAM network.

Communication and promotion

It was unanimously agreed that YAM (Young Audiences Music) should be used as an overall branding along with Blackboard Music Project in order to show that the activities were connected, a special YAM logo was developed and placed before the project's name i.e.: YAM Session, YAM Awards, YAM Blackboard Music Project, etc. This brand is easy on the tongue and easy on the eyes. It is not only an acronym for what it actually is but it also sounds like a children's word and immediately gives a feel both visually and verbally of what the subject is about.

BbMP has embraced a holistic communications approach with a specific focus on digital outreach and innovation. Its objectives were to create a digital hub for professionals involved in young audiences music to:

1. Receive information about the project and its various activities.
2. Provide an online resource centre (toolkit) for disseminating information and best practices around young audiences in Europe.
3. Stimulate discussion via an online forum space for musicians and producers of concerts for kids.

The BbMP targets a wide range of professionals working with young audiences and music within Europe. This group includes musicians, producers, educators and organisers. The aim of the project is to collect and expand on existing knowledge by creating a user friendly online environment where people have direct access to relevant info and where they feel safe to discuss professional issues.

Another large focus of the project's media output has been the production of a series of videos as a part of the online toolkit (see YAMsession communication section). These videos focus on mining the information gained at the various YAM sessions and showcase events. They are talks from guest speakers, intellectuals, producers and short documentaries around the producer's forum.

Lastly, a short animation film has been developed in order to promote the project as well as to raise general interest and awareness around young audiences music. The animation video aims to be very appealing to a general audience of young audiences "gatekeepers": parents, teachers, politicians and organizers. The video touches on the issues of access to culture a fundamental right for all children (UNESCO declaration), preserving cultural heritage (especially classical music, folk, and other European traditional forms of music), exposure to high quality music (that they wouldn't get elsewhere), inspire young people to learn/play music and the impact of live music experiences on self awareness, self esteem and confidence.

The BbMP has extensively used social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter to promote its various activities through regular posts as well as paid ads. Each web article of the toolkit is designed to be easily sharable on all social media and the project's branding strategy has done a lot to consolidate our social media presence. Vimeo has been utilised as an engine to drive the BMP's online video, handling delivery well on both mobile and desktop.

In terms of print communications, at every national showcase program booklets or programs have been distributed with information promoting the project.

Over the spring of 2015, the project lead decided not to produce the printed toolkit and accompanying DVD that were first planned. This decision was based on the changed conditions on how people seek info and find and watch video material. We found that a printed toolkit no longer made sense communication wise to effectively disseminate the results of the project. The fear was that a publication like that would end up in a drawer to collect dust, and additionally, it would be outdated very fast. DVDs were also identified as “soon to be extinct” and in fact could not contain all the video material that has been created during the project due to their restricted size limit.

On that account it was decided to make two smaller flyers to be targeted and distributed as a taste of what YAM is about and what can be found on the website/toolkit to get people to use these platforms; read articles, see videos etc. online instead.

In that manner we believe we distributed our resources better and spent more time on getting as much relevant info on the website as possible. In the end the online website/toolkit is the most important project output

The two folders (appendix) were printed and distributed at YAMsession 2016. They will also be distributed at the coming JMI annual assembly in Oslo (June 2017) as well as other international events that the network attends. They will distributed at national showcases taking place within the network and with and expected outreach of around 5000-10,000 people per year. The goal of the flyer is for a wider general public, to bring across some of the arguments around why children should be exposed to music at a young age. The second document is a project brochure that is aimed at music professionals who would like to get involved in young audience music development. It outlines the different elements of the program and how they can get involved. The principle aim is to drive people to the YAMspace website.

The project has sought to engage the media where-ever possible and enjoyed coverage on Croatian national television during the YAM Session 2015 and coverage twice on Norwegian television during YAMsession 2016 in Larvik.

General Timeline:

- Ongoing Social Media Promotion
- 8 Nov 2014: Production of the first series of videos
- Jan 2015 +: Onsite promotion at all showcase events.
- 15 Sep 2015: Official Launch of YAMspace.org
- 15 Sep 2015 video production at YAM Session in Zagreb
- Oct 2015-Jan 2016: Various site updates and focus on generating toolkit content.
- 1 Nov 2015: Production of a second series of videos
- Feb-August 2016: Development of online forum.
- October 27th 2016 launch of online forum
- November 2016 Production of third series of video productions including animation video.

Our branding strategy has been implemented via all accessible media channels: website, social, print, video, reinforcing consistent branding throughout. This has done well to establish YAM as a thought leader within the international young audiences field as well as provided it's activates with a quality seal that is immediately recognisable to the public.



