



AITA/IATA asbl

41st General Assembly Forum Book

Monaco, 23 August 2025

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Programme: 41st AITA/IATA asbl: Regional Meetings, Open Forum and 41st General Assembly

Friday 22 August: Regional Meetings, Auditorium Rainier III

- 09:30 Regional Meetings
- 10:45 Break
- 12:00 Regional Meetings close

Friday 22 August 2025: Open Forum, Auditorium Rainier III

- 14:30 Open Forum Part 1: Alejandro Cavadas López, Escenamateur will speak on data gathering and the challenges and opportunities for the sector based on the Spanish experience.
- 15:50 – 16:10 Break
- 16:10 Open Forum Part 2: AITA/IATA Council Open Forum, a Council facilitated opportunity for delegates to network and exchange ideas.
- 17:30 Open Forum ends

Saturday 23 August 2025: General Assembly, Auditorium Rainier III

- 09:30 Formal welcome to delegates by General Commissioner of the Mondial Patrice Cellario and by President Aled Rhys-Jones
- 10:00 Reception for all delegates
- 10:30 General Assembly continues
- 12:30 Lunch
- 14:30 General Assembly continues
- 15:30 Break
- 15:45 General Assembly continues
- 17:00 General Assembly ends

Agenda of the 41st AITA/IATA asbl General Assembly

Saturday 23 August 2025

1. Official opening of the 41st AITA/IATA asbl General Assembly - address by the Commissioner General of the Mondial du Théâtre and the President of AITA/IATA Aled Rhys-Jones

Break: Reception given by H. E. The Prime Minister
 2. Introduction and welcome from the President of AITA/IATA asbl, Aled Rhys-Jones
 3. Appointment of the Presiding Chair of the 41st General Assembly Vote of GA
 4. Agree the agenda of the General Assembly Vote of GA
 5. Roll call of all Members in attendance (Monaco and online)
 - a. Confirmation of voting rights
 - b. Notification of proxies
 6. Appointment of Tellers and the Drafting Committee Vote of GA
 7. Confirmation of new Members (Associate and National Centre 2024 – 2025) Vote of GA
 8. Call for written questions to Candidates for Election to Council
 9. Approval of the Minutes of 40th online General Assembly by Zoom 15 June 2024 Vote of GA
 10. AITA/IATA asbl review 2024 - 2025
 - a. Council review from President Aled Rhys-Jones Vote of GA
 11. Finance review 2024 - 2025
 - a. Review of finance by Treasurer Patrick Schoenstein and approval of finance report. Vote of GA
 - b. Discharge to Councillors Vote of GA
- Sandwich Lunch**
12. Preparation for the Elections
 - a. Statements of intent from candidates
 - i. President Sofia Wegelius, Finland
 - ii. Councillor 1 Kevin Dowsett, Great Britain
 - iii. Councillor 2 Joke Quaghebeur, Belgium
 - iv. Councillor 3 Lakó Zsigmond, Hungary
 - v. Councillor 4 Patrick Schoenstein, France
 - vi. Councillor 5 Cândido Sobreiro, Portugal
 - b. Elections Vote of the GA

The General Assembly goes into a short recess while the newly elected Council members take their place.
 13. AITA/IATA Vision Statement by the new President
 14. Other proposals submitted for consideration by the General Assembly Vote of GA
 15. Budget 2025 – 2026
 - a. Proposed budget Vote of GA
 16. AITA/IATA World Festival of Children’s Theatre, Lingen, Germany 2028
 17. Hosts for future AITA/IATA Festivals:
 - a. AITA/IATA World Children’s and Youth Performing Arts Festival 2026, proposal by Joke Quaghebeur, OPENDOEK
 - b. AITA/IATA International Amateur Theatre Festival 2027, proposal by Paul Percy, Theatre New Zealand
 18. Other business
 19. Closing of the 41st General Assembly of AITA/IATA asbl

Constitution of AITA/IATA asbl

I. NAME, REGISTERED OFFICE, PURPOSE AND DURATION

Article 1

The association is named "Association Internationale du Théâtre Amateur - International Amateur Theatre Association - Asociación Internacional del Teatro Amateur", in short "AITA/IATA asbl", hereinafter referred to as "the Association".

Article 2

The Association is constituted as a Belgian non-profit organisation, according to the Belgian Code of Companies and Associations of 23 March 2019, published in the Belgian Moniteur on 4 April 2019 (hereinafter referred to as the "Belgian CCA").

The registered office of the Association is established in Belgium, Brussels Region.

The registered number of the Association is 0863.683.050.

Article 3

The Association is formed for the purpose of:

- a) Fostering dramatic art by all theatrical groups of the world devoted, without remuneration, to artistic and cultural aims;
- b) Promoting by permanent international contact and relationships those activities common to its members;
- c) Co-ordinating the actions of its members in their purpose of enriching human experience and educating through the medium of theatre;
- d) Facilitating international exchanges between all groups belonging to amateur theatre.

To establish these aims, the Association will employ the following means:

- a) The organisation or participation in the organisation of international congresses, conferences, seminars, festivals, courses, exhibitions and any other activity;
- b) The publication or assistance in the publication and distribution of books, periodicals and stage plays;
- c) The maintenance of one or more support, information or study centres on amateur theatre;
- d) Co-operating with other international organisations having similar aims or devoted to theatre and culture in general.
- e) The Association may undertake or support any initiative and organise any activity that may contribute to establishing its aims or objectives.

Article 4

The Association has been constituted for an unlimited period of time.

II. MEMBERSHIP

Article 5

The number of members of the Association is unlimited. Its minimum is fixed to two (2).

Article 6

The General Assembly of the Association is composed of the Members.

The admission of Members is decided by the General Assembly (hereinafter referred to as the GA) following the proposition of the Council. The Council may grant provisional admission to new Members, which must, however, be confirmed at the next GA.

The organisation accepts 2 (two) categories of Members:

- A **National Centre Member** is an organisation or a federation of organisations who are networks, concentrators of activity, local and global, working proactively in the field of amateur theatre and/or representing amateur theatre activity on a national basis, where "national" indicates a nation, a self-governing territory, or self-governing territories.

National Centre Members are hereinafter referred to as "**National Centres**".

- An **Associate Member** is an organisation, a federation of organisations, or an individual with an interest and/or activity in the field of amateur theatre.

Associate Members are hereinafter referred to as "**Associates**".

Article 7

All Members are required to pay the appropriate annual Membership Fee, relevant to their Membership category, as determined by the GA. The maximum amount of this Membership Fee is set at five thousand (5,000) Euro.

Non-payment of the Membership Fee will automatically result in resignation by default of the Member.

III. GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Article 8

A **National Centre** who is up to date with their membership payments is entitled to six (6) votes in the GA. These votes have to be cast in one block of six (6) votes.

An **Associate** who is up to date with their membership payments is entitled to one (1) vote in the GA.

A Member can delegate their votes by proxy to another Member. Each Member is limited to carrying one proxy.

A natural person can represent a maximum of two (2) Members.

Article 9

Resigning and resigned, suspended or expelled Members, as well as their heirs or those having rights over a deceased Member, have no rights over the assets of the Association. They cannot reclaim Membership Fees, claim or request statements, rendering of accounts, nor inventories. Neither can they affix seals or proceed to precautionary attachment ("saisie conservatoire").

Article 10

The legislative power of the Association is held by the GA. In accordance with the Belgian CCA, powers that are exclusively reserved for the GA are the following:

- a) Alterations to the Constitution;
- b) The appointment and dismissal of Councillors and of the President of the Association;
- c) Granting discharge to Councillors regarding their obligations as Councillors of the Association;
- d) The approval of the budget and the accounts of the Association;
- e) The dissolution of the Association and the destination of the net assets of the Association following such dissolution;
- f) The expulsion of Members of the Association;
- g) The conversion of the Association into a company with a social purpose;
- h) All cases required by the articles of the Association.

In addition to the powers mentioned above, it is the authority of the GA to appoint one or more independent persons, who cannot be Councillors, as "third party" examiners of the accounts.

Article 11

The GA is chaired by the President of the Association or by any other chair appointed by the GA at the beginning of the GA.

Article 12

The President of the Association, on behalf of the Council, or upon request of at least one fifth (1/5) of the Members of the Association, will convene the GA by any appropriate means of communication as agreed by the Council. In both cases, notification which will include the draft agenda of the GA, will take place at least eight (8) weeks before the GA.

Any proposal to be considered by the GA must be supported by at least one twentieth (1/20) of the Members of the Association before it can be added to the agenda of the GA. Proposals must reach the Secretariat not later than four (4) weeks before the GA. The final agenda of the GA, containing all proposals by Members and all relevant documents, will be distributed to Members not later than fifteen (15) days before the GA.

The GA can be held in any physical or digital format considered appropriate by Council.

Article 13

1. Attendance in the GA

Regardless of the number of Members in attendance (present or represented), the GA is **constitutionally valid**, except for the decisions relating to:

- a) The expulsion of a Member;
- b) alterations to the Constitution;
- c) changing the purpose of the Association
- d) the dissolution of the Association.

Decisions relating to the expulsion of a Member alterations to the Constitution, changing the purpose of the Association and to the dissolution of the Association require the attendance of at least two thirds (2/3) of Members (present or represented).

A second GA may be called if, in compliance with the Belgian CCA, the abovementioned attendance criteria are not met, regardless of the number of Members in attendance (present or represented). Such a second GA may not be held within fifteen (15) days following the first GA.

2. Decisions in the GA

All **decisions** are taken by a simple majority (fifty percent (50%) plus one (1)) of the votes of Members in attendance at the GA (present or represented), except, as is compliant with the Belgian CCA, for decisions relating to:

- a) the expulsion of a Member;
- b) alterations to the Constitution;
- c) changing the purpose of the Association;
- d) the dissolution of the Association.

Decisions relating to the expulsion of a Member, as well as decisions relating to alterations to the Constitution, require a majority of two thirds (2/3) of the votes of the Members in attendance (present or represented).

Associates do not have voting rights with regard to the decision of the expulsion of a National Centre.

Decisions relating to alterations to the Constitution concerning the purpose of the Association, as well as decisions relating to the dissolution of the Association, require a majority of four fifths (4/5) of the votes of Members in attendance (present or represented).

3. Voting in the GA

Voting procedures and/or systems in the GA are decided by the Council. Voting may be manual, postal, electronic, or digital or by any means that the Council considers to be appropriate.

Abstentions and/or invalid votes are not taken into account when counting the votes and/or when defining majorities, neither in the numerator nor in the denominator.

The GA can vote only on issues that are included in the Agenda.

IV. THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND NETWORKS

Article 14

The GA delegates the governance and day-to-day management of the Association to the Council.

The GA will, through an election process, appoint one (1) President and a maximum of eight (8) Councillors. The President and the Councillors jointly form the Council. Their mandate ("the Mandate") is not remunerated by the Association.

The Council has the authority to appoint and dismiss from among the Councillors, officers as appropriate ("the Officers"), for example: Treasurer, Secretary, or any other function the Council considers appropriate. Officers may resign or be dismissed from their assigned functions without effecting their Mandate as a Councillor.

