

RIAM

Royal Irish
Academy of Music



STRATEGY 2020



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SUMMARY: RIAM'S 5 STRATEGIC THEMES

1 An Exemplary Teaching and Learning Approach

Teachers, students, alumni and parents will talk to each other about their RIAM experiences. Following this, and further informed by international best practice, the Academy will set out its unique teaching and learning values in a Manifesto known as 'The RIAM Way'. A bespoke Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Programme will reinforce those values and good practices.

2 Quality and Innovation in Professional Music Education & Training

The Academy's innovative third level programmes, developed in partnership with Trinity College Dublin, will gain international recognition as being primary contributors to radical improvement in professional music training in Ireland.

3 The RIAM Music Education Network; supporting the Teacher and the Non-Professional Musician

The RIAM's Local Centre Examination System will expand from an examination board to the RIAM Music Education Network, a music-education system where progress is measured through examination and other activities with a national and global reach.

4 Performing on the Irish and World Stage

The Academy's diverse public programme of music events, developed in collaboration with Ireland's preeminent institutions, involving identified key strategic international partners and with the Academy's graduate population, will position the RIAM as a standard bearer in classical music for Irish culture and identity.

5 Resourcing the Academy

The re-development of the RIAM Westland Row site with accessible and appropriately-resourced, multi-functioning facilities for performance, teaching, practice, rehearsal, library, research, administration and recording requirements will develop and consolidate the Academy's reputation as "*Ireland's World-class music conservatoire*".

INTRODUCTION

THE ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY OF MUSIC IS IRELAND'S OLDEST CONSERVATOIRE THE ACADEMY FOCUSES EXCLUSIVELY ON CLASSICAL MUSIC AND THE IRISH HARP.

National Relevance

Over the course of its 167-year history, the Academy has led the development of education and training in music performance in Ireland across a wide spectrum of age and ability: from grass roots non-professional level, (through the Academy's countrywide Local Centre Examination System) and part-time on-site tuition on Westland Row, to the full time students (educated and trained for the profession), who graduate and represent Ireland with great distinction throughout the world. This unique educational span is the Academy's offering and strength. Since its foundation, over 1,000,000 musicians have successfully interacted with the Academy.

Global Reach

In 2013 the RIAM entered a new chapter of its history as an associate college of Ireland's longest established University: Trinity College, Dublin. In 2014 the Academy began a consultancy arrangement to establish a music conservatoire in Malaysia based on the RIAM curricula and approach. In 2015 the Academy joined forces with the Juilliard School New York in a multi-annual performance project. This growing international influence represents a new and defining phase in its development, and enables it to consolidate its position as a key player in the competitive international arena. This Plan includes benchmarking all the Academy's activities against the very best in the world.

Contributing Partners

The Academy acknowledges with thanks the on-going support of the Irish Government and the Department of Education and Skills through the Oireachtas grant, and the vital contribution of its own growing list of benefactors. This assistance enables the Academy to offer subsidised tuition, financial aid and scholarships, helping to deliver on the core belief that finance should not be a bar to any person who wishes to study music.



Strategic Planning

The RIAM Strategic Plan 2020 development phase has taken twelve months. It began with questionnaires, meetings and focus groups with a variety of stakeholders. A Strategic Planning Committee was formed in October 2014. This group of over 30 included students, parents, governors, administration and teaching staff, alumni, members of the music profession and third party advisers. They reviewed source documents and worked on defining the mission, vision, values and the 5 Strategic Themes which encapsulate the Academy's vision for its future.

Centrality of the Student Experience

Central to this RIAM Strategic Plan 2020 is the commitment to ensuring that the professional and non-professional students are enriched through their interaction with the Academy. To achieve this, the Academy will engage that sense which musicians cultivate over a lifetime: to *listen* to the students who deserve the best service and support.

Cultural significance of the RIAM in 2023

This five year Plan is a key stepping stone to a significant landmark year for the RIAM. The Academy's 175th anniversary in 2023 presents a wonderful opportunity for all in the Academy to work towards the best possible future: to devise an exciting, cohesive, distinctive, collaborative, meaningful, multi-layered programme in celebration of this landmark year, which will signal successful completion of the goals presented in this Plan, encapsulated by this simple, but bold, banner statement:

The Royal Irish Academy of Music:
Ireland's World-class Music Conservatoire

Dr. Brian Aylward, Chairman, RIAM Board of Governors

Deborah Kelleher, Director

RIAM'S VISION

The Academy's vision is to become a leading international music conservatory defined by its core values: the quality of its teaching and learning, the excellence of its programmes for non-professional and professional musicians, the achievements of its graduates, the breadth of its global partnerships, and by its commitment to sharing its passion for music across a wide community.

