



RHYTHMIC MUSIC CONSERVATORY

Strategy and Action Plan
for Research and Development (R&D)

2019–22

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Foreword

The remit of Rhythmic Music Conservatory (RMC) includes generating knowledge by artistic, educational and scientific research within the Conservatory's areas of expertise.¹ The research provides new knowledge and insight to society as a whole, as well as to other academic disciplines, and reinforces and develops the knowledge base that forms the foundation for RMC's study programs.

The strategy at hand has three objectives. It is designed as a tool to inspire RMC's researchers² in their specific research and development (R&D) work, and help them to develop R&D ideas and projects. It is designed as a management tool to ensure that R&D is conducted in strategically designated areas. It is also designed as a communication tool, to convey RMC's R&D visions and specific objectives to current and potential partners, as well as to the general public.

The work that led to the institutional RMC Strategy 2019–2022 also served as the foundation for work on the R&D strategy. In 2018, RMC conducted an External Environment Analysis that identified a number of benchmarks for R&D over the next few years, based on the overall goals for educational policy; the government's growth and business initiatives for the creative professions; the Minister for Culture's policy goals for art education and talent development; the Danish research strategy manifesto, RESEARCH 2025; and international trends and initiatives. Ultimately, a number of the focus areas identified in the RMC strategy found their way into RMC's 2019–2022 framework agreement with the Ministry of Culture,³ including a series of strategic initiatives that involve all of the Danish artistic higher education institutions.⁴ The R&D strategy also incorporates areas of the framework agreement with relevance for R&D.

RMC's researchers played a vital role in shaping this strategy document. It was debated at three internal symposiums, discussed with external specialists, and finally presented for consultation to the Student Council and the Conservatory Council prior to adoption by RMC management.

Associate Professor Lars Brinck PhD, Head of R&D

Holmen, 30 January 2020

¹ In its R&D work and in this strategy, RMC uses the three recognized Danish terms for types of R&D: artistic research (*kunstnerisk udviklingsvirksomhed* = KUV), scientific research (*videnskabelig forskning* = FOR), and educational research (*pædagogiske udviklingsvirksomhed* = PUV). These three types are specified in *Bekendtgørelse af lov om videregående kunstneriske uddannelsesinstitutioner under Kulturministeriet* (Act on Higher Artistic Educational Institutions under the Ministry of Culture Denmark), which states that art education institutions such as music conservatories *may* choose to conduct scientific research. RMC has chosen to conduct scientific research as part of its knowledge work. The Act is available (in Danish) at: <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=181737>.

² The strategy refers to everyone working on R&D as “researchers”, regardless of R&D category.

³ Read more in *Rytmisk Musikkonservatorium* (2018a) (Rhythmic Music Conservatory (2018a)): *Rammeaftale 2019–22 (Framework Agreement 2019–22)*, Appendix 1: *Strategi for Rytmisk Musikkonservatorium* (Strategy for the Rhythmic Music Conservatory), and *Rytmisk Musikkonservatorium* (2018) (Rhythmic Music Conservatory (2018)): *Omverdensanalyse* (External Environment Analysis).

⁴ For a description of these initiatives, please refer to *Rytmisk Musikkonservatorium* (2018a) (Rhythmic Music Conservatory (2018a)): *Rammeaftale 2019–22* (Framework Agreement 2019–22). Appendix 3.

1. Introduction

1.1 Status of the knowledge production at RMC

Over the past decade, knowledge production at RMC has changed significantly in both form and content – for example, *artistic* research has become a key knowledge dimension. More and more researchers are conducting large-scale artistic projects; national and international research networks have been extended, and RMC now has a fairly prominent profile in international artistic research. The outcomes of these efforts are not only important to artistic research and the arts in general, but also constitute a central knowledge base for “Artistic Development Work”, which is now a main teaching subject within all performance and composition study programs at RMC.

Similarly, *scientific* research is now a firmly established part of RMC’s knowledge production. Three lecturers have completed research training (PhD diplomas) in the last eight years, and new knowledge has been generated in a number of areas of relevance to RMC’s programs and research fields. Several subject areas at RMC are now either research-based or informed by scientific research. This applies particularly to the music education subjects and programs and to the Music Management (MM) program. RMC has also extended its international scientific research network, and is now represented on a range of national and international councils and committees.⁵

In recent years, RMC has successfully attracted external funding for specific artistic and scientific research projects, as well as for PhD programs for three lecturers.

Although the third R&D knowledge dimension, *educational* research, plays a less prominent role at RMC, key projects are a regular feature of RMC’s knowledge production. For example, a major project on teaching materials and didactics for the Artistic Development Work subject has just been concluded.

Overall, this steadily growing, increasingly focused knowledge production has been facilitated by increased external funding, greater efforts by administrative staff and management, and the ongoing enhancement of the teachers’ research skills.