4.1 YAMspace.org

“To me the YAMspace website has been one of the most important gains of the whole Blackboard-project. For a producer of concerts for children and youth this site has been a most welcome new portal to a wealth of accumulated practical and theoretical knowledge. The site represents an invaluable and ever expanding source of information, development and inspiration for all the many different aspects of production work in this field. In the toolbox-pages some of the foremost international producers of concerts for children share ideas, approaches, and 'best practice' based on often long and esteemed careers and experiences in this particular field, and thus provides a unique tool for professional and personal development as a producer and a very efficient way of keeping up with the latest trends and research. With its many instructive videos, interesting articles and well researched reports it also serves as an extremely useful tool for introducing new producers to the varied possibilities and approaches in the important work of creating the best possible high-quality concert experiences to the children. I sincerely hope that it will be possible to maintain and develop this site further in the future.” Producer, Denmark

The development of the YAMspace website was designed as an inclusive process whereby the project partners were involved as an intrinsic part of the creative process at several partner meetings. This was in order to create a site that was not only relevant to people working with young audiences and music but so to create ownership of the website by all parties. The style of the site was derived from a mix of inspirations, though a major influence has been *TED.com* due to the similarities in content and the type of audience the site wishes to attract.

The site's learning/resource center lies at the heart of its functionality and has been created as a beautiful, user-friendly environment to share and collect all intellectual information in and around young audiences and music. Today it is the no.1 go to site for any professional working in the field of young audiences, attract thousands of users every month. The site acts as an online library for policy makers, organizers, educators and musicians alike hosting a collection of unique and curated content. The unique content comes in the form of the videos that were "mined" during the project as well as other intellectual outputs (toolkit articles, research outcomes) that the project produced (the website has one or more articles published relating to the majority of the themes that have been discussed during the various partner meetings such as quality assessment, benefits of the international YAM cooperation/network, speed sessions, legitimacy). These can only be found on YAMspace and thus create a significant reason to visit the site. The curated content is a continuous process of research, discovery and dissemination. Here the partners share the information that informs and shapes their world with the world. This is important as young audiences music development is a relatively new field of study and work, and thus not a lot of material is available. We offer a platform on which knowledge can be built: "This is what is out there, and this is what still needs to be done", it is both a question and an answer, driving forward the European young audiences field as a whole.

YAMspace was launched in September 2015 at YAMsession in Zagreb. The content has developed ongoing since and new content is published every two to 3 weeks. Additionally, the website features YAM events; showcases and conferences as well as any relevant news happening in the field.

The site's forum has been a creative challenge to implement as the originally idea was to create an open forum for professionals working with music and young audiences. It was quickly brought to our attention during the first phase of the site's development by local producers that the info that they would like to share on the forum was of a highly sensitive nature. This meant that standard forum solutions would no longer suite our needs and that we would have to rethink this functionality. After some time, and some delay on our original planning, a solution has been discussed and implemented whereby only known producers may access the forum and where information can be shared only with certain groups or with the whole forum, giving users the kind of privacy that was requested.

All in all, we are very pleased with the outcome of the site. It provides a central point of dissemination for the project that will have a life much longer than just that of the grant. It has allowed the partners to consolidate their knowledge in one place, creating a new standard for the way European music organizations work with young audiences music development.

Among the partners, the website overall reached an average rating of 4,2. The majority of the partners thus remain very positive (seven partners out of nine rates either 4 or 5): *"Good for easier communication, exchange of ideas and communication with musicians"*

*"The website is in constant progress, and it is adjusting to all our needs, and that is a very good starting point for it to be used for more people."**"The website is a wealth of information and a great repository for all things surrounding young audience music development. I look forward to its future development."*

The comments also reflect that the website is a new tool within the YAM field, and there is still work to be done in terms of promotion and getting into the habit of using the site more actively. This is primarily caused by the delay in the YAMspace forum.

In terms of how the website is useful to the partners' work, the average is somewhat lower 3,6. Some find it really useful: *"It is a tool that works as a platform for collecting materials; using this tool to support exchange is fantastic"; "We have our own website for our production network, but it is focused mainly on our particular situation. I often refer producers to the YAM website as an example of the universality of many of the production concepts we talk about here in Norway. This strengthens the validity and "believability" of our own website."*

At the partner meeting in Larvik, it was also emphasised that the website forum will be really useful for producers coming from minor organisations or production companies that do not have the funding for international travel and participation.

The critique of the website comes from two angles. One partner noted that he/she would rate it higher when the forum became more active; another partner came with a more severe critique: *"TheYAMspace website is the weak part of the whole project: no real means have been given, so no real development has been possible until now. From what I felt, it is based for the moment on volunteer contributions, which is utopic given the lack of time everybody suffers, and the lack of habit that artists and producers have of putting into (correct) words their experience and ideas. Multimedia content is the ultimate goal, but requires real competence. Most of all, we need to be able to communicate a clearer sense of the PURPOSE of the site."* Partner. This is a critique we take very seriously, and resources have been allocated for content management in the future.