RIAM'S CORE VALUES

EXCELLENCE

An exemplary, student-focused, learning experience, through quality teaching, delivering outstanding musical performance at every level.

INSPIRATION

The finest teaching and programmes, challenging, inspiring and igniting a passion for music in all students.

INCLUSION

Embracing the broad range of non-professional and professional student programmes in the belief that music benefits all and the desire to make the RIAM accessible to anyone who loves music.

INNOVATION

Continuously challenging the status quo, and adopting new programmes and best teaching and learning practice, elevating standards and gaining international recognition.

SUPPORT

Nurturing and fostering relationships with the students, the staff and stakeholders, so that all will feel supported, respected and valued.



RIAM'S MISSION

The RIAM's Mission is to be the benchmark for excellence in classical music education in Ireland. The Academy offers an inclusive and innovative learning and assessment experience to non-professional and professional musicians because the Academy believes that music vitally enriches society. Nurturing this passion for music is its driving ambition.

In today's globalised world, delivering on the RIAM Mission requires that all the Academy's programmes are truly world class, delivered by international calibre faculty, so that they can, and do, attract students from around the world, and also that the professional graduates of the Academy can compete on any of the world's stages.

ACHIEVING THE ACADEMY'S GOALS

This document outlines the reasons why the Academy has chosen the strategic themes, sets out the specific actions which will bring these themes to life, and the results that the successful delivery of each theme will bring. Each strategic theme has its own operational and financial goals and objectives, against which to measure progress and refine actions.

STRATEGIC THEME

1 AN EXEMPLARY TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACH

“A musical people by nature, all we want is instruction”

(The Freeman’s Journal, 1851)

REASONS FOR THIS THEME

The Academy’s Strategy for the years 2015 to 2020 is based around the concept of “The RIAM Way” – a document setting out its teaching programme and how it responds to the needs of a wide range of music learners. It focuses on maintaining at the heart of its activities the excellence of the Academy’s tuition and seeks fresh approaches for the future, drawing on international best practice.

THE GOAL FOR THIS THEME

The Academy wants teachers, students, alumni and parents to discuss their RIAM experiences with each other, so as to identify achievements to date and how they might be enhanced.

CURRENT APPROACH

The core requirement is to provide the student body with an education in music. To this end the Academy has created a diverse teaching faculty focusing on self-directed learning and professional development, Therefore it is essential to address how the students are taught, so they bring their music education to the benefit of a broad social context in the 21st century.

HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVES

CREATIVE TEACHING METHODS REVIEW

All stakeholders will be involved in a comprehensive review of current teaching methods and values, with a view to adopting best international practice to enhance the student learning experience.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND PROGRAMME

The Academy will develop a coherent, institution-wide strategy for internationally focused and continuing professional development for its teaching staff.

JUNIOR CHAMBER MUSIC PROJECT

The Academy will develop a flagship programme aimed at teaching chamber music and group music to Junior students, using varied learning techniques celebrating the social and interactive nature of music-making.

MEASURING OUTCOMES

- In 2016 the Academy will publish a manifesto setting out the “RIAM Way”, which is a declaration of its shared values and goals
- In 2017 the Academy will launch its bespoke CPD Policy and Programme, which will assist in embedding an interactive culture in the RIAM, where teachers communicate with their heads of faculties on a regular basis
- In 2017 the Academy will launch its Junior Chamber Music Project which will be a formal presentation of outcomes one and two, by enacting best practice approaches to teaching young students who are in the early stages of their musical learning

STRATEGIC THEME

2 QUALITY AND INNOVATION IN PROFESSIONAL MUSIC EDUCATION & TRAINING

“I was inspired by my teacher to believe that I could be the best. From Day One, she devoted so much of her time and gave me advice on the music profession that I follow to this day. The RIAM is a very special place and certainly gave me great opportunities; but it also gave me great confidence in myself and that is priceless”

(Tara Erraught, 2013, Bavarian State Opera)

REASONS FOR THIS THEME

RIAM became an associate college of Trinity College, Dublin in 2013, and this new and exciting partnership, combined with the Academy’s track record of success in producing world class artists, means that the Academy has the potential to advance and improve in this field. In the competitive international conservatory arena, this means dynamic, relevant and uncompromisingly high-value programmes.