1.2 Reading this strategy

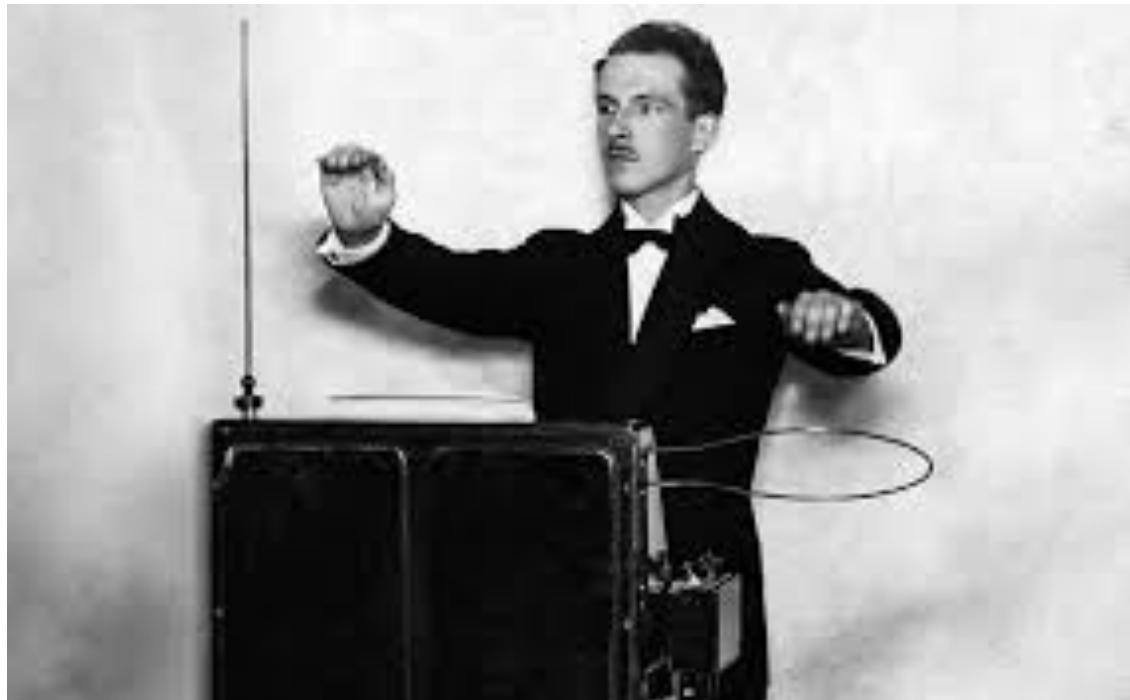
Following this brief introduction, this R&D strategy will set out strategic priorities for the next four years that are in line with RMC’s overall strategies, and which also reflect national and international trends and visions. Specific initiatives and actions will be listed for each priority.

⁵ At the time of writing, RMC is represented on two working groups under the AEC (Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen) development project *Strengthening Music in Society*, and as a peer reviewer for the *Journal of Popular Music*, *European Journal of Philosophy in Music Education*, and the Norwegian Academy of Music’s Centre for Educational Research in Music (CERM). RMC researchers have also established relationships with the Norwegian Academy of Music, the University of Bergen, the University of California at Berkeley, and other higher education institutions. In Denmark, RMC is represented on the Ministry of Culture’s Research Committee and collaborates on research with the universities of Aarhus, Roskilde, and Aalborg. It is a peer reviewer for journals such as *Passage* and *Qualitative Studies* at the University of Aalborg, and one of the RMC lecturers edits *Chara, tidsskrift for skaberværk, pædagogik og dannelses* (*Chara: Journal of Creativity, Pedagogy and ‘Bildung’*).

Chapter 2 *General priorities* sets out quality-assurance and communication goals for R&D, and describes how these will help to generate an appropriate knowledge base for study programs, improve framework conditions for researchers, and encourage greater student participation in R&D.

Chapter 3 *Academic priorities* describes how and why the substantive focus of R&D over the next four years will be on artistic development, cross-disciplinary work, new technology (in terms of both challenges and opportunities), and new educational and communications approaches.

Appendix I offers a brief outline of the financial framework for R&D in Denmark compared to the other Nordic countries.



2 General priorities

2.1 Quality assurance of R&D output

To meet the objective of producing knowledge that is of significance to both the rest of society and to its own study programs, it is important that RMC improves the documentation and communication of its R&D output, including publication on peer-reviewed platforms.⁶

RMC's *scientific* research results have for a number of years achieved a satisfactory level of international publication in peer-reviewed journals, anthologies and books. However, there is still room for improvement in the publication of both *artistic* and *educational* research. The two most important initiatives for the quality assurance of RMC's entire R&D production during the strategy period will be international peer reviewing – particularly of *artistic* research output – and the development of RMC's own platform on Research Catalogue.

2.1.1 RMC's platform on Research Catalogue

For a couple of years, RMC has hosted a dedicated institutional platform on Research Catalogue⁷ – a platform for international digital documentation, communication and knowledge-sharing of artistic research, owned by the Society for Artistic Research. The platform facilitates nuanced communication of complex artistic development projects, through text, music, pictures, graphs, etc. Its dynamic layout has potential for generating engaging and relevant documentation and communication. The platform also offers adequate opportunities for on-site peer feedback and peer review (see 2.1.2 Peer review).

The aim is to document and disseminate all artistic research projects via Research Catalogue following peer review. The goal is that the institutional platform on Research Catalogue is a recognized and utilized point of reference within the international field of artistic research. Another goal is that more and more students (especially supplement diploma students) use the platform during their coursework and final exams in the subject Artistic Development Work.

