

MERITA Platform
where chamber Music, hERitage and TAleNT meet

CALL FOR APPLICATION | MERITA Platform MERITAcubed edition 2025 - 2029

MERITA Platform supports the European circulation of the new generation of professional chamber music ensembles.

The Platform has received a second co-funding from the European Commission and will launch a second edition, MERITAcubed, running from 2025 to 2029.

This cycle opens up exciting possibilities for 44 new ensembles (22 string quartets and 22 piano trios), including paid concert engagements, the chance to design innovative outreach and special projects through online training and residencies, and the opportunity to connect with a network of over 22 international cultural institutions.

BENEFITS FOR THE NEW SELECTED ENSEMBLES

- *Online training* on the chosen topic to help the ensemble to reach a broader audience and have increased business opportunities;
- *5-day artistic residency* in an historic house located in Europe, with accommodation, meals, travels and video recording expenses covered, plus an *on-site mentoring tutor* to support the on-site training;
- *1 "test concert"* (first test of the outreach / special project in front of an audience) performed at the end of the artistic residency / on-site training;
- *A minimum of 3 paid opportunities* to perform the outreach / special project in Europe per participant ensemble, co-funded by the Creative Europe programme and offered by the member concert societies and festivals, including travel and accommodation expenses, with meals and travels covered;
- The opportunity to *showcase* on the MERITAplatform (to at least 22 international organizations) the ensembles' profile, the ensemble portfolio, and the outreach / special projects through a *recorded video trailer*.
- The opportunity to record a MERITAcubed *podcast* episode, dedicated to your ensemble's outreach or special project.

- The possibility of being selected to perform *extra-EU concerts* taking place in the United States of America, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and North Macedonia;
- The opportunities to *perform* in renowned cultural cities, concerts institutions and festivals abroad;
- The access to a European map of "*categories of professionals*" (e.g. luthiers, accountants, videomakers, recording rooms, etc.) necessary for a professional ensemble, that can support the ensembles' career development through their work in different countries

MERITAplatform develops tools aimed at transforming the way the cultural sector operates. Through digital solutions and collaborative approaches, it supports a more connected, sustainable, and forward-thinking model for artistic production and cultural exchange. New tools will be available on the digital platform and accessible through a login. (www.meritapatform.eu)

DESCRIPTION OF THE CALL FOR APPLICATION

Apply to be one of the new 44 ensembles of MERITAcubed

MERITAcubed will involve 56 ensembles, 44 newly selected (22 string quartets and 22 piano trios) and 12 string quartets selected from the previous edition of MERITA. These 12 quartets will be selected through a separate dedicated call.

Among the new 44 selected ensembles, each one will get **free access to online training on one specific topic and to a 5-day training in presence (artistic residency)** in order to **develop an outreach / special project based on one of the 6 topics available** (see Appendix 1 for further details):

- **Social transformation through classical music**
- **Digital resonance: amplifying musical experiences and audience engagement**
- **Women in Music: exploring the unheard narratives and legacy of female composers**
- **Mental Health and wellbeing for artists and communities**
- **Harmonising with nature: integrating environmental consciousness in musical performance**
- **International cultural relations/cultural diplomacy via music**

Each ensemble will be asked to express three topic preferences that they are interested to deepen, according to their attitudes; then each ensemble will be selected to develop a project on one topic, with a specific program and identity.

Each project will be showcased through both a written and a video presentation, published on the MERITA Platform website (meritapatform.eu). In addition, a dedicated podcast will be produced for each selected ensemble. Finally, every ensemble will be guaranteed at least three paid engagement opportunities to present their project at the international level.

The activities described in this call will take place from October 2025, starting with the publication of this call for selection, until August 2029, marking the conclusion of the MERITAcubed edition.

An Artistic Committee formed by Simone Gramaglia, Viviane Hagner, Alexander Pavlovsky, Hila Karni, Jonathan Aner and Minna Pensola, will make the final evaluation and select the 44 ensembles (22 quartets and 22 piano trios) participating in MERITAcubed.

Training and capacity building activities

Once assigned one specific topic, each ensemble will be asked to develop outreach / special projects to be proposed to concert societies and festivals.