THE GOAL FOR THIS THEME

In the next five years the Academy’s innovative third level programmes, developed in partnership with Trinity College Dublin, will have gained international recognition as being primary contributors to a radical improvement in professional music training in Ireland.

CURRENT APPROACH

In 2011, a new Bachelor in Vocal Studies curriculum was launched in the Academy, and the vocal faculty has since seen a leap forward in recruitment, quality, profile and programme. This model will be used to achieve a similar transformation in the other faculties.

HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVES

REVISE CURRENT THIRD LEVEL CURRICULA

In collaboration with Trinity College, the Academy will review international best practice in professional music training and devise new, forward looking curricula which will enable students to match the best in the international arena and attract greater numbers of quality applicants.

CENTRE FOR PERFORMING ENSEMBLES

It is intended to create a hub for detailed study of orchestral and ensemble playing, in partnership with the professional ensembles in Ireland.

AMPLIFY THE RANGE AND VISIBILITY OF RESEARCH IN THE RIAM

The Academy will identify strands of research to excel in, exploit the links with TCD and encourage staff to give prominence to artistic research in their professional activities.

MEASURING OUTCOMES

- In 2015 the Academy will commence a research audit in the RIAM to assess the scope and volume of research activity currently being undertaken by staff and students
- In 2016 a key research strand will be launched from which the Academy will gain international recognition. Further strands will be in place by 2020
- In 2016 the revised Bachelor in Music Performance curriculum will be launched, followed in September 2017 by the launch of the revised Master and Doctorate curricula
- In 2017 the Academy will launch The RIAM 'Centre for Performing Ensembles' which will attract high-level orchestral students

STRATEGIC THEME

3 THE RIAM MUSIC EDUCATION NETWORK; SUPPORTING THE TEACHER AND THE NON-PROFESSIONAL MUSICIAN

“The very small beginning pioneered by Michele Esposito one hundred years ago has grown probably beyond the wildest expectations of this great man. We look back with satisfaction and thanksgiving for our success while moving into the next century with confidence that the great work started by Michele Esposito will continue to flourish.”

(Anna Brioscú, Chairperson of the RIAM Board of Governors, 100th anniversary year of the Local Centre Examination System, 1994)

REASONS FOR THIS THEME

With 42,000 students currently entered for examinations by 7,000 private music teachers and with information technology making access to music education more convenient for all, the Academy has the ingredients to give larger numbers of musicians access to an exemplary musical experience. The Academy aims to expand its current support of the private music teacher through continuing professional development and accreditation.

THE GOAL FOR THIS THEME

Over the next 5 years the RIAM's Local Centre Examination System will have expanded from an examination board to the RIAM Music Education Network, a music education system where progress is measured through examination and other activities with a national and global reach of over 75,000 musicians.

CURRENT APPROACH

The RIAM is an acknowledged leader in Ireland's music examination sector. In recent years the Academy has developed new examination formats which allow for the flexibility of group assessment. In 2013 the RIAM Teaching Network was launched, Ireland's first online virtual learning environment for the music teacher. The Academy's staff has a passion to bring their ensembles into community outreach settings, and are doing so, on an occasional basis.

HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVES

ASSESSMENT EXPANSION

The Assessments Portfolio will be expanded by increasing the range and type of assessments through development of new syllabi and by encompassing more disciplines.

ONLINE DEVELOPMENT

The Virtual Learning Environment, the RIAM Teaching and Learning Network, will be consolidated and developed, to allow the RIAM to create an online hub that will be central to music education in Ireland.

REACH OUT STRATEGY

The RIAM's Outreach Programme will be developed by integrating it into the Academy's full-time programmes and performing groups' activities so as to increase the Academy's contribution to community music-making, while also developing the skills of the full-time RIAM student in the future.

MEASURING OUTCOMES

- In 2017 the Academy will expand its current assessment portfolio with new syllabi and assessment styles
- In 2016 the RIAM Music Education Network will be launched, presenting an online musical community encompassing teachers, parents and students, to encourage and enhance connections between RIAM staff and students
- In 2015 the Academy will appoint a new Outreach position in the Academy with the role of developing and managing a programme of activities that will be launched formally in September 2016

STRATEGIC THEME

4 PERFORMING ON THE IRISH AND WORLD STAGE

“The programmes were long – surprisingly so – but nobody seemed to mind. The hall was always packed to the doors and the concerts reported at length in the Dublin papers. At the first prize giving concert I was taken aback to find that all the string players (except the cellos) were expected to stand up while playing the national anthem. The wind players stayed in their seats!”