⁶ In the 2018 External Environment Analysis, RMC wrote that: "Quality assurance of knowledge production by the colleges of art (especially in artistic development) can be strengthened significantly. This would require conceptual definitions of criteria for good research, good communications and credible, evolving, innovative knowledge and insight. Johan Haarberg, former director of the Norwegian Artistic Research Programme (NARP), and currently Executive Officer of the Society for Artistic Research (SAR), has on several occasions [including, *inter alia*, the Danish Ministry of Culture's seminar on artistic research in September 2018, *ed.*] called for peer review of knowledge production in artistic research in Denmark, including peer review (by peers with specialised knowledge in relevant areas) in the assessment of applications to the Ministry of Culture's funding pool for artistic development" (Rhythmic Music Conservatory (2018): *Omverdensanalyse* (External Environment Analysis), page 29)).

⁷ Please cf. <https://www.researchcatalogue.net /portals?portal=427069>

Actions

- RMC to use its platform on Research Catalogue to document and disseminate the Conservatory's main artistic research output. All presentations to be in English and peer-reviewed prior to publication (see *2.1.2 Peer review*)
- Supplement Diploma students to use the RMC platform on Research Catalogue to formulate and communicate Artistic Development work (see *2.6 R&D's contribution to study programs' knowledge base*).

2.1.2 Peer review

Peer reviewing within a given field is the most widely accepted and utilized form of quality assurance in international *scientific* research. The results of RMC's scientific research are already subject to international peer review in a number of either anonymous ("blind") or open formats. RMC will develop a similar and coherent peer-review system for *artistic* and *educational* research.

Scientific research similarly has a rich tradition of drawing up quality criteria, values, visions, etc. as the basis for peer review as a method of quality assurance. RMC will develop such criteria for both *artistic* and *educational* research.⁸

As part of the process of developing a robust peer review process for its *artistic* and *educational* research, RMC will establish representative boards of international peer reviewers. Individual researchers can engage in academic dialogue with these researchers as part of the systematic process. It is a prerequisite that all peer-review processes in artistic and educational research are open, in order to promote high-quality critical dialogue between peers.

Actions

- All R&D publications to be peer-reviewed before publication.
- RMC to draw up quality criteria and systematic procedures for open peer review of artistic and educational research.⁹
- RMC to establish representative peer-review boards for artistic and educational research.

⁸ As this R&D strategy was written during the first year of the current RMC strategy period, the R&D unit and RMC researchers have already drawn up criteria for the peer review of artistic research, adopted a procedure, set up a board of international peer reviewers, and initiated peer review of four major artistic research projects by RMC researchers.

⁹ In the first six months of the strategy period, the R&D unit developed a set of quality criteria (SITRE), procedures, and guidelines for the peer review of artistic research.

2.2 National and international co-operation

In recent years, RMC has focused on forging relationships in its field, both in Denmark and abroad. There are numerous good examples of RMC's participation in international activities in artistic and scientific research, including collaboration with leading international artists and researchers in Japan, the USA, and Europe.¹⁰ RMC researchers have also built up important academic relationships in Denmark.¹¹

However, there is still great potential for further involvement in work involving multiple institutions and colleagues. This is especially the case in large-scale cooperation projects (including cross-disciplinary ones), and in relation to communicating knowledge production at international level.

To encourage close cooperation within the field of artistic knowledge production, the artistic educational institutions under the Ministry of Culture have decided to set up a joint knowledge center, initially focusing on the development of artistic research at and between the institutions. This is expected to create more opportunities for cross-disciplinary projects and perspectives on artistic research. It will also entail attempts to enhance conceptual clarity in this area, and thereby enhance academic dialogue and the quality of artistic research at the individual art education institutions.¹²

RMC has also decided to maintain the previous R&D strategy's interest in integrating the perspectives and working approaches of the three R&D categories in specific RMC projects. There are already several examples of scientific and artistic researchers collaborating on such projects.¹³

Actions

- RMC will work more closely with leading international researchers and institutions in all R&D categories.
- As per its framework agreement, RMC will be involved in two knowledge projects along with international partners during the strategy period.
- RMC will contribute to the development of the Danish artistic research knowledge center and the Danish artistic research network.
- RMC will, via specific projects, explore potential synergies between the R&D categories.

¹⁰ For example, CalArts, Los Angeles, CA; University of California, Berkeley, CA; Sonic Arts Research Center (SARC), Belfast, Ireland; University of York, York St. John University; Leo Baeck College, University of Oslo; Faculty of Fine Art, Music and Design, University of Bergen; University of the Arts Helsinki; University of the Arts Stockholm; Universität der Künste Berlin; etc.

¹¹ RMC researchers have academic relationships with all of the Danish colleges of art (through the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts Schools of Architecture, Design and Conservation, as well as with Roskilde University, Aalborg University, the University of Copenhagen, Aarhus University and the University of Southern Denmark).

¹² The Schools of Visual Arts at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts are heading the coordination and establishment of the centre, now formally titled 'International Centre for Knowledge in the Arts (ICKA)'.

¹³ Two researchers (one with artistic competencies; one scientific) have just published a peer-reviewed scientific article on experiences and points of interest from artistic research and artistic development. A current project is tracking the work of a scientific researcher and an artistic researcher from a learning analytics perspective.