The **training and capacity building** activities will be held to support the selected ensembles in developing these outreach / special projects:

- **Online training (available March 2026 and November 2026)** are mandatory online capacity building material designed to help musicians to develop their project, available on MERITA platform. Each ensemble member will have to complete the training dedicated to their specific topic, by referring to online materials developed by training member organizations. These include curated material for reading/viewing (text or video going deeper into the subject), and prompts for reflection designed to help them to complete the project proposal + bibliography.
- After finishing the on-line training, **online meetings** (at least two) are organized between a trainer and each ensemble in order to decide how the outreach / special project will be refined during the following on-site training. Together, they will also define the on-site training structure and program.
- **On-site artistic residencies (5 days to be agreed in the period from December 2026 to November 2027)** are held in historic houses in Europe. The hosting houses are mostly part of the European Historic Houses network.
The artistic residency lasts 5 days: in this period, the musicians have the opportunity to refine the outreach / special project developed during the online training.
 During each artistic residency, the trainer from the training member organization will be supporting on-site musicians in the realization of the outreach / special project.
 The residency ends with a “*test concert*”, a part of the training programme, allowing musicians to put into practice their outreach / special project. They therefore should not be understood as paid concerts.
 Expenses for the accommodation are covered in the form of a lump sum; an extra contribution to the daily allowance and travel of the ensemble, including the cello, will be given by the training member organizations.

Training and capacity building member organizations are: Fundación Teatro Real (Spain), Julian Cochran Foundation (Poland), ProQuartet - Centre européen de musique de chambre (France), Scandinavian cello school (Denmark), Stichting Strijkkwartet Biënnale Amsterdam (Netherlands), Qualco Foundation (Greece).

Concerts production and organization

After the completion of online and on-site training, the presentations of the 44 innovative outreach / special projects developed by the ensembles are uploaded on the MERITA Platform (www.meritaplatform.eu).

Each concert society, institution and festival member organization can choose its favorite outreach / special project proposal, and hires the ensembles for *performing at least 3 concerts* in its seasons, festivals or concert series, **between December 2026 and August 2029**, as soon as both the training online and in person are completed.

Each musician will receive a cachet of €1.000 per concert, inclusive of all taxes and social costs. For each concert, an extra contribution to travel and daily allowance of the ensemble will be given in the form of a lump sum by the hiring member organizations, considering also the travel expenses for the cello. Please note that any country has its own taxation rules.

Concert society, institution and festival member organizations are: Cadanza Arts Management Ltd. (Hungary), Comitato AMUR (Italy), B & M Theocharakis Foundation (Greece), Fundación Teatro Real (Spain), Esterhazy Palace (Austria), Europa Nostra (Netherlands), Kolarac – Zadužbina Ilije M. Kolarca (Serbia), Lofoten Internasjonale Kammermusikkfest (Norway), Conc.arts Berlin (Germany), ProQuartet – Centre européen de musique de chambre (France), Qendra EVENT (Albania), Scandinavian Cello School (Denmark), Stichting Strijkkwartet Biënnale Amsterdam (Netherlands), Terra Foundation (Portugal), Qualco Foundation (Greece).

Moreover, *4 concerts are planned in non-EU countries* (USA, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and North Macedonia): the Platform Members together with the artistic committee will select 4 ensembles (2 string quartets and 2 piano trios) that stood out during the project period in terms of performance, artistic vision and potential of growth.

Specifically, a score will be assigned to each ensemble, evaluating key aspects, such as: musical skills, connection with the audience, interest toward the explored topics and their application, ability to develop meaningful outreach / special projects, organizational skills also in terms of environmental management.

The cachet for each of these extra-EU concerts is €1.000 for each musician, inclusive of all taxes and social costs; an extra contribution to the daily allowance and travel of the ensemble will be given by Le Dimore del Quartetto.

All the activities will be held in English.

Please note that **any material** related to the project developed within the MERITA framework will be subject to **regulation** by the MERITA team. This includes the terms and conditions for the use, sale, and distribution of all materials produced to present and promote the Ensemble Project.