The President and the Councillors of the Association are natural persons.

Article 15

The President of the Association and Councillors are elected for a mandated period of four (4) years ("the Mandate Term").

An individual can serve a maximum of three (3) consecutive Mandate Terms on the Council, of which a maximum of two (2) consecutive Mandate Terms as Councillor, or a maximum of two (2) consecutive Mandate Terms as President.

In exceptional circumstances, the GA can extend the Mandate Term of the President, a Councillor and/or several Councillors, for a period to be decided by the GA. This decision requires a majority of two thirds (2/3) of the Members in attendance at the GA (present or represented).

The Mandate of a Councillor and/or the President will cease:

- a) At the end of the Mandate Term;
- b) Should the GA decide to end the Mandate. This decision requires a simple majority by the GA;
- c) Upon receipt of a written resignation (by letter, email or any other form of text message) to the Council.

Should a Councillor (including the President) be unable to complete their Mandate irrespective of cause, this Mandate will count as a fully completed Mandate Term.

Should a position on the Council become vacant, owing to the death, incapacity or resignation of an appointed Councillor, the Council may appoint a temporary replacement until the following GA. The appointee will function as a Councillor without voting rights.

Article 16

The Council is convened by the President of the Association by any means that the Council considers appropriate and will meet at least twice between two GAs. The Council is constitutionally valid (quorate) if 5 out of 9 Councillors are present or represented.

Council meetings can be held in any physical or digital format considered appropriate by the Council. Voting procedures and/or systems during Council meetings are decided by the Council. Voting may be manual, postal, electronic or digital or by any means that the Council considers to be appropriate.

A Councillor can delegate their vote by proxy to another Councillor. Each Councillor can carry only one proxy.

Article 17

The Council has unlimited executive powers in matters relating to the governance and day-to-day management of the Association.

Unless a power is, under the Belgian CCA or under this Constitution, explicitly stated to belong exclusively to the GA, all powers are under the authority of the Council.

The Council may appoint any contracted individual and determine their job description and remuneration.

The Council has the right to delegate the day-to-day management of the Association, including the authority of signature in relation to the day-to-day management, to any contracted individual.

Article 18

a) External relations

The Council can establish or terminate any operational relationship, at any time, with any appropriate party, natural person, de facto association or legal entity, in the interest of the Association. These operational relationships are called **Networks**.

b) Internal relations

The Council can establish or terminate, within the organisation, one or more **Committees**, where appropriate chaired by a coordinator or coordinating team. The Council will approve a Committee's internal rules.

The Council will appoint the members and the coordinator of any Committee. The Council can terminate the appointment of any coordinator or Committee member, at any time.

V. LANGUAGE

Article 19

The languages to be employed in all official business conducted by the Association are French, English and Spanish. In case of difficulties of interpretation of the Constitution and/or official documents of the Association, the French language will take precedence.

It is the responsibility of the Council to ensure that sufficient skills are available in the Council in order to address the Association's official languages and cultural issues.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS

Article 20

The Association is represented in legal agreements, including those where a public officer or a law official intervenes, and in legal actions, either by the President of the Association or by two Councillors.

Article 21

The financial year will run from 1 April to 31 March of each year.

Article 22

In case of voluntary dissolution of the Association, the GA will appoint two (2) liquidators and determine their powers.

Article 23

In case of voluntary or judicial dissolution of the Association at any time and for any reason, the net assets of the Association will be allocated to an Association involved in similar works and with similar aims to the Association, as agreed by the GA.

This decision will be taken by a simple majority (fifty percent (50%) plus one (1)) of the votes of the Members in attendance (present or represented).

Article 24

All decisions of the GA and of the Council are recorded in the form of minutes and signed by the President of the Association. The record is kept at the registered office where all Members and third parties may consult it.

Article 25

All that is not explicitly stated in this Constitution will be determined by Belgian Law, in particular the Belgian CCA.

Made in Monaco, 22 August 2021
Signed, Béatrice CELLARIO, President

Draft Minutes of the 40th AITA/IATA asbl General Assembly, 15 June 2024

1. **Official opening** at 13:05 and welcome to online 40th AITA/IATA General Assembly

2. **Introduction and welcome from the President of AITA/IATA, Aled Rhys-Jones** – President Aled Rhys-Jones welcomed delegates and observers to the third AITA/IATA online General Assembly (GA) and was pleased to offer a particular welcome to former AITA/IATA Presidents Rob Van Genechten and Béatrice Cellario and former Treasurer Villy Dall. He noted it was a full agenda to get through and asked the AITA/IATA Council to briefly introduced themselves to delegates. He recorded apologies received from Councillor Kelli McLoud-Schingen and Honorary President Jacques Lemaire.

3. **Appointment of the Presiding Chair of the 40th General Assembly** – The President briefly outlined the experienced background of Dirk De Corte, Flanders (SGT) and, on behalf of Council, proposed him as the Presiding Chair of the GA.

By a show of hands, the GA unanimously agreed the appointment of Dirk De Corte as Presiding Chair.

4. **Roll call of Members represented** – the Presiding Chair asked all those present online to confirm their presence. Delegates from the following **17** Members (National Centres), which included Iceland who had asked Finland to carry their proxy, had registered to vote and the following responded to the roll call:

Catalonia – 6 votes; Faroes (SGT) – 6 votes; Finland – 6 votes (carrying the proxy of Iceland – 6 votes;); Flanders (SGT) – 6 votes; France – 6 votes; Germany (BAG & BDAT) – 6 votes; Great Britain (SGT) – 6 votes; Hungary – 6 votes; Israel – 6 votes; Japan – 6 votes; Latvia – 6 votes; Lithuania – 6 votes; Monaco – 6 votes; Spain – 6 votes; South Tyrol – 6 votes; Sweden (ATR) – 6 votes.

a. The Presiding Chair then invited the Associate Members who were present online to confirm their presence. Delegates from **13** Associate Members had registered to vote but not all were present at the start of the GA. The following **11** Associate Members responded to the roll call:

Kingdom Theatre (Canada) - 1 vote; Villy Dall (Denmark) – 1 vote; Rob Van Genechten, (Flanders (SGT)) – 1 vote; De WAANzin (Flanders (SGT)) – 1 vote; Théâtre de la Roëlle (France) – 1 vote; The Questors Theatre (Great Britain) – 1 vote; Mary Pears (Ireland) – 1 vote; Theatre New Zealand (New Zealand) – 1 vote; Teatro de Balugas (Portugal) – 1 vote; Federació de Teatre Amateur de la Comunitat Valenciana (Spain) – 1 vote; Theaterpädagogisches Zentrum Brixen (South Tyrol) – 1 vote.

5. **Agree the agenda of the General Assembly**

The Agenda of the GA was agreed by a show of hands.

6. Acceptance of new Members (National Centre and Associate) The Presiding Chair explained that two new National Centres and seven new Associate Members would be voted on. The two National Centres did not appear in the Forum Book because they had paid the fee after its publication and they were Slovakia and the Netherlands. Matej Moško from Národné osvetové centrum, Slovakia briefly outlined his organisation. He noted the longstanding close links between Slovakia and AITA/IATA and that changes within Slovakia meant they would now take on the National Centre role. Leanne Heuwekemeijer from the Netherlands also referred to the longstanding relationship with AITA/IATA and noted that budget cuts within the Netherlands had resulted in the former National Centre closing. The lack of theatre activities during COVID and the recognition of the importance of amateur theatre had resulted in a reallocation of funds and a new organisation was in the process of being set up. The Presiding Chair outlined the voting procedures and asked for the patience of all delegates as the process would take time. The outcome was as follows:

a. To accept Stichting Visie AmateurTheater, Netherlands as a National Centre Member of AITA/IATA asbl

Using the online poll, Stichting Visie AmateurTheater, Netherlands, was approved unanimously as a National Centre Member

b. To accept Národné osvetové centrum, Slovakia as a National Centre Member of AITA/IATA asbl

Using the online poll, Národné osvetové centrum, Slovakia, was approved unanimously as a National Centre Member

c. Following their approval as National Centres by the GA, these two new National Centres, each with 6 votes, were entitled to vote giving a total of **19** National Centre Members represented and entitled to vote.

d. To accept Blackflame Theatre, Bangladesh as an Associate Member of AITA/IATA asbl

Using the online poll, Blackflame Theatre, Bangladesh, was approved unanimously as an Associate Member

e. To accept Theater am Olgaek e.V, Germany as an Associate Member of AITA/IATA asbl

Using the online poll, Theater am Olgaek e.V, Germany, was approved unanimously as an Associate Member

f. To accept Theater School-Studio „Berikebi“, Georgia as an Associate Member of AITA/IATA asbl

Using the online poll, Theater School-Studio „Berikebi“, Georgia, was approved unanimously as an Associate Member

g. To accept Chow Drama Theatre, Malaysia as an Associate Member of AITA/IATA asbl

Using the online poll, Chow Drama Theatre, Malaysia, was approved unanimously as an Associate Member

h. To accept Monterrey Performing Arts Academy, Mexico as an Associate Member of AITA/IATA asbl

Using the online poll, Monterrey Performing Arts Academy, Mexico, was approved unanimously as an Associate Member

i. To accept Melike Ersoy, Turkey as an Associate Member of AITA/IATA asbl

Using the online poll, Melike Ersoy, Turkey, was approved unanimously as an Associate Member

j. To accept Georgian Youth Theatre, USA as an Associate Member of AITA/IATA asbl

Using the online poll, Georgian Youth Theatre, USA, was approved unanimously as an Associate Member

k. Following their approval as Associates by the GA, the three new Associates present at the online General Assembly were entitled to vote giving a total of **16** Associate Members represented and entitled to vote. They were Melike Ersoy (Turkey) – 1 vote; Blackflame Theatre (Bangladesh) – 1 vote; Chow Drama Theatre (Malaysia) – 1 vote.

7. Approval of the Minutes of the 39th General Assembly, Debrecen

The Presiding Chair noted that the minutes of the 39th GA were in the Forum Book on pages 8 – 20. Delegates were asked to approve the minutes by a show of hands.

The minutes of the 39th AITA/IATA General Assembly were agreed by a show of hands.