2.3 External funding and fundraising

RMC's ordinary state funding affords only limited scope for knowledge production on any significant scale, which makes it important to secure external funding for major projects. To date, RMC has secured external funding from a number of national funding pools and foundations. However, the Conservatory now intends to make greater efforts to attract more external funding, including exploring potential new sources.

Actions

- RMC will maintain efforts to attract external R&D funding from the Ministry of Culture's artistic research pool and Research Committee.
- RMC will seek to secure external R&D funding from private foundations and from EU research and development funds.¹⁴
- RMC will study whether projects that explicitly build bridges between the various R&D knowledge dimensions – scientific, educational and artistic research – could potentially benefit from these external funding sources.

2.4 Diversity

“If music is to be for everyone, those who work in it have to make that happen – diversity is something we have to ‘do’ ourselves.”¹⁵

In the 2019–2022 framework agreement, RMC set itself the goal of “drawing up and implementing a new diversity policy that sets clear targets for diversity at RMC in terms of both gender and contemporary music genres”.¹⁶ This strategic objective must, of course, be applied to R&D as well. At the time of writing (late 2019), this diversity policy has now been drawn up.¹⁷ As such, it is now possible to start identifying focus areas for the strategic work of knowledge production, with a view to promoting diversity.

RMC’s diversity policy begins with the words:

¹⁴ “Public-sector investment in Denmark for artistic development is relatively limited in Denmark compared to the other Nordic countries. This presents challenges for RMC and the other Danish arts colleges in coping with international competition” (Rhythmic Music Conservatory (2018): *Omverdensanalyse* (External Environment Analysis), page 30).

¹⁵ This was the key sentiment expressed in *Charter for diversitet i dansk musikliv* (Charter for Diversity in Danish Music), published by the Danish Arts Foundation’s Project Funding Committee for Music in 2017.

¹⁶ Rhythmic Music Conservatory (2018a): *Rammeaftale 2019–22 (Framework Agreement 2019–22). Appendix 1: Strategi for Rytmisk Musikkonservatorium* (Strategy for Rhythmic Music Conservatory), page 10, author’s translation.

¹⁷ Rhythmic Music Conservatory (2019): *Mangfoldighedsopolitik på Rytmisk Musikkonservatorium* (Diversity Policy of the Rhythmic Music Conservatory).

Rhythmic Music Conservatory regards a proactive diversity policy as a prerequisite for fulfilling its vision of being a pioneer among educational, knowledge and cultural institutions involved in contemporary music.¹⁸

It goes on to state that it is:

essential (...) to make the institution's work in the arts, and in society in general, as representative as possible (...) in terms of gender, ethnicity and social background, musical genre, age, geography, sexual orientation, and individual mental and physical capacity.¹⁹

During the strategy period, RMC will organize its knowledge production based on these ambitions. As such, it is particularly appropriate to focus on greater diversity in terms of musical genre when developing new R&D projects. Other diversity perspectives, e.g. gender, could also be incorporated when recruiting researchers for externally funded projects, recruiting students as research assistants, and so on.

The RMC framework agreement stipulates that a diversity conference will be held in 2022. This provides a valuable opportunity to present the results of the Conservatory's work on diversity in connection with its own knowledge production.

Actions

- RMC will improve the quality of the knowledge production by ensuring greater diversity, in terms of musical genres in R&D projects, and by pursuing gender balance in the recruitment of students and researchers.
- RMC will include knowledge production perspectives both in the annual diversity report and at the diversity conference in 2022.

¹⁸ Rhythmic Music Conservatory (2019): *Mangfoldighedsopolitik på Rytmisk Musikkonservatorium* (Diversity Policy of Rhythmic Music Conservatory), page 1 (author's translation).

¹⁹ Ibid., page 1.

2.5 The researchers' framework conditions

The quality of an individual researcher's work is closely linked to his/her framework conditions and the opportunities to make the best possible use of them. During the strategy period, RMC will continue to improve these conditions so that researchers, as far as possible, enjoy the conditions that best suit their research. This work will cover issues such as interior design of research facilities, taking account of the researcher's other duties, and exploring the possibility of release for periods of concentrated research.

Actions

- RMC will provide the best possible financial and technical framework conditions during both the research process and the documentation and dissemination phase (see *2.1.2 Peer review*).

2.5.1 Skills enhancement for researchers

The priorities in the R&D strategy for 2015–2018 included developing R&D at RMC by means of skills enhancement for individual researchers, activities aimed at promoting closer collaboration, critical dialogue, feedback/feedforward, and so on – not only at RMC, but also in connection with forging new external academic relationships. RMC has made great progress in this area. In particular, drawing up international peer-review criteria for *artistic* research, establishing an RMC platform on Research Catalogue, and greater use of international commentators at *artistic* research presentations have all helped to internationalize RMC's research environment and enhance the skills of individual researchers. An increasing number of RMC's scientific and artistic researchers have also presented their work at international conferences.

As mentioned previously, RMC has also been upgrading its publication and communication activities. During the strategy period, all researchers will enhance their skills on an ongoing basis via systematic peer-review processes, with a view toward improving their ability to record, apply and communicate research materials in ways that are relevant to the specific research project (see *2.1 Quality assurance of R&D output*).

Actions

- RMC will ensure academic feedback on its researchers' work from peers in Denmark and abroad.
- Within its financial framework, RMC will offer skills enhancement to individual researchers, in order to improve the quality of their R&D work.