ELIGIBILITY, APPLICATION PROCESS AND PROGRAMME RULES

Eligibility

- The MERITA Call for application is exclusively addressed to ensembles whose members play permanently together.
- The Call is open to ensembles based in countries eligible for the Creative Europe programme (*)
- The ensemble undertakes to commit to the MERITA project for the entire duration of the project (4 years, until to the end of the project on August 31st, 2029).
- All members of the quartet must be under 36 years of age at the time of application. If even one member has already turned 36 at that time, the quartet will not be eligible for selection.
- The ensemble must have been active for at least one year.
- Participant ensembles should plan to keep the same members over years.
- Musicians of the ensemble have already demonstrated to have all the artistic and technical qualities, as well as the vision, that are necessary to develop an international career: this has been recognized by chamber music operators as well as by audiences, and can be proved through the ensemble's CVs (including the concert societies for which the ensemble has performed, the prizes received at national and international competitions, the educational path), audio-video recordings and letters of recommendation from senior chamber musicians.
- String quartets that participated in the previous edition of MERITA will be selected through a dedicated call and are not eligible to apply for this one.

(*) Eligible countries: *Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine*

More specifically:

- Individual musicians do not necessarily have to be of these nationalities, but they have to be permanently based in these countries
- If the ensemble is based in an eligible country, it is sufficient to be suitable that only 1 musician of the quartet comes from an eligible country
- If the ensemble is based in a non-eligible country, it is necessary that at least two of the musicians are originally from an eligible country
- Dual citizenship is allowed

Application process

A MERITAcubed Q&A Zoom call for clarifying any doubts prior to the application is scheduled on **November 4th at 11a.m GMT + 1** please find the link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83996996394>

Applications must be sent by email at info@meritaplatform.eu **no later than Saturday, December 13th 2025 at 11.59 pm GMT+1** time, specifying in the email subject **“APPLICATION FOR MERITAcubed - NAME OF THE ENSEMBLE”**.

1. Professional CV of the ensemble, with description of studies and career, including links to website and social media (if any);
2. A brief video presentation (please, see guidelines in appendix 3 to make it correctly)
3. Links to performing videos (not older than two years),
NB: Audio recordings /CDs are not accepted in replacement of performing videos.
4. Pictures that well represent the ensemble, indicating when they have been taken
5. Identity document of each member in order to prove the dates of birth, nationalities and residential addresses;
6. Any additional attachment / information useful to evaluate the application;
7. Fill this google form:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSftd0JaB_jK9Zg2nsP_WUpXnPW-0394UucxHi5ccCGv3q6Pig/viewform?usp=header
This form is intended solely for monitoring and evaluation purposes. The information you provide will **not** affect the outcome of your application. We kindly ask you to answer accurately and honestly. Please note that this is **mandatory** in order to complete your application.
8. (optional) 1 or more letters of endorsement to reinforce the ensemble's abilities and qualities, from relevant institutions, Maestros, and significant personalities in the music and cultural fields **outside** the MERITA Platform

If you are sending large attachments, please use WeTransfer and incorporate the WeTransfer link in the application email.

Please note that incomplete applications will not be taken into consideration.

Program rules

The final evaluation is made by the Artistic Committee and both the quartets and the trios are classified in 2 ranking lists, from 22 (max. score) to 0. The maximum for each ensemble is 22 points. Please note that any musicians with disabilities and special needs, and ensembles based in countries eligible for Creative Europe and involved in conflicts will have additional 5 points.

Admission to the MERITA Platform will be decided by the Artistic Committee at its sole discretion; the results of the selection process will be communicated to all the applicants by Monday, February 16th, 2026. We will ask the selected ensembles to confirm their participation within 7 days from the official communication of selection, so no later than Monday, February 23rd. Please note that, once confirmed their participation, musicians cannot withdraw from the MERITA programme, unless it is for justified health reasons. In case of annulment of their commitment after having confirmed, the ensemble will pay a penalty equal to € 1.200.