8. AITA/IATA asbl Reviews 2023 – 2024

a. *Council's Review by the President Aled Rhys-Jones* – President Aled Rhys Jones welcomed the new Members and in particular the National Centres of Netherlands and Slovakia. He noted that the Netherlands had once hosted the AITA/IATA Secretariat and that Slovakia hosts Europe's oldest National Theatre Festival (Scenic Harvest Festival) which he had visited in 2002 for its 100th edition. He turned to the comprehensive Council Report in the Forum Book and proposed to review the highlights in more depth and to look to the future.

b. When he took over the Presidency from Béatrice Cellario, she had warned him that it was a busy job and indeed he had found it so. There had been difficulties with the Belfius Bank Account but the recent meeting in their Antwerp office had been very productive and the difficult and outstanding issues had mostly been resolved.

c. All Council members took responsibility for different areas of work, which were itemised in the report. Council is now working on arrangements for four festivals: the AITA/IATA World Festival of Children's Theatre Lingen, Germany, June – July 2025; the Mondial du Théâtre, Monaco, August 2025; the proposed AITA/IATA World Festival of Children's and Youth Theatre in

2026 organised by OPENDOEK in cooperation with the City of Antwerp; and the proposed AITA/IATA International Amateur Theatre Festival in the early Spring of 2027 organised by Theatre New Zealand.

d. AITA/IATA had started a series of Masterclasses; the first had been an excellent English Language event on Intimacy in Theatre with Elodie Foray: a topic that was becoming ever more important in amateur theatre. The workshop had been so good it was hoped to repeat it and, because Elodie is fluent in French, offer it in that language. Masterclasses in French and Spanish will be held later in the year.

e. The President noted that, thanks to the Secretariat Anne Gilmour, AITA/IATA had been able to share an excellent message from the world-renowned actor Sir Ian McKellen on World Theatre Day, 27 March. His message had been very personal and directed to the amateur theatre world and to AITA/IATA. He hoped that other theatre luminaries might be willing to do the same for future World Theatre Days.

f. It had been agreed in Debrecen to offer two bursaries to attend the Drama in Education Congress (DIE) in Austria in March 2024. Eleven applications had been received which had been narrowed down to two: one was a new person from Uganda and the second was a member of the Sri Lankan theatre company which had taken part in the Debrecen festival in 2023. Sadly, the Ugandan applicant could not get a visa to enter Austria. The denial of visas remains an issue for AITA/IATA and for other cultural organisations and Councillor Kelli McCloud-Schingen is gathering information on this aspect.

g. The President noted the success of the DIE Congress and that the recipient of the bursary reported having a fantastic time. He has already run a forum back in his home university in Jaffna, Sri Lanka and AITA/IATA hopes to run an online session with him in the autumn. He handed over to Vice President Sofia Wegelius to talk about Digital matters and Children and Youth projects.

h. Sofia Wegelius noted that the next two Masterclasses would be in French & Spanish respectively and asked delegates to suggest topics that they would find helpful or, if they had a contact with noted individuals with exceptional theatre related expertise in an area who would be willing to lead a Masterclass to let her know. It was important to highlight to Members the benefits of being part of AITA/IATA.

i. She also wanted to highlight a second conference in the *Curtain Up!* series to be held on 26 October 2024. Over one day, four or five workshops would be offered on related topics and AITA/IATA was in the process of finding partners. The event will consider the benefits of amateur theatre both to those who participate in amateur theatre and the benefits and achievements for the wider community. Simultaneous translation will be offered. One aim is to provide members with the arguments to make when they apply for funding for their own activities.

j. The Vice President noted that AITA/IATA continues to develop a new approach to digital matters. The front page of the AITA/IATA website now hosts a map where any amateur theatre

can pin their theatre to show the global spread of amateur theatres around the world. AITA/IATA also has an Instagram account [weareamateurtheratre](#), on the website front page, which members can take over for a week to share information about one of their theatre events. AITA/IATA will also send occasional Newsletters to non-members who have agreed to receive it, about AITA/IATA events.

k. AITA/IATA has also started a Youth Think Tank to enable Council to hear the views of young people from around the world. For the first 'pilot' event the young people were hand-picked and AITA/IATA had a most interesting dialogue with them. It is planned to expand this network and Sofia asked if any AITA/IATA Members had interested young people to let her know for future online events. The aim is to help develop a new strategy for the Children and Youth (C&Y) committee. The key message from this first event was that young people wanted live events where people come together, not digital events.

l. The President thanked Vice President Sofia Wegelius for her work. He had been heartened by the engagement and views of the young people taking part in the Think Tank. They had understood the benefits of online events but sought and recognised the importance of interaction. He was clear, world events will not change if we stay within our own borders and look inward, we must look outward.

m. The President noted the 2025 GA in Monaco would include elections: for a new President and four Councillors. Also, that the AITA/IATA Secretariat was looking to retire and there was a need to consider succession planning during the coming year.

n. One joy of his role was to be able to talk to people when visiting festivals. He had recently visited the Lingua Festival in Barcelos, Portugal for the second time and had been encouraged by how the festival had developed and found new life and become quite special. While at the festival he and the new President of ESCENAMATEUR Alejandro Cavadas, held especially useful discussions which resulted in an invitation for him to attend a meeting in November in Spain which will explore new ways to work with amateur theatre in Latin America. AITA/IATA's contact with former Latin American Associate CLT - Corridor Latinoamericano - had ended since the main contacts had moved on and he hoped that the November meeting would enable AITA/IATA and ESCENAMATEUR to find ways to work with organisations in Latin America and build new links.

o. The President moved on to the issue of Membership Fees and their potential increase which was always a difficult issue. The fees were reduced quite considerably in 2017 and raised in 2019 but had not increased since. Because of COVID's impact on Members no fee increase had been sought because it was clear that members were struggling. But AITA/IATA was now running at an operational loss and the fee level had to be addressed. Any increase agreed at this GA would not be implemented until 2025 and in that time AITA/IATA had, in effect, lost ground by approximately 29%. Council had held long discussions on the subject and, as Members were aware, AITA/IATA fees link to the UN HDI Index where those in poorer countries pay less.

p. If an increase were agreed and implemented in 2025 – 2026, this change would not impact on the 2024 – 2025 budget in the Forum Book. The President wanted to give Members a picture of AITA/IATA's current position and a fuller discussion would take place during the financial report.

q. The President concluded by noting how busy AITA/IATA was and that it was a different organisation to the one he had joined in 1999: the world was different and the pace of life was so different. He noted that the next President would need to take these changes into consideration as they looked to the future. AITA/IATA was now a more flexible organisation and he thanked Rob Van Genechten for his work to restructure the organisation. His general message was positive and he was happy to report that Council was engaged and was working hard to move forward.

Council's review was agreed by a show of hands.

9. Financial Review by the Treasurer Patrick Schoenstein

a. *Review of finance and approval of the Financial Report 2023 – 2024* – The Presiding Chair Dirk De Corte referred delegates to pages 29 and 30 of the Forum Book. He noted that Treasurer Patrick Schoenstein would speak first in French and his colleague would then speak in English.

b. Patrick noted that the operating costs of the Association amounted to € 25,493.33 and the operating revenues to € 19,768.41 giving an operational deficit of € 5,724.92 Euros. The deficit was due to lower revenues from membership and an increase in operational expenses, including the agreed increase in the fee to the Secretariat and the employment expenses of a new bookkeeper. As of 31 March 2024, the Current bank account totalled € 14,167,90 and the Savings account: € 65,759.81. He noted the statutory auditors' report on page 31 of the Forum Book.

c. There were no questions and Dirk began the voting process.

Using the online poll, the Finance Report was unanimously accepted.

d. President Aled Rhys-Jones turned to Council's proposal to increase Membership Fees. He noted this had not been a popular move five years ago when the GA had asked Council to be more prudent in its expenditure. Although savings had been made during COVID, since then AITA/IATA had taken on new expenses such as the Zoom package, an accounting package, and a bookkeeper. He was confident that these expenses were entirely justified but AITA/IATA was running at a deficit and there was a gap between income and expenditure. In the financial year 2022 -2023 funding had been found from the Goethe Institute, Germany for the *Curtain Up!* event which had almost covered its running expenses. AITA/IATA had also received a facilitation fee from the online festival held by Associate Member Saint John Theatre Company for the assistance given by AITA/IATA. But in the Financial Year just ended it had not proved possible to find funding and AITA/IATA had operated at a loss. The proposed increase on page 32 of the Forum Book showed that the UN HDI Category 1 increase has been kept below € 600 with a proposed rate of €595, which remained lower than in the past. No questions were raised and the Presiding Chair began the poll.

Using the online poll, the proposal to increase the Membership Fees was voted upon: Yes 102 (94%), No 7 (6%). The proposal was agreed.

10. Discharge to Councillors – The Presiding Chair explained to delegates that this was a legal requirement. Discharge relates to contractual liability and responsibility of Councillors. As a member of an association, you have elected Councillors to carry responsibility of the association's operations. Logically, you may expect the Councillors to behave with due diligence. In other words, that they do not perform actions that a normal, right-thinking person would not perform. If this does happen, the association can address the Councillors about this. Since it is the association that must address the directors, the initiative for this lies with the highest legal body of the association, the General Assembly.

a. Granting discharge means that the Councillors can no longer be held liable for malpractices during the period for which they are granted discharge. The period under discussion was from 1 April 23 – 31 March 2024 for all Councillors apart from Anna-Karin Waldemarson who resigned on 13 June 2023. The current Councillors asked for discharge with the exception of Anna-Karin Waldemarson.

Using the online poll, the discharge to Councillors, with the exception of Anna-Karin Waldemarson, was unanimously accepted.

11. Budget for 2024 – 2025 – Treasurer Patrick Schoenstein spoke in French and then in English and referred delegates to the final page 33 of the Forum Book which detailed the one-year budget which was based on the expenditure patterns of the last two years. Income was anticipated at € 25,000 and expenditure at € 28,905 giving a deficit of € 3,905 which could be controlled if the number of members increased.

a. Leanne Heuwekemeijer, of The Netherland National Centre, asked about the modest income and what strategy there would be to improve this. Patrick noted that the membership increase would come into effect in the next Financial Year. The new members, accepted into AITA/IATA were not reflected in the budget so there would be an increase in income. The President noted that until 2021, AITA/IATA income relied entirely on Membership Fees but since then Council had sought to find new ways to generate income and find new funds and it was a new and developing area. Councillor Stephen Tobias will lead a sub-group to develop a fund-raising strategy. The President noted it was not easy for a global organisation to attract funding. He also noted that AITA/IATA had charged attendees to take part in the online Workshops and Masterclass with AITA/IATA Members receiving a discount. Former Treasurer Villy Dall noted that the accounts showed funds in the Bank although the Membership fee was not being raised to previous high levels when AITA/IATA had reserves of €130,000 in the bank: there was now only half that amount. He noted it had always been difficult to get sponsorship.

Using the online poll, the Budget for 2024 – 2025 was unanimously accepted.

12. Other proposals submitted for consideration by the General Assembly – none were submitted.

13. Announcement of host venue for 41st GA in 2025 in Monaco - Béatrice Cellario noted the dates of the 2025 GA and Mondial du Théâtre had been announced in Debrecen: the Festival was 20 – 27 August 2025 and the GA would be on Saturday 23 August and if necessary also on 24 August. Regional Committees could hold their meetings on 22 August. She reminded Members that 10 Oct 2024 was the final date for groups to submit their applications to perform in Monaco.

14. Antwerp, Belgium World Festival of Children's Theatre 2026 - This project is being led by OPENDOEK Director Joke Quaghebeur who had had to leave the meeting, but OPENDOEK President Reginald Wietendaele noted that they were preparing for the event and no doubt delegates would hear more in Monaco. The President noted that procedurally AITA/IATA needed to approve this event and would do so in Monaco.

15. Written questions from Members – none had been received by the deadline of 18:00 UK time on 10 June 2024.

16. Closing of the 40th General Assembly of AITA/IATA asbl - the formal meeting ended at 12:23 and the Presiding Chair Dirk de Corte thanked everyone for their attention. He handed over to President Aled Rhys-Jones who asked Paul Percy, President of New Zealand Associate, Theatre New Zealand to speak about the possibility of holding the AITA/IATA International Festival in the early Spring of 2027.