Among the producers, 11 out of 15 are familiar with the website, and the rating for its usefulness as a tool for their work is 3,6. Some use it actively, and refers the content to others, *"when I talk to musicians and they ask me: "what can we improve in our production?", I send the YAMspace link actually. And I say "read it, look it up and just get inspired". There is some very nice inspiration on it...There is a high approach to the scientific – a motivation to explore what's going on and how we can develop."* Others are aware of it, but have not used it actively: *"I have seen the website, but I seldom use it, only when I need info/dates/information".*



Project management and cooperation

The main part of the project management has taken place on the web-based communication platform PODIO. This has worked very well in terms of having all the project documents (project plans, procedure lists, minutes from meetings etc.) gathered in one place; of giving updates and messages that everyone can comment on, ask questions and describe different tasks.

At the second partner meeting in January 2015, it was decided that all communication from the Project Secretariat would take place on PODIO, and not via email (both had been used until then).

The use of PODIO as a project management tool was rated an average of 3,6 in the interim evaluation. The majority of the partners are very satisfied (grade 4 or 5), and a few consider it complicated in terms of finding the relevant information *"I find this system confusing" "difficult to navigate in, but very useful for information"*.

It has also become clear that the initiation of discussions on professional aspects of YAM and continuation of discussions from the partner meetings have proved more difficult for the partners to engage in. When we meet in person at the activities and partner meetings, people are 100 % dedicated, but contributions between activities are more limited, although they do occur.

A disadvantage, however, has been the change of different contact persons in the project, and in the end, the project coordinator has had to post on PODIO as well as sending mails to make sure that everyone got the relevant information (primarily because new contact persons entered the project at a late stage, or were substitutes, and therefore not properly introduced to the system).

Overall, the partners express satisfaction with the project management. The contact with the secretariat was rated 4,4 in the interim evaluation, and in terms of the information being useful and clear 4,1. In the final evaluation the overall project management was rated 4,5. *"It has been a great pleasure to work with the project coordinator"; "Everything was handled very professionally. The whole was coordinated with a lot of passion put into it as well. This motivates and drives the project"*.



Challenges and obstacles

With ten partners in eight different European countries covering a vast geographical area and diverse cultural backgrounds, languages and approaches to cooperation and organisation, naturally we have faced challenges and obstacles.

The project management has encountered different perceptions and understandings of different matters and problems: things that to us were very clear, turned out to be less clear for some of the partners. Written procedures and to-do lists were formed initially as part of an intro package to the project and adapted continuously. With eight different languages spoken, some misunderstandings will occur - although the English proficiency of the partners has been good. The lesson learned for the project coordinator has been that personal contact is extremely important. Meetings and calls must accompany written procedures. As a consequence, we've had extra individual meetings to explain and settle any misunderstandings with the assistance from Jeunesses Musicales International whose international expertise has been of great value.

In the end we have managed to settle all major issues, and from the perspective of the project team, the overall cooperation has been enriching and rewarding.

Aside from this, we have faced different force majeure issues (illness, maternity leave, change of contact persons) that have led to absence from meetings, information and activities.

Throughout the project, it has been important for the project management to keep in mind the balance between a Scandinavian domination resource-wise and physical participation in project activities, and the other partners. Initially we had attempted to balance this through securing a minimum of representation at the different activities (all YAMsessions + one additional showcase per year).

"The Nordic countries are privileged [in terms of resources]. How can less privileged countries be supported?" YAMsession participant 2015

This has been a relevant issue for the partners to discuss, and will be for the YAM committee under JMI to discuss in the future. The Nordic partners have been able to back the project by sending more delegates and musicians to showcases and YAMsessions ensuring a good participation. Not only out of altruism, but for the important learning it creates to meet other ways and thoughts of the YAM work. This is important as it has to be a balanced gain for all involved. During the project period the emergence of an international professional community for YAM is probably the greatest asset for future help to less privileged countries.

"The biggest challenge for YAM at the moment is the fact that countries and culture are in this politically unstable field, and there is constantly cuts and constantly new priorities – and to work with something in the long term becomes increasingly difficult".

Another major factor – in fact the most prominent challenge in the project–has been the political instability as described by one partner in the above. The majority of the partners have faced budget cuts, lack of funding from their governments or delays in payments affecting the organisation in larger or minor degrees (one partner for instance had the entire public funding cut, which had formed the basis of their income, as

of the beginning of 2017, just to give an impression of the severity of problems some partners have faced during the project period.)