By submitting their applications, all the ensembles' members confirm to have carefully read this call for applications and the MERITA programme rules, and to accept all the conditions specified therein. Once selected, all the selected ensembles' members will be asked to sign a regulation form.

A MERITAcubed Q&A Zoom call for clarifying any doubts post-selection is scheduled on **February 19th at 11 am GMT + 1** please find the link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86592060554>

For any doubts or questions, do not hesitate to contact us at info@meritaplatform.eu specifying the email subject "INQUIRIES FOR MERITAcubed - NAME OF THE ENSEMBLE".

OVERVIEW ON THE MERITA PROJECT

MERITA – where chamber Music, cultural hERitage and TALent meet is an online and offline platform aiming at **increasing the visibility and circulation of European string quartets while promoting European cultural heritage.**

After its first three years (2022–2025), MERITA was awarded the European Call for Platforms 2024 and received a second co-funding from the European Commission. The project will now run its second edition, MERITAcubed, over the period 2025–2029.

MERITA Platform develops in three areas - *training, production, research* - and it is founded upon the principles of *innovation, training and development, promotion and sustainability*.

The main goal will be achieved through 4 specific objectives:

1. To innovate the chamber music industry functioning, by matching the music institutions' requests with the quartets' attitudes, therefore creating new job opportunities for musicians.
2. To enhance training and capacity building for chamber music artists on how to expand, internationalize and consolidate their careers effectively.
3. To foster production and circulation of chamber music in Europe and beyond, through original outreach / special projects.
4. To promote a sustainable business model bringing together chamber music artists, audiences and cultural heritage (European historic houses and sites), fostering best practices exchange and competitiveness for artists, audience engagement and development, environmental sustainability and awareness.

These specific objectives will be reached through the MERITA digital platform as well as through a rich panel of online and onsite activities, i.e. training, artistic residencies, transnational and international circulation of the artists, studies and researches.

The project is co-financed by the European Union - European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) and is represented by Le Dimore del Quartetto, based in Milan, Italy, as lead and coordinator of 19 organizations (Platform Members) from 16 European countries (soon to be 22 - one more will join the consortium each year):

1. Asociación Red Europea de Jardines Históricos (ERHG) (Lloret de Mar, Spain)
2. Cadenza Arts Management Ltd (Budapest, Hungary)
3. Comitato AMUR (Milan, Italy)
4. ENCATC - European Network on Cultural Management and Policy (Brussels, Belgium)
5. Fundación Teatro Real (Madrid, Spain)
6. Esterházy Palace (Eisenstadt, Austria)
7. Europa Nostra (The Hague, Netherlands)
8. European Historic Houses (Brussels, Belgium)
9. Julian Cochran Foundation (Warsaw, Poland)
10. Kolarac - Zadužbina Ilije M. Kolarca (Belgrade, Serbia)
11. Lofoten International Chamber Music Festival (Lofoten Islands, Norway)
12. Conc.arts berlin gUG (Berlin, Germany)
13. ProQuartet – Centre européen de musique de chambre (Paris, France)
14. QEndra Event (Tirana, Albania)
15. Scandinavian Cello School (Rødvig, Denmark)
16. String Quartet Biennale Amsterdam (Amsterdam, Netherlands)
17. Terra Foundation (Lisbon, Portugal)
18. Qualco Foundation (Athens, Greece)
19. Traces&Dreams (Stockholm, Sweden)

APPENDIX 1 - DESCRIPTION OF THE TOPICS

Social transformation through classical music

This program invites musicians to broaden their skills beyond performance, fostering an awareness of their pivotal role as artists within society. Participants will explore how musical performances can serve as powerful tools for social change, delving into multisensory experiences, thoughtful venue selection, audience engagement strategies, and repertoire choices aimed at cultivating meaningful social transformation. The training aspires to equip musicians with a holistic understanding of the potential for classical music to transcend the stage, inspiring positive change and fostering connections within diverse communities. Through this course, musicians will navigate the intersection of art and social impact, discovering how their craft can be a catalyst for transformative change in society.

