

TEMPLATE FOR THE GOOD PRACTICE

What is a good practice?

A good practice is not only a practice that is good, but a practice that has been proven to work well and produce good results, and is therefore recommended as a model. It is a successful experience, which has been tested and validated, in the broad sense, which has been repeated and deserves to be shared so that a greater number of people can adopt it.

Please follow the instructions included to fill in the template. You can replace the guiding questions for each element with your description.

Mandatory fields are defined by *

Element	Description
Title*	<i>Partnerships as a Driver of Professional Excellence in Music Education</i>
Name of the VET Provider	<i>Yerevan State Music College after Romanos Melikyan, Armenia</i>
Thematic domain	• Creating partnerships/skills ecosystems • Innovation • Lifelong learning
Introduction*	Introduction <i>Yerevan State Music College after Romanos Melikyan is a specialised state vocational and professional music education institution in Yerevan, Armenia, with a history of more than a century, dating back to 1923.</i> <i>The College provides professional education in instrumental and vocal performance, choral conducting and music theory. Due to the practice-oriented nature of professional music education, the development of students' competences requires a close relationship between formal education and the wider professional, cultural and artistic environment.</i> <i>Professional musicians develop their competences not only through structured educational programmes, but also through interaction with practising professionals, cultural institutions, educational organisations, employers and other stakeholders. This creates a need for educational partnerships that connect learning with professional practice and the cultural ecosystem.</i> <i>In response to this need, the College has been developing a partnership-based approach to professional music education, in which cooperation with external stakeholders contributes to students' professional development, staff learning, cultural engagement and institutional development.</i> <i>Since 2025, this approach has been progressively strengthened through professional exchange, masterclasses, training activities, cooperation with</i>

cultural and educational organisations, stakeholder engagement and international peer learning.

The practice is based on a shift from occasional or event-based cooperation towards purposeful and sustainable partnerships built around shared educational and professional interests.

Stakeholders and Partners

The primary beneficiaries of the practice are the College's students and graduates. Teaching staff and accompanists are also important participants and beneficiaries, particularly through professional exchange and continuing learning.

The wider stakeholder community includes:

- cultural and artistic organisations;*
- professional musicians and practitioners;*
- employers and potential employers;*
- educational and training institutions;*
- non-governmental organisations;*
- public institutions;*
- international partner institutions;*
- organisations operating in the cultural and creative sectors.*

The College's partnership network supports different forms of cooperation, including professional meetings, masterclasses, training activities, concerts and artistic events, exchange of experience, practical learning opportunities and joint initiatives.

The College seeks to develop partnerships based on reciprocal contribution, whereby educational and external partners share expertise, experience and opportunities for professional learning.

An international dimension is also developing through peer learning and benchmarking with partner institutions abroad. Cooperation with a Georgian music education institution has included staff exchange, online professional discussions and comparison of approaches to professional music education, creating a basis for further methodological, educational and cultural cooperation.

An emerging international dimension complements the national partnership network. The College has initiated peer-learning and benchmarking cooperation with a Georgian music education institution, involving professional exchange, online discussions and comparison of approaches to music education. The cooperation provides a basis for further methodological, educational and cultural initiatives.

Impact*

The practice has strengthened the connection between the College's educational environment and the wider professional and cultural context in which its graduates will continue their careers.

For students, partnerships extend learning beyond the formal educational setting by creating opportunities to interact with professional practitioners and participate in masterclasses, concerts, professional meetings and other educational and cultural activities. These experiences provide additional exposure to professional practices and expectations.

For teaching staff, cooperation with external professionals and partner institutions creates opportunities for continuing professional development, exchange of experience and exposure to different artistic and pedagogical approaches. In this respect, the practice supports lifelong learning within the institution's professional community.

The partnership approach has also broadened the College's opportunities for institutional cooperation and created a more structured basis for interaction with organisations from education, culture, professional practice and community engagement.

The international dimension provides an additional mechanism for professional learning. Peer learning and benchmarking enable the College to compare approaches, reflect on its own experience and identify opportunities for further cooperation.

Evidence of the practice includes partnership agreements and memoranda, records of professional and educational activities, documentation of masterclasses and training activities, institutional and departmental reports, stakeholder feedback and records of international cooperation.

The principal impact of the practice is the development of a more interconnected professional learning environment in which education, professional practice, cultural cooperation and continuing professional development reinforce one another.

**Innovation and
Success Factors ***

The innovative dimension of the practice lies in treating partnerships not merely as supplementary activities, but as a structural element of professional music education.