2.6 R&D's contribution to study programs' knowledge base

Study programs at RMC are based on artistic, educational and scientific research, as well as “practical knowledge from professional practice”.²⁰ In an R&D context, practical knowledge from professional practice is understood as the artistic and educational practices upon which individual researchers more or less explicitly base their artistic, educational or scientific research.²¹

As stipulated in the framework agreement, one of the objectives for the whole institution is to “enhance the quality of study programs by building up their *knowledge base*, instigating *high-quality artistic development work*, and improving *quality assurance* so that the programs achieve *positive accreditation*”²²

The importance of a close interrelationship between RMC’s knowledge production and its study programs is particularly clear when a lifelong-learning perspective is applied to the students’ learning objectives for their programs.

RMC’s study programs train artists and music managers to “reinvent” or “reformulate” themselves in response to new trends, values, and visions. As such, it is vitally important that the students develop a basic “research understanding” not only toward these new perspectives, but also in their approach to their own lives as artists, teachers, or managers.

There are many arguments in favor of developing competencies that will enable students to pursue sustainable careers in music. *RESEARCH2025* argued that:

[d]evelopment [continues to] creates (...) a need for new skills, which have to be identified and improved upon throughout people’s lives (...). But since we cannot anticipate exactly which jobs and skills requirements will arise in the future, we must also focus on how to create a strong and responsive, high quality education system with equally high academic standards and an emphasis on innovation, creativity, problem solving and collaborative skills.²³

A similar point was made in the recently published report by the EU project entitled *NXT: Making a Living from the Arts*.²⁴

(...) artists must be well equipped for employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. Institutions are focusing, in varying degrees, on strengthening the resilience of the individual artist through a multifaceted and hybrid skill set, which she or he can use to generate value in a range of contexts.²⁵

²⁰ Ministry of Higher Education and Science, Danish Agency for Science and Higher Education (2008): *Dansk kvalifikationsramme for de videregående uddannelser. Tillag vedr. kunstneriske bachelor-, kandidat- og masteruddannelser* (The Danish Qualification Framework for Higher Education. Appendix re. artistic bachelor, master’s and professional master’s study programs).

²¹ Another way in which knowledge from professional practice impacts on study programs is via experts loosely affiliated to the institution, lectures, workshops, artist talks, etc.

²² Rhythmic Music Conservatory (2018c): *Rammeaftale 2019–22 (Framework Agreement 2019–22)*. Appendix 3: Common objectives of the Ministry of Culture’s artistic educational institutions (un-numbered pages, italics in original). (author’s transl.)

²³ *RESEARCH2025*, page 185

²⁴ ELIA: *NXT – Making a Living from the Arts*.

²⁵ Ibid., page 9

With regard to the specific competencies that institutions are responsible for developing in individual students, the President of the Nordic Council, Helene Hellemark Knutsson says: “Education and research can help build strong, democratic societies inhabited by curiosity-driven, critically reflecting men and women.”²⁶

Taken together, these arguments indicate that study programs can improve students’ competencies in and knowledge of research and development, and that the institution’s knowledge production (and students’ access to it) has a significant role to play in this process. During the strategy period, RMC will focus on two initiatives that underpin this approach: greater student involvement in R&D; and greater visibility for the researchers’ work on the study programs in general.

2.6.1 Student involvement in R&D

One of the objectives stipulated in the RMC framework agreement is greater student involvement in research projects. This will improve their understanding of how R&D is organized and conducted, their understanding of their own study program’s goals and purpose, and, more generally, their understanding of how new knowledge is developed at various levels of competency. This makes it possible, in different ways and based on different expectations, to involve students at all levels and on all study programs in the work done by researchers. In other words, active students must have access to active researchers. It is important that researchers not only bring the work of other researchers into the classroom, but also present themselves – based on their own research – as researchers who are actively seeking and generating knowledge.

Student involvement in R&D will train them to develop ideas for, plan, and run development projects of increasing scale and complexity throughout their study programs. As part of this learning process, it is essential that each student is able to relate to experienced researchers in a variety of ways. The goal is that *all* RMC knowledge projects will entail a certain level of student involvement.

Actions

- The RMC framework agreement stipulates student involvement in a number of specific knowledge projects during the strategy period.
- In the longer term, the goal is that all RMC knowledge projects will involve one or more students in aspects of the work. The nature of this involvement will be specified in all R&D project descriptions, and an account of the students’ involvement and how it benefits the project will form part of the approval and reporting/publication process.

²⁶ Knutsson, HH (2017). Knutsson was the Swedish Minister for Higher Education and Research, 2014–2019. The quote is from her speech to a meeting of Nordic art school principals in Stockholm, 15 April 2018.

2.6.2 Visibility in the study programs

RMC aims to make the work of researchers a visible, everyday element of its students' study programs. Researchers must use a range of tools to give students a comprehensive overview of research. This involves not only presenting outcomes, but also discussing research as a lengthy and often unpredictable process – just like the students' own projects in artistic development, music education development, and music management.

The RMC framework agreement calls for new models for communicating information about knowledge production as part of the study programs, and for knowledge-sharing between researchers and supplement diploma students.

Actions

- The RMC framework agreement calls for new models for communicating information about knowledge production in teaching.
- The RMC framework agreement also calls for new models for knowledge-sharing between artistic researchers and supplement diploma students.