Digital resonance: amplifying musical experiences and audience engagement

This program explores the transformative potential of technology, including AI, augmented reality, and various digital tools, to enhance project experiences. Musicians will uncover opportunities to perform in multiple venues simultaneously, utilizing digital platforms to engage audiences in innovative ways. The training aims to harness technology not only for artistic expression but also to reach diverse and often overlooked audiences, creating a more inclusive chamber music environment. Participants will navigate the integration of digital elements into their projects, fostering a dynamic dialogue between traditional musical expression and cutting-edge technology. This course provides a unique space for musicians to explore the vast possibilities of the digital landscape, expanding the horizons of chamber music engagement and accessibility.

Femmes en Musique: Exploring the unheard narratives and legacy of Female Composers

This program offers a nuanced exploration of a repertoire curated exclusively from the rich and diverse compositions of women throughout history, including contemporary voices shaping the musical landscape. Participants will delve into the distinctive styles and narratives of female composers, fostering a deeper appreciation for their contributions to classical music, both past and present. The training encourages collaborative dialogue on interpretation and performance techniques unique to this repertoire. Through this exploration, musicians will gain insights into the historical context and challenges faced by female composers, celebrating their enduring impact on chamber music. The course seeks to amplify the voices of women in classical music, providing a platform for meaningful conversations and an enriched understanding of the chamber music landscape.

Mental Health and wellbeing for artists and communities

A transformative training for musicians, centering on mental health and well-being, both for the artists and their communities. This program explores the delicate balance between musicians' mental health and the creation of projects fostering deep connections with audiences. Musicians will delve into strategies for maintaining mental well-being, recognizing the symbiotic relationship between personal balance and artistic expression. Emphasis will be placed on crafting intimate projects that resonate with local communities, harnessing the evocative power of chamber music to create profound connections. This training aims to cultivate a space where musicians can explore the intersection of mental health, community engagement, territory and artistic expression, fostering projects that authentically connect with audiences on a deeply emotional level.

Harmonising with nature: Integrating Environmental Consciousness in Musical Performance

This training focuses on the fusion of music, nature, environmental consciousness and the development of a sustainable model for the chamber music industry. This course invites musicians to explore a curated repertoire inspired by the natural world and delve into the integration of nature sounds, collaborating with contemporary composers for innovative compositions. The purpose of this training is to invite the musicians to experience performing in open spaces, cultivating an intimate connection with the outdoors through immersive concerts. The training aims to provide a platform and tools for musicians to measure the environmental impact of their projects and authentically engage with nature within their musical expressions, fostering a deeper understanding of the interplay between music and the environment.

International cultural relations/cultural diplomacy via Music

The role of what is widely called soft diplomacy is acknowledged today as crucial to promote bilateral and regional relations. Cultural diplomacy being probably the most important part, has always played a role of bridge between peoples and countries, as well as a tool for promoting mutual understanding and communication overcoming state differences and geographical and other boundaries. Music is the best tool to use, since it is a universal language, especially instrumental music that overcomes language barriers and affects the emotion directly. The string quartet and piano trios being the quintessence of European Music and European Culture can convey the spirit of our common cultural inheritance not only to non Europeans, thus creating an intercultural dialogue, but also to promote "intercultural" relations for Europeans from different countries or traditions.

APPENDIX 2 - DESCRIPTION OF MERITAcubed ORGANIZATIONS

Le Dimore del Quartetto is a creative cultural enterprise that, from 2015, supports international young string quartets and chamber music ensembles at the beginning of their career and enhances the European cultural heritage, in a circular economy. With a consolidated network of houses, ensembles and partners in the fields of music and of the cultural heritage, it is specialized in planning and in the management of festivals and travel itineraries, masterclasses and training programs for musicians, educational projects for primary and secondary schools and universities, team-building activities for companies, and residencies and concerts in historic houses and other places of cultural interest.

Asociación Red Europea de Jardines Historicos, founded in 2016, spans 47 historic gardens in Europe. Recognized as a Council of Europe Cultural Route, it promotes heritage, collaboration, research, and cultural activities. ERHG engages in youth education, contemporary arts, and sustainable tourism to enrich cultural heritage appreciation.