As a consequence, being under pressure for time, the daily challenges naturally are prioritised on behalf of long term investments in international cooperation. This has also been felt in terms of the active participation in discussions in between project activities on PODIO and (somewhat in terms of contributing with content to the project website). This is reflected in the partners' evaluation of their contribution on PODIO being an average of 3 (IE). *"I have very little time to work on a virtual network"*, and this has also - inevitably - affected the feeling of project ownership for some of the partners.

And additional challenge, which we presume reflects the above mentioned problem in terms of prioritising and which has been expressed at partner meetings in the final half of the project, is the conveying of the benefits and advantages of the project to the remaining part of the organisation that did not take part directly in the project activities. We have discussed how to approach this challenge, and have worked on a YAMspace article to convey the benefits of the international collaboration in the YAM network, as well as a statement about the outcome of the project is in the making, which the partners can use.

Finally, the project originally had Jeunesses Musicales Serbia connected as an associated partner, meaning that they would be informed of all activity taking place in the project, and would get a special invitation and discount for participation in the second YAMsession which being located in Zagreb was in the vicinity. However, JMSerbia unfortunately was unable to raise sufficient means for traveling activities at the time, and therefore could not send a representative to YAMsession 2015. Since no other activities could offer the participation at a cheaper rate, JMSerbia regrettably has not taken part in any of the other project activities.

"They really do take good care of all the partners; they take care of all the people. They want to give everyone a chance. So I sincerely hope that they will continue their work in that direction and that it will be great for all of Europe and a "stage" for young audiences music". Partner, Macedonia



Output, impact and benefits

“The project has greatly increased my knowledge of young audiences music through the intercultural learning experiences gained at the national showcase discussions, various YAMsessions and through the YAMspace website’s toolkits and articles.” Partner

Despite diverse challenges and obstacles, the project activities and outcomes have to a very high degree taken place according to plan. The evaluations of the content and form of the activities have generally received high ratings. To assess to what degree the aims and objectives in the project have been met, we have divided this section in the following categories:

1. Contacts and network
2. Capacity building and audience development
3. Internationalisation, mobility and exchange
4. Legitimacy and quality assessment
5. Research
6. Overall project expectations

7.1 Contacts and network

For the partners involved, the increased international network has been of great value. Even for partners with fewer resources that participated in less project activities.

“We have made many new friends, we have had the chance to network with many people and organisations. I can say that before the project, I knew 2 or 3 people, now I know 20, 30 – maybe even 100. And we have had opportunity to speak with them: face to face interactions that bond. And it’s way way better than writing e-mails. This was one of the greatest benefits after all.” Partner, Macedonia.

When asked how the project had improved the international contacts, the partner average was 4,5 (not counting JMI as an international organisation). In this context, the increase of and strengthening of existing contact and network is emphasized. Furthermore, the network generally has improved the mutual understanding *“meeting each other on a regular basis is a must. There was also enough opportunity to keep in contact in a more informal way”*.

“We have gone from having only a Scandinavian network to having a network of highly competent contacts in many European countries” Partner Norway

Among the producers the improvement of the international contacts/network was rated a 4,5, 10 of which had rated it a full 5 (the average was lowered by one person who rated 2 only, due to fact that he had participated in few of the project activities: *“but I hope to be able to participate more and more often in the future”*.) *“Wonderful to meet people from Iceland, France, Belgium, Scandinavia, Macedonia, wherever, and discuss these important matters.” Producer Sweden*

From outside the partner circle, the YAM network has also proved valuable:

“It was wonderful to meet so many people from different countries who share the same passion for this work...My network has totally changed with the YAM work. Because now I’m exchanging with people from Denmark, from Norway, from Croatia, from Germany – and this is totally inspiring” Producer, Austria

The musicians, when asked whether or not YAMsession has improved their international contacts, rated a 3,6 average. Some point out that it is still too soon to say (the evaluation took place six weeks after the 2016 event). Others, however, point out that it was difficult to find the right people to talk to, and they come up with suggestions to create better opportunities for musicians and organisers to meet. *“It would be good with a booklet with a list of producers and organisations and their contact details.”*

7.2 Capacity building and Audience development

The building of competencies and the audience development have been central elements in the project and all project activities have been aimed at approaching these. Overall, the evaluations done and the feedback received confirm that the capacity building of producers on an international scale has benefited all partners as well as professionals from outside the partner circle.

As mentioned in the introduction, two overall aspects have been relevant: the quantity of concerts (widening of audience) and the quality of concerts aspect (deeper relationship with audience).

The better concerts aspect has been approached through all project activities. Primarily during the YAMsession producers’ forums supporting a formal education for producers in the network. The Producers’ Forum has worked as an eye-opener for many experiencing expert producers work hands-on with YAM productions.