17. New Zealand 2027 - Paul Percy confirmed they were looking forward to the opportunity to host the event in Wellington in February / March during their summer. President Aled Rhys-Jones noted this would be the first time AITA/IATA had held an event in the Southern Hemisphere and while there were some matters that required further discussion, Council had agreed unanimously to accept this outline proposal. The timing meant it would not be possible to hold an AITA/IATA GA at the festival because the financial year would not have ended. While New Zealand was a long way from Europe, the event would attract groups not usually seen at an AITA/IATA Festival and the President thought it a great opportunity to meet new people and make new contacts. Paul Percy hoped to be in Monaco in 2025 where he would put forward a fully-fledged proposal.

18. In closing, the President noted that AITA/IATA was looking for international host venues after 2028 and stressed the festival could be of any type. He thanked Dirk de Corte for his hard work and thanked delegates for their confidence in the direction that Council was taking. He thanked for all their hard work: Council Members; Secretariat Anne Gilmour; Sue Pound the new bookkeeper; and he looked forward to seeing everyone in Lingen and Monaco in 2025.

Current Membership of AITA/IATA asbl

AITA/IATA asbl Membership Figures as at 7 August 2025:

Member (National Centres)

31 Paid by 31 March 2025, or with the agreement of Council, by an extended deadline.

Member Associates

65 Paid by 31 March 2025, or with the agreement of Council, by an extended deadline.

Countries and territories represented 52

New Membership Applications to be confirmed by the General Assembly

Norway:	National Centre - Norsk Amatørteaterforbund
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Associate Member - Neretva
Canada:	Associate Member - LITF – Liverpool International Theatre Festival
Germany:	Associate Member - Theatre 11, Bremen
Great Britain (SGT):	Associate Member - PLATS (Latvia)
Greece:	Associate Member - Theatre Group "Other Side"
Honduras:	Associate Member - Teatro la Fragua
India:	Associate Member - Mudra A Creative Gesture
Indonesia:	Associate Member - Saaduddin
Lithuania:	Associate Member - Vilnius University Drama Theatre
Morocco:	Associate Member - FITAS Agadir
Morocco:	Associate Member - Hassany Anouar
New Zealand:	Associate Member - James Bell
Norway:	Associate Member - Lithuanian Amateur Theatre
Portugal:	Associate Member - Grémio Dramático Povoense
Singapore	Associate Member - Opera Academy
Switzerland:	Associate Member - Theatre Studio BELOE
Türkiye:	Associate Member - Ömer Şahinbaş
USA:	Associate Member - World Stage Theatre Co
Zimbabwe:	Associate Member - CHIPAWO

AITA/IATA asbl Council 2024 – 2025

Council

President	Aled Rhys-Jones (Great Britain)
Councillor (Vice President)	Sofia Wegelius (Finland)
Councillor (Treasurer from 25/10/23)	Patrick Schoenstein (France)
Councillor	Kelli McLoud-Schingen (USA)
Councillor	Ksenia Nesterova (Russia)
Councillor	Carlos Taberheiro (Spain)
Councillor	Stephen Tobias (Canada)
Councillor	Heidi Troi (South Tyrol, Italy)

AITA/IATA asbl Council Meetings 2024 – 2025

Since the last General Assembly held by Zoom on 15 June 2024, the Council of AITA/IATA has met:

- 2 September 2024 Zoom meeting online
- 3 December 2024 Zoom meeting online
- 16 – 19 January 2025 Brixen, Austria
- 22 April 2025 Zoom meeting online
- 18 June 2025 Zoom meeting online
- 23 July 2025 Zoom meeting online
- 21 August 2025 Monaco (pre-GA)

Representations of the President 2024 – 2025

In addition to the daily email correspondence and WhatsApp communications, these are the Representations of the President since the online GA on 15 June 2024:

2024

25 June	Online Meeting with Vice President Sofia Wegelius
28 June	Online Meeting with Paul Percy Theatre New Zealand
28 June	Online Meeting with Emrah Yayici Associate Member from Turkey
1 July	Online Meeting with Paul Percy and Lakó Zsigmond
2 July	Online Meeting with Nils Hanraets re: World Festival of Children's Theatre
12/13 July	Attended British Festival of One Act Plays, Perth, Scotland
30 July	Online meeting with Secretariat
1 August	Online meeting with Councillor Stephen Tobias re: Fundraising
13 August	Online meeting with Secretariat
14 August	Online meeting with Vice President Sofia Wegelius
16 August	Online meeting with Dirk de Corte
27 Aug/1 Sept	Attended FITAG Festival in Girona, Catalonia, Spain
2 September	Online Council Meeting
9 September	Online Meeting with Vice President and Secretariat
10 September	Online Meeting with Paul Percy, Theatre New Zealand
10 September	Attended meeting with Bookkeeper Sue Pound
07 October	Online meeting with Joke Quaghebeur Director of OPENDOEK, Flanders (SGT)
21 October	Online meeting with President Toni Font y Selva and the Board of the Federació de Grups Amateurs de Teatre de Catalunya
22 October	Online meeting with Paul Percy, Theatre New Zealand
23 October	Online meeting with Secretariat
29 Oct/3 Nov	Attended Merida Festival, Spain
6 November	Online meeting with Paul Percy, Theatre New Zealand

8/11 Nov Attended Comité Mixte Mondial du Théâtre, Monaco
 22 November Online meeting with Secretariat
 26 November Online meeting with Alika Chandra, President of Asian Regional Committee
 29 Nov/2 Dec Attended Joint Committee World Festival of Children's Theatre, Lingen
 3 December Online Council Meeting
 6 December Online meeting with Hamza Sbai, Director FITAS Festival, Agadir, Morocco
 10 December Online meeting with Councillor Ksenia Nesterova

2025

09 January Online meeting with Secretariat
 14 January Online meeting with Candido Sobreiro re: European Theatre Awards
 15/19 January Attended Council Meeting, Brixen, South Tyrol, Italy
 24 January Online meeting with Hamza Sbai, Director FITAS Festival, Agadir, Morocco
 29 January Online meeting with Paul Percy, Theatre New Zealand
 29 January Online meeting with Lakó Zsigmond, Hungarian National Centre
 29 January Online meeting with Dirk de Corte
 04 February Online meeting with Councillor Heidi Troi
 05 February Online meeting with Secretariat
 10/13 Feb Attended series of meetings with Alika Chandra, President Asian Regional Committee, Jakarta, Indonesia
 17/20 Feb Attended series of meetings with Paul Percy, Theatre New Zealand, Wellington, New Zealand
 25 Feb Meeting with James Bell, Manager the Pump House Theatre Auckland, New Zealand
 7 March Online meeting with Hamza Sbai, Director FITAS Festival, Agadir, Morocco
 20 March Online meeting with Candido Sobreiro re: European Theatre Awards
 24 March Online meeting with Secretariat
 28 March Online meeting with Dirk de Corte
 10 April Online meeting with Hamza Sbai, Director FITAS Festival, Agadir, Morocco
 15 April Online meeting with Paul Percy, Theatre New Zealand
 22 April Online Council Meeting
 23 April Online Meeting with Nils Hanraets re: World Festival of Children's Theatre
 24 April Online meeting with Sanja Krsmanović Tasić President of IDEA
 26/29 April Attended MOSTRA Festival, Pineda de Mar, Catalonia, Spain
 4 June Online meeting with Secretariat
 18 June Online Council Meeting
 26 June/5 July Attended the 16th World Festival of Children's Theatre, Lingen, Germany and series of both formal and informal meetings:
 Meeting with Joke Quaghebeur, Director of OPENDOEK, Flanders (SGT)
 Meeting with Paul Percy, Theatre New Zealand
 Meeting with Joke Berton, OPENDOEK Coordinator - Louder Together 2026
 Meeting with Jin Hai An Art Troupe from Rizhao, China
 8 July Online meeting with Treasurer Patrick Schoenstein, Independent Financial Examiner Dirk de Corte, Bookkeeper Sue Pound and Secretariat Anne Gilmour.
 11 July Online meeting with Secretariat
 11 July Online meeting with Vice President Sofia Wegelius

Arranged at time of writing

23 July Online Council Meeting
 1/5 August Attending 95th Edition of Jiráskův Hronov Festival, Czechia
 19/28 August Attending 18th Mondial du Théâtre, Monaco
 20 August Comité Mixte Mondial du Théâtre, Monaco
 21 August Council Meeting
 23 August AITA/IATA General Assembly, Monaco

Council Activity Report 2024 – 2025

Dear AITA/IATA Members

As I write this report on behalf of Council, I have just returned from the 16th World Festival of Children's Theatre in Lingen and therefore, many different emotions and impressions of theatre, and conversations around international amateur theatre, are fresh in my head. Amateur theatre festivals are the meeting place and discussion points of our work, and I have been fortunate to represent AITA/IATA at several festivals over the past year since our last General Assembly.

For a third successive year I attended the FITAG Festival in Girona, Catalonia, Spain in late August 2024, and enjoyed many different theatre productions and I am pleased to report a healthy, developing festival under the custodianship of Xavier Valenti.

Spain has featured high in the calendar in the past twelve months and in November 2024, the AITA/IATA President was invited to attend the XIth Iberic Amateur Theatre Festival in Merida and Calamonte, Spain as the guest of the Spanish Federation ESCENAMATEUR, Federação Portuguesa de Teatro and FATEX (Federation of Theatre Associations of Extremadura). The festival took place against a background of anxiety and concern for the people of Valencia, as they struggled with the catastrophic floods which devastated the area, with a huge loss of life. However, the mood was appropriately measured and festival participants concentrated positively on the creativity on stage. As part of the weekend activities, an online forum was convened with participants from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Spain and Portugal. The focus of the forum was to look at the possibilities of creating an Iberoamerican network of amateur theatre. It was agreed that this was an ongoing project and that ESCENAMATEUR would continue to work towards this objective.

I attended the XXIst MOSTRA Festival in Pineda de Mar, Catalonia, Spain in April 2025 at the invitation of the Federació de Grups Amateurs de Teatre de Catalunya. This is an annual festival bringing groups together from all over Spain with visiting companies from France, Italy, Morocco and Portugal. The highlight of the visit to this annual festival was to sit with representatives of some of the different regions of Spain and to sign a Memorandum of Agreement: "...to promote, disseminate and strengthen amateur theatre as a cultural, educational and social tool, both locally and internationally. With this purpose in mind, they (the organisations signing the document), undertake to continue working together to establish synergies, exchanges and initiatives that contribute to the promotion of amateur theatre and its recognition as a living cultural heritage".

AITA/IATA Councillors represented the association on the Joint Committee of the 18th Mondial du Théâtre in Monaco. The association was represented by President Aled Rhys-Jones, Vice President Sofia Wegelius, Treasurer Patrick Schoenstein and Councillor Kelli McLoud-Schingen. The Joint Committee met in Monaco at the invitation of the Mondial Organising Committee and the Studio de Monaco, and considered the applications received, discussed the workshop and colloques, meeting schedules and the general arrangements for the festival and the AITA/IATA General Assembly. Grateful thanks are passed to the Mondial Organising Committee for their generous hospitality over the weekend.