2.7 Communication and knowledge-sharing

During the strategy period, RMC will increase communication and the sharing of information about the knowledge production.²⁷ Within scientific research, there is a wealth of varied experience in different forms of communication and knowledge-sharing involving different target groups, “from the general population to the inner circles in the researcher's academic field”.²⁸ Within artistic development, on the other hand, there is considerable untapped potential in the areas of communication and knowledge-sharing. As previously mentioned, RMC has set up its own communication and peer-review platform on Research Catalogue, but this work is only in its infancy and needs to be greatly enhanced.

2.7.1 Development of appropriate publication channels

RMC seeks to communicate and share the knowledge production in ways that are specific and appropriate to the nature of both the knowledge and the target group concerned. Communication with close peers will be in-depth and specific, while communication with the general public must be easily understandable and relate to ordinary, everyday life. During the strategy period, individual researchers will develop communication methods and channels that are appropriate to their own knowledge generation.

Actions

- RMC will develop a range of publishing options, so that each project is communicated in a lasting, relevant and public way via appropriate channels.



²⁷ The Danish Ministry of Culture's 2017 analysis of artistic higher education institutions highlighted the pressing need to improve the documentation and communication of knowledge production. The analysis related the importance of this to the prospect of institutional accreditation under international standards (Ministry of Culture Denmark (2017): *De kunstneriske uddannelser – et forslag til organisering* (The artistic study programs: A proposal for organization)).

²⁸ Rhythmic Music Conservatory (2018): *Omverdensanalyse* (External Environment Analysis), page 29 (author's transl.).

Sharing knowledge with peers

One goal in the RMC framework agreement calls for more international communication on peer-reviewed platforms. This will ensure that the knowledge generated at RMC reaches the relevant academic forums, and will also improve international recognition of its knowledge work. Another goal is that RMC knowledge production will be more widely used as a reference and starting point for the work of other researchers.

Actions

- The RMC framework agreement includes a target of presenting seven to ten knowledge projects per year at international conferences, or publishing them on English-language, peer-reviewed platforms (see *2.1.1 RMC's platform on Research Catalogue*).

Communication with the general public

For several years, RMC has been using the institutional website and the annual, week-long Danish Science Festival to communicate the researchers' knowledge production. In the future, however, it will be important to communicate more widely. The ordinary citizen with an interest in art and research has a right to be introduced to the kind of knowledge generated by RMC researchers. This will also make the social relevance of knowledge production more visible.

During the strategy period, the communication of knowledge production to the wider public will be improved via the development of new methods of communication, such as podcasts, college radio, library lectures, research concerts, Danish University Extension classes, etc.

Actions

- RMC will convey information about knowledge production to the general public via appropriate channels and means of communication.
- Specific plans for this work will be incorporated into the approval process for project descriptions.

3 Academic priorities

The academic priorities for the strategy period are based on the initiatives outlined in the RMC strategy and framework agreement. The following sections elaborate on each of these areas.

3.1 Artistic research

The External Environment Analysis found that, in recent years, RMC has:

strengthened the educational focus on developing students' competencies in the subject area Artistic Development, in order to meet the need for trained artists capable of providing up-to-date, thought-provoking art throughout their careers in a rapidly changing society.²⁹

The introduction of Artistic Development Work as a core subject means that there is a greater need for active artistic researchers who generate knowledge about matters concerning artistic research, and thereby enhance the students' understanding and experience of the subject (see *2.6.1 Student involvement in R&D*).

Artistic research is therefore expected to become the most significant knowledge base for study programs at RMC in the next few years. For that reason, the strategy highlights this R&D category as a particular priority.

RMC will approach artistic research as a diverse, multifaceted field of knowledge, firmly based on artistic experience and insight, and on what artists actually do. This will involve, for example, the study of materials, methodologies, theoretical approaches, and so on. For RMC, it is essential that research takes its starting point in (and conducts an exploration of) the individual researcher's artistic practice. It is through working on artistic questions arising from the artist's practice that new knowledge is developed.

Actions

- The RMC framework agreement calls for high-quality artistic research.

²⁹ Rhythmic Music Conservatory (2018): *Omverdensanalyse* (External Environment Analysis), page 25 (author's translation).

3.2 The cross-disciplinary potential

For many years, the world of art and culture has talked about and experimented with interdisciplinary approaches to the development of art, art education and knowledge production. The establishment of the Campus Holmen in the 1990s was a tangible expression of this approach. Among RMC's Nordic and European counterparts, there are considerable differences in the degree to which cross-genre, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary or similar approaches have a tangible impact on the creation of new art and on the education of future artists. RMC's view is that there is still (relatively untapped) potential for exciting breakthroughs, new insights, new discourses, new concepts, and new theories.

Compared to our Nordic counterparts, the Danish art schools lag behind in terms of knowledge-sharing between artistic communities. The Norwegian Artistic Research Programme (NARP) has long since made inter- and cross-disciplinary encounters between artistic researchers a key element in raising the level of academic dialogue and development. Similarly, Sweden and Finland have merged arts education in UniArts Helsinki and Stockholm.