“The possibility to work across borders with professionals from other countries is most valuable in the process of developing a more extended understanding and perspective in the preparing of performances for different age groups” Producer Norway.

Second has been the exposure to a wide range of YAM productions from many countries, cultures and production traditions. In this, the speed sessions model has initiated the development of an effective tool for producers to meet and work as a basis for further talks and discussions.

“In the near future, I am planning on working with a French producer/director on a professional wood wind quartet in a new production. Wouldn’t have happened if I hadn’t met her at a YAM meeting”. Producer, Sweden

“We currently have a project with a production house in Amsterdam, where Dutch producers are coming to Norway to work, and Norwegian ensembles and Norwegian producers are gaining through that kind of cooperation...” Partner, Norway

The partner meetings have worked as a basis for taking up selected themes and go more into depth with them. Here a foundation for the knowledge that was collected and channeled into the project website has taken place.

“I have learned to let the music speak for itself and work with what you’ve got. Get things closer to the audience and trust in the flexibility of the young audiences” Producer, Belgium.

When the partners were asked about how their level of artistic inspiration and ideas had changed in the project, the average rate was a high 4,6. Among the producers it was 4,1.

The advantage for the participating musicians has also been reviewed. The inspiration gained from viewing other YAM concerts, and the advantages in being produced place focus on the communication with the children: *“We completely changed our concept when performing for children (...) It opened so many different possibilities. Interacting with the audience and more communication (...) We can now feel more connected to the audience”* Musician, YAMsession 2015-6

In general very satisfactory answers as to the success of strengthening the artistic competency and capacity among YAM producers, musicians and organisers, as stated in the project objectives.

The quantity aspect has proved somewhat more challenging to approach. Although more concerts have taken place within the project than originally was planned, the more concerts on a general level, has proved more challenging to work for in a structured manner. The quantity development has two sides: one is the quantity within the different partner organisations that already have an established/organised YAM concert program and the other is the organisation that has none or very few activities (within and outside the partner circle).

We have addressed both issues at partner meetings. Concerning the organisations that already have YAM activities taking place, a relevant point in this discussion is the fact that many partner organisations face severe budget cuts, and therefore are forced to focus primarily on quality improvements rather than on quantity. This has led to a further increase on the focus on the quality issue addressed in the above. Another relevant perspective in this context is time: when entering into a close cooperation as the partners have done, changes – especially those within organisation structure - take time. Concerning organisations with no or few YAM activities, we have added people to the network through YAMsession, and YAMsession 2017 will take place in Portugal. As for the partners within the project, the feedback on the outcome of the project activities on a national scale has been really good:

“Now we’ve started to think more like other European countries. We applied our government this year to start giving us at least a little fund only for children and young audiences development. Before that we had funds for young musicians. Now we have switched and have applied for another project, and that is for development. That is one thing that we learned from the other countries. That we can have that kind of approach.” Partner, Macedonia

Additionally, the Croatian partner arranged a workshop in Zagreb in September 2016, where Producers from Norway and Sweden worked with Croatian YAM productions and producers as an initiative in improving and placing focus on YAM concerts.

The final evaluation among the partners on how the project has inspired or provided tools to improve the organisation and/or financing of YAM concerts, the average rate was 3,7.

(6 answers rated 4 or 5) *“Definitely we will use new tools and methods learned during the whole project”*; *“The best tool to have success as an organisation is by sharing experience with other organisations. By that we saw how others work and we can try to see how the other models of financing would work in our circumstances.”*; *“Both the staff and board members of our organisation have been inspired by what the*

showcases especially the YAMsessions have offered. We are trying new things more readily e.g. regarding new programs". Three partners rated 2 or 3:

"BbMP has not acted on that level for us. It was not the purpose for us, as we already organise 1600 school concerts per year."

Also people from without the partner circle have benefitted from the network on this level: *"My knowledge about producing and also programming musical performances for young audiences has totally changed with the work of the YAM-network."* Producer/Organiser Austria



7.3 Internationalisation, mobility and exchange

The original aim was to have each partner organisation send one or two YAM productions to a showcase in another partnering country during the project period. This would have each project showcase introduce one international production, and each YAMsession three international productions, a total estimate of 12 exchanged YAM productions (only two YAMsessions were scheduled in the original project plan).

Due to the added international concerts at YAMsession and the fact that some partners ended up inviting more than one production to their national showcase, the exchange taking place within the project was considerably more than originally planned. Additionally, a tour of Danish production and YAMawards winner 2013 that came about as a result of their performance at the first YAMsession in 2014, was added as an additional project activity. BRF played five concerts for approximately 1700 school children and a

number of families in connection with the Festival Tout'Ouie 2015 co-hosted by partner JMFrance. This tour added opportunities of branding the project in France, for professionals and for families, and proved the value of the identification and promotion of cutting-edge YAM productions taking place at YAMsession and as stated in the project aims and objectives.