AITA/IATA Councillors represented the association on the Joint Committee for the 16th World Festival of Children's Theatre, Lingen, Germany – It's About Us. The association was represented by President Aled Rhys-Jones, Vice President Sofia Wegelius and Councillor Heidi Troi. The Joint Committee met in Lingen in December 2024 for the selection of the plays and discussion of other matters relating to the festival.

The AITA/IATA Council agreed to invite the Oberbürgermeister of Lingen; Dieter Krone, to the AITA/IATA General Assembly in order for him to present a report on the festival and to offer him the opportunity to experience how the event is respected, welcomed and appreciated by the international amateur theatre community. I also attended the 16th World Festival of Children's Theatre in Lingen and represented the AITA/IATA Council.

As a result of the pandemic, the festival had not taken place since 2018 and the Theaterpädagogisches Zentrum Lingen, the City of Lingen and the County of Emsland pulled off a wonderful event after a long pause of seven years. From the spectacular open-air opening in the City Square to the end of festival party in the Hofbräu an der Wilhelmshöhe, the festival was a great success. Over 300 children participated in the event from 15 different countries: Armenia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico, Uganda and Ukraine. The festival took place in temperatures in excess of 30 degrees, and a freak storm in the middle of the week brought down some trees in the Festival Park, which curtailed some of the fringe activities organised for the children. However, the festival organisers did a remarkable job in safeguarding the event and in returning the festival to its programme, and all the performances went ahead as planned. Norbert Radermacher, as the local founder of the festival, authored a commemorative book to mark the 35th anniversary of the founding of the festival, and I contributed an article to the volume on behalf of AITA/IATA asbl. A huge congratulations and thank you to Nils Hanraets, Vera Bruns and all the professional team which led the festival, and to the 130 volunteers who welcomed the world to Lingen!

I have bought flight tickets to attend the FITAS Festival in Agadir, Morocco on two occasions but sadly external circumstances have twice prevented me from fulfilling this commitment. However, I have initiated a series of meetings with the Director of the festival, Hamza Sbai. I initially asked him for a meeting to discuss the geographic spread of his festival and to gain a better understanding of the current state of amateur theatre in the Maghreb countries. The conversation developed to discuss the participation of amateur theatre companies from the Gulf States in the FITAS Festival. I noted that it is very rare that an amateur theatre company from the Gulf States takes part in international festivals. Hamza agreed to make introductions for AITA/IATA to the contacts he has in the region. Our goal is to attempt to convene a face-to-face meeting of amateur theatre representatives from across the region.

In January 2025, the AITA/IATA Council were hosted by the Südtiroler Theaterverband and Theaterpädagogisches Zentrum Brixen for a face-to-face Council meeting in Brixen, Südtirol, Italy. Council would like to extend thanks to Theaterpädagogisches Zentrum Brixen and Councillor Heidi Troi for organising the meeting, and to Rene Mair President of Südtiroler Theaterverband and his organisation for supporting the work of the association. In addition to the general agenda, Councillor Stephen Tobias led Council through an analysis of the current health of the organisation, opened up thinking to new ideas and considered ways to move the organisation towards greater financial stability. The emphasis in this session was on thinking outside the box and looking at other potential models. The informal discussion paper is attached as an appendix to this report.

In February 2025, I travelled to Wellington, New Zealand to meet with the President of Theatre New Zealand, Paul Percy and other potential partners interested in hosting the AITA/IATA International Amateur Theatre Festival 2027. I am very grateful to Tourism New Zealand who subsidised the costs of my flight tickets and to Business Events Wellington who supported my accommodation. In Wellington, Paul Percy and I visited theatre and conference spaces, hotel accommodation, local tourist attractions and met with representatives of Drama New Zealand, Business Events Wellington and Wellington Culture and Heritage Department. Paul Percy

anticipates selecting 12 theatre companies from outside New Zealand and two home-based companies. It is likely that the event will take place at the end of the New Zealand summer in late February or March 2027. This precludes us holding a General Assembly in New Zealand as the financial year will not have ended and we will be unable to consider the accounts or create a realistic budget for the following year. Paul and I have been discussing the possibility of holding an event alongside the festival to encourage greater attendance. We have spent some time discussing potential partner organisations who might be able to deliver such an event in partnership with Theatre New Zealand. In June 2025, Theatre New Zealand submitted a full proposal to host the AITA/IATA International Amateur Theatre Festival 2027 to the Council, who welcomed the bid warmly. This bid can be seen on the AITA/IATA Website [HERE](#) and will be presented to the Members for consideration at the General Assembly in Monaco on 23 August 2025. If any group, festival or National Centre would like to host a face-to-face General Assembly in July/August of 2027, please get in touch....

I took the opportunity of a stopover in Indonesia to visit Alika Chandra, the President of ARC – the Asia Regional Committee of amateur theatre. Whilst in Jakarta, Mr Chandra and I attended a meeting with the Board of the Indonesian National Wayang Secretariat (Senawangi) at the home of the General Chairman, Air Vice Marshall (Ret.) FH Bambang Soelistyo, and signed a Letter of Intent on behalf of Senawangi and AITA/IATA asbl. The Letter of Intent recognises: “the importance of fostering cross-cultural artistic exchange in the field of performing arts and both parties acknowledged their shared mission in cultural education, development and creative collaboration. Both parties expressed their mutual interest in exploring and developing strategic collaborations that align with the global cultural policies of UNESCO, particularly in the field of performing arts”.

Associate Members Opera Academy from Singapore (website link [HERE](#)) heard through the grapevine that the AITA/IATA President would be visiting Jakarta, and several of the company took the opportunity to fly over to Jakarta and to sit and have a meeting and a conversation about their company and how to maximise on their AITA/IATA membership, make international contacts and apply to international festivals. It was a pleasure to meet with the company and to learn from them regarding their professional approach to marketing and presentation.

The Council have been involved in ongoing discussions with OPENDOEK, the amateur theatre organisation for Flanders (SGT), Belgium in response to their bid to host the World Festival of Children’s Theatre in 2026. In September 2024 Council agreed to support the initiative to create a multi-faceted event, and to attach the festival to an International Teaching Artist Conference through hosting ITAC8. However, Council raised concerns in relation to the broad age range that the festival intends to cover and the differing requirements and audiences of different age groups. Whilst some concerns remain, the AITA/IATA Council agreed to endorse the event. Louder Together - a World Children’s and Youth Performing Arts Festival and Teaching Artists Conference will take place in Antwerp, Belgium from 21 to 30 August 2026. Information [HERE](#).

For World Theatre Day 2025, we marked the event by spreading the message of the International Theatre Institute (ITI) by Theodoros Terzopoulos, from Greece: Theatre Director, Educator, Author, Founder and Artistic Director of the Attis Theatre Company, Inspirator of Theatre Olympics and Chairman of the International Committee of Theatre Olympics. Members will recall that the 2023 AITA/IATA International Amateur Theatre Festival in Debrecen, Hungary was funded through a successful bid by Hungary to host the 2023 Theatre Olympics. The AITA/IATA President also wrote a short message to mark World Theatre Day which was shared with all Members in the French, English and Spanish languages.

Councillor Kelli McCloud-Schingen continues to gather information on visa issues relating to amateur theatre festivals. She is keen to hear from all festival organisers and to collect both data and anecdotal stories relating to the kind of visa related issues that festival organisers are experiencing. Kelli will be attending the Mondial du Théâtre in Monaco and encourages members to share their visa experiences and concerns with her over a coffee.

Our Secretariat Anne Gilmour has been dealing with some health issues over the past year and has continued working as normal with only an occasional, temporary drop in hours. Anne has requested to stand down from her role as Secretariat and Council are working with her to manage this forward.

CYTheatre Report by Sofia Wegelius

Youth Think Tank

On May 19, 2024, the council arranged the first test run of a think tank for youth around the world. The idea is to let young theatre makers meet and define what activities they hope for the association. The first think tank was attended by 17 young people from 9 different countries. From that first Think Tank it became clear that what the youth wish from AITA/IATA is possibilities to physically meet and do theatre together across borders.

The council has been working this past year with a plan how to make such a meeting possible. The aim is to arrange the first AITA/IATA youth workshop in the summer 2026. The workshop will be arranged in collaboration with interested youth from all over the world.

Digital Capabilities

Masterclass

As part of a series of online Masterclasses, on Saturday 25 January 2025, AITA/IATA held a French language event in collaboration with the French National Centre FNCTA, entitled: 'The different phases of playwriting' led by the French playwright: Jean Paul Alègre, whose works have been translated into several languages, including Japanese. He spoke about the different phases of theatrical writing: the theme, the dialogues, the characters, the dramatic action. This two-hour, online masterclass was well attended with 24 tickets sold. Discussions are taking place in order to offer a Spanish Language Masterclass in the coming months.

We Are Amateur Theatre

AITA/IATA maintains the Instagram account [Weareamateurtheratre](#). The idea behind the account is to showcase amateur theatres from around the world. Groups and events can host the account one week at a time. We are building an audience for the account and during the last 90 days the Instagram profile visited have grown with 232%. The stories that the groups post gather the most views 41% and the posts 35%

Pin Yourself on the Map

In Autumn 2023, the Council launched a map feature on the association's [homepage](#). The map, offers amateur theatre companies the opportunity to pin themselves and show the world where they are located. The map was created for us by Erik Ramm-Schmidt. To pin your theatre to the map, visit the AITA/IATA website and fill out the form [HERE](#). At the moment, 234 amateur theatre groups from all around the world have pinned themselves to the map. Together they represent in the region of 24,500 theatre active individuals, according to the statistics they have sent us.

On behalf of the Council.

Aled Rhys-Jones

President

Appendix to the Council Report

AITA/IATA Council Discussion Paper January 2025 by Stephen Tobias: to stimulate discussion in Brixen.

Re: Fund-raising to support stabilisation and growth of AITA/IATA as an organisation.

1) Consider the importance of AITA/IATA by measuring and articulating the impact

- a. How many years of operation?
- b. How many festivals supported?
 - i. In how many countries?
- c. How many members?
 - i. Currently?
 - ii. Historically?
- d. How many countries/companies in the AITA/IATA network?
- e. Connected to how many major networks?
 - i. NEATA, ARC...etc?
- f. How many alumni?