Cadenza Arts Management Ltd, est. 2011, oversees concerts and artist services. Led by Eszter Pista, with 9 years in the Franz Liszt Chamber Orchestra, they organise global concerts, represent artists, and collaborate with Hungarian festivals. Coordinating Visegrad and ERASMUS+ projects, they contribute to cultural landscapes. Member of the European Association of Artist Managers.

Comitato AMUR unites 17 historic Italian chamber music institutions, averaging a century of history, fostering collaboration from North to South.

European Network on Cultural management and policy ENCATC is the only cross-sectorial learning platform in Europe and beyond bringing together the cultural management and policy community

Fundación Teatro Real The Teatro Real is an independently-run public foundation with significant civil society involvement in its governing and funding bodies, and the participation – at state, regional and local level – of the Spanish Ministry of Culture, the Regional Government of Madrid and Madrid CityCouncil. It is deemed Spain's major institution for the musical and performing arts, and is the leading national opera house, with significant and growing global outreach

Esterhazy Palace is a cultural hub that forges a bridge from its lively past to a forward-looking present hosting contemporary interventions in centuries-old walls, classical performances in historical settings, and works by world-famous artists.

Europa Nostra, the European voice of civil society for cultural and natural heritage, advocate for preserving endangered heritage, actively shapes and implements heritage-related European strategies and policies and coordinates the European Heritage Alliance,

demonstrating its commitment to safeguarding and promoting Europe's rich cultural and natural legacy.

European Historic Houses represents 27 national associations in Europe, focusing on preserving and promoting family-owned heritage, facilitating connections among members to exchange best practices.

Julian Cochran Foundation, since 2016, innovatively promotes classical music through concerts, events, and an online piano competition. They focus on changing perceptions and fostering education, breaking stereotypes and reaching diverse audiences.

Kolarac - Zadužbina Ilije M. Kolarca, established in 1878, promotes culture, science, and art. With a mission to provide lifelong learning, the institution hosts over 250 concerts annually, fostering a diverse audience, including children.

Lofoten Internasjonale Kammermusikkfest Lofoten International Chamber Music Festival is an annual event that takes place in the Lofoten Islands, Norway. The festival focuses on chamber music, featuring performances by both Norwegian and international musicians.

conc.arts berlin gUG (haftungsbeschränkt) The non-profit company conc.arts berlin gUG organises classical concerts and concert tours of top-class orchestras and ensembles in Germany and abroad. This includes the acquisition of public and private funding as well as the organisational and administrative handling of all necessary processes. Its main mission is to support classical musicians in the realisation of their artistic activities.

ProQuartet – Centre européen de musique de chambre, a Paris-based non-profit, specializes in chamber music and aids young artists' professional integration, focusing on string quartets and piano trios. Operating for 37 years, it serves as an incubator, providing support, development, and masterclasses with renowned musicians.

QEndra Event | Established in July 2016, Qendra "EVENT" is a non-profit organisation with a mission to organize national, regional, and international events in support of education, culture, sports, cultural tourism, environmental protection, agro-tourism, public relations, community development, and social support for vulnerable groups.

Scandinavian Cello School is an international school for young classical music talents. It has succeeded in bringing classical music to new audiences and in untraditional surroundings. It challenges and strengthens both international and Danish talents that are brought together. A solid foundation for their future is planted whilst on Danish soil through world class teaching, essential networking and a healthy life balance.

Stichting Strijkkwartet Biennale Amsterdam is the world's largest string quartet festival, featuring concerts, masterclasses, and talks. It embraces tradition while encouraging innovation and inclusivity. The festival hosts renowned and emerging artists, fostering a contemporary approach to the string quartet.

Terra Foundation is a collaborative cultural platform working to balance the relationships amongst humans, and between humanity and planet Earth. Strongly committed to the alignment of culture with sustainability, it upholds the role of culture as a catalyst for the creation of new and forward-thinking solutions to some of the main challenges facing the contemporary world.

Qualco Foundation is a philanthropic organization founded in 2021 to promote a resilient and inclusive Greek society. It supports social impact through partnerships, scholarships, cultural projects, and emergency aid, focusing on sustainability, heritage, and civic engagement.