In the end, a total exchange of 24 YAM productions (15 of which took place at YAMsession exchanges) took place as part of the project activities. Of these 20 were from inside the partner circle and 4 from the outside (see appendix for overview of exchanges). In addition to this more than 200 showcase concerts have played for 1700 YAM professionals from abroad and for almost 8000 children from Finland, Croatia, Denmark, France, Sweden and Norway.

Aside from this, there has been additional spinoffs when productions having performed at a project activity were booked subsequently for additional concerts at showcases, venues or schools outside the project. JM France has had six of their productions exported to Norway, Belgium (one to French speaking and one to Flemish speaking regions) and Denmark; Denmark has had two productions exported to Norway, Sweden and France; JMV has had two productions exported to Finland and Norway, Finland has had one production exported to Sweden and Denmark. More exchange can have taken place outside the knowledge of the organisers as not all musicians and organisers filled in the evaluations.

In the interim evaluation among the partners, the promotion of exchange of productions reached an average rating of 3,3. In the final evaluation, the rate increased to 4,4, a more than satisfactory outcome.

"More exchange was realized and we got stimulated to try to organise more exchange. Even if on the short term there will not be more exchange, the people involved in the productions and producers had the opportunity to broaden their network in an international context."

For the project organisers, the important part of the exchange of productions has been for as many organisations as possible to go through the process of sending and receiving international productions in order to pave the way for future mobility. *"Exchanging tours and productions becomes much easier when we are familiar with the systems in other countries"*, Partner DK

The general internationalisation of the partner organisations has taken place throughout the project and its activities. Aside from the international participation in the project YAMsessions, the organisations have sent producers and organisers to showcases. International delegations of between 9 to 14 people have participated in each showcase.

"We have a chance to speak about the productions, and people explain their ideas. We talk about what would function in our country and what wouldn't function; what is good for the children, what is different. Because we also have some very different cultural understandings. There are some things that are not acceptable for us that for other countries are completely normal. So we wouldn't know that if we hadn't interacted with people. So internationally it is really good. That is one of the big advantages of having this kind of project. Many partners and many producers meet, so we realize what is the reality – not only our thoughts." Partner

This has led to an increased knowledge about traditions and culture in different countries, and to a deeper understanding of what works for the international young audience: *"we've gotten a lot of knowledge about what types of projects cross borders easily"* Partner

7.4 Legitimacy and quality assessment

Legitimacy and quality assessment were outlined as challenges in the initial challenges and expectations sheet filled in by the partners. Both aspects have been topics on partner meetings and also in the YAMsessions talks.

“I’ve always felt that excellent music for children requires no legitimacy. But as far as our communication with people who do need legitimacy for the music field and work with children, the project has given us a wonderful new perspective, and it’s given us a lot of new voices that we can bring into the dialogue” Partner

In terms of legitimacy, an overall aim has been to strengthen and promote the serious foundation of the YAM field. For some partners this has been done through becoming acquainted with the work of other organisations around Europe *“As soon as you go outside the borders of Norway and start working with other countries it has a legitimacy – it attracts attention. And I think that’s a very big advantage of having this kind of European network that we have through YAM and the BbMP”*. For other partners it has also been the general introduction to the work in the field: *“It’s really inspiring, not only on the artistic part – of creating the music – but also working; the way of thinking, and the way of seriously beginning to focus on the subject of the young audience”*.

In the evaluation, when asked how the project had helped create legitimacy for YAM, the partners average rate was 4,3. *“The status of our organisation and the legitimacy of our concerts have risen in our country thanks to this international project”* Partner Croatia

Quality assessment has been approached through talks at partner meetings and through the use of the IAN model¹ in different contexts such as the speed sessions. The partners’ overall response to whether the project has supported the work to assess quality in YAM productions, the average rate was 4,4. (One partner had rated a 2 due to an extensive national treatment of this issue in the organisation, which BbMP had not been a part of). This means a very high level of satisfaction:

“An evaluation of quality is dependent on what kind of frame of reference you have, and if the only productions you know are your own productions, then your quality standard is pretty set. We started looking at productions from Denmark, from Finland, Sweden, the Netherlands and France. We discovered their different artistic thoughts and the way that people approach children with concerts in other countries. The concept of children and childhood is slightly different in different countries, and it’s given us a lot of important things to think about, and given us a new frame of reference for the evaluation work that we do.” Partner, Norway.

The quality assessment has also been beneficial to people outside the partner circle.