2) Benefits of AITA/IATA activities

- a. Connecting Cultures
- b. Celebrating International Theatre
- c. Developing Youth & Education
 - i. Note...what are the benefits articulated for international amateur athletics for example?
- d. Fostering national pride via international connections

3) Risks to the organisation moving forward

- a. Board recruitment
- b. Staff burnout
- c. Expensive and difficult to maintain international connections
 - i. This will be compounded by a desire to avoid perception of being Euro-Centric
- d. Travel costs
- e. Organisation currently benefits from a high degree of goodwill from the board.
 - i. Travel costs etc
 - ii. The board would be currently the largest "donors" to AITA/IATA as a result of their travel costs and unpaid labour but are not recognised for this.
- f. Desire to have "diverse" membership, creates "diverse" membership income rates
- g. **This all boils down to budget issues, and the largest risk is that the current budgets are not sustainable.**

4) **Needs:**

a. Short-term:

- i. Making the shift to a Culture of Philanthropy
 1. Commitment to building a donor base
 2. Charity starts at home – friends and family of the organisation first
 - a. Identify the need – difficult to fundraise for the status quo
 - i. Articulate a long term goal
 - ii. Create a budget around that goal
 - iii. Create a donor chart (donor pyramid)
 1. All donors are not created equal, nor should they be treated equally
 - b. Strategize donor requests
 - i. Give before you get
 - ii. Giving is not ranked or subject to any kind of quota – each would give according to their own ability
 - c. In my system, board members are donors – fundraisers – advocates
 - i. Again – no one is subject to a quota
 - d. Expanding the circle of prospects via research
 - e. All requests are targetted and strategised
 - f. Match the prospect with the individual making the request
 - g. Prospects could be individual, corporate or NGO
 - ii. Right size budget to eliminate annual deficits
 1. How much?

b. Mid-Term:

1. Build staff
 - a. What would ideal staffing look like for a mature organisation?
2. Acquire CRM and create a development routine
 - a. Would require staff
3. Develop enhanced services:
 - a. Enhanced Newsletters for all alumni
 - b. Training opportunities
 - c. Greater Festival and Event Support
 - d. Travel support
 - e. Digital Library
4. Development of more formal workbooks and 'how-to' guides
 - a. Might require additional consultant support
5. Possible Annual awards recognising "service to AITA/IATA"
6. What would a budget look like for this?

c. Longer term

1. Significantly larger budgets for staff
2. Larger budgets for board support
3. Larger marketing and communications budgets to support activities

5) Sources of support

- a. Existing Board
- b. Former Board Members
- c. Partner organisations
- d. Organisations that do 'good business' with AITA/IATA
- e. Alumni of AITA/IATA
- f. Who would (in theory) be a 'major patron'
- g. Companies or organisations influenced by AITA/IATA stakeholders
- h. Government or other "Public Funding" – Might require staff or special dedicated committee
- i. Tourism Bureaus?

Call for nominations: 41st AITA/IATA asbl General Assembly Monaco 23 August 2025

21 February 2025

In accordance with the **Constitution of AITA/IATA asbl**, the 2025 General Assembly (GA) in Monaco will proceed to the partial renewal of Council. The President and Councillor Aled Rhys-Jones will reach the end of his four-year term of office and is not eligible for re-election. Three Councillors will reach the end of their first four-year term of office and are entitled to stand again for election. There is currently also one vacant Councillor post.

- **President and Councillor Aled Rhys-Jones** (reached the end of a third term of office and is not eligible for re-election)
- **Councillor Sofia Wegelius** (elected for a four-year term of office in 2021)
- **Councillor Ksenia Nesterova** (elected for a four-year term of office in 2021)
- **Councillor Patrick Schoenstein** (elected for a four-year term of office in 2021)
- **Vacant Councillor post**

President Aled Rhys-Jones has reached the end of his third consecutive term of office and is not eligible for re-election; Councillor Sofia Wegelius has declared her intention not to seek re-election as a Councillor but will present her candidacy for election as President; Councillor Patrick Schoenstein has declared his availability to renew his mandate as Councillor at the end of his first term in office; Councillor Ksenia Nesterova does not seek re-election.

The 2025 General Assembly will, therefore, elect a President and four Councillors who will all be appointed and take office immediately following election. The Councillors are elected for a mandated period of four (4) years ("the Mandate Term"). These posts take an active role in the general management of the Association.

Any natural person can announce their candidacy for these posts. Each candidate needs the written support of at least two (2) Members (National Centre or Associate). Only Members (National Centre or Associate) who have paid their **2024/2025** Membership Fee can support candidates. Only Members who have paid their **2025/2026** Membership Fee can vote at the 2025 Monaco General Assembly.

Description of functions under the Constitution of AITA/IATA asbl

President – The President of AITA/IATA asbl represents the Association officially upon all occasions.

President & Councillors - share the joint responsibility, delegated to them by the GA, for the strategic governance and the day-to-day management of the Association by ensuring that the vision, mission, values and practices are in line with the objects of the Association.

The President & Councillors are not remunerated by AITA/IATA asbl, nor do they receive any allowances. To enable Council to deliberate validly, candidates **agree to participate in all statutory meetings** and must have secured the provision for funding their travel expenses before submitting their application. These points should be **clarified explicitly** in the Candidates application letter.

Candidates who believe that they can fulfil the duties either of the President or a Councillor, are called upon to declare their intention to stand for election. Following the approval of candidates by Council, approved candidates must comply with the precise terms and procedures of the timetable attached to this notification.

In accordance with the Election Timetable below, a candidacy must have been received by the President and Secretariat by **midnight GMT on Monday 26 May 2025**

Electoral Process and Timetable 2024 - 2025

To prepare the elections with greatest transparency in time for the General Assembly of 2025, Council will proceed according to the following timetable, which is limited to change only within the Constitution.

- **31 December 2024** : date by when Councillors who wish to renew their mandate confirm their intention to do so.
 - Councillor Sofia Wegelius
 - Councillor Ksenia Nesterova
 - Councillor Patrick Schoenstein
- **Saturday 22 February 2025** : date by when Members will receive the first call of the General Assembly by email. Also, the date by when the call for candidates to the role of President and four (4) Councillor posts will be sent to all Members with voting rights. Any natural person can announce their candidacy. For a candidacy to be valid, a candidate must have the support of at least two (2) Members (National Centre or Associate) of the organisation¹.
- **Monday 26 May 2025** : date by when a candidacy must have been received by the President and Secretariat. The Secretariat will check all candidacies received and acknowledge their receipt.
- **Saturday 28 June 2025** : date by when the complete list of individual candidates will be sent by email to Members with voting rights: these will be Members (National Centre or Associate) accepted by the AITA/IATA Council as having membership rights for 2024. Also, the deadline for the draft agenda of the General Assembly to have been sent to all Members (National Centre and Associate).
- **Saturday 26 July 2025** : date by when the Secretariat of AITA/IATA asbl must receive at least two Member (National Centre / Associate) Support Forms for each candidate. In accordance with the Constitution of the Association, only Members (National Centre or Associate) with voting rights at the 2025 General Assembly can vote for candidates. Also, the deadline for the receipt of Members' proposals (National Centre or Associate) for consideration at the General Assembly.
- **Friday 8 August 2025** : date by when Council will have examined the validity of and agreed the list of candidates. Also, the deadline by when the agreed list of candidates will be emailed to all Members together with the Statutory documents of the General Assembly, prior to the meeting of the General Assembly on Saturday 23 August 2025 in Monaco.

¹ In order to be valid, the support of at least two (2) Members (National Centre or Associate) must be on a Support Form which will be emailed to all Members. (Decided by Council in October 2016)

Candidature for President

Statement of Intent by Sofia Wegelius

To the President International Amateur Theatre Association (AITA/IATA) Mr Aled Rhys- Jones c/o MAI, 40 Rue Washington 1050 Bruxelles-Ixelles Belgium	Sofia Wegelius Kopingsvagen 15 G Grankulla, Finland sofia.wegelius@fsu.fi +358405408114
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19.05.2025

Dear Mr President, Council, Members, and Associates,

With a strong sense of commitment and deep appreciation for the work of our global community, I wish to formally present my candidacy for the position of President of AITA/IATA.

Since 2021, I have had the honor of serving as Vice-President of AITA/IATA and as President of NEATA, the Nordic and Baltic regional network. These roles have allowed me to gain valuable perspective on the needs and strengths of our membership, while also taking an active role in shaping the organization's development. My focus has been on member services, digital growth, and youth engagement-key areas that I believe are essential for our long-term vitality.

Professionally, I work as a theatre coordinator for a national amateur theatre organization in Finland, with a special focus on children and youth within the Swedish-speaking minority. I approach leadership as a cultural producer and organizer-practical, inclusive, and deeply rooted in collaboration.

I believe that transparency is one of the most important qualities in leadership.

I have the full support of the Finnish centre of AITA/IATA, and that centre receives governmental funding. This support is confirmed for this year and the next. Based on experience, I believe it will continue beyond that, but it cannot be guaranteed since we apply funding one year at the time. Should that governmental support change, I remain committed to the role, though there may be an impact on my ability to travel on behalf of the association.

I am a full-time working mum, and while I carry deep passion for this association, my time and resources are not unlimited. My vision for our organisation is to share the responsibility of representation across the Council-to work as a team to ensure that AITA/IATA maintains a strong, active presence globally. I want to continue to focus on the development of our youth program, on creating visible content and on activities for our members.

What I can promise is hard work, dedication, and a strong belief in our shared mission. I want to continue supporting the growth of an organization that is responsive, accessible, and full of life. I hope to build on the solid foundation laid by Aled Rhys-Jones-keeping unnecessary drama out of the organization's management and putting it, rightly, back on the stage where it belongs.

Thank you for your consideration and trust. I would be honored to serve as your President.

Warm regards,



Sofia Wegelius

Candidature for Councillor Statement of Intent by Kevin Dowsett



I initially trained as a drama teacher (University of Birmingham 1970-73) and worked in schools in the West Midlands and inner London for 14 years before becoming the Theatre Tutor at London's Curtain Theatre. There I led professional programmes exploring plays, creating a youth theatre and advising London schools and creating many performances. I then taught acting extensively in London drama schools, including [Rose Bruford College](#), [East 15 Acting School](#), the Academy of

Live and Recorded Arts, and the [Italia Conti Academy of Theatre Arts](#), where I was Head of Acting. For six years, I taught Advanced Acting Process (a weekly course for professional actors) at the City Literary Institute in London.

I joined AITA/IATA in 1991 after taking a group of London students to the then Czechoslovakia (in 1989) and leading the GB students to EDERED 1990 in Echternach, Luxembourg. Since then, I have been a frequent attendee at Congress and the General Assembly, both at Monaco and beyond.

In 1992, I founded [Theatretrain](#), a young people's performing arts training company which now has over 75 companies across England and Wales. It has a unique approach to process and performance, helping young people become part of something bigger than themselves. We do this through large-scale performance, and I have produced and directed more than 100 performances in West End theatres, including 13 at the Royal Albert Hall. For over 30 years, Theatretrain has created links with many worldwide companies and participated in festivals and exchanges. In 2010, I created a performance called Voices for a Better World at the Royal Albert Hall. This performance brought together 150 young people from 33 countries worldwide from 5 continents to London, where they were hosted by Theatretrain for 10 days at Imperial College, the university situated next to the Royal Albert Hall.

This September, our production of *We're Gonna Change the World* returns to the Royal Albert Hall with 1200 performers – it asks the question, what is wrong with the world, and what are we going to do to fix it? Unusually, the young people summon the world leaders (Trump, Putin and Xi represented by giant hanging puppets) into their midst.