The approach recognises that a specialised music education institution operates within a wider ecosystem connecting education, culture, professional practice and employment. The College therefore seeks to create meaningful and reciprocal relationships between these spheres.

The approach can be represented as a continuous cycle:

Educational needs → identification of relevant partners → shared objectives → joint activities → reflection and exchange → further cooperation

This model is particularly relevant to music education, where professional competence encompasses technical mastery, artistic expression, practical experience, communication, professional behaviour and familiarity with the cultural and professional environment.

Key success factors include:

- institutional commitment to external cooperation;*
- active participation of teaching and professional staff;*
- identification of partners according to educational and professional needs;*
- involvement of practising professionals;*
- opportunities for direct student and staff participation;*
- continuity of relationships beyond individual events;*
- reciprocity between partners;*
- openness to international exchange and peer learning.*

The approach is also adaptable: the form and intensity of cooperation can be adjusted according to the needs, capacities and professional profiles of participating organisations.

Constraints*

The development of a broad partnership network creates organisational and institutional challenges.

One challenge is ensuring that cooperation remains connected to clearly identified educational and professional needs and does not become limited to isolated events.

Another challenge is maintaining continuity. Sustainable partnerships require regular communication, coordination, shared objectives and identification of follow-up activities.

The specialised nature of music education also means that partnerships need to be appropriately matched to different professional disciplines, educational programmes and student profiles.

International cooperation presents additional challenges related to differences in educational systems, institutional structures, language and available resources.

The College addresses these challenges through ongoing communication with partners, gradual development of cooperation, clarification of shared objectives and reflection on joint activities. Peer learning and benchmarking are also used to explore alternative approaches and identify practices that may be adapted to the College's context.

Lessons learned *

The College's experience demonstrates that partnerships are most effective when they respond to clearly identified educational and professional needs.

Meaningful cooperation should provide opportunities for learning, professional exchange or joint development for both sides. Consequently, partnerships are

more sustainable when they develop beyond individual events and create opportunities for continued interaction.

The experience has also demonstrated the value of direct interaction with practising professionals as a complement to formal music education. Students gain exposure to professional realities, while teachers benefit from continued exchange with the wider professional community.

International cooperation is particularly valuable when it is approached through peer learning and mutual reflection, rather than through the direct transfer of models. Institutions operating in different contexts can identify common challenges, exchange experience and adapt relevant approaches to their own circumstances.

The development of partnerships is also a gradual process. Initial cooperation may begin with a single professional activity and subsequently develop into broader collaboration when shared interests and mutual benefits become established.

Finally, sustainable partnerships depend on reciprocity, trust, continuity and clear shared purpose.

**Replicability
and/or up-scaling**

The practice can be adapted by other VET providers, particularly institutions operating in the cultural and creative sectors and other practice-oriented fields.

Its core methodology can be represented through a partnership-development cycle:

Identify educational and professional needs → identify relevant partners → establish shared objectives → implement joint activities → reflect on outcomes → develop further cooperation

At institutional level, this approach can be applied within individual departments, educational programmes or professional fields.

At regional and national levels, it can support stronger connections between VET providers, employers, cultural organisations, NGOs, public institutions and other stakeholders.

At international level, the approach can be extended through peer learning, benchmarking, staff mobility, joint professional activities and international cooperation projects.

Successful replication does not require institutions to reproduce the same activities or partnership structures. The approach should be adapted to the professional profile, regional ecosystem, cultural context and labour-market environment of the institution applying it.

For music and other artistic VET providers, particular attention should be given to partnerships with professional practitioners and cultural organisations, ensuring that cooperation contributes directly to professional learning and development.

The practice can therefore serve as a flexible framework for strengthening the relationship between vocational education and the wider professional and cultural ecosystem.

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URL of the practice

Yerevan State Music College after Romanos Melikyan:
<https://romanosmelikyan.am/>

Related resources that have been developed

The practice is supported by institutional and partnership-related documentation, including:

- *partnership agreements and memoranda of cooperation;*
- *documentation of professional meetings and masterclasses;*
- *records of staff professional development activities;*
- *documentation of concerts and cultural activities;*
- *stakeholder feedback and consultation materials;*
- *annual institutional and departmental reports;*
- *documentation of international peer-learning and benchmarking activities;*
- *photographs and other records of partnership activities.*

These resources provide supporting evidence of the development and implementation of the practice and can be made available where appropriate.