“I’ve totally changed my way of judging productions and musical performances in a scientific way. As an example, there is the IAN-model that I didn’t know before. It’s concerning intend, ability and necessity, and with these three parameters, you can judge productions and the way of producing and performances and acting of the musicians on a very objective level. So I got a new method on how to see performances and productions, but also from a lot of talks with the people working in the YAM network; our meeting at the YAM-session. But I really have a lot of new perspectives and methods coming from this work.”

¹ A model developed by researchers at University of Aarhus as a means to evaluate performative art.

7.5 Research

From the start, it has been a wish to link BbMP with current relevant research. To that end we connected to Michel Hogenes, researcher of music education at the Hague University, who was a speaker at the first YAM session in Umeaa, and spent the small budget set aside for research for his participation and travels connected to the project activities.

It was never a plan to do actual research, but to identify already existing research in the YAM and related fields, and to look for what areas of research we could wish for in the future.

Michel Hogenes has participated in all three YAMsessions during the project and he has been on the expert panel at YAMsession 2015 and 2016. Additionally, he was invited to the Finnish showcase in March 2016 where the planned partner meeting had YAM research on the agenda.

He has thus gained extensive knowledge about the project, its content and activities.

Over the course of 2016, a list of relevant literature within the YAM field was created in cooperation with the partners, and in the fall of 2016 Michel Hogenes outlined a series of possible approaches to research within the YAM field, and these were discussed and prioritized at the final partner meeting in connection with YAMsession 2016 in Larvik.



7.6 Overall project expectations

“The Blackboard Music Project/YAM is really, really important for every part of Europe, especially for the building of European culture: we should have something that are gathering us and not dividing us. So starting this kind of project is really important for all the countries, and all the people meeting... and working for the most important thing in the world – working for the youth. Working for the children.”
Partner

The overall satisfaction with the project generally has been very high. The interim evaluation was rated a 4,4 average in terms of the project living up to the expectations (based on 7 answers). Of these, one partner had rated 3, caused by the lack of funding received for the national work. All remaining answers were 4 or 5.

“We’ve met a lot of people that we otherwise wouldn’t have met, we’ve seen an awful lot of music productions for children that we otherwise wouldn’t have seen, we’ve discovered new showcases and competencies that are suddenly available to us – and also because the project is so holistic, we’ve not only met producers and musicians, but also researchers and administrators and have had an opportunity not just to look at the research that affects the productions that we make, but also the different models for distributing and supplying concerts to children in different countries.” Partner, Norway

At the end of the project, the final evaluation rate average was 4,6 showing a similar picture with one partner rating 3 while the 8 others rated 4 and 5. *“we can say that it was even above our expectations”*; *“We are totally satisfied with the gains our organisation has achieved through the participation in the project.”*

Also from outside the partner circle the responses to the project activities (YAMsession and YAMspace) have been great: *“Iceland is so isolated and I really feel that YAM opens a window and gives us inspiration. Looking into different cultures with artists creating and performing for children of all ages is so important for our world today. Thank you.”* Producer Iceland

The overall project outcome for the different partners has been very different depending on their point of departure.

For the partners with many YAM activities, especially the Scandinavian countries, it has been a very valuable input on top of the experiences they already have. These partners came with a readiness to take in other perspectives on the YAM work and a curiosity towards different cultures/schools of promoting the arts to children and youngsters. These expectations were met and it has enriched the organisers and producers with new knowledge and inspiration. Discussions with colleagues from other countries have been able to shed light on existing practises – sometimes leading to change, and sometimes reassuring the benefits of what was already happening.

The producers’ forum was an element in the project that was based on a format used in the Nordic countries already. With the challenge of developing it further, these countries had the benefit of deeper reflection over it, and strengthening their knowledge from being responsible for implementing it on a European scale.

Partners with less or no YAM activities have started to work on productions:

"Thanks to YAM and to Blackboard project. We have started to work on productions for young children and I can say that it has completely changed our world and perception, and we are really happy to be a part of all thi.", or the "status of our organisation and the legitimacy of our concerts have risen".

Moreover, new perspectives on national music have been an outcome after experiencing how other countries present their national folk music:

"I found it very interesting that many of our partners from Scandinavia and the rest of Europe have the same rhythms as us. That was a surprise...We decided to focus on our own native instruments, our own native things, and to work on presenting them to as many children as possible." Partner, Macedonia.

Another overall tendency that the evaluations show is that the French speaking countries/regions in the project have been less enthusiastic about the project as a whole. There has been a feeling that the benefits of the international work has not transferred sufficiently to their organisation nationally. We have addressed this issue at partner meetings, and discussed how best to spread and disseminate the good results obtained in the project. This will also be a point of discussion at future meetings, e.g. the YAM committee meeting in Brussels in March.