In 2009, 2010, and 2013, I directed and produced huge performances involving up to 6,000 performers at the [O2 Arena in London](#). *The Long and Winding Road* told the story of the Beatles, *Licence to Thrill* was a pastiche of James Bond using the original songs, and the third was the 20th anniversary of Theatretrain, where every student took part.

Since 2004, I have been President of the National Centre of AITA/IATA Great Britain. I was initially on the Board and later became President of [EDERED](#) (2007-13), organising and raising European funding for a successful GB Encounter in Ipswich in 2013. I later served as Secretary and Treasurer of CEC (2015-9).

I have published the following books about the performing arts:

- Dream Date (1984) a play published by Samuel French Ltd.
- The Theatretrain Way (Amazon 2012)
- 100 Days: Developing the Performer's Mindset (Amazon 2021)
- Two Planks and a Passion (Amazon 2024)

I continue to write a weekly blog (over 200 now) give international workshops, adjudicate (most recently in Dublin 2023), and write publications and books. This summer (2025), I am giving workshops at the Drama League of Ireland's Annual Summer School at the University of Limerick.

My main focus is the teaching of the performing arts to all ages – professional or non-professional. I believe it transforms people by giving them a safe space to create an imagined life, stand back from it, understand it, leave, return and perform it to an audience. It has rules that can be broken and played with. Play is fundamental to our human condition. It ought to feature more highly in education, particularly as more and more time is spent, in school and out, on screens. It is live and in the now. The performing arts are an area AI will find difficult to duplicate in real time, especially with work in the moment, which I regard to be the highest artistic level of our work.

I have thought and written about theatre and education, and led workshops for 50 years. I am keen to work internationally with like-minded individuals who want to leave the world a better place by raising the impact and status of the performing arts. I believe AITA/IATA needs to be financially sound, have the widest possible global reach of membership and deliver a programme of wide-ranging creative events through collaboration with partners and existing festivals.

Kevin Dowsett

Candidature for Councillor Statement of Intent by Joke Quaghebeur

Dear President and Council,

With great enthusiasm, I announce my candidacy for the AITA/IATA Council—a carefully considered decision after thoughtful reflection. Time commitment, belief in the organization, and the question “Can I make a valuable contribution?” all led to a resounding YES!

My first encounter with AITA/IATA dates back to 2015, when I had the honour of organising the international edition of Spots op West. Honestly, it was overwhelming: within just two months, I had to arrange transportation, accommodation, and catering for both the theatre companies and all the representatives. A challenge indeed! But ultimately, it was brought to a successful conclusion—so much so that I still hear people talk about Spots op West today.

In 2016, I became General Manager of OPENDOEK, with an initial focus on Flanders (SGT) and Brussels. Nine years later, we have achieved many milestones, including the establishment of our open house—a place where anyone with a passion for theatre is welcome. Since 2021, I’ve also served on the CEC Board, where I work with my colleagues to bring fresh energy and new dynamics.

Over the years, through general assemblies and festivals, I’ve come to know the vibrant theatre family that is AITA/IATA. Like most families, it is diverse and dynamic. These gatherings often resemble family reunions (albeit with relatives from far and wide): filled with lively debates, passionate opinions, celebration, and a shared appreciation of our common history.

As one of the largest National Centres, I believe it is my responsibility to contribute to the growth and strengthening of this remarkable international theatre family. I hope to bring greater impact to AITA/IATA through my expertise in organisation, events, networking, and fundraising.

In recent years, I have come to deeply value the importance of international exchange. We all pursue the same goals and have so much to learn from one another. I want to help create and facilitate that space within this organisation.

In today’s world, we must stand together, remain alert to global developments, and ensure that *all* regions of the world are represented within AITA/IATA. Sustainability, renewal, and diversity in all forms are high on my agenda. We must continue to make the case to political leaders for the value of amateur theatre—a passion that brings people together, fosters connection, and supports mental well-being.

To gain even more momentum, I would like to work with the Council to further professionalise the organisation, secure necessary funding, and better support our global network of like-minded individuals.

Candidature for Councillor Statement of Intent by Lakó Zsigmond



April 18, 2025

Dear AITA/IATA Council, National Centres and Associates,

I am pleased at the opportunity to stand for the position of Council Member of the AITA/IATA organization.

My name is Lakó Zsigmond, I am from Debrecen, Hungary. I graduated as an English and Italian teacher and philologist at the University of Debrecen. I specialized in English Theatre Studies and I did a postgraduate course in theatre pedagogy at the University of Theatre and Film Studies in Budapest. I wrote my PhD thesis on Pier Paolo Pasolini's Theatre. At present, I am the vice president of the Hungarian Amateur Theatre Association (MSzJSz), a university lecturer at the University of Debrecen, director of the Art Centre of the Faculty of Humanities and also director of the University Theatre of Debrecen. I work as a coordinator of the Hungarian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale on behalf of the Ludwig Museum Budapest. I was a co-organizer of the AITA/IATA International Amateur Theatre Festival & General Assembly in Debrecen, 19-25 June 2023. From March 2025 I am a board member of the AITA's Central European Committee. I have been teaching students specializing in theatre studies at the Ady Endre High School since 2006, and I also work with students on theatre productions both in Hungarian and in English language at the University Theatre of Debrecen. As part of the Regional Amateur Theatre programme, I work with a different amateur theatre group in Hajdú-Bihar County, Hungary each year. With the Debrecen University Theatre and the Hungarian Amateur Theatre Organization we regularly organize national amateur and student theatre festivals, along with other art festivals and collateral art events.

In 2019 the VígKarma Company of the Debrecen University Theatre was selected to participate in the AITA/IATA Festival in Saint John, Canada. It was a defining experience for me, and after that encounter I started collaborating with AITA/IATA asbl on a more profound level. In 2021 at the Monaco General Assembly, I announced Debrecen's candidacy for the organization of the 2023 Festival, which, at the end, we managed to organize with success as part of the 10th International Theatre Olympics.

I believe in dialogue and networking, and in my opinion that is exactly what AITA asbl has been facilitating on the international level since its foundation. Already when I first met with the AITA, I felt that I can learn a lot from the encounters that the organization can offer through its members and events, and I also felt that I really want to be part of the community and try to contribute to it with my national and international experience in cultural diplomacy and organization. What we need in these hard times is exactly what AITA can offer: continuous dialogue through art, strengthening the international network of small communities, all in order to hear and understand each other better.

It would be a great privilege and honour for me to serve the cause of amateur theatre on the international level as an official member of the council of such a prestigious association as the AITA/IATA asbl. I really hope you consider my candidacy.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lakó Zsigmond

Candidature for Councillor Statement of Intent by Patrick Schoenstein



Honorary Chairman of Fncta (Fédération Nationale des Compagnies de Théâtre Amateur) - Centre National Français Aita advisor since 2021 and Associate Member n° 348 for the Compagnie Théâtre de la Roële.

Elected to the position of Aita Councillor at the General Assembly in Monaco in 2021, I have been Treasurer of the association since 2023, following the defection of the elected Treasurer.

I chaired the French national centre (Fncta) for 28 years and became its honorary president in May 2024.

As cultural director of a town with a population of 20,000 in eastern France, in 1975 I set up a theatre and an amateur theatre company, the Théâtre de la Roële, mainly intended to host amateur theatre shows, with 60 performances per season.

I hold two honours from the French government: the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres and the Ordre National du Mérite.

I have represented the French National Centre at the various General Meetings of Aita since 1990 and I have taken part in the various Forums and focus groups on the modification of Aita's statutes. In particular, I defended the predominant role that I believe the national centres should have.

As an advisor, I regularly took part in face-to-face and video meetings of the Board. On behalf of Aita, I organised a French-language video training course featuring a contemporary playwright, Jean Paul Alègre.

As a member of the Festival Mondial's Joint Committee, I acted as an intermediary between the Organising Committee and the French organiser of the Mondial's colloquia, Lilian Lloyd.

I'm standing for re-election as an advisor, so that I can bring my experience to the association and possibly continue to act as treasurer.

Two points seem to me to be the most important for the future if we want our association to be truly representative of amateur theatre at international level:

- To continue to increase the number of member national centres and the number of associate members at the same time
- Ensure that our association does not become an association managed by a strictly 'Western' or even 'European' board.

Candidature for Councillor Statement of Intent by Cândido Sobreiro

Dear Council, Members and Associates of AITA/IATA asbl.

Thank you for this opportunity. It is with a great enthusiasm that I submit my application for a position on the Council Member of the AITA/IATA.

I work in the field of International Relations within higher education and I am the co-founder of Teatro de Balugas, a theatre company and cultural association, which was founded in 2007 and is based in the city of Barcelos, Portugal. My connection to theatre and cultural associations dates back to 1997 and has always been marked by a strong artistic and community involvement. I am currently a member of the Portuguese Theatre Federation.

I have been the Artistic Director of Teatro de Balugas for 18 years, during which I have developed numerous artistic partnerships and productions that have been showcased at festivals in Portugal, Spain, Italy, Hungary, and Monaco. Among these, I highlight the trilogy consisting of the plays "Pão Nosso" (performed at Mondial du Théâtre, Monaco, 2021), "Raposos" (performed at FITAG - International Amateur Theatre Festival of Girona, Spain, 2022), and "A Furgoneta" (performed at the AITA International Amateur Theatre Festival - Debrecen, Hungary, 2023).

As the director of a theatre company, participating in various international festivals with the support of AITA/IATA has allowed me to get to know the association, its members, and its structure firsthand, as well as sharing its objectives and mission. I believe this experience can be helpful in supporting and motivating other theatre companies and groups.

Alongside the theatrical project, I am the director of PALCO DE TERRA - Amateur Theatre Festival of the Northwest Iberian Peninsula, a cross-border festival dedicated to North of Portugal and Galicia (Spain). I also coordinate the organisation and awarding of the GIL VICENTE - European Amateur Theatre Awards, which aim to recognise and honour European amateur theatre across various categories. These awards celebrate the excellence and diversity of European amateur theatre, valuing it as an act of citizenship and artistic expression.

My largest international project is directing LÍNGUA - International Festival of Theatre in Minority Languages. It is one of the most inspiring theatre festivals in the world, dedicated to bringing to the stage and preserving for future memory the languages and dialects at risk of disappearing from the world.

My experience in organising cross-border and international initiatives and festivals, as well as my contact with various theatre groups from different continents—especially those working in minority languages—has allowed me to develop knowledge and skills in areas such as international relations, production, funding, and logistics. I believe this experience can be a valuable contribution to AITA/IATA as it continues to expand across different parts of the world.

In addition to the LÍNGUA festival, I am responsible for the UNESCO Club for the Safeguarding of Theatre in Minority Languages, based in Portugal. Theatre, as an oral, written, and performative expression, is a privileged means for the protection and continuity of many languages and dialects listed in the "UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger". It also aligns with the commitment to "The International Decade of Indigenous Language", United Nations initiative that runs from 2022 to 2032.

This international cooperation and research is yet another added value that theatre can offer to society. Regarding AITA/IATA's cultural and social responsibilities, the protection and promotion of

these languages and their performances is a task I can help to develop further, drawing on my experience in coordinating the festival and the UNESCO Club.