In recent years, the Danish art education institutional network for artistic research has attempted to follow suit, e.g. by running joint seminars, but the full potential of this approach has not yet been realized. The Ministry of Culture Denmark's 2017 report³⁰ on future organization of the Danish higher art education institutions reached a similar conclusion. In the next few years, the newly established 'International Center for Knowledge in the Arts (ICKA) is expected to play a vital role in exploring this cross-disciplinary potential, and RMC will run specific cross-disciplinary projects aimed at developing new experiences and insights in the field.³¹

Actions

- The RMC framework agreement stipulates that two major interdisciplinary artistic research projects will run during the strategy period.

3.3 Potentials, demands, and challenges of technology

Horizon 2020, the current EU framework program for research and innovation, talks about how artists can contribute to the development of modern society, not least in terms of technological development:

Specific Challenge: The ever-increasing role of technology in our daily life offers huge potential for added value for our society. Artists can help unleash this potential. They can help shape a better relationship between technology and humans and stimulate human-centered innovation through their transversal competencies and unconventional thinking.³²

³⁰ Ministry of Culture Denmark (2017): *De kunstneriske uddannelser – et forslag til organisering* (The Artistic Programs: A proposal for organization).

³¹ Rhythmic Music Conservatory (2018): *Omverdensanalyse* (External Environment Analysis), page 36 (author's translation). Here, the term "cross-artistic" refers to research and other academic cooperation between different art schools and art forms. However, in this R&D strategy, the term "cross-disciplinary" is considered more inclusive and comprehensive.

³² European Commission: *Horizon 2020 Framework Programme*. Strand 5.i. Information and Communication Technologies (page 66).

At national level, RESEARCH2025 emphasizes that Denmark has “a strong tradition of fast and creative application of new technologies”,³³ and that there is “serious potential in the digital research interacting with domain-specific research within (...) creative business, etc.”³⁴

During the strategy period, the potential of new technology, as well as its various demands and challenges, will be addressed from an R&D perspective. RMC will contribute to the development of new knowledge in this area and provide artistically informed critical thinking about the role of technology in human working and production processes. Many of its researchers will also be prime movers in the use of the latest sound and music technology.

Actions

- The RMC framework agreement calls for three knowledge projects in collaboration with external stakeholders during the strategy period.

3.4 Development of new educational and communication approaches

This R&D priority involves generating knowledge about 1) pedagogy and didactics relevant to contemporary music and the creative arts; and 2) communication approaches linked to performance, knowledge-sharing, public involvement, etc. Regarding point 1), the Conservatory’s knowledge production can contribute new knowledge. Regarding point 2), see 2.7.1.2 *Communication with the general public*.

Several interrelated factors inform the need for new knowledge of pedagogy and didactics. The External Environment Analysis states: “An increasing number of students are found not to have come through the ‘usual’ route of formal music-teaching institutions, including the pre-conservatory MGK (Basic Music Course). There is a need for more knowledge about what characterizes the educational and artistic communities that are key to developing the artists of the future.”³⁵

Only around 4% of Danish children attend music schools.³⁶ As such, politicians must recognize that there is a great need for all children and adults to encounter art and culture to a much greater extent than is currently the case. This is where RMC’s R&D can contribute new knowledge and insight.

³³ Ministry of Higher Education and Science, Danish Agency for Science and Higher Education (2019): RESEARCH2025: *Promising future research areas*, page 10.

³⁴ Ibid, page 28.

³⁵ Rhythmic Music Conservatory (2018): *Omverdensanalyse* (External Environment Analysis), page 27 (author’s translation).

³⁶ This challenge was also highlighted in the 2017 report *Musikskolerne i Danmark* (Music Schools in Denmark), which found that only 4% of Danish children and young people under the age of 25 participate in music schools’ activities (see also section 4.2.2). According to the think-tank, music schools play an important role, but within a context of great social disparity, as they do so primarily for the children of the already privileged middle class. The report highlighted the huge untapped potential – through increased collaboration between the various types of institution (conservatories, music schools, state schools) – for meeting this challenge. It also pointed out the significance of the great diversity of opportunities for children and young people to encounter music in different ways, and from different worldviews and cultural perspectives (Ministry of Culture (2017a): *Musikskolerne i Danmark* (Music Schools in Denmark)).

The 2017 report *Musikskolerne i Danmark* (Music Schools in Denmark) concluded that:

Music schools (...) in other words – based on the actual opportunities available in different local environments – [should] take a more active role in using new teaching methods, adapting existing teaching methods, and consciously choosing methods that benefit a specific musical learning environment. Similarly, music schools should incorporate new knowledge about teaching and learning, and apply this knowledge to the ongoing development of teaching methods and techniques.³⁷

Specifically regarding the final point in the quote, RMC stated in its 2018 External Environment Analysis that it could contribute “new knowledge about these issues: knowledge that could, through good communication and knowledge-sharing, make a difference for the general public in Denmark, not just the few who attend music school”.³⁸

It was also pointed out that the Ministry of Culture’s initiative *Talentindsats 2018* (Talent Initiative 2018) presents a “specific vision of the importance of the art schools in developing society’s artists of the future. It contains proposals for inter-institutional collaboration between art schools, schools of culture, and other environments, which could collectively provide greater opportunities for talented young people to meet more experienced artists – a *hub* for artists of all ages. In such a collaboration, the Conservatory could contribute new knowledge about how artistic skills and competencies are developed in close collaboration with other artists. New knowledge of how artistic practice constitutes in itself the seeds for the ongoing development of art and artists through collective reflection on methodological experiences, knowledge of materials, and conceptual visions.”³⁹

From a labor-market point of view, there are signs that:

in the future, RMC graduates (...) may be able to choose to teach in the public school system – perhaps not as classroom teachers, but in many cases, as guest teachers. From another perspective, there are the more communicative tasks related to school concerts, workshops, partnership schemes, etc., where children and young people in the public school system encounter artists. There is also potential inherent in the growing interest in community singing as a cultural phenomenon.⁴⁰

In other words, the indications are that there is a general need to develop new knowledge about these conditions.