Concluding questions and future focus

"I hope that through the project and through all this common knowledge that has been built up, that projects like YAM will be able to really make the importance of arts work for young audiences visible outside of our own network. To create awareness with other organizations, with politicians, with the cultural bureaucracy of just how important the young audience segment is, is a very important aspect of the whole YAM." Partner Norway



As mentioned in the introduction, the evaluation of the project aims and objectives, among others capacity building and audience development in particular, are difficult issues to approach. Has the project created more concerts for young audiences around Europe? Have they reached new groups of young audiences? And are the concerts better than they were before, and have they had a deeper impact on the audiences? These were the overall aims of the Blackboard Music Project.

They are questions that remain difficult to answer, but we can evaluate to what extent the players; organisers, producers and musicians primarily, have benefitted from the activities taking place in the project.

Generally the satisfaction with being part of the project for all involved has been very high. The majority of the ratings show averages above 4, both in terms of the quality of the activities and the professional gains

in taking part in them (in the final evaluation among the partners, only two out of eleven questions have averages below 4,2 – “how the project has inspired or provided tools to improve the organization and financing of YAM concerts”: 3,7; and “the usefulness of the website”: 3,6). The artistic inspiration has the highest ratings, and although the tools to organize and finance YAMconcerts is lower, several partners express that they have received inspiration to improve their national organisation, and the one partner who had the least YAM activities nationally have applied for government funding to start up a YAM program in their country. In that manner it is safe to conclude that the project has been very successful on both parameters in the audience development strategy.

In this the YAMsessions and the web platform YAMspace are essential elements. YAMsessions as the annual physical meeting and YAMspace as the platform where all players can find news, events, contacts and lots of relevant material within a range approaches to Young Audiences Music on a day to day basis.

YAMsession has been well established as the annual international event for professionals in the YAM field. The overall picture shows that producers and organisers highly value this annual get-together with its many professional, educational and networking benefits and in that respect YAMsessions really make a difference. YAMsession will continue as a base for developing new ideas in the field. YAMsession 2017 will take place in September in Porto, Portugal.

YAMSpace.org has been created with news, events and the learning/resource center and forum consolidating the joint knowledge accumulated during the project in one place. The forum for producers and organisers to share ideas and discussions has been launched and is ready for use. As the evaluations show, there is still work to do in terms of updating and posting new content and promoting the site among producers, organisers and musicians, in order to have them use the forum more actively. For this means have been allocated by JMI and LMS in 2017.

Furthermore, we can conclude that more concerts took place within the project framework than expected, and as a consequence more YAM productions were experienced by the international delegates/participants and by the many school children in the audience; more people in the national networks were introduced to the project and the international YAM work; the exchange across borders increased as a result of the activities in terms of concerts as well as players traveling abroad.

It is clear that the level of exchange that has taken place across borders during the project will not be able to continue to the same degree. But procedures have been made, and network has been established to pave the way for more exchange in the future.

In fact we have already seen increased exchange taking place after the project period ending as a direct consequence of the project activities: Norway sent several organisers to the annual JMFrance showcase in Paris in the beginning of January 2017 for network and inspiration and to look for good French productions to invite to the Norwegian showcase in October 2017.

Similarly there are also several examples of additional collaborations between producers taking place across countries.

On the same note, the physical meetings among the European YAM organisations will not be as frequent as was the case during the project, but the network has been strengthened and expanded, and most

importantly, an online platform has been created allowing YAM professionals to take up discussions and exchange ideas and concepts in the future.

“I think as the project has continued, one of the things that we have become aware of is that we get a much bigger dividend from the growth of the producers who have been involved in the project, and that that kind of knowledge about production and those kind of competencies is actually a bigger dividend than just exchanging musicians between countries”. Partner, Norway

Overall, the project has successfully established and consolidated YAM as a serious, professional field with a large and solid international network in which players – producers, organisers and musicians can exchange concerts, concepts and ideas and cooperate across borders. There is a strong sense of going from enthusiastic loners in different countries to a professional community with a lot to share. This can have a huge impact in the long run for the YAM work where a critical mass is of great importance for lifting quantity and quality of the activities – a critical mass that cannot possibly be established within the respective countries separately.

Although the project has been very successful in terms of outcomes and the quality of the activities, it is also clear that several of the partner organisations suffer from the consequences of the politically unstable field which is a reality all over Europe. Furthermore, there was a strong wish among the partners to keep the momentum in the activities achieved so far. On that account the focus for the near future will be on maintaining the activities and networking benefits that Blackboard made possible, rather than developing new areas in the field. This will hopefully be possible before too long, as it is a strong wish from the partners for the future.