I thank you for your time and hope this brief letter of intent reflects my commitment and the experience I bring to this application, remaining fully available to provide any additional clarification. More than just an application for the AITA Council, this is an expression of my desire to contribute to its ongoing growth, embracing this cause with passion and responsibility. I see it as a unique opportunity to learn, grow, and collaborate with colleagues, partners, and organisations worldwide — using theatre as a powerful tool to make the world a better place.

AITA/IATA asbl Finance 2024 – 2025

To delegates at the General Assembly 23 August 2025

Financial Statements follow:

- AITA/IATA Profit and Loss Statement 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025
- The Statement of Balance at 31 March 2025
- The Account Controller's Certificate 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025
- Budget Proposals 2025 – 2026

On behalf of the AITA/IATA asbl Council, I submit the accounts for your approval.

6 August 2025

Patrick Schoenstein

Patrick Schoenstein

Treasurer

AITA/IATA asbl Profit and Loss Statement

1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

	Closing balance (Debit)	Closing balance (Credit)
Profit and loss statement		
Operation Profit and costs		
Operating income (code 70/74)		
Membership, donations, legacies and subsidies		
730010 - Membership Fees National Centres		14,169.58
730020 - Membership Fees Associate Members Groups		1,929.24
730030 - Membership Fees Associate Members Individuals		2,213.84
Total: Membership, donations, legacies and subsidies		18,312.66
Other operating income		
740000 - Other operating income		302.78
740102 - Withdrawals from Children and Youth Fund		2,120.88
Total: Other operating income		2,423.66
Total: Operating income (code 70/74)		20,736.32
Operating charges		
Services and other goods		
610900 - Subcontracting Secretariat	12,100.00	
610905 - Subcontracting Accounting	3,000.00	
610906 - Subcontracting Tutors	220.00	
611011 - Office Expenses	260.00	
611014 - Postage and Freight	24.20	
611016 - Internet & Web	3,090.85	
613100 - Phone	573.47	
615000 - Registration Belgium	580.80	
615006 - Legal Fees	103.39	
615007 - Subscription Accounting Package	551.76	
616002 - Travel expenses and grants paid	1,074.20	
617003 - Expenses funded from Children and Youth Fund	2,120.88	
Total: Services and other goods	23,699.55	
Other operating charges		
644000 - Miscellaneous operating charges	250.00	
Total: Other operating charges	250.00	
Total: Operating charges	23,949.55	
Total: Operation Profit and costs	3,213.23	
Financial revenues and costs		
Financial income		
Income from financial fixed assets.		
750100 - Bank interest		625.63
Total: Income from financial fixed assets.		625.63
Total: Financial income		625.63
Financial charges		
Other financial charges		
651002 - Bank fees	206.35	
Total: Other financial charges	206.35	
Total: Financial charges	206.35	
Total: Financial revenues and costs		419.28
790000 - Loss of book year		2,793.95
Total: LOSS OF BOOK YEAR		2,793.95

The Statement of Balance at 31 March 2025

	Closing balance (Debit)	Closing balance (Credit)
Balance sheet		
Assets		
Current assets		
Deferred charges and accrued income (Asset)		
491000 - Accrued income	104.45	
Total: Deferred charges and accrued income (Asset)	104.45	
Cash at bank and in hand		
550000 - Belfius Current Account	16,056.06	
550001 - Belfius Savings Account	56,250.54	
Total: Cash at bank and in hand	72,306.60	
Total: Current assets	72,411.05	
Total: Assets	72,411.05	
Liabilities		
Social fund		
Associate funds		
Starting capital		
100000 - Association Funds		1.00
Total: Starting capital		1.00
Total: Associate funds		1.00
Allocated funds		
131011 - Fund for Children and Youth		6,593.26
131012 - Strategic Development Fund		7,823.00
Total: Allocated funds		14,416.26
Accumulated profits / Lost		
140000 - Profits carried forward		42,417.54
Total: Accumulated profits / Lost		42,417.54
Total: Social fund		56,834.80
Debts		
Amounts payable within one year (toel. X)		
Trade debts		
Suppliers		
440000 - Suppliers		2,309.50
Total: Suppliers		2,309.50
Total: Trade debts		2,309.50
Total: Amounts payable within one year (toel. X)		2,309.50
Deferred charges and accrued income (Liabilities)		
493100 - Accruals pre-paid income - invoices to receive		12,916.75
493110 - CEC Fees		350.00
Total: Deferred charges and accrued income (Liabilities)		13,266.75
Total: Debts		15,576.25
Total: Liabilities		72,411.05
Result		
Result for selected periods: 1 - 12		
Total: Result		
Total: Balance sheet	72,411.05	72,411.05

Account Controller's Certificate

1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

AITA/IATA Account Controller's Certificate

Bookyear 01/04/2024 – 31/03/2025

Ghent, 24 July 2025

We have examined the financial statements of AITA/IATA asbl ("the Association") for the accounting year 1 April 2024 - 31 March 2025 which comprises the Profit and Loss Account, the Balance Sheet and related notes together with supporting accounting reports and copies of Bank Statements. We have also been supplied with copies of all Council Meeting Minutes which outline decisions taken with regard to financial transactions during the accounting year 1 April 2024 - 31 March 2025.

We have obtained all the information and explanations that we considered necessary to carry out our role as Account Controller and can confirm that proper books of account have been kept by the Association, the financial statements are in agreement with the books of accounts, and that accounts are compliant with Belgian Accounting Practices for Not for Profit Organisations (*verenigingen zonder winstoogmerk-associations sans but lucratif*).

2024-2025 shows an accounting loss of 2,793.95 EUR, taking into account a withdrawal from the Fund for Children and Youth of 2,120.88 EUR. Therefore, the 2024-2025 year shows an operating loss of 4,914.83 EUR.

Following a Council decision on 23 July 2025, it was decided to reinstate the Fund for Children and Youth to its original 6,593.26 EUR. This adjustment was done by transferring 2,913.29 EUR from the carried forward results to the said Fund. As this decision has an impact on past bookings, it will be expressed in the 2024-2025 accounts, even when the decision itself was taken post the 2024-2025 book year.

As a result, the net worth of the Association (Allocated Funds of 14,416.26 EUR) plus Carried Forward Results of 42,417.54 EUR) on 31 March 2025 is 56,834.80 EUR, compared to 61,749.58 EUR on 31 March 2024 (end of previous book year, i.e. 2023-2024), the difference being the operating loss of 4,914.83 EUR mentioned above.

Although this loss warrants attention, we see no reason to question the Association's status as a going concern as the cash position of the Association is still 72,306.60 EUR, or nearly three times the current annual cost.

Signature



Dirk De Corte,

Ghent, 24 July 2025

Vision Statement: Candidate for Presidency, Sofia Wegelius

Candidacy for President, International Amateur Theatre Association

As a candidate for President of the International Amateur Theatre Association, my mission is to strengthen our global community through increased engagement, shared creativity, and meaningful exchange. I believe deeply in the power of amateur theatre to connect, inspire, and reflect the diversity of our cultures and stories.

I want to become President because I see possibilities, roads yet to be travelled for this organisation. I have many ideas for how we can improve, especially in how we engage and support our members. I am a person full of passion and ideas. I work hard, and I thrive in collaboration with others who are driven and creative. I want to help build a space where more voices are heard, more perspectives shared, and more people feel connected and inspired.

One of my goals is to continue the valuable initiatives launched by the current council, including the international masterclasses and conferences that have created new spaces for learning, exchange, and inspiration. I am also committed to supporting and helping bring together the upcoming AITA/IATA youth event next summer—an exciting opportunity to invest in the next generation of amateur theatre. Looking ahead I have many new ideas for future projects and collaborations, that can further strengthen our network and benefit our members. In addition, I will support the ongoing process of planning and developing our world festivals, which are at the heart of AITA/IATA's international spirit and visibility.

I am a full-time working mother, and that reality will naturally influence how I approach this role. There may be times when professional or personal responsibilities mean I cannot travel or attend all international events in person. My vision is that this responsibility will be shared among the council members, taking in consideration the councillors expertise and geographical placement. I believe this is not only a practical solution—it also reflects an important commitment to ecological sustainability. AITA/IATA should lead by example in reducing unnecessary travel where we can, while still remaining present, international and engaged.

Leadership for me is not about being everywhere at once—it is about setting a direction, creating space for others, and building strong, supportive structures. That is why I will work closely with the AITA/IATA council, sharing ideas and responsibilities so that we lead this organisation together, as a team.

As we part ways here in Monaco, AITA/IATA stands on the edge of significant change. Our long-serving Secretary, Anne Gilmour, is stepping down. Her contributions over the years have been invaluable—her dedication, knowledge, and personality have played a central role in keeping the organisation strong, vibrant and steady. I am personally immensely thankful for the support she has given me through the years.

Our first responsibility as a council will be to welcome and support the new Secretary in the work ahead and in getting to better know the AITA/IATA community. It is important that the transition is as smooth as possible, and that the legacy Anne has built up is carried forward in a way that strengthens the organisation.

I am fully aware of the association's limited financial resources. One of my priorities will be to review our current costs—particularly in relation to digital tools and platforms—to ensure we are using our budget wisely and efficiently. By streamlining systems and seeking creative, sustainable solutions, we can continue to offer valuable services to our members without increasing spending.

If I am elected, the presidency may look somewhat different from previous years. But the world is changing, and so is our organisation. Change is not necessarily better, but it is inevitable—and I believe that, together with the council, the new Secretary, I can help AITA/IATA move forward with clarity, inclusiveness, and creativity.

Thank you for your consideration

Sofia Wegelius

Council's Proposed AITA/IATA asbl Budget Profit and Loss: 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026

INCOME	
Membership of National Centres and autonomous territories	€ 17,840
Group and individual associate member memberships	€ 6,140
SUM Membership fee	€ 23,980.00
Subsidies	€ 0
Income from activities	€ 300
Designated funds	€ 0
SUM Other income	€ 300
Bank interest	€ 500
Realized gains on exchange	€ 0
SUM Financial income	€ 500.00
Total income	€ 24,780.00
EXPENSES	
Subcontracting secretariat	€ 13,200.00
Subcontracting accounting	€ 3,000.00
SUM Staff	€ 16,200.00
Miscellaneous office expenses	€ 200
Postal address (MAI)	€ 300
Shipping and freight	€ 0
Phone	€ 500
Internet & web	€ 3,100
Archives	€ 0
Subscription for the accounting package	€ 550
SUM Office expenses	€ 4,650.00
Registration Belgium	€ 605
Audit	€ 0
Legal fees	€ 100
Forum/congress	€ 0
Autres organisations (UNESCO & FAIB)	€ 615
Other expenditure	€ 0
SUM Operating costs	€ 1,320.00
Meeting expenses	€ 0
Travel expenses and subsidies	€ 1,000
Children and Youth (DIE Congress Grant)	€ 1,000
Representation	€ 500
SUM Operating costs	€ 2,500.00
Bank fees	€ 110
Realized exchange losses	€ 0
SUM Financial expenses	€ 110.00
Depreciations	€ 0
Depreciations SUM	€ 0
TOTAL Expenses	€ 24,780.00
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	- €