(Joan Trimble, RIAM student in the 1930’s)

REASONS FOR THIS THEME

Performance is at the heart of all RIAM activities, and the Academy’s shop window must provide a quality and vibrant programme of activities that offers an initial professional environment for its students, enabling the sharing of their passion for music with the wider population.

THE GOAL FOR THIS THEME

The Academy’s diverse public programme of music events will position the RIAM as a standard bearer in classical music for Irish culture and identity. It is being developed in collaboration with Ireland’s preeminent institutions, with identified key strategic international partners and with the Academy’s graduate population.

CURRENT APPROACH

The Academy has a programme of over 75 events, ranging from innovative opera productions and high calibre staff recitals, to junior concerts and masterclasses with international artists. This activity has increased in recent years as other cultural institutions have recognised the Academy’s ability to partner on significant projects. The collaboration with the Juilliard School, New York, and tours of China and Korea indicate that the Academy’s performance profile is now established outside Ireland. Managing the myriad of opportunities has become a significant, but welcome, challenge.

HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVES

IN INNOVATIVE, WELL-PLANNED, HIGH QUALITY PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

Long-term inclusive planning will make it possible to celebrate the achievements of the Academy's students (past and present), staff and extended family (Local Centre Network) both on- and off-site at home and abroad. This will inform, entertain and develop audiences and influence stakeholders and funders.

A CONSIDERED, IMAGINATIVE AND RELEVANT EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

This will maximise the positive message of the RIAM's strategic themes by drawing on third party advice, internal experience and the experiences of all of the Academy's stakeholders.

RESIDENT ENSEMBLES AT RIAM

A range of external ensembles, led by young, Ireland-based music professionals, will position the Academy as enabling the emerging professional to make the transition between education and a musical career.

MEASURING OUTCOMES

- In 2015 a new role will be created: Head of Artistic Programming. This person will be supported by a Programming Committee, to maximise the planning and execution of the Academy's busy annual schedule of events
- In 2016 a long term external communications strategy will be presented, which will reflect and support all of the Academy's Strategic Themes and will result in reinforcing its position as an internationally recognised specialist classical music institution
- In 2016, the Academy will publish a tender process for prospective Resident ensembles at the RIAM

STRATEGIC THEME

5 RESOURCING THE ACADEMY

“It is simply impossible for us to do any business with the noise going on in the next room and we must at once move. We trust you may prevail on the musical people to mitigate the nuisance during office hours for a week by which time we should have found other rooms we hope”

(Letter from Engineers Cotton and Flemyng to their Landlord, Henry de Burgh, shortly after the Academy moved to 36, Westland Row, in 1856)

REASONS FOR THIS THEME

Integral to any significant ambition to present the Academy as a pre-eminent music conservatoire is the need to ensure that adequate student, teaching and learning, and physical resources are provided. A core challenge is that the RIAM buildings on Westland Row require significant development if they are to match the Academy’s already established standing and its global ambitions. Additionally, the Academy’s human resources and Information Technology need to evolve, supporting the commitment to offering a first class teaching experience.

THE GOAL FOR THIS THEME

The re-development of the RIAM Westland Row site will consolidate and demonstrate the Academy’s reputation as “*Ireland’s World-class music conservatoire*”. This embraces accessible and appropriately-resourced facilities , including multi-functioning performance spaces, as well as rooms for teaching, practice, rehearsal, research, administration and recording facilities.

CURRENT APPROACH

The Academy operates in a set of buildings which limit the potential for expansion, and which struggle to provide offer the diverse student body an optimal learning experience. Recent reductions in staff levels have resulted in functions being re-assigned across the team. In addition, the current IT provision is in need of updating and future proofing.

HIGH LEVEL OBJECTIVES

REDEVELOP WESTLAND ROW

to create an innovative, state-of the-art, purpose-built music conservatory in and for Dublin which matches international standards.

REVIEW AND REVISE JOB FUNCTIONS

in partnership with faculty and administration, and recruit new positions where needed,

REVIEW AND REFORM INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

to make it fit for purpose for a 21st century educational institution.

CONTINUE TO DIVERSIFY THE FUNDING BASE

to prepare for future development

MEASURING OUTCOMES

- In 2016, the Governors will approve a redevelopment design of the Academy buildings on Westland Row
- In 2015, the Academy will roll out revised responsibilities, functions and Continuing Professional Development targets across staff, beginning with revised Head of Faculty and Senior Examiner job specifications
- In 2015 The Academy will articulate a comprehensive, multi-annual Information Technology Strategy to support all planned strategic objectives





Royal Irish Academy of Music

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