Traces&Dreams, a communication agency, specialises in culture and education. They offer narrative strategies, multimedia content, and project development for EU bodies, NGOs, universities, and more. Providing workshops, educational materials, and transnational project design, they aim to create, consult on, and make understandable, beautiful, and inspiring stories.

APPENDIX 3 - GUIDELINES FOR THE PRESENTATION VIDEO

The answers to these **questions must be included**, and each answer should be a maximum of 2 minutes:

- Name of the ensemble and of the musicians
- Short presentation, how would you define your ensemble in three or four words?
- Which of the above-mentioned topics are you more interested in and why? (Please choose 3 out of 6 topics, rank them in order of preferences and specify)
- Why should the MERITA Platform select you?

To ensure a coherent and professional presentation across all MERITA outputs, ensembles are asked to follow the guidelines below when producing video materials. The use of professional equipment is not required: modern smartphones or tablets provide sufficient quality if the instructions are observed carefully.

RECORDING SETUP

- Orientation: record in vertical format.
- Lighting: good lighting is essential (if possible, record during the day using natural daylight)
- Place the performers facing the window or light source, not with the light behind them, to avoid dark shadows or silhouettes. If recording in the evening, use lamps to brighten the space, but avoid harsh lights directly behind the musicians. Make sure all faces and instruments are clearly visible.
- Background: choose a background that is simple and neutral. Avoid cluttered rooms, distracting objects, or visible mess. A plain wall, rehearsal room, or stage background works best. Check the frame before recording and remove anything unnecessary from view.
- Sound: record in the quietest possible environment, close windows to block outside noise, switch off fans or air conditioners, and silence all phones and notifications. Make sure no one is speaking or moving around in the background. If using a smartphone, place it far enough from you to capture a balanced sound - not too close.

CAMERA AND POSITIONING

- Equipment: you can record with a smartphone, tablet, or digital camera. Professional cameras are not necessary. What matters most is that the device is able to record in 1080p (Full HD) quality. On most modern smartphones, this setting is available in the

camera options. If you are unsure how to check, simply use the standard video setting on your phone, most devices already record in HD by default.

- **Stability:** the device must remain completely still while recording. Shaky footage looks unprofessional and is distracting. Please avoid hand-holding the phone or tablet. Instead: use a tripod if available, if you do not have a tripod, place the device on a stable surface (for example, a table, shelf, music stand). Make sure the surface will not move during the recording (avoid wobbly chairs or piles of books).
- **Framing:** position the camera so that it captures your upper body (from the waist or chest upwards) with a small amount of space above the head. This gives a balanced and professional look. Avoid leaving too much empty space above the head or cutting off parts of the body or instruments.
- **Camera height:** Place the recording device at eye level. If the camera is too low, it will look as if the audience is looking up at you; if it is too high, it will feel like they are looking down. Both distort the perspective. Use a tripod, shelf, or stable stack of objects to raise the device to the correct height if necessary.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

- **Resolution:** Please record your videos in high quality. On most smartphones, this means selecting 1080p (Full HD) in the camera settings. The frame rate should be set to 25–30 frames per second (fps). If you are unsure how to change this, you can simply use the default video settings on your phone, as most modern devices already record in this quality.
- **File format:** Videos should be saved as .mp4 or .mov files. These are the standard formats that almost all phones and tablets produce automatically. No special conversion is needed.
- **File size:** Try to keep the file size under 2 GB. Shorter recordings and using 1080p instead of higher settings (like 4K) will help keep the file size smaller. If your video is longer and becomes larger than 2 GB, you may need to compress it before sending (instructions can be provided if needed).
- **File naming convention:** When saving your video, please name the file in the following way: EnsembleName_Presentation_Date.mp4 This helps us keep all recordings organised.

GOOD PRACTICE AND COMMON ERRORS

- Conduct a short test recording to check sound and framing.
- Ensure that all ensemble members are visible.
- Review the recording prior to submission.
- To be avoided: Recording in poorly lit or noisy environments, Moving or zooming during the performance, The use of filters, special effects, or colour adjustments.