Actions

- The RMC framework agreement calls for one new, large-scale research project focusing on music and learning every year.

³⁷ Ministry of Culture Denmark (2017a): *Musikskolerne i Danmark* (Music Schools in Denmark) (author’s translation).

³⁸ Rhythmic Music Conservatory (2018): *Omverdensanalyse* (External Environment Analysis), page 28 (author’s translation)

³⁹ Ibid., page 27.

⁴⁰ Ibid., page 28.

Appendix I: Financial framework for knowledge production

There are two sources of funding for RMC's research and development activity. First, there is the basic state grant, in which research and development (R&D) accounts for approximately two full-time equivalents (FTE) out of a total of around 22 FTEs. Second, there is external funding, resulting from project applications to various research and development funding sources. Since 2011, RMC has attracted external funding corresponding to approximately 11 FTEs (roughly double the basic state grant for this area).

RMC has received support from the Danish Government's globalization funds, from the Ministry of Culture's funding pools for research and artistic development, and (to a limited extent) from private foundations, etc. The progress in R&D in recent years has largely been due to this external funding, which makes it possible to release lecturers from teaching and administrative duties and significantly improves RMC's ability to cover major operating costs related to R&D.

Knowledge production requires substantial investment, which is difficult for RMC to find within its funding framework. However, RMC believes that there is untapped potential to attract more external funding for knowledge production, for example, from the Independent Research Fund Denmark and EU framework programs (HORIZON 2020, later Horizon Europe). There is also potential to attract funding from major private foundations. It is RMC's hope that there will be greater cooperation between the institutes of higher art education on the matter of fundraising for knowledge development.

In the other Nordic countries, funding arrangements for artistic research vary greatly. In Sweden, the Swedish Research Council provides funding for scientific and "arts-related research". In 2017, the Swedish Research Council granted SEK 26 million for projects in arts-related research, which supplements the artistic education institutions' own funds. In Norway, two different bodies allocate funds for research and artistic development. The Norwegian Artistic Research Program (NARP) supports artistic development in the form of three-year PhD scholarships (currently 79 students, at an estimated total annual expenditure of NOK40 million), and via project funding, which is typically applied for by staff at the institutions concerned (in 2015 and 2016, project funding amounted to approximately NOK 10.5 million per year).

In Finland, project funding for artistic research is granted through the Finnish Research Council. When applying for this funding, artistic projects are in competition with scientific projects.⁴¹ UniArts, based in Helsinki, is by far the biggest player. Approximately 70 DocMus students have been engaged in a four-year, third-cycle program⁴² in music, although they are mostly unpaid. The institutions cover the costs of tuition and student guidance. UniArts also operates a center/network for artistic researchers (CFAR), and the arts education research center known as CERADA.

In Denmark, the Ministry of Culture's Committee for Artistic Research has since 2013 financed artistic research projects with sums of between DKK 3 and DKK 8,5 million a year.⁴³ In addition, the seven

⁴¹ The number of successful applications is unknown, but is estimated to be very low. Funding is primarily granted for projects in which the artistic element plays a communicative or supplementary role in a scientific project (Lilja, 2013).

⁴² Since they are generally not paid, many participants take more than four years to complete the program (ELIA Share).

⁴³ Total investment was DKK 3 million in the period 2013–2016, DKK 5 million a year in 2017 and 2018, and DKK 7 million in 2019. For more information on the Ministry of Culture's funding pool for artistic development, please see the Ministry website: <https://kum.dk/kulturpolitik/uddannelse-folkeoplysning-og-folkehøjskoler/uddannelse/kunstnerisk-udviklingsvirksomhed/kulturministeriets-pulje-til-kunstnerisk-udviklingsvirksomhed/>.

state-run art education institutions have devoted a total of 24.45 FTEs to knowledge production⁴⁴ (equivalent to approximately DKK 13 million).⁴⁵ The institutions report that most of this financial support was used for teachers' artistic activities, while a smaller sum was allocated to artistic research.⁴⁶ In comparison with the other Nordic countries, Denmark invests significantly less in knowledge production in the arts in general, and in the area of artistic research in particular.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Ministry of Culture Denmark (2017): *De kunstneriske uddannelser – et forslag til organisering* (The Artistic Programs: A proposal for organization), page 65.

⁴⁵ Calculated on the basis of a man-year of 1,924 hours at an hourly rate of DKK 275.

⁴⁶ Ministry of Culture Denmark (2017): *De kunstneriske uddannelser – et forslag til organisering* (The Artistic Programs: A proposal for organization), page 65.

⁴⁷ Rhythmic Music Conservatory (2018): *Omverdensanalyse* (External Environment Analysis), pages 24–25.

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